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JOHN FLORIO,

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JOHN FLORIO.

On the same wave which brought the treasures of the old learning to England from Italian shores came Protestant refugees, seeking the protection of the intolerant tolerance which was flourishing so boldly on the freedom-loving isle.

From Florence came the descendants of a Siennese family, Michael Angelo Florio, and his wife, one of the Waldenses, escaping the persecution in the Valtoline to enjoy the Protestantization of Edward VI's reign, the deritualizing innovations of Cranmer and his colleagues. The Primate of all English had invited influential foreign protestants to settle in his country, thus hoping to promote a union of the reformed church with a common doctrinal standard, and the Florios may have been moved in part by this politic hospitality to seek domicile in London.

In 1550 Michael Florio, probably a brother or kinsman as Strype suggests, to "Master Simon* Florio, preacher of

*S. Florio's letter to Gratalorus, 1560, found in the 11th book of the Pantaleon, pp. 337, may refer to M.A. Florio. "The country and people there I well know which take their first original out of the Waldenses, and are of good doctrine and still better life: for before my departure from Geneva, at their request, we sent them two schoolmasters and two preachers."

God's word in the city of Chiavenna, among the Rhetians", was preaching to a congregation of Italian Protestants in London, enjoying the patronage of Sir William Cecyl and of Archbishop Cranmer, and engaged in writing biography and treatises on the Italian language, as "Regole de la Lingua Thoscana". But he was not popular with his flock, many of whom drifted back into the Popish doctrines. Perhaps he tried too arbitrarily to reform all tendencies with which he did not sympathize. Certainly he was other than benign when he wrote to the secretary, enclosing a list of the apostatized members of his church, that they ought "interfici sine misericordia".

But a little later, probably in 1551, the pastor himself erred in the flesh and forfeited thereby the good will of his patrons. Not only was he banished from Cecyl's house where he had been living, but he was forced to give up for a time, the guidance of his Anglican-Italian flock. Cecyl had intended to banish him from England, but Angelo's penitent letter appeased his patron, who could not resist the appeal of "Quo fugiam extra regnum istud, ut vitare possim, quia aut carne mea et sanguine meo satientur hostium evangelii dentes et ora, aut veritatem illius ipse negare cogar?"

With the accession of the redoubtable Mary and the consequent relapse into Catholicism, the Florios left England

for the Continent where they sojourned until the sanguinary reign was over and the novel toleration of Elizabeth made England again safe for them.

It was during these years, Anthony Wood tells us, that "Jo. Florio received his puerile literature."

If we may credit the matriculation records of Magdalen College, Florio was born in 1545, and not in 1553 as the Nat. Dict. of Biog. (with an interrogation mark) and the Encyclop. Britannica would have us believe. When he matriculated in 1581 Florio gave his age as 36, and this is undoubtedly better evidence than that of the inscription on the 1611 portrait, upon which biographers have relied. Moreover, this accords with Wood's statement that he was born in the "latter end of the reign of K. H. 8." Nor would it be easy to picture the decrepitude of which Florio complains in his letter of 1619 did we not include these eight years in the record of his life.

London was his birth place, which he left at the age of eight. For five years, then, he resided upon the Continent, probably in Switzerland, perhaps for a time in France. There is every indication in his translations from the French that he enjoyed the facile mastery of that language, an ease which seldom, if ever, comes by other than an early and intimate association with native sources.

There is evidence to show that after his return to England he resided in Oxford, some years, perhaps before 1576, when we know that he was appointed tutor in "the Italian and French tongues" to Emanuel Barnes, son of the Bishop of Durham, who came to Magdalen College, as Wood tells us, "to obtain Acad. literature in the quality of a commoner." There is further reason for believing that this was the beginning of his pedagogical career, for in the dedication of Queen Anna's New World of Words" published in 1611, the author writes:

"Thus committing your Sacred Majestie (for whom only I have adventured to declare and publish what I know, and by the experience of five and thirtie yeares teaching (and ever the greatest Nobilitie of this Land) have observed and learned of this (o noble and of all Nations so highly esteemed language) to the ever holy protection of the most-most good and Almighty God, I heartily beseech his Eternal Majestie, in this transitorie worlde to bless and prosper, and in that to come, eternally to crowne your Highnesse in his new Jerusalem:"

Resolute: J. Florio."

During the five years, then, at the University previous to his matriculation Florio served as attendant to Barnes. This, of course, was a common practice, and the very early age at which commoners came into residence during the 16th and 17th centuries, Barnes was 15 years of age in 1576,

often made it desirable that they be accompanied by responsible people, who might serve as ballast to the aerial tendencies of their young patrons. This was particularly true during the reign of Lawrence Humfrey as President of Magdalen, when the college was full of rather rollicking young "bloods", rich and "rowdy". That the Bishop of Durham should choose Florio as a companion for his son speaks well for our author and for the reputation of his staunchness in faith.

Emanuel Barnes took his B. A. degree 27 May, 1579, and was dispensed from a year's residence 27 May, 1581, and immediately afterwards proceeded to the degree of M. A. (27 May, 1581). He had kept two years of residence since he became B. A.- three years more were required. Therefore he must have been resident more or less continuously from the time of his B. A. to that of his M. A. The ground for the dispensation was that he was going abroad. Probably this was the reason why Florio, if he meant to remain in Oxford, took advantage of his relation to Barnes to be matriculated as a privileged person in May 1581,- *personae privilegiatae*", those who enjoyed the immunities conferred by charter on the corporation of the University; the chief element in this class being the "scholares" and their servants, "famuli"- "ministri"- "servi"- "servientes".

Florio's matriculation record reads, "1 May, 1581, Magd. C., Florio John: aet. 36; serviens Mri. Barnes." There is

reason to believe, from Wood's account, that Florio was also teacher and instructor to certain scholars in the University, thus serving as an early precursor of the Taylorian.

From internal evidence, especially from that of our author's maiden effort, there is every reason to believe that he was a man of diverse accomplishments, lored in the gentlemanly elegancies of his day; skilled in chess, in cards, primero especially, a tennis player of no mean power, a judge of a good horse, fastidious to an extreme in his apparel, a great reader, an observant traveler, fond of his cupes, but withal pious in his religion, loyal to his sovereign, and perhaps, best test of all, able to make an ardent enemy, and to provoke him by sallies of no half-way nature. In short, he was typically Elizabethan in his versatility, in his industry, in his interest in the world about him.

No pedant he; fond of life and of living, albeit his chief pleasure and his ceaseless labour lay among books. How he must have joyed to translate with all his typical vigour this passage from the divinely human sceptic: "My study and endeavor to doe, and not to write." - - "Good Lord (Madame) how I would hate such commendation, to be a sufficient man in writing, and a foolish-shallow-headed braine or coxcombe in all things else:"

"Give me health a Gods name," you may hear him in his college rooms, or perhaps in conversation at Hall,

"Sir, I will tell you the truth, I love beere, I love ale, but I love a cuppe of wine beste of all; for, as Plinie saith (wine so it be moderately used, is a thing ordained of god, the wine doth quench the thirst, revive the spirites, comfort the hart, sharpen the wit, gladdeth a doleful mind, maketh a good memorye, killeth yl humors, maketh good blod, but contrariwise drinking too much of it, ensue many inconveniences: wherefore, if it please you, give me a glass of wyne."-

During his Oxford residence Florio wrote and translated several books. One, dated from Oxford, a trans. from the Italian of Ramuzio, dedicated to Edmund Bray, high Sheriff of Oxfordshire, 25 June, 1580; another, inscribed to Edw. Dyer, a mss. collection of Italian proverbs, also from Oxford, 12 Nov. 1582. But the most important of these earlier productions was the following. Let the title speak for it, "Florio (Giovanni) His firste fruites; which yeelde familiar speech, merie proverbs, wittie sentences, and golden sayings; (Italian and English) also a perfect induction to the Italian and English tongues; as in the Table appeareth, the like heretofore, never by any man published."

London by Thomas Dawson. 1578.

And the motto which constantly appears on the title pages, "Non vi sed virtute."

The book is prefaced by several complimentary verses, doubtless those of influential friends of the author:

John Cowland, Steven Gosson, R. Wilson, R. Collines, and others, who praise the industry and the art of the "bilingued Florio". The lines of "Piers H. Gent" point to the errant curiosity of the times, to the travel which the Renaissance had induced among the adventurous Englishmen.

"You gallant Brutes, whose travailes farr abroad
 Can testifye your strange desire of newes;
 Cast Ankor here, for loe in English roade,
 there rides the Language that so many chuse."

A more personal glimpse is given in the commendation of J. H.

"For profit Gardners plant, the husbandman for gaine
 Doth til the earth, hoping the seed shal countervaille
 his paine,
 Our Florio doth not so, his travaile yet doth passe
 The Gardners, or the Husbandmans, or toylings of the
 Asse.

For when the byrd, the fish, the foule, joyed in their
 quiet nest,
 In closet close was his delight, no sleepe his eyes
 opprest."

Mr. Sidney Lee tells us in the N. D. B. that Florio "dedicated his 'First Fruites' to Leicester in 1578, from 'his lodgings in Worcester Place' Oxford; but a perusal of the 'Epistola Dedicatoria, or of the last page of the book would have made this error quite avoidable. In each of

these places the address is given 'Di Londra'. Besides, what is known in Oxford as Worcester Place did not then exist under that name. There was a Worcester Place in Southwark, and a Worcester House, a large dwelling between Durham Place and the Savoy belonging to the Earls of Worcester, where Pepys tells us that Clarendon resided for a time, and it may have been from one of these places that Florio inscribed his book.

This first work of Florio, which he promises to follow with a better, 'and that shortly', is extremely valuable as a key to the life of the Elizabethans, interesting as an index to the thought of the author himself, to his prejudices, his criticisms of contemporary society, his comparisons of the English with other nations, and especially with the Italian. Florio could not write a text-book devoid of his own feelings, uncoloured by his own life. This volume, supposedly full of set dialogues as an aid to students, Italian and English learning each others language (let any one who desires to see the modern descendent try to read one of the Berlitz books!) fairly pulsates with personal convictions and throbs with living interest.

Nor is the interest to us only that which comes from the lapse of three centuries and a quarter, from the curiosity of comparison with the present of Elizabethan customs, although there be much of this; but as a

revelation of personality we are surprised and held captive. The antiquarian is humanized.

The "fruites" of "Familiar Speech" are various dialogues concerning customs of the time, the queen, about travel, language, and war, etc.; those of "Merie Proverbs" are popular English and Italian saws; those of "Wittie Sentences" are plucked from the orchards of Italian and Greek "philosophie", and those of "Golden Sayings" are "reasonings" upon "Fortune, Learnyng, Philosophie, Diligence, Humanitie, Clemencie, Temperance, Sobriety, Silence, Liberality, Manners of certayne Nations, Musike, and Love."

No subject is too abstruse or too recondite to daunt the resolute John Florio. And why should there be? He had traveled widely, he had spent some years in the English Academe, and better than all else, he was an Elizabethan!

To have breathed the morning freshness of that age, when every day was an anticipated adventure, when a Shakespeare was in the making, and the East and West hourly flew wider apart, that in itself was a legacy imperishable to immortality. Florio, in spite of his academic pursuits, was a true child of his age, vigorous, emphatic, high spirited and loquacious.

There is a touch of courtesy almost Chinese in his "Epistle Dedicatorie to Lord Robert Dudley, Earl of

Leycester" in which he calls these his first fruits "too too unripe, sower and unsavorie for your Honour to take taste of." He speaks later of various foes, "carping, blustering and malignious tongues," a "taunting broode", which indeed I do thinke to have bin the onely cause why learning heretofore, hath bin so obscured and kept in dennes and altogether without any such direct or plaine path thereto, as now at this day (God be thanked therefore) it is."

And in conclusion there is an almost prayer-book benison, whether the result of familiarity with the book of Common Prayer or the natural outcome of that wonderful Elizabethan mode of expression, I cannot tell.

"I commit your Honour to the tuition of the Almighty, who maintain and keep your Honour in most prosperous and happie estate, deliver and defend you from all worldly cares and earthly troubles, and bring you after this transitorie life, into the place of eternall joy and felicitie.

Your Honours most humble and bounden,
during life to command, J. F."

Florio's dedications and prefaces are usually long, too long, full of verbal bowings and scrapings, and indicative of the courtier; forgetful of his own advice, "Silence is a jewel of great valour;-" "Silence is the heaviest burden that is, the weightiest thought a disease

that alwayes pricketh a man. O how fewe are there found
nowadays among men that hold their peace? but fewer among
women."

I know of no better way to prove what I have said of
the "First Fruites" than to set some of them before you.
Judge whether they be flavourless or bitter. We shake
the tree and here is the first piece that tumbles down.
C. 1.

"And whither wyl you goe?

Where it please you.

Where shall we goe?

To a play at the Bull, or els to some other place.

Doe Comedies like you well?

Yea sir, on holydayes.

They please me also wel, but the preachers wyl not
allowethem.

Wherefore, knowe you it.

They say, they are not good.

And wherefore are they used.

Because every man delites in them.

I believe there is much -- used at those Comedies,
what thinke you.

So believe I also.

Chap. 3.

"Wel I will go and walke in Cheape to buy something
And what will you buy?

I will buy a hat, a payr of white stockens.

And I will buye me a payre of Pantofles and Pumpes.

Tell me, how like you this sword & this dagger, is he
good?

Me thinkes it is very good, I would I had the like
for a crowne.

These Gloves, are they well perfumed?

Yea certainly: who hath perfumed ther?

An Englishman that is called B.

My garters are a good colour.

And so are my stockens also.

So they are: where bought you them?

In Cheape, they cost me tenne shillings.

Me thinkes it is good Cheape.

And me thinkes it is deere."

Chap. 11.

"Sir, I praye you tel me, what is your profession?

I am a Musition, my father is a man of Law, my
brother is a handy craftesman.

I pray you tel me, where doth it seeme you best to
dwel, in Italie, or in England.

It is good to dwel everywhere, if the purse be
weightie, but who hath no money, hath no

credit, but of blowes or stripes.

What do you thinke of the people of England, are they loving.

I will tell you the truth, the nobilitie is very curteous, but the comons are discourteous, and especially toward strangers, the which doth please me. "

Florio takes the opportunity to air his grievances, but fairly, I think. In the 13th Chap. is a long and vivid eulogy of Queen Elizabeth which in every respect hardly agrees, for instance, with the more celebrated accounts of history. Florio calls her "the last refuge, defense and bulwarke of al banished virtues."

"Goe the people wel apparelled?

Very wel, & with great pomp.

A handy craftsman wil be a merchant, a merchant wil be a gentleman, a gentleman wyl be a Lorde, a Lorde a Duke, a Duke a King: so that every one seekes to overcome another in pride.

It is a marvaile that the queene findeth not some remedy for it. She is so pitiful that she letteth everyone to doo what he pleaseth most: lust and covetousnesse are practiced very much."

(Then comes the remark straight from brave John's heart.)

"I pray God he wyl not punish us after our desertes, but

rather after his greate mercy."

(There is almost a premonitory hint in this next)

"The queene, commeth she often to the citie, or not?

Seldom times, yea very seldom.

Wherefore, do you know it?

Because London is almost alwayes infected with the
plage, and there dye many, and the queene fear-
eth much."

(The Italian comes out in the following.)

"What weapons bear they?

Some sword and dagger, some sword and buckler.

What weapon is that buckler?

A clownish, dastardly weapon, and not for a Gentleman.

Wherefore do they have them? (Notice the subtle thrust
in the reply!)

Because they are used to them."

We find that an older Italian civilization speaks
through Florio, to Elizabethan England, as an older English
development speaks today of America, e.g.

"Money ruleth al things.

Let them take heede, God wyl punish them. Gods wyl be
done.

So say I also. -- But from the said unto the deed there
is a great throw. This proverbe is true and used.

It is used dayly in England.

So were it not used."

Again and again Florio shows the effects of a thorough classical training; he continually harks back to the Greek and Roman examples and he proves his true sonship to Oxford by his intimate acquaintance with the unavoidable Aristotle and with the whole range of classical literature.

"What thinke you of this English tongue, tel me, I pray you?

It is a language that wyl do you good in England, but passe Dover, it is worth nothing."

(Perhaps Florio had had some thoughts of writing an English grammar and had changed his mind!)

"But yet what thinke you of the speach, is it gallant and gentle, or else contrary?

Certes if you wyl beleewe me, it doth not like me at al, because it is a language confused, bepeesed with many tongues: it taketh many words of the latine and mo from the French, and mo from the Italian, an many mo from the Dutch, some also from the Greeke, and from the Britaine, so that if every language had his own wordes againe, there woulde but a fewe remaine for Englishmen, and yet every day they adde.

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What thinke you of the maners of Englishmen? tel me of curtesie.

I wyll tell you, some are wel manered, but many yl.

Towards whom are they yl manered.

Toward Strangers: and fewe of these Englishmen delight to have their children learne divers languages, which thing it pleaseth me. When I arrived first in London, I could not speake Englishe, and I met above five hundred persons, afore I could find one, that could tel me in Italian, or French, where the Post dwelt."

(Tell me, oh Muse, was Shakespeare, holding horses at the theatre, perchance, one of the five hundred!)

Can anyone doubt, after reading the following, what Florio's attitude toward a modified Education Bill would have been?

"I would there were such a law, that if one shold bring up his children, without teachyng them somethyng, and especially to reade, write, and speake divers languages, that he should be beheaded, or els punished greevously." With all his progressiveness, perhaps Florio was not entirely free from every trace of medievalism.

It is not without interest that we read Florio, the traveler's account of different peoples, summarized rather arbitrarily, perhaps. After having gone from the Ethiopians to the Romans he says: "the Spaniards, travelers, disdainful and despisers: the Italians, proude, and revengers: the Frenchman, crafty and fierce: the Germans, warriours: the

Saxons, dissemblers: those of Suevia, tatlers: the Bretayne (an Englishman) a busy body: the Irishman, wylde: The Cimbrian, seditious, and horrible: the Boemian, very discourteous, and desirous of news: the Scottish man, perjured: the Vandal, mutable: the Bavarian, a scoffer. Of other I do not wel remember."

In a eulogy to Henry VIII he calls him, "a lover of peace, a preserver of truces, a maynteyner of his worrde, faithfull in his promise", but very tactfully says nothing about him as a husband, and ends as we might expect. "God for his mercy long tyme maynteyne his daughter. Amen."

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And our polite and gracious grammarian, or shall I call him gentleman-gardener, bows us out of his orchard with this speedwell on his untiring lips:

"And thus I ende beseeching all curteous gentlemen to accept my good will, and still remember it is not my profession, that which I have done, I have done for my good will, and did it onely to pleasure a private friend of myne, not thinking it should have come to light, for if I had I would have taken greater heede, if it be well accepted I ask no more, if it bee not, blame not mee, but blame my friend that was the cause thou seest it. If I can see or perceyve by any means thou dost pleasure in it, I promise thee a better, if not here I end forever. If perchance thou find among the Adverbs,

Conjunctions, Prepositions, and interjections any words twice, consider the sundry meanings of them, for as they have divers natures so diversly they are placed. And thus I commit thee to the Almighty, who prosper and keepe thee, and me to his wil, and pleasure, and send us grace to serve him. From his lodging in Woster place, thine to his power. J. F."

Patisco il male, sperando il bene:

Sperando vivo, vivendo muoro."

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I have lingered thus over the first fruites of one who is so much better known by his later fruites, plucked out of France, because here I have found much which is a revelation of the man, perhaps more purely so, than in the translations of the thoughts of another man.

The N. D. B. mentions a translation by John Florio, dated 1580, London. "A short and Briefe Narrative of the Two Navigations and Discoveries to the North-west Partes called New Fraunce. First translated out of the French into Italian by that famous learned man, Geo. Bapt. Ramatius and now turned into English by John Florio."

I did not find a copy of this either in the British Museum or in the Bodleian Library and so I am unprepared to say anything about it, except to call attention to the fact that it gave Florio a preparation which must have stood him in good stead when he came to his chief and most lasting labours later on.

During the close of the 16th Century Florio lived in London where he enjoyed the society of the leading literary men of the day and where much of his time must have been consecrated to the difficult tasks which he set himself to accomplish.

In 1591 was published "Florio's second Frutes, to be gathered out of Twelve Trees, of divers but delightsome tastes to the tongues of Italians and Englishmen.

To which is annexed his Gardine of Recreation yeelding six thousand Italian Proverbs."

The volume is much larger than the first, and is dedicated to Nicholas Saunder of Ewel, whose son may have been the Mathew Saunder who was in residence at Magdalen when Florio was there. The Epistle Dedicatory is long winded as usual, but parts of it are interesting as showing the author's outlook upon his own age and his appreciation of the movement and the diversity of the times.

"Sir in this stirring time, and pregnant prime of invention when everie bramble is fruitefull, when everie mole-hill hath cast of the winters mourning garment and when every man is busilie woorking to feede his own fancies; some by delivering to the presse the occurences and accidents of the world, newes from the marte, or from the mint, and newes are the credite of a travailer, and first question of an Englishman. Some, like Alchemists distilling quintessences of wit, that melt golde

to nothing and yet would make golde of nothing; that make men in the moone and catch the mooneshine in the water. Some putting on pyed coats lyke calendars, and hammering upon dialls, taking the elevation of Pancridge Church (their quotidian walks) prognosticate of faire, of foule and of smelling weathers; men wetherwise that will by aches foretell of change and alteration of wether; some more active gallants made of a finer moulede by devising how to win their Mistresses favours, and how to blaze and blanche their passions, with aeglogues, songs and sonnets, in pitifull verse or miserable prose, and most for a fashion: is not Love then a wagg that makes men so wanton? yet love is a pretie thing to give unto my Ladie. Other some with new characterizings be pasting al the posts in London to the prooffe, and fouling of paper, in twelve howres think to effect Calabrian wonders: is not the number of twelve wonderfull? Some with Amadysing and Martinizing a multitude of our libertine yonkers with triviall, frivolous, and vaine vaine droleries, set manie mindes a gadding; could a-foole with a feather make men better sport? I could not chuse but apply myself in some sorte to the season, and either proove a weede in my encrease without profit, or a wholesome pothearbe in profit without pleasure" -----

Manie sowe corn and reape thistles: bestow three yeares toyle in manuring a barraine plot, and have nothing for their labour but their travel: the reason why, because they leave the low dales to seeke thrift in the hill countries; and dig

for gold on top of the Alpes, when Esop's cock found a pearle in a lower place. For me I am none of their faction, I love not to climb high to catch shadowes;--- "but this I dare vaunt without sparke of vaine-glory that I have given you a taste of the best Italian frutes, the Thuscane Garden could affoorde; but if the pallate of some ale or beere mouths be out of taste that they cannot taste them let them sporte but not spue. The moon keeps her course for all the dogges barking."

Thus Florio kept a terrestrial course, content with his delving and gardening, and eschewing the ballooning of fancy and the innumerable attempts and explorations of the imagination of the 16th Century. His pedagogical experience at Oxford may have clipt his wings somewhat; at any rate we are thankful that he remained true to the more tangible and less ambitious production which will always keep his name fresh in the short category of first-rate translators. Blessed be he who knows his powers and cultivates them with all the generosity which he possesses.

In the Epistle Dedicatory of the "Second Frutes" we find a singularly beautiful tribute to Spenser, a eulogy which canonizes the taste of him who gave it. Strange to say, this appreciation of the great poet by so distinguished an Elizabethan has never found currency, perhaps has never been reprinted. Florio performs a double act of grace in bringing his former patron Leicester and the singer together,

to "balance at the corner" as it were, in almost a minuet figure of courtesy.

"But nor I, nor this place may halfe suffice for his praise, which the sweetest singer of all our westerne shepherds hath so exquisitely depainted, that as Achilles by Alexander was counted happy for having such a rare emblazoner of his magnanimitie, as the Meonian Poete; so I account him thrice-fortunate in having such a herauld of his virtues as Spenser; curteous Lord, curteous Spenser, I knowe not which hath purchast more fame, either he in deserving so well of so famous a scholler or so famous a scholler in being so thankfull without hope of requitall to so famous a Lord:"

When we consider the date of this work, 1591, one passage of the dialogue assumes particular interest. It is this:

"Let us make a match at tennis.

Agreed, this coole morning calls for it.

And afterwards we will dine to gether.,

and then after dinner we will goe see a plaie.

The plaies that they plaie in England, are not right comedies.

Yet they doo nothing else but plaie every daye.

Yea but they are neither right comedies, nor right tragedies.

How would you name them, then?

Representations of histories, without any decorum.

Go to, let us determine something to avoyde idlenes."

The dialogues are long, but they throw great light upon the customs of the period, upon the familiar conversation and small-talk of the upper classes. Of course these books were written for those who could afford to be patrons of learning and acquirers of a foreign tongue and so, of necessity, the number would be restricted.

There are many rather derogatory allusions to the Papacy, and this may be indicative of the spirit of Protestantism which flourished so remarkably during Elizabeth's reign.

We got an inkling of Florio, the lexicographer, from the rining-dictionary at the end of his "First Fruites", but we encounter a much more substantial proof of this sort of industry in the folio volume which appeared in 1598. "A worlde of wordes; or most copious and exact dictionarie; in Italian and English, collected by John Florio. Printed at London by Arnold Hatfield by Edw. Blount.

The dictionarie is dedicated to "the Right Honorable Patrons of virtue, Patterns of Honour, Roger Earle of Rutland, Henrie Earle of Southampton, Lucie Countesse of Bedford," and is prefaced by "The names of the Books and Anctors, that have bin read of purpose, for the accomplishing of this Dictionarie, and out of which it is collected." I count 72 in the list. There is further "a friendes gratulation, to his beloved friend Master John Florio, for that which

God hath sent him, and he us.

"A wondrous birth, in these childe-breeding daies:
 Did not his sisters make the wonder lesse,
 Being (but for their sexe's imperfectnesse)
 As he, equall in blood, and next in praise:
 These three their fathers house shall jointly raise:
 etc.

Nothing in what we know of Florio is more picturesque or more mysterious than his hatred for the unrevealed H.S. Against "this leering cur" he opens the vials of his wrath and there flows forth ^{an} Acherontic flood of execration and anathemas which even Milton, inditing his scurrilities against Salmasius, might have envied.

The gibes have remained, Haeres Stultitiae, Homo Simplex, Hara Suillina, Hostis Studiosorum, Hircus Satiricus, Hedera Seguace, Harpia Subata, Humore Superbo, Hipocrito Simulatore, Huffe Snuffe, Horse Stealer, Hob Sowter, Hugh Sot, Humfrey Swineshead, Hodge Sowgelder; but why Master H. S. should have been favored with so many epithets, continues a mystery. The monument abides but he whose memory it commemorates is forgotten.

Perhaps he may have been one whose adverse criticisms stung Florio to frenzy, a harsh critic of his early works. Florio brands such in the preface to "A worlde of wordes" 1598. "Notable pirates in this our paper-sea, those sea-dogs, or lande-Critikes, monsters of men, if not beasts rather

than men; whose teeth are Canibals, their tongs adder-forkes, their lips aspes-poyson, their eies basiliskes, their breath the breath of a grave, their wordes like swordes of Turkes, that strive which shall dive deepest into a Christian lying bound before them. But for these barking and biting dogs, they are as well knowne as Scylla and Charybdis."

H. S. had insulted the verses of one of Florio's friends so that these attacks of the lexicographer were not wholly selfish. Hunter suggests that Henry Salisbury, the compiler of a Welsh dictionary may have been the foe, but there seems no particular evidence to support this.

Here Florio was acquiring a skill, a flexibility in language--use, a knowledge of the vernacular which stood him in good stead later.

Ere we consider his most lasting work it may be well to mention the succeeding dictionaries, which, although published later than the *Essays of Montaigne*, were really revised and enlarged editions of this first.

In 1611 was issued a folio, "Queen Anna's New World of Words or Dictionarie of the Italian and English tongues, Collected, and newly much augmented by John Florio, Reader of The Italian unto the Sovereigne Majestie of Anna, Crowned Queene of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, etc., and we of the Gentlemen of her Royall Privie Chamber. Whereunto are added certaine necessarie rules and short observations for the Italian tongue."

Not the least interesting part of this volume is a portion of the preface written by Samuel Daniel, who, by the way, had matriculated at Magdalen Hall in 1581, the time of Florio's matriculation.

"To my deare friend and brother. M. John Florio, one of the Gentlemen of hir Majesties Royall Privy Chamber.

-- "So that there seems no more
Beyond this search, that knowledge can impart.
Which being a worke that woulde take up the powers
Of more than one whole man, I wonder how
You could subtract so many serious houres
From that great summe of service that you owe."

Some commentators have concluded from this preface that Florio's wife, Rose, was Daniel's sister, but the fraternal appellation may be due to the fact that they were very close friends and both Grooms of the Privie Chamber at the same time.

Florio had put great labour upon this new Dictionarie, of which Wood says, "for the variety of wordes, was far more copious than any extant in the world at that time."

The number of "authors and Books that have been read of purpose for the collecting of this Dictionarie" has swelled from 72 to 252, and the size of the books from 462 pages to 690.

Not content even with this second edition Florio spent much of the latter part of his life in collecting new material for a third edition which he did not live to see completed, but which was consummated by the energies of "Giov. Torriano, an Italian, and Professor of the Italian tongue in London," 1659.

The title page reads, "A Dictionary, Italian and English, Formerly compiled by John Florio, and since his last edition, Anno 1611, augmented by himself in His Lifetime, with many thousand words, and Tuscan Phrases, Now most diligently Revised, Corrected, and Compared, with La Crusca, and other approved Dictionaries extant since his Death, and enriched with very considerable additions."

"Whereunto is added a Dictionary English and Italian with severall Proverbs and instructions for the speedy attaining to the Italian Tongue, never before Published."

- In the preface Torriano eulogizes him who had left this verbal legacy to him, saying; "he collected out of them an addition of many thousand Words and Phrases, relating to Arts, Science, and Exercises; intending (if he had lived) a third Edition, which he left behind him in a very fair Manuscript, perfected and ready for the Presse. --- I have likewise much corrected the English Interpretations, and (where there was cause) reduced them to their genuine sense, as they are now used in these Modern Times," etc. "I desire the reader also to observe that in this Dictionary I have

shun'd and avoyded (as neer as could be) obsolete and forc'd words, and have chose to put only such as are obvious to the understanding, preferring good, plain current Money before gawdy Meddals," etc.

I find in Mr. Randle Cotgrave's French and English Dict. as revised with the addition of "sundry Animadversions" by James Howell, Esqr. in 1660, there is a postscript in the Epistle Dedicatory which shows the contemporary appreciation of Florio's lexicography. "As also other new invented terms which the admired Monsieur Scudery, and other late Romancers, have so happily publisht in their printed volumns to-gether with the additions of the most significant Proverbs, most refined Gallicisms, and other helps for the advantage of those that would arrive to the most exact knowledge of the French, so that the wisest students as to this indefatigable enterprise, will render this Dictionary as absolute as Riders and Holyokes for the Latin, Floreo with the deserving Torriano for the Italian " -- etc.

I cannot forbear quoting from the "Epistle Dedicatory" itself of this same dictionary, a paragraph to whose truth Florio would have immediately acquiesced.

"There was never yet any perfect Vocabulary of Nomenclator in any language; and though this may seem a Paradox to some, I say, there never was, nor is there any that can speak a language so exactly as to call everything he meets withall by its name; put case the perfectest linguist in English now living,

should go aboard a Ship, then to a Carpenters shop, or some other artisans, thence go abroad a hawking or hunting, then walk in a botanicall garden, I believe tis impossible for him to name all the tacklings of the first, all the tools of the second, all the terms of the third, and the names of all the flowers, fruites and herbs he shall find in the last; and if he chance to go thence to any Apothecary shop, 'twill gravel him to name all the drugs and simples he finds there".

But I have already lingered too long over this side of Florio's work. It was elsewhere that his clock struck twelve.

Our author may speak of his first fruites and his second fruites, and naively call them golden, but the real apples of Hesperides, the undecaying fruit of his genius, are "the Essayes of Michael Lord of Montaigne" which he so energetically and so sympathetically translated into the unsurpassed vernacular of his time. It was in 1598 that the translation of the Essays was licensed to Edward Blount, and not until four years later that the first folio was published. The inspiration for the work Florio attributes to the Countess of Bedford, whose exhortations coupled with the advice of Sir Edw. Wotton and of the sympathetic Maister Doctor Gwinne were ample to set him about a task which was in itself congenial.

William Cornwallis must have seen the Translations in Mss. for in 1600 he records his praise of their worth.

There was much in Florio's nature which made him peculiarly fitted to be the medium between the broad-minded, alarmingly

modern-at-times, genial sceptic of Gascony and the energetic hungry subjects of Elizabeth. He was a cosmopolite, with Latin blood in his veins, his had been an essentially classical training as Montaigne's had been, both were familiar with the life of their courts, both were thinkers and men-of-the-world. Florio was really a Protestant out of a Catholic country, Montaigne, although a Papist in outward circumstance, was, like Renan, fonder of religion than of religions. Who fitter then to act as an interpreter of the thinker in his Tower, the sceptic of the 16th Century than Florio ?

Moreover, at this time France was almost a century behind England in the development of her thought,- and Montaigne was strikingly in advance of his own day - he could have no more appreciative audience than that which undoubtedly numbered a Shakespeare and a Ben Jonson. England and he were ready for each other, and again where was there a better introducer than John Florio ?

It may be that in the long run, the translator, energetic and volatile soul that he was, putt too much of the Elizabethan yeast into the quiet, contemplative thought of the impartial, mature Montaigne; it may be that he added a few high lights, brightened the gray mood in places too argent; raised the key of the instrument now and again to concert-pitch; but when the last word has been said we can only wonder at his triumph, at the unflinching ability to catch the truest sense, at

the unfaltering and sustained power of the whole. Never can we trace the ennui of one whose task is only to render plain another's idea, never is there a falling off in his interest, but straight to the end we are conscious of another mind, intent, enthusiastic, zealous to tell us truly and anxious that no jot escape us. It is a three-cornered game of intense interest and so eager is the one that we may understand the other, that he occasionally enlarges a little, so that we may miss nothing; at times changes a special illustration to a general one (perhaps he thinks it a promotion) as "dainties" where Montaigne says "turbot"; and again; "and fruit", where the French has it "the best pair"; enlarges a little upon physiological allusions and very occasionally, so seldom that the mention of it may exaggerate the tendency, casts a slight slur on the French.

We are likely perhaps, to overestimate the Elizabethan translators: their words, per se, are so interesting. Cotton's translation is better fitted to the quiet, reflective spirit of Montaigne than the ardent interpretation of Florio's language. But we are recompensed in other ways, and if contemplation becomes too dynamic it errs on the better side.

Occasionally we find Florio so interested that he is unable to keep out of the text. There are examples of this in the famous 25th Chapter of the First Booke on the Education of Children.

Both Montaigne and Florio agree and spend much energy in denouncing pedantry. Montaigne asks "Whereto serveth knowledge if one have no head?" "Let us diligently survey the surface of the earth, and there consider so many seely-poore people as we see toying, sweltring and drooping about their businesse, which never heard of Sristotle, nor of Plato, nor ever knew what examples or precepts are," etc.

We find traces of the proverb-monger, a reminiscence of early "fruites" in the translation, in the additions made to certain passages in the hope of further illuminating the Frenchman's thought.

Of course we meet in Elizabethan literature, and Florio's works abound in them, traces of the vernacular which have remained from early colonial days and are still lively in America, but which have disappeared from the ordinary speech of England. The irrepressible Yankee "I guess" is one of these, which, used from Chaucer's time to the seventeenth century in England gradually gave way to such a successor as "I fancy", but remained intact on Western soil. "Broiled" universally used in America, and common in Elizabethan times, (there are instances in Florio's translation) has changed to "grilled" here. And one might name many others, as "popin-jay" etc.

Florio's translations abound in a vigorous nervous words and phrases of an active, intense age. "caitife wretch",-

"flox-flax", "jovisance", "letter-ferits", "nuzzled" "panike terror", "quiddities", "seely", "court-holy water", "to leave at six and seven", "gallymafry", "jaw-falne", "new fangles", "hurly-burlies", "picke-thanks", "argos eied", "downe-steepy", "hab or nab", "tospot", "chuff-penny", "slibber-slabbers", "wherret on the eare", "Scot free", "botcherly-patch cotes", "cuppe-shotten", "gape-seed", "hypothekised", "ninny-hammer", many familiar from our reading of the contemporary dramatists.

The works of John Florio would furnish a very substantial basis for a study of the invective of the age in which he lived.

That Shakespeare and Florio were acquainted seems not only probable, but almost necessary. As the protege of Southampton and of Pembroke, nothing could have been more natural than that the two should meet. London was not large, Florio knew most of the leading authors of the day, many years of his life were spent in the capital, years identical with those spent there by Shakespeare, and he attended the theatre. People met much more easily and freely in those stirring days than they do now, they were more curious of each other, "busy-bodies" as Florio calls Englishmen. Take it all in all, I cannot see how Shakespeare and Florio could have avoided meeting. That the dramatist was familiar with Florio's translation of Montaigne is indisputable, however much of a forgery the signature in the British Museum may be. The oft-quoted passage in "The Tempest"

is evidence enough of this, and I think there is quite as strong evidence in "Measure for Measure".

As to whether Shakespeare ridiculed Florio as Holofernes in "Love's Labour Lost", as Farmer and Warburton have held, is quite another matter. No question but that Florio was good - like Holofernes-"for smelling out the odoriferous flowers of fancy, the jerks of invention?" No question but that he indulged at times in preposterous conceits and drew "out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument," but to be thus dyed in the Euphuism of his time would not mark him as one among ten, even. Holofernes' remark "This is a gift that I have, simple, simple; a foolish extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures, shapes, object, ideas, apprehensions, motions, revolutions: these are begot in the ventricle of memory, nourished in the womb of pia mater; and deliver'd upon the mellowing of occasion: But the gift is good in those in whom it is acute, and I am thankful for it," is applicable in its irony to the extraordinary prefaces of Florio's earlier works, but it is also applicable to the work of a hundred other contemporaries of Florio. Perhaps the allusion to Ovidius Naso is less uncertain evidence, but even this is slight.

The same year which saw the publication of Montaigne's Essays as done into English brought to Florio the appointment as reader in Italian to Queen Anna, for which he received 100 l. a year. On the fifth of August in the next

year (1604) he was appointed by the king gent. extraordinary and groom of the Privie Chamber. Before this, he had been Tutor to Prince Henry for the languages.

Wood says of him that "he was a very useful man in his profession, zealous in the religion he professed, and much devoted to the English nation."

In 1610 John Healey dedicated to him his translations of "Epictetus". In 1613 Florio published the second issue of his translations of Montaigne's *Essays*, in the preface to which he says "If the faults found even by myself in the first impression, be now by the Printer corrected, as he was directed, the worke is much amended: If not, know that through mine attendance on her Majestie, I could not intend it; and blame not Neptune for thy second shipwracke.---

Some admirable verses by Sam. Daniel "heere at his gate do stand" discriminatingly praiseful of Florio and of "This prince Montaigne (if he be not more)" who

"Hath more adventur'd of his owne estate
Than ever man did of himselfe before:"

In the Calendar of State Papers I find some letters of Florio's correspondence, one dated August 5th, 1606 from Ottaviano Lotti, wishing to know where he may purchase some fine English harriers. Another from the same friend commends the bearer as an excellent musician.

The most important one is dated at Fulham Dec. 9, 1619; from Giov. Florio to Fran. Windebank.

"Begs him to accept the fruit of his barren genius if not as wine, yet as the juice of sour grapes; sends him two pieces of rubbish, of which he is the author, and which that blessed royal soul now in glory (Prince Henry) often looked into. Begs him to add the salt of his benignity to the mass of flour and water which is prepared to bring it into bread. (A touch of Holofernes might have envied) Is prevented waiting on him by bitter cold, dirty streets, and importunate old age. Indorsed, "Giovanni Florio, about his pension." (Italian)

Yes, the indefatigable Florio is growing old, he is already 74, and he remains at Fulham to avoid the plague which rages in London; but all in vain, and at last in 1625 aged 80, succumbs, still resolute, to the dire malady. He was buried in Fulham. Wood, who was unable in spite of repeated efforts to obtain the epitaph from the grave, nothing daunted, finally improvises one, - -

Virtute sua contentus, nobilis arte,
 Italus ore, Anglus pectore, uterque opere.
 Floret adhuc, et adhuc florebit: floriat ultra
 Florius, hac specie floridus, optat amans."

To his wife, Rose, he left most of his property; to his daughter, Aurilia, married to John Moliss, surgeon, he bequeathed his 340 Italian, French, and Spanish books.

I know of no better summary of his life than that which he has expressed in a prayer from "His Firste Fruites," a prayer

not original with him but popular in his day. It is a creed worthy of Huxley with his "To smite all humbugs however big!" Here is the passage.

"Wel, wyl you teache me some prayer to saye in the morning?

Say as I say in the morning.

How doo you say?

I say, O Jesu , deliver me from a bankrout, and from a citizen that hath been poore, and now is rich: deliver me from the conscience of priests, and Poticary drugs, and from the Scriveners, and from hym that heareth two masses in a day, good Lord deliver me from an empty purse, from a wicked woman, from an envious neighbour, from an empty pot when I am thirsty, and from al them that sweare by their conscience.

Amen."

Finis.

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