

**HERO TALES  
TOLD IN SCHOOL**

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Hero tales told in school by James Baldwin

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**JAMES BALDWIN**

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ALPHEUS AND ARETHUSA

# HERO TALES

TOLD IN SCHOOL

BY

JAMES BALDWIN

*Author of "The Story of Siegfried," "The Story of Roland,"  
"A Story of the Golden Age," "Baldwin's  
Readers," etc.*

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## INTRODUCTION

IN the world's literature there are certain stories which, told ages ago, can never be forgotten. They have within them that which gives pleasure to all intelligent men, women and children. They appeal to the sympathies, the desires, and the admiration of all sorts and conditions of mankind. These are the stories that are said to be immortal. They have been repeated and re-repeated in many forms and to all kinds of audiences. They have been recited and sung in royal palaces, in the halls of mediæval castles, and by the camp fires of warring heroes. Parents have taught them to their children, and generation after generation has preserved their memory. They have been written on parchment and printed in books, translated into many languages, abridged, extended, edited, and "adapted." But through all these changes and the vicissitudes of time, they still preserve the

qualities that have made them so universally popular.

Chief among these masterpieces of imagination are the tales of gods and heroes that have come down to us from the golden age of Greece, and particularly the tales of Troy that cluster around the narratives of old Homer in his "Iliad" and "Odyssey." Three thousand years or more have passed since they were first recited, and yet they have lost none of their original charm. Few persons of intelligence are unacquainted with these tales, for our literature abounds in allusions to them; and no one who pretends to the possession of culture or learning can afford to be ignorant of them.

Second only in interest, especially to us of Anglo-Saxon descent, are the hero tales of the ancient North and the stirring legends connected with the "Nibelungen Lied." Of much later origin than the Greek stories, and somewhat inferior to them in refinement of thought and delicacy of imagery, these tales partake of the rugged, forceful character of the people among whom they were composed. Yet, with all their