

**ESSAYS
IN MOSAIC**

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Essays in Mosaic by Thomas Ballantyne

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THOMAS BALLANTYNE

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" La netteté épargne le longueur, et sert de preuve aux idées."

—VAUVENARGUES, *Maximes*, cccliv.

" Un grand écrivain élève nos âmes à son unisson, et son y réveille le goût latent du beau et du vrai."

—VAN DE WETER, *Opusc. Max.* 132.

ESSAYS IN MOSAIC.

BY

THOMAS BALLANTYNE,

EDITOR OF "SELECTED PARAGRAPHS FROM THOMAS CARLYLE,"
ETC. ETC. ETC.



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1879.

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TO
WILLIAM EDWARD FORSTER, M.P.,
THE UNDAUNTED ADVOCATE
OF A
RELIGIOUS SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION,
THE
FOLLOWING ATTEMPT TO DIFFUSE JUST IDEAS RESPECTING
THE SUPREME IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING
TO THINK ACCURATELY,
AS THE
FOUNDATION OF ALL TRUE KNOWLEDGE AND WISE ACTION,
IS
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

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PREFACE.

THE Editor of the Bayard Series, in introducing this volume to the reader, wishes to say a few words respecting it. The Essays in Mosaic are, as it were, skeleton lay-sermons containing the best and most earnest and weighty sentences of the most thoughtful writers upon matters which concern us all, and which especially concern the welfare of the commonwealth, since, without having reflected deeply on such matters, no man or woman can be a good citizen. How far the compiler of these Essays is fitted for the very important task he has taken upon himself, may be judged by the following sentence from one who never flatters, who weighs every word he utters, and who, in depth and earnestness, is second to none in this age :—

"I have long recognised in Mr Ballantyne a real talent for excerpting significant passages from books, magazines, newspapers (that contain *any* such), and for presenting them in lucid arrangement, and in their most interesting and readable form.—Witness my hand. T. CARLYLE."

The aim of these excerpts, brought, like rays of light into one focus, is to put the reader, as Seneca phrases it, in possession of *himself*, and he who does this, the sage is careful to add, does a great thing. The method employed is to show the reader how to read, and how to think in such a way as shall tend most thoroughly to educate the memory, and to make the will subservient and obedient to the *Ego*. For if a man's memory be but a large sieve, through which all that is valuable passes, leaving but such unproductive and infertile lumps and stones as most would throw away; or if the will is restless and unable to be controlled, no amount of reading will do good. Of course, the art of reflection is more easily learned by one person than another. Whether men be all *equal* or not, is no question here: certainly they are not all the *same*; but whether a man have a large or small faculty of acquisition,