



New Atlantis [Annotated]

Sir Francis Bacon

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It contains an expression of the scientific views of Bacon and his opinion regarding the duty of the state toward science. More than this it describes his tastes in conduct and dress, and is characterized by a spirit of hospitality, kindliness, and courtesy, which betrays his sympathetic nature. As has been well said "there is no single work of his which has so much of himself in it." Unlike More, who would limit the population, Bacon, as the institutions of the Tirsan shows, would have families large; and unlike other writers of his age, he gives a prominent part and attractive character to Joabin, a Jew. But the chief interest of the author centers in Solomon's House, the College of the Six Days Works, a state institution governed by an official body, and founded for the purpose of discovering "the causes and secret motions of things." Here Bacon gives a list of those experiments and observations, which he hoped would increase knowledge, ameliorate the conditions of life, improve the physical well-being of man, and enlarge the bounds of the human empire. In medicine, surgery, meteorology, food, and mechanical contrivances he anticipates many of the improvements of later times. It has been generally supposed that "this noblest foundation that ever was on earth" suggested the foundation and program of the Royal Society in England and of similar societies abroad.



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