

**FROM FAR LANDS;
POEMS OF
NORTH AND SOUTH**

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From far lands; poems of north and south by J. Laurence Rentoul

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J. LAURENCE RENTOUL

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FROM FAR LANDS



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FROM FAR LANDS

POEMS OF NORTH AND SOUTH

BY

"GERVAIS GAGE"

(J. LAURENCE RENTOUL)

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MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON

1914

IN TOKEN OF GRATEFUL REVERENCE FOR
THE LATE PROFESSOR GEORGE LILLIE CRAIK,
LL.D., etc.
AND
THE LATE PROFESSOR EDWARD DOWDEN,
LL.D., LITT.D., D.C.L., etc.
TWO TEACHERS
OF PROPHETIC KEN AND CREATIVE POWER
WHO FIRST AWAKENED WITHIN ME THE POET VISION
AND THE POET YEARNING,
AND WHOSE SPIRIT AND WORK HAVE BEEN IN MY HEART
AN ABIDING IMPULSE THROUGH THE CHANGEFUL YEARS
AND THROUGH THE FAR LANDS,
THESE POEMS ARE INSCRIBED
BY "GERVAIS GAGE."

AUSTRALIA, 1913.

FOREWORD

THESE, and other, Poems have shaped themselves in the successive pauses of the life-toil of one who is, perforce, a worker, and a wanderer, and an exile.

His infancy and boyhood were moulded amidst the hills and glens, and by the streams and seas, of one of the loveliest and most spirit-haunted nooks of Northern Erin. (His heart clings there still.) Life's call placed him, later, amidst the thought and practicalities of cities, and of the larger world,—England, and, at times, the German Fatherland. Thence Destiny "drove out the man," even as "the Lord God . . . drove out the man" at the first, from the familiar river and trees and "garden" into the "field." And its "curse" and "thorns" have brought also love and work and laughter, as well as heart-break and tears.

From Australia, the Far Land of his adoption, he sends now his message, anxious that her

Vision and her yearning should be sung purely and worthily, with the human pulse-beat old as Man's Knowing and Sin and Sorrow, and new as Man's Love and Remorse and deathless Hope.

He is glad for the growing fellowship of Australasian Seers and Bards who are singing, each by his (or her) own lonely glen or post of vigil, the Message of Man.

Quite apart, however, from all question of the poetic worth or unworth of these Poems, to have discovered three men of such mould as Matthyas Barnewall, and Samuel Perry, and Arithur Wilkinson may be deemed sufficient "apologia" for the publication of this volume.

(It will be evident that the earlier sections of poems—I., II., III., and IV.—belong to my life in the Old Lands, before my departure for Australia.—G. G.)

FROM EDWARD DOWDEN, Esq.,
LL.D., LITT.D., D.C.L., ETC.

IN the winter of 1906 Professor Dowden, having read the MS. of "*Achonry*" and of "*Dunluce*," was good enough to write to "Gervais Gage" (at that time on a visit to Europe):—

"Your poems have brought enlargement, sun, air, sea, space, to a prisoner whose breath is, at present, rather scanty, and whose jailer is bronchitis. They are admirably strong, and very much alive, and very unlike the poetry which is at this moment taken as typically Irish—which has its own kind of shadowy beauty, but not the strong pulse of the general life in it. They promise well, as I think, for 'Gervais Gage.' His volume will have a character of its own. . . . I should like to write at length, but I can only send you good, true, hearty thanks for both '*Achonry*' and '*Dunluce*.' I am struck by their vitality and vigour—vigour of imagination embodying itself in vigour of versification."