

**A BROWNING PRIMER: BEING A
COMPANION TO THE POCKET-
VOLUME OF SELECTIONS FROM
THE POETICAL WORKS OF
ROBERT BROWNING**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649483341

A Browning Primer: Being a Companion to the Pocket-Volume of Selections From the Poetical Works of Robert Browning by Esther Phoebe Defries

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ESTHER PHOEBE DEFRIES

**A BROWNING PRIMER: BEING A
COMPANION TO THE POCKET-
VOLUME OF SELECTIONS FROM
THE POETICAL WORKS OF
ROBERT BROWNING**



ROBERT BROWNING

A
BROWNING PRIMER

BEING

A COMPANION TO THE POCKET-VOLUME OF
*SELECTIONS FROM THE POETICAL WORKS OF
ROBERT BROWNING*

BY

ESTHER PHEBE DEFRIES

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

DR. F. J. FURNIVALL

Annie Besant Pratt
Furnivall
1893.



London

SWAN SONNENSCHN & CO

NEW YORK: MACMILLAN & CO

1893

23444.41.10

✓

W.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION BY DR. FURNIVALL - - - - -	v
PREFACE - - - - -	vii
CHAPTER I.	
THE LIFE OF BROWNING - - - - -	1
CHAPTER II.	
CHARACTERISTICS OF BROWNING'S POETRY -	5
CHAPTER III.	
THE POEMS - - - - -	14
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE - - - - -	145
INDEX - - - - -	152

N.B.—The Poems are discussed according to their arrangements in the sixteen volume edition of 1889 (Smith, Elder & Co.), which was revised by Browning himself.

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
FROM THE LIBRARY OF
MRS. MARY D. BARCLAY
OCTOBER 14, 1926

INTRODUCTION

THE Browning Society always wanted a Shilling Primer to Browning's works; and when a Shilling Selection from those works was promised, the need for a cheap Primer became more urgent. Miss Defries, now Mrs. Leon, kindly undertook to write the Primer, and Messrs. Swan Sonnenschein & Co. agreed to publish it.

The selection in the shilling volume is badly made, inasmuch as the careless chooser of the poems has (1) put in several third-rate and uninteresting poems of Browning's, and left out some of his best, like *Fra Lippo*, *Caliban*, *Count Gismond*, *Up at a Villa*, *Home Thoughts*; and has (2) confused the time-order of the pieces, putting (for instance) *Porphyria's Lover*, of 1836, between two poems of 1855, *The Statue and the Bust* and *Childe Rolande*; and *Pisgah Sights*, of 1849, between two groups of poems of 1876. But the little book does contain some of the poet's most characteristic works, and has intro-

duced him to many thousand readers who knew little or nothing of him before its appearance. Some of these at least will be glad to see the general sketch of Browning and his poems that Mrs. Leon has drawn up.

For myself, when urging on folk the study of Browning, I always admit his faults, his often failure in moulding his verse, his want of lucidity, his habit of going off at tangents, &c. ; but I insist that for manliness, strength, vividness, penetration, humour, buoyancy, characterisation, insight into music and art, he has no equal in modern poetry. He is not for lovers of the commonplace, the pretty, or the sentimental, for drawing-room misses or namby-pamby dawdlers. He is for men and women with the thews of mind and soul which move the world and raise their possessors to the highest level that mortals can attain. He is worthy of the earnest study of all earnest folk ; and to them I commend him.

F. J. FURNIVALL.

27th October, 1892.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

BEFORE introducing this little book to the public, I should like to thank Dr. Furnivall, who first suggested to me the idea of writing it—not only for the idea, but for the kind use he has allowed me of his Browning Bibliography, and of his books. My thanks are also due to the works of Mrs. Orr, Mr. Arthur Symons, Mr. Nettleship, and Mr. Fotheringham, which have been of much service to me.

This book tries to give a first sketch of Browning's poetry. It is not meant for readers to whom the poems are already familiar, but for those who are as yet unacquainted with them. To such readers critical assistance would be almost premature, and I have in-

tentionally preferred to write in the most conventional and non-critical spirit, hoping no more than that this book may act as a sign-post to the beauties which are to be found in the poems, and to some slight extent as a guide to the way in which difficulties which are sometimes overstated, may be overcome.

My aim is to induce a few more English men and women to read Browning in a spirit of gratitude and affection, in order that they may share the pleasure, and, perhaps, the help, which such reading has given to many besides me.

E. PH. D.