

**GASTON DE LATOUR:
AN UNFINISHED
ROMANCE**

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Gaston de Latour: An Unfinished Romance by Walter Pater & Charles L. Shadwell

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WALTER PATER & CHARLES L. SHADWELL

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AN UNFINISHED ROMANCE

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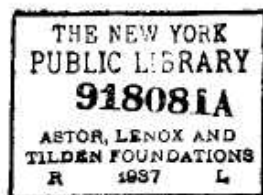
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PREFACE

“GASTON DE LATOUR” was probably begun by Mr. Pater not long after the completion of “Marius.” Five chapters appeared successively in *Macmillan's Magazine* in the months of June to October, 1889.¹ One more chapter appeared, as an independent article, in the *Fortnightly Review* for August, 1889,¹ under the title of “Giordano Bruno.” This article was afterwards largely revised, and marked Chapter VII, as it is here printed. Some portions of other chapters, intended to form part of the romance, have been found among Mr. Pater's manuscripts: they are for the most part unfinished: and they have certainly not received that revision which he would have been careful to give them before he allowed them to appear among his published writings.

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The sixth Chapter, so entitled by Mr. Pater, is now printed from this source; but only to fill the gap which it was designed to occupy in his scheme, and to indicate the direction which the development of the story would ultimately have taken.

The work, if completed, would have been a parallel study of character to "Marius the Epicurean": the scene shifted to another age of transition, when the old fabric of belief was breaking up, and when the problem of man's destiny and his relations to the unseen was undergoing a new solution. The interest would have centred round the spiritual development of a refined and cultivated mind, capable of keen enjoyment in the pleasures of the senses and of the intellect, but destined to find its complete satisfaction in that which transcends both. Something of the same motive appears in some of the Imaginary Portraits, such as Sebastian Van Storck and Duke Carl of Rosemund, undertaken about the same time. How Mr. Pater would have developed the story we can only guess: from the fragmentary state in which he has left it,

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it seems not impossible that he was himself dissatisfied with the framework which he had begun, and that he deliberately abandoned it.

So many wishes have been expressed, both publicly and by many private friends and admirers, for the reproduction of the fragments of "Gaston de Latour" in a permanent shape, that those who have charge of his papers have determined to authorize the publication of the present volume. But they desire to state that nothing more remains of his writings in a shape sufficiently finished for publication: and that it is not their wish that any work of his should appear in a form less complete than he would himself have approved.

C. L. S.

July, 1896,

