

**POÉSIES DIVERSES: CONTAINING
SELECTIONS FROM THE MOST
CELEBRATED FRENCH POETS, FROM
MALHERBE TO LAMARTINE AND VICTOR
HUGO, AND THE DRAMA OF ESTHER**

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Poésies Diverses: Containing Selections from the Most Celebrated French Poets, from Malherbe to Lamartine and Victor Hugo, and the Drama of Esther by Louis Malaher

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LOUIS MALAHER

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SELECTIONS

FROM THE

MOST CELEBRATED FRENCH POETS,

FROM MALHERBE TO LAMARTINE AND VICTOR HUGO;

AND THE

Drama of Esther.

BY RACINE.

ACCOMPANIED WITH INTRODUCTORY ARGUMENTS AND
COPIOUS FOOT NOTES.

BY

LOUIS MALAHER, B.A.,

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P R E F A C E.

It has appeared to the Compiler, in his experience as a teacher, that a proper introduction to the Reading of French Poetry was required by the English Student of the French language. It is evident that poetical productions, on account of their peculiar style, not to speak of the subjects of which they treat, are far from being suited to readers of every age and every degree of intelligence and attainment; and much less so must be the productions of a foreign writer, in a foreign tongue. However, it will be seen that compilers of school books seem to have been more anxious to introduce a name of note and striking compositions, than to consult the capabilities and tastes of their readers; they have not even offered them the help of notes, or of a few introductory words, to facilitate the comprehension of the subjects. The consequence has been, that the student meets with insuperable difficulties in his very first steps, and finds a task where he expected recreation and amusement. In these pages it is purposed to obviate these disadvantages, and to present the English reader with specimens of the most noted French poets, of the classical as well as of the more modern school,

which, with the help of numerous foot-notes and an explanatory argument, he will be able to understand and enjoy, even with only a moderate knowledge of the language; at the same time, it is hoped the selections will not be found unworthy of more advanced scholars, of the most refined taste. The book is particularly intended for Schools, and, by the variety of matter, is expected to answer all the requirements of a class-book.

The student, after having been duly prepared by its perusal, may indulge his particular taste; as he will be ready to read with profit any of the poetical productions of French authors. The last pages of the volume contain the drama of *Esther*, by Racine. The poet has introduced in it all the beauties of the sacred writings—the elevation and the majesty of the prophets. In the chorusses, particularly, he seems almost inspired; and it is not possible to find in the French language strains more truly lyric, more harmonious and diversified, more musical and magical in their effect.*

* The piece was several times performed by the pupils of the celebrated establishment of St. Cyr—the long robes worn by the Persians and the Jews obviating the difficulty which otherwise would have been felt by young ladies performing in the masculine character.

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