

A FORMER JOHN HOSKIN.

To those who knew the late Dr. John Hoskin, Treasurer of the Law Society of Upper Canada—*praeclare nomen*—it may be of interest to hear of another John Hoskin, Barrister, over three centuries ago.

Ioannes Audenus, or John Owen, a Welshman (1560-1622), educated at Winchester and Oxford, who became a schoolteacher, and, dying in London, was buried in St. Paul's churchyard, has been called "the Prince of Epigrammatists." He left behind some 1,727 epigrams in Latin elegiacs of from two to ten verses, alternating hexameter and pentameter (dactylic, of course).

"In the Hexameter rises the fountain's silvery column:
In the Pentameter, aye falling in melody back."

The terminology is unexceptionable, the quantity good, there is an occasional hiatus, indeed, but wholly pardonable.

The epigrams in 12 books have been frequently republished. They are *de omnibus et quibusdam aliis* and have been translated into English, French, German and Spanish. My own copy, a 24 mo., not dated, I picked up on the bank of the Seine before the War.

The third epigram in book I reads:

"*Ad Joannem Hoskin, J.C., De suo Libro.*

Hic Liber est mundus, homines sunt, Hoskine, versus
Invenies paucos hic, ut in orbe, bonos."

I.e., "To John Hoskin, Jurisconsult, concerning his Book, this book is the world, Hoskin, the verses are men: Here, as in the world you will find a few good ones."

(From his play upon the word "mundus" in lib. I., ep. 131, it seems not unlikely that a similar play is meant here on the same word, and "mundus" may be translated as the adjective "clean.")

We find by a subsequent epigram that this John Hoskin had been a school friend at Winchester and a college friend at Oxford. Lib. I., ep. 96, reads:

"*Ad Jo. Hoskin.*

Ambiguos tecum peragens socialiter annos,

Oxoniae juvenis, Wintoniaegue puer,

Saepe tuum in dubiis sine fuco expertus amorem

Rebus et indubiam, sum, sine fraude fidem.

Hoc tibi mnemosynon me mittere jussit amoris

Qui mihi te *junxit*, me tibi *viuxit*, amor."

"To John Hoskin.

Having passed the years of doubt in close friendship with you, a young man at Oxford, a boy at Winchester, I have often in difficulties experienced your love without pretence and your genuine faithfulness without deceit. This remembrancer of love, Love directs me to send to you—Love, who attached you to me, conquered me for you."

By the way, is the following not gross Scandalum Magnatum? It certainly sounds far more scandalizing than the statements of Colonel Joseph Ryerson for which our Upper Canadian Judge, Mr. Justice Thorpe of the Court of King's Bench, instituted an action of Scandalum Magnatum more than a century ago.

Lib. I., ep. 100:

"De Magnete.

Cuncta trahunt ad se *Magnates* aurea sicut

Ad se *magnetes* ferrea cuncta trahunt.

Tecum nil mihi sit, gens aulica, docta rogare;

Cum das, parca satis; prodiga, quando petis.

Omnia te adversum spectantia, nulla retrorsum,

Munera me terreat, ut mihi in de petam."

"Concerning the Magnet.

Magnates attract to themselves everything of gold, just as magnets attract everything of iron. I don't want anything to do with you, you court tribe skilled in asking—stingy enough when you give, extravagant when you ask. All the gifts looking towards you look for nothing in that direction."

Everyone will remember the Fable of the Fox and the Lion in Æsop (or Babrius, if we are hypercritical): the Fox declined the Lion's invitation to his den, saying that he noticed that all the footprints pointed to the den and none the other way—*nulla retrorsum*.

It seems probable that it is to the same friend that another epigram is dedicated—in those days I and J were used indiscriminately, both capital and lower case, as were U and V.

It may, however, have been another friend of Owen, Sir John Harrington, who was thus favoured.

Whoever was the addressee, the epigram is ingenious and full of sound common sense.

Lib. II., ep. 168:

"*De Diaeta: Ad I. H.*

Si tarde cupis esse senex, utaris oportet
 Vel Modico *medice*, vel Medico, *modice*.
 Sumpta, cibus tanguam; laedit medicina solutem
 At sumptus prodest, ut medicina, cibus."

"Concerning manner of living: to J. H.

If you wish to grow old slowly, you should use food medically, medicine moderately. Medicine taken as food injures the health but food taken as medicine is wholesome."

The "Prince of Epigrammatists" thus speaks of one whose name is a household word wherever the English Common Law is held in reverence:

Lib. VI., ep. 13:

"*Ad Edwardum Coke, Equitem, Jurisprudētiss. Judicem, etc.*
Naturae notum tibi *Jus*, *naturaque Juris*;
 Lis, et uterque tuo pendet ab ore *cliens*.
 De scripto *Responsa*, *Britannus Apollo*, dedisti
 Clara magis quam quae *Delphicus* ore dedit.
 Praesentes dirimis *lites*, tollisque futura
Jurgia; *praesentes* Voce, *futura* Manu."

"To (Sir) Edward Coke, Knight, Judge most learned in the Law. To thee are known the law of Nature and the nature of Law; litigation—and either litigant hangs on your lips. Thou hast given in writing, O British Apollo! Responses more clear than those the Delphian (Apollo) gave orally. Present litigation thou dost adjust, future disputes prevent—the present by the Voice, the future by the Hand.

I simply cannot resist copying another epigram for my friends, devotees as was I (*Consule Planco*) of My Lady Nicotine: Lib. I., ep. 172:

"*Ad Lectorem.*
 Tabificum non accendat liber iste Tabacum;
 Terge libro potius posteriora meo."

I.e., "This book is not to be used to light disease-breeding Tobacco: rather than that use this book of mine as toilet paper."

WILLIAM RENWICK RIDDELL.

Toronto.