

**THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARE: WITH A LIFE OF THE
POET, EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES,
CRITICAL NOTES, AND A GLOSSARIAL
INDEX, IN TWENTY VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE & HENRY N. HUDSON

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Dro. E. "Methinks you are my glass, and not my brother:
I see by you I am a sweet-faced youth."

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WITH
A LIFE OF THE POET, EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES, CRITICAL
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Harvard Edition.

BY THE
REV. HENRY N. HUDSON, LL.D.

IN TWENTY VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO THE MEMORY

OF

Daniel Webster,

OUR GREATEST ORATOR, STATESMAN, AUTHOR, THE SAVER OF
OUR NATIONAL UNION, THE CROWN AND CONSUMMATION OF
AMERICAN INTELLECT AND MANHOOD, THIS EDITION
OF HIS FAVOURITE POET IS, WITH REVERENTIAL
AFFECTION, INSCRIBED BY THE

EDITOR.

PREFACE.

THE most obvious peculiarity of this edition is, that it has two sets of notes ; one mainly devoted to explaining the text, and printed at the foot of the page ; the other mostly occupied with matters of textual comment and criticism, and printed at the end of each play. Of course the purpose of this double annotation is, to suit the work, as far as practicable, to the uses both of the general reader and of the special student. Now, whatever of explanation general readers may need, they naturally prefer to have it directly before them ; and in at least nine cases out of ten they will pass over an obscure word or phrase or allusion without understanding it, rather than stay to look up the explanation either in another volume or in another part of the same volume. Often, too, in case the explanation be not directly at hand, they will go elsewhere in quest of it, and then find, after all, that the editor has left the matter unexplained ; so that the search will be to no purpose : whereas, with the plan of foot-notes, they will commonly see at once how the matter stands, and what they have to expect, and so will be spared the labour and vexation of a fruitless quest.

It scarce need be said that with special students the case is very different. In studying such an author as Shakespeare, these naturally expect to light upon many things for the full discussion or elucidation of which they will have to go beyond the page before them ; though I believe even these like to have the matter within convenient reach and

easy reference. At all events, they are, or well may be, much less apt to get so intent on the author's thought, and so drawn onwards by the interest of the work, but that they can readily pause, and turn elsewhere, to study out such points as may call, or seem to call, for particular investigation. In fact, general readers, for the most part, pay little or no attention to the language of what they are reading, and seldom if ever interrogate, or even think of, the words, save when the interest of the matter is choked or checked by some strangeness or obscurity of expression; whereas special students commonly are or should be carrying on a silent process of verbal interrogation, even when the matter is their chief concern: and as these are more sharp-sighted and more on the look-out for verbal difficulties than the former, so they are less impatient of the pauses required for out-of-the-way explanation.

This edition has been undertaken, and the plan of it shaped, with a special view to meeting what is believed to be a general want, and what has indeed been repeatedly urged as such within the last few years. It has been said, and, I think, justly said, that a need is widely felt of an edition of Shakespeare, with such and so much of explanatory comment as may suffice for the state of those unlearned but sane-thoughted and earnest readers who have, or wish to have, their tastes raised and set to a higher and heartier kind of mental feeding than the literary smoke and chaff of the time. I have known many bright and upward-looking minds, — minds honestly craving to drink from the higher and purer springs of intellectual power and beauty, — who were frank to own that it was a sin and a shame not to love Shakespeare, but who could hardly, if at all, make that love come free and natural to them.

To be plying such minds with arguments of duty, or with thoughts of the good to be gained by standing through un-