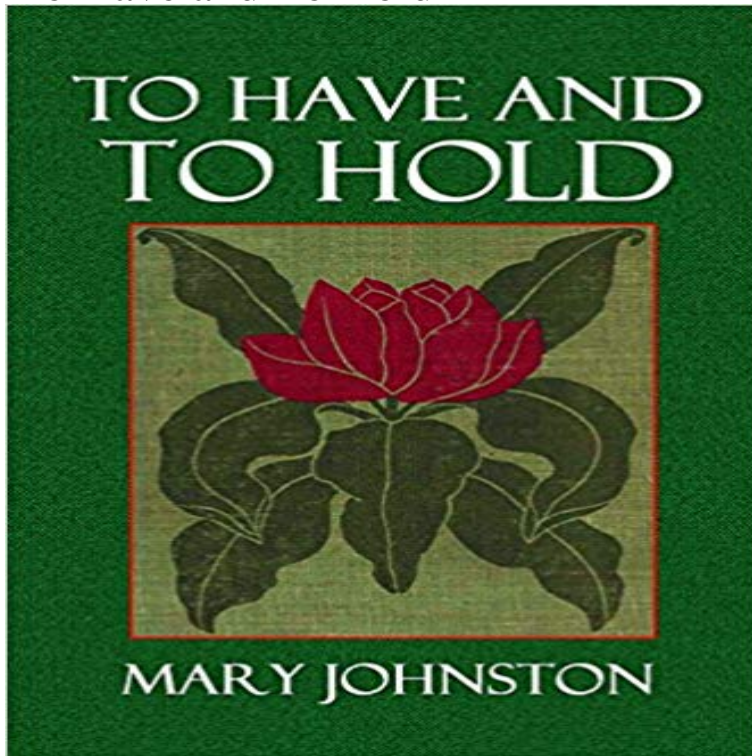


To Have and To Hold



A review from *The American Monthly Review of Reviews*, Volume 21: WITHIN a couple of months, Miss Mary Johnston, the demure little authoress from Alabama, has become noted throughout America for having written the story *To Have and To Hold*. The advertisements of the publishers and the newspaper paragraphers record, in the fashion of the day, that a hundred and sixty-five thousand have been sold, and a week or so later it is more than two hundred thousand. We are inclined to think that a more important thing than these figures is the evidence in the book itself that it should survive this extraordinary popularity. Through all its accompaniment of battle, murder, and sudden death, the story is told with a sweetness of spirit, a tenderness of fancy, a poetical insight that are rare indeed in the novel of adventure. and much to be prized. Miss Johnstons imagination has taken her and us back to the Virginia of 1630, when Captain John Smith had passed away, but John Rolfe, husband of Pocahontas. was still alive, and is a character in the story. Some 3000 English settlers lived in and around Jamestown. Among them was the bluff, honest bachelor, Captain Ralph Percy, ex-trooper in the Low Countries, and the terror of mischievous Indians in the strange new land. Captain Percy, in his lonely estate, throws dice to see whether he shall be one of the suitors who meet a shipload of damsels from England. The fates say matrimony, and the soldier selects his bride. Instead of the ordinary baggage, however, he strikes on a highborn girl, the kings ward, who is running away from a hated lover. She accepts the downright soldier as the least of the many evils in her friendless state, but scorns to show him even friendliness, and he manfully respects her helplessness. The story tells of the arrival of the hated lover, the kings favorite, of the high spirit and charms of the Lady Jocelyn Leigh, of the limitless

perils endured for her by her brave, silent husband, and how his strength of soul and arm finally won her whole heart. The setting of the story is a finely dramatic one, the sentiment as pure as a girls face, Miss Johnston paints the woods, the skies, the stones, and all the vast wilderness scenes of Opecaneanoughs Virginia, with the sure, convincing touch of one who has an eye for the eloquent details of Gods earth. The picture of Lord Carnals great vessel sailing up the James River to the frightened little settlement is told by one having with the true spirit of romance, the accessory gifts of the romancer. It is very pleasant to have such a thoroughly due story written by a young Southern woman, and pleasant too to see the public immediately give the work its due in such full measure. Miss Johnston is spoken of generally as an Alabamian, and, indeed, she has lived with her father, Maj. John W. Johnston, in Birmingham since her sixteenth year, with the exception of a four years residence in New York City. But the family is Virginian, and Miss Mary Johnston spent her childhood among the mountains in that romantic region where the James River breaks through the Blue Ridge. Until a few years ago she had written nothing. Prisoners of Hope, which was printed in the Atlantic, and afterward in book form, was her first effort, and now this charming story under notice is the second. Miss Johnstons health has never been strong, and both her novels have been written under great physical stress. Her delicate health prevented her from obtaining any regular training at school, and this allowed her to pursue in her fathers library that desultory yet all-devouring reading which is, of course, the great education of a child of imagination.

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