

Foreword

WHEN Poetry first walked out of the early woods of this world, there were brambles in her hair and the dew of wet grasses on her bare feet. She was the living embodiment of the earth-spirit, and the gods had wakened her from a long sleep. Through the ages of myth and legend she wandered, until with the coming of a new and strange religion she met Pain and Liberty for the first time. Then her heart seemed to stop beating and her step grew slow. Hereafter, throughout the middle ages, and almost until the dawn of the twentieth century, this spirit was a force at war with itself. Growing, like music and religion, out of the earth-ritual, having her first expression in pure paganism, Poetry was destined to develop a soul, which—in embryo at least—does not always fare happily with beauty.