

**OREMUS; OR, LITTLE
MILDRED. A STORY
FOR CHILDREN**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649416851

Oremus; Or, Little Mildred. A Story for Children by F. B. Drew Bickerstaffe Drew

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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F. B. DREW BICKERSTAFFE DREW

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O R E M U S ;

OR,

LITTLE MILDRED.

A Story for Children.

BY

F. B. DREW BICKERSTAFFE DREW.



R. WASHBOURNE,
18 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

1880.



AT THE FEET OF
SAINT NICHOLAS
I LAY THIS LITTLE BOOK,
THAT, BY HIS PRAYERS, IT MAY HELP
EVEN A LITTLE
SOME LITTLE CHILD.

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O R E M U S ;

OR,

LITTLE MILDRED.

CHAPTER I.

It was hay harvest.

Over all the land the summer lay like a garment of gladness, and the whole earth laughed for joy. The river leapt gladly along to the sea, and the sea danced wildly, yet all playfully, in the soft southern gale : the golden sun shone high in the sapphire sky, and hardly a cloud rode lightly across the blue. It was late June, and the hay stood heaped in cocks waiting to be carried ; the labour was all done.

And it was very hot : so hot that the

sleepy kine stood dozing idly beneath the broad shadow of great elm trees, chewing the cud, and never moving. Only now and then they would swish round their tails with a long, slow sweep to brush away a fly, or leisurely turn their mild eyes in the direction of some sound : even the lambs were still, and lay at rest in the long lush grass.

It was very still, too.

There was hardly a sound, save that of the swirling river ; even the throstle's song was low and distant, and the moaning of doves made silence yet more still.

It was the day of God : and even the weary beasts had rest. Great waggon-horses lay with half-shut eyes, basking in the bright sun, most utterly content.

Come with me to-day, you that are dwellers in great cities, away into the sweet meadow-lands, and wander, by brook and woodland, to a wee village that I know. Forget all your weary town sights and

sounds, and give God glory for the lovely world that He has made.

There are not more than a hundred houses, —it is only a hamlet after all—and they are houses like the nests of birds, all roofed with dark-brown thatch, half overgrown with straggling creeping plants and cool dark ivy. Before each door is a belt of garden, full of scarlet and blue and gold, the garments of sweet-scented flowers, whose glory the greatest king of Israel could never match.

A pleasant brook babbles merrily down the village street, and on the other side great willows stoop down to cool their long green fingers in its flood: and then beyond are hay-fields and green meadows, and beyond again the church.

Ah! it is a lovely one, that ancient sign of the love our fathers had for God and His holy faith: but for three hundred slow-departing years the sound of those bells has called to another worship than that He