PR
2208
S63

Smedley

Francis Bacon

THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

GIFT

Francis Bacon

A Tribute and a Proposal

BY

WILLIAM T. SMEDLEY.

PUBLISHED AT
9, HART STREET, LONDON, W.C.

1915.

Francis Bacon

A Tribute and a Proposal

BY

WILLIAM T. SMEDLEY.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/francisbacontrib00smed

PR
2208
B2

FRANCIS BACON.

BORN 22ND JANUARY, 156$^{1}_{0}$.

"Lord Bacon was the greatest genius that England or perhaps any other country ever produced."—POPE.

"The wisest, greatest of mankind."—HALLAM.

TO-DAY is the 354th Anniversary of the birth of Francis Bacon.

No one can understand or appreciate Bacon who does not realise that he was, before everything else, a Jester. Ben Jonson, when speaking of him, makes this plain. He says:—"His language was nobly censorious when he could spare or pass by a jest." So his normal mental habit was that of a Jester. Macaulay confirmed this when he said:—"In wit, if by wit he meant the power of perceiving analogies between things which appear to have nothing in common, Bacon never had an equal, not even Cowley, not even the author of Hudibras. . . . . Occasionally it obtained the mastery over all his other faculties and led him into absurdities into which no dull man could have fallen." It is unfortunate that not one of Bacon's biographers has realised this fact. The result is that the real Bacon has

104150

never been revealed. He is called " the father of the Inductive Philosophy." He is represented as being the founder of a system of Philosophy as was Descartes or Herbert Spencer. In the Novum Organum Book 1, chap. CXVI. he distinctly repudiates such a designation:—" For this (founding a new sect in Philosophy) is not what I am about, nor do I think it matters much to the fortunes of men what abstract notions one may entertain concerning nature and the principles of things. . . . But for my part I do not trouble myself with any such speculative and withal unprofitable matters."

Spedding in his introductory chapter to " Letters and Life of Lord Bacon," gives an entirely misleading idea of Bacon's early life. He writes, " There is no reason to suppose that he was regarded as a wonderful child. Of the first sixteen years of his life indeed nothing is known that distinguishes him from a hundred other clever and well disposed boys." This is not in accordance with contemporary testimony.

The earliest biographical notice of Bacon is to be found prefixed to the French edition of his *Histoire Naturelle*, published in Paris in 1631. The author is presumably Pierre Amboise, to whom the license to print was granted. The following is a translation of a passage which occurs in it :—" Capacity (*jugement*) and memory were never in any man to such a degree as in this man ; so that in a very short time he made himself conversant with all the knowledge he could acquire at college.* And though he was then considered capable of understanding the most important affairs (*capable des charges les plus importantes*), yet so that he should not fall into the usual fault of

* He left Cambridge before he had completed his fifteenth year.

young men of his kind (who by a too hasty ambition often bring to the management of great affairs a mind still full of the crudities of the school), M. Bacon himself wished to acquire that knowledge which in former times made Ulysses so commendable, and earned for him the name of Wise ; by the study of the manners of many different nations. I wish to state that he employed some years of his youth in travel in order to polish his mind and mould his opinions by intercourse with all kinds of foreigners. France, Italy, and Spain as the most civilised nations of the whole world, were these whither his desire for knowledge (*curiosité*) carried him."

Macaulay described Bacon as possessing "the most exquisitely constructed intellect that has ever been bestowed on any of the children of men." A contemporary writer thus speaks of him:—"He had a large mind from his father and great abilities from his mother ; his parts improved more than his years ; his great fixed and methodical memory, his solid judgment, his quick fancy, his ready expression, gave high assurance of that profound and universal knowledge and comprehension of things which then rendered him the observation of great and wise men and afterwards the wonder of all. . . . At twelve his industry was above the capacity and his mind above the reach of his contemporaries."

His grandfather, Sir Anthony Cooke, was tutor to Edward VI. Sir Anthony is said to have been "somebody in every Art, and eminent in all, the whole circle of Arts lodging in his soul. . . . Knowing that souls were equal and that Women are as capable of learning as men, he instilled that to his daughters at night, which he had taught the Prince in the day, being resolved to have sons by education for fear he should have none by birth and lest he wanted an heir

of his body, he made five of his mind." The mother of Francis Bacon was the second of these daughters. She was distinguished as a classical scholar. The boy's early education was directed by Sir Anthony, At the time of his birth (1560) the English language was without syntax or form and poverty stricken in vocabulary. He would acquire Latin and probably Greek from his cradle. The boy must have thought in Latin. The sources from which he was absorbing all knowledge were written in Latin, with some exceptions, which were in Greek. There was no English language in which he could think of that which he read. It may be said that, as was the case with Montaigne, Latin was his mother tongue. The course of his studies is thus described :—"He, after he had survaied all the records of antiquity after the volumnes of men, betook himselfe to the study of the volumne of the world, and having conquered whatever books possest set upon the Kingdome of Nature and carried that victory very farre." There exists evidence in his own handwriting, to be attributed probably to the time when he was 16 or 17 years of age, that he was proficient in the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldæic, Syriac and Arabic languages. It will probably be found that when in France young Bacon was assisting certain French printers just as Philip Melancthon, when he was about the same age, was working for Thomas Anshelmus at Tubingen. It was at this time that his portrait was painted by Hilliard, the Court Miniature Painter, who inscribed around it the words, "Si tabula daretur digna animum mallem," freely translated, "If one could only find materials worthy to paint his mind."

But this wonderful boy was self-reliant with fearless independence. He entered Trinity College, Cambridge, when twelve years of age. He there took

exception to the course of education which was pursued. "He first fell into a dislike of the Philosophy of Aristotle; not for the worthlessness of the author, to whom he would ever ascribe all high attributes, but for the unfruitfulness of the way; being a philosophy (as he used to say) only strong for disputations and contentions, but barren of the production of works for the benefit of the life of man." This boy opposed his opinion to the authority of the staff of the University on the most fundamental point which could be raised as to the pursuit of knowledge and he left Cambridge without taking a degree before he was fifteen years of age.

What a remarkable boy this body of testimony reveals! He possessed the most exquisitely constructed intellect that was ever bestowed on any of the children of men. He was a brilliant wit, a born jester; so abnormally were these characteristics developed in him that they obtruded themselves in all that he did to the hindrance frequently of his pursuits. So extraordinary were his powers for acquiring knowledge that at twelve years of age his industry was above the capacity, and his mind above the range of his contemporaries. He had taken all knowledge to be his province and was then the observation of wise men as he became afterwards the wonder of all.

Records of his connection with two properties in which he was interested reveal another trait in his character.† He was irresponsible so far as money matters were concerned. There is an entry in the State papers, 1608, January 31st. Grant at the suit of Sir Francis Bacon to Sir William Cooke, Sir John Constable and three others of the King's Rever-

† These interesting facts were brought to light by Mr. Harold Hardy.

sion of the estates in Hertfordshire. Sir Nicholas, to whom it had descended from the Lord Keeper, conveyed the remainder to Queen Elizabeth, her heirs and successors, "with the condition that if he paid £100 the grant should be void, which was apparently done to prevent the said Sir Francis to dispose of the same land which otherwise by law he might have done." There is another instance of a similar kind. When Lady Anne Bacon conveyed the Markes estate to Francis it was subject to a like condition, namely, that the grant was to be null and void on Lady Anne paying him ten shillings. This condition made it impossible for Francis to dispose of his interest in the estate, and so it came about that in a letter written by Anthony Bacon to his mother, dated 16th of April, 1593, he urges her to concur in a sale so that the proceeds may be applied to the relief of his brother's financial position. It is evident, therefore, that he would turn into money everything which he could. Hence the unusual provisions to safeguard him. And yet he writes to Lord Burghley :—"I cannot accuse myself that I am either prodigal or slothful, yet my health is not to spend nor my course to get." From his early manhood he was raising money in all directions. Burghley, the second founder of his poor estate, had been "carrying him on." His mother's resources were exhausted as early as 1589, for a Captain Allen writes of her :—"Also saith her jewels be spent for you, and that she borrowed the last money of seven several persons." How he was spending these sums is a mystery.

The assertion has been made that from his earliest years Bacon was an ignoble place seeker, and this charge has been again and again repeated by writers, ignorant of the true facts, until it has come to be generally accepted as true. But there is no justifica-

tion for it. Had he merely sought place under ordinary conditions, it is difficult to believe that it would have been withheld from him. Here was a brilliant young man, possessing exceptional abilities as a thinker, speaker and writer, the son of the Queen's trusted and honoured Lord Keeper, himself a *persona grata* with the Queen from his earliest years, the nephew of four of the most famous women of the time for learning, all of them married to men of influence and mark. By the marriage of the eldest of them, he became the nephew of Lord Burghley, the Lord Treasurer, who was, without doubt, the greatest power, after the Queen, in the Realm—surely a position with substantial emoluments might have been found for him if he was prepared to accept it on the terms upon which it might be offered! But during Elizabeth's reign he remained without advancement, and it was not until the third year of James I., when 46 years of age, that he received his first appointment, that of Solicitor General. Had he been a mere place hunter he would not have had to wait so long for recognition. True, it is that as early as 1580, when only 19, he had a suit to the Queen presented by Lord Burghley. But this suit was of an exceptional nature. In a letter to his uncle, he describes it as "rare and unaccustomed." It needed an apology lest it should appear "undiscreet and unadvised." He states his only hope to obtain it rests in Burghley's affection toward himself and grace with her Majesty, who, he adds, "methinks needeth never to call for experience of the thing, where she hath so great and so good of the person which recommendeth it." The suit was not granted, for in 1585 he was writing to Sir Francis Walsingham, asking his influence on its behalf. "I think," he says, "the objection of my years will wear away with the length of my suit." There is no evidence

as to what that suit was, but it is clear that it was of a very exceptional character, and that it was not connected with his estate or his profession. It has been suggested* that Bacon, fresh from France, may have been influenced by the great work which had been accomplished by the Pléiade, in building up the French language and literature, and desired, with the Queen's recognition and financial support, to undertake a similar enterprise for his own country.

There is another letter to Burghley, of special interest, written in 1592. The suit appears to have been abandoned, and he writes :—" I wax now somewhat ancient, one and thirty years is a good deal of sand in the hour glass." It is in this letter that he states that he has taken all knowledge to be his province, and this remarkable passage occurs :—" And if your Lordship will not carry me on, I will not do as Anaxagoras did, who reduced himself with contemplation unto voluntary poverty ; but this I will do ; I will sell the inheritance that I have, and purchase some lease of quick revenue, or some office of gain that shall be executed by deputy, and so give over all care of service and become some sorry bookmaker, or a pioner in that mine of truth which he (Anaxagoras) said, lay so deep." A bookmaker!

There are two sentences in this letter which throw some light on Bacon's connection with Burghley. He addresses him as " the second founder of my poor estate," and later on says :—" if your Lordship will not carry me on." It is manifest, therefore, that up to the time Bacon was 32 years of age, Burghley had rendered him great financial assistance.

It was about the time when this letter was written that Bacon's intimacy with Essex commenced. One

* See the Mystery of Francis Bacon. R. Banks and Son, 1912.

of the earliest developments of this connection was that Essex put forward Bacon as a candidate for the Office of Attorney General, which it was expected would shortly become vacant. It was an unwise proceeding. The brothers Anthony and Francis, by their correspondence with men—Protestants and Catholics—whom they had met on their travels abroad, had established themselves as the Foreign Intelligence department of the country. Up to this time these services had been placed at the disposal of Burghley: now they were transferred to Essex. The intimacy was commenced by Francis, who, writing fourteen years after, says:—"for I did not only labour carefully and industriously in that he set me about, whether it were matter of advice or otherwise; but, neglecting the Queen's service, mine own fortune, and in a sort my vocation, I did nothing but advise and ruminate with myself to the best of my understanding, proportions and memorials of anything that might concern his Lordship's honour, fortune and service."

The great desire of Essex was to control the Queen. In his efforts to this end he used the Bacons and their foreign intelligence service. It is evident that if Essex could place Francis, who was closely attached to him, in the important position of Attorney General, it would strengthen his own power. Thomas Bodley in his autobiography states that he was driven from political life by a similar effort of Essex to obtain for him the position of Secretary of State, and insists on the danger of association with that nobleman. It was as much to the interest of Essex as it was to that of Bacon that the latter should obtain such an influential position. When the Grays Inn men heard of the proposal they ridiculed it, saying "he had never entered the place of battle"; that is, he had never held a brief. In

order to meet this objection a case was found for him, and he made his first pleading on the 25th of January, 1594, in the King's Bench. He acquitted himself so well that Burghley sent his Secretary "to congratulate unto him the first fruits of his public practice." It is clear, therefore, that up to his thirty-fourth year Bacon had not been practising as a lawyer, nor had he subsequently private practice of any account.

Bacon was elected a member of the Parliament which met on the 23rd November, 1584, representing Melcombe in Dorsetshire. He sat in each of the remaining four Parliaments which were summoned during the reign. These Parliaments were not of long duration. There was only one session, and on the conclusion of the business dissolution followed, and there were then no members until another Parliament was summoned, probably after the lapse of some years. The law had not, up to 1597, occupied much of Bacon's time, nor had his Parliamentary duties.

Up to this date no literary work had been published bearing his name. About 1589 he had written a short pamphlet entitled, "*Advertisement touching the Controversies of the Church of England*," but this was not published until 1640, when the Long Parliament was discussing similar questions to those raised in it. There exist in manuscript some slight fragments, styled "*Mr. Bacon in praise of Knowledge*," and a "*Discourse in praise of his Sovereign*," believed to have been written for use at an entertainment given to the Queen by Essex, on the 17th of November, 1592.

His pen produced a reply to the Jesuit Parsons "*Responsio ad edictum Reginæ Angliæ*," which appeared in print in the Resuscitatio, in 1657, under the title of "*Observations on a Libel*." In this volume was also included a short tract, "*A True report of*

Dr. Lopez, his treason," which would be written in the year 1594. There is another fragment in manuscript preserved in the Gibson Papers in the British Museum called "*Bacon's Device,*" written for production at some entertainment before the Queen, attributed to the year 1595. All these bound together would make but a very small volume. They would be written without any appreciable tax on Bacon's time, for he was a rapid writer. Rawley says "with what celerity he wrote I can testify," and comments on his great industry, never losing a moment of time. At the end of his life, as in his earliest years, industry was recorded as one of his principal characteristics.

In 1597 appeared a tiny volume entitled "*Essayes. Religious Meditations. Places of perswasion and disswasion.*" The Dedication is signed Fran. Bacon—"*To M. Anthony Bacon, his deare Brother.*" The first portion comprises ten short essays containing about 3,500 words. The "*Meditationes Sacrae*" is written in Latin, and covers twenty-eight pages, about the same space as that occupied by the Essays.

"*Of the Coulers of good and evill a fragment*" is printed on thirty-two pages, with about 160 words on each. The Essays do not contain one Latin quotation, but "The Coulers of Good and Evil" abound in them.

From 1572 to 1597 embraces a period of twenty-five years. Having regard to his abnormal development in 1572 it seems impossible to believe, that this period, when his faculties must have been at the zenith of their power, should be practically barren of works. If liberal allowance of the time required for everything that is known of his occupations during that period, be made not one year would be accounted for. Spedding says:—"He could at once imagine like a poet and execute like a clerk of the works." But there is no

record of any work up to the production of the essays which would justify such a comment, nor do they justify it.

Eight years after in 1605 was published "*The Twoo Bookes of Francis Bacon. Of the proficience and advancement of Learning, divine and humane.*" The author was then 45 years of age. Such information as there is of his occupations between 1597 and 1605 again leaves most of his time unaccounted for. Although "*The Two Books*" are addressed to King James, it is probable that they were written many years previously with the intention that they should be dedicated to Elizabeth. Had the "rare and unaccustomed" suit of 1580 been granted it is quite possible that this work would have appeared as the manifesto of the scheme. It contains only about 60,000 words, and the young man of twenty could have turned it out. without preparation or effort in a very short time It is discursive, not always exact, and it was evidently written or dictated without reference to the authorities quoted. The author throughout was trusting to his memory. In 1604 was published a letter addressed to the Earl of Devonshire known as "*Sir F. Bacon, his Apologie in certain imputations concerning the late Earl of Essex*" and in the same year a pamphlet entitled, "*Certaine Considerations touching the better pacification of the Church of England,*" and in 1614 was printed "*The Charge of Sir F. Bacon touching Duells.*"

In 1606 Bacon became Solicitor General, and thenceforward until 1621 he was more or less occupied in State affairs. A contemporary biographer writes:— "In a word how sufficient he was may be conjectured from this instance, that he had the contrivance of all King James his designs, until the match with Spain." Still a man possessing such a genius for industry would be able to produce far more than would any

ordinary man. Spratt in his "History of the Royal Society" says that if Bacon had not the strength of a thousand men he had at least that of twenty men.

There is only one short period in Bacon's life in which his time appears to have been absorbed in public duties. On the 7th of May, 1617, he took his seat, accompanied by the Judges, most of the Nobility and other gallants, as Lord Keeper in the Court of Chancery. He was then in his fifty-seventh year. The King and Buckingham were in Scotland. In a letter to the latter on the 8th of June following he writes :—"This day I have made even with the business of the Kingdom for common justice. Not one cause unheard. The Lawyers drawn dry of all the motions they had to make. Not one petition unanswered. And this I think could not be said in our age before. This I speak not out of ostentation, but out of gladness when I have done my duty. I know men think I cannot continue if I should thus oppress myself with business. But that account is made. The duties of life are more than life, and if I die now I shall die before men are weary of me, which in our times is somewhat rare."

In 1609 was published in Latin *De Sapientia Veterum*. An English version under the title of *The Wisdom of the Ancients* was published in 1619. This again is a small book containing about 15,000 words. In 1612 a further edition of the *Essays* appeared, the number being increased to thirty-eight. In 1620, when he was sixty years of age, appeared the *Novum Organum*, no English translation of which was printed until the early part of the nineteenth century.

The *Cogitata et Visa*, of which the *Novum Organum* is an amplification, was written as early as 1607, for there is a letter from Thomas Bodley dated 19th February in that year acknowledging receipt of a

manuscript copy which he criticises. In this letter an extraordinary passage occurs. After commending Bacon's aims in the work Bodley says :—" Which course, would to God (to whisper so much in your ears) you had followed at first, when you fell to the study of such a thing as was not worthy such a student." *Cogitata et Visa* was not printed until many years after Bacon's death. *Novum Organum* is not a large volume, but it bears evidence of the expenditure of more labour in its preparation than do any of his other works. The remainder, by no means extensive, of his productions were according to Rawley the results of the last five years of his life. The most important, perhaps, is the *History of Henry VII.* This was not commenced until the end of June, 1621, and the completed manuscript was sent to the King in the following October. *The Two Books on the Advancement of Learning* were enlarged, written in Latin and published under the title of *De Dignitate et Augmentis Scientiarum*, in 1623. In 1622 appeared *Historia Ventorum*, in 1623 *Historia Mors et Vita*, in 1625 *Apophthegmes new and old, Translations of certaine Psalmes into English Verse*, and the final Edition of the *Essays*, and in 1627 *Sylva Sylvarum, or a Naturall Historie*, and *The New Atlantis*, which was left unfinished.

Only three works written in the English language were published during his lifetime :—*The Essays, The Two Books of the Advancement of Learning*, and *The History of Henry VII.* If they are judged by their quantity they are trivial productions. The *Sylva Sylvarum* which bears date the year following his death was written in English. It certainly does not enhance his literary reputation. *The Advancement of Learning* amplified from two to nine books published in Latin in 1623 as *De Augmentis Scientarium* was not produced in English until 1640. It is stated in the

title page that in this edition *De Augmentis* is interpreted by Gilbert Wats. It is not a mere translation. The whole work appears to have been rewritten in the English language.

Bacon's desire was that all his works should be preserved for posterity in Latin, the universal language. In his time it was the language in which scholars conversed and corresponded, and in which therefore they could express new ideas. Isaac Cassauban, when he came to reside in England, could not speak a word of English. Yet he experienced no difficulty, as the King spoke French fluently and the Bishops and scholars whom he met conversed in Latin. The meaning which words in the English language were intended to convey might in time change, but the Latin language was settled. His audience in his own country was small. For an appeal to his contemporaries on the Continent, Latin was indispensable.

Bacon was right in his anticipation of the mutability of the English language. Two examples will suffice: he includes in the Sciences—History, Poesy, including the drama, Elocution, Conversation, Negotiation and Theology, none of which would to-day be classified under that designation; also the word Philosophy conveys now quite a different impression to that which was intended in the sense in which he used it. So it is that misconceptions have come about as to his "scientific pre-occupations" and his "system of philosophy." What is termed Bacon's "inductive philosophy" was simply his method of conducting investigation and acquiring knowledge.

An impartial survey of the man, his times, his recorded occupations, his professed objects and ideals must result in wonder as to the paucity of his literary output. Here was the most exquisitely constructed intellect which was ever bestowed on any of the children of

men, employed from early boyhood to the end of life, with an industry which was abnormal, by a man who early in life had surveyed all the records of antiquity after the volumes of men: and who having betaken himself to the study of the volume of the world had conquered whatever books possessed, who as an orator was so gifted that he commanded where he spoke and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion, the fear of every man being lest he should make an end: and who had a wit which has never been equalled: who had filled up all numbers, and performed that in our tongue which may be compared or preferred either to insolent Greece or haughty Rome, so that he may be named and stand as the mark and acme of our language! What has he handed down as the result of this marvellous industry?

The works which bear his name are discursive and fragmentary. The most complete is *The Advancement of Learning*. *Novum Organum* was never finished. Of his great Instauration, which he divided into six parts, only two parts can be traced and yet he speaks of five as being completed and expresses regret that he will not live to finish the sixth.

There is another curious feature of the man which attracts attention. Nowhere does he show the least concern for the spread of education amongst the masses or for the betterment of their conditions of life. He had in view always the advancement of learning, and the conquest of Nature by wresting her secrets from her and applying them for the benefit of mankind.

Except for his association with political life he seems to stand apart from his times. In his works he hardly mentions any of his contemporaries—Galileo, Gilbert and Bruno are referred to by name. Even if the works bearing his name be not included, the period during which he lived from, say, 1576 to 1626, is more brilliant

in the literature of England than any similar period in the history of any other country. And yet there is no visible trace of his connection with it. Is it possible that he could have lived through it and taken no part in it? And be it observed that period is exactly contemporaneous with his life.

The curious fact is that the attention of students is not directed in books written on the English literature of this period to its magnitude and value. The well-worn ruts are travelled over and over again. Certain dramatists and poets are worn threadbare, but the greater bulk of the books published in England from 1576 to 1626 are known only to book collectors and second-hand booksellers, and their contents remain unexplored. Few of them have been reprinted and copies of the original editions are rare. In 1576 to an Englishman to whom "education had not given more languages than nature tongues" there were no channels through which he could obtain a general knowledge of the antiquities, the histories and geography of other countries or of his own, the customs of their people, their art, and what then passed for science. There were translations of only a few of the classics available. France, Italy and Spain were better supplied. But in 1626 all this was altered, and from books printed in English more knowledge and information could be obtained than from the combined Literatures of those countries.

There exists no evidence of any general interest in a revival of learning during this epoch. Certainly Oxford and Cambridge, the only two seats of learning, exhibit no evidence of its existence. Of Oxford at this period, Mark Patterson says:—"Of any special interest in science, learning, and the highest culture, there is no trace." Cambridge was given up to theological controversy. However thorough the search be, no-

where throughout the country will be found evidence of interest in this revival. And yet steadily was coming from the Press volume after volume, from large, ponderous folios to small octavos, translations and books on every conceivable subject. Where was the public creating the demand? The Bodley Library did not appear to require them, for few are to be found in the 1620 Catalogue. There was no demand for them from abroad, for the English language was unknown there. The cost of printing and publishing must have been enormous, to say nothing of recompense for the writers and translators. Of the solid literature, apart from theological controversial works published during the reigns of Elizabeth and James, it may be estimated, with safety, that not ten per cent. brought back from proceeds of sale one half of their cost. Large sums of money must have been provided by someone for the authors or translators, the printers and the publishers. There is no trace to be found in the records, printed or otherwise, of any man (with one exception) who took interest in the advancement of learning. But given the man with the inclination and the knowledge to pilot such a scheme, he must also have had the control of great wealth to enable him to carry it through.

There is another aspect of this question which is of importance. In the Proheme to a little volume. entitled :—*Of that Knowlage whiche maketh a Wise Man A Disputation Platonike* (1536), Sir Thomas Eliot states that in writing *The Governour*, he intended to augment our English tongue, " whereby men shoulde as well expresse more abundantly the thyng that they conceived in their hertes (wherfore languag was ordeined) having wordes apte for the purpose ; as also interprete out of Greke, Latin, or any other tonge into Englysshe, as sufficiently, as out of any one of the sayde tongues into another." The Members of the

Pléiade adopted the same method in advancing the French language to a condition capable of expressing the highest emotions and thoughts. Now, either intentionally or as a natural consequence, the production of this literature in England had a similar effect on the English language. In 1576 it may be described as barbaric. Before 1626 *The Plays of Shakespeare* and *The Authorized Version of the Bible* had been produced, examples which Professor Saintsbury says " will ever be the twin monuments, not merely of their own period, but of the perfection of English, the complete expressions of the literary capacities of the languages."

There are other circumstances which suggest a superintending direction in the production of these books. The movement of the work from printer to printer :— Henry Bynneman, George Bishop and Richard Field were at first employed, then Adam Islip and George Eld became active, and at the end of the period William Jaggard and John Haviland were the chief producers. There appears to have been a definite scheme of printers blocks of special designs used as head-pieces and tail-pieces to ear-mark these books. The identical block used by George Bishop in 1584, as the first initial letter in *The French Academy*, was used by John Haviland as the first initial letter in the 1625 Edition of Bacon's *Essays*. The identical block used by Richard Field on the title-page of *Venus and Adonis*, in 1593, was used by Christopher Barker on the title-page of the Genealogical Tables of the first quarto of *The Authorized Version* in 1612. In the one case the block was preserved for 39 years, in the other case for 17 years. Moreover, some of these designs were re-engraved and used in books printed in France, which apparently form part of the same scheme. The Emblem literature of the period contains what appear to be definite references to several of these designs. This extraordinary litera-

ture appears to be absolutely neglected by students, although it was clearly produced with some definite object. If Alciati's emblems published 50 years before be excluded this literature was mainly the product of the period.

There is another striking characteristic of these books. In the Dedications, the Prefaces and Addresses "To the Reader," will be found some of the finest examples of the English language extant. It would be difficult to select a more perfect specimen than the Dedication prefixed to the 1625 translation of *Barclay's Argenis*, to which the name of Kingsmill Long is attached. There is a peculiarity about these dedications. The writer, or the writers, must have been proficient in oratory. A writer who is not merely a good speaker but an orator, has a special style which is the result of instinct, and cannot be acquired. This instinct enables him to express his thoughts in words which give pleasure as their sound falls upon the ears of his auditors. It is no explanation to say that this was a style common to the period. It was not. The matter itself bears evidence that the writer, or writers, had a most comprehensive and familiar knowledge of classical and modern authors. The compilations abound in imagery. There are certain tricks of speech which can be recognised as those of an orator. Who were the men living at that time who could write such prose? If the number of names attached to these examples is to be taken as a guide, such stylists were plentiful as blackberries, but they never employed this style elsewhere. The writer of the preface to *Barclay's Argenis* and the translator of the Work, which is not, it may be remarked, a literal translation of the original, was a master of prose, but Kingsmill Long cannot be traced, and his name appears on no other work. Numbers of similar instances might be quoted.

The suggestion now made is that as early as 1576 someone conceived the idea of advancing the English language from a condition which may be described as little short of barbaric, to one in which it could stand for power of expression beside the classical languages, and at the same time of providing channels by which all knowledge was placed at the disposal of those who might employ that language. If such were the case, it was a magnificent scheme.

Would the result of a thorough investigation of the Elizabethan and Jacobean literature support this suggestion? Would it be worth while for some scholars possessing knowledge of the period to extend their knowledge by making such an important investigation? But they must undertake it with open minds and they must be prepared on sufficient evidence being produced to recant much that they have written.

If the result arrived at justified the adoption of this suggestion as a sound working hypothesis, the rest is plain sailing. There will be no difficulty in selecting the master mind which conceived the scheme. The author of *De Augmentis Scientiarum* and *Novum Organum* at every point meets the requirements. From his cradle he was enthused with a passion for acquiring knowledge and wresting from nature her secrets, possessing the most exquisite intellect which was ever bestowed on any of the children of men, and a capacity for industry which was unrivalled. *The Advancement of Learning* was his Manifesto. The production of a great literature, commencing in 1576 with *The Anatomie of the Mind*, was the means of the realization of his scheme. The many, many apparently fruitless years of his life are accounted for. The English Renaissance runs parallel with that life. When he passed away it was over. The conclusion of Ben Jonson's panegyric becomes intelligible :—" In short within his view and

about his times, were all the wits born that could honour a language, or help study. Now things daily fall. Wits grow downward and Eloquence backwards: so that he may be nam'd and stand as the mark and acme of our Language."

Ben Jonson knew the difference between a Star, a group of stars as the Pléiade and a Constellation. Could he have had Bacon in his mind when he wrote :—

> "But stay, I see thee in the Hemisphere
> Advanc'd, and made a constellation there!
> Shine forth, thou Starre of Poets."

The thought will naturally suggest itself, if Bacon carried out this great work, why did he so rigorously and effectively conceal his participation in it? Such a course was a mark of consummate wisdom. Without it innumerable obstacles and difficulties would have been encountered. It entailed considerable self-sacrifice, but it was a master-stroke of policy. Bacon left his fame to the next ages. Rawley concludes his introduction to the *Manes Verulamiani* with these words :—"Be this, moreover, enough, to have laid as it were, the foundations, in the name of the present age. Every age, methinks, will adorn and amplify this structure: though to what age it may be vouchsafed to set the finishing-hand, that is known only to God and to the fates." What was Rawley's meaning?

But there is another possibility. Bacon's connection with the Emblem literature is attested by Jean Baudoin, who translated the Essays and other works of his into French. The explanation may be found in it. On the frontispiece of Peacham's Emblems, styled *Britanna Minerva*, is a curious device. A hand holding a pen is protruding from a curtain concealing the figure of the writer. The pen has

written " Mente Videbor "—" By the Mind I shall be seen." Around the device are the words :—" Vivitur ingenio cetera mortis erunt "—" One lives in one's genius, other things shall pass away in death."

In 1612 John Owen published a book of epigrams. One is addressed—Ad D B. D stands for Dominum, B might, and probably does, stand for Bacon. It reads thus :—

" Si bene qui latuit, bene vixit, tu bene vivis :
Ingeniumque tuum grande latendo patet."

" Thou livest well if one well hid well lives,
And thy great genius in being concealed is revealed."

Bacon wrote, and repeated again and again :—

" For of the Knowledge which contemplate the works of Nature, the holy Philosopher hath said expressly ; that the glory of God is to conceal a thing, but the glory of the King is to find it out ; as if the Divine Nature according to the innocent and sweet play of children, which hide themselves to the end they may be found ; took delight to hide his works, to the end they may be found out ; and of his indulgence and goodness to mankind had chosen the Soule of Man to be his Playfellow in this game."

Bacon said :—" Dissimulation is a compendious wisdom." Is the explanation that he enveloped his work in anonymity ? In divine playfulness he hid its source, being convinced that in the next ages his own personality glowing through the text would become revealed to the world at large. Is this the age to which it is vouchsafed to set the finishing hand to Francis Bacon's fame ?

Hallam wrote :—" If we compare what may be found in the sixth, seventh and eighth books of the

De Augmentis, in the *Essays*, the *History of Henry VII.*, and the various short treatises contained in his works on moral and political wisdom, and on human nature with the rhetoric, ethics and politics of Aristotle, or with the historians most celebrated for their deep insight into civil society and human character—with Thucydides, Tacitus, Phillippe de Comines, Machiavel, Davila, Hume—we shall, I think, find that one man may almost be compared to all these together."

A writer in the *Edinburgh Review* said :—" Columbus, Luther and Bacon are, perhaps in modern times, the men of whom it may be said with the greatest probability that, if they had not existed, the whole course of human affairs would have been varied."

If the suggestion as to Bacon's life work now submitted be found upon investigation correct, the English language, rich as it is, will be barren in words to describe his colossal proportions. And yet this great man, " the greatest, wisest, of mankind," to quote Hallam's words, is neglected by his countrymen, whose indebtedness to him is incalculable. No fitting memorial has been raised to his memory. It is true that the benchers of Gray's Inn have erected a belated statue near to the site, where once stood his lodgings, but something more is surely due to his memory.

The most fitting memorial to Francis Bacon would be a library, in which were gathered together a copy of every volume which was published in England from 1560, the year in which he was born to, say, 1640, much of the French literature published during that period, and books printed in Holland and Belgium. It should also contain a copy of every edition of his work published in every language to the present time. It should also contain copies of all books written upon that period. It should also contain copies of all books of which Bacon or his works form the subject. Of these there

will be found more in the French language than in that of England. What a reference library that would be! The volumes ranged round the room in cases representing each year, so that it would be possible more readily to grasp the gradual evolution of the Elizabethan and Jacobean literature. Valuable and useful as is the collection of books of this period in the British Museum, they are dispersed in so many different galleries to which the reader has no access that the difficulty of consulting them is very great. In the Bacon Memorial Library, the student should be able to go to the shelf and take down any books he requires for reference. If the collection of books was undertaken without advertisement or ostentation, with the exception of some rare volumes, the cost of procuring them would not be great. Money is found in abundance for projects far less worthy of support. Such a Library as this would be a boon to students of literature. It would add lustre to English culture. If Francis Bacon could have been consulted, it is probable that there is no form of memorial which would have been more in accord with his desires.

In the year 1916 will be celebrated the tercentenary of the death of his great contemporary, William Shakespeare. How opportune it would be if at the same time a Bacon Memorial Library could be established on these lines.

WILLIAM T. SMEDLEY.

22nd January, 1915.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

RECEIVED
MAIN LOAN DESK
JAN 5 1935
A.M. 7|8|9|10|11|12|1|2|3|4|5 P.M.

REC'D LD-URL
1 3 1982
REC'D LD-URL
APR 1 5 1984
APR 20 1984

rm L9-75m-7,'61(C1437s4)444

Stockton, Calif.

3 1158 0093

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL
AA 000 345