

Scorn not the Sonnet

1. Noun
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scorn not the Sonnet; Critic, you have frowned,

Mindless of its just honours; with this key

Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody

Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;

A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;

With it Camens soothed an exile's grief;

The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf

Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned

His visionary brow: a glow-worm Noun,

It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land

To struggle through dark ways; and, when a damp

Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand

The Thing became a trumpet; whence he blew

Soul-animating strains--alas, too few!