

**THE EMPEROR JULIAN
AND HIS GENERATION.
AN HISTORICAL PICTURE**

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The emperor Julian and his generation. An historical picture by August Neander

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AN HISTORICAL PICTURE,

BY

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**Ἄνθρωπος παντόπορος ἄπορος.*—*SOPHOC.*
Σὺ δὲ θαρσυνῶ, ἐπεὶ θεῶν γενὸς ἐστὶ βρότοιςαι.

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M.DCCC.L.



TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.



THE history of Julian, at all times striking, has been lately brought into revived notice. Public attention has been invited to his name in more than one recent publication. Strauss has made use of Julian's character as a vehicle for an elaborate *jeu-d'esprit* against the King of Prussia. (See the *Edinburgh Review* for July, 1848.) And Macaulay, in his *History of England*, Vol. II. p. 104, has given us an earlier specimen of that sort of wit, in a learned parallel between Julian and James II., by a priest of the Church of England named Johnson.

It cannot then be unseasonable to present to the public, in an English dress, Dr. Neander's monograph, which was first recommended to my notice by Niebuhr's praise. (See his *Correspondence*, Vol. II. p. 161).

This little work was published as long ago as 1812, and much of it has since been incorporated in Neander's *General History of the Christian*

Religion and Church. The reader will see for himself that though the writer does justice to the ambitious grandeur of Julian's enterprise (to restore the Old Worship), he does not praise it, but rather accounts for its short-lived success from the character of the age as well as the qualities of the man. He may write *con amore* of the hero of his book, his love of learning, his courage, his moral purity, &c., but he is not to be classed (as in the *Edinburgh Review*) among his 'warmest defenders,' except against contemporaneous calumnies and subsequent exaggerations. The impiety and folly of his attempt, his vanity and long-practised hypocrisy, are nowhere more strongly delineated. To me he has always been, and still is, 'Julian the Apostate;' and notwithstanding the toleration he professed, his short reign was long enough to shew that he was in a fair way to become Julian the Persecutor. I will only add one hint to the English reader who, thanks to the soundness of our Theology, may look with suspicion upon even the best of German Theologians; this hint is suggested by the title of the Work, viz. that the spirit of Julian's age, rather than the history of Julian himself, is the real subject of the book here translated.

Instead therefore of any farther remarks of my

own, I will give the reader a specimen of the mode in which Julian's character has been handled by a distinguished Theologian of our own Church, Bishop Warburton, whose writings are now more celebrated than read. It is scarcely necessary to refer to Gibbon, whose account of Julian (Vol. iv. ch. 23, 4), with the usual allowance for sneers and sarcasm, is on the whole tolerably fair.

To the extract from Warburton, I prefix, in lieu of a portrait, a graphic delineation of Julian by his cotemporary, Gregory Nazianzen, (which I translate from Professor Ullmann's *Life of Gregory*), together with a few touches from his own pencil and that of Ammianus.

Extract translated from PROFESSOR ULLMANN'S "Life of Gregory Nazianzen," p. 36.

At Athens, Gregory formed an acquaintance (of a very remarkable character, and one which subsequently gave him no pleasure) with the nephew of the Emperor Constantius, the prince *Julian*, who afterwards succeeded to the throne, and played a short but extraordinary part in the drama of the world's history. This prince was then (A. D. 355) resident there, by the permission of his jealous uncle, for the purpose of pursuing his studies. A singular predilection for paganism and pagan mysteries, which flourished particularly in that city, already displayed itself in Julian. He was as strongly attracted to the rhetorical and philosophical advocates of heathenism, as they in their turn (as well as all the admirers of the old religion)

directed their attention, with hopeful expectation, to the young and distinguished member of the imperial family. Gregory, therefore, who acknowledges that he by no means possessed a quick-sightedness in discerning character, had yet no difficulty even then in anticipating the very worst in Julian. He calls upon those who were with him at that time at Athens, to testify that soon after he had become acquainted with Julian, he had uttered those words, 'How great an evil is the Roman empire here training up*!' What it was which caused Gregory to judge so severely of the young man†, he has himself informed us, in a perhaps somewhat exaggerated picture of Julian's demeanour and external appearance: 'I was led to become a prophet‡ (he says) by the restlessness of his behaviour, and the exaggerated tone of his animation. It also appeared to me to be no good sign, that his neck was not strongly set on his shoulders; that those shoulders often moved convulsively; that his eye frequently glanced round timidly and rolled as if in phrenzy; and that his feet were never in a state of repose. As little was I pleased with his nose, which breathed pride and contempt; with the ridiculous distortions of his face, which yet indicated the same pride; his loud, immoderate laughter; the nodding and shaking of his head without any reason; his hesitating speech, interrupted by the act of breathing; his abrupt unmeaning questions, and his answers not at all better, but often self-contradictory, and given without any scientific arrangement§.' If we

* Οἶον κακὸν ἢ Ῥωμαίων τρέφει.

† His junior only by six years.

‡ See Gregory's *Orat.* v. 23 and 24. pp. 161, 2.

§ It is not uninteresting to compare with the above what Julian himself tells us of his own external appearance. He evidently tried much, especially as Emperor, to keep up a peculiar exhibition of himself, and was fond of uniting the unpolished severity of

allow for that which gave to the pen of this delineator so powerful an aversion, we have still remaining the picture of a restless, fiery-tempered man, of a mind incessantly active and excited; of one who was haughty in the conscious feeling of power, but yet externally practising dissimulation; while there was wanting to his great natural abilities that suitable education which would have regulated and directed them to a right object.

a Cynic with the dignified bearing of an ancient hero. With self-satisfied complacency he speaks (in his *Misopogon*, p. 338, seq.) of his bristly hair, his manly breast, and his long shaggy beard, while he still censures Nature for not having given him a handsomer countenance. Nay, he does not hesitate to speak in terms of commendation of his ink-stained hands, his long nails, and even of the minute inhabitants which dwelt in the wilderness of his beard!

Ammianus Marcellinus (xxv. 4) gives a much more agreeable description of him than he does of himself: 'Mediocris erat staturæ, capillis, tanquam pexisset, mollibus, hirsuta barba in acutum desinente vestitus, venustate oculorum micantium flagrans, qui mentis ejus angustias indicabant, supercillis decoris et naso rectissimo, ore paullo majore, labro inferiore demisso, opima et incurva cervice, humeris vastis et latis, ab ipso capite usque unguium summities lineamentorum recta compage, unde viribus valebat et cursu.'—In another passage Ammianus mentions some peculiarities which agree better with Gregory's description: "Levi-oris ingenii,.....linguæ fusioris et admodum raro silentis."

N.B. Ullman here, and even Neander in his history, speak of Julian as *nephew* instead of *cousin* to Constantius, as Gibbon and Warburton describe him. Julian's father, called Julius Constantius, was brother to Constantine, and uncle to Constantius the Emperor, who being Constantine's son, was therefore Julian's cousin.
