

**BURT FRANCLIN RESEARCH & SOURCE WORKS
SERIES NO. 49; INEDITED TRACTS:
ILLUSTRATING THE MANNERS, OPINIONS, AND
OCCUPATIONS OF ENGLISHMEN DURING THE
SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES:
NOW FIRST REPUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINAL
COPIES WITH A PREF. AND NOTES**

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W. C. HAZLITT

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W. C. HAZLITT, Editor

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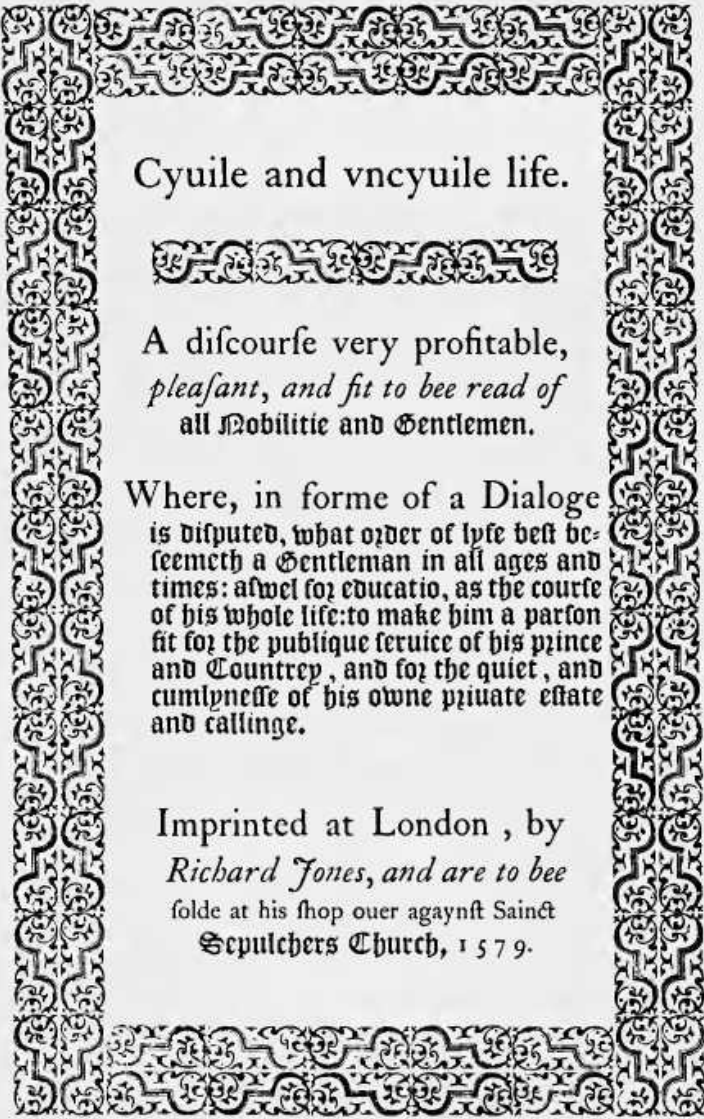
Introduction.

IT may be questioned whether, in the entire compass of early English literature, three Tracts could be found more instructively and entertainingly illustrative of old manners and ideas than those which are here presented to the subscribers to the present series.

The first article, *Cyuite and Vncyuite Life*, 1579, exists in two copies, which are of different issues, if not of different editions. Of each of these issues (or editions), this single copy only is known. I have preferred adopting that of 1586, because the opportunity was afforded me by the kindness of a friend, of collating in proof the transcript of the Bodleian exemplar, line for line, with the original copy of the later date in his possession. The annexed page is an exact representation of the title of the earlier quarto.

The account given by the anonymous writer of this valuable volume may now be compared with other authorities for the same class of information, such as Peacham's *Compleat Gentleman*, 1622, Blome's *Gentleman's Recreation*, Markham's *Country Contentments*, &c.¹ In Lyly's *Euphues*, 1579 (repr. Arber, p. 113-14), there is an

¹ See also *Antiquarian Repertory*, ed. 1807, i. 71.



Cyuite and vncyuite life.

*A discourse very profitable,
pleasant, and fit to bee read of
all Nobilitie and Gentlemen.*

Where, in forme of a Dialogue
is disputed, what order of lyfe best be-
seemeth a Gentleman in all ages and
times: adwel for educatio, as the course
of his whole life: to make him a parson
fit for the publique seruice of his prince
and Countrey, and for the quiet, and
cumlynesse of his owne priuate estate
and callinge.

Imprinted at London, by
Richard Jones, and are to bee
solde at his shop ouer agaynst Sainct
Sepulchers Church, 1579.

interesting account of the manner in which, according to the writer, the occupation of the country gentleman or farmer was varied with the several seasons of the year. Lyly, with all his fantastic phraseology and uncouth mannerism, throws much light on old English manners. Mr. Arber did good service in reprinting his *Euphues* from the *editiones principes*: nor are Lyly's dramas by any means destitute of merit and interest, though tainted by the same affectations in style and language. I regard *Euphues* as an allegory. Cassander in Lyly's *Euphues and his England*, 1580, speaks up for a rural life. In his will, he says to his son: "Liue in the Countrey not in the Court: where neither Grasse will growe, nor Mosse cleaue to thy heeles."

Our second article is supposed to have proceeded from the fertile pen of the author of *Country Contentments*; but one argument, which militates slightly against this attribution of the initials at the foot of the Epistle to the Reader, is that J. M. speaks of the production as his earliest appearance in print, which could not in any way be true of Markham, who in 1598 had already acquired some celebrity as a versifier and miscellaneous writer. The subject handled in the *Seruingmans Comfort*, as the tract is styled in the headlines, had not received much attention before; and we are indebted to Markham, or J. M., for several useful and amusing items of intelligence on what cannot be regarded as either an uninteresting or unimportant theme. We have, however, in the same direction, Lydgate's *Stans Puer ad Mensam*, the *Doctrinal of Good Seruantes*, Rhodes' *Boke of Nourture*, and one or two other treatises in verse or prose, and some hints to the purpose occur in Bacon's *Essays*, Overbury's *Characters*, Braithwaite's *Rules for the Government of the House of an Earl* (*Miscellanea Antiqua Anglicana*, 1816), and *Archæologia*, xiii.

On the fly-leaf of his copy of the *Seruingmans Comfort*, Douce

notes :—“ This is in all respects a curious work, but particularly so for having supplied Shakspeare with several hints, &c., in his play of *Love's Labour Lost*. See a note by Dr. Farmer in Ste[e]vens's *Shakspeare*, vol. v. p. 236., edit. 1793.”

A volume of extraordinary rarity and curiosity completes the present book. *Of The Court and Country*, by Nicholas Breton, 1618, not more than one perfect copy has ever been seen ; an imperfect and sadly mutilated one, which formerly belonged to my friend the Rev. Thomas Corfer, M.A., is now in the Bodleian Library. To S. Christie-Miller, Esq., I owe my acknowledgments for the courtesy and liberality with which he enabled me to furnish to this collection a complete and accurate text of a production in every sense unique.

Of the life of Breton, Mr. Corfer has given some particulars in his *ColleEtanea Anglo-Poetica*, but the late Mr. Hunter, in his *New Illustrations of Shakspeare*, 1845, has pointed out the interesting circumstance that Breton was connected by marriage with George Gascoigne, the soldier-poet. Mr. Collier, in a note to *A Book of Roxburghe Ballads*, 1847, xxiii., confounded Breton the poet with a namesake and contemporary of his.

In Fletcher's *Scornful Lady*, 1616, Sir Roger, one of the characters, is made to say—

“ Did I expound *the Owl* ?
And undertook, with labour and expence,
The re-collection of those thousand pieces,
Consumed in cellars and tobacco-shops,
Of that our honour'd Englishman, Nich. Breton.”

Again, in Fletcher's *Wit Without Money* (1614), Valentine asks Bellamore—

“ Who look'd on you,
But piping kites, that knew you would be prizes,
And prentices in Paul's Church-yard, that scented
Your want of Breton's books ! ”

I know of no book or tract by this writer except his *Wits Private Wealth*, 1612, which would have been of much service to Bellamore and his friends. Can the dramatist have written *Britton's book*—the legal treatise so called?

All these pieces are very carelessly printed, and the punctuation was found so faulty, that it was necessary to amend it throughout. The old typographers did not bestow much pains, under any circumstances, on the work in hand, and to the execution of pamphlets designed for popular use and general circulation they were probably still more indifferent.

A few notes have been incorporated with the index, but they are merely such as seemed to me, in revising the sheets for press, to be likely to prove serviceable to a few readers who might be less conversant with archaic expressions or allusions.

This volume was promised for November last, and should properly have appeared then; the delay in its issue is due to a cause entirely unconnected with the editorship: the fault lies with another department; but nevertheless the *Inedited Tracts* form part of the subscription of 1868.

W. C. H.

Kenington,
Christmas, 1868.