

**THE MILLER'S HOLIDAY:
SHORT STORIES FROM THE
NORTHWESTERN MILLER**

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The Miller's Holiday: Short Stories from the Northwestern Miller by Various

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VARIOUS

**THE MILLER'S HOLIDAY:
SHORT STORIES FROM THE
NORTHWESTERN MILLER**



Drawn by R. Caton Woodville.

Don Quixote and the Windmill.

The Miller's Holiday

Short Stories from The Northwestern Miller

By Edward Everett Hale

Charles F. Lummis

James Lane Allen

Frank R. Stockton

Hamlin Garland

Octave Thanet

Howard Pyle

Robert Barr

O. Henry

Edited by Randolph Edger

1920

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PREFACE

On rainy afternoons the garret was an inviting place where neighbors' children often joined us in hastily improvised theatricals or in poring over forgotten books beneath the eaves. In the course of time an odd assortment of volumes found their way into the garret, crowded out as they were from the library shelves, and some of them, I believe, were heritage of another and older house with very much the same sort of garret and loved by equally inquisitive children as ourselves. Sometimes when the rain beat upon the roof we liked to imagine that the ghosts of readers followed the books of other days, and thereupon was invoked a fantastic game of shrill cries from darkened corners and, to the extreme discomfort of persons below, much stamping and scurrying across the bare floors.

From attic enlightenment ranging between a defunct treatise upon "Breakfast Dainties" and an illustrated Isaac Watts,—from this library of chance the Holiday Numbers of *The Northwestern Miller* were held by the children in high esteem. Particularly fascinating were the illustrations of certain verses by James Whitcomb Riley,—an enormous flea battling with a night-gowned miller,—or the Don Quixotic covers of embossed wind-mill tilting; pictures remembered long after the text had been forgotten.

Then;—"We skip twenty years," and the rain of many seasons patters over the deserted garret as dust collects on the books we knew. They were tumbled together when I found them again, some with broken backs and others wrought invertebrate by neglect, but the same intrepid miller glared at a monstrous and intelligent insect and Don Quixote, a trifle the worse for wear, wielded as of yore his futile lance.

Perhaps in renewing these friendships the chief interest has been in the discovery of the manner taken by many of

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the contributors in "finding themselves"; Augustus Thomas, whose name appears in the first Holiday Number (1883) as the author of "The Miller's Daughter," is obviously the playwright and apparently unaware that narrative dress ill becomes his idea, while James Lane Allen alternates between pleasant verse and a discursive form of short story. The prevailing and altogether anachronistic suggestion of the contributions prior to 1890 is one of familiar faces daguerreotyped in their youth.

The Holiday Numbers of *The Northwestern Miller* were published at twelve Christmas seasons between 1883 and 1904, the intervals between these special issues being irregular. Unprecedented and never imitated in trade-journalism, *The Northwestern Miller* secured for the exclusive use of its columns the merited work of the best writers and illustrators of the day. Among the authors to contribute were Robert J. Burdette, "Bill" Nye, Edgar Fawcett, Charles King, Frank R. Stockton, James Lane Allen, Harry P. Robinson, James Whitcomb Riley, Howard Pyle, Edward Everett Hale, Hamlin Garland, O. Henry, Joaquin Miller, Julian Hawthorne, Eugene Field, Octave Thanet, Charles F. Lummis, Robert Barr, William Hamilton Osborne, Mary Hallock Foote, and Clement Scott.

No less distinguished were the contributing artists, among whose names we find: Oliver Herford, L. S. Ipsen, R. Caton Woodville, Harry Fenn, James Fagan, A. Zenope, Albert C. Sterner, F. X. Leyendecker, George E. Graves, George Varian, H. V. Rosenberg, Frederick Opper, Charles H. Stevens, J. L. Gerome Ferris, W. T. Thomson, William F. Kline, Victor J. Petry, Mary Hallock Foote, Alfred Lens, L. Maynard Dixon, Charlotte Harding, Frederic Remington, John W. Norton, F. DeForest Schook, H. Cassiers, Frank Russell Green, Ralph Fletcher Seymour, Edward Potthast, Henry Hutt, E. L. Durand, Albert Levering and Howard Pyle.

The short stories of the present volume have been chosen almost at random, an exception being "The Christmas Wreck," written by Frank R. Stockton and originally published in *The Northwestern Miller* in 1885. In a recent anthology, "The Great Modern American Stories" (Bon)

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and Liveright), compiled by William Dean Howells, it was elected to a place among the twenty-four tales comprising the selection. "I have chosen one of the shipwrecks dear to Frank Stockton's whimsical humor," wrote Mr. Howells in the introduction, "and not the unique triumph which all the rest of the world likes best in 'The Lady and the Tiger.' I shall always believe that a large minority of his lovers will be with me in my choice of 'The Christmas Wreck.'"

August, 1880.

R. E.

