

**KISSES: BEING A POETICAL
TRANSLATION OF THE BASIA OF
JOANNES SECUNDUS NICOLAIUS.
WITH THE ORIGINAL LATIN TEXT; TO
WHICH IS PREFIXED, AN ESSAY ON HIS
LIFE AND WRITINGS**

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Kisses: Being a Poetical Translation of the Basia of Joannes Secundus Nicolaius. With the Original Latin Text; To Which Is Prefixed, an Essay on His Life and Writings by Janus Secundus

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AN
ESSAY
ON THE
LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
SECUNDUS.

OF all the modern Latin poets, none perhaps has remained longer in obscurity than Joannes Secundus, owing to what cause we shall not pretend to determine; yet no author has been more esteemed by the few who have read him, as well for the purity and elegance of his language, as for the singular beauty of his thoughts. Considering, then, that obscurity in which he has so long continued, it is not very wonderful that so few circumstances can be collected with regard to his history. For the following anecdotes of his life we are chiefly indebted to a little treatise in the last edition of his works, published by Scriverius in the year 1631; and these anecdotes are not regularly drawn up into a complete life of our author: therefore, if

our account of Secundus be not entirely satisfactory to the reader, it must be attributed to a want of the existence of necessary materials.

That Joannes Secundus was descended from an ancient and illustrious family, in the Netherlands, is undoubted. His father Nicolaus Everardus, was born in the neighbourhood of Middelburg, (hence he is often styled *Middelburgensis*) which is the chief town of the province of Zealand, and situated in the island of Walcheren, belonging to that province.

Everardus was accounted a man of great erudition, remarkably learned in the law, and had every qualification that might complete the gentleman as well as the scholar; in short, he was a shining character, and could not fail by such abilities and politeness as he possessed to distinguish himself as a courtier, in which sphere of life fortune had placed him: accordingly, we find him a great favourite with the then Emperor Charles the Fifth, and having employs of the utmost importance (for he was a member of the grand parliament or council of Mechelen, and was also president of the States of Holland and Zealand, residing at the Hague, during his residence at which place our Joannes Secundus Nicolaïus was born, Anno 1511): he was afterwards translated to the same honourable post at Mechelen, where he ended his days,

Aug. 5, 1532, aged seventy ; and at that place he was buried.

Whence our poet acquired the names of Secundus and Nicolaus may be a matter of much dispute, as we have nothing upon record which satisfactorily clears up this point. The name of Nicolai all the children of Nicolaus Everardus took, possibly, from their father's name Nicolaus : but the name of Secundus, which distinguishes our author, most probably had its rise from some pun ; for to be sure he was, as a poet, *nemini secundus*.

But before we proceed any farther in our history of Secundus, let us take a view of the children of Nicolaus Everardus, which were five sons, and we believe three daughters : they were all of a scientific cast ; nay, such was the genius for literature which this family possessed, that it even descended to the female line, as we shall shew in mentioning Isabella Nicolais. To speak of the sons of Everardus, then, in the same order that they are spoken of in that treatise of the family preserved by Scriverius, we begin with Petrus Nicolaus. He was an ecclesiastic of the order of Premonstre, also a doctor of divinity and of civil law. Next to him was Everardus Nicolaus, who was a member of the grand council of Friezland, and of the grand council of Mechelen ; afterwards president at Friezland, and of Mechelen ; he was also

a knight of the order of the Golden Fleece. Then comes Nicolaus Grudius Nicolaïus, (so called because he was born at Lovain, the inhabitants of which country have supposed themselves to be originally the Grudii of Caesar.—Vide Cæs. Comment. de Bel. Gal.): he was treasurer of the province of Brabant, and one of the privy council; he was also knight, and register of the order of the Golden Fleece. Hadrianus Marius Nicolaïus is now to be spoken of; he was a knight, a member of the privy council, and high chancellor of Guelderland and Zutphen.

Thus we see that it was a family distinguished by princely favours; nor were these four brothers deficient in point of learning: on the contrary, we find many encomiums paid to their literary merits particularly as poets. That Nicolaus Grudius and Hadrianus Marius excelled in poetry, is evident, not only from the testimony of Secundus, but from their remaining compositions: the *Cymba Amoris*, of Marius, is a most elegant little piece.

According to Scriverius, our poet comes last in order, whose history we shall resume after having mentioned his sister Isabella Nicolaïa. This lady was an honour to her sex, having a remarkably fine taste for polite and even classical learning: she was capable of corresponding in Latin, as we are informed by an epistle of Secundus to her.

wherein he regrets the loss that society sustained from talents like her's being buried in a cloister; for that she spent her days in a convent is a fact, but upon what account we are not informed. As to the other sisters of Secundus, nothing particular is related of them.

Such were the children of Nicolaus Everardus by his lady, Eliza Bladella, who was a native of Mechelen, and endowed with every female accomplishment.

To return to Secundus. He was put under the care of Jacobus Volcardus, who was every way qualified for the undertaking, and whose death Secundus mentions in one of his *Narnia* with no small concern. Rumoldus Stenemola succeeded him in the place of tutor, and his abilities equalled those of Volcardus.

The original works of Secundus in painting and sculpture are now extremely scarce, and the very few copies of them are become almost equally so. We learn that he carved all his own family, his mistresses, (of whom we shall make mention presently,) the Emperor Charles the Fifth, several great personages of those times, and many of his intimate friends.

Secundus having nearly attained the age of twenty-one, it was thought necessary, that, under some excellent professor, he should regularly study the