

**VOX HUMANA:
POEMS**

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Vox Humana: Poems by John Mills

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JOHN MILLS

**VOX HUMANA:
POEMS**

VOX HUMANA

Poems

BY

JOHN MILLS

WITH PORTRAITS

London

T. FISHER UNWIN

PATERNOSTER SQUARE

MDCCCXCVII



Yours very truly
John Mills 1894

PR 5021
M 485 V 6

FATHER, uplifted wondering to thy Face
Were our first glances. Slowly did we grow
To feel its charm and influence, and to know
By heart the lines of mingled power and grace.
Thought's sculpture round thine eyes we loved to trace,
Grave eyes, yet lit with humour, and aglow
With tenderness from deeper fires below.

Dark now, and cold, and empty is thy place !

Yet still for us, athwart the gathering gloom
That morning vision shines, a beckoning Star ;
And still, beyond the silence of the tomb,
For us thy voice rings, sounding from afar
Its " Comfort ye !"—voice of a vanished Home,
Enshrined where Love and Home unclouded are.

FILIA.

November, 1896.

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PREFACE

JOHN MILLS was born at Bank Top, Ashton-under-Lyne, on December 16, 1821, and died at Northwold, Bowdon, on September 26, 1896. His was a unique and many-sided nature. A student of statistics, an authority in banking and finance, a man of shrewd sense and of keen humour, he was yet at heart a poet; and born a musician.

He owed his real education rather to his own thirst for knowledge, steady reading, and enthusiastic sympathy with the great thinkers of his day, than to any special teaching. His mind was shaped by Wordsworth and Coleridge, by Richter, Emerson, and Carlyle. His lifelong friend, Prof. W. B. Hodgson, of Edinburgh, early drew him into touch with projects of reform in educational matters, and deepened his interest in social, economic, and financial problems. In these last he was also closely associated with Prof. Jevons, and for many years he found sympathetic society in the group of

thinking men who were drawn together by the genial influence of his earliest and closest friend, the late Alexander Ireland.

That this book did not appear during the writer's lifetime is due partly to his native shrinking from prominence or self-assertion, but still more to the severely critical and fastidious taste which made it hard for him to feel that what he had written might not yet be amended or more perfectly finished. It is hoped that some interesting reminiscences of his life may be issued before long, but those to whom his poems are a precious legacy offer, at this time, no biography. It seems better to let him speak for himself in the following pages.

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