

PUBLISHER'S NOTE
on the
COMPLETE LAFCADIO HEARN LECTURES

It is with great pleasure that I am able to announce the publication, on September 26th, 1934, the very day of the thirtieth anniversary of the death of the great interpreter of Japan, of two volumes of Lafcadio Hearn's lectures "On Poets" and "On Poetry", thereby bringing the issue of the Complete Lafcadio Hearn Lectures to a conclusion. It is nine years since the publication of the Lectures was first undertaken, and seven years since "A History of English Literature" was brought out, followed by the publication in 1932 of the lectures "On Art, Literature and Philosophy."

I recall to mind as vividly as if it were yesterday how, in 1922, and just about a year before the Great Earthquake and Fire which devastated Tokyo and Yokohama, Mr. Mitchell McDonald, the life-long friend and literary executor of Hearn, in his room on the second floor of the Grand Hotel, Yokohama, said under great emotion to me:

"It is already twenty years since my dearest friend Hearn died. I am now seventy and cannot hope for many more years to live, but you are still a young man and have a great work ahead in publishing the works of Hearn. Lafcadio often told me to take good care of my health, and now I must tell you to do the same thing, especially because you are undertaking a great work. Your work will greatly delight me and the spirit of Hearn, whose remains lie in the Zoshigaya Cemetery."

A year later Mr. McDonald was killed in the Great Earthquake and Fire, which also caused almost the complete ruin of my business. However, with the words of Mr. McDonald ringing in my ears, I started at once to re-establish my ruined plant and business. You can imagine therefore how pleased I am at the completion of the work, and with what profound pleasure and gratification I am dedicating the four volumes of Hearn's Lectures to the spirits of Hearn and McDonald.

After Hearn's death, Mr. McDonald regretted for a long time that his lectures delivered at the Tokyo Imperial University, masterpieces of delivery and fine pieces of literary criticism in themselves, should remain unpublished, and he entrusted part of the lecture notes taken in class by Hearn's pupils, including those of the editors of the present volumes, to Professor Erskine, of Columbia University, New York, for publication. The result was Hearn's "Interpretation of Literature" in two volumes,

“Appreciation of Poetry” and “Life and Literature”, edited by Professor Erskine and published by Dodd, Mead and Co., New York. These four volumes, representing the able craftsmanship of Professor Erskine as the editor, justly remained for long as the standard edition of Hearn’s lectures. Among the pupils and admirers of Hearn, however, there was an irresistible craving to have Hearn’s lectures in complete form, including everything their beloved master delivered, and in its original form. That is why the editors of the present volumes and the publisher undertook the issue of the Complete Lafcadio Hearn Lectures.

Recourse was made to the notes taken in class by Professor R. Tanabé and Professor T. Ochiai, two of the former pupils of Hearn, who re-read and compared their notes again and again, and reference was made by Professor Nishizaki of the Lafcadio Hearn Library, Toyama Koto Gakko, to the books Hearn possessed and used in Japan, to verify the lecturer’s statements and correct the notes,— a laborious research indeed. We are now satisfied that the volumes in its present form, containing all the lectures delivered by Hearn at the Imperial University of Tokyo during the period extending from 1896 to 1903, represent his lectures as they were delivered by the master.

As to the third revised edition of “A History of English Literature”, which also forms a volume of the series, it may be added that it represents the editorial work of Professor Tanabé and Professor Ochiai, with emendations by Professor Nishizaki of the Hearn Library, and Professor A. Stanton Whitfield, B. Litt. (Oxon), F. R. Hist. Soc., B. Sc., formerly of the Tokyo Imperial University.

September 26, 1934.

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NOTE TO THE NEWLY REVISED EDITION

Lafcadio Hearn’s lectures on English Literature have a lasting value in literary criticism. It is the source of profound pleasure to us to realize that we have at last succeeded in bringing out the Lectures in the form as Hearn actually delivered them.

I take this opportunity of expressing my cordial thanks to the various professors and readers in various parts of the world who have so loyally helped me to accomplish this volume, which I believe completes the monumental work of Lafcadio Hearn’s achievement in Japan.

The Publisher

March 20, 1941.