

years after leaving school, he writes, "If I am anything, it is the education I had then that has made me so. I had a true honour and affection for that excellent man. I feel something like a satisfaction in the midst of my concern, that I was fortunate enough to have him once under my roof before his departure." His gratitude was proved by the favour he afterwards showed to Shackleton's son.

In 1743, Burke was entered at Trinity College, Dublin, and continued there for five years. It is interesting to notice his course of study — mathematics, logic, history and poetry, as the fancy seized him, rather than according to college routine, and each subject engrossing his attention while the fit lasted, only to be entirely discarded for its successor. Such a course would be fatal to an ordinary mind; yet the use he made of these desultory studies in after-life proved the strength of his memory and the power of his genius.

After leaving Trinity College he commenced the study of law, and removed to London. There he remained for about nine years, and of his work during that time we know but little. Though we have evidence that his legal studies were by no means neglected, he seems to have given his time and energies to the pursuit of literature. He was never called to the bar, and as he published his first book about the time when he ought to have begun to practise, we can easily understand that he rebelled against the dull routine of circuit travelling, and that his mind was working its way up through the early mistiness towards the goal to which destiny was leading him. Burke's first books were "A Vindication of Natural Society" and "A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas on the Sublime and the Beautiful." The former was a

criticism on a work of Lord Bolingbroke who had died shortly before. So subtle was the irony that Chesterfield mistook the book for a posthumous work of Bolingbroke's, and years afterwards, when Burke presented himself as a candidate for parliament, he was obliged to print a second edition of the book with an explanatory preface. The two works gave him great fame as an author, and he quickly became known and respected by the literary *coterie* of whom Johnson was chief. He was one of the first members of the famous literary club to which Johnson, Reynolds, Goldsmith, and Garrick belonged. That Burke was held in the highest esteem by his literary brethren is attested by Johnson's remark that he was the greatest man in England. Even Gibbon, from his retreat at Lausanne, wrote that he admired his eloquence, approved his politics, adored his chivalry, and almost forgave his reverence for Church establishments.

But the fates ordained that the restless spirit of Burke was not to be confined to the field of literature. And it would have been strange indeed had he remained a mere book-worm in those stormy times. The Seven Years' War was being vigorously prosecuted, England was conquering India, and extending her possessions in North America. At home there were troubles of an equally distracting nature. Ireland was in a state of ferment, which continually threatened an outbreak; the Roman Catholic peasantry were ground under the heel of the Protestant traders, who were in their turn the victims of oppression by the English authorities. Nearer yet, the English political world was disturbed by the stubbornness of the King on the one hand, and cabals of disreputable politicians on the other. Pitt had been dismissed; and Bute, with his train of