

**MOTHER BUNCH: A
STORY FOR
BOYS AND GIRLS**

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Mother Bunch: a story for boys and girls by Stella Austin

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STELLA AUSTIN

**MOTHER BUNCH: A
STORY FOR
BOYS AND GIRLS**

Stella Matrona - 1884
Amos.

MOTHER BUNCH,

A STORY FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

BY

STELLA AUSTIN,

AUTHOR OF "STUMPS," "SONNETS," "EYES AND TALKERS,"
"EAT," ETC



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J-A

TO
GWENDOLEN AND MARJORIE,
WITH MUCH LOVE,
AND REMEMBERING THEIR LOVE,
I DEDICATE THE STORY
OF
Mother Bunch.



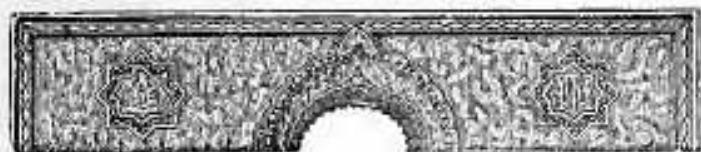
PREFACE.

A LONG time ago I was asked to write a story which would "bring Heaven nearer." In the character of "Mother Bunch" I have kept this aim before me, but I do not know if I have succeeded, as realisations—at least mine—fall very short of ideals. If this should meet the eye of some pleasant travelling companions of two years ago I must apologise for any shortcomings in the description of "Pat," and say that I have tried my best to do justice to his beauty and general bewitchingness. I found him charming in spite of his restlessness.

As this is the first preface I have written to any

of my stories, I take the opportunity of thanking my readers and critics for the kind treatment I have received at their hands. I have had much praise, little or no blame; thanks to the kindness which has been so ready to encourage all that could be encouraged and to overlook the faults, of whose existence I am fully conscious. From friends one might expect as much, but from the unknown public, from which the majority of my readers are taken, I have always felt I have received much encouragement, and for this I thank them. Printed words can never be recalled, and it is a great responsibility to send even children's books out into the world. I only hope that nothing I have written has ever, or can ever, do harm or give pain to any human being. And for the rest, for all the good there may be in my books, I give thanks to GOD, by Whom the gift was given to me.

BRIGHTON, 1884.



CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Humfray begins the Story.

	PAGE
GRANDFATHER SYLVESTER AND HIS FAMILY	1

CHAPTER II.

Humfray continues the Story.

THE LADY'S WALK	11
---------------------------	----

CHAPTER III.

The Story tells itself.

MR. PIPPO ARRIVES	37
-----------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

The Story tells itself.

MOTHER BUNCH GOES TO SEE THE FAIRIES	46
--	----

CHAPTER V.	
Humfray tells the Story.	
MOTHER BUNCH SEES ANGELS INSTEAD OF FAIRIES	PAGE 69
CHAPTER VI.	
Humfray tells the Story.	
MOTHER BUNCH'S FIRST ATTEMPT AT GARDENING	85
CHAPTER VII.	
Humfray tells the Story.	
"MISFORTUNES NEVER COME SINGLY"	100
CHAPTER VIII.	
The Story tells itself.	
A POSEY OF FORGET-ME-NOTS	113
CHAPTER IX.	
* Humfray tells the Story.	
PHYLLIS'S BALL OF WORSTED	125
CHAPTER X.	
Humfray tells the Story.	
GAY DISTINGUISHES HIMSELF : THE TWINS DO NOT	140
CHAPTER XI.	
Humfray tells the Story.	
GAY HAS SOMETHING ON HIS MIND	157