

**A TALE OF TRUE
LOVE: AND OTHER
POEMS; PP. 1-136**

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A Tale of True Love: And Other Poems; pp. 1-136 by Alfred Austin

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POET LAUREATE



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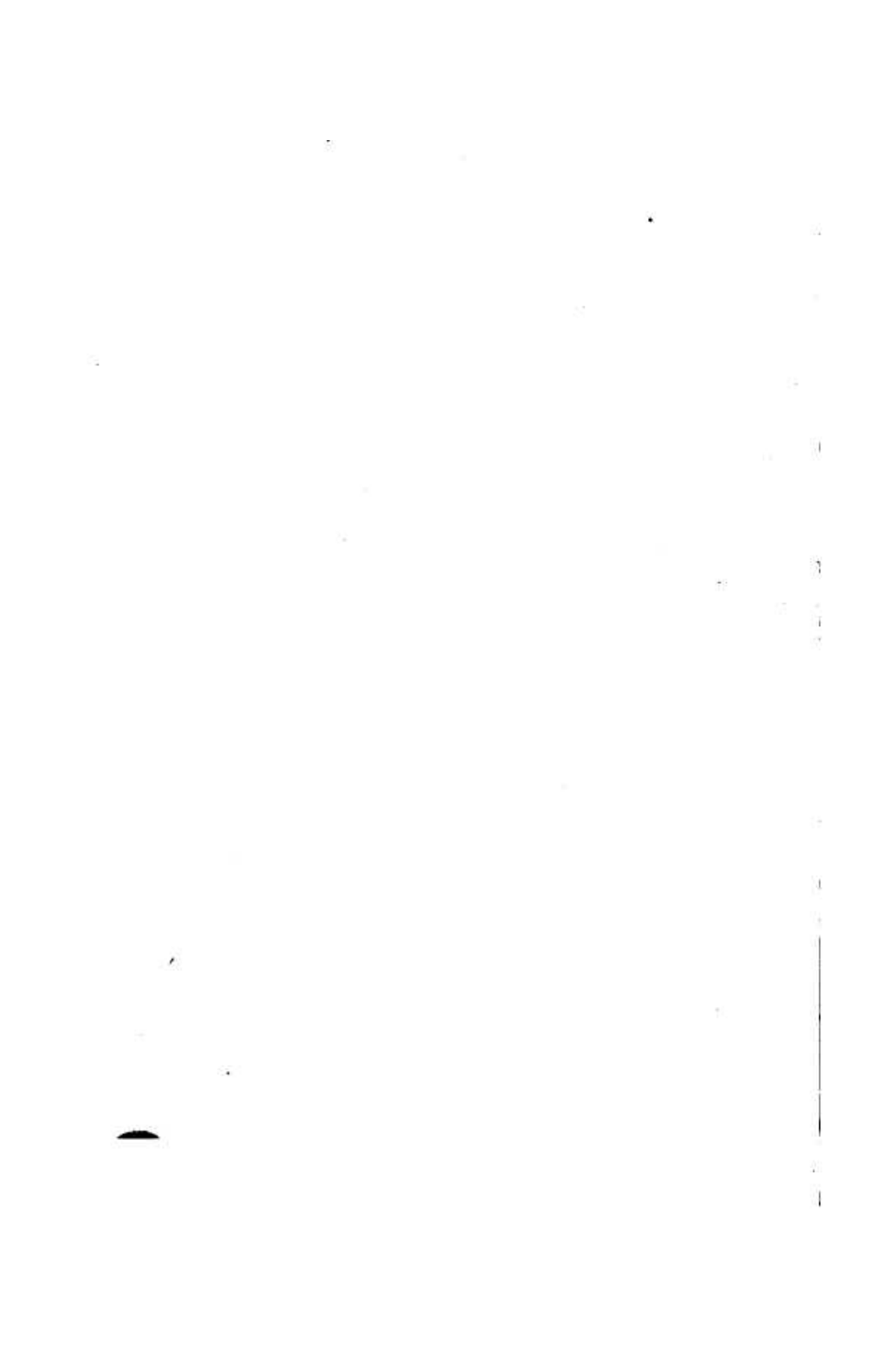
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TO ONE
EVEN MORE DISTINGUISHED FOR HIS PERSONAL QUALITIES
THAN FOR HIS POLITICAL POSITION
LOFTY THOUGH IT BE
PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
I INSCRIBE THIS VOLUME
WITH DEEP ADMIRATION AND RESPECT





PREFACE
TO THE AMERICAN EDITION



I HAVE long observed that the only way of addressing the American people that is agreeable to them is to do so with unhesitating frankness; and as that mode of address is, if we may say so, as congenial to the present writer as it is to themselves, he is going to avail himself of it on this occasion.

He finds that, on their side of the ocean as on ours, there are many persons who imagine that the office of Poet Laureate is a mere court appointment, and that the holder of it is expected, on stated occasions, to publish courtly sentiments in verse; and, as this conception is calculated to



prepossess American opinion against both, he wants to assure them it is a wholly mistaken one. Do they think, had such been the nature and responsibilities of the office, it would ever have been offered to a man of such manly independence of character as Walter Scott; or is it to be supposed that such men as Wordsworth and Tennyson would have accepted it without hesitating, had any taint of courtly servility been attached to it? But, as a fact, it was expressly understood, when Southey was nominated to the post, that, whatever might have once been its supposed functions and obligations, these had altogether passed away, thanks to one of those unwritten but none the less operative modifications that are continuously taking place in the British Constitution and British society; and, when the present writer had the honor, however undeserved, of being nominated as Tennyson's successor, it was in writing communicated to him, with that spontaneous graciousness of language which was one of the distinctive gifts of our late beloved and revered Queen, that she was