

**AN EXPOSITION OF
BROWNING'S 'SORDELLO':
WITH HISTORICAL AND
OTHER NOTES**

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An exposition of Browning's 'Sordello': with historical and other notes by David Duff

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DAVID DUFF

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BROWNING'S 'SORDELLO':
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An Exposition
OF
Browning's 'Sordello'

With Historical and Other Notes

BY
DAVID DUFF, B.D.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
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PREFACE.

IF *Sordello* is to be read at all, a fresh and independent attempt at its elucidation need make no excuse for its appearing. Many aids, from earnest and thoughtful essays to annotated editions that had best be regarded as practical jokes, have been offered to the student of this strange intellectual product, but it is generally acknowledged that it remains a 'dark poem.'

"But that lock went damnable hard," says the Immortal Tinker, when describing his pilgrims' attempt to escape from Doubting Castle. The words have often come nigh me as I have tried to force my way into the stronghold of the Giant Despair of our literature to rifle its treasures: if my readers can conscientiously finish the sentence of which the words quoted form a part, I shall be more than satisfied.

During the preparation of my work I have received kindness at the hands of many friends. My thanks are due to those who have given me free access to their books, and to those who, out of the stores of their own knowledge, have aided me in following up references. Dr John Sutherland Black, besides revising the proofs,

has kindly contributed an account of the historical Sordello, which will be found in the Appendix. The Rev. Robert Law, B.D., has subjected my work to a persistent, vigorous, and far-reaching criticism; and this invaluable service, which I cannot acknowledge in its details, I would acknowledge here as heartily as it was generously rendered. Mr Law has also kindly revised the proofs.

DAVID DUFF.

ЕДИНСТВО, *April* 1906.

ERRATUM.

Omit note on Book I, line 275, page 10.

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The text referred to is that of the seventeen-volume edition published by Smith, Elder, & Co. The reader will find it easy to number the lines by fives.

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in their devotion to objects not themselves 16

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of a type already existing in their own souls 17

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