

**ESSAYS IN MODERNITY:
CRITICISMS
AND DIALOGUES**

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Essays in Modernity: Criticisms and Dialogues by Francis Adams

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FRANCIS ADAMS

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AND DIALOGUES**

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MODERNITY

CRITICISMS AND
DIALOGUES BY
FRANCIS ADAMS



"Im ganzen, guten, schönen."—GOETHE.

LONDON AND NEW YORK

JOHN LANE

THE BODLEY HEAD

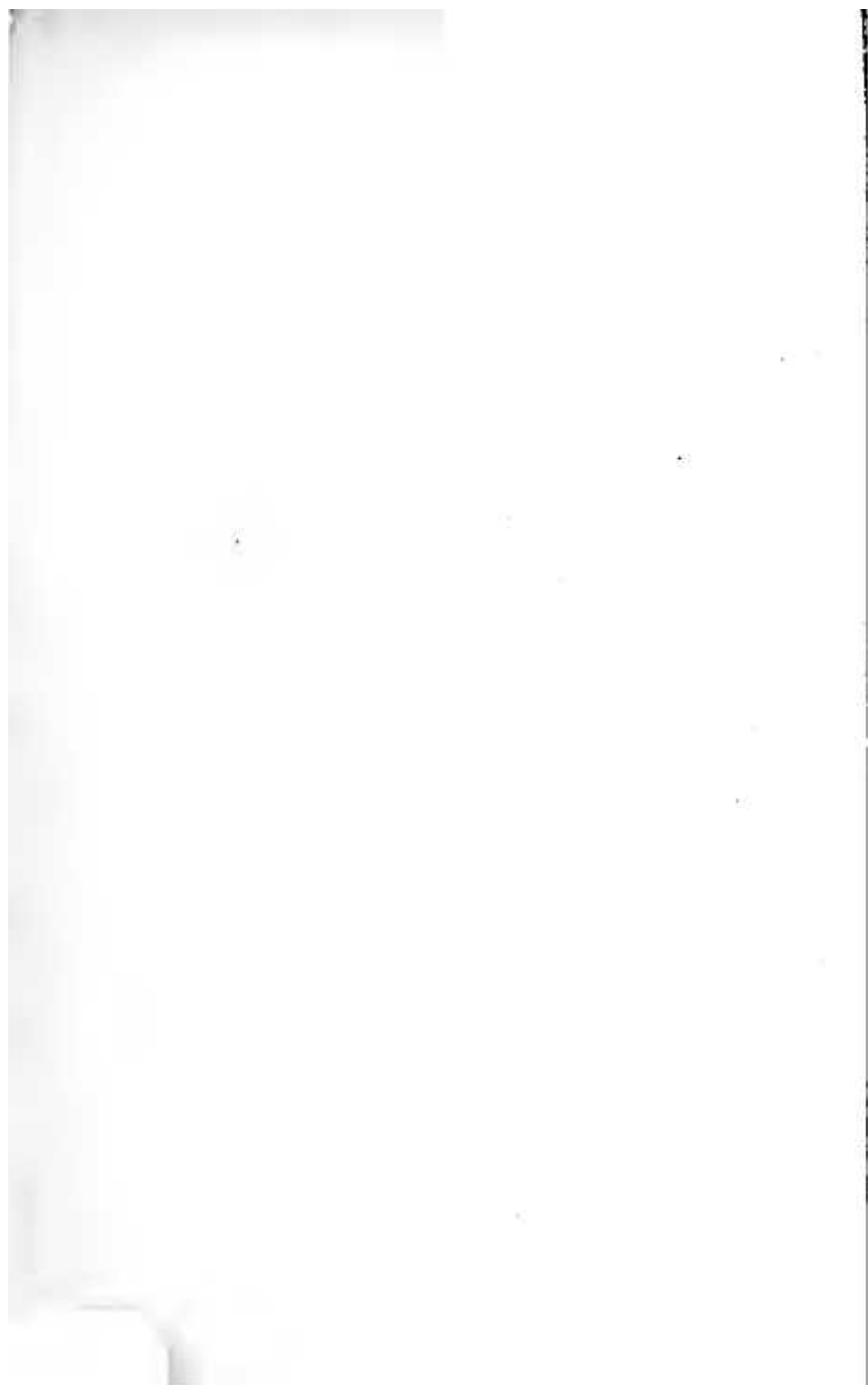
1899

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TENNYSON



ESSAYS IN MODERNITY

TENNYSON

THIS attempt to treat a contemporary writer with absolute critical candour will not, it is hoped, be misunderstood. The case is a special one. To the younger generation of us, the position of Tennyson in the realm of English poetry seemed from the first to differ little, if at all, so far as its actuality went, from that of Wordsworth and Coleridge, of Byron and Shelley and Keats. He presented himself to our youthful imagination as an accomplished fact. The only difference lay in a comparative ignorance of his private life, an ignorance which was by no means ambiguous enough to prove a stumbling-block. It is not too much to say that it has cost many of us far more trouble to arrive at anything like an impartial judgment of Shelley than of Tennyson. Shelley was as much a superstition to us as Byron was to our fathers. They both have the passionately personal element in them, and