

**SHAKESPEARE'S
COMEDY OF MUCH
ADO ABOUT NOTHING**

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Shakespeare's Comedy of Much Ado About Nothing by William J. Rolfe

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WILLIAM J. ROLFE

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OF
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING



"and look, the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phoebus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey" (v. 3. 25).



SHAKESPEARE'S

COMEDY OF

Much Ado About Nothing

EDITED, WITH NOTES

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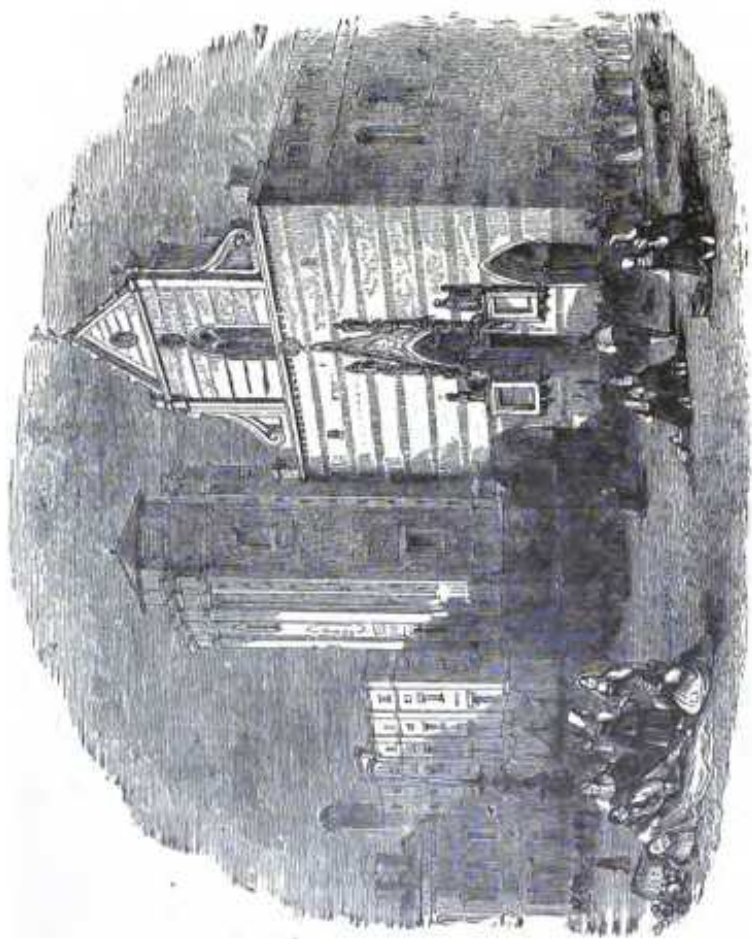
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EXTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL OF MESSINA.



MESSINA, FROM THE SEA.

INTRODUCTION
TO
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

I. THE HISTORY OF THE PLAY.

THE first edition of *Much Ado About Nothing* was a quarto, published in 1600 with the following title-page:

Much adoe about | Nothing. | *As it hath been sundrie times
publikely* | acted by the right honourable, the Lord | Cham-
berlaine his seruants. | *Written by William Shakespeare.* |
London | Printed by V. S. for Andrew Wise, and | William
Aspley. | 1600.

The earliest known reference to the play is in the Registers of the Stationers' Company, among some miscellaneous memoranda at the beginning of Volume C.* The memorandum follows one dated May 27th, 1600, and is thus given by Arber:

* See our ed. of *As You Like It*, p. 10.