

THE FOVRTH

BOOKE OF THE

FAERIE QVEENE.

Containing
The Legend of CAMBEL and TELAMOND,
OR
OF FRIENDSHIP.

[1]

THE rugged forehead that with graue foresight
Welds kingdomes causes, & affaires of state,
My looser rimes (I wote) doth sharply wite,
For praising loue, as I haue done of late,
And magnifying louers deare debate;
By which fraile youth is oft to follie led,
Through false allurement of that pleasing baite,
That better were in vertues disciplined,
Then with vaine poemes weeds to haue their fancies fed.

[2]

Such ones ill iudge of loue, that cannot loue,
Ne in their frosen hearts feele kindly flame:
For thy they ought not thing vnknowne reproue,
Ne naturall affection faultlesse blame,
For fault of few that haue abusd the same.
For it of honor and all vertue is
The roote, and brings forth glorious flowres of fame,
That crowne true louers with immortall blis,
The meed of them that loue, and do not liue amisse.

[3]

Which who so list looke backe to former ages,
And call to count the things that then were donne,
Shall find, that all the workes of those wise sages,
And braue exploits which great Heroes wonne,
In loue were either ended or begunne:
Witnesse the father of Philosophie,
Which to his *Critias*, shaded oft from sunne,
Of loue full manie lessons did apply,

The which these Stoicke censours cannot well deny.

[4]

To such therefore I do not sing at all,
But to that sacred Saint my soueraigne Queene,
In whose chast breast all bountie naturall,
And treasures of true loue enlocked beene,
Boue all her sexe that euer yet was seene;
To her I sing of loue, that loueth best,
And best is lou'd of all aliue I weene:
To her this song most fitly is addrest,
The Queene of loue, & Prince of peace from heauen blest.

[5]

Which that she may the better deigne to heare,
Do thou dred infant, *Venus* dearling doue,
From her high spirit chase imperious feare,
And vse of awfull Maiestie remoue:
In sted thereof with drops of melting loue,
Deawd with ambrosiall kisses, by thee gotten
From thy sweete smyling mother from aboue,
Sprinckle her heart, and haughtie courage soften,
That she may hearke to loue, and reade this lesson often.

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