

**PRUE AND I**

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Prue and I by George William Curtis

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**GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS**

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PRUE AND I

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BY

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS



*Author's Edition*

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DAVID DOUGLAS, CASTLE STREET

1884

1841

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TO  
MRS. HENRY W. LONGFELLOW,  
IN MEMORY OF THE HAPPY HOURS  
AT OUR CASTLES IN SPAIN.

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## A WORD TO THE GENTLE READER.



AN old book-keeper, who wears a white cravat and black trousers in the morning, who rarely goes to the opera, and never dines out, is clearly a person of no fashion and of no superior sources of information. His only journey is from his house to his office ; his only satisfaction is in doing his duty ; his only happiness is in his Prue and his children.

What romance can such a life have? What stories can such a man tell?

Yet I think, sometimes, when I look up from the parquet at the opera, and see Aurelia smiling in the boxes, and holding her court of love, and youth, and beauty, that the historians have not told of a fairer queen, nor the travellers seen devouter

homage. And when I remember that it was in misty England that quaint old George Herbert sang of the—

“Sweet day so cool, so calm, so bright—  
The bridal of the earth and sky,”

I am sure that I see days as lovely in our clearer air, and do not believe that Italian sunsets have a more gorgeous purple or a softer gold.

So, as the circle of my little life revolves, I console myself with believing, what I cannot help believing, that a man need not be a vagabond to enjoy the sweetest charm of travel, but that all countries and all times repeat themselves in his experience. This is an old philosophy, I am told, and much favoured by those who have travelled; and I cannot but be glad that my faith has such a fine name and such competent witnesses. I am assured, however, upon the other hand, that such a faith is only imagination. But, if that be true, imagination is as good as many voyages—and how much cheaper!—a consideration which an old book-keeper can never afford to forget.