Elements of Criticism

Kames Henry Home
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ELEMENTS OF CRITICISM,

BY

HENRY HOME, LORD KAMES,

JUDGE OF THE COURT OF SESSIONS IN SCOTLAND, &c. &c.

WITH

ANALYSES,

AND

TRANSLATIONS OF ANCIENT AND FOREIGN ILLUSTRATIONS.

EDITED BY ABRAHAM MILLS, A. M.

AUTHOR OF AN IMPROVED EDITION OF ALISON ON TARTS, ETC.

SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED.

New York:

CONNER & COOKE, FRANKLIN BUILDINGS.

1833.
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PREFACE

to

THE SECOND EDITION.

Printing, by multiplying copies at will, affords to writers great opportunity of receiving instruction from every quarter. The author of this treatise, having always been of opinion that the general taste is seldom wrong, was resolved, from the beginning, to submit to it with entire resignation: its severest disapprobation might have incited him to do better, but never to complain. Finding now the judgment of the public to be favorable, ought he not to draw satisfaction from it? He would be devoid of sensibility were he not greatly satisfied. Many criticisms have indeed reached his ear; but they are candid and benevolent, if not always just. Gratitude, therefore, had there been no other motive, must have roused his utmost industry, to clear this edition from all the defects of the former, so far as suggested by others, or discovered by himself. In a work containing many particulars, both new and abstruse, it was difficult to express every article with sufficient perspicuity; and, after all the pains bestowed, there remained certain passages which are generally thought obscure. The author, giving an attentive ear to every censure of that kind, has, in the present edition, renewed his efforts to correct every defect; and he would gladly hope that he has not been altogether unsuccessful. The truth is, that a writer, who must be possessed of
the thought before he can put it into words, is but ill qualified to judge whether the expression be sufficiently clear to others: in that particular, he cannot avoid the taking on him to judge for the reader, who can much better judge for himself.

June, 1763.
EDITOR'S PREFACE.

The present edition of Lord Kames' Criticisms was prepared, and is now offered to the public, with a view of facilitating the use of the work, and of rendering it more acceptable to general readers. To effect the former object, an analysis has been placed at the head of each chapter; and to effect the latter, translations, either original or selected, have been affixed to the numerous passages introduced as illustrations, from the Latin and Italian languages.

The editor deems it unnecessary to enter into any process of argument, by which to justify the course he has pursued in the preparation of the present work; as in all matters of practical utility, the only just judgment that can possibly be formed must necessarily rest on practical effects: and though he would be sorry to arrogate any superiority to himself, or to his own observation, yet there may, perhaps, be no impropriety in saying, that the result of the experience of many years assiduously devoted to the business of instruction, is, a thorough conviction that only by presenting a subject to the mind in its leading features, and as one whole, can students obtain a clear and comprehensive view of it. Too much dependence however, in the use of the work, must not be placed upon the analyses; for it is by no means intended that because of them is less of the work to be learned.
their principal object is, as before stated, to render the instruction of classes less irksome, and less difficult. The editor would, therefore, recommend to professors and teachers, uniformly to insist that scholars, at the commencement of their recitations, be prepared to repeat, with perfect clearness, the subject of each chapter or section, by its respective analysis; and from it to conduct the recitation of the class. He is aware, however, that to teachers not familiar with the subject, this would be impossible; but where is the teacher to be found, determined to excel in his profession, who would not, from considerations, both of duty and of interest, study to acquire that familiarity by which alone, he can secure to himself, the confidence and respect of his scholars, and ultimate success in his calling?

That in works for general reading, and especially in textbooks, translations should be uniformly affixed to passages introduced from the ancient classics, as illustrations, the editor does not hesitate to say must be the conviction of every candid and intelligent mind: as to scholars who may be familiar with those languages, they can certainly be no hindrance; while to those who have not enjoyed the advantages of a classical education, they are indispensably necessary. It is true that many persons still seem to think it bordering almost on presumption for any one to pretend to taste or elegant scholarship in the Belles Lettres, who can not read Latin and Greek; but though the advantages of a knowledge of these languages, in forming one's taste, must ever be acknowledged to be immensely great, yet it by no means follows, that those who may not understand them have not it in their power to cultivate theirs. The principles of taste, and the perception of the Sublime and the Beautiful, exist, in a

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