

**THE SCHOOLMASTER'S
STORIES, FOR
BOYS AND GIRLS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649698561

The Schoolmaster's Stories, for Boys and Girls by Edward Eggleston

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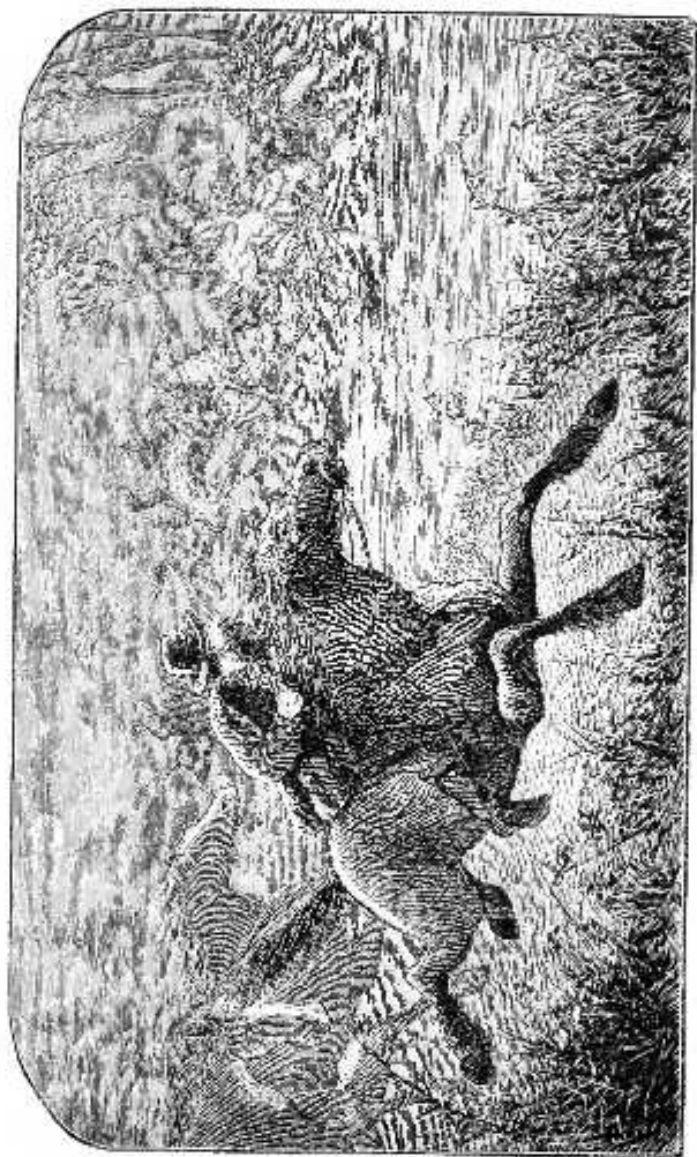
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EDWARD EGGLESTON

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THE
Schoolmaster's Stories,

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

BY
EDWARD EGGLESTON,
AUTHOR OF "THE HONORABLE SCHOOLMASTER," ETC.



BOSTON:
HENRY L. SHEPARD & CO.,
(LATE SHEPARD & GILL)
1874.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1876, by

HENRY L. SHEPARD & CO.

In the office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.

PREFACE.

SOME years ago there was a party of forty or fifty boys who met at my house once a week, and to them I often told stories. They sat on the arms of my chair, hung themselves over the back of it, squatted by my feet on the floor, and leaned on one another's shoulders. I noticed that they were particularly eager for stories that had the smell of the frontier about them. I believe I have told in this book some of the very stories that used to amuse these good fellows, who got a great hold on my heart by listening to my stories and liking them. Dear boys! I thought of dedicating the book to them, but they are all gone. Not dead — I did not say that. But in five or six years every rascal of them has shot up into something like a young man. Some of them are raising little patches of faint-looking beard on their upper lips, and some of them are nearly six feet high. Think of dedicating a story book to sophomores, and store-clerks, and such like! It's a way boys have. Just when you think you've got a boy, he turns to a man. Boys and tadpoles are uncertain things.

There are some queer little improbable, unbelievable, half-fairy-story sort of things here, which I have often given in small doses to girls. They have generally taken them as kindly as they would have taken sugar-plums or pickles.

Some of these stories have morals to them, for when one first begins to write one does not know any better than to put morals to stories. You may skip the moral if you want to,—when you eat a squirrel you are not obliged to eat the tail. Many of the stories have no morals to be skipped, and in some the moral is so twisted into the story that you can't get one without the other. You'll have to read the good advice, my young friends, or do without the story.

Some readers may now and then recognize a familiar face. Some of these stories have appeared during six or seven years past, in *The Little Corporal*, *Our Young Folks*, *The Schoolday Visitor*, *The Sunday School Scholar*, and *The Youth's Companion*.

"Mr. Blake's Walking Stick" appeared in a little book by itself, and the "Queer Stories" and some others were once before in book covers. But both of these were burned up,—books, stereotype plates, and all, in the Chicago fire. They were very melting stories at that time. Perhaps some mischievous reader may say to me as one minister said to another whose barrel of sermons had been burned with his house, "They gave more light from the fire than they ever did in any other way!"

But a long preface is pretty nearly as bad as a moral. So I open the door, take off my hat, and bow.

BROOKLYN, Oct., 1874.

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