

**THE SONNET IN
ENGLAND, &
OTHER ESSAYS**

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The sonnet in England, & other essays by J. Ashcroft Noble

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J. ASHCROFT NOBLE

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IN ENGLAND
& OTHER ESSAYS

by
ARNOLD
J. ASHCROFT NOBLE

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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ELKIN MATHEWS AND JOHN LANE
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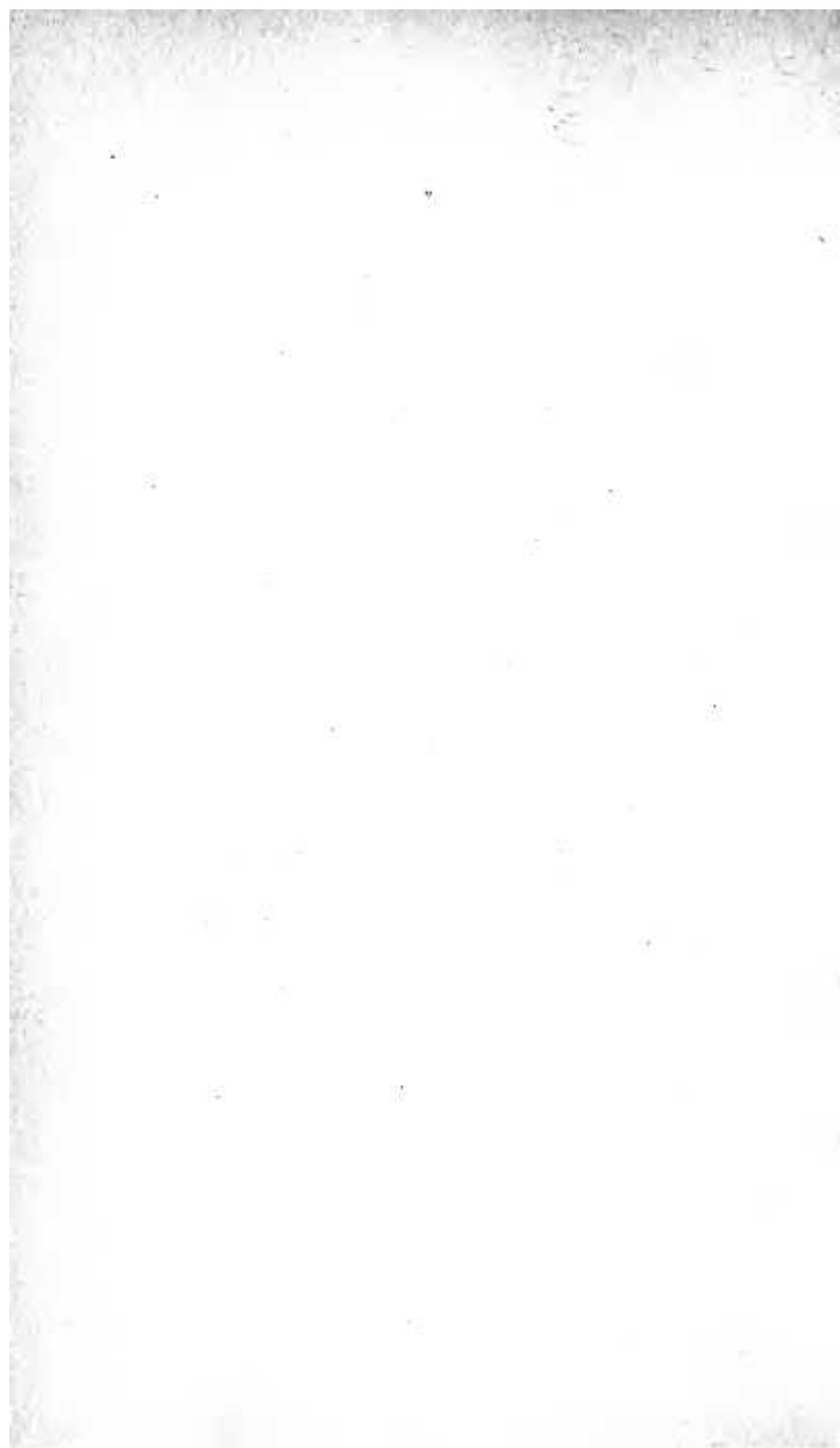
EDWARD DOWDEN

Professor of English Literature at the University of Dublin.

MY DEAR DOWDEN,

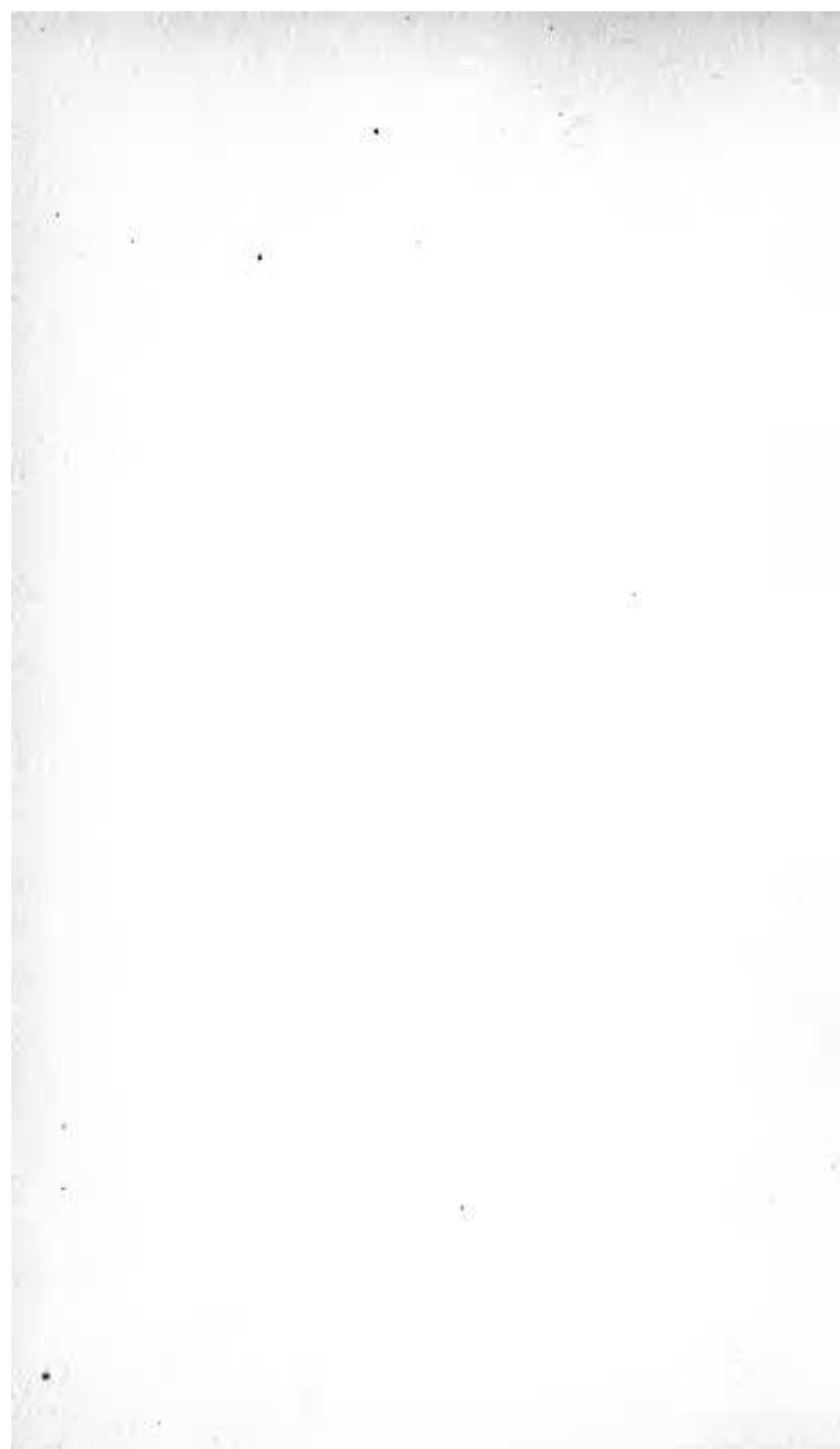
During sixteen years of a close and warm friendship—made sacred by two great sorrows, in which we have grieved together—you have put me so largely in your debt by all kinds of cheer, encouragement, and aid, that I have acquired some of the recklessness of the bankrupt debtor; and I am bold enough to beg from you one thing more—your acceptance of the dedication of this little book. I have not asked your consent to such a conjunction of your name and my work; because, had such a petition been made and granted, you might have incurred a certain shadowy responsibility for the faults which, I am sure, are to be found in these essays; and, though your affection might have made you somewhat indifferent to such responsibility, it would ill have become me to burden you with it. As it is, I can do you no injustice and I can give myself a great pleasure by writing and printing words which imply no more than this—that long ago you gave me the right to sign myself—Your friend,

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.



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PREFACE

THE greater part of the contents of this volume has previously been printed. The first essay appeared in the *Contemporary Review*, the second in *Fraser's Magazine*, the third in the *London Quarterly Review*, the fourth in *Macmillan's Magazine*, and the papers on Robert Stephen Hawker and Mr Robert Buchanan are expansions of articles contributed to a work which, my own share in it being very unimportant, I may praise without indelicacy,—that delightful anthology *The Poets and the Poetry of the Century*, edited so admirably by Mr Alfred H. Miles. To those editors by whose kind permission the six essays are reproduced here, my thanks are heartily rendered, and I cannot feel less grateful to my friendly publishers, who have commended my work to all lovers of books by the pains which they have taken to render it