

**FORCES IN FICTION  
AND OTHER ESSAYS**

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Forces in fiction and other essays by Richard Burton

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**RICHARD BURTON**

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BY RICHARD BURTON

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FOR PERMISSION TO REPRINT THE PAPERS  
IN THIS VOLUME THANKS ARE DUE TO THE  
EDITORS OF THE FORUM, THE BOOKBUYER,  
THE PHILADELPHIA SATURDAY EVENING  
POST, THE INDEPENDENT, THE CRITERION,  
AND THE NEW ENGLAND MAGAZINE. 🐾 🐾



# FORCES IN FICTION

AND

## OTHER ESSAYS

### THE FUNDAMENTALS OF FICTION

Good novel-making, technically viewed, rests four-square upon invention (plot), construction, characterization, and description. These may be called the fundamentals of fiction. The form of literature known as the story is often spoken of carelessly or in shallow wise as if its manner—its style or diction—were the chief thing, even the only thing. "Have you read so and so?" queries one lady of another in the car. "The idea isn't anything, but then, you know, Brown writes so well! His style is so good!" Again, with the great class of uncritical readers, represented in the lower grade by the blue-clothed messenger boy in the car immersed in the latest number of the "Fireside Companion," plot outweighs every other consideration. Possibly it does with the majority of all novel-lovers.

But if, looking to the permanent successes and great names of fiction, we ask ourselves what qualities constitute the essentials of fiction, we