

**THE CASE OF MR.  
LUCRAFT, AND  
OTHER TALES. IN  
TWO VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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The Case of Mr. Lucraft, and Other Tales. In Two Volumes, Vol. I by Sir Besant & James Rice

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**SIR BESANT & JAMES RICE**

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LUCRAFT, AND  
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TWO VOLUMES, VOL. I**



THE  
CASE OF MR. LUCRAFT;  
AND OTHER TALES.

BY THE AUTHORS OF  
"READY MONEY MORTIBOY," "THIS SON OF VULCAN,"  
"THE GOLDEN BUTTERFLY," ETC., ETC.

*IN TWO VOLUMES.*  
VOL. I.

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## P R E F A C E.



WHEN Jules Janin once published a collection of tales which, as he modestly owned, would leave nothing behind them when once read, he asked himself why he was putting them together for publication. And the best answer he could find was, "C'est son Altesse ma Vanité qui le veut ainsi." He goes on to say that the reader may be very well content with this motive, "qui est le grand fond de tous les caractères et de toutes les œuvres d'ici-bas."

"Son Altesse ma Vanité" frequently tries

to conceal himself. His voice may be recognised, however, though his features are behind a mask, when he says that his publishers have insisted on the collection of his stories, or that they are issued in response to the earnest solicitation of friends, or in the hope that the work may "be useful in a wider circle," or that they may be "blessed for good," or that they may extend knowledge of the principles for which the gifted and disinterested author is ready to become a second Saint Lawrence if necessary.

No legion of friends have urged upon us the necessity of giving these tales a second chance of immortality—our friends, indeed, are chiefly concerned about their own immortality. Nor do we look to see the following stories work for good, being quite satisfied with the belief that they will work for no harm. On the other hand, if the moral is found to be so good that the Board schools

will adopt the work for a text-book, we shall be pleased. But there are no principles advocated, because the authors themselves have none.

These tales have all appeared before. "The Case of Mr. Lucraft," which came out as one of a series of short tales in the *World*, has been rewritten, and now contains many additional details of Mr. Lucraft's surprising adventures, which we had to leave out for want of space in the former appearance of the narrative. We venture to present this singular experience as worthy to be compared with that of Peter Schlemyl, the Shadowless. "Titania's Farewell" is based upon certain well-known lines in Hood's "Midsummer Fairies."

Always "son Altesse ma Vanité," and nothing else? Perhaps not quite. There is one other motive which induces men to write, to publish, to pray for favour at the hands of