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EDUCATION.

School days of Eminent Men in Great-Britain.

By JOHN TIMBS, F. S. A.

(Continued from our last.)

LIV.

SIR EDWARD COKE'S LEGAL STUDIES.

This celebrated lord-chief-justice was born in 1551-2, at Mileham, Norfolk, in which county the Cokes had been settled for many generations. His father, who was a bencher of Lincoln's Inn, sent him to the Free Grammar-school at Norwich, whence, in 1567, he removed to Trinity College, Cambridge. After having spent three years at the University, he went to London, to commence his legal education: he became a member of Clifford's Inn, and in 1572 was admitted into the Inner Temple; here he entered into a laborious course of study, which Lord Campbell thus vividly describes:

Every morning at three, in the winter season lighting his own fire, he read Bracton, Littleton, the Year Books, and the folio Abridgments of the Law, till the courts met at eight. He then went by water to Westminster, and heard cases argued till twelve, when pleas ceased for dinner. After a short repast in the Inner Temple Hall, he attended "readings" or lectures in the afternoon, and then resumed his private studies till five, or supper-time. This meal being ended, the moots took place, when difficult questions of law were proposed and discussed,—if the weather was fine in the garden by the river side; if it rained, in the covered walks near the Temple Church. Finally, he shut himself up in his chamber, and worked at his common-place book, in which he inserted, under the proper heads, all the legal information he had collected during the day. When nine o'clock struck, he retired to bed, that he might have an equal portion of sleep before and after midnight. The Globe and other theatres were rising into repute, but he would never appear at any of them; nor would he indulge in such unprofitable reading as the poems of Lord Surrey or Spenser. When Shakspeare and Ben Jonson came into such fashion that even "and apprentices of the law" occasionally assisted in masques and wrote prologues, he most steadily eschewed all such amusements;

and it is supposed that in the whole course of his life he never saw a play acted, or read a play, or was in company with a player!

To Coke's merits there cannot be a more direct testimony than that of his great rival, Sir Francis Bacon, who speaks of his great industry and learning in terms of high and deserved commendation; and justly ascribes to him the praise of having preserved the vessel of the common law in a steady and consistent course.

LV.

SPENSER AT CAMBRIDGE.

Edmund Spenser, one of the great landmarks of English poetry, was born in East Smithfield, near the Tower, about the year 1553; as he sings in his *Prothalamion*:

Merry London, my most kindly nurse,
That gave to me this life's first native source,
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of ancient fame.

The rank of his parents, or the degree of his affinity with the ancient house of Spenser, is not fully established. Gibbon says: "The nobility of the Spensers has been illustrated and enriched by the trophies of Marlborough; but I exhort them to consider the *Faery Queen* as the most precious jewel in their coronet." The poet was entered a sizar (one of the humblest class of students) of Pembroke College, Cambridge, in 1569, and continued to attend college for seven years. "Of his proficiency during this time, says Johnson, "a favourable opinion may be drawn from the many classical allusions in his works." At Cambridge, he became intimate with Gabriel Harvey, the future astrologer, who induced the poet to repair to London, and there introduced him to Sir Philip Sidney, "one of the very diamonds of her Majesty's court." Of Spenser it has been well said that he and Chaucer are the only poets before Shakespeare who have given to the language anything that in its kind has not been surpassed, and in some sort superseded—Chaucer in his *Canterbury Tales* and Spenser in his *Faery Queen*. Spenser is thought to have been known as a votary of the Muses among his fellow-students at Cambridge: there are several poems in a *Theatre for Worldlings*, a collection published in the year in which he became a member of the University, which are believed to have come from his pen.

LVI.

RICHARD HOOKER AT HEAVITREE.

The boyhood of Richard Hooker, the learned and judicious divine, and the earliest and one of the most distinguished prosewriters of his time, presents some interesting traits. He was born at Heavitree, near Exeter, about 1553, of parents "not so remarkable for their extraction or riches, as for their virtue and industry, and God's blessing upon both." When a child, he was grave in manner and