

**THE ESSAYS OF  
ABRAHAM  
COWLEY**

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The Essays of Abraham Cowley by Abraham Cowley

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**ABRAHAM COWLEY**

**THE ESSAYS OF  
ABRAHAM  
COWLEY**



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THE ESSAYS OF ABRAHAM COWLEY.



"Cowley's *Prose* stamps him as a man of genius and an  
improver of the English Language."

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

THE ESSAYS OF  
*ABRAHAM COWLEY.*

WITH LIFE BY THE  
EDITOR.

NOTES, AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY DR. HURD,  
AND OTHERS.



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ESSAY, INTRODUCTORY AND  
BIOGRAPHICAL.

**W**HEN Abraham Cowley was buried in Westminster Abbey, near Chaucer and Spenser, King Charles II. pronounced oracularly, "That Mr. Cowley had not left behind him a better man in England." The posthumous praise of princes is, we must remember, one way of paying their debts; and as Cowley had acted as secretary to either Charles, and had been so trusted that he wrote much of their correspondence in cypher, and was rewarded slenderly, if at all, we may believe that with the king such excessive praise was natural. This was in 1667; and Cowley had died at the Porch House in Chertsey, in the forty-ninth year of his age, leaving behind him, as we know, both better men and better poets.

It is in writing his life that Doctor Johnson complains of the penury of English biography, and does, one must confess, very little to enrich it. He tells us that "Cowley's father was a grocer, whose condition Dr. Sprat conceals under the general appellation of a