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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

The Editor To The Reader.

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THE
EDITOR
TO THE
READER.

IT would perhaps be looked upon as a Piece of Rashness in us, to attempt any thing in Commendation of *Montaigne* and his ingenious Translator, after the Character given of them by so learned a Hand as the Marquis of *Hallifax*: Nothing material can be added to what he has said on the Subject; but, nevertheless, a Word or two may not be altogether unnecessary, in Regard to this new Impression of a Book, the Original of which has been in Demand in *France* ever since the first Publication of it there 150 Years ago.

Mr. *Cotton* has, indeed, succeeded to a Miracle in his Translation of so celebrated a Piece, and we are thoroughly persuaded that very few *Frenchmen* now living, were they to undertake the Task, would find themselves capable of turning *Montaigne's Essays* into modern *French* with the same Spirit and Justice to the Author; but still our Translator was not altogether infallible: He had certainly one of the most difficult Books in the World to struggle with, and he complains of it himself in his Preface: It is no Wonder then that he fell into such Mistakes, which we should not only have

To the R E A D E R.

have fallen into ourselves, but probably have committed a great many more, had he not first trod the rugged Way before us. All we ventured to do has been only to mend the few Errors in him that obviously appeared to us to be such, and to change his Language where fifty Years had rendered it any Way harsh or obsolete: This was the utmost of our View, and we can assure our Readers, that in pursuing it we have altered Mr. Cotton's Prose in above three thousand Places; but as to his Poetry, we thought fit to let it remain as we found it, except upon one or two Occasions. Whether the Alterations we have made are for the better or not, is what we must submit to the Judgment of the Public, whom it has been our earnest Endeavours to please by a new Edition of a Book so constantly called for, so universally useful, and so highly esteemed by all Men of Learning and Taste.



T H E