

## FOREWORD

gard to religion and ethics, to human freedom, to brotherhood and to love.

Burns was a genius worthy to rank with Shakespeare. As an interpreter of Christ's philosophy of democracy and brotherhood, Burns is greater than any other poet. His religious and ethical poems and his love songs are unequalled; yet many people fear to have the poems of Burns in their libraries, so thousands miss the uplift and clearer vision which they might receive from his truly great poems.

Some of his most brilliant poems are, in the light of present standards, indelicate, but nearly all such poems relate to local people, events, and conditions that do not exist at the present time.

Great poetry is universal in its appeal to the minds of men. Burns wrote so many profoundly kindling and elevating poems that it seems reasonable to publish them, omitting those that are merely local but presenting those in which his great love of nature is evidenced.

This book is published with the view of securing a wider reading and study of the universal poems of Burns, especially by young people. I have arranged the poems in four classes: 1. Poems of Nature; 2. Religious and Ethical Poems; 3. Poems of Democracy and Brotherhood; 4. Love Songs.

In order to help readers of Burns to understand the conditions under which he lived and wrote, and the beauty of the rivers, the woods, the hills and glens of his native district, I personally made the photographs used for illustrations in this volume, except the por-