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### **The Works Of Horatio Walpole, Earl of Orford**

In Five Volumes

**Walpole, Horace**

**London, 1798**

Advertisement to Paul Hentzner's Account of England

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A D V E R T I S E M E N T  
TO  
PAUL HENTZNER'S  
\*ACCOUNT OF ENGLAND,  
In the YEAR 1598.

DOCTOR BIRCH, in his Summary of fir Thomas Edmondess's State-papers, has published a short extract from the following obsolete author, which, for the elegance of the Latin, and the remarkable description of queen Elizabeth, has been deservedly admired: her best portraits scarcely exhibit a more lively image.

The original work, of which perhaps there are not above four or five copies in England, is an Itinerary through Germany, England, France, and Italy, performed by Hentzner, a travelling tutor to a young German nobleman. That doctor Birch has extracted the most interesting passage in the whole book, is certain: yet it records some circumstances and customs not unworthy the notice of an English antiquarian, and which are mentioned nowhere else. For these reasons, I flatter myself, that a publication of the part relating to our own country might not be an unacceptable present to persons of curiosity. The translation was the production of the idle hours of another gentleman †.

\* Printed at Mr. Walpole's private press at Strawberry-hill.

† Mr. R. Bentley.

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The author seems to have had that laborious and indiscriminate passion for SEEING, which is remarked in his countrymen; and, as his translator observed, enjoyed as much the doubtful head of a more doubtful saint in pickle, as any upon the shoulders of the best Grecian statue. Fortunately so memorable a personage as queen Elizabeth happened to fall under his notice.—Ten years later, he would have been as accurate in painting Anne of Denmark!

The excess of respectful ceremonial used at decking her majesty's table, though not in her presence, and the kind of adoration and genuflection paid to her person, approach to eastern homage. When we observe such worship offered to an old woman, with bare neck, black teeth, and false red hair, it makes one smile; but makes one reflect what masculine sense was couched under those weaknesses, and which could command such awe from a nation like England!

Not to anticipate the entertainment of the reader, I shall make but one more reflection. We are apt to think that sir William Temple and king William were in a manner the introducers of gardening into England: by the description of lord Burleigh's gardens at Theobalds, and of those at Nonfuch, we find that the magnificent, though false taste, was known here as early as the reigns of Henry VIII. and his daughter. There is scarce an unnatural and sumptuous impropriety at Versailles, which we do not find in Hentzner's description of the gardens above mentioned.

With regard to the orthography of proper names, though corrected in the translation, I have left them in the original as I found them.—Accuracy in that particular was not the author's merit: it is a merit peculiar to Englishmen: the French are negligent of it to an affectation; yet the author of *Les Mélanges Historiques* complains that other nations corrupt French names! He himself gives some English ones in page 247, 248, which it is impossible to decypher. Bassompierre calls York-house, *Jorchaux*, and Kensington, *Inhimthort*. As a soldier and ambassador, he was not obliged to know the names of houses; when he turned author, there was no excuse for not being intelligible. Even Voltaire, who writes the language so well, is careless in our titles. In England, it is the defect of a servant to blunder in pro-  
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per names. It is one of those silly pretensions to politeness, which nations that affect a superiority have always cultivated—for, in all affectations, defects are merits. The readers of history love certainty: it is pity the writers do not. What confusion would it have saved, if it had not been the custom of the Jews to call every Darius and Artaxerxes, Ahafuerus! It were to be wished, that all nations would be content to use the appellations which people or respective countries have chosen for themselves. Proper names ought never to be tortured to any particular idiom. What a ridiculous composition is *Aulugel!* Who can conceive that *Meylandt* signifies Milan; or Leghorn, *Livorno*? When one is misled by a proper name, the only use of which is to direct, one feels like the countryman, who complained, *That the houses hindered him from seeing Paris.*—The thing becomes an obstruction to itself.

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