

**SIGHT AND
SONG WRITTEN**

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Sight and Song Written by Michael Field

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MICHAEL FIELD

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SONG WRITTEN**

SIGHT AND SONG

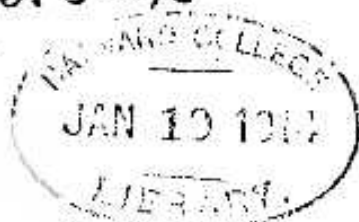
SIGHT AND SONG WRITTEN
BY MICHAEL FIELD *pseud.*



ELKIN MATHEWS
AND JOHN LANE
AT THE SIGN OF
THE BODLEY HEAD
IN VIGO STREET
LONDON 1892

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Gift of the
Division of Modern Languages

ὄρα ἂν λέγομεν πάλιν ἑρῶντα λέγομεν.

Σοφοκλής, *Œdipus Coloneus*.

'I see and sing, by my own eyes inspired.'

Κρατύς, *Ode to Pegasus*.

PREFACE

THE aim of this little volume is, as far as may be, to translate into verse what the lines and colours of certain chosen pictures sing in themselves ; to express not so much what these pictures are to the poet, but rather what poetry they objectively incarnate. Such an attempt demands patient, continuous sight as pure as the gazer can refine it of theory, fancies, or his mere subjective enjoyment.

‘ Il faut, par un effort d’esprit, se transporter dans les personnages et non les attirer à soi.’ For *personnages* substitute *peintures*, and this sentence from Gustave Flaubert’s ‘Correspondence’ resumes the method of art-study from which these poems arose.

PREFACE

Not even 'le grand Gustave' could ultimately illude himself as a formative power in his work—not after the pain of a lifetime directed to no other end. Yet the effort to see things from their own centre, by suppressing the habitual centralisation of the visible in ourselves, is a process by which we eliminate our idiosyncrasies and obtain an impression clearer, less passive, more intimate.

When such effort has been made, honestly and with persistence, even then the inevitable force of individuality must still have play and a temperament mould the purified impression:—

'When your eyes have done their part,
Thought must length it in the heart.'

M. F.

February 15, 1892.

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