

The New York Browning Society, Inc. Newsletter

Founded in 1907

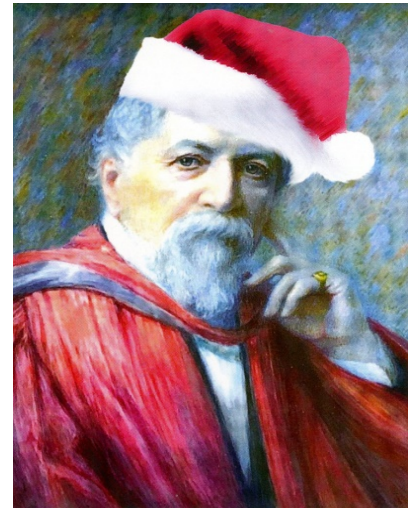
Date Wednesday, December 18th 2024

Time 6:00– 7:30PM

Place Jefferson Market Library

425 Avenue of the Americas

Annual Holiday Poetry Reading



Happy Holidays! It is that time of year again where our Society meets to celebrate our love of poetry, especially of the Brownings!

We have been enjoying our meetings at Jefferson Market Library, we would love for you to come out and join us to read some of your favorite poems by Elizabeth and Robert Browning or even share some of your own!

Traditionally this has been one of our most enjoyable events of the year. Our members have so much talent, and we really adore and appreciate all they have to offer, to hear them express their poetic talents is worthwhile, we want to come together and join in a community of sharing the best of our English language.

Let's come together for this holiday reading and honor the legacy of the Brownings, read a poem from their works, for peace, and for the love of the word! 'Tis' the Season! We Hope that you will join us! We can't wait to hear your voices sing with poetry!

**JEFFERSON MARKET LIBRARY – 425
AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS – 12/18/24
6pm! READ A POEM & BRING A FRIEND!**



Stained Glass at Armstrong Browning Library

The Armstrong Browning Library, located on the campus of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, is home to the largest collection of works by Victorian poets Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The library also boasts an impressive collection of stained glass windows, featuring **62 panels that are believed to be the largest collection of secular stained glass in the world.**



Bells and Pomegranates

Between the years 1841 and 1846—that is after the publication of *Sordello* and until his marriage and removal to Italy—all of Browning’s poetry was published in a series which he called *Bells and Pomegranates*. The eight pamphlets which made up the series with the date of publication, the number of pages in each, and the price at which each was offered per copy, are listed below:

- I. Pippa Passes, Apr 1841; 16 pages; Sixpence
- II. King Victor and King Charles, Mar 12, 1842; 16 pages; One Schilling.
- III. Dramatic Lyrics, Nov 26 1842; 16 pages; One Schilling
- IV. The Return of the Druses, Jan, 1843; 20 pages; One Schilling.
- V. A Blot in the ‘Scutcheon, Feb 11, 1843; 16 pages; One Schilling
- VI. Colombe’s Birthday, Apr 20, 1844; 20 pages; One Schilling
- VII. Dramatic Romances and Lyrics, Nov 6, 1845; 24 pages Two Schillings.
- VIII. Luria and A Soul’s Tragedy, Apr 13, 1846; 32 pages; Two Schillings Sixpence.

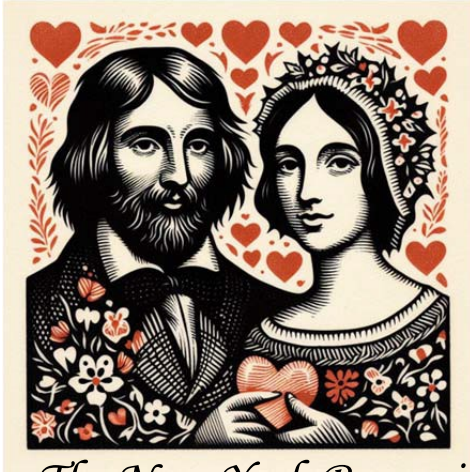
The mode of publishing his poems in a series of pamphlets was suggested to Browning by Edward Moxon, the publisher of *Sordello*, who also published the poetry of Wordsworth, Tennyson, Samuel Rogers, Coventry Patmore, and Miss Barrett. Moxon has republished Elizabethan plays in this manner, and proposed it to Browning as an economical method. Each pamphlet was to be printed in fine type and double columns, and was to be bound in paper wrappers. The cost of publication was borne by the poet’s father, and amounted to approximately £16 a pamphlet.

It was Browning’s original intention to make the series one entirely of plays, and he thought of re-touching *Strafford* and including it in the series. But Moxon persuaded him to publish his shorter poems, *Dramatic Lyrics* (Bell No. III) and *Dramatic Romances* (Bell No VII), for popularities sake. Though the poet condescended to seek for popularity through his shorter poems, it was only the energetic remonstrance of Miss Barrett which at last made him give the public an explanation of his title, *Bells and Pomegranates*. As a forward to *A Soul’s Tragedy*, he wrote:

Here ends my first series of “Bells and Pomegranates”: and I take the opportunity of explaining, in reply to inquiries, that I only meant by that title to indicate an endeavor towards something like an alternation, or mixture, of music with discoursing, sound with sense, poetry with thought; which looks too ambitious, thus expressed, so the symbol was preferred. It is little to the purpose, that such is actually one of the most familiar of the many Rabbinical (and Patristic) acceptations of the phrase; because I confess that, letting authority alone, I supposed the bare words, in such juxtaposition, would sufficiently convey the desired meaning. “Faith and good works” is another fancy, for instance, and perhaps no easier to arrive at: yet Giotto placed a pomegranate fruit in the hand of Dante, and Raffaele crowned his Theology with blossoms of the same; as if the Bellari and Vasari would be sure to come after, and explain that it was merely “*simbolo delle buone opera—il qual Pomogranato fu però usato nelle vesti del Pontefice appresso gli Ebrei*”

Neither Miss Barrett nor the general reader was as familiar with rabbinical and patristic lore, or indeed with *Exodus*, whence the symbolism rises (28:33-4), as one should be. It is significant that all the pamphlets of the series bore the legend “By Robert Browning, Author of *Paracelsus*.” The *Bells*, especially *Pippa Passes* and the shorter poems, show Browning’s genius clearing magnificently, and the poet working towards the perfected dramatic lyrics and dramatic monologues which are to be in time the happiest vehicle of his expression. Through the Forties and Fifties the *Bells* gradually won to Browning not a large but a devoted circle of readers.

We Look forward to seeing you this month for our holiday meeting on Dec 18th 2024! 6pm! NYC!



“Ah, but a man's reach should
exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for?”
— **Robert Browning**

*The New York Browning Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) Non Profit
2024-2025 Dues and Donation Form*

Make checks payable to: New York Browning Society
Mail checks to James Kepple, President
227 West 149th Street, #6F; New York, NY 10039

Enclosed is my check for:	<u>Regular (\$25)</u>	<u>Patron (\$50)</u>
2024-2025 dues	_____	_____
Additional Donation	_____	_____
Total	\$ _____	\$ _____

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Check here if you wish to be removed from our mailing list. _____

Comments and suggestions?