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GEMS OF CHINESE POETRY

Edited and translated
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(Revised and Enlarged)

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Distinguished Professor of Humanities at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, Burton Raffel has published more than 50 books, including translations of Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel* and the Old English epic, *Beowulf*.

Preface

The richness and beauty of Chinese poetry is world renowned. Today there has arisen at home and abroad an increasing interest in Chinese poetry, and an urgent demand is felt for a small-sized anthology made up of the best poems, most representative of the spirit of the various ages of China. Hence the compilation of this anthology to fill such a want. The seventy-eight poems included are selected after repeated scrutiny on the basis of the following three principles:

- 1) The selected poems must be superb in content and artistry. They should be able to mirror the trend of the poetry of their respective age;
- 2) All the authors must be the leading poets of the various ages of China, who hold an acknowledged important position in the history of Chinese poetry;
- 3) The poetry of representative Chinese nationalities other than Han should also be included.

In translating the poems, the compilers stressed fidelity more to their spirit and poetic

conception than to their prosodical form. Line-for-line translation is not always observed.

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