

CONFESSIONS OF A YOUNG MAN

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649554577

Confessions of a Young Man by George Moore

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GEORGE MOORE

**CONFESSIONS OF
A YOUNG MAN**

WORKS OF GEORGE MOORE
NEW AND REVISED EDITION

In Uniform Binding

Post 8vo, Green Cloth

SPRING DAYS
CONFESSIONS OF A YOUNG MAN
A MUMMER'S WIFE
IMPRESSIONS AND OPINIONS
MUSLIN
CELIBATES
ESTHER WATERS
SISTER THERESA
LEWIS SEYMOUR AND SOME WOMEN
THE UNTILLED FIELD

Others in Preparation

BRENTANO'S :: NEW YORK

CONFESSIONS OF A YOUNG MAN

BY
GEORGE MOORE, 1886

EDITED AND ANNOTATED
BY GEORGE MOORS 1904
AND AGAIN IN 1926



NEW YORK
BRENTANO'S

1917

PR 5042
C6
1917

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À JACQUES BLANCHE

L'ÂME de l'ancien Égyptien s'éveillait en moi quand mourut ma jeunesse, et j'ai eu l'idée de conserver mon passé, son esprit et sa forme, dans l'art.

Alors trempant le pinceau dans ma mémoire, j'ai peint ses joues pour qu'elles prissent l'exacte ressemblance de la vie, et j'ai enveloppé le mort dans les plus fins linceuls. Rhamèsès le second n'a pas reçu des soins plus pieux ! Que ce livre soit aussi durable que sa pyramide !

Votre nom, cher ami, je voudrais l'inscrire ici comme épitaphe, car vous êtes mon plus jeune et mon plus cher ami ; et il se trouve en vous tout ce qui est gracieux et subtil dans ces mornes années qui s'égouttent dans le vase du vingtième siècle.

G. M.





PREFACE

IF I say that the end of the Nineteenth Century cannot brag of a more original book than "The Confessions of a Young Man," I shall be deemed boastful and arrogant, but if the reader doesn't lay the book aside, he will probably discover me to be a man who would speak truthfully on all occasions, even about his own writings, a subject which lends itself to the exposition of a great deal of hypocrisy and insincerity, vices peculiarly disagreeable to me, and which I would avoid in the preface as I have avoided them in the book. Therefore, I relate that the adjectives that came up in my mind on looking through these Confessions were "original" and "incomplete." No one will object to my applying the word "incomplete" to my own book, but the word "original," how is that to be justified? By a simple statement that the book owes its originality to the circumstances out of which it came rather than from any special talent in the writer. Gaiety, liveliness in plenty . . . talent? I am not sure that the word "talent" is applicable to these Confessions.

At the time of writing them I knew nothing of Jean Jacques Rousseau. It is barely credible that I could have lived into early manhood without having heard of him, but "The Confessions of a Young Man" testifies that I never read him; a page of Jean Jacques would have made the book I am prefacing an impossibility; another book more complete but less original might have been written. I wrote without a model; Jean Jacques, too, wrote without a model, but he wrote at the end of his life, between sixty and sixty-five. His book is life seen in long mysterious perspectives, whereas mine is merely the evanescent haze by the edge of the wood, the enchantment of a May morning. Youth goes forth singing; the song is often crude and superficial; youth cannot be other than superficial; but the book babbles spontaneously and truthfully, and this is why Pater liked it and why it drew from him the letter that I print.

BRASENOSE COLLEGE, Mar. 4.

MY DEAR, AUDACIOUS MOORE.—Many thanks for the "Confessions," which I have read with great interest and admiration for your originality—your delightful criticisms—your Aristophanic joy, or at least enjoyment, in life—your unfailing liveliness. Of course, there are many things in the book I don't agree with. But then, in the case of so satiric a book, I suppose one is hardly expected to agree or