

**THE SHADOW ON
THE DIAL, AND
OTHER ESSAYS**

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The shadow on the dial, and other essays by Ambrose Bierce

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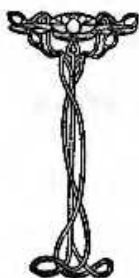
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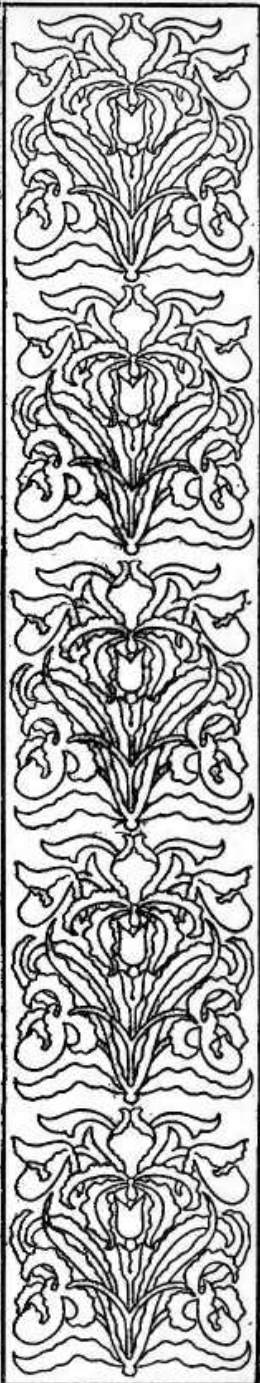
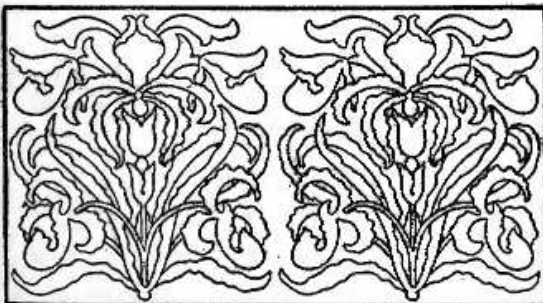
The Shadow on the Dial
and other Essays  

By
AMBROSE BIERCE



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A. M. ROBERTSON
1909



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A Note by the Author



IT WAS expected that this book would be included in my "Collected Works" now in course of publication, but unforeseen delay in the date of publication has made this impossible. The selection of its contents was not made by me, but the choice has my approval and the publication my authority.

AMBROSE BIERCE.

Washington, D. C., March 14, 1909.

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Preface



THE note of prophecy! It sounds sharp and clear in many a vibrant line, in many a sonorous sentence of the essays herein collected for the first time. Written for various Californian journals and periodicals and extending over a period of more than a quarter of a century, these opinions and reflections express the refined judgment of one who has seen, not as through a glass darkly, the trend of events. And having seen the portentous effigy that we are making of the Liberty our fathers created, he has written of it in English that is the despair of those who, thinking less clearly, escape not the pitfalls of diffuseness and obscurity. For Mr. Bierce, as did Flaubert, holds that the right word is necessary for the conveyance of the right thought and his sense of word values rarely betrays him into error. But with an odd—I might almost say perverse—indifference to his own reputation, he has allowed these writings to lie fallow in the old files of papers, while others, possessing the knack of publicity, years later tilled the soil with some degree of success. President Hadley, of Yale University, before the Candle Light Club of Denver, January 8, 1900, advanced, as novel and original, ostracism as an effective punishment of social highwaymen. This address attracted widespread attention, and though Professor Hadley's remedy has not been generally adopted it is regarded as his own. Mr. Bierce wrote in "The Examiner," January 20, 1895, as follows: "We are plundered because we have no particular aversion to plunderers.