

**THE SHAKESPEARE
SOCIETY'S,
PAPERS. VOL. II**

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THE
SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY'S
P A P E R S.

VOL. II.



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P R E F A C E.

In issuing the second volume of "The Shakespeare Society's Papers," the Council has much satisfaction in referring to the number and variety of the contributions, to the importance of most of them (as illustrative of the works of our great dramatist and early stage-literature), and to the manner in which all tend to carry out the general objects of the Society. They show also the wide interest taken in inquiries of the kind, extending even to some of our remoter colonies.

Another gratifying point, more fully established by the present volume, is the active and persevering spirit of research generated by the continued labours of the Society. Individuals who have old books or documents in their hands have thus been induced to explore their dusty depositories; and the result has been, among other things, the discovery of several highly curious and valuable tracts by dramatic contemporaries of Shakespeare, which have hitherto remained in utter concealment. Two of these, a Pageant by Thomas Middleton, and a poem by Robert Greene (the only entire work in verse he perhaps ever wrote) are included in the ensuing pages, as too brief to form separate publications. They have never been heard of before.

The Council has also been put in possession of a printed satirical production in rhyme, by John Lanham, the distinguished actor, who was at the head of one company of the Queen's Players in 1590, and who until now has not been supposed to be an author: two unknown and unique pieces, in prose and verse, by Philip Stubbes, the early adversary of dramatic performances and other popular amusements, have likewise been transmitted from the country; but all arrived too late to be inserted in the volume now issued.

It will be seen too that some new manuscript sources of interesting information have been opened, particularly by a member who is in all respects qualified to aid the design of the Shakespeare Society.

The Council trusts that no exertions will be relaxed by the members at large, and that year after year it may be able to present volumes with increased claims to approbation. The liberality of individuals, who have impoverished their own peculiar stores for the purpose of making them generally useful, cannot be too highly estimated nor too gratefully acknowledged.

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