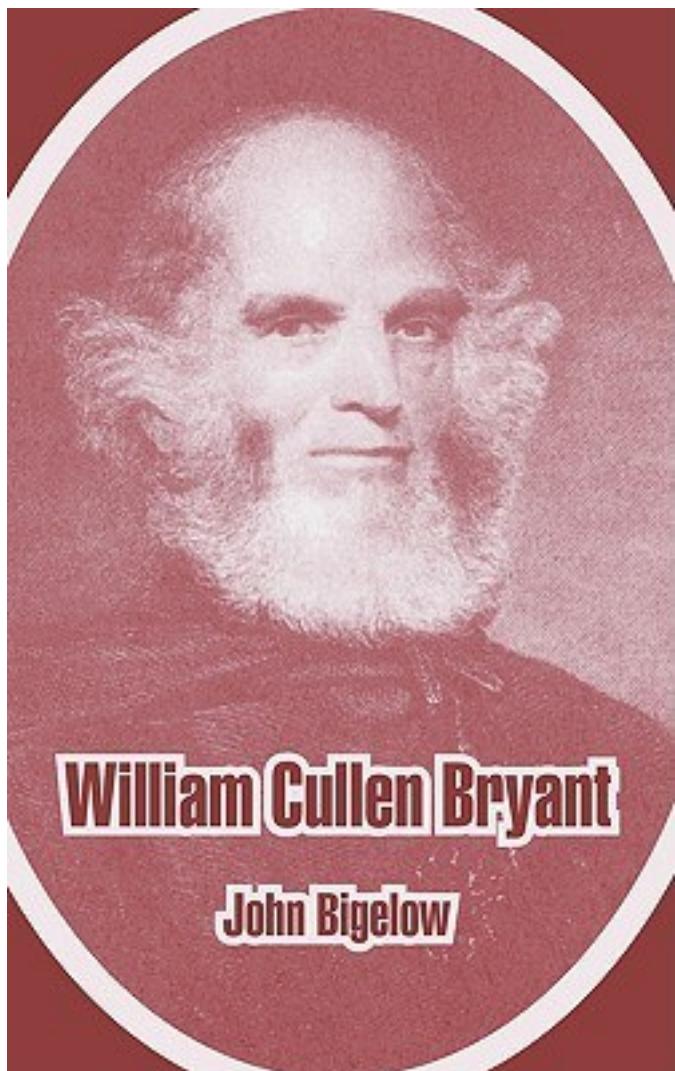


William Cullen Bryant



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Simply stated, this book will introduce the surprising literary figure behind a familiar name. Though a mere vestige of William Cullen Bryant's fame survives through inclusion of "Thanatopsis" and perhaps one or two other poems in school anthologies, the nineteenth century celebrated him as one of its great men. He not only deserved that acclaim, but he was actually a more important writer than his century recognized. Half of this volume consists of a Bryant showcase. Three dozen poems chosen from the hundreds he produced reveal him as a revolutionary of prosody seeking refuge from Calvinism in a pantheistic God. Extracts from his criticism are a homily promoting the prospects for American literary nationalism. Also included here is a pair of his tales which, although almost totally unknown, are among the best work in the genre written before the Civil War. The other half of this new volume presents a concise biography and, of special interest, three groundbreaking new critical studies. Gado argues that Bryant is the Founding Father of American poetry. As a poet of nature, Bryant played a literary role comparable to the influence on art exercised by his good friend Thomas Cole, founder of the Hudson River School. But perhaps even more important was the example Bryant set for Walt Whitman in a relationship explored here for the first time. A much briefer piece discovers the consistent philosophical belief addressed by a lifetime of poems. The third essay is unique in its consideration of Bryant's short fiction, which has never before received attention. William Cullen Bryant: An American Voice is a landmark publication.

作者介绍:

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