

**A BOOK  
OF SIBYLS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649268580

A book of sibyls by Miss Thackeray

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**MISS THACKERAY**

**A BOOK  
OF SIBYLS**



# A BOOK OF SIBYLS

MRS BARBAULD

MISS EDGEWORTH

MRS OPIE

MISS AUSTEN

BY

MISS THACKERAY

(MRS RICHMOND RITCHIE)

LONDON

SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE

1883

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PR  
468  
WLR47  
1883

*[Reprinted from the Cornhill Magazine]*

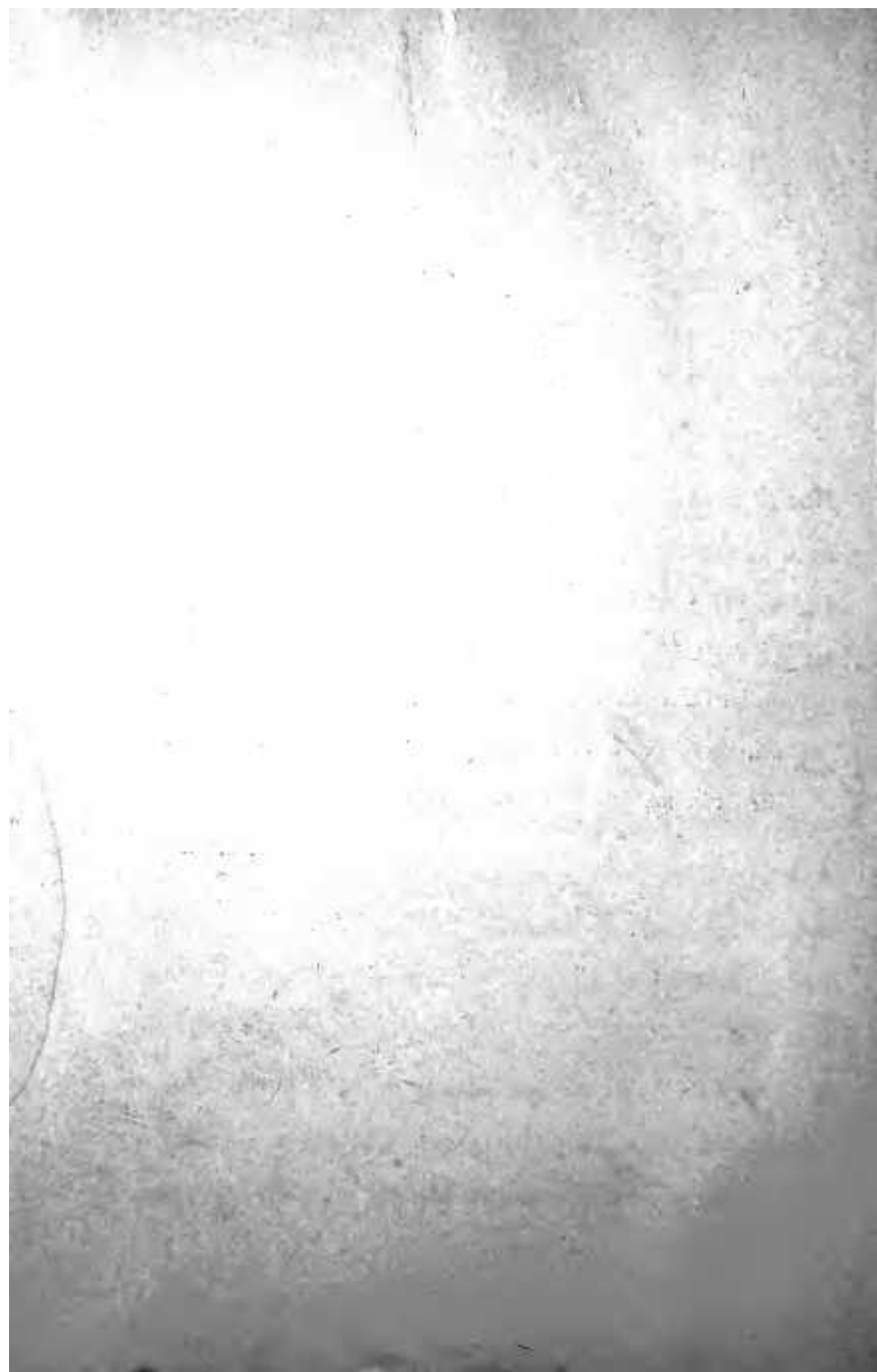


TO

MRS OLIPHANT

*My little record would not seem to me in any way complete without your name, dear Sibyl of our own, and as I write it here, I am grateful to know that to mine and me it is not only the name of a Sibyl with deep visions, but of a friend to us all*

A. I. B.





## P R E F A C E.



NOT LONG AGO, a party of friends were sitting at luncheon in a suburb of London, when one of them happened to make some reference to Maple Grove and Selina, and to ask in what county of England Maple Grove was situated. Everybody immediately had a theory. Only one of the company (a French gentleman, not well acquainted with English) did not recognise the allusion. A lady sitting by the master of the house (she will, I hope, forgive me for quoting her words, for no one else has a better right to speak them) said, 'What a curious sign it is of Jane Austen's increasing popularity! Here are five out of six people sitting round a table, nearly a hundred years after her death, who all recognise at once a chance allusion to an obscure character in one of her books.'

It seemed impossible to leave out Jane Austen's dear household name from a volume which concerned women writing in the early part of this century, and although the essay which is called by her name has already been reprinted, it is added with some alteration in its place with the others.

Putting together this little book has been a great pleasure and interest to the compiler, and she wishes once more to thank those who have so kindly sheltered her during her work, and lent her books and papers and letters concerning the four writers whose works and manner of being she has attempted to describe; and she wishes specially to express her thanks to the Baron and Baroness von HÜGEL, to the ladies of Miss Edgeworth's family, to Mr. HARRISON, of the London Library, to the Miss REIDS, of Hampstead, to Mrs. FIELD and her daughters, of Squire's Mount, Hampstead, to Lady BUXTON, Mrs. BROOKFIELD, Miss ALDERSON, and Miss SHIRREFF.

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