



THE
OLD ENGLISH DRAMATISTS

BY
JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL



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NOTE

IN the spring of 1887, Mr. Lowell read, at the Lowell Institute in Boston, six lectures on the Old English Dramatists. They had been rapidly written, and in their delivery much was said extemporaneously, suggested by the passages from the plays selected for illustration of the discourse. To many of these passages there was no reference in the manuscript; they were read from the printed book. The lectures were never revised by Mr. Lowell for publication, but they contain such admirable and interesting criticism, and are in themselves such genuine pieces of good literature, that it has seemed to me that they should be given to the public.¹

CHARLES ELIOT NORTON.

¹ Before their publication in this volume, these Lectures appeared in *Harper's Magazine*, in the numbers from June to November, 1892.