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Crabbe by Alfred Ainger

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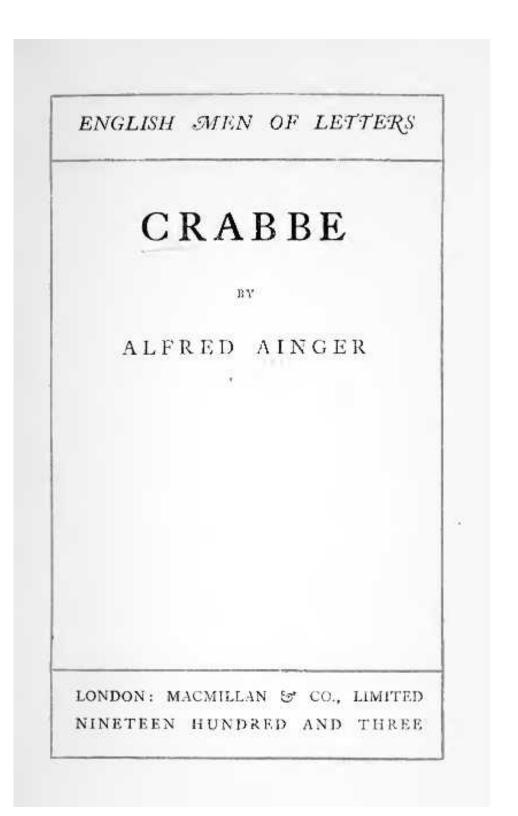
ALFRED AINGER

CRABBE



ENGLISH MEN OF LETTERS

CRABBE





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PREFATORY NOTE

THE chief, and almost sole, source of information concerning Crabbe is the Memoir by his son prefixed to the collected edition of his poems in 1834. Comparatively few letters of Crabbe's have been preserved: but a small and interesting series will be found in the "Leadbeater Papers" (1862), consisting of letters addressed to Mary Leadbeater, the daughter of Burke's friend, Richard Shackleton.

I am indebted to Mr. John Murray for kindly lending me many manuscript sermons and letters of Crabbe's and a set of commonplace books in which the poet had entered fragments of cancelled poems, botanical memoranda, and other miscellaneous matter.

Of especial service to me has been a copy of Crabbe's *Memoir* by his son with abundant annotations by Edward FitzGerald, whose long intimacy with Crabbe's son and grandson had enabled him to illustrate the text with many anecdotes and comments of

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interest chiefly derived from those relatives. This volume has been most kindly placed at my disposal by Mr. W. Aldis Wright, FitzGerald's literary executor.

Finally, I have once again to thank my old friend the Master of Peterhouse for his careful reading of my proof sheets.

A. A.

July 1903.

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