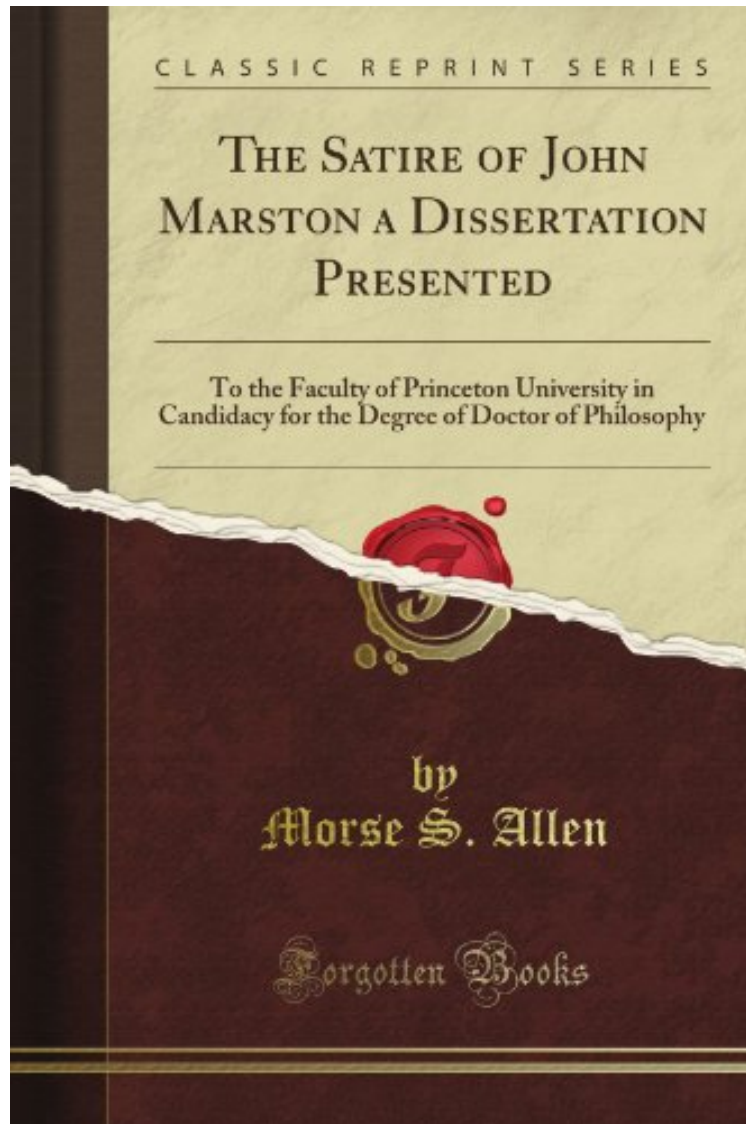


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Morse S. Allen

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John Marston was born about 1575 and died June 25, 1634. He came of good family and was a gentleman. This was acknowledged even by his enemy, Jonson, who in fact lays stress upon Marston's own insistence upon his gentility. His family was an old Shropshire one; a Robertus de Marston is mentioned in 1307. The dramatist's great-grandfather was also a John Marston whose son Ralph was of Shropshire, while the next generation, John, the poet's father, was of Coventry. The dramatist's mother, Mary Guarsi or Guersie, was probably the descendant of Balthazar Guarsi, a man of some prominence, living in the reign of Henry VIII's Andrew Guarsi, Marston's grandfather, who died in 1561, was probably Balthazar's son. He bequeathed to his daughter Mary 100, to be paid when she should reach the age of eighteen, or upon her marriage. This Mary Marston, who was the poet's mother, died June 12, 1621. John Marston, the poet's father, entered the Middle Temple in 1570. He seems to have moved to Coventry soon after, though he kept up his connections with London. In his will he calls himself of city of Coventry Gent. In Dugdale's Warwickshire he is mentioned as a reader in the Middle Temple. The facts concerning Marston's biography are for the most part taken from the introduction to Bullen's edition of Marston (which he summarized for the D. N. B.); and from Grosart's introduction to Marston's *Works*, in his *Occasional Issues*. These *Issues* of Grosart are rare, only about fifty copies of each having been printed. *Poetaster*. II. i, 89f, and III. i, 27; 108. Cf. also *infra*, p. 63. He was an Italian, and surgeon to Queen Katharine of Aragon; he was naturalized in England in 1521-2; Bachelor of Medicine from Cambridge about 1530; and was surgeon to Henry VIII. In 1543 he was collecting for the king accusations against Archbishop Cranmer. By special grace he was admitted M. D. at Cambridge, 1546. Royal favor ended. (Typographical errors above are due to OCR software and don't occur in the book.)