

***RICHARD
BARNFIELD***



***THE AFFECTIONATE
SHEPHERD***

Richard Barnfield

The Affectionate Shepherd

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Two copies only of the poem by Barnfield here reprinted, are known to be preserved; one in Sion College Library, and another, formerly in Heber's possession, mentioned in "Bibliotheca Heberiana," iv. 15. Its merits and great rarity have pointed it out as a work deserving to be more known and appreciated. Barnfield is, perhaps, chiefly remembered by his elegant pieces printed in the "Passionate Pilgrim," attributed by some to Shakespeare; but Mr. Collier has distinctly proved them to belong to the less eminent poet. The "Affectionate Shepherd" was his first production, as he himself confesses in the preface to his "Cynthia," 1595, and it has received the well-merited commendation of Warton. Besides these poems, he is the author of "The Complaint of Poetrie for the death of Liberalitie," 4to. 1598, and others published at the same time, reprints of which are in the British Museum; also "The Encomium of Lady Pecunia, or the Praise of Money," a curious manuscript in the Ashmolean Museum, and likewise printed in the author's life-time. It should be mentioned that in the original copies of the following tract are a few hexameter verses on the Rape of Helen, which have been omitted as of an inferior kind to the other part of the work, and for still more obvious reasons. The "Affectionate Shepherd" itself will be found remarkably free from the coarseness which disfigures so much of the Elizabethan literature,—an additional inducement, if any were necessary, for rescuing it from the liability to destruction which is of course incident to any book of such

excessive rarity. Our thanks are due to the Rev. H. Christmas, Librarian of Sion College, for the courtesy and liberality with which he permitted our transcript to be made from a volume of tracts possessing the greatest charm for the bibliographer; for besides the present one, it contains the first edition of Shakespeare's Lucrece, and several other pieces of nearly equal value, in the finest possible condition.

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Amor plus mellis, quam fellis, est.

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