

**DIANA: THE  
SONNETS, AND  
OTHER POEMS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649451289

Diana: The Sonnets, and Other Poems by Henry Constable

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**HENRY CONSTABLE**

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DIANA: THE SONNETS AND OTHER  
POEMS OF HENRY  
CONSTABLE.



" Sweet Constable doth take the wond'ring ear  
And lays it up in willing prisonment."

*The Return from Parnassus, 1606.*

DIANA: THE SONNETS AND OTHER  
POEMS OF HENRY CONSTABLE, B.A.  
OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;  
NOW FIRST COLLECTED, AND EDITED, WITH  
SOME ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR, BY  
WILLIAM CAREW HAZLITT, OF  
THE INNER TEMPLE  
ESQUIRE.



TO WHICH ARE ADDED, A FEW NOTES AND  
ILLUSTRATIONS, BY THE LATE  
THOMAS PARK.



LONDON:  
BASIL MONTAGU PICKERING,  
196, PICCADILLY.  
1859.



THIS VOLUME BEING THE WORKS IN THEIR FIRST  
COLLECTIVE FORM, OF ONE  
OF THE LITERARY ORNAMENTS OF THE AGE OF  
ELIZABETH, IS APPROPRIATELY  
INSCRIBED TO  
RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES, Esq. M.P.  
BY THE EDITOR.





## PREFACE.

**N**O apology seems to be requisite for introducing to the public notice the complete poetical remains of Henry Constable, one of the leading Sonneteers of the age of Elizabeth. Though not altogether free from the quaintness which marks the writers of his time, the *Diana* and his other productions possess a naturalness of sentiment, and a grace of expression, which will go far to redeem any blemish of the kind to which we refer. The numbers of Constable are generally harmonious and pleasing; and it might be difficult to select any of his pieces which did not exhibit, in a greater or less degree, traces of a mind rich in fancy and invention. The efforts of his Muse, to which the Poet himself attached, or affected to attach, principal importance, were his *Spiritual Son-*

*nets*; of the rest he was accustomed to speak in after-life as the "vain poems" of his youth. It is to be suspected that posterity will judge otherwise; for, while these sacred effusions rarely rise above mediocrity, a more beautiful specimen of early English lyric poetry than *The Sheepbeard's Song of Venus and Adonis* could hardly be found in the whole circle of Elizabethan literature.

The present collection embraces no fewer than sixty-three pieces by Constable not found in the printed copy of the *Diana*, 1594,\* viz. from Todd's MS. thirty-eight; from the Harl. MS. sixteen; from *Sidney's Apology for Poetry*, four; from *England's Helicon*, four; from the 4<sup>o</sup>. of 1592, one. On the other hand, we have rejected, without hesitation, the "divers quatorzains of honorable and learned personages," with which Constable had no concern,

\* This edition has undergone two reprints (1815, 4<sup>o</sup>, and 1818, 12<sup>o</sup>.) which are equally worthless. It seems likely that Constable, when he christened his little book, had in his mind the title of a similar volume published by John Southerne, eight years before: *Pandora, the Musique of the Beautie of his Mistresse Diana*, 1584, 4<sup>o</sup>. Who, in either case, the lady may have been, in whose praise the poet is so lavish, it is now idle to conjecture.

and which Richard Smith, the publisher, appears to have foisted into the 12°, with no other object than that of making up the volume.

Between 1592 and 1604, the *Diana* passed through as many as four editions. Of the first, which was published in the former year in 4°, a copy formerly belonged to Mr. J. P. Collier; it contains twenty-three sonnets only. The next, 1594, 12°, is, or was, in Malone's collection at Oxford; the number of sonnets, there subscribed H. C. amounts to twenty-seven; but the one addressed *To his Absent Diana*, which in the 4°. immediately follows the title-page, is omitted. The two impressions which it remains to notice, appeared in 1597 and 1604 respectively: of the latter, it is stated, in the *Bibliographers' Manual*, that a copy wanting several leaves was sold among Mr. Bindley's books.

The four contributions of Constable to *England's Helicon* have been reprinted from the Editor's copy of the first edition of that unrivalled miscellany, published in 1600, 4°.

For a transcript of the Sonnet described above as being found only in the quarto, the editor is indebted to the kindness of its former possessor, Mr. Collier.