

## PREFACE

**L**AFCADIO HEARN held the chair of English literature in the Imperial University of Tokyo from September, 1896 to March, 1903. He taught twelve hours a week—five hours in reading of Milton, Tennyson, Rossetti, and others, four hours in lecturing on miscellaneous subjects in literature and for the remaining three hours he lectured on the history of English literature. This was a three-year course which he gave twice in his seven years at the University. This book has been edited from the note-books of his students who attended the second series, extending from September, 1900 to March, 1903.

In lecturing Hearn did not prepare any manuscripts, but would sometimes merely look into a small note-book taken out of his pocket. In this note-book he had scribbled dates and titles. The students would listen attentively to the teacher and managed to write down long passages and even whole lectures, word for word.

“Notes on American Literature” was delivered in the autumn of 1898 as one of his series of special lectures on various subjects. His piercing criticism upon the poetry of America had long hampered its publication in that country.

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*March, 1941.*