

# POEMS

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Poems by Mary E. Coleridge

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**MARY E. COLERIDGE**

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## PREFACE

POETRY needs no introduction ; but with the present volume a few words of explanation seem desirable. As a poetess, Mary Coleridge never came before the public under her own name ; her printed verse was always either anonymous or signed with the pseudonym "*Arados*"—a name taken from George Macdonald's romance, "*Phantastes*," where it is evidently intended to bear the meaning of "*Wanderer*." Probably several reasons or feelings prompted this concealment ; the one by which my own arguments were always met was the fear of tarnishing the name which an ancestor had made illustrious in English poetry.

She would close the discussion with a gay and characteristic inconsistency—"Never, as long as I live! When I am dead, you may do as you like." Now that death has so soon taken her at her word, I cannot help thinking myself justified in acting on that permission, however lightly given; and I believe that no poems are less likely than these to jar upon lovers of "Christabel" and "The Ancient Mariner."

The poems of *Ἄρπυιαι* have already made friends for themselves, and their re-appearance in a single volume, accessible to all, has long been desired. Those numbered I. to XLVIII. in the present collection were issued in 1896 by Mr. Daniel, from his private press at Oxford: but the edition was limited to one hundred and twenty-five copies, of which about one-third are now, it is believed, in America, and the remainder in this country practically beyond the reach of a purchaser.