

**ABOUT OLD STORY-
TELLERS: OF HOW AND
WHEN THEY LIVED, AND
WHAT STORIES THEY TOLD**

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About old story-tellers: of how and when they lived, and what stories they told by Donald G. Mitchell

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DONALD G. MITCHELL

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WHAT STORIES THEY TOLD**



"Well; what about them,"

ABOUT
OLD STORY-TELLERS:

*OF HOW
AND WHEN THEY LIVED,*

AND

WHAT STORIES THEY TOLD.

BY

DONALD G. MITCHELL,

AUTHOR OF "REVERIES OF A BACHELOR," "MY FARM
OF EDGEWOOD," ETC., ETC.



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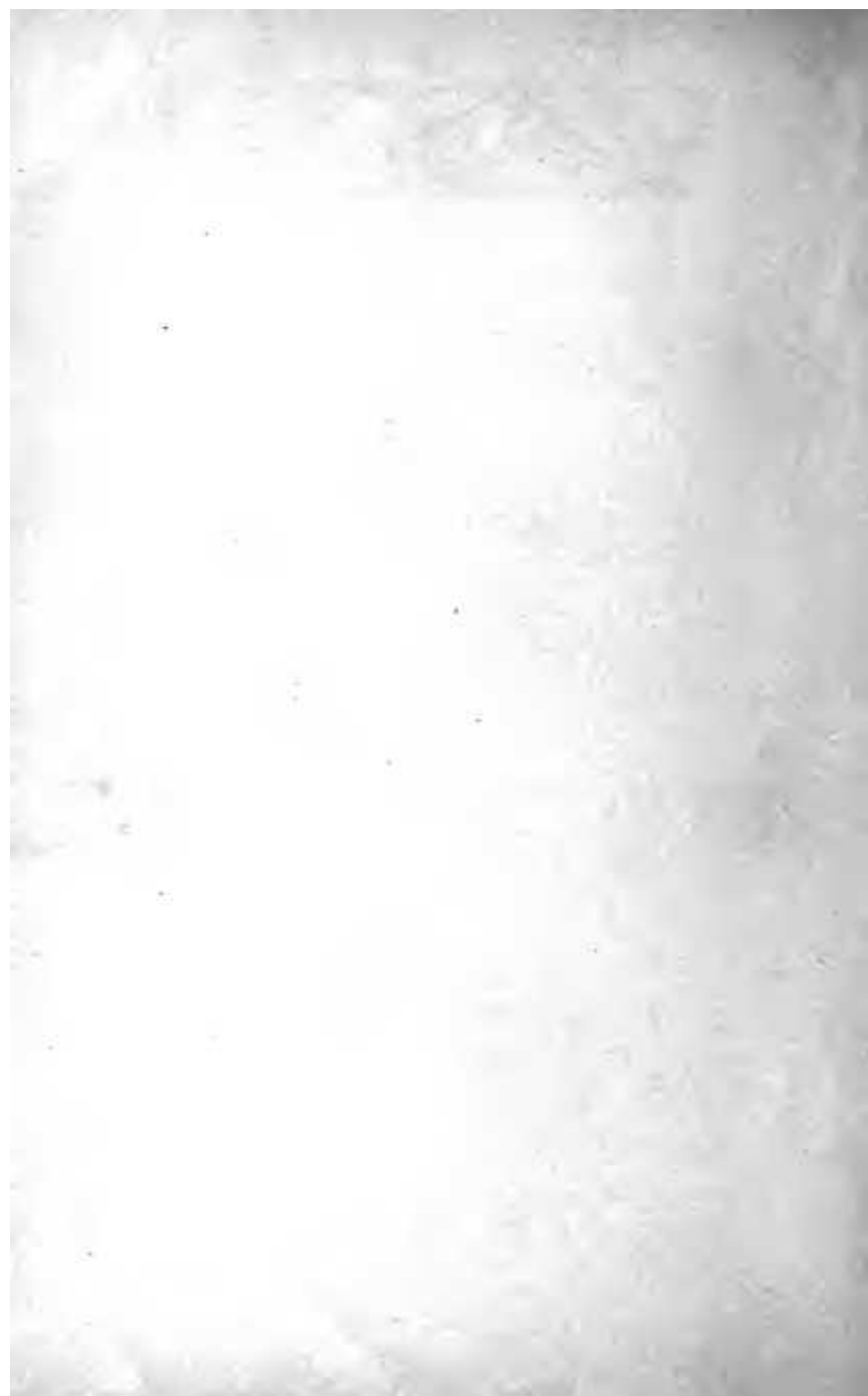


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*TO THE SMALL COMPANY
AT EDGEWOOD,
AND TO THE LARGER COMPANY
WHOM THEY MEET
ONCE A MONTH
OVER THE PLEASANT PAGES OF "ST. NICHOLAS,"
THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
BY THEIR EARNEST WELL-WISHER,
D. G. M.*





PREFACE.

For the Grown-up People.

I MAKE no doubt that elderly people will browse at this booklet, in the shops, if nowhere else; testing what flavor it may have, and if it will be safe reading for Ned, or Tom, or Bell, or such other son or grandchild as may be pulling at old heart-strings for some token of kindly feeling, to mark the holidays.

For all such gracious elderly ones, I shall say a frank word here at the beginning about the purport of the book, and of the reasons why it has taken the shape it has, and of what good I hope it may do to the youngsters who thumb its pages and study its pictures.

In the matter of books, as in the world, I believe in old friends, and don't think they should

be laid away upon the shelf without good cause ; and age is hardly cause enough.

In short, I must confess a lurking fondness for those good old-fashioned stories which were current forty years ago, — and some of them maybe a hundred years ago, — written in good straightforward English, with good straightforward intent. I cannot get over or outlive the zest with which I first pored over the story of "Lazy Lawrence," or listened to it, or to that other of "Barring Out," intoned by lips on whose utterance I hung entranced. And if Miss Edgeworth won such yearning, what is to be said of "Robinson Crusoe," — of "Gulliver," — of "The Vicar of Wakefield?" Are these outlived? — or "The Arabian Nights," or Grimm's Stories, or John Bunyan's "Pilgrim"?

In my own household at least, as the evenings have grown long in winter, and the fire-play has thrown its gleams over wall and floor, I have sought to keep alive a regard for those old-new books ; and have endeavored to kindle and fasten interest in them, by talk of their authors, and of the times in which they lived, and of the circumstances under which they wrote, — so that the