

T H E S I S .

Subject, Francis Bacon

Name, Jens Lambert

Francis Bacon was born in London January 22nd, 1561. He was the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the great seal and a statesman of Elizabeth. Francis was a favorite of the queen and she called him "her young Lord Keeper."

At the age of twelve Bacon was sent to Cambridge and put under Whitgift at Trinity. At sixteen he was admitted to the Society of "Ancients" of Gray's Inn, and he went in the household of Sir Amias Paulet, the Queen's ambassador, to France. He spent two years here, and unlike the boys of to-day, associated with men. The old and young people then worked together.

In 1579 Bacon was called home by his father's death. He was thus left to earn his own living, which seemed a very great task at his young age. He at once entered upon the study of law, and made great advancement in this direction. Although this was the only way opened for him, it did not suit him.

In 1582 he was made barrister, in 1601 Solicitor General, in 1613 Attorney General and in 1617 Lord Chancellor.

From this brilliant public success we cannot get any idea of Bacon's inner life and deepest desires.

In a letter to one of his friends he declared, "I confess that I have as vast contemplative ends

as I have moderate civil ends; for I have taken all knowledge to be my province."

Bacon's whole purpose of living and of every day's work was to do great things to enlighten and elevate his race, to enrich it with new powers, to lay up in store for all ages to come a source of blessings which should never fail or dry up.

Although at times he was diverted by worldly duties, he was true at heart to his lofty purpose.

Bacon had high thoughts of the ends and methods of law and government and was regarded as the standard by which the use of public power was to be measured.

In 1621 he was accused of taking bribes while serving

in his office of Lord Chancellor. He confessed the charge, and was thus a ruined man in reputation and fortune.

The remainder of Bacon's life was spent in the composition of some of the great philosophical and scientific works on which his fame rests.

Although ruined in the eyes of the people, he still showed himself to be brave, and moved about with a courtly air.

While engaged in a scientific experiment he caught cold and died April 9th . 1626

Bacon is considered the greatest man of the Elizabethan Age with the single exception of Shakespeare.

He chose to be a Latin rather than an English writer. He had no con-

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confidence in the stability of his own language, and went so far as to have his *Advancement of Learning* translated from English.

He thought little of his work as an English writer and extended most of his energies in other directions. Regardless of this fact however, it is his English works that have been best appreciated.

It is by *The Essays* that Bacon is best known to the general reader. These read like a note book of a good thinker. They are jottings on great subjects, are brief, but full of thought and furnish much information.

His own account of the object of the *Essays* is, that he "endeavored to make them not vulgar, but of a nature

whereof much should be found in experience and little in books; and desires that they should "come home to men's business and bosoms." Three editions were published during his lifetime; the first in 1597, the second in 1612 and the third in 1625. The first contained ten essays, but by the third the number had been increased to fifty-eight.

Bacon believed in teaching from objects. He did not believe in abstract principles, but in facts gained by observation and experiment.

"To reason without knowing anything of that which we reason upon, is as if we were to weigh or measure the wind."

He followed nature closely in his teaching and proceeded from

the simplest ideas to the highest forms.

He taught that "Learning should be a process of discovery."

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