

# **EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ESSAYS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649010301

Eighteenth century essays by Austin Dobson

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**AUSTIN DOBSON**

**EIGHTEENTH  
CENTURY ESSAYS**



J. Burnett  
177

Feb 25<sup>th</sup> 1890

B. V. N.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ESSAYS.

With slower pen, men used to write,  
Of old, when "letters" were "polite";  
    In *Anna's*, or in *George's* days,  
    They could afford to turn a phrase,  
Or trim a straggling theme aright.

They knew not steam: electric light  
Not yet had dazed their calmer sight;—  
    They meted out both blame and praise  
    With slower pen.

More swiftly now the hours take flight!  
What's read at morn is dead at night;  
    Scant space have we for Art's delays,  
    Whose breathless thought so briefly stays,  
We may not work — ah! would we might,  
    With slower pen!

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1365  
D6  
1888  
SRL

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

ESSAYS.

SELECTED AND ANNOTATED BY

AUSTIN DOBSON.

*Collecta revirescunt.*

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BOSTON:  
WILLARD SMALL,  
24 FRANKLIN STREET.  
1888.

Alfred Mudge & Son, Printers,  
24 Franklin Street,  
Boston.



TO

MRS. RICHMOND THACKERAY RITCHIE.

*Madam*,—In putting the finishing Strokes to that famous Novel of the Eighteenth Century, which is one of the chief Glories of the Nineteenth, the Author of *Esmond* did not neglect one needful and indeed indispensable Detail, the Dedication to an Illustrious Personage. So high a Precedent may not improperly be followed in Cases more obscure. Were Mr. *Thackeray* still among us, the Homage of this Selection of Eighteenth-Century Essays (had he been pleased to accept it) would have belonged of right to the literary Descendant of *Addison* and *Fielding*, of *Goldsmith* and *Steele*; and it would have been my Privilege to have found in it the Pretext for a Tribute (however trifling) to a great Writer whom I love and honor. But alas!

. . . nultum  
*Sæva Caput Proserpina fugit:*

and *Fate*, that cannot kill a Noble Work, is absolute over him who gives it Birth. I am reminded, not the less, that there are still written, for our unthinking Moderns, Pages in which it is not difficult to trace some softer Relation to that pure and unaffected Pathos, that keen yet kindly Satire. I presume therefore to offer this little Volume to Mr. *Thackeray's* Daughter.

I am, Madam, Your obedient Servant,

AUSTIN DOBSON.

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