

EDGEHILL ESSAYS

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Edgehill Essays by Adrian Hoffman Joline

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ADRIAN HOFFMAN JOLINE

**EDGEHILL
ESSAYS**

EDGEHILL ESSAYS

BY

ADRIAN HOFFMAN JOLINE

Author of
"Meditations of an Autograph Collector"
"The Diversions of a Book Lover"
"At the Library Table"
&c.



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RICHARD G. BADGER

The Gorham Press

1911

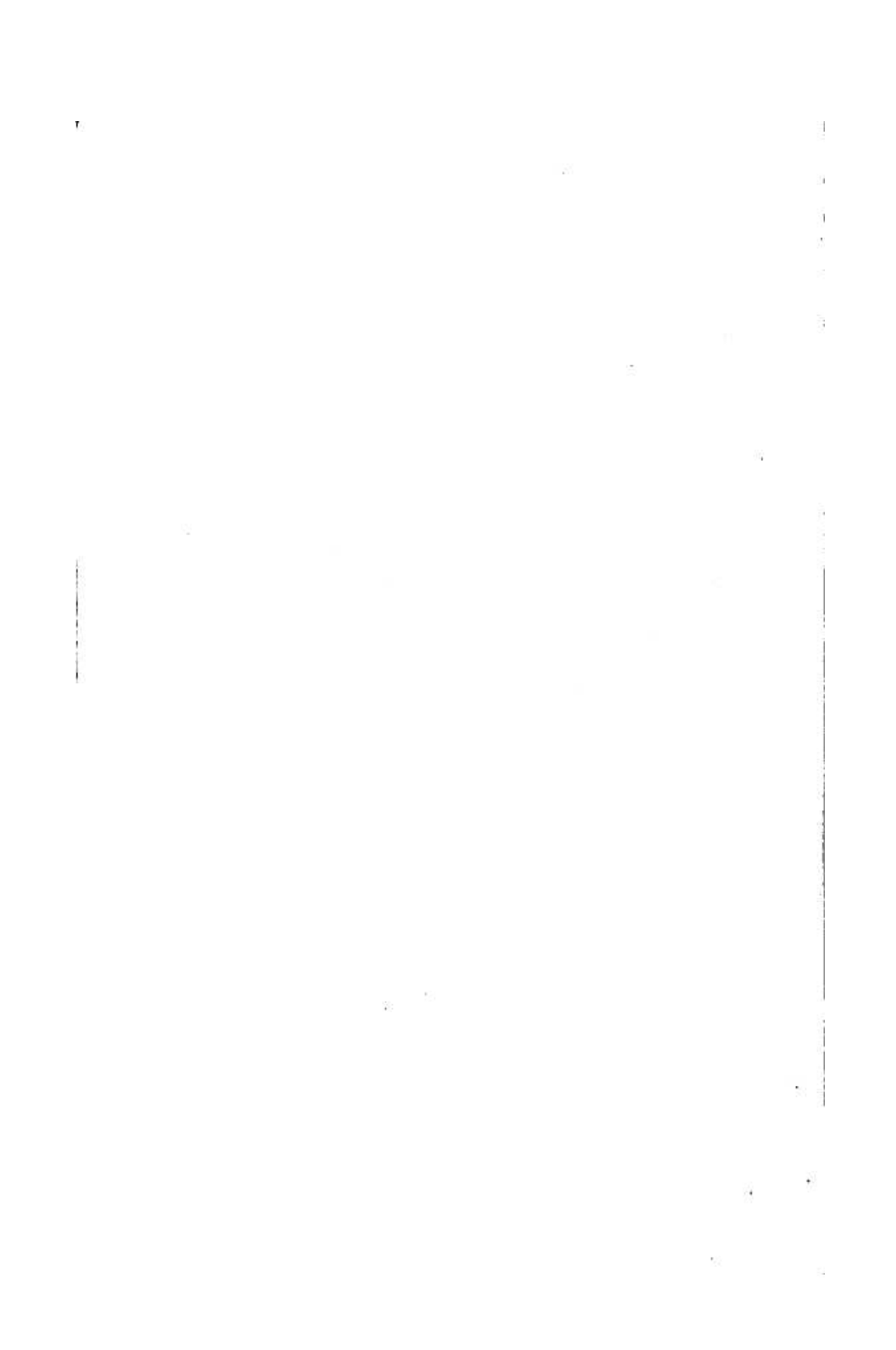
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To M.



PREFACE

TO dignify these desultory papers by the title of "Essays," may seem presumptuous; but by a liberal construction of the dictionary definition, they may be so styled without grave offence, for they are short sketches, disquisitions, and experiments. Far be it from me to make pretense to the honorable name of "essayist." "Essayists, like poets, are born and not made," says Henley, and I am glad that he adds concerning the essayist, "for wisdom, it is not absolutely necessary that he have it." That relieves my mind greatly. He also assures us that the essayist "seems to write not for bread nor for a place in society, but for the pleasure of writing." This also reassures me.

At all events, whether these are essays or something infinitely less, they were written at Edgehill; not the place in Warwickshire where Charles I. and Essex fought their famous battle, nor the rambling building at Princeton where years ago lads were prepared for college, but in a New Jersey cottage on the brow of a hill. The atmosphere there is more bookish than that of Wall Street, but it must be owned that some essays produced in that financial region have been pecuniarily more profitable than their country companions. They were railway mortgages. The style was dry and monotonous, but it was serious and convincing. No one ever disagreed with my views as expressed in those contributions to literature; whereas in other fields almost everyone refuses to concur with

me, except when I am merely "embroidering the obvious," as a pert man in *Life* unkindly said in regard to a modern essay-writer.

In the longest of these papers it was not my purpose to present an original review of the life and work of Francis Jeffrey, but only to give an outline of his career and to cite some contemporaneous estimates of his personality, his character, and his merits. He is now little known except to those who make a study of the books of the middle nineteenth century. His "Life" by Cockburn is a melancholy monument of dull mediocrity on the part of the biographer. Sir Leslie Stephen's admirable sketch in the *Dictionary of National Biography* is far more satisfactory and I have used it freely. In recent years Professor Gates has published a critical study of Jeffrey as a reviewer in *Three Studies in Literature* (1899), and Professor Winchester has added a brief supplement in his *Group of English Essayists* (1910). I have not attempted to invade their province. If I have quoted liberally from books of gossip and reminiscence, it has been because the writers gave a more vivid presentation of their subject than I could give by mere paraphrase.

ADRIAN H. JOLINE.

Edgehill, Bernardsville, New Jersey.

November, 1910.

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