

## PREFATORY NOTE.

A WRITER on Dryden is more especially bound to acknowledge his indebtedness to his predecessors, because, so far as matters of fact are concerned, that indebtedness must necessarily be greater than in most other cases. There is now little chance of fresh information being obtained about the poet, unless it be in a few letters hitherto undiscovered or withheld from publication. I have, therefore, to acknowledge my debt to Johnson, Malone, Scott, Mitford, Bell, Christie, the Rev. R. Hooper, and the writer of an article in the *Quarterly Review* for 1878. Murray's "Guide to Northamptonshire" has been of much use to me in the visits I have made to Dryden's birthplace, and the numerous other places associated with his memory in his native county. To Mr. J. Churton Collins I owe thanks for pointing out to me a Dryden house which, so far as he and I know, has escaped the notice of previous biographers. Mr. W. Noel Sainsbury, of the Record Office, has supplied me with some valuable information. My friend Mr. Edmund W. Gosse has not only read the proof-sheets of this book with the greatest care, suggesting many things of value, but has also kindly allowed me the use of original editions of many late seventeenth-century works, including most of the rare pamphlets against the poet in reply to his satires.