

**FROM MONTAIGNE TO MOLIÈRE;
OR, THE PREPARATION FOR THE
CLASSICAL AGE OF FRENCH
LITERATURE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649123728

From Montaigne to Molière; or, The preparation for the classical age of French literature by
Arthur Tilley

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ARTHUR TILLEY

**FROM MONTAIGNE TO MOLIÈRE;
OR, THE PREPARATION FOR THE
CLASSICAL AGE OF FRENCH
LITERATURE**

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

C. F. CLAY, MANAGER

LONDON : FETTER LANE, E.C. 4



NEW YORK : THE MACMILLAN CO.

BOMBAY

CALCUTTA } MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD.

MADRAS }

TORONTO : THE MACMILLAN CO. OF
CANADA, LTD.

TOKYO : MARUZEN-KABUSHIKI-KAISHA

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



MAR 10 1953

FROM MONTAIGNE
TO MOLIÈRE

OR

THE PREPARATION FOR THE CLASSICAL AGE
OF FRENCH LITERATURE

BY

ARTHUR TILLEY

FELLOW OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

SECOND EDITION, REVISED

CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

1923

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE change which came over English poetry between the death of Shakespeare and the appearance of Pope has been traced by Mr Gosse in his well-known volume *From Shakespeare to Pope*. The similar change from a literature of imagination to a literature of reason which took place in France between the death of Montaigne and the production of Molière's *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, or, in other words, the transition from the Renaissance to the Classical Age, is the subject of the following pages. I have not attempted to write a complete history of French literature during this period, but rather to give an account of the various forces, political, religious, social, and literary, which helped to bring about this change. Even in those chapters which deal exclusively with the literary forces, such as those on Malherbe and Corneille, there will be found nothing like a complete critical estimate of the writers. The chapter on the Catholic revival is a sketch, necessarily brief and imperfect, of a large and important subject, which still awaits its historian. The chapter entitled "The Reign of Bad Taste" deals with matters which are still the subject of considerable controversy—namely, the origin of *préciosité* and the influence of Italy and Spain. I have tried to show that true *préciosité*, though it had its germ in the Hôtel de Rambouillet, did not develop into a real

malady till the days of Mlle de Scudéry, and that it was in no way due, as is often stated by English writers, to an influx of Marinism and Gongorism.

Of the authorities on which I have principally relied, a certain number, more especially those of recent date, will be found mentioned either in the text or in the notes. But for the benefit of students, and as a further acknowledgment of my debts, I will mention some others here. The first place is naturally due to vol. IV of the *Histoire de la langue et de la littérature française*, edited by the late L. Petit de Julleville, a volume of high and singularly even excellence. On all historical matters, including the history of the Catholic revival, I have consulted the *Histoire de France*, edited by M. Lavissee, vol. VI, part II (by M. Mariéjol), and vol. VII, part I, pp. 1-117 (by M. Lavissee). For ecclesiastical history the Abbé Guettée's sound and impartial *Histoire de l'Église de France*, 12 vols., 1847-56, is valuable. The *Essai historique sur l'influence de la religion en France pendant le XVII^e siècle*, by M.-J. Picot, 2 vols., 1824, written from the point of view of a devout Catholic, is uncritical, but it is the only account of the Catholic revival as a whole with which I am acquainted. It is hardly necessary to mention Sainte-Beuve's great work on *Port-Royal* (third edition, 7 vols., 1867): "He who does not know the literature of Port-Royal does not know the seventeenth century," says M. Gazier, the greatest living authority on Port-Royal. It may be said with equal truth that he who does not know Sainte-Beuve's *Port-Royal* does not know the seventeenth century.

Turning to the literary forces of the period, Malherbe, Corneille, and Pascal have all been edited in monumental editions for *Les grands écrivains de la France*; while there are excellent monographs on Corneille (by G. Lanson), Descartes (by A. Fouillée), and Pascal (by E. Boutroux) in the series of *Les grands écrivains français*. That on Malherbe in the same series by the Duc de Broglie is disappointing. Five essays, three of considerable importance, on this period will be found in vol. IV of Brunetière's *Essais critiques*. I must also mention K. Schirmacher, *Théophile de Viau*, Leipzig, 1897; P. Morillot, *Scarron et le genre burlesque*, 1888; l'Abbé Fabre, *Chapelain et nos deux premières académies*, 1890; and Ch. Livet, *Précieux et précieuses*, second edition, 1870. Cousin's brilliant volumes, of which the most important is *La société française au XVII^e siècle d'après le Grand Cyrus de Mlle de Scudéry*, 2 vols., 1852, must be used with caution. The best and most trustworthy account of the Hôtel de Rambouillet and the *Précieuses* is that by E. Bourciez in the *Histoire de la langue et de la littérature française*. I am also indebted to sundry articles in the *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, the *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Litteraturen*, and the *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Litteratur*.

Mr T. F. Crane's *La société française au dix-septième siècle*, New York, 1889, and his edition of Boileau's *Les héros de roman*, Boston, 1902, both with good bibliographical references, will be found very useful by students; and I would specially commend a little book by F. Vial and L. Denise, entitled, *Idées et doctrines*

littéraires du XVII^e siècle, 1906. Recent English works are Miss Haldane's *Descartes, his Life and Times*, 1905; *Angélique of Port-Royal*, by A. K. H., 1905; and *The Story of Port-Royal*, by Mrs Romanes, 1907; while the whole period is treated with judgment and penetration by Professor Grierson in two chapters of his *First Half of the Seventeenth Century* (vol. VII of *Periods of European Literature*), 1906.

In conclusion, I have to express my warm gratitude to my friend the Rev. H. F. Stewart, Fellow and Dean of St John's College, Cambridge, who has read the whole of the proofs.

A. T.

BEEMBRIDGE,
September 4, 1908