

Inspiration...at last

Now sitting at his desk, though the hour was late,
For Francis Bacon, writing was his opiate
He reminisced on some of his previous writing
Some of which others had found to be exciting:
As in his created land, called New Atlantis,
With its adventures of such Utopian bliss,
Over one hundred Essays he'd already penned
On so many subjects, seemingly without end;
He was known, because of study and appliance,
As the Father of Experimental Science;
He argued that wonder was the seed of knowledge
Something that so many folk do now acknowledge;
At times his prose in Latin had been well written
As with this formal language he was quite smitten:
Scientia potentia est one time he wrote,
Yes, Knowledge is Power, let other men note;
De augmentis scientiarum, too,
The Advancement of Learning, (surely this you knew!)

But now he wished to write a fiction drama
The setting for which he sought a panorama;
But he realised that his great playwright friend, Will,
Had visited so many countries with his quill:
In Italy, Julius Caesar came to his fate,
In Greece, Timon, a grand Athenian of late,
The tragedy of Hamlet took place in Denmark
To Scotland, where Macbeth had made his blooded mark,
With the Tempest a faraway island was found
And in Midsummer Nights Dream fairies did abound.

To plagiarism he would never succumb
For original thinking was his rule of thumb,
But now his imagination began to fail
And as he could not conjure up a worthwhile tale
He decided another Essay he would write
For which he then considered a title that night
To return in the morning when his mind was free
And *Inspiratio Spiritus** it would be.

* My title! The Inspiration of the Spirit

Peter Smith

Inspired by *Macbeth*

At Secondary School my favourite Shakespearean play was *Macbeth* and I used to memorise many lines, some of which I have retained to this day.

One of these is 'vaulting ambition' which came to mind when Andy Burnham came into the limelight with his desire to be not just an MP, but to use that position almost immediately - if elected - to put himself forward to be the Prime Minister. I cannot think of a better description of this than Shakespeare's above.

This gave me the inspiration to follow up: what else might there be in *Macbeth* that would be relevant to today's political situation? Herewith:

Regarding Brexit, the Labour manifesto confirmed that Brexit would stand, and Starmer, too, has said, 'What's done is done.....What's done cannot be undone.'

'Come what, come may, Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.' How often must Keir Starmer have gone to sleep this year with these words in his mind... for 'Foul whisperings are abroad.'

In his Cabinet, Keir Starmer must have looked across at the faces there and thought, 'There's no art to find the mind's construction in the face.' Similarly, as we now know, 'False face must hide what the false heart doth know.'

How often have Labour MPs recently said of Starmer, 'Stand not upon the order of your going, But go at once!'

With all the contenders to replace him in No. 10, Starmer may well ask, 'Whence is that knocking?' ...Andy Burnham, Angela Rayner, West Streeting, Ed Milliband ...and others?

The pretenders to No. 10 Downing Street, must surely consider that 'This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air nimbly and sweetly recommends itself unto our gentle senses.'

Finally, whoever is the incumbent in Number 10, surely this applies: 'Who can be wise, amazed, temperate, and furious, loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man [or woman].'

Peter Smith

