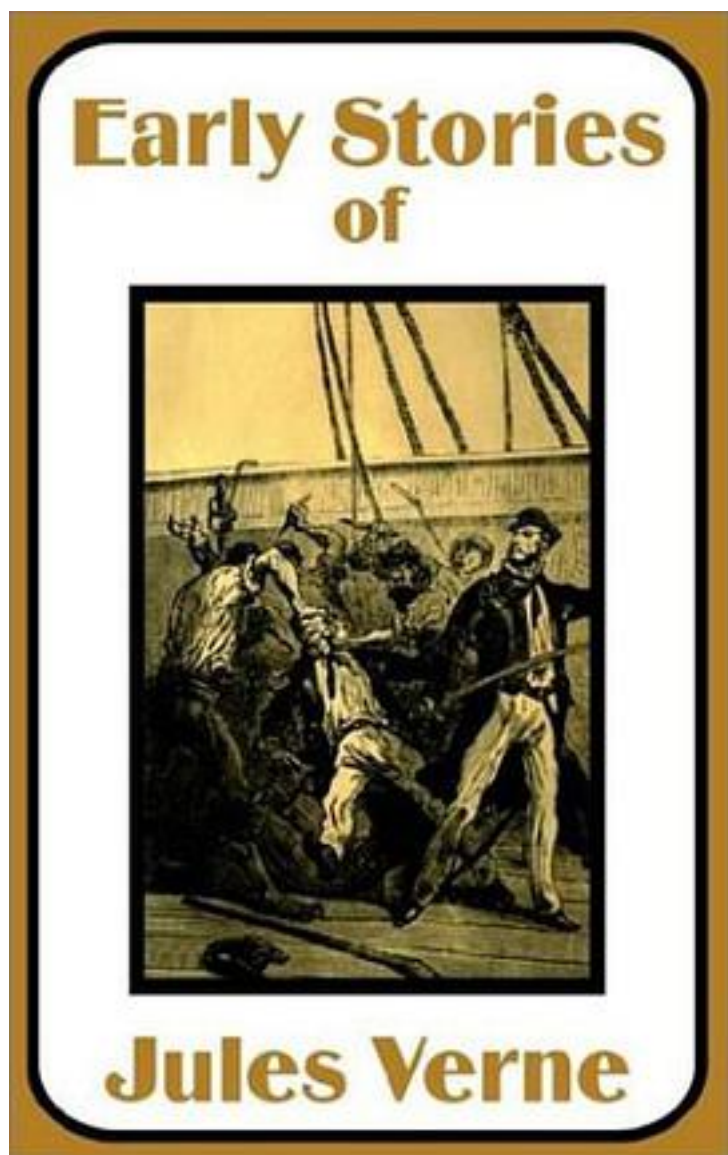


Early Stories of Jules Verne



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This volume includes all of Verne's earlier stories as he himself thought worth preserving. These he gathered in later years, and had some of them reissued by his Paris publishers. "A Drama in the Air," was, as Verne himself tells us, his first published story. It appeared soon after 1850 in a little-known local magazine called the "Musée des Familles." The tale, though somewhat amateurish, is very characteristic of the master's later style. In it we can see, as it were, the germ of all that was to follow, the interest in the new advances of science, the dramatic story, the carefully collected knowledge of the past, the infusion of instruction amid the excitement of the tale. Similarly we find "A Winter in the Ice" to be a not unworthy predecessor of The Adventures of Captain Hatteras and all the author's other great books of adventure in the frozen world. Here, at the first attempt, a vigorous and impressive story introduces us to the northland, thoroughly understood, accurately described, vividly appreciated and pictured forth in its terror and its mystery. "The Pearl of Lima" opens the way to all those stories of later novelists wherein some ancient kingly race, some forgotten civilization of Africa or America, reasserts itself in the person of some spectacular descendant, tragically matching its obscure and half-demoniac powers against the might of the modern world. "The Mutineers" inaugurates our author's favorite geographical device. It describes a remarkable and little-known country by having the characters of the story travel over it on some anxious errand, tracing their progress step by step. Thus, of these five early tales, "The Watch's Soul" is the only one differing sharply from Verne's later work. It is allegorical, supernatural, depending not upon the scientific marvels of the material world, but upon the direct interposition of supernal powers.

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目录:

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书评

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