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Montaigne's Essays

In Three Books. With Notes and Quotations. And an Account of The Author's Life ; With a short Character of the Author and Translator, by the late Marquis of Halifax; With the Addition of A Complete Table to each Volume

Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de

London, 1743

This for Charles Cotton, Esq; at his House at Berisford. To be left at Ashburne in Derbyshire.

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*This for Charles Cotton, Esq; at
his House at Berisford.*

To be left at Ashburne in Derbyshire.

S I R,

I Have too long delayed my *Thanks* to you for giving me such an obliging *Evidence* of your *Remembrance*: That alone would have been a welcome *Present*, but when joined with the Book in the World I am the best entertained with, it raiseth a strong Desire in me to be better known, where I am sure to be so much pleased. I have 'till now thought Wit could not be translated, and do still retain so much of that Opinion, that I believe it impossible, except by one whose Genius cometh up to that of the Author. You have the original Strength of his Thought, that it almost tempts a Man to believe the Transmigration of Souls, and that his being used to Hills, is come into the Moor-Lands, to reward us here in *England*, for doing him more Right than his Country will afford him. He hath by your Means, mended his first Edition. To transplant and make him ours, is not only a valuable Acquisition to us, but a just Censure of the critical Impertinence of those *French* Scribes

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A Letter to Mr. COTTON.

lers who have taken Pains to make little Cavils and Exceptions to lessen the Reputation of this great Man, whom Nature hath made too big to confine him to the Exactness of a studied Stile. He let his Mind have it's full Flight, and sheweth, by a generous Kind of Negligence, that he did not write for Praise, but to give the World a true Picture of himself and of Mankind. He scorned affected Periods, or to please the mistaken Reader with an empty Chime of Words. He hath no Affection to set himself out, and dependeth wholly upon the natural Force of what is his own, and the excellent Application of what he borroweth.

You see, Sir, I have Kindness enough for *Monsieur de Montaigne* to be your Rival; but no-body can now pretend to be in equal Competition with you: I do willingly yield it is no small Matter for a Man to do to a more prosperous Lover; and if you will repay this Piece of Justice with another, pray believe, that he who can translate such an Author without doing him wrong, must not only make me glad but proud of being his

Very humble Servant,

HALLIFAX.

T H E