

**THE SILVER STORE,
COLLECTED FROM
MEDIÆVAL CHRISTIAN
AND JEWISH MINES**

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The silver store, collected from mediæval Christian and Jewish mines by S. Baring-Gould

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S. BARING-GOULD

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BY

S. BARING-GOULD, M.A.

AUTHOR OF 'CURIOUS MYTHS OF THE MIDDLE AGES,'
&c.

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1868.

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DEDICATED

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE VISCOUNTESS DOWNE.



PREFACE.

IN a former work, 'Post-Mediaeval Preachers,' the author drew attention to a class of ancient writers who are rarely studied, and whose very names are known only to the book-hunter. From these and kindred sources, and also from the Talmud, the majority of the legends and anecdotes in this volume have been drawn.

No apology is offered for introducing them to the public. It is not in the power of many to toil through ponderous tomes, written in languages with which they are not familiar; and it is proper for those who have facility and leisure for this study, to employ what they have acquired for the public good.

The author thinks it only fair to himself to add, that some of the most *piquant* stories in this collection are, in their original form, wholly devoid of point.

It has afforded the writer no little pleasure to bring, like Goldner, roses of gold out of the gloomy, tangled overgrowth of Mediæval fancy and superstition, in the hopes that the drudgery and routine of nineteenth century life may not have dulled the keenness of public perception of the beautiful and pure and true.

Some may object to the introduction of lighter pieces at the end of the book ; but the 'Silver Store' would not have fairly represented the genial, laughter-loving, as well as moral and devout temper of the ages which invented these tales, had the element of grotesqueness been excluded. The droll and the lovely were strangely intermixed and wonderfully blended in the Mediæval mind, as is instanced in the architectural masterpieces of the middle ages, where the quaint gargoyle harmonizes with the angel and the flower.

Two or three of the humorous pieces at the end of the volume certainly hit the ladies rather hard. It must be remembered by forbearing and forgiving woman, that the perpetrators of these stories were confirmed old bachelors.

Lest the writer should be supposed to sympathise with these ungenerous attacks, he has appended in the notes the originals on which the verses are based, which will

clear him of the imputation of having invented these libels, and will afford the curious choice specimens of monkish Latin.

Let the fair sex remember also, that, where the writer has been free to express his own sentiments, as in Dr. Bonomi, he has not spared the lords of creation, and that compensation is offered in the former part of the volume. Surely Beruriah* and Ruth will make amends for Mrs. Malone and the Judge's wife. A few of the pieces in the 'Silver Store' have already appeared in 'Fraser's Magazine,' and one in 'Temple Bar.'

* By an oversight, in 'The Loan,' the name Beruriah has been spelt incorrectly.

DALTON, THESK :

March 1, 1858.