

# **BRANGONAR: A TRAGEDY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649445387

Brangonar: A Tragedy by George H. Calvert

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

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**GEORGE H. CALVERT**

**BRANGONAR:  
A TRAGEDY**



BRANGONAR

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LEE AND SHEPARD, PUBLISHERS, BOSTON, MASS.

# BRANGONAR

*A Tragedy*

BY  
*George H. Calvert*  
GEORGE H. CALVERT

BOSTON:  
LEE AND SHEPARD, PUBLISHERS  
NEW YORK:  
CHARLES T. DILLINGHAM

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*The Riverside Press, Cambridge:*  
Electrotyped and printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.



## PREFACE.

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FROM his astonishing intellectual and practical capacity, the rapidness of his rise, the grandeur of the historic position he seized, the career of Napoleon offers a high theme for poetic presentation. But the great events whereof he was the originator and the pivot are too near to us to be imaginatively detached from the prosaic realism of history. This detachment is necessary for poetic idealization. Genuine poetic idealization is but a finer setting forth of fact, a more luminous presentment of truth.

For tragedy an historic foundation is the best. As the poet cannot invent history (his counterfeit of it would be soulless and unsubstantial), he must handle reality with poetic imaginativeness, and thus beautify history while interpreting it. Further, to obtain free poetic play history requires to be compressed, foreshortened, exhibited, as it were, in a panorama of peaks, its spirit reproduced through its supreme moments. A period must be distilled and then reëmbodied in the personages who created it. The flavor

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and perfume of a distillation cannot be imparted to personages with whom, from nearness of time, we are so familiar as we are with Talleyrand and Murat and Joseph Bonaparte and Metternich and Castlereagh and their compeers. Even the colossal Napoleon is somewhat belittled by our closeness to him. Familiarity, in such cases, breeds poetic contempt. Poetry refuses to deal directly with these prosaic palpabilities. She cannot transfigure them through her golden veil. And yet, the men and the epoch are so full of life and significance, that with lively signals they beckon to the poetic dramatist. In the following pages an attempt is made to reproduce dramatically Napoleon and his crowded vivid career, to give the essence of a momentous epoch, under a thin disguise to portray the features of the period and the character of its gigantic protagonist.

1868.

