

ARTHUR
BONNICASTLE

J. G. HOLLAND

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HOLLAND

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ARTHUR BONNICASTLE

AN AMERICAN NOVEL

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AN AMERICAN NOVEL

BY

J. G. HOLLAND

AUTHOR OF "THE BAY PATH" "MISS GILBERT'S CAREER" "BITTER-SWEET"
"KATHRINA" ETC., ETC.

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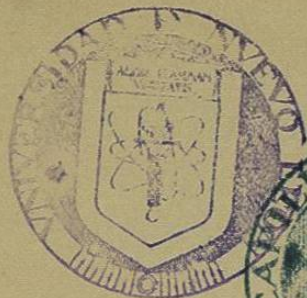
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CHAPTER I.

THANK A BLIND HORSE FOR GOOD LUCK.

LIFE looks beautiful from both extremities. Prospect and retrospect shine alike in a light so divine as to suggest that the first catches some radiance from the gates, not yet closed, by which the soul has entered, and that the last is illuminated from the opening realm into which it is soon to pass.

Now that they are all gone, I wrap myself in dreams of them, and live over the old days with them. Even the feeblest memory, that cannot hold for a moment the events of to-day, keeps a firm grasp upon the things of youth, and rejoices in its treasures. It is a curious process—this of feeling one's way back to childhood, and clothing one's self again with the little frame—the buoyant, healthy, restless bundle of muscles and nerves—and the old relations of careless infancy. The growing port of later years and the ampler vestments are laid aside; and one stands in his slender young manhood. Then backward still the fancy goes, making the frame smaller, and casting aside each year the changing garments that marked the eras of early growth, until, at last, one holds himself upon his own knee—a ruddy-faced, wondering, questioning, uneasy youngster, in his first trousers and roundabout, and dandles and kisses the dear little fellow that he was!

They were all here then—father, mother, brothers and sisters; and the family life was at its fullest. Now they are all