SELECTIONS FROM THE BRITISH APOLLO, CONTAINING ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS IN LITERATURE, SCIENCE, FOLK-LORE, AND LOVE, PERFORMED BY A SOCIETY OF GENTLEMEN IN THE REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649700936

Selections from the British Apollo, Containing Answers to Curious Questions in Literature, Science, Folk-Lore, and Love, Performed by a Society of Gentlemen in the Reign of Queen Anne by G. W. Niven

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd. Cover @ 2017

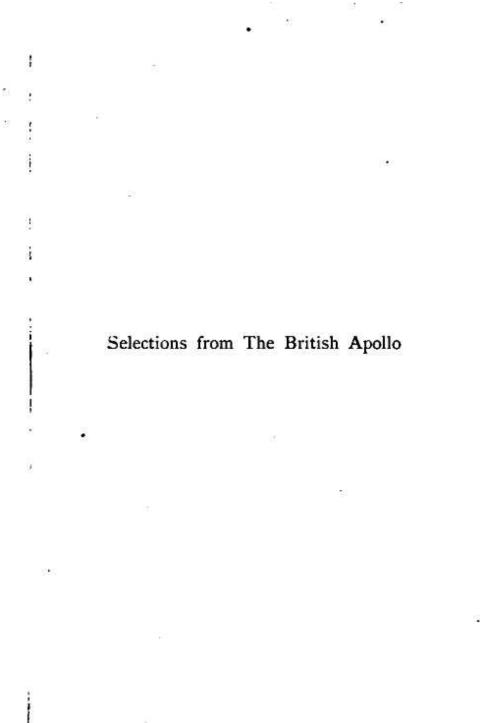
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EDITED BY THE LATE	
G. W. NIVEN	
Honovary Secretary, Greenock Natural History Society	
WITH INTRODUCTION BY	
THE REV. HUGH MACMILLAN	
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PAISLEY : ALEXANDER GARDNER publisher by appointment to the late Queen Victoria	
1903	

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Commendatory Ode

TO THE AUTHORS OF THE BRITISH APOLLO.

HAIL / glorious bards, who on Parnassus sit, Sole arbitrators of substantial wit ; Who from your unexhausted source impart, In flowing streams, all Science, ev'ry Art; Your labours pregnant by collectial fire. Each line confessing your illustrious sire: Not all the praise the thankful age can show Can e'er discharge the mighty debt they owe. To you the anxious and desponding mind Address, and balm for every sorrow find ; You teach them how to wash away in tears Each crime, relax their griefs, dispel their fears : But with amazements you possess us, while So wondrous clear our doubts you reconcile. Even from antipathies an harmony You raise, and make the long contesting world agree. Th' inquisitive in every thing you teach, Their compass of extensive human reach ; To you, as comprehending all, they look, Concealed in Nature's universal book, A judgment in all Science to obtain, To you they come, and ne'er return in vain. Our smoother hours with tuneful strains you please, More soft than the delicious western breeze, Or dew distilling on the myrtle grove, Or down which decks the pinions of the God of Love. Your hum'rous lines were never rival'd yet, The quick results of sprightly, boundless wit: Those tart, laconic strains aptly detect Follies which serious sense can ne'er affect. The snarling critics now with shame withdraw, Struck with a just, a venerable awe, They find their keen reflections, fond mistakes, Distinguished for their pains, for fools, or rakes. Go on, brave, gen'rous souls, inform mankind, Whilst profit mixed with delight we find : A glorious recompense may all your labours find.

From BRITISH APOLLO.

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PREFACE.

THE publication of this volume is the outcome of a request made to me by a number of my late father's friends, whose desire it was to have in book form some of his many writings.

On undertaking the fulfilment of this wish I found myself in some perplexity, not by any means on account of dearth of material, but as to the selection of that which it would be most desirable to publish—the majority of his writings being of a technical nature. Considering this, and in view of the fact that, had he lived, it was my father's intention to have them published, the editorial articles on the *Britisk Apollo* have been selected, and are now presented with a number of extracts from that quaint and humorous work.

The British Apollo, as will be learned from the succeeding chapters, is a work of extreme rarity, and one which appears to have been quite overlooked by students of the literature of the Queen Anne Period. It is a remarkable fact that the

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