

**SELECTIONS FROM THE
PROSE AND POETRY
OF ALFRED DE MUSSET**

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Selections from the prose and poetry of Alfred de Musset by Alfred de Musset

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ALFRED DE MUSSET

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SELECTIONS

FROM

THE PROSE AND POETRY

OF

ALFRED DE MUSSET.

*Presented to Mrs. Owen Weber
for the book with "The Virginian"
later - ca 1911?*

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PREFACE.



PROBABLY no one ever tried to translate anything, however short and simple, without throwing down his pen in utter despair before he came to the end. Whatever difficulties are usually met with in such essays, were found tenfold strong in the present instance. When the task was accomplished, the questions arose: Will not this author be incomprehensible to all not only unfamiliar with his native language, but with his native country? and will not all who are likely to understand him, know him already? Owing to such considerations, these translations, made long ago, remained unpublished; why offer an English version of De Musset to those who could read him in French? An article, however, which appeared less than a year ago in an English review, proved at least that all who read De Musset do not appreciate

him ; and this, and the desire one always feels to share intellectual enjoyment with others, combined with some other reasons, finally determined their publication. Some of the finest poems have not even been attempted, and imperfect as all the translations, prose and verse, may seem, even to a careless reader, how infinitely far they fall short of the spirit, grace, and beauty of the original, one who has made the endeavor to put them into English alone can judge. But no water is ever brought away from the spring perfectly fresh.

There must necessarily be but few out of France who can enjoy De Musset greatly, but to them, wherever they may be, these poor attempts are dedicated.

S. B. W.

GERMANTOWN, Pa., Dec., 1839.

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TALES.