

**SOUTHWARD HO!
AND OTHER ESSAYS**

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Southward ho! and other essays by Holbrook Jackson

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HOLBROOK JACKSON

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AND OTHER ESSAYS**



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SOUTHWARD HO!

And other Essays



Holbrook Jackson



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NOTE

THE Essays included in this volume are, in the main, selected from my two earlier volumes *Romance and Reality* and *All Manner of Folk*. They have been revised, and to their number I have added four essays which have not yet appeared in book form.

H. J.

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SOUTHWARD HO! AND OTHER ESSAYS

I

SOUTHWARD HO !

I

THOSE who remember Liverpool before the multi-domed Dock Offices and the sky-scraper of the Royal Liver Insurance Company flaunted themselves on the pier-head, overtopping the tallest spars of the fleetest barques of the South Sea trade, and making even the colossal red funnels of the *Mauretania* look like toys, will remember also the St. George's Dock. And if they are further companioned by a sentimental regard for old familiar things, as which of us is not, they will no doubt resent somewhat the intrusion of those arrogant monsters of iron and stone, modern hybrids of building construction, half engineering and half architecture, usurping the place of that same old rectangular basin of muddy green water. For do they not stand precisely where it once stood?

Southward Ho !

Are they not the monstrous gravestones of the cosiest dock in the whole world?

Well, it was in this dock, in the corner beside the swing bridge which used to connect James Street with Mann Island, in the shadow of the Goree Piazzas, that I first beheld the craft which afterwards took me to the South Seas. I was just out of my teens and had come over the water from the Cheshire side and was crossing from Mann Island into the City of Ships. I had passed the hut where the ancient gentleman sold cheap Bibles and Testaments and other accounts of the True Faith, and stood turning over the battered volumes on the stall of the second-hand bookseller, which at that time stood in a row of stalls, most of which displayed glowing pyramids of oranges and apples presided over by plump old dames with immobile, wind-tanned faces, who seemed to do nothing but sit staring all day at the pleasant row of sailors' dram-shops opposite. Even in those days I had a keen scent for a good book, and almost the first I touched on the stall was a musty copy of "Typee," by Herman Melville. I had never heard of it before, but was attracted by the name. "Typee," I murmured, "Typee suggests something childlike and exotic," and turning over the pages I came across this passage:

"There were none of those thousand sources of irritation that the ingenuity of civilised man has created to mar his own felicity. There were no foreclosures of mortgages, no protested notes, no bills payable, no debts of honour, in Typee; no