

STORIES FROM THE HISTORY OF ROME

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Stories from the History of Rome by Mrs. Beesly

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MRS. BEESLY

**STORIES FROM THE
HISTORY OF ROME**

Thomas James Barry
1877

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OF ROME.



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HISTORY OF ROME.

BY

MRS. BEESLY.

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PREFACE.

THE writer of this little book was not satisfied that her children should hear nothing but fairy tales and the stories of nursery life, now so popular. But she could find nothing else fit to read to them. There are, indeed, plenty of story-books drawing their materials from history, and professing to be intended for children. But they are not suited to very young children. They abound in words and ideas which a child of four or six years old not only does not understand, but cannot be made to understand. The writer, however, believed that it was quite possible to put portions of Livy and Plutarch into language which should need little or no explanation even to children of that age. She accordingly made the experiment. One story after another was written and read to her little boys. Whenever she discovered that a word or idea was unintelligible to them, she took pains to simplify it. She found that they thoroughly enjoyed these old tales from Roman history, and liked to hear them repeated again and again. She has thought, therefore, that if published they might

perhaps supply a want that may have been felt by other parents.

It was necessary that the stories should be such as would interest little children. But the writer has also selected them with a view to illustrate the two sentiments most characteristic of Roman manners—duty to parents and duty to country. She has, moreover, tried to indicate that the latter of these sentiments took precedence of the former. A healthy moral lesson is thus conveyed, while at the same time the most essential feature of the Roman civilization is impressed on the memory.

Probably no one will be found to raise the dull objection that many of these tales are not strictly true. Being typical of Roman manners, they are true in a more real sense than many a well attested but less characteristic fact. They undoubtedly helped to create in Romans those virtues which they professed to record. To the young, aye, and to older persons, it is more important to have heard that Brutus beheaded his sons and that Mucius thrust his hand into the flame, than to be acquainted with the most approved theories as to the origin of the Plebs or the functions of the three Comitia. May it be long before these old legends are banished from Roman history in the name of a pedantic and unprofitable accuracy!

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. THE BUILDING OF ROME,	1
II. THE HORATHI AND THE CURIATHI,	7
III. BRUTUS AND HIS SONS,	19
IV. HOW LARS PORSENNA BESIEGED ROME,	24
V. CAIUS MARCIUS AND HIS MOTHER,	33
VI. THE DEEDS OF THE FABII,	50
VII. CINCINNATUS,	62
VIII. THE BATTLE OF CORBIO,	70
IX. HOW THE ROMANS WON TWO CITIES,	78
X. THE TAKING OF ROME,	93
XI. THE GULF IN THE FORUM,	112
XII. THE STORY OF TITUS MANLIUS,	115
XIII. THE DEATH OF DECIUS,	130
XIV. THE CAUDINE FORKS,	142
XV. THE TWO FABII,	160
XVI. HOW PYRRHUS FOUGHT AGAINST ROME,	168