

**A SELECTION FROM
THE POEMS OF
GIOSUE CARDUCCI**

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A Selection from the Poems of Giosue Carducci by Giosue Carducci & Emily A. Tribe

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GIOSUE CARDUCCI & EMILY A. TRIBE

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THE POEMS OF
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A SELECTION
FROM THE POEMS
OF
GIOSUÈ CARDUCCI

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED WITH A
BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION

BY
EMILY A. TRIBE

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1921

DEDICATED
TO
MARY H. ALBAN
WITHOUT WHOSE HELP THE WORK
COULD NEVER HAVE BEEN
ACCOMPLISHED

532054

TO GIOSUÈ CARDUCCI

A daughter of the misty northern land,
I bring this tribute frail to one who knew
To touch the lyre with no uncertain hand
And wake its ancient chords to music new.
Forgive if only harsh strains I command
To echo thy sweet music to the few
Who fain thy lofty soul would understand,
But to thy golden tongue have not the clue.

The old Italic gods with nymph and faun
For thee re-peopled mountain, wood and dale;
'Gainst sloth and pride thy keenest shafts were drawn:

'Let Love and Freedom over these prevail'
Such was thy cry: 'And in their radiant dawn
Must tyrants cease and superstition pale.'

E. A. T.

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PREFACE

THIS attempt to represent some of the poems of Giosuè Carducci in English verse has not been made without consideration of the objections urged by many critics against this form of translation and of the advantages of greater facility and literalness possible to a prose version. But while prose may fairly render dramatic and even narrative verse, it seems to me absolutely impossible to produce in that medium the effect of lyrical poetry. The one violates the canons of the other.

No one can be better aware than I am myself of how far my translation falls short of the beauty of the original. My aim has been to give as literal a rendering as the exigencies of metrical forms would allow. I have also endeavoured to keep as close as I could to those used by Carducci. I have found the unrhymed metres more difficult to reproduce in English than the rhymed, and have allowed myself more licence than is perhaps permissible in the attempt to imitate classical measures, but I have some justification in the practice of Carducci himself and in the introductory remark on the versification prefixed to the *Odi Barbare*, which I may here quote, substituting *English* for *Italian*. He calls them *barbarous* "because such they would seem to the judgment of the Greeks and Romans, although they are intended to be composed in the metrical forms of their lyrics, and because they will sound barbarous to the ears of many an *Englishman*, even though composed and harmonized in *English* verse depending upon accent." (Preface to *Odi Barbare*.)

In the selection I have made from the numerous poetical compositions of Carducci, necessarily limited by the difficulty of my task and by the infirmity of rapidly failing sight, I have been guided by the desire to make it as representative as possible, and I have chosen those poems which are of permanent and universal interest rather than those of temporary and local interest. I have therefore not included any of the literary or political satires, nor of the occasional poems that would have needed long explanatory notes to make them appreciated by the English reader unacquainted with details of the Italian life of the day.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to the notes of the *Antologia Carducciana* by Guido Mazzoni and Giuseppe Picciola, and the obligations I am under to the former for kindly revising the text of the *Life* and some of the poems. I have also made use of the Comments on the *Odi Barbare* by Prof. Demetrio Ferrari.

I owe much to the kindly criticism and helpful suggestions of Mr. W. A. Sim, Professor Baldi and the Barone Alberto Lumbroso, but above all to the friend without whose help as amanuensis and in looking up references the work would have been impossible, and to whom I dedicate the volume which owes its existence to her patient and effective collaboration.

NOTE.

This work was finished before the outbreak of the Great War. Its publication has been necessarily delayed by that event. I have added a few Notes to bring the work up to date.

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