THE POETICAL WORKS OF ROBERT SOUTHEY, IN TEN VOLUMES, VOL. VII (BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES, VOL. II), PP.1-225

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649675678

The Poetical Works of Robert Southey, in Ten Volumes, Vol. VII (Ballads and Metrical Tales, Vol. II), pp.1-225 by Robert Southey

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ROBERT SOUTHEY

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Trieste

THE

POETICAL WORKS

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ROBERT SOUTHEY.

IN TEN VOLUMES-

VOLUME VII.

BOSTON:

LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY. NEW YORK: PHENRY, BLAKEMAN AND MASON. CINCINNATI: RICKEY, MALLORY AND CO. M.DOCC.LX. nosrox:

SUBLECTIVED OF JOIN WILSON AND SON.

RIVERSIDE, CIMERIDEE: PRINTED BY N. O. HOUMITON AND COMPANY.

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BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

Two volumes of this collection, which consist of Ballads and Metrical Tales, contain the author's carliest and latest productions of that kind; these which were written with most facility and most glue, and these upon which most time and palus were bestowed, according to the subject and the mode of treating it.

The "Tale of Paragnay" was published separately in 1825, having been so long in hand that the Dedication was written many years before the poem was completed.

"All for J.ove," and the "Legend of a Cock and a Hen," were published together in a little volume in 1829.

A TALE OF PARAGUAY.

PREFACE.

ONE of my friends observed to me, in a letter, that many stories which are said to be *founded* on fact have in reality been *foundered* on it. This is the case if there be any gross violation committed or ignorance betrayed of bistories! mannets in the prominent parts of a narrative wherein the writer affects to observe them, or when the groundwork is taken from some part of history so popular and well known that any mixture of faction disturbs the sense of trath; still more so if the subject be in fiscill so momentous that any alloy of invention must of necessity debase it; but most of all in themes drawn from Scripture, whether from the more familiar or the more awfal portions; for, when what is true is sacred, whatever may be added to it is so surely fell to be false that it appears profuse.

Founded on fact the poem is, which is here committed to the world; but, whatever may be its defects, it is liable to none of these objections. The story is so singular, so simple, and withat so complete, that it must have been injured by any alteration. How faithfully it has been followed, the reader may perceive, if he chooses to consult the abridged translation of Dobrizhoffer's "History of the Abipones."