

Renascence Editions

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Sonnets by Spenser from Various Sources

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SONNETS BY SPENSER

FROM

VARIOUS SOURCES.

I. *From "Foure Letters, and Certaine Sonnets: Especially touching Robert Greene, and other parties by him abused, etc. London: Imprinted by Iohn Wolfe, 1592 (quarto)."*

To the right worshipfull my singular good frend,
M. Gabriell Haruey, Doctor of the Lawes.



Haruey, the happy aboue happiest men
I read: that, sitting like a Looker-on
Of this worldes Stage, doest note with critique pen
The sharpe dislikes of each condition:
And, as one careless of suspition,
Ne fawnest for the fauour of the great;

Ne fearest foolish reprehension
Of faulty men, which daunger to thee threat.
But freely doest, of what thee list, entreat,
Like a great Lord of peerelesse liberty;
Lifting the Good vp to high Honours seat,

And the Euill damning euermore to dy.
For Life, and Death, is in thy doomefull writing:
So thy renowme liues euer by endighting.

*Dublin this xvij of Iuly, 1586,
Your devoted frend, during life,
Edmund Spenser.*

II. *From "Nennio, Or a Treatise of Nobility, etc. Written in Italian by that famous Doctor and worthy Knight, Sir Iohn Baptista Nenna of Barri. Done into English by William Iones, Gent, 1595 (quarto)."*



Ho so will seeke by right deserts t'attaine,
Vnto the type of true Nobility,
And not be painted shewes & titles vaine,
Deriued farre from famous Ancestrie:
Behold them both in their right visnomy
Here truly pourtrayt, as they ought to be,
And striuing both for termes of dignitie,
To be aduanced highest in degree.
And when thou doost with equall insight see
[T]he ods twixt both, of both th&etilde; deem aright,
And chuse the better of them both to thee:
But thanks to him that it deserues, behight;
To *Nenna* first, that first this worke created,
And next to *Iones*, that truely it translated.

Ed. Spenser.


III. *From "Historie of George Castriot, surnamed Scanderberg, King of Albanie: containing his famous actes, etc. Newly translated out of French into English by Z. I., Gentleman. Imprinted for W. Ponsonby, 1596 (folio)."*



Herefore doth vaine antiquitie so vaunt
Her ancient monuments of mightie peeres,
And old Heroes, which their world did daunt
With their great deedes, and fild their childrens eares?
Who rapt with wonder of their famous praise,
Admire their statues, their Collossoes great,
Their huge Pyramids, which do heauen threat.
Lo one, whom later age hath brought to light,

Matchable to the greatest of those great:
Great both by name, and great in power and might,
And meriting a meere triumphant feate.
The scourge of Turkes, and plague of infidels,
Thy acts, ô Scanderbeg, this volume tels.
Ed. Spenser.

IV. From "*The Commonwealth and Gouernment of Venice. Written by the Cardinall Gasper Contareno, and translated out of Italian into English by Lewis Lewkenor, Esquire. London: Imprinted by Iohn Windet for Edmund Mattes, etc., 1599 (quarto).*"

 He antique *Babel*, Empresse of the East,
Vpreard her buildinges to the threatned skie:
And Second *Babell*, tyrant of the West,
Her ayry Towers vpraised much more high.
But, with the weight of their own surquedry,
They both are fallen, that all the earth did feare,
And buried now in their own ashes ly;
Yet shewing by their heapes, how great they were.
But in their place doth now a third appeare,
Fayre Venice, flower of the last worlds delight;
And next to them in beauty draweth neare,
But farre exceeds in policie of right.
Yet not so fayre her buildinges to behold
As *Lewkenors* stile that hath her beautie told.
Edm. Spenser.