

JUVENILE ENTERTAINER.

"Torquet ab obscænis jum nunc sermonibus aurem"

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THE JUVENILE ENTERTAINER

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BIOGRAPHY.

FRANCIS BACON,

Francis Bacon, a great lawyer and statesman, a much greater philosopher, was the son of Nicholas Bacon, lord keeper of the great seal, which is the same office as that of Lord Chancellor of England.

He was born at York-house, in the Strand, in 1561, and in his infancy showed signs of a happy genius and strong judgment. When he was but a child, he was introduced to Queen Elizabeth, who asked him how old he was; to which he answered, "that he was two years younger than her majesty's happy reign;" for queen Elizabeth was crowned in 1559. This fine compliment gave so much satisfaction to that discerning queen, that she bestowed many marks of royal favour upon Mr. Bacon, whom she used to call her "young lord keeper."

At the dazzling splendours of a court, and the smiles of his sovereign, did not entice him from his studies. His progress in learning was so great, that at the age of twelve years he was sent to the university of Cambridge, where he was for his tutor Dr. Whitgift, who was afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. Under this learned and pious divine, he applied to his books with such uncommon diligence, that before he was sixteen years old, he had gone through the whole circle of the liberal arts and sciences, as were then taught; besides making a great proficiency in the learned languages and divinity.

His father, the lord keeper, discovering in him such a ripeness of judgment and virtue, as well as of knowledge, resolved to send him, when he was, to France, that he might gain acquaintance with affairs of state. He was accordingly committed to the care of Sir Amias Apsley, the English ambassador at Paris; and well did he conduct himself in that situation, so that he was sent to England with a commission of privy counsellor to the queen, which required both wisdom and dispatch. He executed this honourable trust with such applause, as gained both the queen's and the ambassador's great credit. Our young

statesman then returned to France, where he applied himself not only to his studies, but cultivated the friendship of men of learning, and made many useful observations upon public affairs, as appears from a succinct view of the state of Europe, which he wrote when he was only nineteen.

But while he was thus honorably improving himself abroad in such pursuits as might best answer the expectations entertained of him, the sudden death of his father recalled him to England, where, finding that his portion, owing to the largeness of the family, was but small, he resolved to make the law his profession. He accordingly entered himself a student of Gray's Inn, where, in his twenty-eighth year, he became a reader to the society; that is, read lectures upon profound questions in the law. About the same time he was also appointed queen's counsel, but did not receive any substantial preferment or distinction till the reign of King James the First, when he had passed through the offices of solicitor and attorney general, and finally, that of chancellor, on which occasion he was made a viscount. He died at Highgate, in 1626. His fame for universal learning was so extensive, that in his last illness a French nobleman, of very high distinction, went to pay him a visit, and finding him in bed, with the curtains drawn, "You resemble," said the Marquis, "the angels; we hear those heavenly beings constantly talked of, and we believe them superior to mankind, but we never have the consolation of seeing them."—"If the charity of others," replied the dying philosopher, "compare me to an angel, my own infirmities tell me I am but a man."

In the midst of his professional employments, and the fatiguing engagements of state affairs, this great man applied to his studies with unremitting ardour. He was the first who discarded a slavish adherence to theory and hypothesis in philosophy, and laid it down as a maxim, "that in the study of nature we should always proceed, not upon conjecture and theory, but upon experiment alone!"

Juvenile Platarch.

Character of Sir FRANCIS BACON, Lord high Chancellor of England, by Monsieur d'Alembert.

On considering attentively the sound, intelligent, and extensive views of this great man, the multiplicity of objects his piercing wit had comprehended within its sphere, the elevation of his style, that every-where makes the boldest images to coalesce with the most rigorous precision, we should be tempted to esteem him the greatest, the most universal, and the most eloquent of philosophers. His works are justly valued, perhaps more than known and therefore more deserving of our study than eulogiums. Bacon, born amidst the obscurity of the most profound night, perceived that philosophy did not yet exist, tho' many had undoubtedly flattered themselves for having excelled in it; for, the more an age is gross and ignorant, the more it believes itself informed of all that can be possibly known. He began by taking a general view of the various objects of all natural sciences; he divided those sciences into different branches, of which he made the

most exact enumeration; he examined into what was already known as to each of those objects, and he drew up an immense catalogue of what remained to be discovered. This was the aim and subject of his admirable work, on the dignity and augmentation of natural knowledge. In his New Organ of Sciences, he perfects the views he had pointed out in the first work, he carries them farther, and shows the necessity of experimental physics, which was not yet thought of. An enemy to systems, he beholds philosophy as only that part of our knowledge, which ought to contribute to make us better or more happy. He seems to limit it to the science of useful things, and every where recommends the study of nature. His other writings are formed on the same plan. Every thing in them, even their titles, is expressive of the man of genius, of the mind that sees in great. He there collects facts, he there compares experiments, and indicates a great number to be made. He invites the learned to study and perfect the arts, which he deems as the most illustrious and most essential part of human knowledge. He exposes with a noble simplicity his conjectures and thoughts on different objects worthy of interesting men; and he might have said, as the old Gentleman of Terence, that nothing affecting humanity was foreign to him. Science of Nature, Morality, Politics, Oeconomics, all seemed to be within the stretch of that luminous and profound wit; and we know not which most to admire, the richness he diffuses over all the subjects he treats of, or the dignity with which he speaks of them. His writings cannot be better compared than to those of Hippocrates on Medicine; and they would be neither less admired nor less read, if the culture of the mind was as dear to mankind as the preservation of their health. But there are none but the works of poets of all kinds whose works can have a certain splendour. Bacon was not of the number, tho' the form of his philosophy was against it. It was too good to fill any one with astonishment. The Scholastic Philosophy, which had gained the ascendancy in his time, could not be overthrown but by bold and new opinions, and there is no probability that a philosopher, who only intimates to men, "This is the little you have learned, this is what remains for your enquiry," is calculated for making much noise among his contemporaries. We might even presume to hazard some degree of reproach against the Lord Chancellor Bacon for having been perhaps too hard, if we were not sensible with what reserve, and as it were with what reservation, judgment ought to be passed on so sublime a genius. Though he confessed that the scholastic philosophers had enervated the sciences by minutiae of their questions, and that sound intellects ought to have made a sacrifice of the study of general beings to that of particular objects, he seems notwithstanding, by the frequent use he makes of school-terms, and sometimes also by the divisions and sub-divisions that are in vogue, to have showed too much deference for the predominant taste of his age. This great man, after breaking the shackles of so many nouns, was still entangled by some chains, which he either could not, or dared not to break asunder.

THE ACCOMPLISHED YOUTH.

SINCERITY AND TRUTH.

It is necessary to recommend to you sincerity and truth. This is the basis of every virtue. That darkness of character, where we can see no heart; those foldings of art, through which no native affection is allowed to penetrate, present an object, unamiable in every season of life, but particularly copious in youth. If, at an age when the heart was warm, when the emotions are strong, and when nature is expected to show herself free and open, you can already smile