

**THE CIRCLING
YEAR, AND
OTHER POEMS**

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The Circling Year, and Other Poems by A. B. Todd

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A. B. TODD

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BY

A. B. TODD,



AUTHOR OF "POEMS, LECTURES, AND MISCELLANIES."

LONDON :

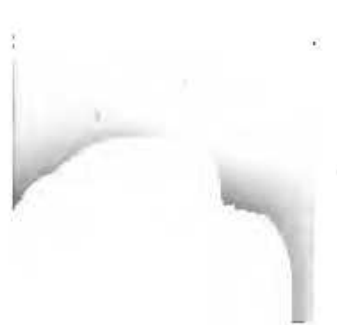
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TO

JOHN FRANCIS WALLER, Esq., LL.D.,

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY,

&c. &c. &c.



DEAR SIR,

I dedicate "The Circling Year" to you, not so much because of the high and well-deserved place which you have long occupied in the walks of literature, as because no living poet, for the last quarter of a century, has been so often in my thoughts as yourself; and also because that, ever since I made your acquaintance as a writer, no one has afforded me a purer or a more exquisite pleasure. I have returned again and again, with ever-increasing delight, to your incomparable "Slingsby Papers;" and very often, as I have rambled among the green hills of Scotia in the balmy, dreamy summer days, or traversed her purple moors in the mellow autumn time, I have breathed aloud your beautiful, and to me matchless, lyrics, upon the light winds which wantoned among the green glens, and along the banks of many a lonely, limpid, tinkling stream which gush and meander around the sources of the Ayr, the Lugar, the Afton, and the Nith; upon or near to the

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beautiful banks and brass of which I have passed the greater part of my life.

Thus, though I have never seen you in the body, and it is but recently that I have been honoured by your correspondence and friendship, and by your approving encouragement; yet I have long been intimate with you in spirit, and so feel, even now, as if I was addressing myself to one with whom I had long been personally familiar.

In the following Poems I have not designedly imitated any school of poetry or any author, so far as I know, unless it be in the mere structure of the verse.

Born in the country, and reared to agricultural and pastoral pursuits, amid scenes of picturesque beauty, and of stirring and often hallowed historical associations; and trained by a noble, pious, and poetic mother, my heart was early captivated by the loveliness and the sublimities of Nature, and moved and fired in no ordinary degree by gazing upon the battle scenes of bygone ages, where our forefathers bravely fought for their civil liberty, and for their religious faith; and where, in the stirring Covenanting times, they often conquered even when they fell. My mind has become attached to such scenes, and especially to the quiet retirement of the country, in an almost over-

mastering degree ; and my happiest hours have been spent alone, or with some loved companion of congenial tastes, in traversing the trackless wilds, threading the pathless woods, tracing the unpolluted streams which run among the hills, or in gazing upon the rippling waters of some lonesome loch far in among the mountains, and watching the little waves chasing each other on to the green or silvery shore.

To me, the grandest picture-gallery has always been the ever-changing clouds of heaven, and especially those around the morning chambers of the sun ; and in among the great glowing curtains which he gathers around his burning brow, as he rolls down the western sky on a calm summer night, and sinks from sight behind the splintered pinnacles of the hills in Arran's isle, all flickering and glowing in rays of rosy, saffron, or orange light ; while down below, and far around, the wide waters of the Frith of Clyde glow like some " sea of glass, mingled with fire."

Though far from being insensible to the charms of music, yet no concert of human voices ever thrilled me half so much as the morning or the evening piping of the thrush, in some greenwood glen, where the living waters of some gushing stream mingled its voice in the melody, or the lark warbling his song of love and gladness far up