

**AMERICA TODAY:  
OBSERVATIONS  
AND REFLECTIONS**

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America Today: Observations and Reflections by William Archer

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**WILLIAM ARCHER**

**AMERICA TODAY:  
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# America To-Day

Observations & Reflections

By

William Archer



London

William Heinemann

1900

## PREFACE

THE letters and essays which make up this little book appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* and *Pall Mall Magazine* respectively, and are reprinted by kind permission of the Editors of these periodicals. My original intention in crossing the Atlantic was simply to make a study of the American stage. The enlargement of my scheme, to which this book owes its existence, was due to the personal suggestion of Mr. Astor, whose encouragement overcame the diffidence I felt in venturing so far beyond the limits of my own narrow province. Whether Mr. Astor's encouragement was well inspired it is for the reader to determine. Let me only say that while no one can recognise more clearly than I the superficiality of the hasty survey here recorded, I should have been exceedingly sorry *not* to have put on record a few of the innumerable pleasant impressions I received during my eight-weeks' stay in the United States.

## PREFACE

The letters which form the first part of the book were published in the *New York Times* (simultaneously with their appearance in England) under the title of "American Jottings." This word exactly describes them; they are jottings and no more. As the term, however, seemed scarcely applicable to the essays composing the second part of the book, I was forced to choose for it a more general, and I fear more pretentious, title.

In the letters, and in the last of the essays, I have inserted a few passages which were in my mind, if not on paper, from the first, and were omitted only from considerations of space. All *after-thoughts* have been added either in footnotes or in postscripts. The essay on "American Literature," which appeared in the *Pall Mall Magazine* about eighteen months ago, has been largely re-written and brought up to date.

LONDON, *October 31, 1899.*

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PART I  
OBSERVATIONS

