

ICELAND FISHERMAN



PIERRE LOTI

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FICTION

ICELAND FISHERMAN
BY PIERRE LOTI
TRANSLATED BY W. P. BAINES

PIERRE LOTI, was the pseudonym of Louis Marie Julien Viaud, who was born at Rochefort on 14th January 1850. He entered the navy in 1867, became lieutenant in 1881 and captain in 1906, and was transferred to the reserve in 1910. Died at Hendaye on 10th June 1923.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Pêcheur d'Islande, in English *Iceland Fisherman*, was Pierre Loti's seventh book, and the story that established his greater fame as a novelist and story-teller. He had been a sailor serving in the French navy many years when he wrote it, and his intimate understanding of the sea in all its moods, its northern and wintry aspects and its summer calms, was never turned to finer effect. His Breton strain aided in the interpretation of the characters who were like his hero Yann, both sturdy and wayward, or like the girl Gaud, simple and complex by turns. Those who know the Breton coast and its 'Sept Isles' and their azure setting, or its bleak moors and rocky coasts will recognize the truth of his scene-painting. His Paimpol and his Porseven become alive and real in his tale-teller's page. The touch of Celtic fatalism in the story may be traced to his temperamental reactions and the same early influences.

Here and there possibly an ultra modern reader may question his use of the idyllic note and his frequent dropping into the minor key. But that too was typical of the man and his narrative method, for he could be gay and melancholy, with equal instinct; and he could not resist at the end of all a cadence that is almost too affectionately turned. When the final summing up of Pierre Loti as a French novelist comes to be made, it will be to the books in which his Breton and his seafaring early memories give fictive reality to the writing that the old Censor, Time, will turn—and in that earlier cycle of stories *Iceland Fisherman* will hold a sure place.

E. R.

The following is a list of the chief works by Loti with the date of their first appearance in book form:

Aziyadé (published anonymously), 1879; *Le Mariage de Loti*, 1882 (issued first in the *Nouvelle Revue* in 1880 as *Rarahu*); *Le Roman d'un Spahi*, 1881; *Fleurs d'Ennui*, 1882; *Mon Frère Yves*, 1883; *Les Trois Dames de la Kasbah*, 1884; *Pêcheur d'Islande*, 1886; *Propos d'Exil*, 1887; *Madame Chrysanthème*, 1887; *Japoneries d'Automne*, 1889; *Au Maroc*, 1889; *Le Roman d'un Enfant*, 1890; *Le Livre de la Pitié et de la Mort*, 1891; *Fantôme d'Orient*, 1891; *L'Exilée*, 1893; *Jérusalem*, 1895; *Le Désert*, 1895; *La Galilée*, 1895; *Ramuntcho*, 1897; *Matelot*, 1898; *Figures et Choses qui passaient*, 1898; *Reflets sur la Sombre Route*, 1899; *Les Derniers Jours de Pékin*, 1902; *L'Inde*, 1903; *Vers Ispahan*, 1904; *La Troisième Jeunesse de Madame Prune*, 1905; *Les Désenchantées*, 1906; *La Mort de Philae*, 1909; *Le Château de la Belle-aux-bois-dormant*, 1910; *Un Pèlerin d'Angkor*, 1912; *La Turquie agonisante*, 1913; *La Hyène enragée*, 1916; *L'Horreur allemande*, 1918; *Prime Jeunesse*, 1919; *Le Mort de Notre Chère France en Orient*, 1920; *Suprême Visions d'Orient*, 1921; *Un Jeune Officier pauvre*, 1923.

Loti also did a little dramatization, including versions of *Pêcheur d'Islande* and *Madame Chrysanthème*, and a play written in collaboration with Judith Gautier called *La Fille du Ciel*. His two best-known miscellaneous works are the *Discours de Reception de Pierre Loti à la Séance de l'Académie Française*, 1892, and *L'Outrage des Barbares*, 1917, translated into English by Madox Hueffer. A collected edition of his works was published in eleven vols., 1893-1911.

The best small study of Loti is that by Frédéric Mallet: *Pierre Loti: son Œuvre*, 1923.

Most of Loti's work has been translated into English, and Werner Laurie Limited have published the majority of the translations. It is by their courtesy that this translation is reprinted in Everyman's Library.

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