

PETER THE  
WHALER  
BY W. H. G.  
KINGSTON

EVERY  
MAN  
I WILL  
GO  
WITH  
THEE  
BE THY  
GUIDE



IN THY  
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FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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BY W. H. G. KINGSTON

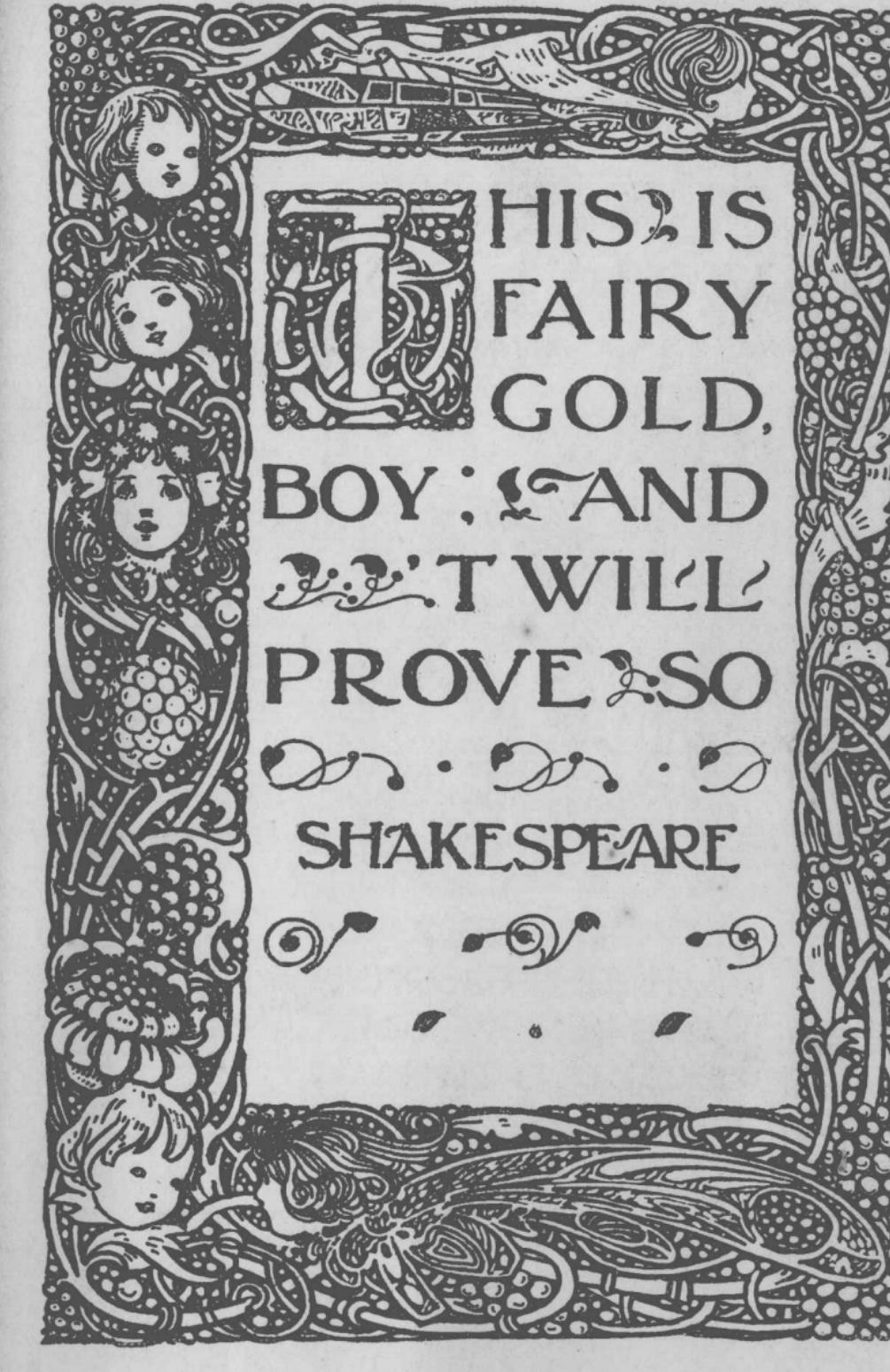
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IN TWO STYLES OF BINDING, CLOTH,  
FLAT BACK, COLOURED TOP, AND  
LEATHER, ROUND CORNERS, GILT TOP.

LONDON: J. M. DENT & SONS, LTD.  
NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO.



**T**HIS IS  
FAIRY  
GOLD,  
BOY : AND  
IT WILL  
PROVE SO  
SHAKESPEARE

RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,  
BREAD STREET HILL, E.C., AND  
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## EDITOR'S NOTE

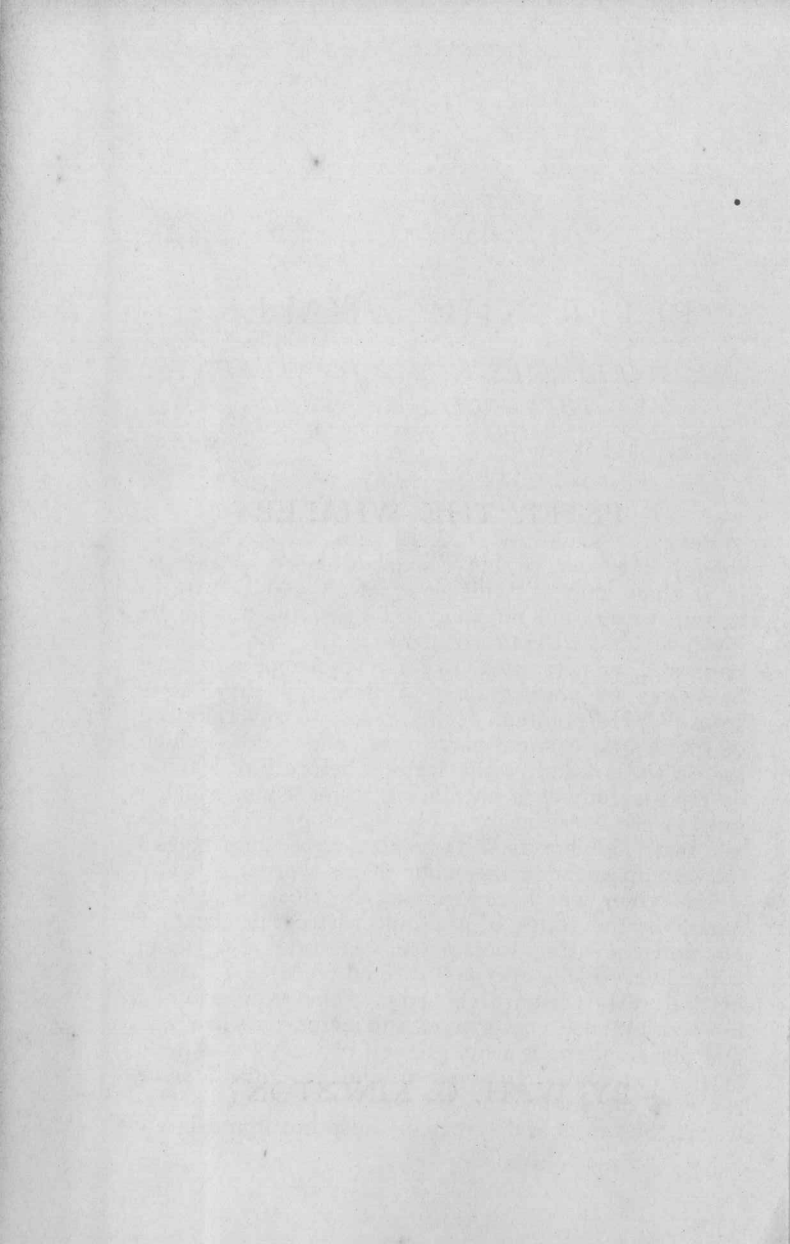
THE author of "Peter the Whaler," William Henry Giles Kingston, was born in 1814 at London. Much of the earlier part of his life was passed in Portugal, however, his father's business being at Oporto. He began his career, not as a writer of tales, but as a writer for the papers. His articles on Portugal, which were translated into Portuguese, helped to bring about the friendly treaty with Portugal in 1842. This gained him a Portuguese knighthood and a pension. His first books were written abroad; it was not till after he had taken up his abode in England and had been living there for some time that he began his long series of books and annuals for boys. His stories run to over a hundred. "Peter the Whaler" (1851), one of the best known, was also one of the earliest. Another favourite, "The Three Midshipmen," is already included in this series; and others may presently follow. It would be hard to select the best dozen of his sea-tales and story-books: but among those that helped to win him fame are "Will Weatherhelm" (1860); "Marmaduke Merry" (1862); "Manco, the Peruvian Chief" (1853); "Salt Water" (1857); "Round the World" (1859); "Rob Nixon: the Old White Trapper" (1865); "The Pirate of the Mediter-

anean " (1851); "The Three Admirals" (1878); "The Three Commanders" (1876); and "James Braithwaite the Supercargo" (1882). Kingston wrote many books of travel too; a life of Captain Cook; translated many of Jules Verne's stories, and edited various boys' magazines. He died in 1880, at Willesden, near London.

1906.

PETER THE WHALER

BY W. H. G. KINGSTON



# PETER THE WHALER :

## *HIS EARLY LIFE AND ADVENTURES IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS*

### CHAPTER I

"PETER," said my father with a stern look, though the tone of his voice had more of sorrow in it than anger, "this conduct, if you persist in it, will bring ruin on you, and grief and shame on my head and to your mother's heart. Look there, boy, and answer me: Are not those presumptive evidences of your guilt? Where did they come from?" He pointed, as he spoke, to several head of game—pheasants, partridges, and hares—which lay on the ground, while I stood before him leaning on my gun, my eyes not daring to meet his, which I knew were fixed on me. My two dogs crouched at my feet, looking as if they also were culprits and fully comprehended the tenor of his words.

My father was a clergyman, the vicar of a large parish in the south of Ireland, where the events I am now narrating took place. He was a tall man with silvery locks and well-formed features. I think his hair was prematurely grey. The expression of his countenance was grave, and betokened firmness and decision, though his general character was mild in the extreme. He was a kind parent, in some respects too kind; and he was very indulgent towards the faults and errors of those not immediately

connected with him. He was on good terms with the Roman Catholics of the neighbourhood, of which faith were the large majority of the population, and even with the priests; so that our family had few enemies, and were never in any way molested by the peasantry.

That, however, we had some foes, I shall have occasion presently to shew; but I must return to the scene I was describing. I may be pardoned for first giving a slight sketch of myself. I hope that I may escape being accused of vanity, as I shall not dwell on my personal appearance. I believe that I inherited some of my parents' good looks; but the hardships I have endured have eradicated all traces of them. I was well grown for my age (I was barely fifteen), but, dressed in my loose shooting costume, my countenance ruddy with fresh air and exercise, I looked much older.

"What do you suppose would be the lot of a poor man's son, if he were to be discovered acting as you are constantly doing in spite of my warnings and commands?" continued my father, his voice growing more serious and his look more grave. "I tell you, boy, that the consequences may and will be lamentable; and do not believe, that because you are the son of a gentleman, you can escape the punishment due to the guilty.

"You are a poacher. You deserve the name; and on some occasion, when engaged in that lawless occupation, you will probably encounter the gamekeepers of the persons on whose estates you are trespassing, and whose property you are robbing. Now hear me out. They, as in duty bound, will attempt to capture you. You and your companions may resist; your weapons may be discharged, and life may be sacrificed. If you escape the fate of a murderer, you may be transported to distant lands, away from friends, home, and country, to work for long years; perhaps in chains among the outcasts of our race, fed on the coarsest food, subject to the tyranny of brutalised overseers, often themselves

convicts, your ears forced to listen to the foulest language, your eyes to witness the grossest debauchery, till you yourself become as bad as those with whom you are compelled to herd; so that, when the time of your punishment is expired, you will be unfit for freedom; and if you venture to return home, you will find yourself, wherever you appear, branded with dishonour and pointed at as the convict.

"Think, Peter, of the grief and anguish it would cause your poor mother and me, to see you suffer so dreadful a disgrace—to feel that you merited it. Think of the shame it would bring on the name of our family. People would point at your sisters, and say, 'Their brother is a convict!' they would shake their heads as I appeared in the pulpit, and whisper, 'The vicar whose son was transported!' But more than all (for man's censure matters not if we are guiltless), think how God will judge you, who have had opportunities of knowing better, who have been repeatedly warned that you are doing wrong, who are well aware that you are doing wrong; think how He will judge and condemn you.

"Human laws, of necessity, are framed only to punish all alike, the rich and educated man as well as the poor and ignorant; but God, who sees what is in the heart of man, and his means of knowing right from wrong, will more severely punish those who sin, as you do, with their eyes open. I am unwilling to employ threats; I would rather appeal to your better feelings, my boy; but I must, in the first place, take away your means of following your favourite pursuit. And should you persist in leading your present wild and idle life, I must adopt such measures as will effectually prevent you. Give me your gun."

I listened to all that was said in dogged silence. I could not refuse to give up my dearly-beloved weapon; but I did so with a very bad grace; and I am sorry to say that my father's words had, at that time, little or no effect on my heart. I say at the time, for afterwards, when it was too late, I thought

of them over and over again, and deeply repented of my wilful obstinacy and folly.

Alas! from how much suffering and grief I should have been saved, had I attended to the precepts and warnings of my kind parent—how much of bitter self-reproach! And I must warn my young friends, that although the adventures I went through may be found very interesting to read about, they would discover the reality to be very full of pain and wretchedness were they subjected to it; and yet I may tell them, that the physical suffering I endured was as nothing when compared to the anguish of mind I felt, when, left for hours and days to my own bitter thoughts, I remembered that through my own perverseness I had brought it all upon myself.

Often have I envied the light hearts of my fellow-sufferers, whose consciences did not blame them. Let me urge you, then, in your course through life, on all occasions to act rightly, and to take counsel and advice from those on whose judgment you should rely; and then not only in the next world will you have your reward; but in this, through the severest trials and bodily suffering, you will enjoy a peace of mind and a happiness of which no man can deprive you.

My parents had four sons and five daughters. My eldest brother was studying for the bar in Dublin; and as the family fortune was limited, we were somewhat cramped to afford him the requisite means for his education. I was consequently kept at home, picking up, when I felt disposed, any crumbs of knowledge which came in my way, but seldom going out of my way to find them; nor had I, unfortunately, any plan fixed on for my future career.

My mother was constantly employed with my sisters, and my father with his clerical duties or his literary pursuits; so that I was forgotten, and allowed to look after myself. I am unable to account for the neglect to which I was subjected, but such was the case; and consequently I ran wild, and contrived to become acquainted with some

scampish youths in the neighbourhood, in every way my inferiors except in age; and they gave me lessons which I was, I own, too willing to learn, in all that was bad.

Sporting was my greatest amusement; and, for my age, I was perhaps one of the best shots in all the country round. While I confined myself to my father's glebe, and to the grounds of two or three friends who had given me leave to shoot, he did not object to my indulging my propensity; but not content with so narrow a sphere of action, I used frequently, in company of some of the youths I speak of, to wander over property where I not only had no right to kill game, but where I had positively been forbidden to trespass, and where I even knew people were on the look-out to detect me.

I had just returned from one of these lawless expeditions, when I was encountered by my father, laden with game, and the scene I have described took place. As I before said,—and I repeat it with shame, I felt the loss of my gun more than I cared for the lecture, or the grief my conduct caused my father. I can scarcely now account for the obstinacy and hardness of heart which made me shut my ears to all remonstrances. I have since then grown wiser, and, I hope, better; and I feel that I ought at once to have asked my father's forgiveness, and to have cheerfully set to work on some occupation of which he approved. With me, as it will be with every one, idleness was the mother of all mischief.

For two days I sulked, and would speak to no one. On the third, I set off to take a walk by myself, across the bogs, and over the hills in the far distance. I had got into a better spirit from the fresh air and exercise; and I truly believe that I was beginning to see my error, and was resolving to do my best to make amends for it, and to give up my bad habits, when who should I encounter but Pat Doolan, one of the wildest of my wild acquaintances.

Before a word of salutation had passed, he asked me why I had not got my gun with me; and after a

weak and vain endeavour to avoid answering the question, I confessed all that had occurred. He sneered at my fears and my father's warnings, and laughed away all my half-formed good resolutions; telling me that I might just as well go and borrow one of my sister's petticoats at once, for to that I should come at last, if I was going to give up all manly pursuits. Unhappy, indeed, it was for me, that I listened to the voice of the tempter, instead of keeping my good resolutions safely locked up in my own breast, and instantly hurrying away from him as I ought to have done. Or, perhaps, I might have answered him, "No; I must not, and will not listen to you. I know that what I have resolved to do is right, and that which you want to persuade me to do is wicked—an instigation of the evil one; so go away and leave me." And if he persisted in remaining near me, I should have set off, and run from him as hard as I could go. This is the only way to treat temptation in whatever form it appears. Fly from it as you would from the slippery edge of a precipice.

Instead of acting thus, I sat down on the heather by his side, and, looking foolish and humbled, I began plucking off the crisp flowers and leaves, and throwing them to the winds. He asked me if I knew where the gun was locked up. When I told him that it was not locked up at all, but merely placed on the mantelpiece in my father's dressing-room, he laughed at me for a fool, because I had not before re-possessioned myself of it. Fool I was, in truth; but it was to yield to the bad advice my false and false-hearted friend tendered. I own that I at first was rather shocked at what he said; but still I sat and listened, and made only weak objections, so that he very speedily overcame all my scruples; and I undertook to get back my gun at all cost, and to join him on the following morning on a shooting expedition on the property of a nobleman, some part of which was seen from the hill where we had posted ourselves.

Doolan could make himself very entertaining by narrating a variety of wild adventures in which he or his companions had been engaged; or, I may say, in some of which he pretended to have been engaged, for I since have had reason to believe that he drew considerably more on his imagination than on truth for the subjects of his tales, for the purpose of raising himself in my estimation, thereby hoping to gain a greater influence over me.

I have often since met such characters, who are very boastful and bold in the company of lads younger than themselves, or of persons whom they think will believe them, but cautious and silent in the presence of those whom they have sufficient discernment to perceive at once take them at their true value. Observe one of those fellows, the instant an educated gentleman appears in the circle of which he is the attraction; how his eye will quail and his voice sink, and he will endeavour to sneak away before his true character is exposed. I need scarcely advise my readers not to be misled by such pretenders.

The property on which we had resolved to poach was owned by Lord Fetherston. We knew that he maintained but few keepers, and that those were not very vigilant. He also, we believed, was away from the country, so that we had no fears of being detected.

I said that my father had few enemies. For some reason or other, however, Lord Fetherston was one. I did not know why, and this fact, Doolan, who was well aware of it, took care to bring forward in justification of the attack we purposed to make on his property. I should have known that it was no justification whatever; but when people want reasons for committing a bad act, they are obliged to make very bad ones serve their purpose.

Pat Doolan was my senior by three years. He was the son of a man who was, nominally, a small farmer, but in reality a smuggler, and the owner of an illicit distillery; indeed I do not know what other lawless avocations he carried on.