

SHORT STORIES

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Short Stories by J. M. Lainé

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J. M. LAINÉ

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SELECTED BY

J. M. LAINÉ, M.A.



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PREFACE.

CHILDREN in the Fifth Standard of an elementary school are required by the Education Department to "write from memory the substance of a short story read out twice." A more universal adoption in the education of the young of this method of training them to write English, would, it is believed, be beneficial, and the primary object of the present collection is to supply teachers generally with a number of stories suitable for such an exercise. At the same time, however, it is hoped that the subject matter of the book may also be found to be sufficiently attractive to recommend it as a Reader for children.

The stories, which have been abridged, adapted, or copied from various sources, are either illustrative of moral qualities, such as kindness, self-sacrifice, courage, honour, truthfulness, and honesty; or they exemplify animal intelligence; or they describe amusing, adventurous, or wonderful incidents. While an attempt has thus been made to secure both a good moral tone and variety, care has also been taken to include only such stories as contain some special point or points, which may readily engage the hearers' attention. Tales, in which dialogue occurs, have been here and there introduced, as affording a good means of exercising simultaneously and in a special way children's powers of expression and memory.

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SHORT STORIES.

A SISTER'S LOVE.

A touching story is told of a French girl only eleven years of age, who succeeded in saving her little brother from wolves. It was during a severe winter in a remote village of France, and wolves were constantly seen prowling about. One day a wolf with five whelps burst into the girl's cottage, attracted by the smell of bread she had been baking. By means of a heavy stick the little girl had almost succeeded in driving the she-wolf off, when, seeing one of the cubs about to attack her brother, she seized the boy, thrust him into a cupboard, and buttoned the door. That gave the wolf time to fly at her throat, and in a moment she was the prey of the wolves. Her brother remained quite safe, and was released by some neighbours from the cupboard. He lived to be an old man, treasuring the memory of the mother-like sister, who had died to save him.

JACK AND HIS DRIVER.

An interesting story is told by Mr. Smiles of a horse called Jack. Jack's business was to draw the stone trucks along the tramway during the erection of Waterloo Bridge. Near at hand was a beer-shop, frequented by the navies and carters. Jack's driver, named Tom, was an honest fellow, and very kind to Jack, but too fond of spending more time than he ought to have done in the beer-shop. Jack, though a restive animal, got accustomed to Tom's habits, and waited patiently till an over-looker startled him into activity. On one occasion, however,