

**THE DRAMATIC
ESSAYS OF
CHARLES LAMB**

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The dramatic essays of Charles Lamb by Charles Lamb & Brander Matthews

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CHARLES LAMB & BRANDER MATTHEWS

**THE DRAMATIC
ESSAYS OF
CHARLES LAMB**



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THE
DRAMATIC ESSAYS
OF
CHARLES LAMB

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY

BRANDER MATTHEWS



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III

This Selection,

**FROM THE WRITINGS OF AN AUTHOR WHOM
WE BOTH LOVE, IS INSCRIBED TO**

LAURENCE HUTTON,

BY HIS FRIEND AND FELLOW-WORKER,

THE EDITOR.



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INTRODUCTION.

CHARLES LAMB AND THE THEATRE.

AMERICANS take a peculiar delight in the humour of Charles Lamb, for he is one of the foremost of American humourists. On the roll which is headed by Benjamin Franklin, and on which the latest signatures were made by Mark Twain and Mr. Bret Harte, no name shines more brightly than Lamb's. By the captious it may be objected that he was not an American at all; but surely this should not be remembered to his discredit, — it was a mere accident of birth. Elia could have taken out his naturalization papers at any time. It is related that once a worthy Scotchman, commenting on the well-known fact that all the greatest British authors had come from the far side of the Tweed, and citing in proof thereof the names of Burns and Byron and Scott, was met by the query whether Shakspeare was a Scotchman also. Reluctantly enough it was acknowledged that he was not, — although he had parts not unworthy of that honour. So it is