

**EREBUS: A
BOOK OF VERSE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649762651

Erebus: a book of verse by Evangeline Ryves

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EVANGELINE RYVES

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ER E B U S

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BY

EVANGELINE RYVES

*NEW EDITION WITH A
PREFATORY NOTE*

LONDON
ELKIN MATHEWS, CORK STREET
MCMXIII

PR 6035

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The Publisher to the Reader

THERE are vicissitudes in all things and books are not exempt from fickle fortune.

When I discovered, a short time since, that at least two thirds of the small edition of these early verses had for ten years been packed away and in danger of utter oblivion, I asked the Author to let me re-issue them.

She somewhat reluctantly consented, truly urging that by using the original sheets it gave her no opportunity of contradicting certain lines or of correcting punctuation. But in the end she wisely realized that Youth cannot be revised or Immaturity polished away; indeed, why make any apology for having been young, as John Masefield says somewhere.

Doubtless the Author has made strides in her art

since 1903; in the "Lyrics" of 1906 and in "The Red Horizon" now on the eve of publication, but certainly the work should not be suffered to perish of an Author who gained the recognition and called forth the instant admiration of a few of the best judges of verse of the time;—among them F. W. H. Myers; Herbert Trench; Mrs. Meynell, and Arthur Ransome. Also Francis Thompson who, after Mrs. Meynell had persuaded him to read "Lyrics" said "Well! there's no doubt of this—the man's a poet!"

The great "S. T. C." has well said that "all good poetry is the overflow of spontaneous feeling"—there is little doubt that the saving grace of these juvenilia is that of spontaneity and that by any re-casting that quality would vanish.

A well-known critic, summing up the poetical literature of the year 1903 in one of the chief London newspapers, singled out three tiny volumes that to him made the greatest appeal. In each case he found the appeal due to some direct personal expression to the use of literature not as a cold detached medium, but as a

revelation of some intimate and individual criticism of life, and concerning this particular volume he said, "there is a note of real individual power, passionate longing and regret glowing against a background of night and darkness."

Little remains to be said except that the Author owns a literary ancestry. She derives (a pun is not intended) from a stock that in the mid-seventeenth century produced Sir Thomas Ryves the famous jurist of whom witty Doctor Thomas Fuller speaks in his "Worthies of England" as an "Advocate to the King of Heaven," and his kinsman, Bruno Ryves, the loyal divine who wrote and suffered during the Grand Rebellion: and also the eighteenth century dramatist Elizabeth Ryves, whose brave fight against unmerited neglect is told with much pathos by Isaac D'Israeli in his "Calamities of Authors."

CORK STREET,
April 1913

*"In a place of weeds and thorns,
"As chill evening darkened,
"O'er their spinning sang the Norns,
"I wept as I hearkened."*

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