



P R E F A C E .

THE collection and preservation of the ancient Songs of a Nation has long been esteemed a worthy occupation. In other lands than this, these researches, it is true, go back to days of chivalry and are rewarded by the acquisition of

What resounds,
In fable or romance, of Uther's son
Begirt with British or Armoric knights. •

In our own country, the range of inquiry is more limited. We have no such legendary treasures to draw upon. The invention of printing—the use of gunpowder—the extension of navigation—all the discoveries that moulded the form and character of modern times, and separate us from past ages, preceded the European settlements in America, and shut out from our soil the

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