

PREFACE.

I BEGAN this edition five or six years ago, in the hope that I might be able to clear away some of the obstacles which perplex all readers of what is still a most attractive drama. Though I cannot say that this hope became stronger as the work went on, I have certainly felt more and more the attractiveness of the subject. If the task has turned out harder than I expected, it has at the same time come to seem more worth doing.

On the general question of the state of the text and its possible history I have no original views to propound. All I have tried to do is to ascertain and weigh the views of others, and to arrive by selection at what seems to me the most probable hypothesis. This is, speaking generally, that the *Iphigeneia at Aulis* was left by Euripides in too unfinished a state to be put on the stage: that the man or men who prepared it for such representations not only added passages at the end and in the body of the play, but rearranged the prologue: and lastly that of small casual interpolations of a later date the text of this tragedy contains an exceptionally large share. For further details under this head I must refer the reader to my introduction and commentaries. My original contributions have been confined to attempts at the emendation and elucidation of particular passages, and for these likewise I must refer to the Critical and Explanatory Notes.