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AUCASSIN AND NICOLETTE

TRANSLATED FROM THE OLD FRENCH

BY
FRANCIS WILLIAM BOURDILLON

LONDON
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DRYDEN HOUSE, GERRARD STREET, W.
1908

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INTRODUCTION

The story of Love, that simple theme with variations *_ad libitum_*, *_ad infinitum_*, is never old, never stale, never out-of-date. And as we sometimes seek rest from the brilliant audacities and complex passions of Wagner or Tschaikowsky in the tender simplicity of some ancient English air, so we occasionally turn with relief from the wit and insight and subtlety of our modern novelists to the old uncomplicated tales of faerie or romance, and find them after all more moving, more tender, even more real, than all the laboured realism of these photographic days. And here before us is of all pretty love-stories perhaps the prettiest. Idyllic as Daphnis and Chloe, romantic as Romeo and Juliet, tender as Undine, remote as Cupid and Psyche, yet with perpetual touches of actual life, and words that raise pictures; and lightened all through with a dainty playfulness, as if Ariel himself had hovered near all the time of its writing, and Puck now and again shot a