

**RUPERT BRETT. THE
STORY OF A MODERN
EXPERIMENT**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649696383

Rupert Brett. The Story of a Modern Experiment by Harry Forrester

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

HARRY FORRESTER

**RUPERT BRETT. THE
STORY OF A MODERN
EXPERIMENT**

RUPERT BRETT

RUPERT BRETT

THE STORY OF A MODERN EXPERIMENT

BY

HARRY FORRESTER

LONDON

ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

1908

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE MONZA TRAM - - -	I
II. CAMBRIDGE - - -	10
III. A DAY IN THE PARISH - -	20
IV. ARLINGTON STREET AND THE OPERA -	30
V. LORD MALBY'S DECISION - -	40
VI. BRIDGE WITH THE MARCHIONESS - -	50
VII. THE VICAR AT HOME - - -	61
VIII. TO THE NORTH - - -	72
IX. CLUMBERSHAW - - -	80
X. WORK AND PLAY - - -	89
XI. A WALK ACROSS THE FIELDS - - -	99
XII. A CHEAP EXCURSION - - -	109
XIII. A HOLIDAY AT SPEETON - - -	119
XIV. ON THE SPA - - -	128
XV. TEA AT SUNDERLAND LODGE - - -	141
XVI. AN UNLUCKY RIDE - - -	152
XVII. SAMSON AND DELILAH - - -	167
XVIII. GAY OSTEND - - -	177

CHAPTER	PAGE
XIX. THE DAY AFTER - - -	194
XX. BACK TO MILAN - - -	207
XXI. A RASH RESOLVE - - -	218
XXII. THE STOLEN LETTER - - -	230
XXIII. THE CERTOSA DI PAVIA - - -	241
XXIV. MEN MAY DIE—BUT NOT FOR LOVE - - -	251

RUPERT BRETT

CHAPTER I

THE beginning of a story is apparently the easiest thing in the world. One can begin, like "Robinson Crusoe" or "Gulliver's Travels," with a brief family history and a summary of the leading character's doings up-to-date. Or one can begin with descriptions of scenery; and thus introduce one's principal personages. "The rolling flood of the mighty Amazon" would be a good beginning. A little boat (containing the hero, of course, and any other necessary characters) comes round the bend, and so on. Or again, the sun rises (preferably in the East), "tipping the snowy spear-heads of the Himalayas with rosy light. Temple bells begin to ring; there is a faint scent of incense in the air; a figure is seen wandering down (or climbing up) the mountain-side. Suddenly a sharp report is heard," etc., etc. The sun, too, can set as well as rise, and there are a thousand and one interesting places in which it can perform that remarkable but perfectly normal feat, "changing the world into a paradise of purple and crimson, green and gold," and so forth. Another good beginning is the typical English landscape—rich, lush meadows, cattle lazily browsing; the quaint old orchard. In this style of scenery all that is necessary to get things going is a ripple of mischievous girlish laughter. Simple but effective, one might call it.

The sad thing is that none of these beginnings (quite excellent in themselves) will fit in with my story. The family history and previous doings of my hero are pointless and unnecessary. The scenery method, too, is impossible, for we begin at the corner of a street, and, even though the street is in Milan, we cannot drag in the blue Italian sky, as the day I want you to picture is dull and cloudy. But a start must be made, so let us take a plunge and hope for the best.

On a certain dull April afternoon in Milan two persons might have been seen waiting in the Corso Venezia for the Monza tram. The elder was aged thirty-two and of middle height; his short beard and coarse moustache only partly hid the mouth of a kindly cynic; dark, wavy hair crowned a thoughtful brow, and the creed of an idealist shone out from the windows of his eyes. His companion was a boy of fourteen, slender and refined, not as yet touched by the worldliness of Eton and that spoiling and flattery to which wealth and position appear to condemn a man.

They had not waited long when the huge two-storied tram came rumbling up, and our two friends, climbing upstairs, proceeded to make themselves as comfortable as possible under unpromising conditions.

"And so you are disappointed that you are not with your people in Rome at the present moment, are you?" began the elder of the two, the Reverend Stephen Henley.

"Well, yes, it is hard lines that Mr. Gregory should have been taken ill here." And Rupert Brett gazed ruefully at the rows of stunted mulberry-trees. The cherished and only son of Lord Maltby, he had yet to learn one of life's earliest lessons, that though the past lies behind us with its terrible certainty, yet that mystery, the future, is in the hands of the gods.

"And so," continued Henley, "because your tutor is ill, I must suffer. Last night in my efforts to amuse

you my thumb was damaged, but all the same I had to play tennis with you all this morning, and now I'm trailing out to Monza so that poor Gregory may have a little peace and quiet. Some people are never satisfied. You had seven cakes and three caviare sandwiches for tea yesterday, you have ices for dinner every night, and still you grumble."

"Oh, I'm so sorry," replied Rupert. "I hope you're not offended. I'm sure you are awfully good, and I didn't mean to be ungrateful."

"My dear boy, of course I'm not offended. I only hope that Rome will come up to your expectations; but the pleasures of anticipation are often so much greater than the pleasures of realization that I trust you won't be disappointed."

"I don't see how I can be; but, anyhow, it is nice to look forward to enjoying things."

"That is quite true. We spend our youth in a dream of future happiness. In middle life we try to grasp the slippery moments as they rush by and to wring the last drop of pleasure out of them. In old age we gaze with regretful longing on the splendid past. But the dreams of youth are better than all the realities of later life; it is boyhood that possesses the vision splendid."

"And do you think it is nicest to be young?" asked Rupert, beginning to be interested.

"My dear Rupert, youth is the one thing in life really worth having, and yet we never realize its value till we are on the point of losing it. And what a glorious thing it is to be a boy like yourself. To be, as it were, some perfect wild-flower opening its gentle bud and gazing with wide-eyed wonder on the beautiful world around. Golden dreams are for youth, sober awakenings for middle age."

The plains of Lombardy are flat and unlovely, but on a sunny day the circle of mountains round them relieves the monotony. Even on this dull afternoon the sullen