JULIAN THE APOSTATE, A DRAMATIC POEM

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649211319

Julian the Apostate, a dramatic poem by Sir Aubrey De Vere Hunt

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

www.triestepublishing.com

SIR AUBREY DE VERE HUNT

JULIAN THE APOSTATE, A DRAMATIC POEM

Trieste

JULIAN

THE APOSTATE

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

[First edition.]

BY

SIR AUBREY DE VERE [HUNT,] BART.

LONDON

JOHN WARREN, OLD BOND STREET.

MDCCCXXII.

LONDON
PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY, DORSET STREET.

Conclusion of the Life of Julian, from "Speed's Historie." Edit. 1632.

"*But now one errour, his apostacie, disroabing him of all his morall vertues, leaves him an object naked to the vulgar eie, but a monster of men, and marke of infamie. I holde it therefore fitting no lesse the use, than the justice, of a story, to doe him (as I have done) all his right: since in him we learne thatt all those admirable endowments of nature, embellished with all the morall and internall graces that art could adde, are not the base of holinesse, without divine grace: nor dalliaunce of fortune and fulnesse of empire (that made this man wanton and forgettfull) is the center of security and happinesse, without heavenly protection: since from the sense of sacred piety hee fell to pagan superstition: for many are called, but few are chosen; and in the seat of Presumptuous Majesty hee felt the rod of Divine Revenge.*"

(2)

INTRODUCTION.

The House of Constantine gave eleven Sovereigns (including the associate Cæsars) to the Roman Empire, and terminated with Julian the Apostate. Its greatness was sullied by domestic crimes, which gradually produced its extinction.

Julian, and his elder brother Gallus, were the offspring of Julius Constantius, the patrician, brother to Constantine the Great; and were withdrawn from successive proscriptions, so fatal to the Imperial race, by the efforts of Mark, bishop of Arethusa—a service but ill requited in after-days.

The brothers were eventually adopted by their uncle, the Emperor Constantius, at the

instance of his wife, Eusebia—a woman gifted with many noble qualities. It was vainly, and perhaps absurdly, hoped, that the youths would, in the enjoyment of Imperial favour, forget the wrongs of their family, and the death of their father, who had perished by the hands of an assassin.

Gallus was created Cæsar, and was united in marriage to a sister of the Emperor. He speedily fell a victim to his own folly and the unruly passions of his wife; not long surviving the suspicions of a sovereign never appeased without blood.

Julian succeeded to the vacant dignity, apparently ill-suited to habits formed in the schools, and on which courtiers and philosophers pronounced widely differing opinions. At Athens his education was completed, and his proficiency in all mental accomplishments gave proof of genius and unwearied perseverance.

Among the philosophers with whom he there became intimate, Maximus obtained the chief hold of his affections, and established a decided influence over his imagination. Under his tuition, doubts of the truth of that religion in which he had been early trained, were artfully suggested. It was the faith of his household oppressors, and gradually gave place to the seductive delusions of pagan worship, in a mind gifted above all with an irregular enthusiasm. At length he was allowed to participate in the Eleusinian mysteries; when, it is asserted, he consented to his uncle's death: —an act suitable to his vengeance and to his ambition, and the appropriate consummation of his apostacy. At this period my drama commences, for I have not dared to detail in language the progress of impiety, or to array the arguments that seduced a Christian from his God.

Julian had been invested by Constantius with the sovereignty in Gaul: a splendid but diffi-