

Landesbibliothek Oldenburg

Digitalisierung von Drucken

Hudibras

In Three Parts, Written in the Time of The Late Wars

Butler, Samuel

Cambridge, 1744

The Author's Life.

urn:nbn:de:gbv:45:1-3493

T H E
A U T H O R'S
L I F E.

SAMUEL BUTLER, the Author of this excellent Poem, was born in the Parish of *Strensham*, in the County of *Worcester*, and baptized there the 13th of *February* 1612. His Father, who was of the same Name, was an honest Country Farmer, who had some small Estate of his own, but rented a much greater of the Lord of the Manor where he liv'd. However, perceiving in this Son an early Inclination to Learning, he made a shift to have him educated in the Free-School at *Worcester*, under Mr. *Henry Bright*; where having past the usual time, and being become an excellent School-Scholar, he went for some little time to *Cambridge*, but was never matriculated into that Univerfity, his Father's Abilities not being fufficient to be at the charge of an Academical Education; fo that our Author return'd foon into his native Country, and became Clerk to one Mr. *Jefferys* of *Earls-Croom*, an eminent Justice of the Peace for that County, with

with whom he liv'd some years, in an easy and no contemptible service. Here, by the Indulgence of a kind Master, he had sufficient leisure to apply himself to whatever Learning his Inclinations led him, which were chiefly History and Poetry; to which, for his Diversion, he joined Musick and Painting; and I have seen some Pictures, said to be of his Drawing, which remained in that Family; which I mention not for the Excellency of them, but to satisfy the Reader of his early Inclinations to that noble Art; for which also he was afterwards entirely beloved by Mr. *Samuel Cooper*, one of the most Eminent Painters of his time.

He was, after this, recommended to that great Encourager of Learning, *Elizabeth* Countess of *Kent*, where he had not only the Opportunity to consult all manner of learned Books, but to converse also with that living Library of Learning, the great Mr. *Selden*.

Our Author liv'd some time also with Sir *Samuel Luke*, who was of an ancient Family in *Bedfordshire*; but, to his Dishonour, an eminent Commander under the Ufurper *Oliver Cromwell*: and then it was, as I am inform'd, he composed this Loyal Poem. For tho' Fate, more than Choice, seems to have placed him in the service of



a Knight so notorious, both in his Person and Politicks, yet by the Rule of Contraries, one may observe throughout his whole Poem, that he was most Orthodox, both in his Religion and Loyalty. And I am the more induced to believe he wrote it about that time, because he had then the opportunity to converse with those living Characters of Rebellion, Nonsense, and Hypocrisy, which he so lively and pathetically exposes throughout the whole Work.

After the Restoration of King *Charles II.* those who were at the Helm, minding Money more than Merit, our Author found those Verses of *Juvenal* to be exactly verify'd in himself:

Haud facile emergunt, quorum Virtutibus obstat.

Res angusta Domi: ———

And being endued with that innate Modesty, which rarely finds Promotion in Princes Courts; he became Secretary to *Richard Earl of Carbury*, Lord President of the Principality of *Wales*, who made him Steward of *Ludlow-Castle*, when the Court there was reviv'd. About this time, he married one Mrs. *Herbert*, a Gentlewoman of a very good Family, but no Widow, as our *Oxford* Antiquary has reported: She had a competent Fortune, but it was most of it unfortunately lost, by being put out on ill Securities, so that it was
 little

little advantage to him. He is reported by our Antiquary to have been Secretary to his Grace *George Duke of Buckingham*, when he was Chancellor to the Univerfity of *Cambridge*: but whether that be true or no, 'tis certain, the Duke had a great kindnefs for him, and was often a Benefactor to him. But no man was a more generous Friend to him, than that *Mecænas* of all Learned and Witty Men, *Charles Lord Buckhurst*, the late Earl of *Dorset* and *Middlefex*, who, being himfelf an excellent Poet, knew how to fet a juft value upon the Ingenious Performances of others, and has often taken care privately to relieve and fupply the Neceffities of thofe, whofe Modefty would endeavour to conceal them: of which our Author was a fignal Instance, as feveral others have been, who are now living. In fine, the Integrity of his Life, the Acutenefs of his Wit, and Eafinefs of his Converfation, had rendered him moft acceptable to all Men; yet he prudently avoided multiplicity of Acquaintance, and wifely chofe fuch only whom his difcerning Judgment could diftinguifh, (as *Mr. Cowley* expreffeth it)

From the Great Vulgar or the Small.

And having thus liv'd to a good old age, admir'd by all, though perfonally known to few,
he



he departed this Life in the Year 1680, and was buried at the Charge of his good Friend ^a Mr. *L——vil* of the *T——le*, in the Yard belonging to the Church of *St. Paul, Covent-Garden*, at the *West-End* of the said Yard, on the *North-Side*, under the Wall of the said Church, and under that Wall which parts the Yard from the common Highway. And since he has no Monument yet set up for him, give me Leave to borrow his Epitaph from that of *Michael Drayton* the Poet, as the Author of *Mr. Cowley's* has partly done before me:

*And tho' no Monument can claim
To be the Treasurer of thy Name;
This Work, which ne'er will die, shall be
An everlasting Monument to thee.*

The Characters of this Poem are for the most part obvious, even to the meanest Pretenders to

^a "Mr. *W. Longueville* would fain have buried *Butler* in *Westminster Abbey*; and spoke in that view to some of those Wealthy Persons, who had admired him so much in his life-time; offering to pay his Part, but none of them would contribute. Upon which *Mr. Longueville* buried him with the greatest privacy (but at the same time very decently) in *Covent-Garden Church-yard* at his own expence; himself and seven or eight persons more following the Corps to the Grave." (*Hudibras's Life*, Gen. Hist. Dict. vol. 6. pag. 299. Marg. Note.) and I will beg leave to add, that the Burial Service was read over him, by the learned and Pious Dr. *Patrick*, (afterwards Lord Bishop of *Ely*) then Minister of the Parish.

Learning

Learning or History; nor can scarce any one be so ignorant, as not to know, that the chief Design thereof is a Satire against those Incendiaries of Church and State, who in the late Rebellion, under pretence of Religion, murder'd the best of Kings, to introduce the worst of Governments; destroy'd the best of Churches, that Hypocrisy, Novelty, and Nonsense, might be predominant amongst us; and overthrew our wholesome Laws and Constitutions, to make way for their *Blessed* Anarchy and Confusion, which at last ended in Tyranny. But since, according to the Proverb, *None are so blind as they that will not see*; so those who are not resolv'd to be invincibly ignorant, I refer, for their farther satisfaction, to the Histories of Mr. *Fowlis* of *Presbytery*, and Mr. *Walker* of *Independency*; but more especially to that incomparable History lately published, wrote by *Edward* Earl of *Clarendon*, which are sufficient to satisfy any unbiass'd Person, that his general Characters are not fictitious: And I could heartily wish these Times were so reformed, that they were not applicable to some even now living. However, there being several particular Persons reflected on, which are not commonly known, and some old Stories and uncouth Words which want explication, we have thought fit to do that
right

right to their Memories, and for the better Information of the less learned Readers, to explain them in some additional Annotations at the end of this Edition.

How often the Imitation of this Poem has been attempted, and with how little success, I leave the Readers to judge: In the Year 1663, there came out a spurious Book, call'd, *The Second Part of Hudibras*; which is reflected upon by our Author, under the Character of *Whacum*, towards the latter End of his Second Part. Afterwards came out the ^b *Dutch and Scotch Hudibras*, *Butler's Ghost*, the *Occasional Hypocrite*, and some others of the same Nature, which, compar'd with this, (*Virgil's Travesty* excepted) deserve only to be condemn'd *ad Ficum & Piperem*; or, if you please, to more base and servile Offices.

Some vain Attempts have been likewise made to translate some Parts of it into *Latin*, but how far they fall short of that Spirit of the *English* Wit, I leave the meanest Capacity, that understands them, to judge. The following *Similes* I have heard were done by the Learned Dr. *Harmer*, once *Greek* Professor at *Oxon*:

^b *May'st thou print H— or some duller As,*
Jorden, or him, that wrote Dutch Hudibras.
Oldham, upon a Painter, that had expos'd him, by printing a Piece.
 Works 1703. pag. 261.

So

So learned *Taliacotius* from, &c.

*Sic adscititios nasos de clune torosi
Vectoris, doctâ secuit Taliacotius Arte:
Qui potuere parem durando æquare Parentem
At postquam fato Clunis computruit, ipsum
Una sympathicum cæpit tabescere Rostrum.*

So Wind in the *Hypocondres* pent, &c.

*Sic Hypocondriacis inclusa meatibus Aura
Definet in crepitum, si fertur prona per abvum,
Sed si summa petat, montisq; invaserit arcem
Divinus furor est, & conscia Flamma futuri.*

So Lawyers, left the Bear Defendant, &c.

*Sic Legum mystæ, ne forsan Pax foret, Ursam
Inter furantem sese, Actoremque Molossum;
Faucibus injiciunt clavos dentisque refigunt,
Luctantesque canes coxis, femorisque revellunt.
Errores justasque moras obtendere certis,
Judiciumque prius revocare ut prorsus iniquum.
Tandem post aliquod breve respiramen utrinque,
Ut pugnas iterent, crebris hortatibus urgent.
Ejâ! agite ô cives, iterumque in prælia tradunt.*

There are some Verses, which, for Reasons of State, easy to be guess'd at, were thought fit to be omitted in the first Impression; as these which follow:

Did

*Did not the Learned ° Glyn and ° Maynard,
To make good Subjects Traitors, strain hard?
Was not the King, by Proclamation,
Declar'd a ° Traitor thro' the Nation?*

And now I heartily wish I could gratify your farther Curiosity with some of those *Golden Remains* which are in the Custody of Mr. *L—vil*; but not having the Happiness to be very well acquainted with him, nor Interest to procure them, I desire you will be content with the following Copy, which the Ingenious Mr. *Aubrey* assures me he had from the Author himself.

° Serjeant *Glyn* declar'd, That the *Protestation* of the Bishops (in favour of their Rights) was High Treason. *Echard's Hist of England*, vol. 2. pag. 276. He acted as Judge during *O. Cromwell's Usurpation*. see *Thurloe's State Papers*, vol. 3. pag. 332.

° Serjeant *Maynard*, was a Manager at the Earl of *Strafford's Tryal*; *Echard*, vol. 2. p. 216. and though upon the *Declaration of no more Addresses to the King*, 1647-8. he drew up a famous Argument against that *Declaration*; shewing, That by that Resolution, they did, as far as in them lay dissolve the Parliament: and he knew not after that, with what Security in point of Law they could meet together, and joyn with them: *Echard*, vol. 2 p. 595. Yet he condescended during the Usurpation, to act as *Cromwell's Serjeant*. When he waited on the Prince of *Orange*, with the Men of the Law, he was then near ninety, and said (as Bp. *Burnet* observes, *History of his own Time*, vol. 1. pag. 803.) “the liveliest thing that was heard of, on that occasion; the Prince took notice of his great age, and said, that he had outliv'd all the Men of the Law of his time: he answered, *He had like to have outliv'd the Law itself, if His Highness had not come over.*” If that had happen'd, he had certainly

No Jesuit e'er took in hand
 To plant a Church in barren Land;
 Nor ever thought it worth the while
 A Swede or Rus to reconcile.
 For where there is no Store of Wealth,
 Souls are not worth the Charge of Health;
 Spain, in America had two Designs
 To sell their Gospel for their Mines.
 For had the Mexicans been poor,
 No Spaniard twice had landed on their Shore.
 'Twas Gold the Catholick Religion planted,
 Which, had they wanted Gold, they still had wanted.

tainly outliv'd it twice. He was very eminent in his profession, and made more of it, than any one of his time. Mr. *Whitelocke* observes (in his *Memorial*) That he made 700*l.* in one Summer's Circuit: and to his great Gains in his Profession, Mr. *Oldham* alludes, (see a *Satyr*, *Oldham's Poems*, 1703. pag. 424.)

*Then be advis'd, the slighted Muse forsake,
 And Cook, and Dalton for thy Study take;
 For Fees each Term, sweat in the crowded Hall,
 And there for Charters, and crack'd Titles brawl;
 Where M——d thrives, and Pockets more each year,
 Than forty Laureats on a Theatre.*

* Alluding to the Vote of the Parliament, upon the King's Escape from *Hampton-Court*, November 11, 1647. (though he had left his Reasons for so doing, in a letter to the *Parliament*, and an other to the *General*) "That it should be Confiscation of Estate, and Loss of Life without mercy, to any one who detained the King's Person, without revealing it to the Two Houses." *Echard's History of England*, vol. 2. pag. 588.

The

The *Oxford* Antiquary ascribes to our Author two Pamphlets, supposed falsely, as he says, to be *William Pryn's*; the one entituled, *Mola Afinaria: or, The Unreasonable and Insupportable Burthen, press'd upon the Shoulders of this Groaning Nation, &c. London, 1659.* in one Sheet 4^{to}. The other, Two Letters, one from *John Audland*, a *Quaker*, to *Will. Pryn*; the other, *Pryn's* Answer; in three Sheets in *Folio*, 1672.

I have also seen a small Poem, of one Sheet in *Quarto*, on *Du Vall*, a Notorious Highway-man, said to be wrote by our Author; but how truly, I know not.

PRE-