

**EDWARD FITZGERALD AND "POSH"
"HERRING MERCHANTS". INCLUDING A
NUMBER OF LETTERS FROM EDWARD
FITZGERALD TO JOSEPH FLETCHER OR
"POSH", NOT HITHERTO PUBLISHED**

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Edward Fitzgerald And "Posh" "Herring Merchants". Including a Number of Letters from Edward Fitzgerald to Joseph Fletcher Or "Posh", Not Hitherto Published by James Blyth

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JAMES BLYTH

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"POSH" FLETCHER IN 1870. TAKEN FOR EDWARD FITZGERALD

Frontispiece

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BY
JAMES BLYTH

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS



LONDON
JOHN LONG
NORRIS STREET, HAYMARKET

MCMVIII

TO
W. ALDIS WRIGHT, Esq., M.A.
VICE-MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

I DEDICATE THIS SKETCH
WITH MOST SINCERE THANKS FOR HIS
INVALUABLE ASSISTANCE IN CONNECTION THEREWITH
AND FOR HIS PERMISSION TO PRINT
THE LETTERS OF EDWARD FITZGERALD
WHICH ARE NOW PUBLISHED FOR THE FIRST TIME

JAS. BLYTH

March, 1908

PREFACE

THERE can be no better foreword to this little sketch of one of the phases of Edward FitzGerald's life than the following letter, written to Thomas Carlyle in 1870, which was generously placed at my disposal by Dr. Aldis Wright while I was giving the sketch its final revision for the press. The portrait referred to in the letter is no doubt that reproduced as the photograph of 1870.

“DEAR CARLYLE,

“Your ‘Heroes’ put me up to sending you one of mine—neither Prince, Poet, or Man of Letters, but Captain of a Lowestoft Lugger, and endowed with all the Qualities of Soul and Body to make him Leader of many more men than he has under him. Being unused to sitting for his

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portrait, he looks a little sheepish—and the Man is a Lamb with Wife, Children, and dumber Animals. But when the proper time comes—abroad—at sea or on shore—then it is quite another matter. And I know no one of sounder sense, and grander Manners, in whatever Company. But I shall not say any more; for I should only set you against him; and you will see all without my telling you and not be bored. So least said soonest mended, and I make my bow once more and remain your

“Humble Reader,

“E. FG.”

Too much has been made by certain writers, with more credulity than discretion, of some personal characteristics of a great-hearted man. My purpose in tendering this sketch to the lovers of FitzGerald is to show that in many ways he has been calumniated. The man who could write the letters to his humble friend, which are here

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printed; the man who could show such consistent tenderness and delicacy of spirit to his fisherman partner, and could permit the enthusiasm of his affection to blind him to the truth, was no sulky misanthrope; but a man whose heart, whose intensely human heart, was so great as to preponderate over his magnificent intellect. Edward FitzGerald was a great poet, and a great philosopher. He was a still greater man.

Therefore, my readers, if, during the perusal of these few letters, you "in your . . . errand reach the spot"—whether it be at Woodbridge, Lowestoft, or in that supper-room in town "Where he made one"—". . . turn down an empty glass" to his memory.

For there is no *Saki* to do it, either here or with the houris.

JAMES BLYTH