

LAMIA'S WINTER- QUARTERS

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Lamia's Winter-Quarters by Alfred Austin

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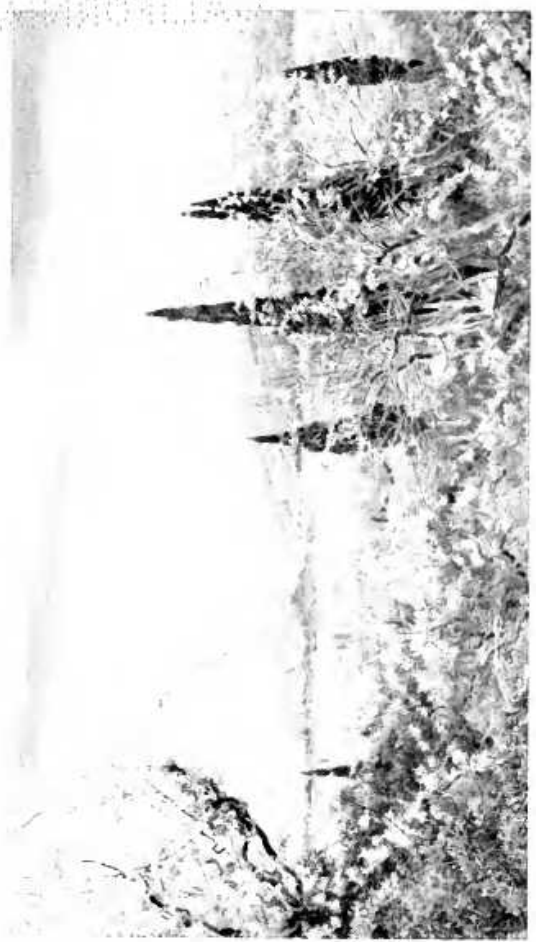
ALFRED AUSTIN

**LAMIA'S WINTER-
QUARTERS**

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NO. 1000
MICHIGAN



'AND OUT OF A VALLEY OF GRAPE AND GRAIN THERE
BLOSSOMS A CITY OF DOMES AND TOWERS'

LAMIA'S WINTER-QUARTERS

BY

ALFRED AUSTIN

AUTHOR OF 'THE GARDEN THAT I LOVE,' 'IN VERONICA'S GARDEN,'
'HAUNTS OF ANCIENT PEACE,' AND 'THE POET'S DIARY'

LONDON

ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK

1907



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1907

MAIN

Introduction

TO

THE EDITION ILLUSTRATED BY

GEORGE S. ELGOOD, R.I.

‘I OBSERVE,’ said Lamia, ‘that another of those somewhat numerous prose performances of yours, that are more or less remotely connected with Gardens, and which you were pleased, without any previous consultation with me, to entitle *Lamia’s Winter-Quarters*, is, like the first of the series, *The Garden That I Love*, to be issued in an equally luxurious form, and to be illustrated by the attractive talent of Mr. Elgood. But since this project, to which my attention was called by that now universal source of information, advertise-

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ments, has been alluded to, do you mind telling me why you called our delightful sojourn in a Tuscan villa overlooking Florence my winter-quarters rather than the Poet's winter-quarters, or Veronica's, or, for that matter, even yours ?'

Somewhat embarrassed, I replied :

'To have called the book my winter-quarters would have savoured of egotism, and would, moreover, I fear, have failed in attractiveness.'

'But against Veronica's name, or the Poet's, no such objection would lie ?'

'Perhaps not,' I said. 'But possibly from living with them, to say nothing of you, I have acquired a habit of respect for the fact ; and it was more consonant with truth to call the winter-quarters yours.'

'How is that ?' she asked.

'Well, you see, Veronica does what the Poet wishes, and the Poet does what you wish, and so——'

'I beg to say,' she interrupted, '*that* is not the fact. *I* do what the *Poet* wishes.'

'Is not that much the same thing ?' I replied. 'You always seem to have the same wish about everything. So I suppose you felt precisely as he did when he wrote those adulatory

lines which I saw in the public prints, a few days ago, under the heading, "A Poetical Impromptu."

'Really! He wrote no such, nor indeed any, lines, never having seen nor heard of the lady in question, in his life.'

'Is it possible?'

'Everything of that kind is possible in these days.'

'But did he not contradict it?'

'Did he contradict! Like a good many other men, he would have to keep a Secretary for no other purpose than to contradict what is reported in the papers, and most of which they probably never see. I should think he turned the opportunity to better account by recalling a couplet of Pope—

'Let Dennis charge all Grab Street on my quill,
I wished the man a dinner, and sate still.'

'But,' I said, 'are not such inventions calculated to injure the influence of the prints that resort to them?'

'I should think so,' she said, honouring me for once by talking seriously. 'But whose, and what, influence is not being injured just now by their own misdoings? The House of Commons,