

**THE SECOND ODD
NUMBER:
THIRTEEN TALES**

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The second odd number: thirteen tales by Guy de Maupassant & Charles Henry White

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GUY DE MAUPASSANT & CHARLES HENRY WHITE

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THE SECOND ODD NUMBER

THIRTEEN TALES

BY
GUY DE MAUPASSANT

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Linn*

THE TRANSLATION BY
CHARLES HENRY WHITE

AN INTRODUCTION BY
WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS

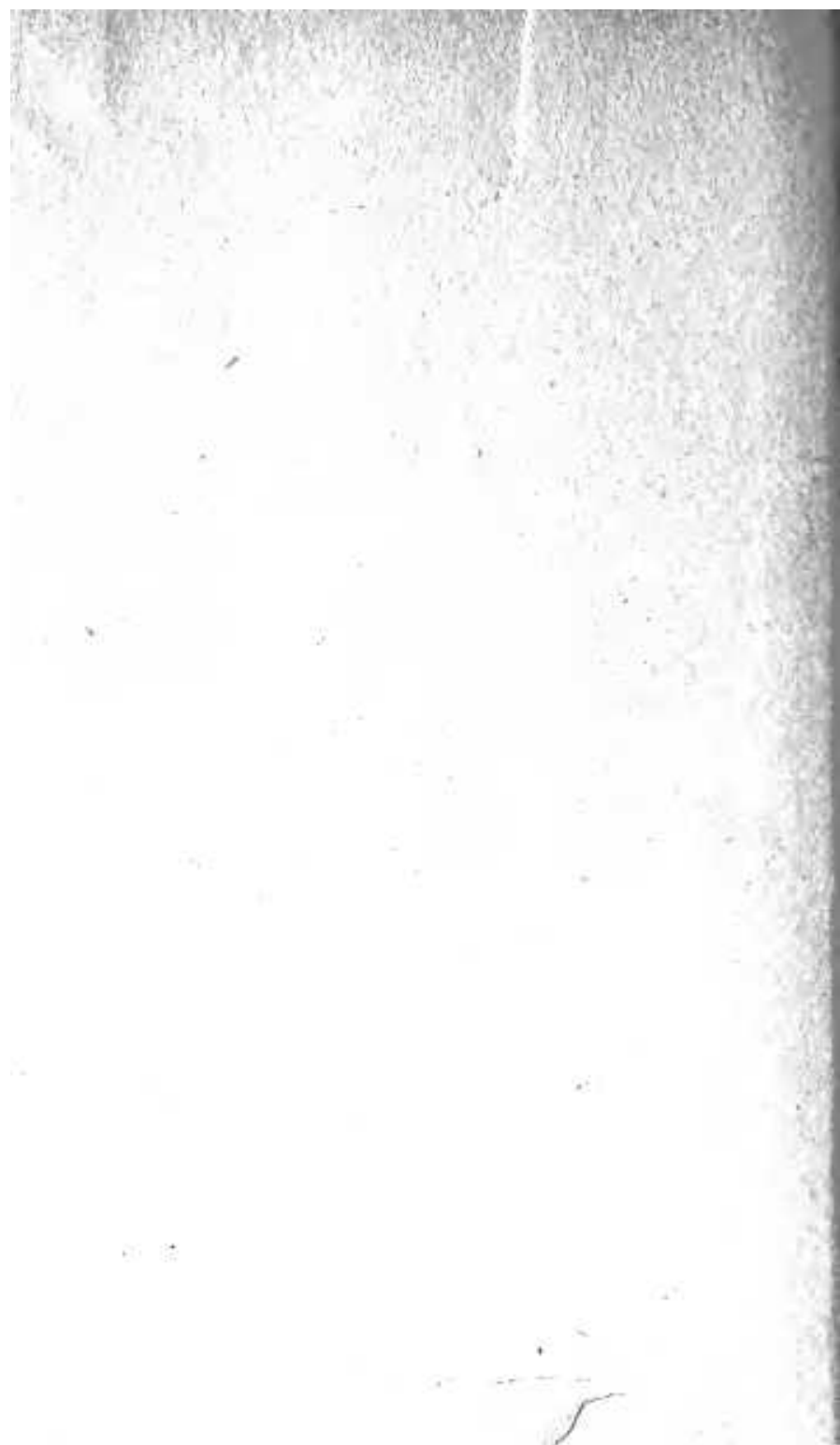


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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Of the thirteen tales in this volume, the following ten were translated by Charles Henry White: "Tony," "Decorated," "The Colonel's Idea," "The Jewels," "Fear," "Two Friends," "Relics of the Past," "A Question of Diplomacy," "Passion," "Grave-Walkers."

The remaining three tales: "Mademoiselle Perle," "The Madman," and "The Homecoming," were translated by Virginia Watson.



INTRODUCTION

THE admirable preface which Mr. Henry James wrote for the first volume of Guy de Maupassant in this series leaves one little to say of the novelist's great characteristics. He had fully developed these when Mr. James wrote of him, and he died soon afterward without notable change in matter or manner. He remained always the De Maupassant observed by Mr. James for good as well as for bad, if the tales here reproduced are to be taken as representative of his slighter work.

He is said to have studied his realism under the direct mastery of Flaubert, and perhaps his novels are proof of this. But I think he went beyond Flaubert in the

INTRODUCTION

things which Flaubert could best teach by the supreme example of *Madame Bovary*. Flaubert did not seem to enjoy painting the passions—or the passion which fiction makes stand for all the passions—nude; but if De Maupassant does not enjoy it, he seems to prefer it. Besides, there is a brutality in De Maupassant which appears voluntary. Its excess does not convince so much as disgust; its grossness bedaubes the author and comes off on the reader, without verifying the fact presented. I think this will be felt in the opening sketch of this volume, called "Tony," which is quite noisome, and can amuse only the lovers of horseplay. I do not suppose that De Maupassant himself thought it was humorous, perhaps he was forced to do the thing because he had known it or the like of it to happen; a writer is sometimes thus obsessed by his experience. It is mainly noticeable here because it is without the artistic merit of a man whom you must hold to account as an artist, and blame if he fails you.