

**ROBERT BURNS: AN INQUIRY
INTO CERTAIN ASPECTS OF HIS
LIFE AND CHARACTER AND THE
MORAL INFLUENCE OF HIS
POETRY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649398447

Robert Burns: An Inquiry Into Certain Aspects of His Life and Character and the Moral Influence of his poetry by S. Scotchwoman

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

S. SCOTCHWOMAN

**ROBERT BURNS: AN INQUIRY
INTO CERTAIN ASPECTS OF HIS
LIFE AND CHARACTER AND THE
MORAL
INFLUENCE OF HIS POETRY**

ROBERT BURNS:

AN INQUIRY

INTO CERTAIN ASPECTS OF

His **L**ife and **C**haracter

AND

*THE MORAL INFLUENCE OF HIS
POETRY.*

BY

A SCOTCHWOMAN.

LONDON:
ELLIOT STOCK, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1886.

•

P R E F A C E .

SO much has been written on the life and works of Burns, that it may well seem to most readers as if no more remains to be said. It is not for the purpose of adding any new facts, hitherto unknown to the biographers, that the few pages following have been written, but to clear away certain fabulous legends which have sprung up in connection with the great poet.

The writer pretends to no advantage over other authors for this purpose, except the very important one of having enjoyed many years of the most loving intimacy with some of the immediate descendants of one of the characters described by Burns, as

well as with other relatives and friends of the same person—all of whom knew him intimately. The generation who had the privilege of knowing personally the venerable Dr. Dalrymple, and who were also acquainted with his colleague, Dr. MacGill, has passed away, and we now possess only tradition. But the tradition derived immediately from those who lived through the time has still a value, and when another generation has gone it may be lost.

It seemed, therefore, a duty incumbent on one who knows the truth from the most trustworthy information to relate the simple facts. All students of history know well how facts connected with remarkable men become distorted and changed by passing from mouth to mouth, and even by degrees begin to be mixed up with fable, so that with much laborious examination of old docu-

ments, it is still difficult to arrive at a truthful estimate of historical characters.

Such men are often led by innate force of character to act a part in life which brings them enemies as well as friends and admirers; the former finding out and exaggerating all faults, and too willing to listen to all evil reports; the latter often too willing to hide or extenuate all failings. In this way, after the lapse of centuries, dust and rubbish gather round a great man's history, as they have around the wonderful statues and temples of Greece and Rome.

We are only one century removed from the days when Burns first became famous, yet even in that time gross falsehoods had already arisen in connection with his history, which, instead of being in recent days corrected or dropped, have been repeated even with exaggeration. It was this which made

the writer feel that she owed a duty, not only to the memory of others justly entitled to respect, but also to that of the great poet who, erring as he was, has been much misunderstood.

No desire has been felt to conceal or disguise the sad errors of the poet, even had it been possible to do so. Truth alone has been the aim of the present writing.

This is enough in the way of explanation ; the motive of writing will be still more clear to anyone who is willing to take the trouble to read the following pages.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
BURNS AND CHURCH PARTIES IN	
SCOTLAND - - - - -	I
MISSTATEMENTS OF BURNS'S BIO-	
GRAPHERS - - - - -	9
FURTHER DISTORTIONS OF THE TRUTH	20
THE MINISTERS OF AYR AND THEIR	
FRIENDS - - - - -	28
BURNS'S EDUCATION - - - - -	41
HIS SOCIAL DIFFICULTIES - - - - -	53
HIS RECEPTION IN EDINBURGH - - - - -	58
BURNS AND CLARINDA - - - - -	63
CONCLUSION - - - - -	68
APPENDIX - - - - -	71