

**THE POETICAL WORKS OF
ROBERT BROWNING. VOL.
I. PAULINE - PARACELSUS
- STRAFFORD**

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The Poetical Works of Robert Browning. Vol. I. Pauline - Paracelsus - Strafford by Robert Browning

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ROBERT BROWNING

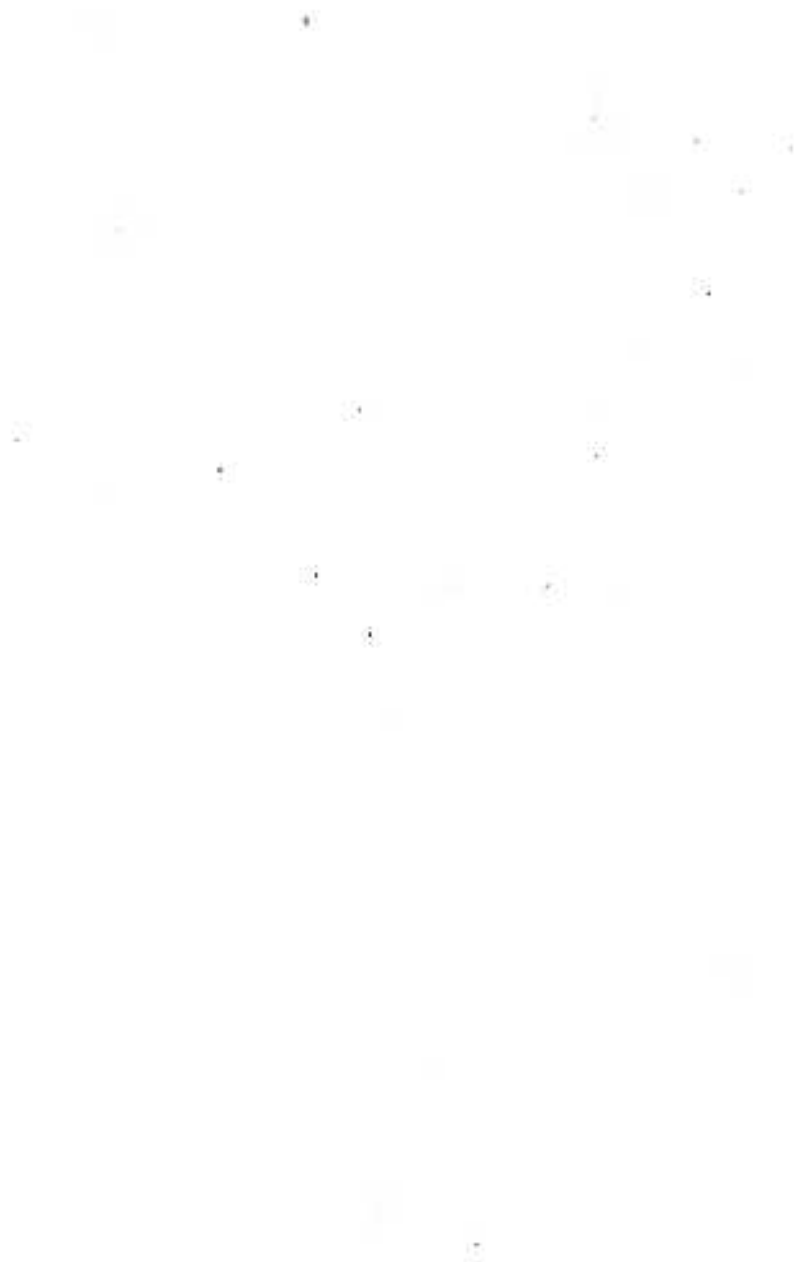
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THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
ROBERT BROWNING,
M. A.,
HONORARY FELLOW OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

VOL. I.

PAULINE — PARACELSUS — STRAFFORD.

SMITH, ELDER AND CO., LONDON.
1868.



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[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page]

THE poems that follow are printed in the order of their publication. The first piece in the series, I acknowledge and retain with extreme repugnance, indeed purely of necessity ; for not long ago I inspected one, and am certified of the existence of other transcripts, intended sooner or later to be published abroad : by forestalling these, I can at least correct some misprints (no syllable is changed) and introduce a boyish work by an exculpatory word. The thing was my earliest attempt at "poetry always dramatic in principle, and so many utterances of so many imaginary persons, not mine," which I have since written according to a scheme less extravagant and scale less impracticable than were ventured upon in this crude preliminary sketch—a sketch that, on reviewal, appears not altogether wide of some hint of the characteristic features of that particular *dramatis persona* it would fain have reproduced : good draughtsmanship, however, and right handling were far beyond the artist at that time.

R. B.

London, December 25, 1857.

PAULINE;
A FRAGMENT OF A CONFESSION.

Plus ne suis ce que j'ai été,
Et ne le saurois jamais être.—MAROT.

NON dubito, quin titulus libri nostri raritate sua quamplurimos alliciat ad legendum : inter quos nonnulli obliquæ opinionis, mente languidi, multi etiam maligni, et in ingenium nostrum ingrati accedent, qui temerarie suis ignorantia, vix conspecto titulo clamabunt : Nos vetita docere, hæresiam semina jacere : piis auribus offendiculo, præclaris ingeniiis scandalo esse : . . . alio conscientie suæ consulentes, ut nec Apollo, nec Musæ omnes, neque Angelus de cælo me ab illorum execratione vindicare queant : quibus et ego nunc consulo, ne scripta nostra legant, nec intelligant, nec meminerint : nam noxia sunt, venenosa sunt : Acherontis ostium est in hoc libro, lapides loquitur, caveant, ne cerebrum illis excutiat. Vos autem, qui æquamente ad legendum venistis, si tantam prudentiæ discretionem adhibueritis, quantum in mente legendo apes, jam securi legite. Puto namque vos et utilitatis hand parum et voluptatis plurimum accepturos. Quod si qua repereritis, quæ vobis non placeant, mittite illa, nec utimini. **NAM ET EGO VOBIS ILLA NON PRODO, SED NARRO.** Cætera tamen propterea non respicite Ideo, si quid liberius dictum sit, ignoscite adolescentiæ nostræ, qui minor quam adolescens hoc opus composui. — *Hen. Cern. Agrippa, De Occult. Philosoph. in Prefat.*

London, January, 1833.
V. A. XX.