

**THE SPIRIT OF
SPORT IN NATURE
AND OTHER POEMS**

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The Spirit of Sport in Nature and Other Poems by T. S.

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And Other Poems.

Thomas Swann
By T. S.

"Sport is the bloom of perfect health."—EMERSON.



London:
MARCUS WARD & CO., LIMITED, CHANDOS ST.
AND AT BELFAST AND NEW YORK
1883

INTRODUCTORY.

MOST of the poems that compose this volume were submitted to the Rev. George Gilfillan several years before his death. He pointed out their defects, which have since been laboriously corrected; but he also advised the author to publish them. His opinions regarding the whole are expressed in a number of letters in the writer's possession. He says—"Not for many years have I got anything so good: they possess much merit. They show true poetic feeling, even genius. There is an uncommon spirit and energy in most of the verses—genuine poetic and Milesian fire. The spirit is good and true." The author, wishing of course for an audience, however limited, does not feel himself called upon to exercise that amount of self-denial that would be required to suppress such opinions; for, whatever may be the estimate of Gilfillan as a writer, most people are

willing to concede that he understood poetry. In addition to his favourable impressions, he also offered the writer a testimonial of merit, and promised to criticise the poems favourably on their appearance in some review open to him; but, for reasons not worth enumerating now, the poems were not published at the time. "The Spirit of Sport in Nature" may perhaps rest on a narrow "coign of vantage," but those who have minutely watched some of the manifestations of Nature will not feel inclined to question the leading ideas of the poem. In the "Voyages of Zobeiday," the author intended to apply the poetry of romance to a range of subjects seldom found in connection with it. The author regrets the necessity of having to place Gilfillan's opinions in any part of the present publication, but it is a necessity connected with its existence, for without such opinions it would not have seen the light.

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VIGNETTE OF SONG.

WHEN o'er the grass in golden drifts the forest leaves
are scatter'd,

And in the winds an inner voice for ever sighs and
grieves ;

When the lime-tree sheds its glory like an emerald
palace shattered,

And summer dies in red and gold amid her fallen
leaves :

Then in the poet's bosom all the chords of life are
ringing ;

Though Nature fades, her life and light are coursing
through his veins,

And all the joyous summer birds within his heart are
singing,

So he, for very need, must sing to ease his happy
pains.