

**THE BROTHER'S
RETURN, AND
OTHER STORIES**

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The brother's return, and other stories by A. L. O. E.

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RETURN, AND
OTHER STORIES**



SARAH MAY'S KINDNESS REMEMBERED.



THE BROTHER'S RETURN.

And Other Stories.

By

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The Brother's Return



“ COULD have been sure that John's house stood here,” murmured Ralph Daines to himself as he looked around. “I know that it stood by the turn of a road, just as one came in sight of the church, and that it had a clump of trees in front, just like these before me. Ah! well, well,” he added, “it's more than twenty years since I turned away from my brother's door—turned away in anger—and twenty years will bring changes. Perhaps I've mistaken the place, after all. I stayed

but a short time with John, so that I never knew his home well. In twenty years one may forget ; yes, one may forget a spot, but there are some things which never can be forgotten, however long we may live."

And amongst those things which rested upon Ralph's mind was his quarrel with his brother, Long John—a quarrel so sharp, that, after the two had parted, they had never seen nor written to each other again. For twenty years and more Ralph had dwelt in a distant land, and had never so much as sent a letter to inquire after the welfare of the brother whom he had left in England. But when Ralph at last returned to his native isle, his heart began to yearn towards the only near relation whom he had upon earth. His anger had been softened by time ; and Ralph thought that his brother's home should be his home, and

that, though they had parted in anger, they might yet meet again in affection.

Ralph Daines, after leaving his luggage at the inn nearest to the place where his brother had dwelt, set out on foot for the house, being sure that he knew the road well enough to enable him to find it without much trouble. But the traveller was perplexed, when he came near the spot where he thought that the house should be, to see only waste land overgrown with thistles and charlock, with bits of a tumble-down fence which could not keep out some sheep that were grazing where once a garden had been.

“Perhaps I’ve taken the wrong road, after all; perhaps I should have turned to the left after passing the mile-stone,” mused Ralph. “I wish now that I had inquired the way at the inn, but I thought that I could not miss it. However, it matters little, for here comes a child