

**THE FAIR MAID OF THE
EXCHANGE: A COMEDY
AND FORTUNE BY LAND
AND SEA; A TRAGI-COMEDY**

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The Fair Maid of the Exchange: A Comedy and Fortune by Land and Sea; A Tragi-Comedy by
Thomas Heywood & William Rowley

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INTRODUCTION.

The following comedy was first published in the year 1607. The present reprint is from that copy, collated with the edition of 1637, the only date given by Langbaine; who undervalues the piece, and adds: "I question, notwithstanding Mr. Kirkman has ascribed it to our Author, whether it be his, since his name is not prefixt, neither does the style or œconomy resemble the rest of his labours." The writer of an article in the *Retrospective Review*¹ and the editor of *Baldwyn's Old English Drama*, echo this strain, for it is easier to join in a cry than to read for oneself; but the comedy appears to me and others, who are better judges than I, very entertaining, and very much in Heywood's style. The Cripple, (he has no name) whom Charles Lamb calls the hero of it, is a very original character, not unworthy of Ben Jonson. He is called a "drawer," meaning a pattern-drawer, and keeps a little shop or seat in the Exchange. He appears also to be a scrivener, a writer

¹ Vol. xi., p. 127.