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**Jules
Verne**

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WORKS
of
JULES VERNE

EDITED BY

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INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME THIRTEEN



HE ROBINSON CRUSOE SCHOOL," published in 1882, classes with "The Tribulations of a Chinaman" as a whimsical fantasy, tossed off by Jules Verne in lighter mood, without either the geographical or the scientific purpose, one of which was usually dominant in his books. He jests good-naturedly here, as indeed he does in several of his later books, with the vast fortunes, the "hundred millions" commonly ascribed to Americans.

What could be more grotesque than the contest of the two San Francisco millionaires for possession of a worthless island, for which neither at the moment has any use? So, too, we have the exaggerated picture of the gilded youth, utterly unacquainted with the stern realities of life, pining to be a Robinson Crusoe on a desert island. The deliberate preparation for him of the uncomfortable situation he has desired, along with all the Crusoe incidents, would have in itself been a merry farce. When to this is added the vengeance of the defeated millionaire, turning loose his monsters also upon the solitude, we get an extravaganza mingled with elements of real danger and excitement such as has been seldom equaled.

"The Star of the South" (1884), takes us back to Africa again; but not to the Africa of Verne's first success "Five Weeks in a Balloon," nor of his tragic slave tale "Dick Sands." Those dealt with the Africa of the negro. This tale is of the Africa of the white man. The diamond region and the diamond mines are fully and closely depicted, so are the rough and hard types of men who make their way there.

Among these is presented, in singular contrast, the edu-

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