

**SONGS FROM THE
PLAYS OF
SHAKESPEARE**

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Songs from the Plays of Shakespeare by William Shakespeare & Paul Woodroffe

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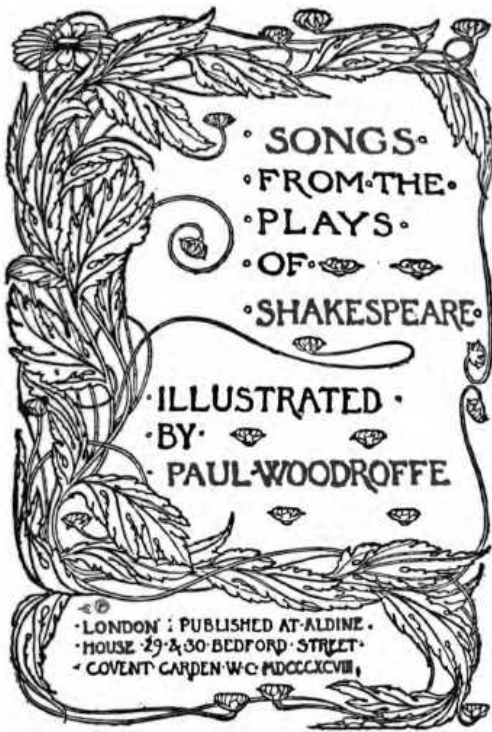
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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE & PAUL WOODROFFE

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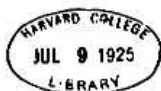


SONGS
FROM THE
PLAYS
OF
SHAKESPEARE

ILLUSTRATED
BY
PAUL WOODROFFE

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Gift of
W. W. H. H. H. H.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| ✓ <i>You spotted snakes with double tongue</i> | <i>Frontispiece</i> |
| ✓ <i>It was a lover and his Lass</i> | <i>To face page</i> 17 |
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ON THE SONGS FROM THE PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE



RIEL, who is the essential sprite of song, has often been attempted, if never entirely captured, in picture; and the same may be said of SHAKESPEARE'S SONGS. They lure every generation in turn to give them a pictorial and musical setting, after its own fashion. Fashions change; the charm of these SONGS, and their lyric fascination, are constant. The new presentment may not be, is very unlikely to be, the final and perfect one. It is pretty certain to be very unlike Shakespeare's idea, conceived in Elizabethan terms of music or colour, of his own SONGS set to a lyric or pictorial accompaniment.

SONGS FROM

Still, if it is good in its kind, the setting serves to make us turn to the original SONGS with a new sense of their delightfulness ; and that is enough.

The wonderful thing about the SONGS is, that separated from their context in the plays—where their extreme felicity, dramatically considered, made one dwell mainly upon their stage merit—they should still strike one as so perfect in themselves. This sets aside the cavil of the Scottish critic who maintained that SHAKESPEARE'S SONGS would not bear mention in the same breath with BURNS—save for the lustre of their dramatic framework. Better to consider how both wrote songs so inimitably, and both purely as song-writers, not as lyric poets in our later sense. As for Shakespeare, we may be sure that, though the names of his tunes are not given, he had a tune in his head for every song he wrote. The ballads heard at Stratford fairs, or the songs caught from the