

**WARBLINGS BY THE
WAY: OR, LAYS OF
LOVE AND PROGRESS**

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Warblings by the Way: Or, Lays of Love and Progress by James Souter

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JAMES SOUTER

**WARBLINGS BY THE
WAY: OR, LAYS OF
LOVE AND PROGRESS**



James Souther,
N. Castle-on-Tyne.

Wanderings by the Way;

OR,

LAYS OF LOVE AND PROGRESS.

BY

JAMES SOUTER.

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INTRODUCTION.



HERE are the outbreathings of a true and tender spirit, with something in them of the freshness and fragrance of spring-time. JAMES SOUTER was more than a mere maker of verses. His life was a poem; not a finished poem truly, for he was cut off in the midst of his days; but still a poem, for it had reality, imagination, music, and oneness. For more than twenty years he did with admirable efficiency and urbanity the work of Honorary Secretary to Bath Lane Church Sunday School. In the performance of his secular calling he showed a religious sense of duty worthy of an ancient Roman. Never late, never in a hurry, never idle, his life flowed on like a clear and quiet stream. The whole of Sunday—all the year round—was given to the church, the school, and the culture of the spiritual life. The spare week-day evening hours were given to English literature, over the whole of which he ranged. He was familiar with its poetry, and knew "Paradise Lost"

by heart. His social life was pure and joyous. Over all was shed the mellowed light of Christian thought and feeling. With a full and cultured mind he had a ready pen. When passing events struck a chord in his breast, his verse flowed unbidden. Such is the history of most of the pieces in this volume. JAMES SOUTER'S heart beat high with hope for the future of his race: all the higher that it thrilled with faith in immortality. A Christian freed-man, Liberty found in him a steadfast friend. Too soon we have lost him. We have laid him in the silent tomb. His spirit, we believe, has joined the full-voiced choir. Last May morning, with the dew of his youth still upon him, he gave promise of higher soaring and sweeter singing; to-day our dull ears cannot hear the voice, but only its echo in these lays, and we are left to scatter a few flowers of spring-time on his early grave.

"Pure as the naked heavens—majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay."

JOHN HUNTER RUTHERFORD.

May Day, 1879.



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