

**THE VALE OF OBSCURITY,
THE LAVANT,
AND OTHER POEMS**

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The Vale of Obscurity, the Lavant, and Other Poems by Charles Crocker

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CHARLES CROCKER

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THE
VALE OF OBSCURITY,

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LAVANT,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY CHARLES CROCKER.

CHICHESTER:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR BY W. MASON.
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GREEN, LONDON.

17
1830.

TO THE
RIGHT REVEREND
ROBERT-JAMES,
LORD BISHOP OF CHICHESTER,

THE FOLLOWING

POEMS

ARE

(BY PERMISSION)

WITH SINCERE RESPECT AND HEARTFELT GRATITUDE,

INSCRIBED BY

HIS LORDSHIP'S

MUCH OBLIGED AND HUMBLE SERVANT,

CHARLES CROCKER.

At lucre or renown let others aim ;
I only wish to please the gentle mind,
Whom Nature's charms inspire, and love of human kind.

BEATTIE.

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PREFACE.

I HAVE for many years found a pleasing, and, I hope, an innocent gratification, in the composition of verses, and though I have, at times, been told that they were not destitute of merit, and might afford pleasure to others should they become more known, yet I never, until a few months ago, entertained an expectation of seeing them in print. I knew that it was by no means uncommon, in the present day, for persons in similar circumstances with myself, to produce tolerable and even excellent poetry. I knew, too, that my poems could never be brought forward without the assistance of powerful patrons; and such assistance I did not expect to find. Under these impressions I have hitherto thought it prudent to keep them as much as possible out of sight, solacing myself with the pleasure which the practice itself, and the approbation of a few partial friends afforded.

But perhaps it may be asked, "Why are they now printed?" The reason is as follows. My MS. papers have of late accidentally fallen into the hands of persons capable of judging of such things, and been pronounced by them not unworthy of publication. They gave it as their

opinion that there would be no impropriety in endeavouring to convert that which had so long been to me a most delightful source of private amusement, into one of profit and advantage. I wish it, however, to be understood that I have no idea of becoming an author by profession. It is more than probable that I shall never appear again in this character. The occupation by which I have hitherto procured subsistence for my family, is, in my opinion, not less honourable (considering my condition in life), and far more likely to be attended with success, than the precarious pursuits of literature. I have thought it proper to state this because I know there exists in the minds of some of my best friends an apprehension, that the publication of my poems, should they be favourably received, may be attended with consequences prejudicial to my future welfare.

I should have considered the foregoing a sufficient Introduction; but it has been suggested to me by several persons, whose opinion I have reason to value, that, as the perusal of this volume will probably excite a desire to know something of my personal history, I should do well to preface it with a short biographical sketch. My claims on public attention are, I am aware, very slight, and not likely to be repeated; and, therefore, I feel that I have no right to obtrude upon it, at any length, a narration of the unimportant events of my life. Nevertheless, something may, and perhaps ought to be said, of the means by which I have gained the small stock of knowledge I possess. This may serve as an apology for the defects which the critical reader cannot fail to discover in my compositions; and when he is informed of the care and attention which I have bestowed upon my favourite pursuit, he will not be surprised at the degree of polish which those who have lately seen my poems, have been pleased to say they observe in several of them. I will therefore briefly notice such circumstances as seem to me necessary for these purposes.