

**REMAINS HISTORICAL AND LITERARY
CONNECTED WITH THE PALATINE
COUNTIES OF LANCASTER AND CHESTER
PUBLISHED BY THE CHETHAM SOCIETY.
VOL. XIII. A GOLDEN MIRROR: WITH
AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649480043

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Notes by Richard Robinson & Thomas Corser

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Cover @ 2017

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RICHARD ROBINSON & THOMAS CORSER

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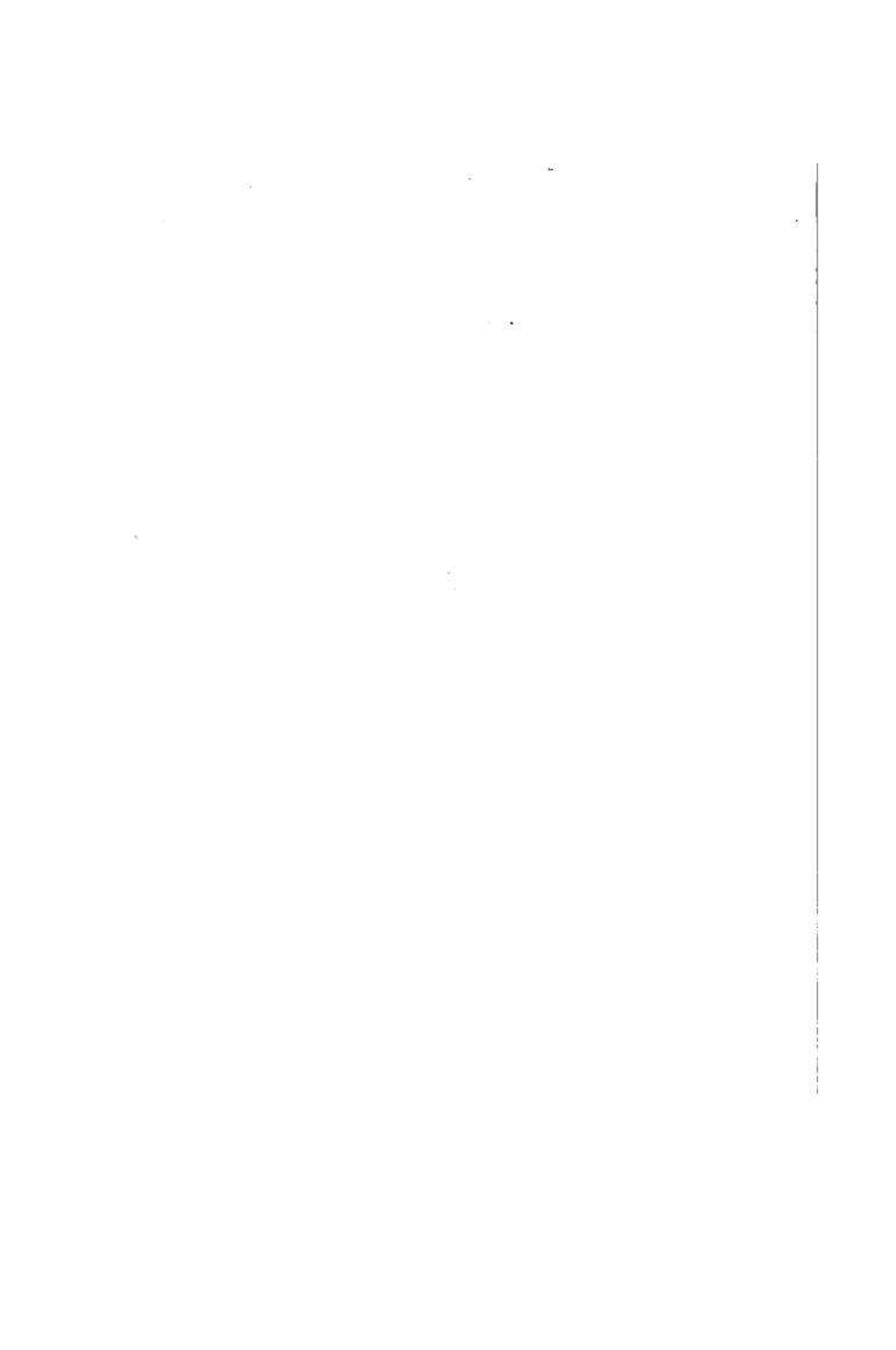
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A
GOLDEN MIRROUR.

CONTAINING

CERTAIN E PITHIE AND FIGURATIVE VISIONS
PROGNOSTICATING GOOD FORTUNE TO ENGLAND, AND ALL TRUE ENGLISH SUBJECTES,
WITH AN OVERTHROWE TO THE ENEMIES.

WEREETO BE ADJOYNEE CERTAIN E FRETTE POEMES WRITTEN ON THE NAMES OF
SUNDRIE BOTH NOBLE AND WORSHIPFULL.

BY RICHARD ROBINSON,
OF ALTON.

REPRINTED FROM THE ONLY KNOWN COPY OF THE ORIGINAL EDITION OF 1689
IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

THE REV. THOMAS CORSER, M. A., F. S. A.,

RURAL DEAN, RECTOR OF STAND, LANCASHIRE, AND VICAR OF NORTON,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

Manchester.
PRINTED FOR THE CHETHAM SOCIETY.
M.DCCC.LI.

INTRODUCTION.

AS Cheshire forms one of the Counties within the peculiar province of the Chetham Society, the Editor has been induced to undertake the reprinting of a work, consisting of poetical addresses to many of its by-gone proprietors, the representatives of some of its ancient families in the time of Elizabeth. An attentive examination of the volume induced him to believe that many others besides himself would derive gratification from its perusal and possession : some from local affection and associations, and others from their attachment to early English poetry and literature. To each of these, this volume will have its attractions : for though the lines are occasionally rough, unmeasured, and uncouth, there is much strength in the expressions, and a high tone of morality and religion pervades the whole : and in the terms which are used, and in the construction adopted, will be found objects of interest

to those, who are fond of tracing the progress of our language at a period when it was moulding itself into form, and approaching to the vigour of its maturity.

Richard Robinson, the author of these "pithie and figuratiue Visions," is merely called by Proctor, their purchaser and publisher, "a Gentleman of the North Countrey," but whatever may have been the county that gave him birth, of which we have no positive or direct evidence, it is quite clear from that contained in the work itself, that Cheshire was that part of the North, with which the author was more immediately connected; for almost all the poems are "rare inuentions pend vpon the Ethimologie of the names, of diuers worthy personages inhabiting the gentle natured countrey and Countie of Chester," whom he commends for various good qualities and virtues, with a feeling of partiality and affection not usually exhibited towards any district, with which the eulogist does not happen to have some close personal connexion. And as he generally uses the term "countrey" for county, it is probable that he means to limit his expression to Cheshire, when he desires his reader, to "iudge upon the sense, if hee haue knowledge to vnderstand me, according to my good and faythfull meaning to my Countrey." About the name of the Author of these Visions there is no doubt, though Proctor does not mention it, and he himself does not subscribe it to his "Epistle to the gentle Reader," for he is twice addressed as Robinson in "the last Dreame that Morpheus did showe vnto" him; and the initials of the lines of "The Authours name in Verdict" disclose to us

the letters RICHARD ROBINSON OF ALTON. Mr. Hawkins is of opinion that by Alton is probably intended Halton in Cheshire, and that it is not unlikely that the scene of the second poem in this volume was laid in that neighbourhood; at least the Author's description of the scenery agrees well with that of Halton Castle, which is situated upon the loftiest eminence of that district, overlooking a rich and well wooded country, and commanding most extensive and beautiful prospects:—

“And I myselve then weary of my booke,
 To be partaker of the pleasant ayre:
 Into a forrest fast by the way I tooke,
 Wherein my sight, did hautie hills appeare:
 And rocky towers, did scale the loftie skyes,
 Whom underneath, deepe dales and dymbles lyes.”

The Editor, however, is more inclined to think that the place here intended, is Alton in Staffordshire, which, standing upon the summit of a lofty hill, overhanging the deep valley of the Churnet, and commanding wide and extended views over the surrounding country, equally well accords with the description of the scenery alluded to in the poem. He is not aware that Halton in Cheshire, even from the earliest period to the present, is ever seen written without the initial letter H; whilst the Author's connexion with the noble family of the Talbots, the ancient possessors of the Manor and Castle of Alton in Staffordshire, and from whence they were accustomed to draw their retainers, would seem to render it more than probable that he was a native of this place. Unfortunately the Editor has not been able