PREFACE

Three years after the death of Christina Rossetti, Mr. MacKenzie Bell published (1898) a biographical and critical study, *Christina Rossetti*. The poet’s brother, William M. Rossetti, did not at that time judge it fitting to tell the story of his sister’s relations with James Collinson and Charles B. Cayley, the two men who at different periods of her life had won her love. William Rossetti later wrote a memoir of Christina as an introduction to the 1904 edition of her *Poetical Works*, and in 1908 her *Family Letters*. The memoir and the many other volumes of Rossetti material either written or edited by William Rossetti have added to the facts in Mr. Bell’s book. It seemed, therefore, that the present time, the centenary of Christina Rossetti’s birth, was appropriate for a new study of her life and for a more extended criticism of her work than had previously been produced. The niece of Miss Rossetti, Signora Olivia Rossetti Agresti, wrote me that the family had no unpublished material about her aunt. Though I had access to some unpublished letters, my biographical problem was, then, mainly one of interpreting facts collected from books already printed: not only those cited, but also the letters, diaries, and biographies primarily concerned with Dante Gabriel Rossetti and other contemporaries of the poet rather than with Christina Rossetti herself. As critic, I have endeavored to call attention in particular to the relation of Christina Rossetti’s work to the literature of her time, to study her prose books for the light which they throw upon her poetry, and to indicate the association of some of her poems with the experiences of her life.

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I am indebted to the following for permission to quote from their publications: the Macmillan Company for quotations from Christina Rossetti's *Poetical Works* and *New Poems* and from Lady Burne-Jones's *Memorial of Edward Burne-Jones*; Charles Scribner's Sons for passages from *Rossetti Papers* and *The Family Letters of Christina Georgina Rossetti*; George Bell and Sons Ltd., and Mr. H. C. Marillier for a passage from the latter's *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*; Sands and Company for extracts from *Rossetti Papers* and *Gabriele Rossetti*; and the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge for extracts from Christina Rossetti's devotional prose works. I am indebted also to Mr. Arthur Rossetti for his permission to quote from the works of the Rossetti family.

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