

**DIDO, QUEEN OF
CARTHAGE:
A TRAGEDY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649022472

Dido, Queen of Carthage: A Tragedy by Christopher Marlowe & Thomas Nash

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CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE & THOMAS NASH

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A TRAGEDY:

BY

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE AND THOMAS NASH.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR HURST, ROBINSON, AND CO.,

99, CHEAPSIDE, AND 8, FLEET STREET;

AND ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE AND CO., EDINBURGH.

MDCCCXXV.

1895

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144.35.39

Harvard College Library
Norton Collection,

JAN 5 1956

LONDON:

Printed by D. S. Maurice, Church Street.

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THOMAS NASH.

THOMAS NASH was born at the small sea-port town of Leostoff, in Suffolk, probably about the year 1564. He was, as he himself informs us, descended from a family who were seated in Hertfordshire. He became a student of St. John's College, Cambridge, and took his Bachelor's degree in 1585. We have assigned his birth to the year 1564, partly on the authority of a pamphlet, published in 1597, entitled *The trimming of Thomas Nash, Gentleman, by the high titled Patron Don Richardo de Medico Campo, Barber Chirurgion to Trinity College, in Cambridge*. This production states that he left College at seven years' standing, and before he had taken his Master's degree, about the year 1587; a statement, on the accuracy of which we may probably rely, with respect to such a fact as this, although proceeding from the pen of an adversary. Assuming, therefore, that Nash went to College at the age of sixteen, (about the usual time,) his birth would, according to this authority, have been in the year above mentioned. From Cambridge, he proceeded to London. In the literary

warfare between the Puritans, under the name of Martin Mar-prelate, and the Church, Nash ranked himself on the side of the establishment, and took an active part in the controversy. He attacked them in their own style, and by the skilful application of his peculiar talents of ridicule and invective, he was chiefly instrumental in silencing them. Amongst his productions in this contest, were *Pap with a hatchet, or a fig for my godson, or crack me this nut. To be sold at the Crab-tree Cudgel, in Thwack-Coat Lane.* and *An almond for a Parrot, or an alma for Martin.* The following are also supposed to have been written by him: *A counter-scuffle given to Martin Junior.—Martin's month's mind.—The return of the renowned Pasquill of England.*

The pamphlet before quoted asserts that Nash, whilst at College, had assisted in writing a show called *Terminus et non Terminus*, for which, the person who had been concerned with him was expelled; and that Nash himself was, at that time, (1597,) in prison for having written a play called *The Isle of Dogs*; neither of which facts, considering the freedom and severity of his satire, are improbable.

Nash was one of the choice wits and boon companions of his day: if he originally possessed any patrimony, it was soon consumed in the dissipations of a town life, and he was reduced to dependance on literary patronage and the produce of his pen. That the latter was fertile enough, must be allowed, but its fruits were not sufficient to supply his wants. He commences his *Pierce Penniless, his supplication to the Devil*, with a very touching description

of his situation. "Having," says he, "spent many years in studying how to live, and lived a long time without money; having tired my youth with folly, and surfeited my mind with vanity, I began at length to look back to repentance, and addressed my endeavours to prosperity; but all in vain, I sat up late and rose early, contended with the cold and conversed with scarcity; for all my labours turned to loss, my vulgar Muse was despised and neglected, my pains not regarded, or alightly rewarded, and I myself, in prime of my best wit, laid open to poverty."

From the following passage, it is not improbable that he had experienced the bounty of Sir Philip Sidney: "Gentle Sir Philip Sidney, thou knewest what pains, what toils, what travail conduct to perfection: well couldest thou give every virtue his encouragement, every art his due, every writer his desert, 'cause none more virtuous, witty, or learned, than thyself. But thou art dead in thy grave, and hast left too few successors of thy glory, too few to cherish the sons of the Muses, or water those budding hopes with their plenty, which thy bounty erst planted."

Nash appears to have been very much in need of a patron at this time: in the production just quoted, he holds out flattering promises of what he would do, if any Mecænas would extend his bounty to him: "Gentles," says he, "it is not your lay Chronigraphers, that write of nothing but Mayors and Sheriffs, and the Dear Year, and the Great Frost, that can endow your names with never dated glory: for they want the wings of choice words to fly to heaven, which we have: they cannot sweeten a discourse, or wrest admira-