

BLANK VERSE

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Blank verse by John Addington Symonds & Horatio F. Brown

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JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS & HORATIO F. BROWN

BLANK VERSE

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BY

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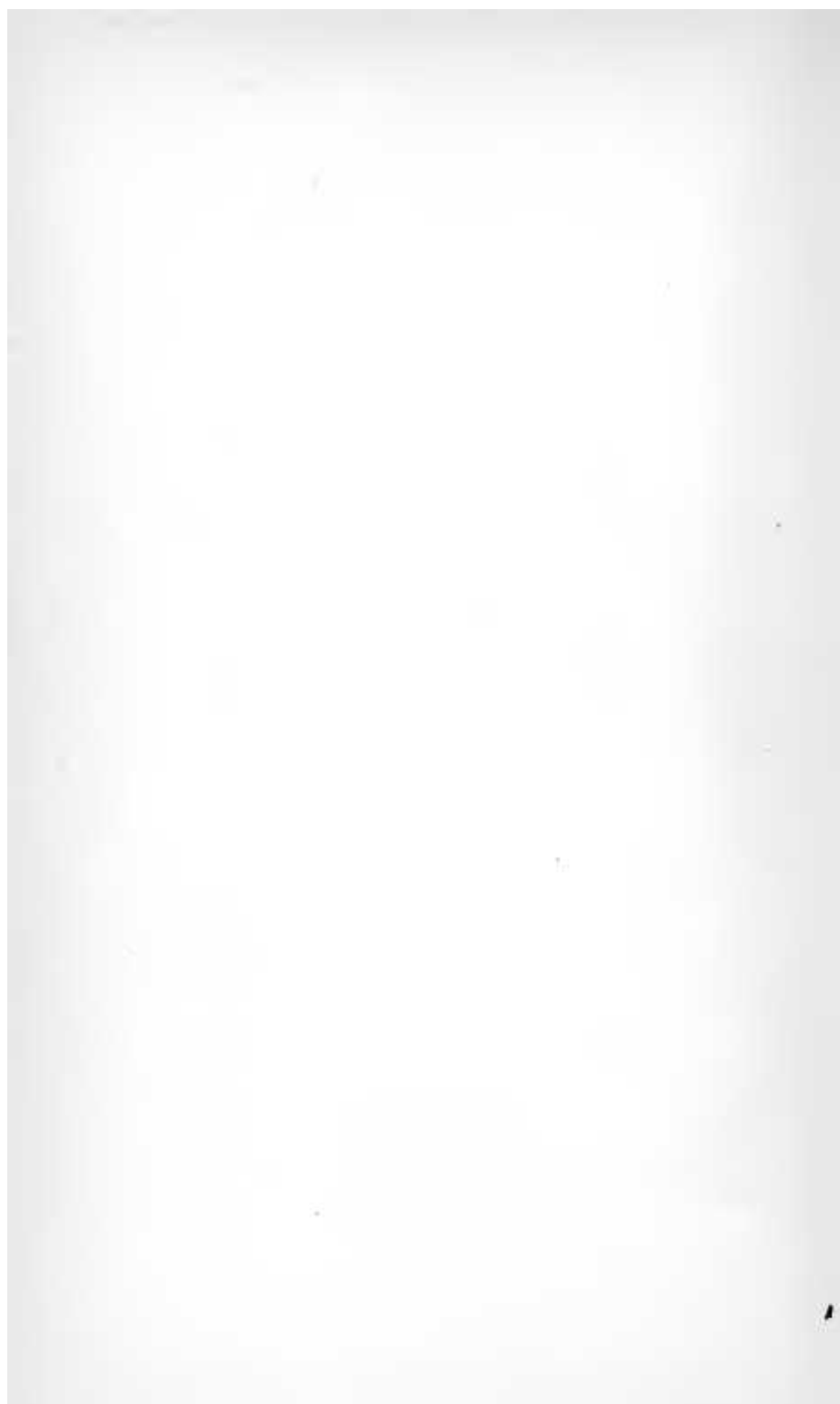
1895

P R E F A C E

THIS Volume is published in obedience to the wishes of Mr. J. A. SYMONDS, thus expressed: "There are three Essays upon English Blank Verse, printed in small type as an Appendix to my *Sketches and Studies in Italy*. In that place they have been entirely lost to sight and observation. They ought to be taken out and published separately in a small volume."

HORATIO F. BROWN.

Sept. 1894.



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BLANK VERSE

I

PREFATORY NOTE



SENTENCE in an essay on England's literary debt to Italy furnishes me with a pretext for reprinting two separate studies on Blank Verse.* They were composed with a view to illustrating the rhetoric rather than the prosody of this metre, on the conviction that, though Blank Verse is an iambic rhythm, it owes its beauty to the liberties taken with the normal structure. The licences allowed

* I have not attempted to avoid repetitions in these Essays. The three parts were written at intervals during the last ten years; and two of them have been separately published. My purpose will be sufficiently served by a simple reprint, and I trust that the reader will not be fatigued by occasional recapitulation of the points I have sought to establish.

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themselves in this metre by great masters of versification may be explained, I think, invariably when we note the accent required by the rhetorical significance of their abnormal lines.

It can fairly be argued, however, that with this end in view I have paid too little attention to the prosody of Blank Verse, or, in other words, to its scansion by feet. In order to meet this objection, some prefatory remarks may here be offered upon the difficult question of quantity and accent.

We are accustomed, roughly speaking, to say that ancient metre depends on Quantity and modern metre on Accent. The names Dactyl, Spondee, Trochee, &c., were invented in the analysis of Greek metres to express certain combinations of long and short syllables, without reference to pitch or emphasis. But when we speak of Quantity in English metre, we mean the more or less accentuation of syllables. Thus an English trochee is a foot in which the first syllable is more accen-