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ISAAC and
REBECCA,
OR
ABRAHAM'S IKE.

A Poem.



ABRAHAM'S IKE

. . . OR . . .

THE SERVANT OF ABRAHAM SEEKING A WIFE FOR ISAAC,

By S. WALLACE,

Author of "The Old Homestead," and

Other Poems.

Richmond, Indiana.
1894.



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PREFACE.

They tell me a poet is born to his trade,
He is not like a dress, to be cut out and made;
Don't judge of him then because of his diction,
The man may be right though his poetry's fiction;
Some people are nice and never would like
To hear the word Bec or see the word Ike;
A word's but the shell of an idea in name,
Just break it in two the idea's the same,
You know that a poet has many a time
To shorten a word to measure his rhyme,
And he'll step to one side to pluck a fine rose
Or pick up a thought for the use of his muse,
And lest he be charged with other men's goods,
He seeks his Egeria olt' in the woods.

The Servant of Abraham
Seeking a Wife For Isaac.



A servant of Abraham stood by the well,
When out came for water a beautiful belle:

Rebecca Replies to the Servant.

Says the servant I'm dry, and what do you think,
She let down her pitcher and gave him a drink ;
She emptied her pitcher, her vessel was small.
She says, I will draw for your camels and all.
The servant then stood in a wonderful maze,
And on the fair damsel a moment did gaze ;
Whose daughter are you ; now tell me I pray
Is there room in your house for my people to stay ?
Have you straw and provender a stable and shed
And a place where my animals all can be fed ?
To answer your question in a very clear way,
My father's the son of old Nahor they say,
Milcha, his wife, is my father's old mother,
And Haron, her father, is Nahor's own brother ;
To answer you farther, I think I may say
We have room in our house, and your people can stay,

We've straw and provender a stable and shed—
A place where your animals all can be fed.
The servant then drew out his jewels and charms
And covered her ears, and covered her arms,
And sent her back home, the story to tell
What had happened her there, just out at the well.
Then Laban came out and invited him in,
And said from your talk you have come from our kin;
I'm the servant of Abraham, a wealthy old man,
Who lives away back in the land of Canaan,
He has camels and cattle and sheep in the fold,
He has plenty of silver and plenty of gold,
His wife is now dead, he's advanced in his life,
He has sent me out here to get Isaac a wife;
Now Isaac, his son, is a very fine boy,
He lives with his father way down at La'roy,

Rebecca Meets the Approval of the Servant.

And further my story I wish now to tell,
The damsel I met to-day pleases me well.
This struck the whole family a terrible blow,
They couldn't say yes, nor they couldn't say no:
Some minutes they stood to talk o'er the case
Till the servant at length grew red in the face ;
He plainly meant business and could not be beat,
He must have a plain answer before he could eat,
Deal kindly and truly with master to-night,
In the morning I'll turn to the left or the right.
Bethuel and Laban then put in a word,
We see very plainly it comes from the Lord ;
So then let there be no longer delay,
We'll call for the damsel and hear what she'll say ;
O come here dear Becca, and how would you like
To go and be a wife for Abraham's Ike?

The man talks so pious and pleasant you know,
She says, I am willing, she says. I will go.
I've agreed to this bargain, but nevertheless,
She said to her mother, I'd like a new dress.
Says her mother, my daughter, you've spoken too late,
I know from his talk, the servant won't wait.
The strangers sat down to tea, I suppose,
While Becca slipped off to hunt up her clothes;
The girls in confusion were running around —
Becca whispered to Sally, now where is my gown?
But Sal was in pouts and gave her a snub,
You know very well it was thrown in the tub.
Becca in haste, now worked on the sly,
She wrung it out quickly and hung it to dry.
While the talk was a-going betwixt the old folks,
The girls in the kitchen were cracking their jokes:

I'm not very certain, I'm not really sure,
But Bec had her ear at the crack of the door ;
However that was, by the time it was light
Rebecca was up and had everything right ;
She came to the camel and made a quick bound,
And lit in the saddle just off of the ground ;
Good bye to you mamma, to papa and Mike,
I'm gotng to be a wife for Abraham's Ike ;
And turning her camel, she drew up the rein
And away she went cantering over the plain,
She'd made a quick bargain and caught as catch can,
This a woman will do for the sake of a man ;
Sal followed after as servants must do,
For Becca had told her she'd have to go, too,
And this is the reason why Sal was in pout,
She saw how the thing was a going to turn out.

The journey was long, and weary the way,
But Becca held on from day unto day,
Now Isaac, impatient, kept his eye pealed,
He came out in the evening, way out in the field ;



It's not so, exactly, put down in the book,
But I think he came out in the evening to look ,

Isaac Sees Them Coming.

He'd a favorite song that he always kept humming,
And raising his eyes, saw the camels a coming.
That's my master, that's Isaac, the servant then said,
Becca drew out her veil and covered her head,
For this was a token with maidens of old
To show to their lover they wouldn't be bold:
Though others would have it a different way,
She meant, by this sign, that she'd always obey:
The girls of our time think Bec was a fool,
They're all now in favor of Irish Home Rule:
Now this, to the ladies, we all must agree,
They should sit at the table, and pour out the tea,
They should rule the whole kitchen, table and chairs,
Clean up the parlor, and up and down stairs:
But put them together by sixes or twelves,
I'll bet you a penny they can't rule themselves,

For this has been shown, as the papers declare,
With the women of late, at Columbian Fair;
They all had been slighted out there, and just then
They thought they would have to appeal to the men:
But a little advice removed all their cares,
And they poured their grief out in womanly tears;
But here I will let the women alone,
I'm now getting old and have none of my own.
As Becca drew near she leaped to the ground,
And showed by her action she was supple and sound;
Then Isaac came near and took her right hand,
And led her straight in to see the old man;
There sat father Abraham — back by the stair,
On a bed or sofa, or perhaps an arm chair;
His hoary white locks waving wide o'er his shoulder,
A hundred years old, they might have been older.

Abraham Talks to Rebecca.

The beard on his chin hung down in his lap,

He's a good looking man, and a' olly old chap.

Why, how do you do, Becca; your a fine looking belle,

Are your father and mother and people all well?

Old Haron's been dead for many a day,
The rest were all well, when I came away.
You have come, I am told, to enlarge our harem,
From a far distant land, from old Padanaram.
Now Becca grew red, and began then to blush ;
She's modest, now papa, I'd have you to hush.
Well, give her the pitcher, the bowl, and the broom,
And show her right in to your Mother's old room ;
Call in the servants, and tell her their names
As your mother once did, let her do the same.
This filled the young damsel with wondrous delight,
She turned herself round and bade him good night.

* * * *

Two twins were then born to this beautiful pair,
One looked like a man, the other a bear ;

One was quite smooth, and his skin very fair,
The other was dark, and covered with hair ;
One stayed at home and took care of the goods,
The other, like a bear, wandered over the woods ;
In other things too they were nothing alike,
Jacob loved Rebecca, and Esau loved Ike ;
Jacob was smartest, and worked on the sly,
He cheated his brother by telling a lie ;
From this very moment, there was trouble and strife,
Which followed poor Jacob the rest of his life.



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