The Works of Stefan George

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Even those who very nearly understood what the author had in mind thought that identifying persons and places would make for a better understanding of THE YEAR OF THE SOUL. But just as no one profits from looking for human and regional models in sculpture and painting, thus in poetry too we should avoid so idle a search. Art has transformed them so completely that they have become unimportant to the poet himself and his readers would be more confused than enlightened by a knowledge of the facts. Names should be mentioned only when they serve to indicate a gift or to bestow eternity. And it should be remembered that in this book the I and the You represent the same soul to an almost unprecedented extent.
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