

PIERCE PENNILESS'S

SUPPLICATION TO THE DEVIL.

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BY

THOMAS NASH.

FROM THE FIRST EDITION OF 1592,

COMPARED WITH LATER IMPRESSIONS.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES,

BY J. PAYNE COLLIER, ESQ., F.S.A.



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INTRODUCTION.

The ensuing tract is reprinted from the earliest impression, an edition of extreme rarity, and we have compared it with subsequent copies in 1592, 1593, and 1595, the two last of which are of more frequent occurrence, though all difficult to be procured. The author, in one of his subsequent works, ("Have with you to Saffron Walden,") informs us that his "Pierce Penniless" had been six times printed between 1592 and 1596, but we have not been able to meet with more than five impressions of those years. Its popularity was extraordinary.

Many years ago, Mr. Octavius Gilchrist, whose knowledge of such matters was great, and whose taste and judgment were good, issued a prospectus for a reprint of "Pierce Penniless his Supplication to the Devil;" but his proposal (never carried into effect) was to adopt the text of the second, and not of the first edition, which, probably, he could not obtain. The differences are trifling, in no case (the preliminary matter excepted) more than verbal, but, having the earliest impression in our hands, we have thought it expedient to