

TALES OF LANGUEDOC

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Tales of Languedoc by Samuel Jacques Brun

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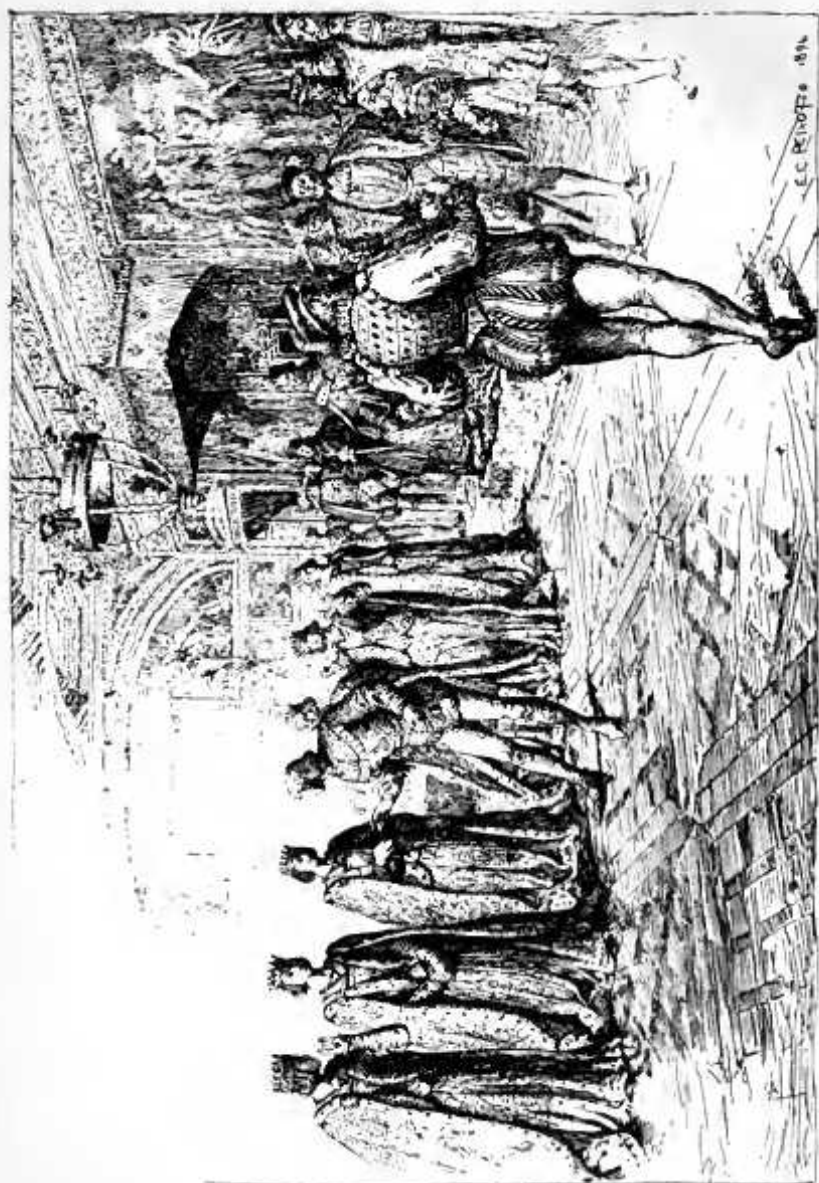
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SAMUEL JACQUES BRUN

**TALES OF
LANGUEDOC**



L.C. RENOIR. 1874

FELIX FLÜGEL

Tales of Languedoc

Samuel # Jacques # Brun

With an Introduction by
Harriet W. Preston

Illustrations by Ernest C. Peixotto



San Francisco
William Doxey
1 · 8 · 9 · 6

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DEDICATION:

TO

THE MEMORY OF

THE STORY-TELLERS

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Preface

THE "TALES OF LANGUEDOC" are drawn from a fund of stories, sayings, and traditions, which came to me by birthright, along with the ancient Bible, the tall clock, and other heirlooms, carrying with them about the same sense of exclusive ownership. Whatever may have been their origin in common folk-lore, they formed an important part of the conviviality of the ancestral hearth from an early date, and for several generations have taken on the personality of the different narrators; so that, in their present form, I have come to regard them as my heritage of the unwritten literature of my native land—a heritage that has brought with it a responsibility in view of succession; for, to survive in a new world and with a new generation, oral traditions must take on a permanent form, verbal narration must be written, and the vernacular find an equivalent in the colloquial expressions of another language. To attempt so difficult a thing with only my own resources would be presumptuous. Besides the indelible impressions of a youth passed with a race of story-tellers, I have fortunately been able to command help of a more tangible nature, without which the collection would not be complete.

The sole survivor of the story-tellers has, with much labor, furnished me with his own manuscripts, delineating the tales in the vernacular, and supplying the connecting links.

With this material I have worked to combine and embody, as in a composite picture, the caste and coloring given by the different narrators, calling to aid an able artist, Mr. Ernest Peixotto, to supply in a measure the loss of scenery and associations, and the acting that went so far to supplement the original version.

The difficulty of rendering the coarse picturesqueness of a language so rich in metaphor and so free in its range of figurative expressions could only be partially met by the use of slang and vulgarisms, which it is hoped will be considered pardonable. The rhymes and quatrains, with the sonorous ring of the vernacular, which sets itself to meter so easily, can have no equivalent in English.

My aim in working out this English version has been to give the spirit of the Languedoc, and to do justice to the original, rather than to reach any standard of scientific or literary value.

Soulless as the tales must seem to those initiated in the magic of story-telling, yet practice proves them capable of exerting a spell over the children and having some interest for lovers of folk-lore — so much so, that the author is encouraged to invite to the hearth a wider circle.