

LAYS OF THE DRAGON SLAYER

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Lays of the Dragon Slayer by Maxwell Gray

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MAXWELL GRAY

**LAYS OF THE
DRAGON SLAYER**

Tuttiest, Mary Glead
Lays
of the
Dragon
Slayer

By

MAXWELL

GRAY, pseud.

LONDON

BLISS, SANDS AND FOSTER

1894

LOAN STACK

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PREFACE

THOUGH more than ten years—half ten years again—have passed since these Lays were written, they seem to the writer now, as then, in spite of defects and crudities, touched with the subtle magic that distinguishes poetry, however faulty, from verse, however perfect.

It seemed a sin, that increased with years, to leave them to yellow unseen in their dark drawer; but not until now was leisure found to bring them to light. After all, to publish poetry is not an indictable offence, nor does the writer echo the pious aspiration of Walt Whitman—

“Let him who is without my poems be assassinated!”

PREFACE

The last of the seven lays, "The Niblung Woc," still remains in that rare library in the castle Hawthorne built out of sunset clouds, and pillared with solid gold of morning sunbeams, alongside of the unwritten cantos of the *Fairy Queen*, the untold *Canterbury Tales*, the end of *Christabel*, and the remainder of Keats' *Hyperion*. Thence it may one day descend to shelves of terrestrial growth, should this volume meet with success.

Carisbrooke, I. W., 1894.

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NOTE

THE *Nibelungen Lied* is known to the writer only by Carlyle's unpleasant and patronizing essay, and the synopsis in Villmar's *Deutsche Literaturgeschichte*. The *Edda* was first seen after some of these Lays were completed.

The writer has not seen either Mr. William Morris's treatment of the Niblung myths, or Wagner's music-dramas on the same.

Two of the Preludes—those marked with an asterisk—appeared in "*Westminster Chimes and Other Poems*" (Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.), 1889.