

**ROMANCE OF SONG;  
OR, THE MUSE IN  
MANY MOODS**

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Romance of Song; Or, The Muse in Many Moods by William Reid

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**WILLIAM REID**

**ROMANCE OF SONG;  
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ROMANCE OF SONG.

By the same Author.

— — —  
*Will shortly be published, uniformly with*  
"ROMANCE OF SONG,"

GEORDIE SINCLAIR,  
AND OTHER POEMS.

ALSO

THE LADY OF CLARE,  
AND OTHER POEMS.

# ROMANCE OF SONG

OR

The Muse in Many Moods

BY

WILLIAM REID



LONDON

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TRAFALGAR SQUARE, W.C.

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## PREFACE.

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T is usual for an author, in making his *debut* in the Republic of Letters, to herald his work with some prefatory remarks which may interest the reader. In following this immemorial custom, the author of the volume now before the public, may in this instance be deemed egotistical in explaining his motives for presenting himself in the poetical character. In that case he must run the gauntlet of the critical few, and trust to their magnanimous indulgence. He has little else to say to them in vindication of that assumption ; preferring to address himself to the general reader, and to those lovers of Nature who seek gratification in the poetical delineation of its sympathies,—in unison with the fraternal aspirations of humanity. The work he now offers to public favour, he is constrained to hazard on its own merits. If that is not sufficient to win its way to popular acceptance, nothing he can say will avail in influencing the verdict he is prepared to accept without solicitude or emotion. He is not very sanguine in anticipating an exemption from the common fate that invariably awaits the votary of song. Yet he is free to confess that the meed of appreciation will be duly esteemed as a recompense for his

mental labour, and an encouragement to further efforts. He has no desire to be "mute" and "inglorious," nor allow the supercilious world to chill "the genial current of his soul." Intellectual gifts are entitled to recognition according to their intrinsic merits, independent of conventional affinity or favour. This is an age of exclusiveness, even in the province of letters when associated with the privileged coteries who dominate society. He, therefore, who belongs to the ubiquitous order outside of the *Alumni*, must be sustained by the conscious possession of inherent power before he can confidently claim his proper place among the recognised lights of literature. To the pre-eminent attribute of the "divine afflatus," the author is modest enough to declare he has not the assurance to claim a distinction so inconsistent with his obscurity. This observation may seem ironical, but it is hoped the reader will not construe it in that sense. Like many others who have appeared on the literary horizon, the author may plead in exculpation of his promiscuous advent, the want of those golden opportunities poets desire, but are seldom permitted to enjoy in the society of the Muse. It will not, therefore, be expected that the fitful vibrations of his lyre can be compared to the more elaborate productions of the lofty hierophants of song. Yet he trusts he is not altogether devoid of imagination, poetic fervour, or literary merit in the effusions now presented with some diffidence to public scrutiny. Loving candour for its own sake, he has no hesitation in saying he believes the lucubrations which follow have sufficient charms of thought, feeling, and fancy, to insure some attention from the lovers of poesy. If they possess the power to touch the heart, or thrill a chord in unison with Nature, it will realise the object of his efforts to add another link which binds

humanity still closer in "kindred ties that stretch beyond the deep." Among the poems comprised in the present collection, some were composed in early life; but in making this admission the author has no desire to snatch a retrospective wreath to glimmer on a mature brow. They are inserted on the simple plea that they revive the cherished memories of youth, which all may readily allow is a meritorious plea for a poet. In conclusion, the author hopes the "Romance of Song," in its varied moods, may gratify the mental aspirations of those who seek in poetry the higher aims, the kindred sympathies, and ennobling triumphs of humanity. When these exalting influences inspire the soul, then, like the Pythoness of old, its auguries become divine.

LONDON, *September 1883.*