

W. C. Stuart
Sonnets

POEMS

OF

WILLIAM TELFORD.

FROM THE AUTHOR TO THE READER

Look not for language, lofty or refined,
Within this book, you no such thing will find ;
I never stood in high school class or college,
God, books and nature, true sources of my
knowledge.

If high your learning, kindly condescend—
Some pity show, to your less learned friend ;
Your high attainments, use not to deride,
While criticising, lean to mercy's side.

Education seldom is obtained by stealth ;
Learning requires no small amount of wealth ;
My humble parents wished, and nobly tried,
To give to me what poverty denied.
Many bright gems lies buried in the dust ;
Many heaven sent gifts for lack of learning rust ;
Many golden talents lie in heads obscure,
Because the parents and the sons were poor.

OUR BARD'S DECISION.

Like Bunyan, I was very much perplexed,
At times in hope, and sometimes sadly vexed,
All my productions I their lines would trace,
And thought the fire would be their proper place ;
Again I thought they might be worth preserving,
Some might them read though they were undeserv-
ing.

While self-esteem, so weak with trembling fear,
Said : "do not print them, some will at them sneer."
Two barriers still stood looming in my way,
First, would it please ? and second, would it pay ?
Can judge his own : No, that's a fancied dream—
The public's verdict always rules supreme.

The humblest man that ever raised a pen
Has friends sincere among his fellowmen ;
I have my friends and they are numerous, too,
Steadfast at all times, true and kind and true,
They view my writings, with a higher aim,
Than I possess self-confidence to claim.
Long have they urged me—showing reasons clear—
Why all my poems should in book form appear.
With great reluctance, therefore, grant I their desire,
Because my lines show no poetic fire.
From my decision do not draw the fact
That self-ambition prompts me to the act ;
Such vain presumption never moved my heart
Thus to aspire—to act an author's part.
But for my friends, my writings still would stay
Within my desk, unpublished, to decay.
Many, I know, will gladly read my muse ;
Those they displease might my weak faults excuse.
The praise of all, no writer ever gained ;
If I please half, my object is attained.
He that builds hope upon the donkey fable
To please the whole, will find he is not able,
He strives, but finds his greatest efforts fail—
He pleases none—and donkey's loss bewail.

A POOR SCHOLAR ; OR, MY OWN DIFFICULTIES.

The following piece was composed at the earnest request of
many of my warmest friends, so that if ever my writings came
before the public, this piece should appear on the first page.

I oft meet with friends as around town I roam,
Saying when were you born, and where are you from.
To stop all such questions I just took the hint,
The best plan to pursue, was to put it in print.