

**BESSIE BRADFORD'S
SECRET**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649073061

Bessie Bradford's Secret by Joanna H. Mathews

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JOANNA H. MATHEWS

**BESSIE BRADFORD'S
SECRET**



MAGGIE AND HER MAMMA.

BESSIE BRADFORD'S SECRET.

BY

JOANNA H. MATHEWS,

Author of the "Bessie Books."



CASELL, PETER, GALPIN & CO.,

NEW YORK, LONDON AND PARIS.

300 1901.37



2010.33

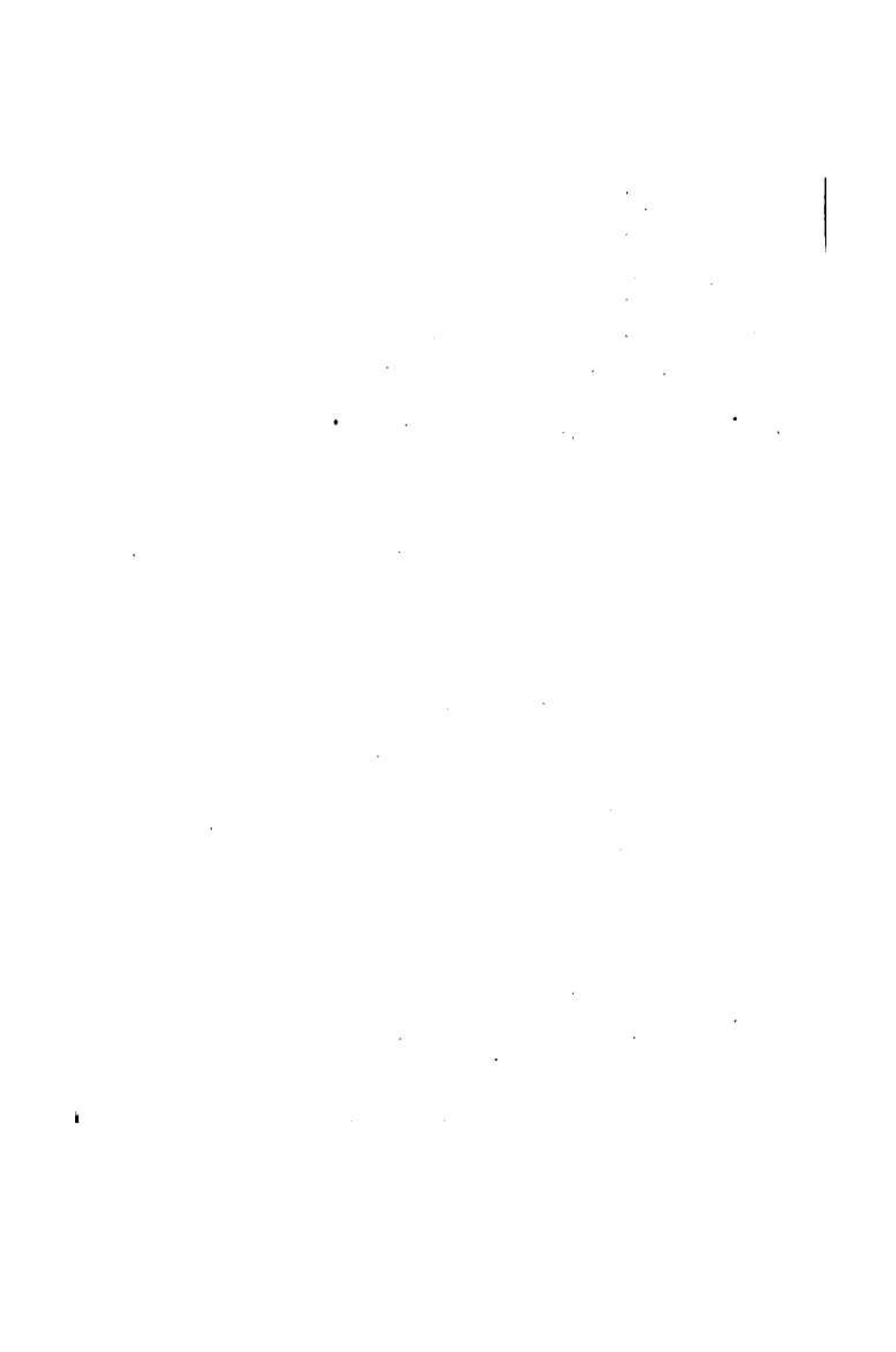
COPYRIGHT,
1881,
By O. M. DUNHAM.

PRESS OF J. J. LITTLE & CO.,
NO. 18 TO 21 ASTOR PLACE, NEW YORK.

DEDICATED

BY REQUEST

TO ALL THE DEAR LITTLE READERS OF THE
"BESSIE BOOKS."



BESSIE BRADFORD'S SECRET.

CHAPTER I.

THE LAME FOOT.

"FAN, is that you?"

"No, my boy, it is I," answered Mrs. Leroy, glancing up at her son Harold, who was hanging over the banisters at the head of the stairs, and looking down into the hall below; then she turned to the woman who had just opened the front door for her, and gave her some direction which Harold did not hear, as he turned impatiently away.

But a moment later, and before Mrs. Leroy had come upstairs, another ring at the bell brought Harold back to his post of observation; and again, before he had time to see who was there, he called aloud,

"Is that you, at last, Fan?"

This time there was no response, but Harold saw that it was a lady visitor who was admitted, and he retreated again, exclaiming,

"Bother Fan's school; it is more than time for her to be

home; I wonder if she has gone somewhere—no, for mamma told her she did not want her to do that without leave—and she has never been kept in, I'm sure; but what in the world can keep her so, and just when a fellow wants her, too?"

Here Mary Jane, the waitress, made her appearance at the door, and with a tone and aspect of calm but severe disapproval, said:

"Master Harold, your ma bid me tell you that Miss Fanny takes her music lesson to-day, and that will keep her an hour later than usual. She'll not be home until Miss Ella comes."

There was unspoken reproof in Mary Jane's voice, for her punctilious soul had been sorely vexed by Harold's outrage of the proprieties in calling over the stairs as she opened the door for the visitor; but the young gentleman either did not notice or did not choose to notice that, and all the reply he made to her piece of information was another impatient

"Oh, bother!"

He had, himself, been kept from school to-day by a slightly sprained foot which did not permit him to go out, although he contrived to hobble about the house, as you have seen by his frequent excursions to the head of the staircase; and Mary Jane thought it well to add a modicum of admonition on this point.

"I don't see as your foot is ever goin' to get well, if you go hoppin' round on it this way all the time, Master Harold," she said.