

**THE FIRST AND SECOND PARTS
OF THE FAIR MAID OF
THE WEST; OR, A GIRL WORTH
GOLD. TWO COMEDIES**

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The First and Second Parts of the Fair Maid of the West; Or, a Girl Worth Gold. Two Comedies
by Thomas Heywood & J. Payne Collier

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THOMAS HEYWOOD & J. PAYNE COLLIER

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FIRST AND SECOND PARTS
OF
THE FAIR MAID OF THE WEST;
OR,
A GIRL WORTH GOLD.

TWO COMEDIES

BY

THOMAS HEYWOOD.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES,

BY

J. PAYNE COLLIER, ESQ.



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INTRODUCTION.

Under the editorial care of the late Mr. Barron Field, the Shakespeare Society has already reprinted four plays, in the composition of three of which Thomas Heywood alone was concerned, while in the fourth he had the assistance of his contemporary, William Rowley. These reprints came out respectively in 1842 and 1846; and in 1847 the Council had the misfortune to lose an able and willing associate, and the Editor of the present volume an early and zealous friend.

In conformity with the declared intention of the Council of the Shakespeare Society, it was the wish of Mr. Field to have continued his labours through the other dramatic works of Thomas Heywood; but death having rendered it necessary that the task should devolve into other hands, the present Editor has been called upon to complete what was left imperfect. It will now, therefore, be his duty from time to time, as the funds and more immediate purposes of the Society will allow, to prepare the remaining plays of this fine old dramatist for republication.

With this design, the two parts of "The Fair Maid of the West," constituting distinct plays, have been put to press; and in performing his duty, as regards them, the Editor has in general followed the system pursued by Mr. Field: he has done so, both for the sake of consistency, and because it appeared to him that it was not, in its principal features, capable of much improvement. Like Mr. Field, he has avoided the inconvenience of foot-notes, which usually distract attention from the progress of the plot and from the poetry of the scene, and he has added such explanations of passages or words, as seemed requisite, at the end of each play: thus, should any difficulty occur to the reader as he proceeds, he has nothing to do but to refer to the page and line in the notes, to have it removed, as far as the knowledge of the Editor extended. In one minor particular he has, he hopes, improved upon the ordinary plan; for he has thought it at all times advisable to put his information in the shortest compass. He has thus excluded many quotations where one would answer the purpose, deeming it a useless consumption of space to multiply authorities, when a single apposite passage would answer the purpose. In cases of appeal to well known works, all that is really wanted is a clear and accurate reference.

He may be allowed, perhaps, to say, after some experience, that it seems to him to have been the prevailing error of editorship, both as regards Shakespeare and his contemporaries, never to consider a point established, as long as any proof to the same

effect could be produced. The vanity of displaying extensive reading, and of citing recondite authorities, has mainly led to the introduction of this surplusage: the only information thus gained by the reader consists of a knowledge of what books had been consulted; and even this was delusive, since second-hand quotations were often made to bear the appearance of original research.

In the two following dramas, immediately connected in subject, the reader is put, as nearly as possible, in possession of the text of the author. It is evident, from the prefatory matter, that Heywood was a consenting party to the printing of "The Fair Maid of the West," in the old edition; and there is reason to believe that he superintended the work through the press: nevertheless, he was guilty of not a few strange oversights, and permitted many printer's errors to remain: these it was, of course, necessary to set right. The divisions of the acts, in our impression, are such as they appear in the old copy; but there the scenes, though usually in some way distinguished, are not marked and numbered in the ordinary manner. When a change of place occurred, especially if it were of any importance in the development of the plot, it was the custom of our old dramatists (in the deficiency of scenery and in the simplicity of other stage contrivances) to take care very early, generally in the first speech, to convey the required information, directly or indirectly, to the audience. The two following plays afford abundant instances of rapid alterations of the scene of action, and of as fre-