

**DEAD MAN'S  
PLACK AND AN  
OLD THORN**

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Dead Man's Plack and an Old Thorn by W. H. Hudson

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**W. H. HUDSON**

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DEAD MAN'S PLACK  
*and*  
AN OLD THORN

BY  
W. H. HUDSON

AUTHOR OF

"THE PURPLE LAND," "BIRDS IN TOWN AND VILLAGE,"  
"FAR AWAY AND LONG AGO," ETC., ETC.



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## DEAD MAN'S PLACK



## PREAMBLE

"THE insect tribes of human kind" is a mode of expression we are familiar with in the poets, moralists and other superior persons, or beings, who viewing mankind from their own vast elevation see us all more or less of one size and very, very small. No doubt the comparison dates back to early, probably Pliocene times, when someone climbed to the summit of a very tall cliff and looking down and seeing his fellows so diminished in size as to resemble insects, not so gross as beetles perhaps but rather like emmets, he laughed in the way they laughed then at the enormous difference between his stature and theirs. Hence the time-honoured and serviceable metaphor.

Now with me, in this particular instance it was all the other way about—from insect to man—seeing that it was when occupied in watching the small comedies and tragedies of the insect world on its stage that I stumbled by chance