

**AUSTRALIAN AND
OTHER POEMS**

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Australian and Other Poems by Roderick J. Flanagan

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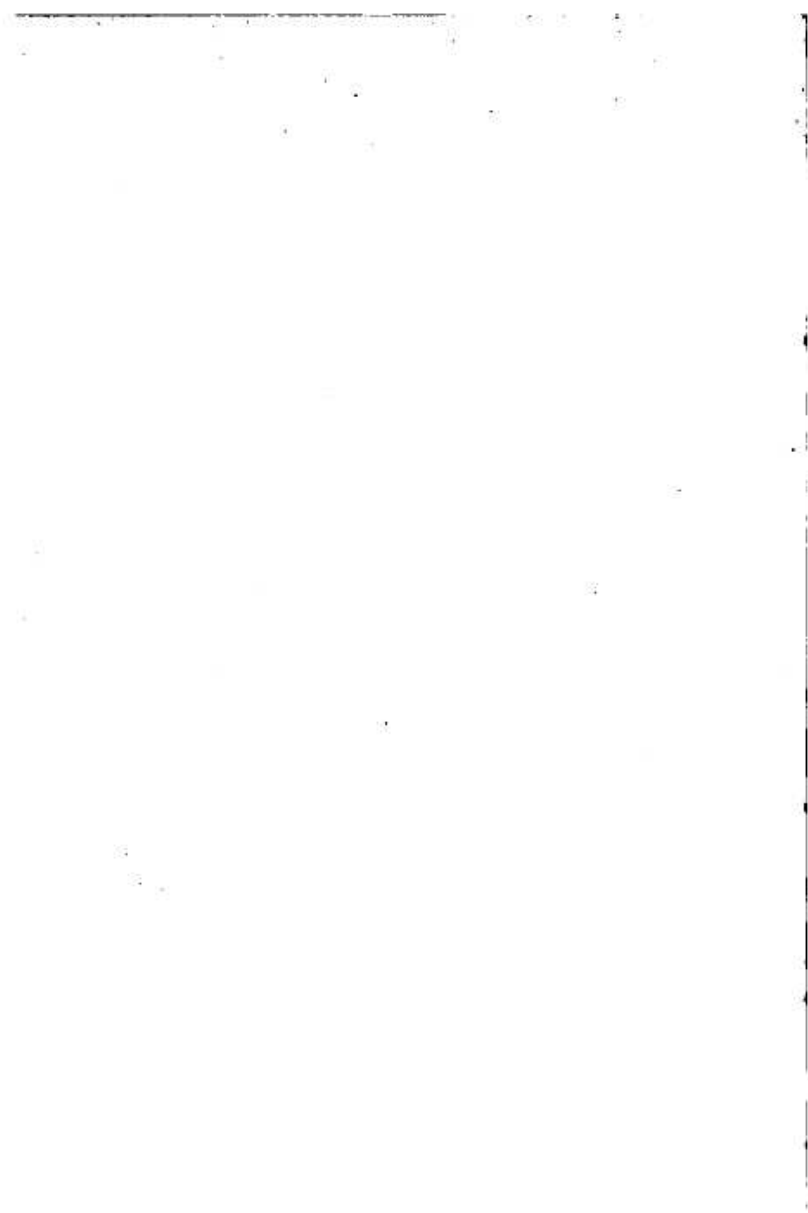
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RODERICK J. FLANAGAN

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A U S T R A L I A N

AND OTHER

P O E M S

BY

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R O D E R I C K J. F L A N A G A N

S Y D N E Y

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PREFACE.

THE author of the following poems died twenty-five years ago. Some of them appeared in various Sydney newspapers, while he was yet living, but many are now printed for the first time. Such exercises were rather the solace and diversion than the serious business of any portion of his literary career—a career which was, unfortunately, as brief as it was full of promise. Distinguished among the journalists of his day, he also made no unimportant mark in what may be termed the regular field of letters. His work on New South Wales, the publication of which, in London, was coincident with his death in that city, at the early age of thirty-three, is justly regarded as a permanently valuable contribution to Australian history. Besides this, he wrote a series of papers in the *Empire news-*

paper on the Aborigines of Australia, which were considered to have shed much light on the manners and customs of that now almost extinct race. It is to be regretted that his death prevented the publication of those essays in book form.

Much that passes for brilliant poetry now-a-days is generally a matter of patience and labour, combined with verbal dexterity and what may be described as a skilful process of assimilation. The faculty alluded to may exist unmingled with a single particle of the genuine quality which it counterfeits. It was decidedly otherwise in Mr. Flanagan's case. That he possessed at least the poetic temperament in a strong degree there can be no doubt. Had he assiduously cultivated the gift he might possibly have struck a memorable note. As it is, there is in these fugitive productions not a little, perhaps, which even the most coldly critical reader can hardly fail to admire: a play of fancy which is occasionally

very graceful ; energetic and picturesque description ; and, above all, a strain of feeling which is unaffectedly simple, generous, and manly.

For such readers, however, the volume is not intended, but chiefly for those to whom it will be a memorial of a friend whose kindly heart was not less calculated to inspire affection than his abilities were to command respect.

November, 1886.