

**ISMAEL; AN
ORIENTAL TALE.
WITH OTHER POEMS**

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Ismael; an oriental tale. With other poems by Edward George Lytton Bulwer

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EDWARD GEORGE LYTTON BULWER

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Other Poems.

BY

EDWARD GEORGE LYTTON BULWER.

*Written between
The Age of Thirteen and Fifteen.*

“Scribimus indocti doctique poemata passim.”

Hor. 2 Ep. 1.

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P R E F A C E.



To court applause by oblique dexterity, or without a due sense of respect for public opinion, impertinently to advance pretensions, is equally revolting to the feelings of an ingenuous mind. But as genius and a desire of fame are naturally allied, and, perhaps, the former never existed without the latter; will not the youthful adventurer be justified in endeavouring to stand well in the opinion of the judicious and discerning, by disseminating his works among them—under a confidence, that the more candid will be pleased with the first blossoms of poetical talent, not only as the fruits of industry, but as presages in maturer years of more elevated titles to distinction? With these impressions, the Author of the following Poems has been induced, by the advice of his friends, to offer the present Collection

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to the public. The praise of friends, I am aware, is not always a sufficient reason for publication;—and pieces of poetry, dictated by some local occurrence, or intended as a tribute of politeness or affection to some individual, though at first much admired, may, nevertheless scarcely deserve to be transmitted to posterity. I am well aware that the strict eye of criticism may discover imperfections, and that a nice ear may, perhaps, occasionally be hurt by a harsh line;—and, that some, from a dread of inspiring into a young mind, a taste for extra-academical fame, may be disposed to extinguish altogether such attempts—yet it would be straining delicacy beyond convenient bounds, if we did not cherish the idea, that there may be others, who may be pleased to look propitiously on the first specimens of genius at so early an age—many of them having been written when the Author had attained only his Thirtieth year, and the whole before he had completed Fifteen years of age. Their claims are not, perhaps, of that superior kind, which will find a place among the first orders of poetry; but the pieces breathe throughout the true spirit of virtuous sensibility, vigour of fancy, and that characteristic manner, which always accompanies strong power of invention;—they display richness of imagery, and elegance of style, while the language has an

easy flow, and unaffected simplicity, free from that artificial splendor, and obscure magnificence, which modern taste seems to establish as the excellence of poetical diction. Most of the larger Poems in the Collection express in easy language, and at the same time with all the graces of genuine poetry, every sentiment fitted to the occasion on which they were written. Of this, among the lighter ones, the reader will have an agreeable specimen in the verses dedicated to Lady C . . . L . . . , which though on a trivial subject, may, perhaps, give us just and pleasing an idea of this Writer's poetical talents, as any other single piece among the more trifling ones which we can collect. The Translations of the first Chorus of *Cædipus Tyrannus*, and two Odes of Horace, exhibit no small degree of classical attainment: and, however just or otherwise the remark may be, "that the failure of preceding translators has arisen, in a great measure, from a desire to copy the variations of Horace's measures;" the present ones convey a correct and spirited explanation of the sense in general, and by observing circumstances and the little figures and turns on the words, (that *curiosa felicitas verborum*;) they have preserved the beauties, and kept alive that spirit and fire, which make the chief character of the original.

It will not, therefore, be presuming too much, to hope that these Poems may contain enough to draw from such as value the display of early talents, a favourable reception; and that the Author, under such encouragement, when his taste is more matured, will perfect the produce of his youthful industry, and by diligence add to the stores of a mind formed by nature to accumulate and decorate them--there is only left for me to say,

His saltem accumulem donis.

ΦΙΛΌΜΕΣΟΣ.

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BY THE AUTHOR.



NOTWITHSTANDING my friend has said so much and so flattering to myself, in his Preface, yet the diffidence and the anxiety which ever accompany a first attempt, particularly at so early an age, urge me to add a few words, however superfluous they may appear. An apology is indeed, perhaps, always requisite for an intrusion on the public, and I cannot, therefore, refrain from offering one for some of the Poems which are inferior to the rest. They were written when but a child—they were the first faint dawnings of poetic enthusiasm,—and that sense of integrity, which should accompany every action, prevented my now altering them, in any *material*

respect. I expressly state the age at which they were written, and I think it but a duty to the public, that they should actually *be* written at that age. For the same reason, therefore, and not from any arrogant vanity, I have been particularly careful that no other hand should have polished, or improved them.

For the Battle of Waterloo, much ought to be said in apology, when so many far, far more adequate to the task, than myself, have written upon it; and when so many have failed in the attempt, it seems to argue vanity in the design; but such, I may assert, was far from my mind, at the time of its composition. It was begun in a moment of enthusiasm—it was continued from a deep interest in the undertaking—and it was completed from a dislike, I have always entertained, to leave any thing unfinished. But I was myself very unwilling to commit it to the press, and only did so at the express and flattering desire of some intimate friends, who were, perhaps, too partial to perceive its defects.

To the generosity of the more lenient of the public, do I now confide this first attempt for their favour; and, as they scan over the faults with the eye of