
SUMMARY: Dedicatory epistle to Oxford in Robert Greene's *Gwydonius; The Card of Fancy*, published in 1584. If Robert Greene was a pen-name of Oxford's, in this instance Oxford dedicated a literary work of his own composition to himself.

To the right honourable Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxenford, Viscount Bulbeck, Lord of
Escales and Badlesmere, and Lord Great Chamberlain of England, Robert Greene
wisheth long life with increase of honour.

That poor Castilian, Frontino, (right honourable), being a very unskilful painter, presented Alphonsus, the Prince of Aragon, with a most imperfect picture which the King thankfully accepted, not that he liked the work, but that he loved the art. The paltering poet Choerilus dedicated his duncing poems to that mighty monarch Alexander, saying that he knew assuredly if Alexander would not accept them in that they were not pithy, yet he would not utterly reject them in that they had a show of poetry. Caesar oft-times praised his soldiers for their will although they wanted skill, and Cicero as well commended stammering Lentulus for his painful industry as learned Laelius for his passing eloquence. Which considered (although wisdom did will me not to strain further than my sleeve would stretch), I thought good to present this imperfect pamphlet to your Honour's protection, hoping your Lordship will deign to accept the matter in that it seemeth to be prose, though something unsavoury for want of skill, and take my well-meaning for an excuse of my boldness in that my poor will is not in the wane, whatsoever this imperfect work do want. The Emperor Trajan was never without suitors because so courteously he would hear every complaint. The lapidaries continually frequented the court of Adobrandinus because it was his chief study to search out the nature of stones. All that courted to Atlanta were hunters, and none sued to Sappho but poets. Wheresoever Maecenas lodgeth, thither no doubt will scholars flock. And your Honour being a worthy favourer and fosterer of learning hath forced many, through your exquisite virtue, to offer the first-fruits of their study at the shrine of your Lordship's courtesy. But though they have waded far & found mines, and I gadded abroad to get nothing but mites, yet this I assure myself, that they never presented unto your Honour their treasure with a more willing mind than I do this simple trash, which I hope your Lordship will so accept. Resting therefore upon your Honour's wonted clemency, I commit your Lordship to the Almighty.

Your Lordship's most dutifully to command,
Robert Greene.