

**THE STRATFORD RECORDS AND
THE SHAKESPEARE AUTOTYPES.
A BRIEF REVIEW OF SINGULAR
DELUSIONS THAT ARE CURRENT
AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON**

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The Stratford records and the Shakespeare autotypes. A brief review of singular delusions that are current at Stratford-on-Avon by J. O. Halliwell- Phillipps

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J. O. HALLIWELL- PHILLIPPS

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THE STRATFORD RECORDS
AND
THE SHAKESPEARE AUTOTYPES.
—
SECOND EDITION.
—

AND FOR YOUR [PALEOGRAPHICAL] WRITING AND READING, LET
THAT APPEAR WHEN THERE IS NO NEED OF SUCH VANITY.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

THE STRATFORD RECORDS
AND THE
SHAKESPEARE AUTOTYPES.

A BRIEF REVIEW
OF
Singular Delusions that are current
at Stratford-on-Avon.

BY THE SUPPOSED DELINQUENT.

THE SECOND EDITION.

HAVE I NOT SEEN DWELLERS ON FORM AND FAVOUR
LOSE ALL, AND MORE, BY PAYING TOO MUCH RESPECT?

BRIGHTON :
PRINTED BY JOHN GEORGE BISHOP.

1884-1885.

M-add:
30.1.12

PREFACE.

Singular misconceptions being prevalent at Stratford respecting my record-work and the treatment that I have met with in that town, I am tempted to devote a few pages to the subject ; and the rather as those delusions have lately assumed a definite form and made a public appearance in the columns of an important local journal. The following, for example, is the commencement of a recent leading article in the Stratford-on-Avon Herald, a newspaper which has a large circulation in the town and neighbourhood,—

The Stratford Corporation are in possession of many very interesting records extending from the earliest times, but it is only recently that the value of these documents has dawned upon the Corporate mind. They were permitted to lie in the muniment-room at the Birthplace unclassified, uncalendared, uncared for, and this indifference to their existence, had it continued, would have led ultimately to their decay, and consequent loss to the town. A little time ago attention was directed to the condition of these records, and the Corporation was prevailed upon to appoint a committee to superintend their classification and calendaring. Mr. Hardy, a gentleman in every way qualified for the work, was entrusted with the task of reducing these records from their chaotic state to something like order, and it is admitted

that, so far as the work has proceeded, he has admirably discharged his duty. Of course gentlemen endowed with special talent of this kind require adequate payment for their services, and already Mr. Hardy's account amounts to £180.

A few days previously the Chairman of the local Record Committee, speaking of course with authority, informed the Council, referring to the unbound records of the Guild, that "they were now gradually decaying and losing their value."

If these allegations are correct, then it follows that I have grossly neglected my duty in a work undertaken for a Corporation that did me the honour some years ago to entrust me with the arrangement of their records. How far the implied accusations are correct will be gathered by the public from the statements that follow.

Then, again, the Stratford Herald, in another recent leader, observes,—

This can be said *from our own knowledge* that Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps has been treated *with the greatest courtesy* by the Stratford Corporation *and by every individual member of it*; and that, if he thinks this treatment has not been extended to him, his mind has received a particular bias from people whose mental condition renders them incapable of imparting to him the truth.

If there is no mistake in the statements that are here italicized, it follows that, after an intimate connexion with Stratford for nearly forty years without exchanging a cross-word with anybody, I was suddenly transformed into one of those ungracious old fellows who rush into quarrels without any kind of provocation.

Being naturally reluctant that statements favouring this impression should go forth unchallenged, I have drawn up, in the latter part of this brochure, an explicit account of the circumstances which induced me to believe that I had been vexatiously treated. It is for the public to say, upon a review of those circumstances, if I have arrived at such a conclusion on insufficient grounds, or if I can be fairly represented at Stratford as an imaginative person who sees nothing but discourtesy in the very centre of æsthetic amenities.

J. O. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS.

Hollingbury Copse, Brighton,

December, 1884.

NOTE.

Page 6, line 26. His (F. O. H.'s) mind has received a particular bias from people whose mental condition renders them incapable of imparting to him the truth.—Whatever can be the real meaning of this extraordinary paragraph? If the notion is that I have been influenced by baseless gossip, then the Stratford Herald has been falling into the identical error it has had the charity to warn me against, or otherwise so unfounded an insinuation would never have found its way into its columns. I may, however, be wrong in this surmise, for there is so much in the article in which the above paragraph occurs which is of so extremely mysterious a character that, as poor Tom Hood used to say of the middle-cut of salmon, it is impossible to make either head or tail of it.