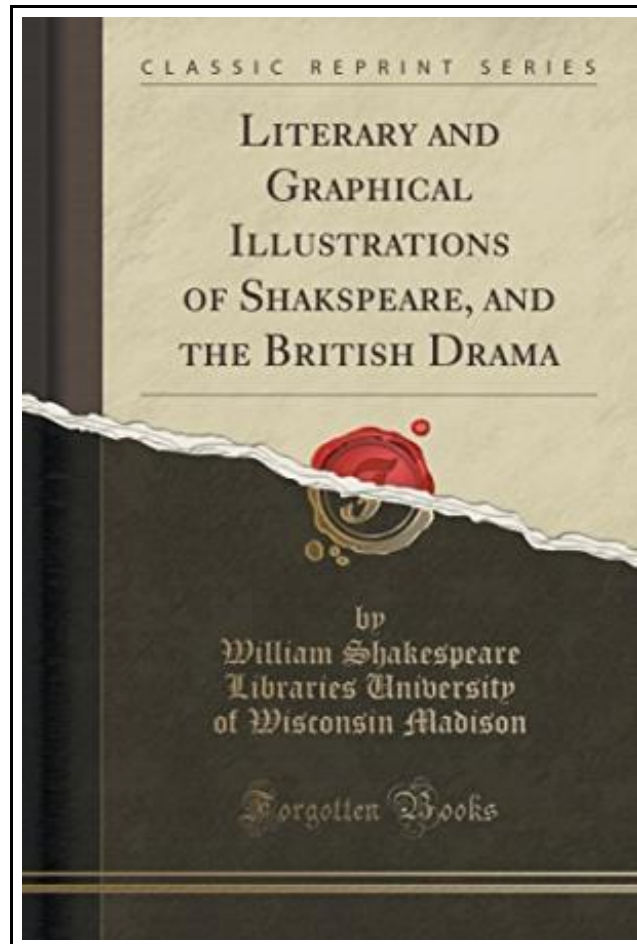


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Forgotten Books, United States, 2015. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 229 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Excerpt from *Literary and Graphical Illustrations of Shakspeare, and the British Drama* However deficient may be the materials for compiling a perfect History of the Drama in England, the illustrations of it, recovered by modern research, are far too numerous to be contained in the space here allotted to the subject: so that the reader will be presented with only some of the leading features of the ancient national Stage, and of the principal points of it s rise and improvement. The old Greek Drama appears to have flourished at Constantinople, until the fourth century of the Christian Era; about which time Gregory of Nazianzen, the Patriarch of that city, a poet, and one of the Fathers of the Church, banished the pagan plays of Sophocles and Euripides from the stage, and introduced those Scripture histories which appear to have been the earliest dramatic entertainments in every part of Europe. In these the Grecian chorusses were turned into Christian hymns, the pieces being arranged on the plan of the more ancient tragedies; and one of the oldest religious dramas written by Gregory is yet extant, called *Christ s Passion*, the prologue to which states, that the Virgin Mary was then for the first time brought upon the stage. The early commercial intercourse between Constantinople and Italy, soon introduced these performances into Europe; in which country the Italian Theatre is affirmed to be the most ancient. The period of it s earliest religious Drama, is, nevertheless, assigned to the year 1243, when a spiritual comedy was performed at Padua; and in 1264, the *Fraternitate del Gonfalone* was established, part of whose occupation was to represent the sufferings of...

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