POEMS OF WORDSWORTH, SHELLEY AND KEATS. SELECTED FROM "THE GOLDEN TREASURY" OF FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE. EDITED FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS

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Poems of Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats. Selected From "The Golden Treasury" of Francis Turner Palgrave. Edited for the Use of Schools by William Wordsworth & Percy Bysshe Shelley & John Keats

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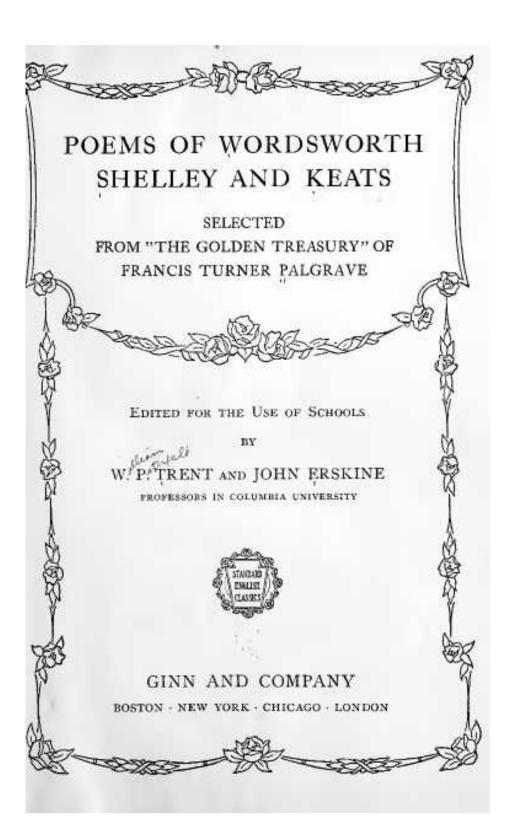
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH & PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY & JOHN KEATS

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Trieste



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH



EDITORIAL NOTE

This edition of those poems of Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats selected by Palgrave for his "Golden Treasury" is intended to meet the requirements recently adopted for high-school students. We have tried to let the poems speak for themselves, adding only such notes of information as seem needed in a book designed for study rather than for more or less rapid reading. For the most part we have avoided æsthetic criticism; where all is so excellent, the reader cannot go wrong if he makes his own choices and discoveries. In preparing the notes, we have consulted the available annotations, and wish to acknowledge much serviceable guidance, especially from the elaborate commentary by Mr. J. H. Fowler and Mr. W. Bell, published by The Macmillan Company, and from the edition by Mr. Herbert Bates, published by Longmans, Green & Co. In the omission of most metrical and etymological matters, we have wished to make clear to teachers and students what seem to us the more important steps in the approach to poetry.

> W. P. T. J. E.

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LYRICAL POETRY

1

Of all literary types the lyric is perhaps the easiest to recognize and the hardest to define. If we say that the lyric is a song, — a poem which is written to be sung or which sounds as if it might be sung, we should have to include under our definition the Old English or Scotch hallad, which has the suggestion of song, but which is narrative and belongs rather to the type of the short story. Palgrave chose for his anthology, the "Golden Treasury," those poems which turned upon a single thought, feeling, or situation. Yet this formula did not represent his notion of the lyric; for he adds that he excluded narrative, descriptive, and didactic poems, "unless accompanied by rapidity of movement, brevity, and the coloring of human passion." The heart of his definition really lay in the last modest phrase, " the coloring of human passion."

For the lyric is essentially that literary type which expresses emotion, just as the drama and the novel express active experience, and the essay expresses thought. In his study of "The School of Giorgione" Walter Pater said that all art tends to become music - that is, to stir emotions rather than to state intellectual ideas. A musician is annoved when some one asks what the music "means"; to him it is a feeling, not a statement; it means no more than does the taste of sugar. So the painter is annoyed at the common attempt to read a story into a picture; to him the picture is a scheme of color and an arrangement of lines, - a sensation for the eye, as music is for the ear. But the average man looks for an idea, -- especially in the United States, where " intellect " has unfortunately been rated higher than the gift and training to appreciate beauty; and in all art we see a certain struggle between the artist's desire to set out the loveliness of the world for man's enjoyment, and man's contrary desire that art shall say something that can be translated into words.