

**THE SONGS OF
SHAKSPERE,
SELECTED FROM
HIS POEMS AND PLAYS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649708673

The Songs of Shakspere, Selected from His Poems and Plays by William Shakespeare

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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*Malone K.
29.*

LONDON: VIRTUE & CO., 26 IVY LANE
PATERNOSTER ROW

1872

LONDON :
PRINTED BY VIMLUE AND CO.,
CITY ROAD.



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THERE is a vitality about the songs of Shakspeare, as there is about everything else he wrote, the imagery in each being continued and unbroken to the end.

“They possess in perfection the elements of gaiety and tenderness,” says a late eminent critic, “facility, grace, idiomatic purity, melody in expression, variety, suddenness, and completeness.”

Like the music of the groves they are ever fresh, and the song of the lark or the nightingale belongs not more vividly to us, than do these masterpieces of art, which hold us spell-bound, as do the rich notes

of some fine instrument in the hands of an inspired master.

The songs of Shakspeare stand alone of all songs of the period of the fixation of the English language ; and have been happily one of the means of preserving its purity. His greatest literary contemporary in the art, Ben Jonson, though always displaying singular elegance of thought, and a luxuriant fancy, had evidently a strong bias in favour of classical models ; whilst Shakspeare, content with the study of nature, in his songs has left to all future song-writers English models far superior to all that preceded them.

J. B.



SONGS

FROM SHAKSPERE'S POEMS.

