TENTATIVE POEMS: A COLLECTION OF VERSE WRITTEN DURING THE PAST FOUR YEARS

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Tentative Poems: A Collection of Verse Written During the Past Four Years by Charles Frederick James Nightingale Stott

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CHARLES FREDERICK JAMES NIGHTINGALE STOTT

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Trieste

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A COLLECTION OF VERSE WRITTEN DURING THE PAST FOUR YEARS.

BY

CHARLES FREDERICK JAMES NIGHTINGALE STOTT
(*S. Boniface Missionary College, Warminster*):

WITH

Prefatory Notice

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "FIRST POEMS."

"DUM SPIRO SPERO."

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TO

MRS. R. MARTIN JOHNSON

AND

MRS. ANGELO W. R. SIMPSON,

IN TOKEN OF AFFECTION AND ESTEEM,

THIS BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

By the Author.

PREFATORY NOTICE.

Mr. Nightingale Stott's religious muse is already recognised by a large number of readers. His gentle verse occupies peculiar prominence in some influential provincial literary circles. His language and style are unique; yet his quaintness and solemnity not unseemly suit with Christian requirements.

During the last four years, among his friends, he has written many poems; and, of these, he sets before the public, in the present form, a few favourites inviting a wider patronage than hitherto.

It was by his wish that I undertook these remarks. In an introduction he had himself designed, Mr. Stott in his particular, modest way writes thus:—

"As a mite in the numberless array of valuable and infinitely more worthy volumes of poetry, which are justly loved by their several possessors, I cannot claim (nor do I wish it) for this little book a place of equal honour."

I like these words not less than that verse that, the

advertisement of which they form part, would in its designed position have been placed before, and to which recommendatory reference has already been made. Indeed, our author's sentence exercises such fitting sentiment that, if the idea of similarly prefacing my own work with quiet statements were not a bygone one, I would learn of him before embodying that idea in action.

In another place Mr. Stott "thanks most sincerely all who have hitherto accorded him their support, and all who may hereafter aid him by reading the verse herein submitted, and he leaves this—the realization of a youthful ambition—not without a hope that it will make rather than mar the prospect of desired future success."

"Every author," says Goethe, "in some degree portrays himself in his works, even be it against his will." I like Mr. Stott in this case; and, as his friends say with the greater poet, our author "is present to us, and designedly, nay, with a friendly alacrity, sets before us his inward and outward modes of thinking and feeling."

And, from his opening *Dedication Poem*, in the which he speaks of early days (see verse 1),

> ". . . *when first I heard the voices*
> Of those in whom now every thought rejoices,"

to his last-written poem of "*The Poet*," telling yet of

> ". . . *one whose work is song*,"

is observable much that induces the conviction that "the prospect of desired future success" shall not be marred thereby.

Now let me join with my friend the author of these

"Tentative Poems" in stating that his satisfaction and my pleasure will be perfect if this should only prove to be the "baby image of the giant mass to come."

In conclusion, may Mr. Stott, like Wordsworth, at a time not far distant from their publication, be found to have formed "no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of his first poems"; and to have justly "flattered himself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure." And, also, in the humbler bard's case, may the result be discovered to differ from his expectation in one thing only, and the announcement be joyous that "a greater number have been pleased than he ventured to hope he should please."

CLAUD VINCENT.

September 24th, 1883.