

LIGHTHOUSES

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Lighthouses by David Stevenson

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DAVID STEVENSON

LIGHTHOUSES



THE ROCK LIGHTHOUSE.

LIGHTHOUSES

BY

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PREFATORY NOTE.



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EDINBURGH, *August* 1864.

INTRODUCTION.

EVERY native of our sea-girt kingdom ought to feel an interest in the questions—What do we owe to our lighthouses? and what would our country be without them?—but we suspect that, from lack of information, these questions are not viewed with the attention which they demand.

A stormy wind may rudely drift the sleet against our windows and disturb our rest; and perhaps our sympathies may be awakened for the men who patrol our dark streets as guardians of our property: but seldom in those dismal nights do our thoughts extend to the solitary outposts of our land, where, confined to the narrow cabin of a lightship, or watching in towers

perched on bleak headlands or sunken rocks, the true guardians of this country's naval greatness keep their quiet and unostentatious vigil unthought of, because remote and unknown.

What, indeed, would our country be without its lighthouses?—A rugged inhospitable land truly. Our shores no coaster could safely navigate, and no oversea vessel could confidently approach; while ever and anon, as in early times, our sea-beaches would be strewed with the timbers of stranded vessels, and the bodies of their ill-fated crews? So common, indeed, were such calamities at the beginning of the present century, that the inhabitants of our Northern Isles regarded shipwrecks with indifference, if not with real complacency. It had, indeed, become proverbial to observe, "that if wrecks were to happen, they might as well be sent to their poor islands as anywhere else;" and, acting on