

LETTERS ON LITERATURE

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Letters on Literature by Andrew Lang

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LITERATURE**

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ON
LITERATURE

BY
ANDREW LANG

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DEDICATION.

Dear Mr. Way,

After so many letters to people who never existed, may I venture a short one, to a person very real to me, though I have never seen him, and only know him by his many kindnesses? Perhaps you will add another to these by accepting the Dedication of a little work, of a sort experimental in English, and in prose, though Horace—in Latin and in verse—was successful with it long ago?

Very sincerely yours,

A. LANG.

To W. J. Way, Esq.

Topeka, Kansas.

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PREFACE.

THESE LETTERS were originally published in the *Independent* of New York. The idea of writing them occurred to the author after he had produced 'Letters to Dead Authors.' That kind of Epistle was open to the objection that nobody *would* write so frankly to a correspondent about his own work, and yet it seemed that the form of Letters might be attempted again. The *Lettres à Emilie sur la Mythologie* are a well-known model, but Emilie was not an imaginary correspondent. The persons

addressed here, on the other hand, are all people of fancy—the name of Lady Violet Lebas is an invention of Mr. Thackeray's: Gifted Hopkins is the minor poet in Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes's 'Guardian Angel.' The author's object has been to discuss a few literary topics with more freedom and personal bias than might be permitted in a graver kind of essay. The Letter on Samuel Richardson is by a lady more frequently the author's critic than his collaborator.