

**THE BROTHERS OR
TALES OF
LONG AGO**

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The Brothers or Tales of Long Ago by F. Levien

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F. LEVIEN

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THE BROTHERS
OR
TALES OF LONG AGO

BY
F. LEVIEN
AUTHOR OF "MAGGIE'S PICTURES," ETC.



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THE BROTHERS.

CHAP. I.—THE CONTRAST.

JOHAN and Stephen Wright stood side by side, looking at each other.

Nobody would have taken them for brothers; Valentine and Orson in the fairy tale were not more unlike, and perhaps that is what these boys were thinking as they stood looking into each other's face. They felt shy and strange, for they could not remember ever having met before; and they were silent, not knowing how to begin speaking. Their meeting had taken place at a railway station—not exactly the place for two people to stand still and think and look at each other. And so the boys began to find out, when two trucks, a porter, and half-

a-dozen passengers had run up against them in turns.

"Is that your box, Stephen?" John asked at last, and Stephen nodded.

"Then we had better take it away," said the other. "There's the carrier outside; he'll take it down to aunt's for you."

John was nine years old and Stephen eight, both tall strong boys for their age; and the box was small enough; they found no difficulty in carrying it through the station to the cart, which was standing outside in the little country road, under the trees.

"I've met my brother, Mr. Brown," John said to the carrier. "And here's his box, if you'll be kind enough to take it to aunt's."

The carrier—a stout countryman, with big blue eyes—stared with all his might at Stephen.

"What! is he your brother?" he asked, surprised; for John's rosy cheeks and blue eyes and rings of yellow hair formed the strangest contrast to his brother's face, which was dark as a gipsy's. Still more unlike was John's neat look to Stephen's neglected appearance and shabby dress; John's springing step to Stephen's slouching tread; John's frank gaze to Stephen's timid, furtive glances.