

**REVELATIONS OF
THE BEAUTIFUL:
AND OTHER POEMS**

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Revelations of the Beautiful: And Other Poems by Edwin Henry Burrington

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EDWIN HENRY BURRINGTON

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BY
EDWIN HENRY BURRINGTON.

He ne'er is crowned
With immortality who fears to follow
Where airy voices lead.

KEATS.

LONDON:
WILLIAM PICKERING, PICCADILLY.

1848.

PREFACE.

LITERARY MODESTY has dwindled into literary cant. It is the practice of young authors to preface their Poetical Works by assertions more affected than honest. They unhesitatingly state that they are conscious of the faults, or, at least, of many of the faults, which their books contain; and therefore they reckon on the indulgence of readers and reviewers by a confession either false or frivolous. When an author disqualifies himself, is it to be expected that the public will be very anxious to annul the disqualification? Cer-

tainly not. History affords many examples of men who have suffered banishment and death on their own condemnation; and having no sympathy for such proceedings, I am not inclined to bring down punishment on myself by an acknowledgment of any weakness. If I am weak there is a fair opportunity for others to detect it, and I justify myself in this line of proceeding by the belief that a literary self-accuser, who hopes by such false humility to disarm criticism, is always a literary coward.

The following Poems were not written for amusement, but I confess them to be the outpourings of a spirit, whose earnestness in a work to be accomplished was only equalled by the desire to accomplish it. Poetry to me has never been an artificialism; it has been the form and the utterance of truth. Through its medium I have claimed a spiritual brotherhood with visible beauty, and by its influence

I have sympathized with the best and holiest feelings of humanity. I would rather that my compositions should be considered as expressions of generous faith and feeling, than as evidences of artistic skill.

Whatever objection may be raised against these Poems, I cannot accuse myself of being consciously careless in their production. Whenever I have detected a fault I have had the will and the time to correct it. But I still remember that even where faults are least conspicuous, the failings of the Poet may be most observable. Faults and failings are distinct things. Faults generally arise from the possession of certain careless habits, but failings, on the contrary, are the non-possession of certain qualities. The distinction is important, because in this distinction the Poet is known from the versifier. The faults of a Poet do not infer an absence of beauties, but when

Nature withholds her choicest gifts from the mind we may be sure that Art has no beauties sufficient to supply the deficiency. The failings, the faults, or the beauties which the following Poems evidence I leave to the impartial, and not to the interested,—to the stranger, and not to the friend.

E. H. B.

BRIDGWATER, 1848.

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