

THE TWELFTH DAY.

“I grant thou wert not married to my Muse
And therefore mayst without attain't o'erlook
The dedicated words which writers use
Of their fair subjects.”

The Sonnets.

I LEARNT at last some sort of confidence,
Called me the fool I was, knowing my skill
Proven of old, all women's native will
To do all things soever that lack sense,
Especially if evil: thoughts immense
Like this I thought: plumes of my amorous quill
I tickled her withal: then grave and still
Waited secure: the silence grew intense.

She read—and saw me but a beardless boy,
Too young to fear, too gentle not to pity,
Not overbold; quite powerless to destroy
Her life's long peace, the ten-year-walled city.
Why be too cruel, check such baby joy?
She said “I think the poem very pretty.”