

WILLIAM GODWIN:
HIS FRIENDS AND CONTEMPORARIES.



WILLIAM GODWIN
AFTER A PORTRAIT BY NORTHCOTE

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BY
C. KEGAN PAUL.

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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P R E F A C E.

MY best thanks are due to Sir Percy Shelley, the grandson of William Godwin, for the generous manner in which he has placed at my disposal the whole of the papers in his possession which relate to his grandfather. These included a vast quantity of letters and other MSS., some of which had never been opened since they were laid aside by Godwin's own hand, many years before his death. Mrs Shelley began to arrange them for publication soon after that event, in 1836, but many packets had apparently not been examined by her. This fact renders it the more necessary that I should state that while Sir Percy Shelley has sanctioned my work as a whole, he is in no way whatever answerable for details. I only am responsible for the selections made and inferences drawn from the papers, as well as for every opinion expressed in the book.

A very few of the letters have been already printed—some of Godwin's by Lady Shelley in her "Shelley Memorials," and some of Coleridge's by Mr Garnett in a Magazine article.

In all cases where there appeared to be the smallest doubt in regard to the publication of documents, I have consulted, where possible, the representatives of the persons concerned, and have obtained their permission to print the letters.

C. K. P.

February 1876.