

THE LOVE STORY OF ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.*



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"Not a finer genius ever came into this world, or went out of it; not a nobler heart ever beat in a human bosom; not a more Christian life was ever lived; not a more beautiful memory ever followed the name of man or woman after death." These lines were written concerning "the most inspired woman of all who have composed in ancient or modern tongues or flourished in any land or time."

I will not tell where and when

* This sketch is a mosaic from many writers, chiefly from Elbert Hubbard, author of "Little Journeys to the Homes of Famous Women."

Elizabeth Barrett was born, for I do not know. And I am quite sure that her husband did not know. The encyclopaedias waver between London and Herefordshire, and the year, 1809, the birth year of the kindred spirits of Gladstone and Tennyson.

The early years of Elizabeth Barrett's life were spent at Hope End, near Ledbury, Herefordshire. Here she lived until she was twenty. She never had a childhood—'twas dropped out of her life in some way, and a Greek grammar inlaid instead. Of her mother we know little. She