



The Idea of Tragedy, in Ancient and Modern Drama: Three Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution, February, 1900 (Classic Reprint)

W. L. Courtney

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Excerpt from The Idea of Tragedy, in Ancient and Modern Drama: Three Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution, February, 1900

My Dear Courtney,

Your publishers have flatteringly invited me to write an "Introduction" to your lectures on The Idea of Tragedy, but, even were I competent to avail myself of so great a privilege, I should consider it in the highest degree presumptuous, as it would be superfluous, in me to "introduce" an acknowledged scholar and authoritative critic like yourself. When the scholar and thinker speaks of immortal poets, and of their development of an idea which has proved a source of noble and lofty inspiration to man through innumerable ages, the playwright of to-day, seeking illumination, must surely be among the humblest of his listeners. What has such an one to do with the part of Master of Ceremonies? And what need have you of such a functionary? However, I feel that personally I owe you a large debt of gratitude, and in payment I can only offer you this my note of hand.

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