

POEMS PLAYS
AND
MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS

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OF
CHARLES LAMB

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
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NEW YORK :
A. C. ARMSTRONG & SON,
51 EAST 10th STREET, NEAR BROADWAY,
1893.

INTRODUCTION.

THE present volume, with its predecessor the *Essays of Elia*, contains all of Lamb's miscellaneous writings that he had himself selected for preservation in a permanent shape. Twice during his lifetime were issued collections of his prose and verse,—the *Works of Charles Lamb*, published by the Olliers in 1818, and the *Album Verses* issued by Edward Moxon in 1830. The volume now presented is made up of the contents of these two works.

Nothing has been omitted, but a few additions have been made, on a principle which I will explain. When Lamb collected his poems in 1818, he omitted from them certain pathetic verses which had been wrung from him by the first and deepest sorrow of his life—his mother's death. These he had printed when the calamity was still recent, most of them in a slender volume of blank verse written jointly by Charles Lloyd and himself in 1802. But in later years he naturally and rightly shrank from recalling to his beloved sister events in which she had taken so terrible a part. Such a reason for their omission has long ceased to exist, and accordingly they are here restored, as nearly as possible in the order of their composition. Again, after Lamb's death his literary executors—who had better reason than we can have for knowing which of the fugitive verses written between 1830 and his death in 1834 Lamb most valued—added in the subsequent editions of his writings some half a dozen pieces that had appeared in newspapers and journals. These have been accordingly retained in the present edition. But other occasional verses—a few