THE ADDRESS TO THE READER.

To the great Variety of Readers.

From the most able, to him that can but spell: There you are number'd. We had rather you were weigh'd. Especially, when the fate of all Bookes depends upon your capacities: and not of your heads alone, but of your purses. Well! It is now publique, & you will stand for your privledges wee know: to read and censure. Do so, but buy it first. That doth best commend a Book, the Stationer saies. Then, how oddes soever your brains be, or your wisdomes, make your licence the same, and spare not. Judge your sixe-pen'orth, your shillinges worth, your five shillinges worth at a time, or higher, so you rise to the just rates, and welcome. But, whatever you do, Buy. Censure will not drive a Trade, or make the Jacks go. And though you be a Magistrate of wit, and sit on the Stage at Black-Friers, or the Cook-pit to arraigne Playes daily, know, these Playes have had their triall alreadie, and stood out all Appeales; and do now come forth quitted rather by a Decree of Court, than any purchased Letters of commendation.

It had bene a thing, we confesse, worthie to have bene wished, that the Author himselfe had liv'd to have set forth, and overseen his owne writings; But since it hath bin ordain'd otherwise, and he by death departed from that right, we pray you do not envie his Friends, the office of their care, and paine, to have collected & publish'd them; and so to have publish'd them, as where (before) you were abus'd with diverse stolne, and surreptitious copies, maimed, and deformed by the frauds and stealthes of injurious impostors, that expos'd them: even those, are now offer'd to your view sur'd, and perfect of their limbs; and all the rest, absolute in their numbers, as he conceived the. Who, as he was a happy imitator of Nature, was a most gentle expresser of it. His mind and hand went together: And what he thought, he utter'd with that easinesse, that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers. But it is not our province, who onelie gather his works, and give them you, to praise him. It is yours that reade him. And there we hope, to your divers capacities, you will finde enough, both to draw, and hold you: for his wit can no more lie hid, then it could be lost. Reade him, therefore; and againe, and againe: And if then you doe not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger, not to understand him. And so we leave you to other of his Friends, whom if you need, can bee your guides: if you needes them not, you can leade yourselves, and others. And such Readers we wish him.

JOHN HEMINGE.
HENRIC CONDELL.