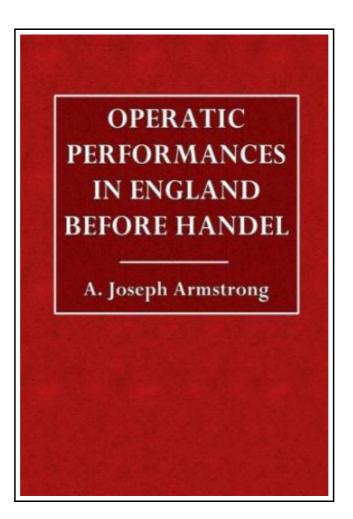
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OPERATIC PERFORMANCES IN ENGLAND BEFORE HANDEL (PAPERBACK)



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Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. From the beginning of the first chapter. This study deals chiefly with the early opera in its connection with English letters. Music has been considered only as it serves to give a more distinct and comprehensive view of the principal theme. This limitation is necessary because with a few exceptions the scores of operas composed before the time of Handel have been lost. The nature of the music therefore can only be surmised from incidental references to it, scattered throughout diaries, letters and other contemporary records. The seventeenth century idea of opera differed materially from our own. The essentials of opera in Italy and France varied in important details from those of English opera so that a definition must be formulated covering the English conditions. An opera, it would seem, was a drama, either tragic or comic, which called to its aid in its presentation the sister art of music in the form of set songs, choruses and recitatives. Its subject was commonly romantic, and it employed like other romantic drama, the effectiveness of elaborate scenery, stage effects and costuming, setting more store on these accessories than did other plays. It differed from the masque in the subsidiary place which it gave to dancing and in the greater coherence of its plot. Though it suffered in its history certain changes in detail, its essential features lay in the fact that it was a musical drama. Davenant was the first writer of English opera. But to him an opera was any dramatic performance with song, recitative, instrumental music and scenic accompaniment. Joseph Knight accounts thus for Davenant s usage of the term: His reason for using the word seems to have been ...

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