

**CAPTAIN
MANSANA
& MOTHERS HANDS**

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Captain Mansana & Mothers hands by Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson

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THE NOVELS OF
BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON

Edited by EDMUND GOSSE

VOLUME VII

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CAPTAIN MANSANA

&

MOTHER'S HANDS

BY

BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON

Translated from the Norwegian

LONDON

WILLIAM HEINEMANN

1897

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

[The two somewhat anomalous stories which are here published together have little in common except the difficulty of finding a place for them in the category of Björuson's works.

"Captain Mansana," under the title of "Kaptejn Mansana, en Fortælling fra Italien," was originally printed, in 1875, in the Norwegian periodical "Fra Fjeld og Dal." It did not appear in book form until August 1879, when it was published, in a paper cover with a startling illustration, in Copenhagen. "Captain Mansana" was written at Aulestad. It was almost immediately published in a Swedish, and later in a German, translation.

A Norwegian magazine, entitled "Nyt Tidsskrift," was started in Christiania in 1882, and continued to represent extreme liberal views in Norway until 1887, when it ceased to appear. In 1892 an attempt was made to resuscitate this periodical, under the general editorship of J. E. Sars. The first number of this new series appeared in November of that year, the opening article being the story of "Mors hænder" ("Mother's Hands"). It was reprinted in August 1894, in the collection called "Nye Fortællinger." It is now for the first time translated into English.

E. G.]

CAPTAIN MANSANA

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE following note was prefixed by the author to the first edition of "Captain Mansana: an Italian Tale":

This story was originally published, several years ago, in a Danish Christmas Annual, "From Hill and Dale," which was edited by Mr. H. J. Greensteen. "Captain Mansana" has already run through two editions in German, and many friends have urged the author to republish it, in a separate form, and in his own tongue.

The following remarks seem necessary in consequence of some criticisms which have appeared in the Danish and Swedish press. The narrative, in all essential particulars, is based on facts, and those of its incidents which appear most extraordinary, are absolutely historical, the minutest details being in some cases reproduced. Mansana himself is drawn from life. The achievements credited to him in these pages, are those he actually performed; and his singular experiences are here correctly described, so far, at least, as they bear upon his psychological development.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The causes which induced me to make him the subject of the following sketch may be found in a few lines of Theresa Leaney's letter, with which the story closes. The reader should compare Theresa's observations on Mansana, with the account of Lassalle, given contemporaneously with the original publication of this story, by Dr. Georg Brandes in his work on the "Nineteenth Century." Any one who studies the masterly portrait painted by Brandes, will observe that the inner forces which shaped Lassalle's destiny are precisely the same as those that swayed Mansana. No doubt Lassalle, with his fertile intellect, his commanding personality, and his inexhaustible energy, touches a far higher level of interest. Still, the phase of character is similar in the two cases, and it struck me at the time as curious, that both Dr. Brandes and myself should have had our attention simultaneously directed to it.

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