

**THE SILVER SERIES OF
ENGLISH
CLASSICS. MACAULAY'S
ESSAY ON ADDISON**

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The Silver Series of English Classics. Macaulay's Essay on Addison by Thomas Babington
Macaulay & Alexander S. Twombly

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THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY & ALEXANDER S. TWOMBLY

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THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY.

The Silver Series of English Classics

MACAULAY'S
ESSAY ON ADDISON

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

ALEXANDER S. TWOMBLY



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PUBLISHERS' ANNOUNCEMENT.

THE SILVER SERIES OF ENGLISH CLASSICS is designed to furnish editions of many of the standard classics in English and American literature, in the best possible form for reading and study. While planned to meet the requirements for entrance examinations to college, as formulated by the Commission of American Colleges, it serves a no less important purpose in providing valuable and attractive reading for the use of the higher grades of public and private schools.

It is now generally recognized that to familiarize students with the masterpieces of literature is the best means of developing true literary taste, and of establishing a love of good reading which will be a permanent delight. The habit of cultured original expression is also established through the influence of such study.

To these ends, carefully edited and annotated editions of the Classics, which shall direct pupils in making intelligent and appreciative study of each work as a whole, and, specifically, of its individual features, are essential in the classroom.

The SILVER SERIES notably meets this need, through the editing of its volumes by scholars of high literary ability and educational experience. It unfolds the treasures of literary art, and shows the power and beauty of our language in the various forms of English composition, — as the oration, the essay, the argument, the biography, the poem, etc.

Thus, the first volume contains Webster's oration at the laying of the corner stone of Bunker Hill monument; and, after a brief sketch of the orator's life, the *oration* is defined, — the speech itself furnishing a practical example of what a masterpiece in oratory should be.

Next follows the *essay*, as exemplified by Macaulay's "Essay on Milton." The story of the life of the great essayist creates an interest in his work, and the student, before he proceeds to study

the essay, is shown in the Introduction the difference between the oratorical and the essayistic style.

After this, Burke's "Speech on Conciliation" is treated in a similar manner, the essential principles of *forensic* authorship being set forth.

Again, De Quincey's "Flight of a Tartar Tribe" — a conspicuous example of pure *narration* — exhibits the character and quality of this department of literary composition.

Southey's "Life of Nelson" is presented in the same personal and critical manner, placing before the student the essential characteristics of the *biographical* style.

The series continues with specimens of such works as "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," by Coleridge; the "Essay on Burns," by Carlyle; the "Sir Roger De Coverley Papers," by Addison; Milton's "Paradise Lost," Books I. and II.; Pope's "Iliad," Books I., VI., XXII., and XXIV.; Dryden's "Palamon and Arcite," and other works of equally eminent writers, covering, in the completed series, a large and diversified area of literary exposition.

The functions of the several departments of authorship are explained in simple terms. The beginner, as well as the somewhat advanced scholar, will find in this series ample instruction and guidance for his own study, without being perplexed by abstruse or doubtful problems.

With the same thoughtfulness for the student's progress, the appended Notes provide considerable information outright; but they are also designed to stimulate the student in making researches for himself, as well as in applying, under the direction of the teacher, the principles laid down in the critical examination of the separate divisions.

A portrait, either of the author or of the personage about whom he writes, will form an attractive feature of each volume. The text is from approved editions, keeping as far as possible the original form; and the contents offer, at a very reasonable price, the latest results of critical instruction in the art of literary expression.

The teacher will appreciate the fact that enough, and not too much, assistance is rendered the student, leaving the instructor ample room for applying and extending the principles and suggestions which have been presented.

INTRODUCTION.

THE CRITICAL ESSAY.

SKETCHES of the lives of Addison and Macaulay are given in other volumes of this series,—that of Addison, with the “Sir Roger de Coverley Papers,” and that of Macaulay, with his “Essay on Milton.”

Expositions of the Essay, as such, and of the Biographical Essay, have also appeared in the volumes which contain the “Essay on Milton” and Southey’s “Life of Nelson.”

This introduction, therefore, will not repeat what has been already presented, but will define the Critical Essay in Literature, as illustrated in Macaulay’s “Addison.”

Macaulay’s “Dryden” might perhaps furnish a more complete example of the critical style, because it treats almost wholly of the poet’s literary efforts and skill; while the “Essay on Addison” weaves more largely the biographical with the critical into the composition.

In his “Lord Bacon,” Macaulay has made the first part mainly biographical, and the last part critical. Other essays, like those on Warren Hastings and Frederick the Great, are historical and biographical.

Literature is distinct from science and philosophy. The term *belles-lettres* does not include the whole of its domain; there is a vast field of authorship outside its province,

— for history, art, science, and philosophy may be treated in a literary way. Yet the literary critic has his special function; and, as a self-constituted judge of the *form* in which the work of authors is presented to the public, his work is well defined.

When *literary* criticism is spoken of, it is not meant that by it an author's *life* is exhibited and his personal conduct dissected; these are not the subjects for literary criticism as such. Its province is to consider critically an author's style, his manner of presenting ideas, skill in the art of composition, and good judgment in selecting facts and drawing inferences.

There are minor matters on which the critic may touch, with more or less advantage to his main purpose. He may show that an author's success has depended on his peculiar traits and surroundings, and that his associations and opportunities have aided or retarded the development of his genius. The critic is also allowed to refer to interesting episodes in the author's life, and may take occasion to discuss principles that underlie the author's work. But the literary critic deals primarily with the productions before him, as literature.

Such a critic needs peculiar qualifications for his work. His talent may not equal the genius of the author that he criticises; but, as a critic, he must show himself at least able to solve the literary problems which he raises concerning that author's work. The critical Dæmon that whispered to Socrates still haunts the Academy; seldom, however, can the critics whom he inspires, answer, as Socrates did, all the questions they are apt to ask.