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Mr. Bushel's mineral overtures

Bushell, Thomas, 1594-1674., Bacon, Francis, 1561-1626.

[Table of contents](#) | [Add to bookbag](#) | [How to cite](#)

Page 1

M^r. BUSHEL'S Minerall Overtures.

Right Honourable:

ACcording to your commands, I do here present your Lordships with a briefe Narrative of the Lord Chancellor BACONS directions to my selfe, for the management of his Minerall experiments, in case his own death should stop his intended progresse therin, before he could practically discover the true generation, and spreading qualities of Mines Royall, I being then his Meniall Servant.

King JAMES having already promised to grant his Lordship all his own discoveries of Mines Royall, and also of any drowned Lands, or deserted Works by him to be recovered within the space of 40. yeers, paying him the fifth according to the usuall custome of the King of Spain, in his Mines of the West Indies, and of other Prinlces, after the expiration of 14. yeers first granted gratis towards the great charge of his new invention, to facilitate the obtaining the Minerall riches of this Land, occasioned by a learned Speech his Lordship had lately made to his Majesty: Count GUNDAMORE, and divers of the Nobility being present, concerning the rise, and magnificent growth of the China Trade, wherein by a perfect demonstration, he made it appear, that the invention of one man (by his helping the defects of nature, with the materials of Art, and the patience of three ages industry to bring its concoction to perfection) became the great Revenue of that Empire, and hath been for this thousand years the only honour of that people, aswell as the livelihood of their patrimony; in which he seriously protested, that his utmost ambition in the affairs of this world affected no greater

Page 2

glory, then to leave the reall fruits of his best service to his Sove|raign, honour to his name, his written works to posterity, and by such treasures as his own industry should raise out of his Minerall experimen•s to accomplish the noble design and fabrick of his Solo|mons house, described in his Naturall History, since the corporation of the Mines Royall, instituted by his Majesty, consisting of Lords and Gentlemen of quality, produced but weake, or very small advantages to his Majesties Revenue, or the publick good, although his Lordship did then really believe it very possible for himselfe (if qualified thereto by his Majesties power) to bring it so to passe in one age, that the barrenest mountains in this nation should produce such store of treasure by their beds of mettle that this State should not need to envy the King of Spains felicity in his POTOSEE, or any other his silver Mines in America; and thereupon by way of similitude added this, that as a State, whose present dimentionions were but small, might happily serve as a foundation for an ample Monar|chy, if all regard of private propriety were laid aside, and every member thereof would diligently devote his particular care to the publick benefit: even so it might happen in the advancement of the discoveries of those Minerall riches supposed to lie hid in the bosoms of the most barren Mountains, when the whole industry of the ma|ny severall persons employed in that work should be concentrick in that service, and act as the united faculties of one man, their hearts being free from all ends and ambitious thoughts, save such as conduced to Gods glory and the common good. But so soon as his Lordship had vouchsafed to acquaint me concerning his proceedings with his Majesty in this affaire, he bad me call to mind the many fatherly favours, which he had conferred upon me as pious motives to retard my unripe years from hazardous travels in forraign parts; I having professed to his Lordship, that I could not with any content resolve to live in my native Countrey, since I first understood that yonger Brothers by the Law of the Land, were but to have little share in their fathers inheritance, but that they were by the wayes of vertue and industry, by the assistance of the Almightyes bounty, to acquire such fortunes as primogeniture had conferred upon their elder brothers, or otherwise to live in an inferiour or servile condition, and then instanced his acceptance of me for his

Page 3

servant at fifteen years of age upon mine own addresse, his clearing all my debts three severall times, with no small sums, his preferring me in marriage to a rich inheritrix, and thereupon allowing me 400 pounds *per annum* to ballance the consent of her Father in the match; saying, that if those reall expressions of his love could but find the due retaliation of my gratitude, he might then assure himselfe of the hoped harvest of two lives in one; inferring, that although fathers are bound to provide for their children, and worse then Infidels if they do not, yet there is no such injunction upon Masters in relation to their servants; and therefore where a Masters pious bounty transcends a Fathers naturall love, there that so obliged servant must appear most prodigiously ingratefull, which shall not with much zeale and faithfulness discharge the duty of a surviving trust, seriously adding this: BUSHELL, I

must now use you my intended instrument, in the prosecution of my Minerall designs, as politick Princes do their nearest servants in their Cabinet Counsels, who putting their masters conceptions into act, if they take well with the people, must own no more of them then the approbation thereof, and the admiration of their Princes wisdom therein; but in case of miscarriage, to salve their Princes honour, they must sadly acknowledge the matter wholly their own, an Errour in their Counsels, and a Crime in themselves; so you if by my Theory you prosper in your practick, must attribute all the honour of the whole worke to me; if otherwise, you must gratefully preserve my reputation, by acknowledging your own misfortune in mistaking and misacting my directions, and so you shall be sure to gain the Title and Character of a gratefull servant in either event. And upon my serious protestation, that I would faithfully and curiously obey all his Commands concerning his Mynerall directions and designs, his Lordship first advised me, not to follow the practice of our Predelcessors in their tedious and expensive wayes of sinking Ayreshaffes at every forty Fathomes in search of the uncertain Veyns, nor to immitate the Ancient Romanes byd•gging Mynes through deepe and open Trenches; but to observe his directions by cutting my Addits into the Mountains at the lowest Levell of all drowned and deserted works, and by supplying the defect of the Ayre in my far led Addits by Pipe and Bellowes, being an Invention utterly unknown to forlmer

Page 4

Ages. And for my first experience, to begin with those five Mountains in Cardiganshire, upon a view thereof by Sir FRANCIS GODOLPHIN, and a Portugues (men of great experience in Mynes) reported by them to be rich in Silver and Lead. But if I should by my practick part faile in my deeper search either for want of convenient Ayre, or a sufficient Veyn of Ore, his Lordship comlmanded me to pursue his directions in that particular no further; yet if my happy successe should prove his Theory true in this, as allso in the severall wayes of seperating the Mettle from the Drosse, and the Silver from the Lead, that then I should not faile to illustrate the innocent Trade of the poor Mynes, by making his Lordship the Patron of their profession, and my self one of their society, according to the many obligations of his Lordships forementioned favours, hereby performing the duty of a faithfull servant therein: And for my further discoveries of the Treasures of other Mountains, which have the same Symptoms of Rakes, Veyns, and Sparres, his Lordship conceived it most necessary for me, to dedicate the whole profit, which Gods providence should reveale in the one to the finding out of the Riches of the other; and as a first help in this work he counsels me to petition my Sovereign: That for the agrandizing his Royal Clemency and Magnificence, he would graciously grant life to such as had offended in petty Felonies, and were willing to expilate their crimes by their diligent and dayly labours in his Majesties Mynes, and if possible to obtain a Branch of his Majesties Mint to encourage all Forrain & Native Miners, with due & certain paymēt, according to the president of other Princes, and not force them to take base Commodities at high rates for their painfull service, as hath been inforced by some former undertakers, which I feare hath entayled a Curse upon their fraudulent policies. But above all, that I

should take a special care conscientiously to elect such honest Agents for the carrying on this innocently profitable work, whose vertuous ambitions should aime at nothing beyond the publike good of their Countrey, and a competent sallary for their modest maintenance: But these Embrions proving abortive by the sudden fall and death of that Lord in the Raign of King James, were the sad motives which perswaded my pensive retiremēts to my three years unsociable solitude in the desolate Isle called the Calfe of Man, where

Page 5

(abhorring the memory of my desol•te exorbitances) in obedience to my dead Lords Philosophicall advice: I resolved to make a perfect exp•riment upon my selfe for the obtaining a long and healthy life, m•st necessary for such a repentance, as my former debauchedness required by a parcimonious diet of Hearbs, Oyle, Mustard, and Honey, with water sufficient, most like to that of our long-liv'd Fathers before the flood (as was conceived by that Lord) which I most strictly observed, as if obliged by a religious vow, till divine providence calling me to a more active life. I discovered and perfe•cted natures ingenious designes upon my rock at Enston in Oxfordshire, by making it such an artificiall delightfull Grotto, that the fame of it invited the late K. Charls to a voluntary visit. By which opportunity I not only became known to his Majesty, but also found an apt occasion to discourse the above mentioned Proposals of the Lord BACON to his owne attentive eare, who so well approved of my Engine upon that place, and his Lordships Minerall modell, that hee presently promised mee the assistance of his Mint when I should in those mountains of Cardigan, find silver worth the Coyning; and likewise the accommodation of my own Lead so discovered, Custome free for 21. yeers, as also my choise of renting the whole Custome of that Commodity at the rate of the Farmers Books, calculated by the Account of 7. yeers Audit, whensoever I should procure to my selfe the Assignment of Sir HUGH MIDDLETONS Lease of the Mines Royall in the County of Cardigan, to put the speculations of my deare deceased Master into practice. These high favours of the late King conferred on my selfe, in memory of that Lords eminent abilities, and this his admonition (before the Earle of Dorset) to me at York. That (if in the war then like to ensue) I should not prove reall, and active in his service, and cordiall in the trust reposed in me by my quondam Lord, I should justly merit the title and reputation of a Knave; which did then provoke mee forwards in my undertakings, with a most zealous observation of my obliged fidelity to both, till his Majesty (at CAUSAM) disingalged me in the first, that he might enable me, as much as in him lay, to perform the latter, by his gracious Letter of per•ssion <◇>•lder Lundy, at my own charge fortified and main•ained, with•ut •nljury or violence to any, upon such Articles as m•ght take o••<◇> dellinquency,

Page 6

and restore me to my estate, and the Grants of my Mines, Mints, and

Customes, rather than the forementioned design so well digested by my Honourable Lord, for the generall good, should bee made frustrate by my incapacity to prosecute it; I being the only man intimately made privy to all those his Minerall speculations, and some other of his Philosophicall Lucubrations, not yet to bee promulged, untill my proficiency and successe in the Mines shall enable me thereunto: which makes mee now become an humble and earnest Petitioner to this State, for their pious assistance in this hopefull work, for the good of this Common Wealth, and their own Honours: since I have taken the Engagement, and given security for my future integrity, desiring no greater riches or honour in this world, then to gratifie the late Civilities of those my friends which gave me credit, and by my utmost industry to manifest the great debt of love and honour I ow to the worthy memory of that unparalleled Lord, by redeeming my selfe in the service and opinion of my Country. For I protest, as in the presence of God, that if I could now command as much wealth as ever the Lidian CRESSUS did possesse, I would gladly adventure it all in perforating the barren Mountains to discover the vast Treasures which lie hid in their Rocky entrayles, for the good of this Common Wealth, and to leav to after Ages a Magnificent Monument in pious Memory of my most deserving Master, by finishing his SALOMONS house in all its dimensions, and with all the accomodations and endowments therof, according to his Lordships own Heroick Idea. And to that end I humbly tender these my proposalls. First, to advance the Milnerall Trade of this Common Wealth, to 1000l. per week, if the Parliament shall be pleased to ratifie to me the same Latitude of Powr to effect it, which King JAMES granted to the Lord Chancelor BACON, and was since conferred by King CHARLES on my selfe, for the encouragement of me and mine assistants in the work; but if any unsatisfied concerned person shall object against the tedious Proposition of a 14. yeers period before my Mountains must bring forth this vast birth, and then peradventure expect but a ridiculous silver Mouse after this Timpany of promises. To beget more candor in such, and a better confidence in all, as a hopefull symptome of a lively Embrion, promising a larger off-spring, I shall in the interim

Page 7

give Marts to all such responsive persons that shall bee diffident of the successe, and also duly pay all such Rent as is now received by the State from the Farmers of the Mines and Customes of Lead; and likewise engage my Life and Fortune, that the cleer fifth part shall be worth to this State 500l. the week; and in the same processe of 14. yeers more, it shall be worth 1000l. the week. I having many noble friends that will adventure their money gratis for 14. yeers, to manifest their love to their Country; and to see the perfection of those Experiments in the L. BACONS Philosophy, I having already by his direction cut through five of the 28. Mountains at the lowest Level, which his Lordship and Sir FRANCIS GODOLPHIN, did mark out as the most pregnant Hills for discovering the Beds, and spreading Branches of this Nations Minerall Treasure; so that no man of known judgement but must conclude the rest to be of the same species, or of richer natures, in their deeper search both for

quantity and quality.

Page [unnumbered]



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