

**PABO, THE  
PRIEST: A NOVEL**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649183142

Pabo, the priest: a novel by S. Baring Gould

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**S. BARING GOULD**

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# PABO, THE PRIEST

A Novel

BY

S. BARING GOULD

AUTHOR OF "DOMITIA," "THE BROOM-SQUIRE," "BLADYS,"  
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NEW YORK  
FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY  
PUBLISHERS

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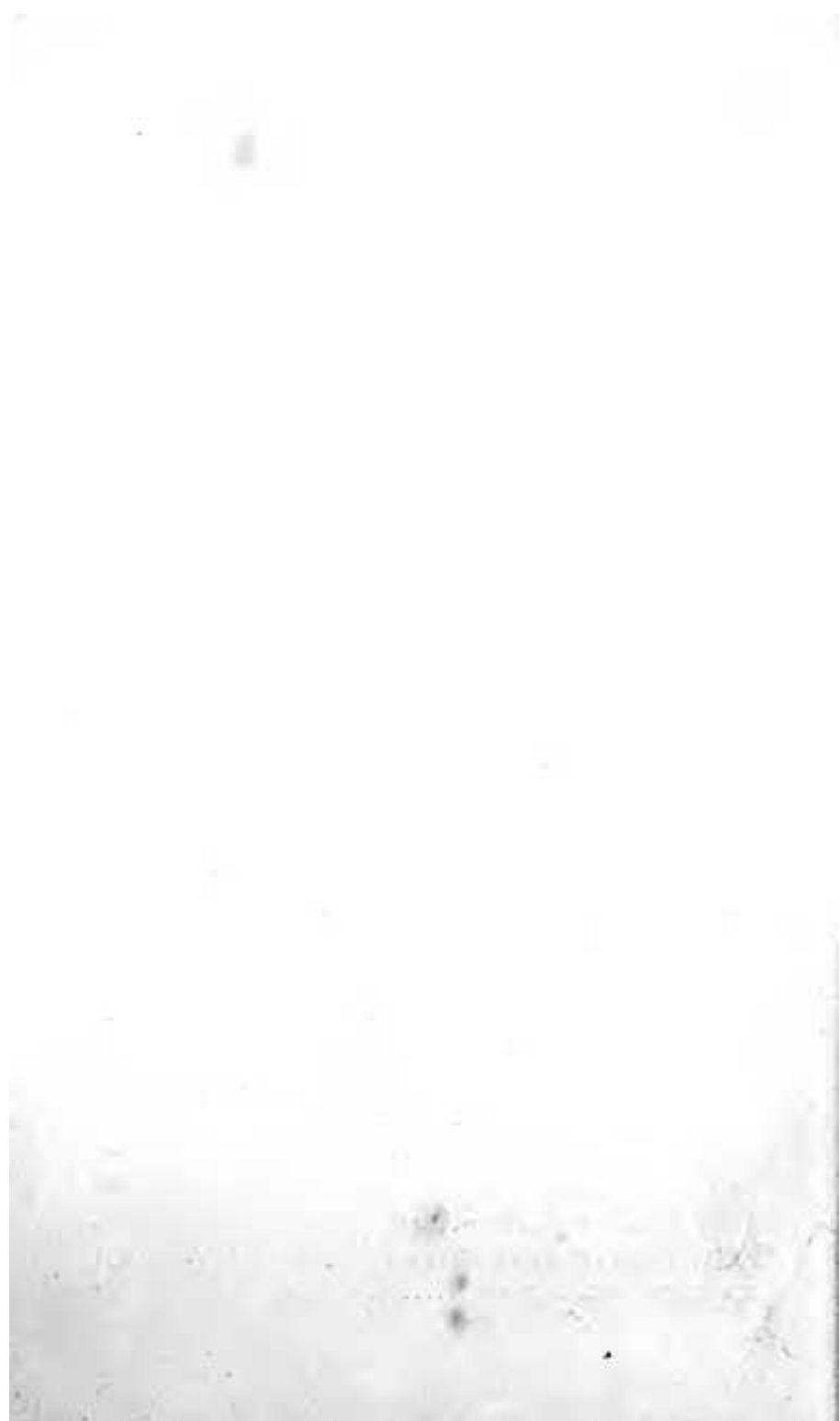


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# PABO, THE PRIEST

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## CHAPTER I

### GERALD

KING HENRY sat in a great chair with a pillow under each arm, and one behind his head resting on the lofty chair-back. He was unwell, uncomfortable, irritable.

In a large wickerwork cage at the further end of the room was a porcupine. It had been sent him as a present by the King of Denmark.

Henry Beauclerk was fond of strange animals, and the princes that desired his favor humored him by forwarding such beasts and birds as they considered to be rare and quaint.

The porcupine was a recent arrival, and it interested the King as a new toy, and drew his thoughts away from himself.

He had occasion to be irritable. His leech had ordered him to eat salt pork only.

By his hand, on the table, stood a ewer and a basin, and ever and anon Henry poured water out of the ewer into the basin, and then with a huge wooden spoon ladled the liquid back into the receiver. The reason of the proceeding was this—

He had for some time been troubled with some internal discomfort—not serious, but annoying; one which we, nowadays, would interpret very differently from the physicians of the twelfth century. We should say that he was suffering from dyspepsia; but the Court leech, who diagnosed the condition of the King, explained it in other fashion.

He said that Henry had inadvertently drunk water that contained the spawn of a salamander. It had taken many months for the spawn to develop into a sort of tadpole, and the tadpole to grow into a salamander. Thus the reptile had attained large size, and was active, hungry, and rampageous. Beauclerk had a spotted salamander within him, which could not be extracted by a forceps, as it was out of reach; it could not be poisoned, as that medicament which would kill

the brute might also kill the King. It must, therefore, be cajoled to leave its prison. Unless this end were achieved the son of the Conqueror of England would succumb to the ravages of this internal monster.

The recipe prescribed was simple, and commended itself to the meanest intelligence. Henry was to eat nothing but highly salted viands, and was to drink neither wine, water, nor ale. However severely he might suffer from thirst he could console himself with the reflection that the sufferings of the salamander within him were greater—a poor comfort, yet one that afforded a measure of relief to a man of a vindictive mind.

Not only was he to eat salt meat, but he was also to cause the splash of water to be heard in his insides. Therefore he was to pour water forwards and backwards between the ewer and the basin; and this was to be done with gaping mouth, so that the sound might reach the reptile, and the salamander would at length be induced to ascend the throat of the monarch and make for the basin, so as to drink. Immediately on the intruder leaving the body of the King, Henry was to snap it up with a pair of tongs, laid ready to hand, and to cast it into the fire.