

THE DRAGON OF WANTLEY: HIS TALE

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The Dragon of Wantley: His Tale by Owen Wister

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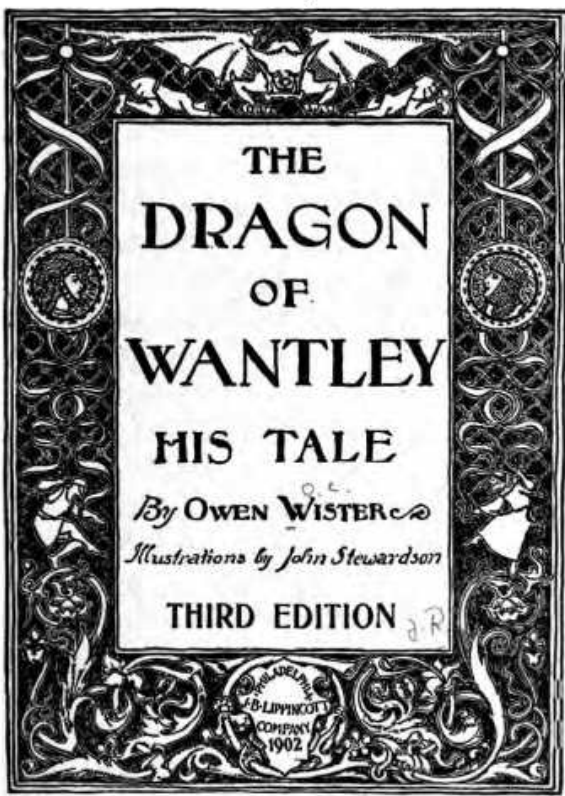
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OWEN WISTER

**THE DRAGON OF
WANTLEY: HIS TALE**



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Preface

WHEN Betsinda held the Rose
And the Ring decked Giglio's finger,
Thackeray ! 'twas sport to linger
With thy wise, gay-hearted prose.
Books were merry, goodness knows !
When Betsinda held the Rose.

Who but foggy drudglings doze
While Rob Gilpin toasts thy witches,
While the Ghost waylays thy breeches,
Ingoldsby? Such tales as those
Exorcised our peevish woes
When Betsinda held the Rose.

Realism, thou specious pose !
Haply it is good we met thee ;
But, passed by, we'll scarce regret thee ;
For we love the light that glows
Where Queen Fancy's pageant goes,
And Betsinda holds the Rose.

Shall we dare it? Then let's close
Doors to-night on things statistic,
Seek the hearth in circle mystic,
Till the conjured fire-light shows
Where Youth's bubbling Fountain flows,
And Betsinda holds the Rose.



We two—the author and his illustrator—did not know what we had done until the newspapers told us. But the press has explained it in the following poised and consistent criticism:

“Too many suggestions of profanity.”

— *Congregationalist*, Boston, 8 Dec. '92.

“It ought to be the delight of the nursery.”

— *National Tribune*, Washington, 22 Dec. '92.