

**THE BOOK OF PITY
AND OF DEATH**

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The Book of Pity and of Death by Pierre Loti & T. P. O'Connor

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PIERRE LOTI & T. P. O'CONNOR

**THE BOOK OF PITY
AND OF DEATH**

THE
BOOK OF PITY AND OF
DEATH.

BY
PIERRE LOTI.

(OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY.)

TRANSLATED BY T. P. O'CONNOR, M.P.

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1892.

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TO MY BELOVED MOTHER

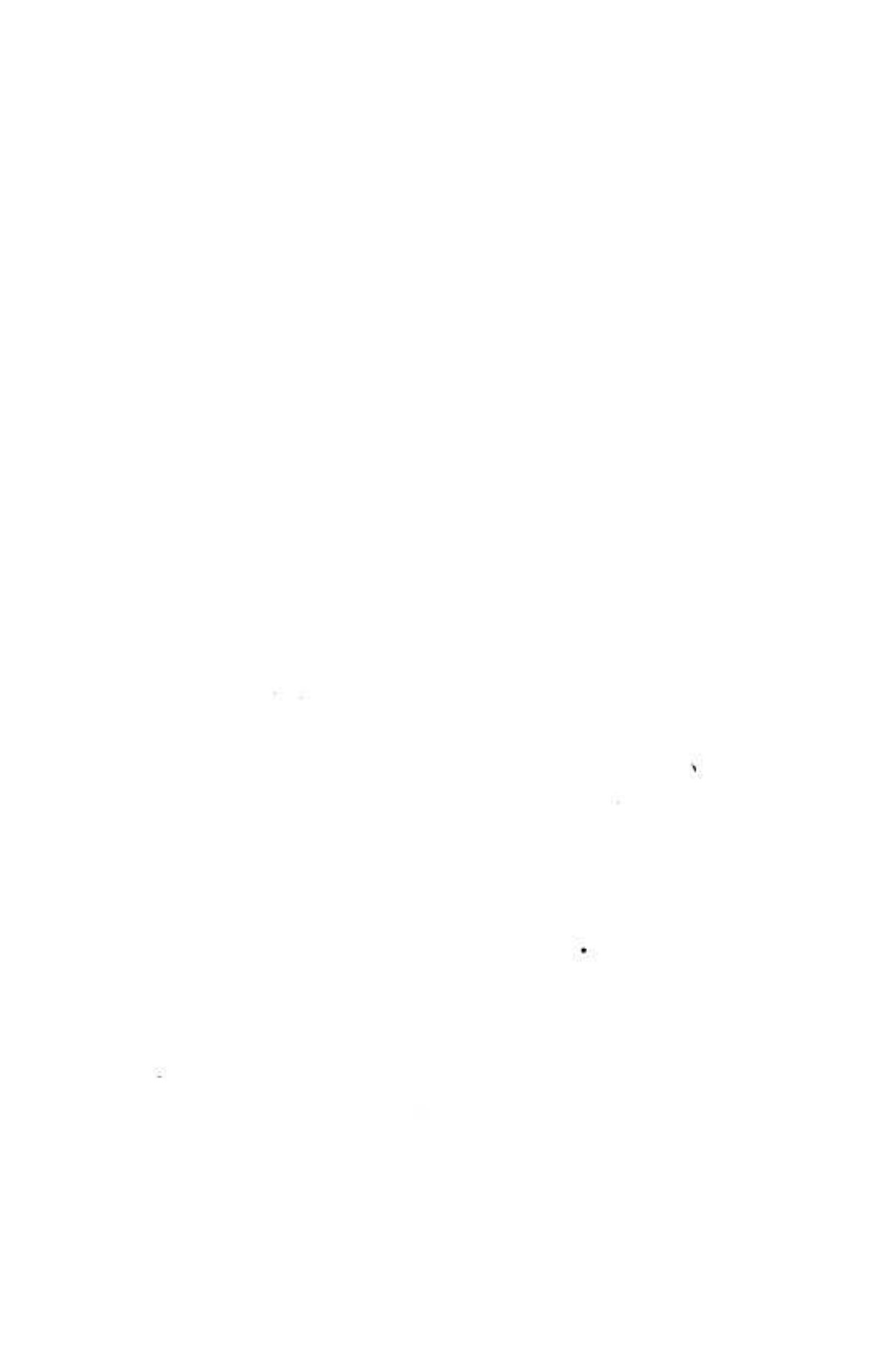
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK ;

AND WITHOUT FEAR ; FOR HER CHRISTIAN FAITH

ALLOWS HER TO READ WITH TRANQUILITY

EVEN THE MOST SOMBER THINGS.

167144



A PRELIMINARY WORD FROM THE
AUTHOR.

"Ah! Insensé, qui crois que tu n'es pas moi."

(VICTOR HUGO—"Les Contemplations.")

THIS book is more my real self than anything I have yet written. It contains one chapter (the Ninth, which is between page 181 and page 233) that I have never allowed to appear in any magazine lest it should fall under the eyes of certain people without my being able to give them a forewarning. My first inclination was not to publish this chapter at all. But I thought of the friends I have who are unknown to me; one response from their distant sympathy I would regard as too much to give up. And then I have always the feeling that in time and space I extend a little the limits of my own soul by mingling it with theirs. A few moments and I shall have passed away; and then, perhaps, these brethren will preserve the life of the images dear to me which I have graven on their memories.

This craving to struggle against death, besides—next to the desire of doing something of which one believes oneself capable—is the sole spiritual reason one has for writing at all.

Among those who profess to study the works of their neighbours, there is a goodly number with whom I have nothing in common, either in my language or my ideas. I am less than ever capable of feeling irritation against them, so much do I allow, before judging other men, for differences either natural or acquired.

But this is the first time their sarcasm has the power to wound me, if it should ever reach me, for it would wound at the same time things and beings that are sacred to me. I certainly give them their chance by publishing this book. To them, then, I desire to say just here: "Do me the favour not to read it; it contains nothing for you; and it will bore you so much, if you only knew."

PIERRE LOTI.

A DREAM.

