

**OLD TESTAMENT LEGENDS;
BEING STORIES OUT OF SOME OF
THE LESS- KNOWN APOCRYPHAL
BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

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Old Testament legends; being stories out of some of the less- known apocryphal books of the Old Testament by M. R. James

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M. R. JAMES

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OLD TESTAMENT LEGENDS



HOW SHEAN DECEIVED EVE IN THE RIVER

(See page 10)

OLD TESTAMENT LEGENDS

BEING STORIES OUT OF SOME OF THE
LESS-KNOWN APOCRYPHAL BOOKS
OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

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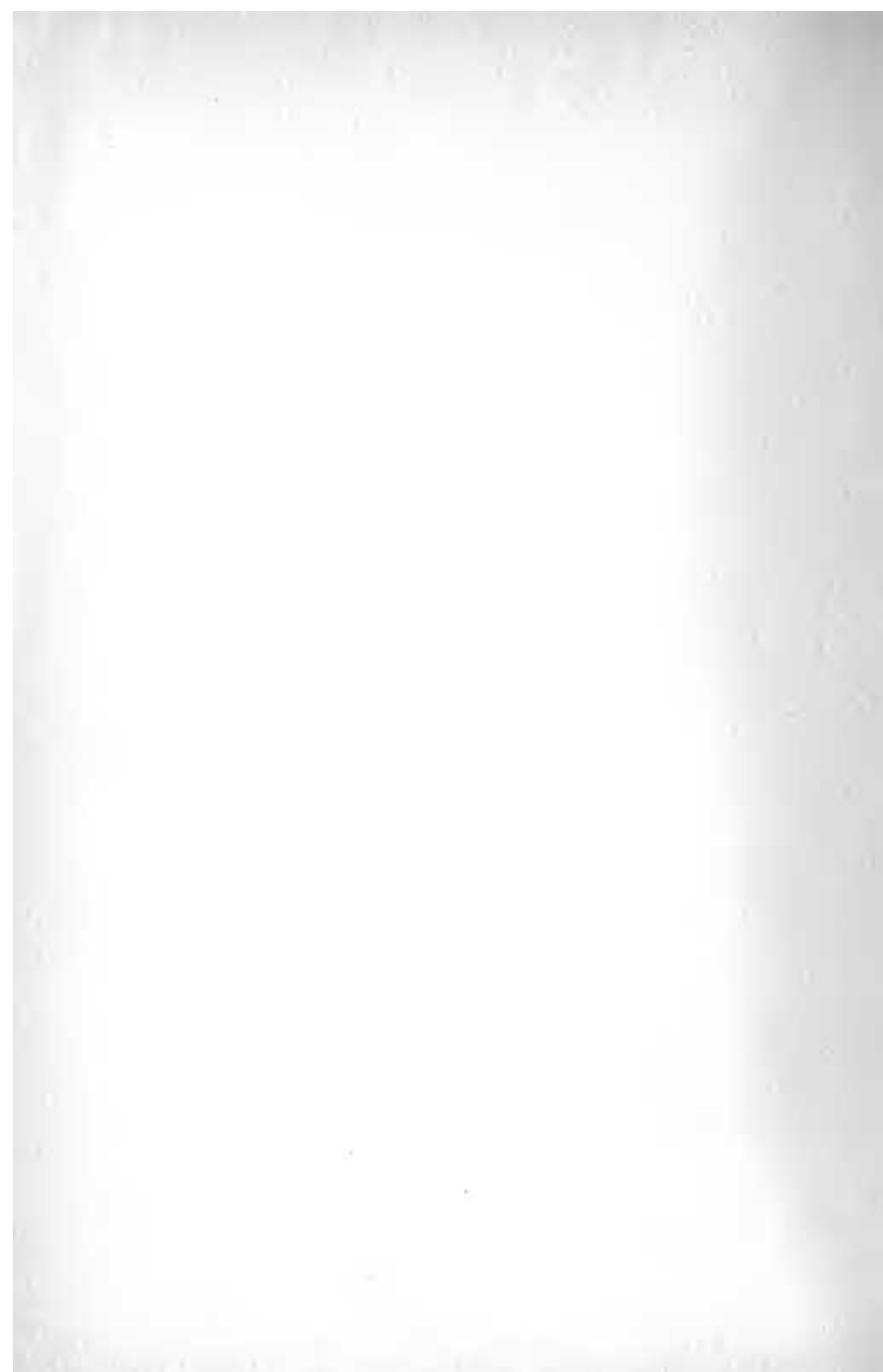
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TO
JANE AND MY
GODCHILDREN



PREFACE

IF you read the title-page of this book—a thing which young persons very seldom do—you will see that it (the book) contains stories taken “out of some of the less-known apocryphal books of the Old Testament.” You will very possibly not understand what that means; but if you will read this preface—another thing which young persons do even seldomer than they read a title-page—you will find the best explanation that I can give.

I have to begin by talking about the word apocryphal. The newspapers are fond of saying that a statement made by the Prime Minister (or the leader of the Opposition, according to which side in politics the newspaper takes) is apocryphal. By this, the newspaper means to say that the statement was untrue. Or, you will read that someone obtained money or goods by saying that he possessed large estates abroad; and that the estates turned out to be apocryphal. By this is meant that they did not exist. But when you read of a *book* being