

**A WAIF ON  
THE STREAM**

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A waif on the stream by S. M. Butchers

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**S. M. BUTCHERS**

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BY

S. M. BUTCHERS.

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## PREFACE.



As a child, on the brooklet's bosom, launches his paper boat, so send I forth this little venture, on a stream of loves.

So frail a bark would be o'erwhelmed did unkind winds but breathe thereon. It is not meant to live through storms; but to float down a kindly stream, where friendly hands will guide its course, for her sake who freights it now, with loving messages to all her friends.

50, ANDOVER ROAD,  
HORNSEY ROAD,  
HOLLOWAY, LONDON, N.  
*July, 1866.*

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## A WAIF ON THE STREAM.

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### OLD LETTERS.

BURNING old letters — sitting by the fireside  
With pile on pile upon the hearth-rug spread ;  
I'm looking at them with a mournful feeling,  
But I must burn them, else, when I am dead,  
Some other eyes that do not know their story  
May read them, and, not knowing it, may sneer  
And ridicule these loved and sacred sayings,  
And count them worthless that I hold so dear.  
Sad desecration ! I will spare my treasures  
From such a mournful undeservéd fate ;  
I'll burn them—tho' my heart may break to do it—  
I'll burn them *now*, before it is too late !  
Just as I've read, in India's blood-red mut'ry,  
Fond husbands — fathers — wives and children slew,  
In mercy sparing them the direful hist'ry  
Of others, murdered by that Sepoy crew !

Before it is too late! for I am agéd,  
My pilgrimage on earth is nearly o'er;  
It can't be long before my Father calls me  
To meet the dear ones who are gone before.  
He knows that I have nothing here to keep me;  
Knows I am lonely now — old blood is cold,  
And I grow weary, and, alas! impatient,  
To meet those lying underneath the mould.

\*                     \*                     \*

Ah! here's a packet—let me cut the tether:  
These are from Janie, my beloved child.  
These are from Janie, written from New Zealand,  
Full of her troubles. I was almost wild  
When first I read them, nearly broken-hearted;  
For I, her mother, would have spent my life  
To save her from them, but I was so distant!  
My child had gone—had gone out as the wife  
Of her dear Willie, spite of all my praying  
That they would settle home. But no! he said  
They would do better there — and so we parted—  
And parted here for ever—for she's dead!