

John Florio

SECOND FRUTES

Dedication

Second Frutes, to be gathered of Twelve Trees, of Divers but delightsome tastes to the tongues of Italians and Englishmen» To which is annexed his Cardine of Recreation yeelding six thousand Italian Prouerbs.

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To the right worshipfull, the kinde entertainer of vertue, and mirrour of a good minde Master Nicholas Saunder o/ Ewel, Esquire, his devoted John Florio Congratulates the rich reward o/ the one, and lasting beautie of the other and wisheth all felicitie els.

Sir in this stirring time, and pregnant prime of invention when everie 'bramble is fruiteful, when everie mol-hill hath cast of the winters mourning garment, and when everie man is busilie woorking to feede his owne fancie; some by delivering to te presse the occurences & accidents of the world, newes from the marte, or from the mint, and newes are the credite of a travailer, and first question of an Englishman. Some, like Alchimists distilling quintessences of wit, that melt golde to nothing, & yet would make golde of nothing; that make men in the moone and catch moon shine in the water. Some putting on pyed coats lyke calendars, and hammering upon dialls, taking the elevation of Paneridge church (their quotidian walks) pronosticate of faire, of foule or of smelling weather, Men weatherwise, that wil by aches foretell of change and alteration of wether. Some more active gallants made of a finer molde, by devising how to win their Mistrises favours, and how to blaze and blanche their passions with aeglogues, songs, and sonnets, in pitiful verse or miserable prose, and most, far a fashion; is not Love then a wagg, that makes men so wanton? yet love is a pretie thing to give unto my Ladie. Other some with new caracterisings bepasting all the posts in London to the prooffe, and fouling of paper, in twelve howres thinke to effect Calabrian wonders; is not the number of twelve wonderfull? Some wirh Amadysing & Martinising a multitude of our libertine yonkers with triviall, frivolous, and vaine vaine droleries, set manie mindes a gadding; could a foole with a feather make men better sport? I could not chuse but apply myself in some sort to the season, and either proove a weede in my encrease without profit, or a wholesome pothearbe in profit without pleasure. If I proove more than I promise, I will impute it to the gracious Soile where my endeavours are planted, whose souveraine vertue divided with such worthless seedes, hath transformed my unregarded slips to medeinable simples. Manie sowe come, and reape thistles; bestow three yeares toyle in manuring a barraine plot, and have nothing for their labor but their travel: the reason why, because they leave the lowe dales, to seeke. thrift in the hill countries; and dig for gold on the top of the Alpes, when Esops cock found a pearle in a lower place. For me, I am none of their faction, I lave not to climb high to catch shadowes: sufficeth, gentle Sir, that your perfections are the port where my labors must anchor, whose manie and liberall favours have been so largely extended unto me, that I have a long time studied how I might in some sort gratefully testifie thankfulness unto you. But when I had assembled all my thoughts, & entred into a contrarious consultation of my utmost abilities, I could not find anie employment more agreeable to my power, or better beseeeming my dutie, than this present Dedication, whereby the world, by the

instance of your never entermitted benevolence towards me, should have a perfect insight into your vertue and bountie (qualities growne too solitary in this age) and your selfe might be unfallibly persuaded in what degree I honor and regarde you. Far indeede I neither may in equitie forget, nor in reason conceale, the rare curtesies you vouchfast me at Oxford, the friendly offers and great liberalitie sincee (above my hope and my desert) continued at London, where with you have fast bound me to beare a dutifull & grateful observance towards you while I live, & to honour that mind, from which as from a spring, al your friendships & goodnes hath flowed: And therefore to give you some paune and certaine assurance of a thankfull minde, and my professed devotion, I have consecrated these my slender *endeauours*, wholly to your delight which shall stand for an image and monument of your worthinesse to posteritie. And though they serve to pleasure and profit manie, yet shall my selfe reape pleasure, also if they please you well, under whose name and cognisance they shall goe abroade and seeke their fortunes. How the world will entertaine thern I knowe not, or what acceptance your credit may adde to their basenes I am yet uncertaine, but this I dare vaunt without sparke of vaine-glory that I have given you a taste of the best Italian fruites the Thuscane Garden could affoorde; but if the pallate of some ale or beer mouths be out of taste that they cannot taste thern, let them sporte but not spue. The moone keeps her course for all the dogges barking. I have for these fruites ransackt and rifled the gardens of fame throughout Italie (and there are the Hesperides) if translated they do prosper, as they flourished upon their native stock or eate thern & they will be sweete, or set thern and they will adorne your orchyards. The maidenhead of my industrie I yeilded to a noble Mecenat (renoumed Leicester), the honor of England, whom, though like Hector every miscreant Mirmidon dare strik being dead, yet sing Homer or Virgil, write frend or foe, of Troy or of Troyes issue; that Hector must have his desert. the Generall of his Prince, the Paragon of his Peers, the watchman of our peace,

Non so se miglior Duce o Cavalliero

As Petrarke hath in his triumph of fame; and, to conclude, rhe supporter of his friends, the terror of his foes, and the Britton Patron of the Muses

Dardanias light and Troyans foithfuls't hope.

But nor I, nor the place may halfe sufflce for his praise which, the sweetest singer of all our westerne shepheards hath so exquisitely depainted, that, as Achilles by Alexander was counted happy for having such a rare emblazoner of his magnanimitie, as the Meonian Poete: so I account him thrice-fortunate, in having such a herauld of his vertues as Spenser; Curteous Lord, Curteous Spenser, I knowe not which hath purchast more fame, either he in deserving so well of so famous a scholler or so famous a scholler in being so thankfull without hope of requitall to so famous a Lord: But leaving him that dying left al Artes, and all strangers as Orphanes, forsaken, and friendles, I will wholly convert my muze to you (my second patron) who among manie that beare their crests hie, and mingle their titles with ***TAM MARTI QUAM MERCURIO*** are an unfayned embracer of virtues, and nourisher of knowledge and learning. I published long since my first fruits to the use of such as were but meanely entred in the Italian tongue (and which because they were first and the tree but young were something sowre, yet at last digested in this cold climat), knowing well that they would both nourish and delight & now I have againe, after long toyle and diligent pruning of my orcharde brought forth my seeond fruites (better, riper and pleasanter than the first) not unfit for those that embrace the language of the muses, or, would beautihe their speech with a not vulgar bravery. These two I brought forth as the daughters and offsprings of my care and studie: My elder (as before noted) because she was ambitious (as heirs are wont) I married for preferment and for honour, but this younger (fayrer, betrer nurtured, & comelier than her sister) because my hope of such preferment and honour had, fayled me, I thought to have cloystred up in some solitarynes which shee perceiving, with haste putting on her best ornaments and (following the guise of her countrie women presuming very much upon the love and favour of her parents) hath volumaryly made her choice (plainly telling me that she will not leade apes in hell) and matched

with such a one as she best liketh, and hopeth will both dearley lave her, & make her such a joymer as shall be to the comfort of her parents, and joy of her match, and therefore have I given her my consent, because shee hath jumped so well with modesty, and not aspired so high that shee might be upbraided either with her birth or basenes when she could not mend it. I know the world will smile friendlier, and gaze more upon a damzell marching in figured silkes (who are as paper bookes with nothing in thern) than upon one being onely clad in homespunn cloth (who are as playne cheasts full of treasure) yet *communis error* shall not have my company, and therefore have I rather chosen to present my Italian and English proverbiall sportes to such a one as I know joynes them both so aptly in himselfe, as I doubt whether is best in him, but he is best in both: who loves them both, no man better; and touching proverbs, invents them, no man finer; and aplies them no man fitter; and hath his great contentment in knowledge of languages (guides and instruments to perfection and excellency) as in Nectar and Ambrosia (meate onely for the Gods and deified mindes,) I shall not neede to trouble my selfe or you with any commendation of the matter I deliver, nor to give credit by some figures and colours to proverbs and sentences, seeing your selfe know well (whose censure I most respect) both how much a proverbiall speech (namely in the Italian) graceth a wise meaning, and how probably, it argueth a good conceipt, and also how naturally the Italians please themselves with such materyall, short, and wittie speeches (which when they themselves are out of Italy and amongst strangers, who they think hath learnt a little Italian out of CASTILIONS courtier, or Guazzo his dialogues, they will endeavour to forget or neglect and speake bookish, and not as they will doe amongst themselves because they know their proverbs never came over the Alpes) no lesse than with the conceipted apothegms or Impreses, which never fall within the reach of a barren or vulgar head. What decorum I have observed in selecting thern I leave to the learned to considero Thus, craving the continuall Sunshine of your worships favour towards me, and that they may never decline to any west, and desiring your friendly censure on my travails, I wish unto you your owne wishes, which are such as wisdomes endites, and successes should subscribe.

Your W.affectionate in all he may; **J.F.**