

**ROMANTIC BALLADS
AND POEMS
OF PHANTASY**

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Romantic Ballads and Poems of Phantasy by William Sharp

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WILLIAM SHARP

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Romantic Ballads.

By WILLIAM SHARP.

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AND

POEMS OF PHANTASY

BY

WILLIAM SHARP

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*Gift of the
Division of Modern Languages*

TO
E. A. S.

IT is but fitting that I should dedicate this little book to you, who have always had such sterling appreciation of imaginative literature. Like many of our country-folk who have been born or have lived much in the Scottish Highlands, we have, in common, the true Celtic passion for the weird and the supernatural, and for vividly romantic sentiment and action. That there is a Romantic Revival imminent in our poetic literature, a true awakening of the genuinely romantic sentiment, is my earnest conviction. Many things point to this freshly-stirring stream of tendency. Among our younger artists there is a quickening of life, of emotion, even of passion, such as has not animated English art since the days of the endeavour of the Pre-raphaelite Brotherhood: it may prove to be a flash in the pan, or confined to rare individual aberration, but I think not.

In pure fiction, the era of romance as opposed to pseudo-realism is about to begin, if the tide be not already well on the flow: the novel of adventure, of romantic incident, has led the way. In the ebb and flux of literary sentiment, the story of adventure must

always have a steadfast place ; for the world is always youthful to the young, and the young love adventure and romance even when the chill of a reactionary period has touched them with its blight. But, of course, the Romance in its best sense is something much more than a story of romantic adventure : varied incident, indeed, is neither essential nor altogether desirable. There is no adventure in " The Scarlet Letter," for example, but it is a romance in the truest sense. The romantic movement in modern English poetry, seen at its highest in the writings of Coleridge and Keats, in the early part of the century, and in those of Rossetti and Mr. William Morris in our own time, has for many years expended itself so futilely and even frivolously that a period of narrow realism or mere metrical dalliance with abstract " motives" was well-nigh inevitable. The third great epoch of English poetic literature will be an essentially dramatic one : and its fruitage will necessarily be preceded by a blossoming of the genuinely romantic sentiment. The tides of literature, like those of Ocean, have their inevitable periods of ebb and flow ; and the new tide that the moon of imagination is about to induce will be closely analogous to that upon whose crest were borne the Elizabethan poets. The most recent phase of this romantic sentiment, that mainly due to and