

**ROBERT BROWNING'S POETICAL
WORKS. VOL. XVII. ASOLANDO:
BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL
NOTES TO THE POEMS**

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Robert Browning's Poetical Works. Vol. XVII. Asolando: Biographical and Historical Notes to the Poems by Robert Browning

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ROBERT BROWNING

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VOL. XVII.

THE POETICAL WORKS
of
ROBERT BROWNING

VOL. XVII.

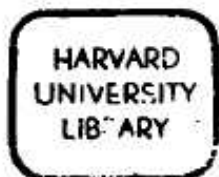
ASOLANDO

*BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTES
TO THE POEMS*

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TO MRS. ARTHUR BRONSON.

TO WHOM but you, dear Friend, should I dedicate verses — some few written, all of them supervised, in the comfort of your presence, and with yet another experience of the gracious hospitality now bestowed on me since so many a year, — adding a charm even to my residences at Venice, and leaving me little regret for the surprise and delight at my visits to Asolo in bygone days?

I write, you will see, the disconnected poems by a title-name popularly ascribed to the inventiveness of the ancient secretary of Queen Cornaro whose palace-tower still overlooks us: Asolare — “to disport in the open air, amuse oneself at random.” The objection that such a word nowhere occurs in the works of the Cardinal is hardly important — Bembo was too thorough a purist to conserve in print a term which in talk he might possibly toy with: but the word is more likely derived from a Spanish source. I use it for

love of the place, and in requital of your pleasant assurance that an early poem of mine first attracted you thither — where and elsewhere, at La Mura as Cà Alvisi, may all happiness attend you!

Gratefully and affectionately yours,

R. B.

ASOLO: October 15, 1889.

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