

BOOKS printed for JOHN STOCKDALE.

to purchase all the expensive editions of our great dramatist; The book now offered to the public may commodiously be taken into a coach or post chaise, for amusement in a journey; or if a company of gentlemen should happen, in conversation, to mention SHAKSPEARE, or to dispute concerning any particular passage, a volume, containing the whole of his plays may, with great convenience be fetched by a servant out of a library or closet. In short, any particular passage may, at all times, and with ease, be recurred to. It is a compendium, not an abridgement, of the noblest of our poets, and a library in a single volume.

The Editor hath endeavoured to give all the perfection to this work which the nature of it can admit. The account of his life, which is taken from Rowe, and his last will, in reality, comprehend almost every thing that is known with regard to the personal history of SHAKSPEARE. The anxious researches of his admirers have scarcely been able to collect any farther information concerning him.

The text in the present edition, has been given as it was settled by the most approved commentators. It does not consist with the limits of the design, that the notes should be large, or very numerous: they have not, however, been wholly neglected. The notes which are subjoined are such as were necessary for the purpose of illustrating and explaining obsolete words, unusual phrases, old customs, and obscure or distant allusions. In short, it has been the Editor's aim to omit nothing which may serve to render SHAKSPEARE intelligible to every capacity, and to every class of readers.

Having this view, he cannot avoid expressing his hope, that an undertaking, the utility of which is so apparent, will be encouraged by the public; and his confidence of a favourable reception is increased by the consciousness that he is not doing an injury to any one. The success of the present volume will not impede the sale of the larger editions of SHAKSPEARE, which will still be equally sought for by those to whom the purchase of them may be convenient.

Gentlemen in the Country finding a difficulty in procuring the above valuable Work, by directing a Letter to Mr. STOCKDALE, opposite Burlington House, Piccadilly, appointing the Payment thereof in London, shall have it immediately forwarded, carriage paid, to any Part of Great Britain.