TO THE MOST NOBLE
AND
INCOMPARABLE PAIRE
OF BRETHREN.
WILLIAM
Earle of Pembroke, &c. Lord Chamberlaine to the
Kings most Excellent Majesty
AND
PHILIP
Earle of Montgomery, &c. Gentleman of his Majesties
Bed-Chamber. Both Knights of the most Noble Order
of the Garter, and our singular good
LORDS.

Right Honourable,

W*Hilst we studie to be thankful in our particular, for the many favors we have received from your L.L we are falne upon the ill fortune, to mingle two the most diverse things that can bee, feare, and rashnesse; rashnesse in the enterprize, and feare of the successe. For,when we valew the places your H.H. sustaine,we cannot but know their dignity greater,then to descend to the reading of these trifles:and,vvhile we name them trifles, we have depriv'd our selves of the defence of our Dedication. But since your L.L. have beene pleas'd to thinke these trifles some-thing, heereto-fore; and have prosequuted both them, and their Authour living, vvith so much favour: we hope,that(they out-living him, and he not having the fate, common with some, to be exequutor to his owne wri-tings) you will use the like indulgence toward them, you have done*

unto their parent. There is a great difference, vvether any Booke choose his Patrones, of finde them:This hath done both. For, so much were your L L. likings of the severall parts, vvhen they were acted, as before they vvere published, the Volume ask'd to be yours. We have but collected them, and done an office to the dead, to procure his Orphanes, Guardians; without ambition either of selfe-profit, or fame: onely to keepe the memory of so worthy a Friend, & Fellow alive, as was our SHAKESPEARE, *by humble offer of his playes, to your most noble patronage. Wherein, as we have justly observed, no man to come neere your L.L. but vvith a kind of religious addresse; it hath bin the height of our care, vvho are the Presenters, to make the present worthy of your H.H. by the perfection.But,there we must also crave our abilities to be considerd, my Lords. We cannot go beyond our owne powers. Country hands reach foorth milke, creame, fruites, or what they have : and many Nations (we have heard) that had not gummes & incense, obtained their requests with a leavened Cake. It vvas no fault to approch their Gods, by what meanes they could: And the most, though meanest, of things are made more precious, when they are dedicated to Temples. In that name therefore, we most humbly consecrate to you H.H. these remaines of your servant* Shakespeare; *that what delight is in them, may be ever your L.L. the reputation his, & the faults ours, if any be committed, by a payre so carefull to shew their gratitude both to the living, and the dead, as is*

Your Lordshippes most bounden,

JOHN HEMINGE.
HENRY CONDELL.