

**ESSAYS AND
LEAVES FROM A
NOTE BOOK**

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Essays and Leaves from a Note Book by George Eliot

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GEORGE ELIOT

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NOTE BOOK**



George Eliot's Home, Foleshill Road, Coventry.

ESSAYS

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FROM A NOTE BOOK

BY
GEORGE ELIOT



ILLUSTRATED

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PREFACE.

Wishes have often been expressed that the articles known to have been written by George Eliot in the "Westminster Review" before she had become famous under that pseudonym, should be republished. These wishes are now gratified—as far, at any rate, as it is possible to gratify them. For it was not George Eliot's desire that the whole of those articles should be rescued from oblivion. And in order that there might be no doubt on the subject, she made some time before her death a collection of such of her fugitive writings as she considered deserving of a permanent form; carefully revised them for the press; and left them, in the order in which they here appear, with written injunctions that no other pieces written by her, of date prior to 1857, should be republished.

It will thus be seen that the present collection of *Essays* has the weight of her sanction, and has had, moreover, the advantage of such corrections and alterations as a revision long subsequent to the period of writing may have suggested to her.

The opportunity afforded by this republication seemed a suitable one for giving to the world some "notes," as George Eliot simply called them, which belong to a much later period, and which have not been previously published. The exact date of their writing cannot be fixed with any certainty, but it must have been some time between the appearance of "Middlemarch" and that of "Theophrastus Such." They were probably written without any distinct view to publication—some of them for the satisfaction of her own mind; others perhaps as memoranda, and with an idea of working them out

more fully at some later time. It may be of interest to know that, besides the "notes" here given, the note-book contains four which appeared in "Theophrastus Such," three of them practically as they there stand; and it is not impossible that some of those in the present volume might also have been so utilized had they not happened to fall outside the general scope of the work. The marginal titles are George Eliot's own, but for the general title, "Leaves from a Note-Book," I am responsible.

I need only add that, in publishing these notes, I have the complete concurrence of my friend Mr. Cross.

CHARLES LEE LEWES.

Highgate, December 1868.