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SERIES, VOL. XIV: POEMS**

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JOHN SALUSBURY & ROBERT CHESTER

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*To W. H. S. with Christmas greeting
C.B.*

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Monograph Series, Vol. XIV

Poems by Sir John Salusbury and
Robert Chester

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

CARLETON BROWN

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FOREWORDS

During the last two decades of the reign of Elizabeth poetry was in the very air, and obscure as well as great men caught the contagion of verse-making. It is with the verse of some of these obscure men that the present volume is concerned. If judged on their own merits these pieces might perhaps have been left in the oblivion in which they have remained for over three centuries. But though having in themselves no importance as literature, they throw additional light upon poems by Shakspeare and other great Elizabethans: *alia claritas solis, alia claritas lunæ.*

In presenting this material to the reader, I gladly take the opportunity of expressing my thanks to those who have in many ways courteously forwarded my investigation. To H. W. Blunt, Esq., M. A., Librarian of Christ Church, Oxford, I am indebted for according me liberal facilities for examining the Christ Church manuscript, and to the Archbishop Wake's Trustees for granting leave to print the poems contained in it. I have also to thank the Secretary to the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, C. Cannan, Esq., for the free use of rotographs of these poems. To S. R. Christie-Miller, Esq., of Britwell Court, I am under obligations for permission to reprint poems from the unique copy of the Parry volume, which is preserved in his library. In this connection I wish also to record my appreciation of the kindness of the Librarian at Britwell Court, Herbert Collman, Esq., who not only transcribed these poems for me but carefully collated the proof-sheets with the original.

In searching for biographical materials concerning Sir John Salisbury, I was enabled to examine the Cecil Papers at Hatfield House, through the gracious permission of the Marquess of Salisbury, who also gave consent to the repro-

duction in facsimile of the letter which appears as the frontispiece. In the matter of Salusbury biography, however, my greatest obligation is to A. Foulkes-Roberts, Esq., of Denbigh. Himself a lineal descendant of Catherine of Berain, Mr. Foulkes-Roberts for years has made diligent researches in Salusbury family history. In response to my appeal he cheerfully placed at my disposal the extensive materials which he had collected, including his transcripts from the Bodfari Parish Register and from Robert Parry's Diary. He has also been good enough to read over the section on the Biography of Sir John Salusbury, and thereby has saved me from a number of errors of detail. Had it not been for his assistance this sketch of Salusbury's life would lack some of its most important facts.

C. B.

Bryn Mawr, Pa., October, 1913.

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INTRODUCTION

The interpretation of Shakspeare's *Phoenix and Turtle* has occasioned so much difficulty that the perplexed commentator sometimes feels tempted, "for these dead Birds," not to "sigh a prayer" but to breathe a malediction. Shakspeare's brief poem in itself presents a hopeless enigma. The allegory of the Phœnix and the Turtle should not, however, be studied in the light of Shakspeare's poem alone. If one is to discover its application one must examine also the other "poeticall essaies" among which Shakspeare's lines are included, and above all one must seek the solution of the allegory in Robert Chester's poem, *Loves Martyr*, to which the pieces by Shakspeare, Marston, Chapman, Jonson and "Ignoto" are appended. The close relationship between these supplementary poems and *Loves Martyr* is stated in unmistakable terms on the title-page by which they are introduced:

Hereafter
follow Diverse
Poeticall Essais on the former Sub-
iect viz. the *Turtle* and *Phoenix*.

These words suggest, if they do not explicitly affirm, that the allegory in the supplementary pieces merely continues that which is woven into the fabric of *Loves Martyr*. A further consideration pointing in the same direction is the fact that Chester's poem and the supplementary pieces are dedicated to the same patron—Sir John Salusbury of Lleweni.

Such being the case, it would appear that the most promising approach to an understanding of Shakspeare's *Phoenix and Turtle* must begin with inquiries concerning Robert

Chester, whose poem supplied the basis of the allegory, and Sir John Salusbury, to whom the whole collection of poems is dedicated. Indeed, Professor Gollancz, in a notably judicious statement of the problem, intimates that Salusbury may be not only the patron but also one of the central figures in the allegory. After expressing his confidence that the solution "will some day be discovered," he adds this suggestion: "It would seem from the title-page that the private family history of Sir John Salisbury ought to yield the necessary clue to the events."¹ In any case it becomes clear that we need to assemble all possible evidence which may throw light upon the personal relations between Chester and Salusbury or between Salusbury and the other poets who dedicated their verses to him.

In the thirty-five years since Dr. Grosart re-printed the 1601 edition of *Loves Martyr*, with a copious Introduction, no further contribution has been made to our information concerning either Robert Chester or his patron. The former, Dr. Grosart sought to identify with Sir Robert Chester of Royston, Herts. This identification, which was based purely upon conjecture, must now be abandoned for reasons which will be presented in a later section. In the case of the patron of the poem, Sir John Salusbury, Dr. Grosart was more fortunate. He had no difficulty in identifying him as a young Knight of prominent family whose seat was at Lleweni in Denbighshire. He also pointed out the interesting fact that to the same patron "Robert Parry Gent." dedicated in 1597 a small volume of verse which bears the cryptic title: *Sinetes Passions*.

The larger part of Dr. Grosart's Introduction, unfortunately, was devoted to an attempt to prove that the Phenix and Turtle were, respectively, Elizabeth and the Earl of Essex. This interpretation of the allegory was at the most

¹ *The Larger Temple Shakespeare*, Vol. XII (1904), Preface to *The Rape of Lucrece*, etc.