

THE
WORKS
OF
Samuel Johnson, LL.D.

A NEW EDITION,
IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

WITH
AN ESSAY ON HIS LIFE AND GENIUS,
BY ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

VOLUME THE TWELFTH.

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LIVES

L I V E S

OF SUNDRY

EMINENT PERSONS.

VOL. XII.

B

FATHER PAUL SARPI.

FATHER PAUL, whose name, before he entered into the monastic life, was Peter Sarpi, was born at Venice, August 14, 1552. His father followed merchandize, but with so little success, that, at his death, he left his family very ill provided for, but under the care of a mother, whose piety was likely to bring the blessing of Providence upon them, and whose wise conduct supplied the want of fortune by advantages of greater value.

Happily for young Sarpi, she had a brother, master of a celebrated school, under whose direction he was placed by her. Here he lost no time, but cultivated his abilities, naturally of the first rate, with unwearied application. He was born for study, having a natural aversion to pleasure and gaiety, and a memory so tenacious, that he could repeat thirty verses upon once hearing them.

Proportionable to his capacity was his progress in literature: at thirteen, having made himself master of school-learning, he turned his studies to philosophy and the mathematicks, and entered upon logick under Capella of Cremona, who, though a celebrated master

of that science, confessed himself in a very little time unable to give his pupil farther instructions.

As Capella was of the order of the Servites, his scholar was induced, by his acquaintance with him, to engage in the same profession, though his uncle and his mother represented to him the hardships and austerities of that kind of life, and advised him with great zeal against it. But he was steady in his resolutions, and in 1566 took the habit of the order, being then only in his 14th year, a time of life in most persons very improper for such engagements, but in him attended with such maturity of thought, and such a settled temper, that he never seemed to regret the choice he then made, and which he confirmed by a solemn publick profession in 1572.

At a general chapter of the Servites, held at Mantua, Paul (for so we shall now call him) being then only twenty years old, distinguished himself so much in a publick disputation by his genius and learning, that William duke of Mantua, a great patron of letters, solicited the consent of his superiors to retain him at his court, and not only made him publick professor of divinity in the cathedral, but honoured him with many proofs of his esteem.

But Father Paul, finding a court life not agreeable to his temper, quitted it two years afterwards, and retired to his beloved privacies, being then not only acquainted with the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Chaldee languages, but with philosophy, the mathematicks, canon and civil law, all parts of natural philosophy, and chemistry itself; for his application was unintermitted, his head clear, his apprehension quick, and his memory retentive.

Being

Being made a priest at twenty-two, he was distinguished by the illustrious cardinal Borromeo with his confidence, and employed by him on many occasions, not without the envy of persons of less merit, who were so far exasperated as to lay a charge against him, before the inquisition, for denying that the Trinity could be proved from the first chapter of Genesis; but the accusation was too ridiculous to be taken notice of.

After this he passed successively through the dignities of his order, and in the intervals of his employment applied himself to his studies with so extensive a capacity, as left no branch of knowledge untouched. By him Acquapendente, the great anatomist, confesses that he was informed how vision is performed; and there are proofs that he was not a stranger to the circulation of the blood. He frequently conversed upon astronomy with mathematicians, upon anatomy with surgeons, upon medicine with physicians, and with chemists upon the analysis of metals, not as a superficial enquirer, but as a complete master.

But the hours of repose, that he employed so well, were interrupted by a new information in the inquisition, where a former acquaintance produced a letter written by him in cyphers, in which he said, "that
" he detested the court of Rome, and that no pre-
" ferment was obtained there but by dishonest
" means." This accusation, however dangerous, was passed over on account of his great reputation, but made such impression on that court, that he was afterwards denied a bishoprick by Clement VIII. After these difficulties were surmounted, Father Paul again retired to his solitude, where he appears, by

some writings drawn up by him at that time, to have turned his attention more to improvements in piety than learning. Such was the care with which he read the scriptures, that, it being his custom to draw a line under any passage which he intended more nicely to consider, there was not a single word in his New Testament but was underlined; the same marks of attention appeared in his Old Testament, Psalter, and Breviary.

But the most active scene of his life began about the year 1615, when Pope Paul Vth, exasperated by some decrees of the senate of Venice that interfered with the pretended rights of the church, laid the whole state under an interdict.

The senate, filled with indignation at this treatment, forbade the bishops to receive or publish the Pope's bull; and convening the rectors of the churches, commanded them to celebrate divine service in the accustomed manner, with which most of them readily complied; but the Jesuits and some others refusing, were by a solemn edict expelled the state.

Both parties, having proceeded to extremities, employed their ablest writers to defend their measures: on the Pope's side, among others, Cardinal Bellarmine entered the lists, and with his confederate authors defended the papal claims with great scurrility of expression, and very sophistical reasonings, which were confuted by the Venetian apologists in much more decent language, and with much greater solidity of argument.

On this occasion Father Paul was most eminently distinguished, by his *Defence of the Rights of the supreme*

preme Magistrate, his *Treatise of Excommunication* translated from Gerson, with an *Apology*, and other writings, for which he was cited before the inquisition at Rome; but it may be easily imagined that he did not obey the summons.

The Venetian writers, whatever might be the abilities of their adversaries, were at least superior to them in the justice of their cause. The propositions maintained on the side of Rome were these: That the Pope is invested with all the authority of heaven and earth. That all princes are his vassals, and that he may annul their laws at pleasure. That kings may appeal to him, as he is temporal monarch of the whole earth. That he can discharge subjects from their oaths of allegiance, and make it their duty to take up arms against their sovereign. That he may depose kings without any fault committed by them, if the good of the church requires it: that the clergy are exempt from all tribute to kings, and are not accountable to them, even in cases of high-treason. That the Pope cannot err: that his decisions are to be received and obeyed on pain of sin, though all the world should judge them to be false: that the Pope is God upon earth; that his sentence and that of God are the same; and that to call *his* power in question, is to call in question the power of God: maxims equally shocking, weak, pernicious, and absurd! which did not require the abilities or learning of Father Paul, to demonstrate their falsehood, and destructive tendency.

It may be easily imagined that such principles were quickly overthrown, and that no court but that of Rome thought it for its interest to favour them.

The Pope, therefore, finding his authors confuted, and his cause abandoned, was willing to conclude the affair by treaty, which, by the mediation of Henry IV. of France was accommodated upon terms very much to the honour of the Venetians.

But the defenders of the Venetian rights were, though comprehended in the treaty, excluded by the Romans from the benefit of it; some upon different pretences were imprisoned, some sent to the galleys, and all debarred from preferment. But their malice was chiefly aimed against Father Paul, who soon found the effects of it; for as he was going one night to his convent, about six months after the accommodation, he was attacked by five ruffians armed with stilettos, who gave him no less than fifteen stabs, three of which wounded him in such a manner, that he was left for dead. The murderers fled for refuge to the nuncio, and were afterwards received into the Pope's dominions, but were pursued by divine justice, and all, except one man who died in prison, perished by violent deaths.

This and other attempts upon his life obliged him to confine himself to his convent, where he engaged in writing the history of the Council of Trent, a work unequalled for the judicious disposition of the matter, and artful texture of the narration, commended by Dr. Burnet as the completest model of historical writing, and celebrated by Mr. Wotton as equivalent to any production of antiquity; in which the reader finds "Liberty without licentiousness, piety without hypocrisy, freedom of speech without neglect of decency, severity without rigour, and extensive learning without ostentation."

In this, and other works of less consequence, he spent the remaining part of his life, to the beginning of the year 1622, when he was seized with a cold and fever, which he neglected till it became incurable. He languished more than twelve months, which he spent almost wholly in a preparation for his passage into eternity; and among his prayers and aspirations was often heard to repeat, *Lord! now let thy servant depart in peace.*

On Sunday the eighth of January of the next year, he rose, weak as he was, to mass, and went to take his repast with the rest, but on Monday was seized with a weakness that threatened immediate death; and on Thursday prepared for his change by receiving the *Viaticum* with such marks of devotion, as equally melted and edified the beholders.

Through the whole course of his illness to the last hour of his life, he was consulted by the senate in publick affairs, and returned answers, in his greatest weakness, with such presence of mind as could only arise from the consciousness of innocence.

On Sunday, the day of his death, he had the passion of our blessed Saviour read to him out of St. John's gospel, as on every other day of that week, and spoke of the mercy of his Redeemer, and his confidence in his merits.

As his end evidently approached, the brethren of the convent came to pronounce the last prayers, with which he could only join in his thoughts, being able to pronounce no more than these words, *Esto perpetua, Mayst thou last for ever*; which was understood to be a prayer for the prosperity of his country.

Thus

Thus died Father Paul, in the 71st year of his age: hated by the Romans as their most formidable enemy, and honoured by all the learned for his abilities, and by the good for his integrity. His detestation of the corruption of the Roman church appears in all his writings, but particularly in this memorable passage of one of his letters: "There is nothing
 " more essential than to ruin the reputation of the
 " Jesuits: by the ruin of the Jesuits, Rome will be
 " ruined; and if Rome is ruined, religion will re-
 " form of itself."

He appears by many passages of his life to have had a high esteem of the church of England; and his friend, Father Fulgentio, who had adopted all his notions, made no scruple of administering to Dr. Duncomb, an English gentleman that fell sick at Venice, the communion in both kinds, according to the Common Prayer which he had with him in Italian.

He was buried with great pomp at the publick charge, and a magnificent monument was erected to his memory.

B O E R H A A V E.

THE following account of the late Dr. BOERHAAVE, so loudly celebrated, and so universally lamented through the whole learned world, will, we hope, be not unacceptable to our readers : We could have made it much larger, by adopting flying reports, and inserting unattested facts ; a close adherence to certainty has contracted our narrative, and hindered it from swelling to that bulk, at which modern histories generally arrive.

Dr. Herman Boerhaave was born on the last day of December, 1668, about one in the morning, at Voorhout, a village two miles distant from Leyden : his father, James Boerhaave, was minister of Voorhout, of whom his son *, in a small account of his own life, has given a very amiable character, for the simplicity and openness of his behaviour, for his exact

* “ Erat Hermanni Genitor Latine, Græce, Hebraice sciens : peritus valde historiarum & gentium. Vir apertus, candidus, simplex : paterfamilias optimus amore, cura, diligentia, frugalitate, prudentia. Qui non magna in re, sed plenus virtutis, novem liberis educandis exemplum præbuit singulare, quid exacta parsimonia polleat, & frugalitas.” *Orig. Edit.*

frugality in the management of a narrow fortune, and the prudence, tenderness, and diligence, with which he educated a numerous family of nine children. He was eminently skilled in history and genealogy, and versed in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages.

His mother was Hagar Daelder, a tradesman's daughter of Amsterdam, from whom he might, perhaps, derive an hereditary inclination to the study of physick, in which she was very inquisitive, and had obtained a knowledge of it not common in female students.

This knowledge, however, she did not live to communicate to her son; for she died in 1673, ten years after her marriage.

His father, finding himself encumbered with the care of seven children, thought it necessary to take a second wife, and in July 1674, was married to Eve du Bois, daughter of a minister of Leyden, who, by her prudent and impartial conduct, so endeared herself to her husband's children, that they all regarded her as their own mother.

Herman Boerhaave was always designed by his father for the ministry, and with that view instructed by him in grammatical learning, and the first elements of languages; in which he made such a proficiency, that he was, at the age of eleven years, not only master of the rules of grammar, but capable of translating with tolerable accuracy, and not wholly ignorant of critical niceties.

At intervals, to recreate his mind, and strengthen his constitution, it was his father's custom to send him into the fields, and employ him in agriculture and
such

such kind of rural occupations, which he continued through all his life to love and practise; and by this vicissitude of study and exercise preserved himself, in a great measure, from those distempers and depressions which are frequently the consequences of indiscreet diligence, and uninterrupted application; and from which students, not well acquainted with the constitution of the human body, sometimes fly for relief to wine instead of exercise, and purchase temporary ease by the hazard of the most dreadful consequences.

The studies of young Boerhaave were, about this time, interrupted by an accident, which deserves a particular mention, as it first inclined him to that science, to which he was by nature so well adapted, and which he afterwards carried to so great perfection.

In the twelfth year of his age, a stubborn, painful, and malignant ulcer, broke out upon his left thigh; which, for near five years, defeated all the art of the surgeons and physicians, and not only afflicted him with most excruciating pains, but exposed him to such sharp and tormenting applications, that the disease and remedies were equally insufferable. Then it was that his own pain taught him to compassionate others, and his experience of the inefficacy of the methods then in use incited him to attempt the discovery of others more certain.

He began to practise at least honestly, for he began upon himself; and his first essay was a prelude to his future success, for, having laid aside all the prescriptions of his physicians, and all the applications of his surgeons, he, at last, by tormenting the part with salt and urine, effected a cure.

That