This book is primarily a critical study of those aspects of 18th century English literature which offer rest and refreshment to our disturbed and feverous age. But it is much more than that. George Saintsbury's hearty likes and dislikes, and his expression of them, have a tonic quality which give him a place all his own among English critics. He is as enjoyable to read for disagreement as for agreement, for his excoriating prejudices as for his more accustomed sobriety of judgment. Sir Herbert Grierson, his successor at Edinburgh University, has written a personal and critical introduction to this new edition of what many hold to be Saintsbury's best book.