

PROSE

UNIT-1 (I) FRANCIS BACON : OF STUDIES

INTRODUCTION ABOUT AUTHOR

Francis Bacon was born on 22nd of January, 1561 in London. Bacon worked as attorney general and Lord Chancellor of England resigning after he was found guilty of bribery. This unfortunate twist in his life brought him together with his true passions i.e. Humanism and natural philosophy. Francis Bacon was an English man who was inclined towards the age of Renaissance and arts. He negated the old fashioned traditions of teachings and believed in the newness of the age. His inspirations revolved around the Aristotelian ideas of philosophical quest. Bacon negated the Aristotelianism and idealized the new teachings of renaissance humanism. He observed the world through the lens of empiricism. He believed that one needs to experience the reality of existence in order to completely understand life. This is known to be Francis Bacon's method of understanding science and humanity. Francis Bacon was given the title "**Father of Scientific method**". In the literary world Bacon is remembered as an all-rounder. He was a lawyer, statesman and a philosopher. Francis Bacon is remembered as a source of wisdom in the literary world.

Bacon teaches a certain principles of science in order to understand life and the world we live in we have to experience the life by living it. He stated this as the empirical scientific method. According to him this scientific method will shed light upon the important characteristics of the nature that would "eventually disclose and bring into sight all that is most hidden and secret in the universe." He wrote in prose style that fitted every profession. Bacon's take on different aspects of life such as Love, Truth and religion is evident in the literary world. The way Bacon adapted to the society around him is marvelous and a very evident feature of his writing style. Bacon stands out in the literary world due to his unique approach towards thinking.

Bacon states "true directions concerning the interpretation of nature," in other words he is trying to make his reader understand that the method of acquiring true knowledge is by observing and understanding the nature. Bacon researched and gathered knowledge keeping in mind the next generations. He modified the old fashion knowledge into an accessible mode of knowledge. In the first book of *Novum Organum* Bacon debates the reasons of human flaw in the quest of knowledge. Earlier Aristotle discussed logical fallacies, usually found in human rationality, but Bacon was unique in observing the methods of reasoning. He invented the metaphor of "idol" to state such causes of human flaw. Bacon played an important role as a linguist in the literary world. Language is the means of understanding the world around us. Language, like other human accomplishments, partakes of human limitations. This aspect of Bacon's thought has been almost as persuasive as his account of natural knowledge, inspiring a long tradition of cynical rationalism, from the Enlightenment. Bacon lived in a time when new worlds were being discovered on Earth. He negated the perception that everything is either revealed by religion or Aristotle. He challenged the grand narrative of religion and researched himself to find answers. Bacon protected the study of nature against those who measured it as either improper or perilous. He argued for a supportive and systematic method against individualism and instinct. Today Bacon is known among great philosophers as an emblem of the notion that is widely held to be misunderstood, that science is inductive.

SUMMARY

Francis Bacon gives an account of three chief uses of studies. The first use is that they serve for delight. This delight may come in solitude or in leisure after retirement from active life. Secondly, they serve for ornament in communication, conversation and discourse. A person who is well read can talk more attractively than an uneducated person. The third use of studies is they help in the judgement, and disposition of business.

An expert man can judge matters one by one when they come face by face to him and he executes them according to his experience. However, this is not the case with an educated man. He can give counsels at any situation according to his knowledge and thus, learned men are best at marshalling of affairs. Studies, however, have their limitations. If too much time is spent at studies it nothing more than sloth. If they are used excessively in conversation, they show exaggeration and posing of a person. And if a scholar makes each and every judgement of his life with the help of his knowledge, it is just foolish and humorous behavior of the scholar.

Studies perfect nature. Furthermore, they are perfected by experience. Bacon compares natural abilities of a man with a natural tree that needs pruning that comes by study. Studies have a vast scope, it is icing on the cake if experience is also added with them. Bacon says, "Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them".

The men who are hard workers or primitive men hate or contemn studies. However, the men who have simple wits admire them. Moreover, the men who are wise use them practically. Studies do not teach their own use. It is the wisdom of a person that teaches him their usage. Bacon is of the view that a man should not read to contradict and confute others; he should not believe and rely wholly on words; nor to find a point of discussion in conversation; but he should read to weigh them their value and use them. The writer further supports this argument in the following statement,

"Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested". There are some books that are to be read only in parts because they are useful for a person only at some places. It is not worthy to read them word by word. On contrary, there are some books that are to be read not with curiosity; and some are to be read completely with attention and diligence because they require the full attention of the reader. Moreover, this category of books has treasures hidden in them that can be found only by reader's diligence. There is another category 'like common distilled waters' i.e 'distilled books', these books are extracts made from other books and compiled in another book. These are the meaner sort of books.

Bacon says a million dollars verses, "Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. It is reading that adds to the knowledge of a man and makes him complete in a sense of his wit. Undoubtedly, it is conversation with others that makes a man ready for any sort of step to be taken practically on behalf of his knowledge. Furthermore, it is the skill of comprehensive or innovative writing that makes a full man because man is created to do wonders, make innovations and generate new ideas.

Moreover, the writer describes some facts about studies. He says if a man writes little than he needs to have a great memory to remember all the learned things. If a man interacts little he needs to have a present and sharp wit; and if a man read little, he should be cunning to know what he does not. Bacon impresses reader through his comprehensive and great sayings. He says, "Histories make men wise; pots witty; the mathematics subtle; natural philosophy deep; moral grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend".

The about stated couple of lines contains an ocean of meaning in it. Bacon says that it is history of ancients that makes new generations wise and witty. These are rules and laws stated by the ancients that make mathematics subtle in its nature. It is because of histories that philosophy has deeper meanings and logic and rhetoric are able to defend through arguments.

Bacon is of the view that any impediment or stoned in the wit can be wrought out by fit studies. If a person considers oneself dull, he can make him better through studies. Clearly, 'bowling is good for the stone and reins; shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head', similarly, studies also have a physical role in mortals' life. If a man's wit is unable to focus at a point and it keeps wandering, let him study mathematics so that he may learn to demonstrate rationally. If his wit is unable to find differences let him study the schoolmen. If a man is not able to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, he should study the lawyers' cases.

Bacon encloses the essay by saying, "So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt".

Bacon, by pointing out the various subject, argues that the studying history makes men wise; mathematics makes them intellectually sharp, while logic and rhetoric skilled men in arguments. Moreover, thinking is not problematic if it cannot be established by the proper study. Every mind disorder has a treatment just like every physical illness. For instance, a man should study law, if he cannot utilize the proofs to demonstrate the certainty of unrelated facts. By studying other forms, any defect in the brain can be cured.

(ii) J.B. PRIESTLY : TRAVEL BY TRAIN

INTRODUCTION ABOUT AUTHOR

Priestley was born on 13 September 1894 at 34 Mannheim Road, Manningham, which he described as an "extremely respectable" suburb of Bradford. His father Jonathan Priestley (1868–1924) was a headmaster. His mother Emma (nee Holt) (1865–1896) died when he was just two years old, and his father remarried four years later. Priestley was educated at Belle Vue Grammar School, which he left at sixteen to work as a junior clerk at Helm & Co., a wool firm in the Swan Arcade. During his years at Helm & Co. (1910–1914), he started writing at night and had articles published in local and London newspapers. He was to draw on memories of Bradford in many of the works he wrote after he had moved south, including *Bright Day* and *When We Are Married*. As an old man, he deplored the destruction by developers of Victorian buildings in Bradford such as the Swan Arcade, where he had his first job.

Priestley served in the British army during the First World War, volunteering to join the 10th Battalion, the Duke of Wellington's Regiment on 7 September 1914, and being posted to France as a Lance-Corporal on 26 August 1915. He was badly wounded in June 1916, when he was buried alive by a trench mortar. He spent many months in military hospitals and convalescent establishments, and on 26 January 1918 was commissioned as an officer in the Devonshire Regiment and posted back to France late summer 1918. As he describes in his literary reminiscences, *Margin Released*, he suffered from the effects of poison gas, and then supervised German prisoners of war, before being demobilised in early 1919.

Priestley died of pneumonia on 14 August 1984.

SUMMARY

(ii) TRAVEL BY TRAIN - J.B. PRIESTLEY

J.B. Priestley is a versatile writer. He is good at writing novels, essays and plays. He is known for his minute observation and portrayal of incidents in a humorous manner. The essay "Travel by Train" presents various types of train passengers. First, the author talks about a middle-aged woman traveller. He describes her as a person with a rough voice and face of brass. She loves to invade smoking compartments that are already filled with a quiet company of smokers. She is always accompanied by her dog. Then he describes the heavy carriers. There are some passengers who carry all their odd chattels and household utensils and parcel them up in brown paper. They also carry baskets of fruits and bunches of flowers to add to their own and other people's misery.

Priestley talks about the non-stop eaters. Once they settled in their seats, they pass each other tattered sandwiches and mouthful scraps of pastry and talking with their mouths full, and scattering crumbs over the trousers of fastidious old gentlemen. The author talks about children's behavior in the train. Some children don't make good travelling companions, throughout a journey they will spend all their time daubing their faces with chocolate or trying to climb out of the window. Then, he describes about the cranks. The cranks will always insist us to open the windows in the trains on the bleakest days but in

the hot season they don't allow a window to be opened.

Then, the author describes about innocent travellers who always find themselves in the wrong train. They neither bother about the railway time-tables nor ask the railway officials for advice. They get into the train that comes first. In the midst of the journey, they enquire, whether they are on the right train or not. The writer has often wondered whether these people will ever reach their destination. Then, he talks about the mighty sleepers. He envies the mighty sleepers. Once they settled in their seats, they sleep in a moment. Two minutes or so from their destination they wake up, collect their baggage and go out. Priestley calls them as descendants of the Seven of Ephesus.

According to the author, Seafaring men are good companions on a railway journey. They are always ready for a pipe and a crack with any man. They talk entertaining matter. Then it is about confidential strangers, who are rarely seen and compared to a very dull dog. They take pleasure in talking of their own interest. At last, the author talks about the elderly man who always seated in a corner. They talk and his talk will be all of trains. The author advises the readers to be aware of the elderly man, for he is the Ancient Mariner of railway travelers who will hold you with his glittering eye.