

**IA**

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La by Q

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# I A

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BY  
Q

*"Though it be song  
Of old and yonge  
That I sholde be to blame;  
Theys be the charge  
That speke so large  
In hurtyng of my name;  
For I wyll prove  
That faythfulle love  
It is deuyd of shame."*

LONDON  
CASSELL AND COMPANY  
LIMITED

1896



विष्णु  
अष्टोत्तशतनाम

To J. M. BARRIE.

*THE responsibility for this little book is a very little matter. Still, a part of it belongs to you; for it was you who, having seen a fragment of La's story, persuaded me to write out the whole. I have done so as briefly and carefully as I can, and now send my girl to you with this note of introduction.*

*She comes from "behind the hills," of a race not always understood. She goes out of the warm circle of the lamp here, to stand (I know) in the outer court and penumbra of most readers' affections. To you, the creator of Jess and Leebie, Margaret and Babbie, she dares to appeal less on her own deserving than in the name of a seven-year-old friendship, which began, on my side, in admiration of your genius, and has grown on both sides, I hope, for better reasons.*

Q.

*The Haven, Fowey,  
New Year's Day, 1896.*

# IA

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*“ Though it be songe  
Of old and younge  
That I sholde be to blame;  
Theyrs be the charge  
That speke so large  
In hurtyng of my name;  
For I wyll prove  
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## PROLOGUE

### THE ROUND-HOUSE AT REVVER

AT the western end of the bay a peninsula of slate-rock, covered with short turf, pushes out N.N.E. into the Atlantic. The people of Ardevora,\* who dry their nets along its

\* Stressed on second syllable—Ardévora. It may be well to mention here that the first letter in “Ia” is long, and should be sounded in English fashion, as if it were written “Eia.”



chine, call this The Island; but a low ridge of sand and gravel connects it with the main-land. From the shelter of this ridge Ardevora Town looks across the bay to the whitewashed lighthouse on Gulland Point—four miles as the crow flies, six if you follow the deep curve of the foreshore.

The beach all the way is sandy—the sand a vivid yellow; and on bright days the sea takes from this underlying sand a sapphire clearness. Blue sea, white breakers, yellow shore—in summer this bit of the coast is full of colour. It has its own flowers, too; on the Island the vernal squills, white and pink as well as blue; gentians afterwards, sea-lavender and succory, and the scarce balm-leaved figwort; wall-mustard, fennel, and valerian everywhere.

Around the bay, at the back of its yellow beaches, the Towans stretch. In the beginning these were sand-hills piled by the

wind and continually shifting. But first the sea-rush took root and stopped the drift, and by degrees this encouraged the turf to grow; and then the spleenwort came, and the gentians and columbines and broad-leaved centaury; and now the Towans are green and pleasant to walk on.

But behind them, and behind Ardevora, rises a country that is sombre and desolate, winter and summer; a land of moors and granite cairns and things silently gone out of mind, and other things handed down and whispered between a smile and a shudder (as a man will tell his wife in the morning some absurd and evil dream that he has had); where to be born, or to live for long, is supposed to confer strange powers.

From this forsaken land a small river—it has no name—runs down and breaks over a sandy bar into the arc of the bay, about two miles and a half from Ardevora Town. Within the river mouth, among the Towans

on the left bank, and half a mile from the bar, stands the hamlet of Revyer.

Revyer consists of a cottage, a boat-builder's yard, and a round meeting-house. That is all. Nevertheless, Revyer is the metropolis of a religious sect which, not twenty years ago, numbered its followers by thousands, dispersed in every quarter of the globe. The history of the Second Advent Saints begins with this meeting-house among the sand-hills: and the history of the meeting-house begins with the Vision of Mary Penno in the year 1773.

In that year, as everybody knows, the Wesleyan movement was divided by a controversy between its leaders—between the Calvinist Methodists on the one hand and the Arminian Methodists on the other. It was Charles Wesley who had first planted Methodism in Ardevora, and John Wesley who confirmed it in 1743. During the next thirty years John paid the town no less than