

**THE MODERN SHORT STORY, A
STUDY OF THE FORM: ITS PLOT,
STRUCTURE, DEVELOPMENT
AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

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The modern short story, a study of the form: its plot, structure, development and other requirements by Lucy Lilian Notestein & Waldo Hilary Dunn

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LUCY LILIAN NOTESTEIN & WALDO HILARY DUNN

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THE
MODERN SHORT-STORY

A STUDY OF THE FORM:
ITS PLOT, STRUCTURE, DEVELOPMENT
AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

BY
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TO
 RUDYARD KIPLING
 MASTER OF THE MODERN SHORT-STORY
 MASTER OF THE MAGIC OF WORDS
 THIS BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
 BY THE AUTHORS

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PREFACE

THE object of this book is to state as clearly as may be, just what the modern Short-story is, and to enumerate and expound the principles underlying the most typical examples of this distinctive kind of fiction. An experience of several years as a teacher of college classes in Short-story writing convinced me that in the case of my own students I could secure better results by the use of a text-book different in type from any of those available. Some of the existing works on the subject treat in elaborate detail the development of the Short-story from the time of the narratives of the Egyptian papyri; others confuse the student by discussing at too great length many related forms of merely short fiction. In regard to other more or less admirable texts, I have only to say that my method differs from that laid down in any of them. In teaching the writing of the Short-story, I have thought it best to hold to the strictly modern form, and to leave the history of its evolution as matter for a separate and distinct course of study. I soon became convinced that I should have to make

a restatement of what is known about the Short-story in the order which experience taught me was most serviceable from the teacher's point of view.

When this conviction came to me, I found myself too closely occupied with other imperative duties to undertake such a work. It was my good fortune to be able to turn, at this time, to one of my former students, Miss Lucy Lilian Notestein, a graduate of the University of Wooster. She brought to the work a broad and thorough knowledge of the subject, an enthusiastic devotion, and a carefulness of detail which I myself could scarcely have summoned. Thus it is that, although the idea of this book originated with me, the actual work has all been done by Miss Notestein. Together we have agreed upon the plan and the contents of the volume, and together we have read it in proof.

It will be noticed that, in the main, the text is based upon a few modern Short-stories which have earned for themselves an established place in literature. We have felt that it is a distinct gain to illustrate all points by reference to these few examples. Teachers may require students to become thoroughly familiar with the stories herein referred to, and students will find a distinct gain in power in actually mastering these specimens. Moreover, the principles underlying these Short-stories will be found to be the principles underlying all good Short-stories. Although in the preparation of this book

many hundreds of stories have been read, we have refrained from burdening the text with titles. The restriction of examples is a part of our method.

Those who desire histories of the Short-story may select from a number on the market. Bibliographies of the subject are now easily accessible. We have therefore burdened this volume with neither history nor bibliography. We have made an effort to hold to the original purpose: to set forth a study of the Short-story in its typical modern form. We have consulted at first hand all the published literature bearing upon this fictional form, and have used it as best suited our purpose. We have tried to indicate in all cases direct indebtedness to previous writers on the same subject.

It is our hope that this book may prove of much value to the rapidly increasing number of private readers and students who are finding in the Short-story that high degree of satisfaction which comes from a study of finished art. Although prepared primarily for use as a college text-book, the volume is not, in our opinion, for that reason less adapted to the use of the general reader, but more so. Every attempt has been made to avoid vagueness and obscurity of statement: no attempt has been made to employ technical or unusual terms for the sake of the terms themselves. We have tried to be honestly, transparently straightforward and unostentatious.

There remains only the pleasure of acknowledging the unusual debt of gratitude we owe to Jonas O. Notestein, Aylsworth Professor of the Latin Language and Literature; to Mr. Walter E. Peck, of the department of Rhetoric and English Composition, in the University of Wooster; and to Mrs. Fern Greenwald Dunn. For helpful suggestion, sympathetic criticism, and aid in seeing this volume through the press, we can render to them no adequate return.

WALDO H. DUNN

UNIVERSITY OF WOOSTER,
October 4, 1913