

expression. By the kindness of his uncle, he obtained a better education at school than his parents could have afforded; and when a schoolboy, he was an early questionist, quietly inquisitive, *Why this was, and that was not, to be remembered? Why this was granted, and that denied?* Hence his schoolmaster persuaded his parents, who intended him for an apprentice, to continue him at school, the good man assuring them that he would double his diligence in instructing him. "And in the mean time his parents and master laid a foundation for his future happiness, by instilling into his soul the seeds of piety, those conscientious principles of loving and fearing God; of an early belief that he knows the very secrets of our souls; that he punishes our vices, and rewards our innocence; that we should be free from hypocrisy, and appear to men what we are to God, because, first or last, the crafty man is caught in his own snare." Jewel, bishop of Salisbury, next took Hooker under his care, sent him to Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and contributed to his support. Having entered into holy orders, he was appointed Master of the Temple, London: and the church contains a bust erected by the benchers to his memory. Hooker's most celebrated work is his treatise on "Ecclesiastical Polity," a powerful defence of the Church of England; and the first publication in the English language which presented a train of clear logical reasoning.

LVII.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, "THE ENGLISH PETRARCH."

Sir Philip Sidney—a name which most educated Englishmen have learnt to admire and love—was born in 1554, at Penhurst Place, in Kent, where an oak, planted to commemorate the event, flourishes to this day.

Young Sidney was placed at the Free Grammar-school of Shrewsbury, (1) While there, his father, Sir Henry Sidney, "a man of great parts," addressed a letter to him, in 1566, full of sterling advice. His biographer and companion, Lord Brooke, states that at this early age, Philip was distinguished for intelligence, and for a gravity beyond his years. In 1569, he was entered at Christchurch Oxford, and is reported to have held a public disputation with Carew, the author of the *Survey of Cornwall*; while at college he displayed remarkable acuteness of intellect and craving for knowledge.

In 1572, Philip Sidney left England, and proceeded on his travels into France. He was furnished with a licence to pass into foreign lands, with three servants, and four horses; and was placed under the protection of the Earl of Lincoln, the Lord Admiral.

Paris was Sidney's first halting-place, and here he was introduced to the dazzling and bewildering splendour of the court of Catherine de Medicis. "Sidney," says Mr. Pears, "had heard much of this queen and her brilliant court: in the quiet days which he had passed at Penhurst, Ludlow, and Oxford, he had often dreamed of such scenes; often too he had talked over the wild doings of the civil wars of France; had his favourite heroes, and in his fancy formed pictures of them—and here he stood in the very midst of these men." But, while in the full enjoyment of the pleasure and luxury of Paris, Sidney's mind was horrified by the Massacre of St. Bartholomew—of near 5000 persons—and he fled for shelter to the English embassy: the effect of this tragedy on him was deep, and never effaced. From France he proceeded to Belgium, Germany, Hungary, and Italy. At Frankfurt, he first became acquainted with Herbert Languet, and addressed to him a volume of letters in Latin, which Mr. Pears has translated, with a few of Sidney's replies.

Sidney next arrived at Vienna, where he perfected himself in horsemanship and other exercises peculiar to those times. At Venice he became acquainted with Edmund Wotton, brother to Sir Henry Wotton. He is said also to have enjoyed the friendship of Tasso, but this statement cannot be verified. Sidney returned to England in 1573; and, famed beforehand by a noble report of his accomplishments, which, together with the state of his person, framed by a natural propension to arms, he soon attracted the good opinion of all men, and was so highly prized in the good opinion of the queen (Elizabeth), that she "thought the court deficient without him." Connected with this success is Sidney's first literary attempt, a masque entitled *The Lady of May*, which was performed before Queen Elizabeth, at Wanstead House, in Essex.

After Sidney's quarrel at tennis with the Earl of Oxford, he retired from court to Wilton, the seat of his brother-in-law, the Earl of Pem-

broke; and there, in the companionship of his sister Mary, he wrote, for her amusement, the *Arcadia*, which, probably, received some additions from her pen.

The chivalry of Sir Philip Sidney, his learning, generous patronage of talent, and his untimely fate, (he fell at Zutphen, in his thirty-third year,) make his character of great interest. "He was a gentleman finished and complete, in whom mildness was associated with courage, erudition modified by refinement, and courtliness dignified by truth. He is a specimen of what the English character was capable of producing when foreign admixtures had not destroyed its simplicity, or politeness debased its honour. Such was Sidney, of whom every Englishman has reason to be proud. He was the best prose-writer of his time. Sir Walter Raleigh calls him "the English Petrarch," and Cowper speaks of him as "a warbler of poetic prose." He trod, from his cradle to the grave, amidst incense and flowers, and died in a dream of glory.

LVIII.

BOYHOOD OF LORD BACON.

Of the early years of Sir Nicholas Bacon, father of Sir Francis Bacon, the biography is uncertain; but he received his scholastic education at Benet (Corpus Christi) College, Cambridge, and completed his studies abroad. Of his illustrious son, Francis Bacon, born in the Strand, in 1561, we have some interesting early traits. His health was delicate; and by his gravity of carriage, and love of sedentary pursuits, he was distinguished from other boys. While a mere child, he stole away from his playfellows to a vault in St. James's Fields, to investigate the cause of a singular echo which he had observed there; and when only twelve, he busied himself with speculations on the art of legerdemain. At thirteen he was entered at Trinity College, Cambridge, which he left after a residence of three years, "carrying with him a profound contempt for the course of study pursued there, a fixed conviction that the system of academic education in England was radically vicious, a just scorn for the trifles on which the followers of Aristotle had wasted their powers, and no great reverence for Aristotle himself." (*Macaulay*.) Such was the foundation of Bacon's philosophy.

LIX.

INFLUENCE OF THE WRITINGS OF LORD BACON.

"Everything relating to the state of the natural sciences at this period," says Dr. Vaughan, "may be found in the writings of Bacon. It was reserved to the genius of that extraordinary man to direct the scientific minds not only of his country but of Christendom, into the true path of knowledge; to call the attention of men from metaphysical abstraction to the facts of nature; and in this manner to perform the two most important services that could be rendered to the future world of philosophy,—first, by indicating how much it had to unlearn, and how much to acquire; and secondly, by pointing out the method in which the one process and the other might be successfully conducted; and, as this system depended on the most rigid and comprehensive process of experiment, it obtained for its illustrious author the title of 'the Father of Experimental Philosophy.'"

This subject is too vast for a running comment upon the progress of Learning like that which is here attempted. It is by his *Essays* that Bacon is best known to the multitude. The *Novum Organum* and *De Augmentis* are much talked of, but little read. They have, indeed, produced a vast effect upon the opinions of mankind; but they have produced it through the operation of intermediate agents. They have moved the intellects which have moved the world. It is in the *Essays* alone that the mind of Bacon is brought into immediate contact with the minds of ordinary readers. There he opens an exotic school, and talks to plain men, in language which everybody understands, about things in which everybody is interested. He has thus enabled those who must otherwise have taken his merits on trust, to judge for themselves; and the great body of readers have, during several generations, acknowledged that the man who has treated with such consummate ability questions which they are familiar, may well be supposed to deserve all the praise bestowed on him by those who have sat in his inner school. The following passage from the *Essays* (1) is in Bacon's early style:

(1) Founded by King Edward VI. In our own time, this school has maintained its pre-eminent rank, under the able head-mastership of the Rev. Dr. Butler. The School-house is situated near the Castle of Shrewsbury, and is built of freestone, in the Italianized Tudor style; it occupies two sides of a quadrangle, with a square pinnacled tower at the angle, which was partly rebuilt in 1831.

(1) For educational purposes we recommend attention to the ably edited reprints of the *Essays*, and *The Advancement of Learning*, by Thomas Markey, M.A. Archbishop Whately's annotated edition of the *Essays* is intended for a different class of students.