

**AT STRATFORD
FESTIVAL: A POEM**

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At Stratford festival: a poem by R. Warwick Bond

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R. WARWICK BOND

**AT STRATFORD
FESTIVAL: A POEM**

AT STRATFORD FESTIVAL

A POEM

BY

R. WARWICK BOND

AUTHOR OF "THE IMMORTALS AND OTHER POEMS," "AN ODE TO THE SUN
AND OTHER POEMS"

LONDON

LAWRENCE & BULLEN

16 HENRIETTA STREET, W.C.

1896

The major portion of the following poem appeared in
Macmillan's Magazine for April 1894

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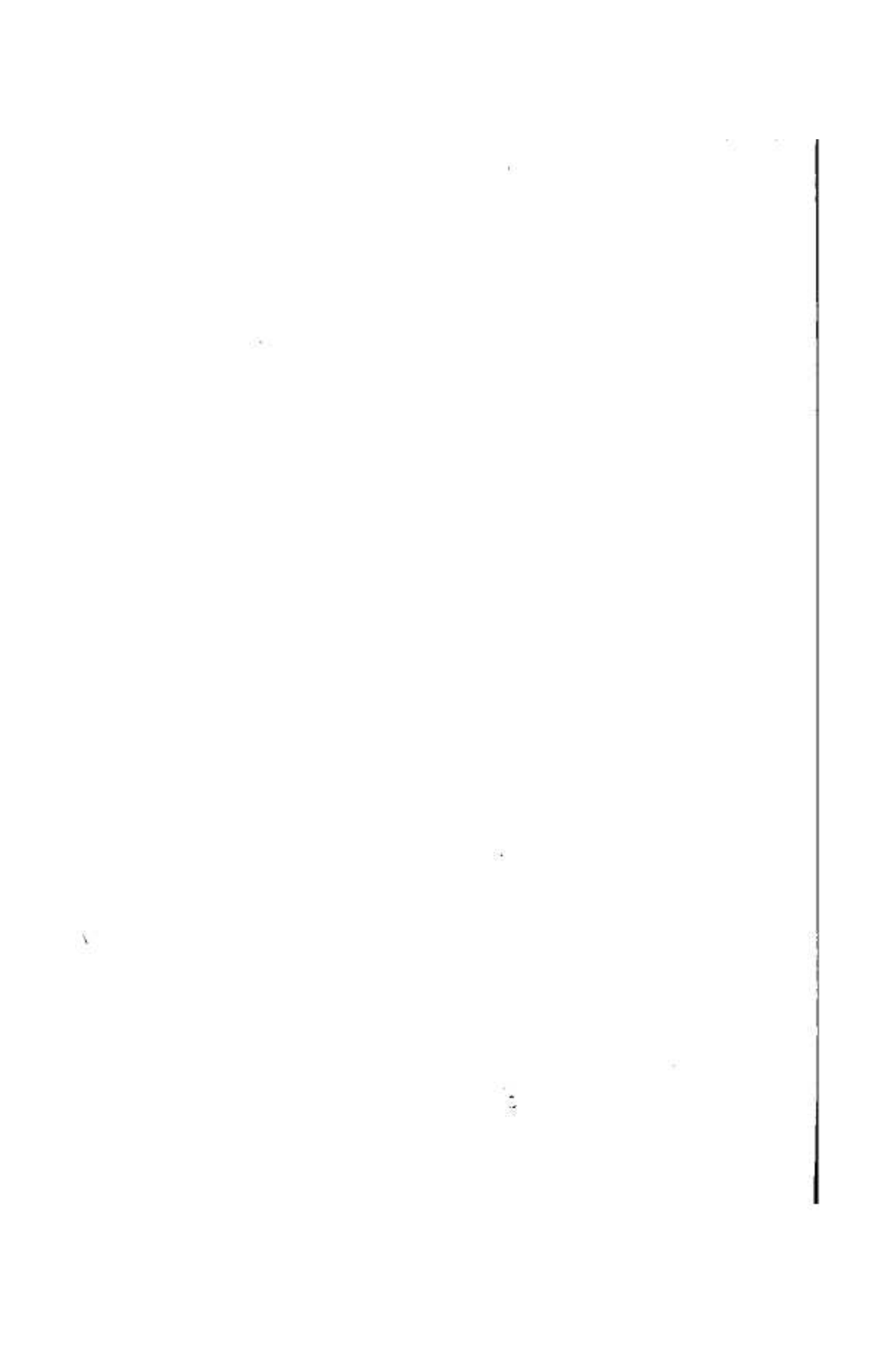
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To

My Father

IN LOVING ACKNOWLEDGMENT
AS WELL OF AN EARLY TASTE INSPIRED
AS OF HELP DERIVED
FROM HIS EXAMPLE AND CRITICISM
THE FOLLOWING POEM
IS
DEDICATED



AT STRATFORD FESTIVAL

APRIL 23, 1892

THE ripple laps along the churchyard wall
Where Avon's sleep is for a moment stirred
By light oars passing downward to the mill ;
A moment's noisier conference is heard
Amongst the cawing colonies that fill
The immemorial
Dream of the elms with discord musical ;
Anon each circling pinion finds a rest
Above some twittering nest,
And all things to the former stillness fall.

Stillness which yet some gentle outrage knew
From passing trumpet of the year's first bees,
Heralds of summer on this sunlit morn,
And, floating faintly hither with the breeze,
A stir that tells no common day is born.
Ere dawn her curtains drew
Clashed out o'er river and town the summons flew:
And Nature, conscious of the rare event,
To grace her darling lent
Flame to the light and sparkle to the dew.

Night after night, this week of all the year,¹
Poet! the listening theatre has paid
Rapt homage to thine old immortal line:
Wandered with Helen through the elfin glade,

¹ The Poet's birthday, April 23, on which the Festival attends, fell in 1892 on a Saturday. *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Julius Caesar, Twelfth Night*, and *Timon of Athens*, had been performed by Mr. F. R. Benson's Company during the week—*Timon* for the first time since 1856, when it was given by Mr. Phelps at Sadler's Wells.