

THE ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURE

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The Elements of Architecture by Henry Wotton

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HENRY WOTTON

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ARCHITECTURE**

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The
ELEMENTS
of
ARCHITECTURE
collected by
W^m Henry Wotton K^t
from the best Authors
and Examples

W

LONDON
M·D·CCCC·III

*your civil observations a good Judge of Arts.
But that which particularly doeth make me
bold to intertayne you therewith is that I have
noted in your gracious eyes some favourable
aspect towards me: whereby I stande in hope
from your Highnesse of the more indulgent
censure of my little paynes: And so I rest*

*Your Highnesse his true
devoted servant*

HENRY WOTTON.

THE PREFACE.

I SHALL not neede (like the most part of Writers) to celebrate the Subject which I deliver. In that point I am at ease. For Architecture, can want no commendation, where there are Noble Men, or Noble mindes; I will therefore spend this Preface, rather about those, from whom I have gathered my knowledge; For I am but a gatherer and disposer of other mens stuffe, at my best value.

Our principall Master is Vitruvius and so I shall often call him; who had this felicitie, that he wrote when the Roman Empire was neere the pitch; Or at least, when Augustus (who favoured his endeavours) had some meaning (if he were not mistaken) to bound the Monarchie: This I say was his good happe; For in growing and enlarging times, Artes are commonly drowned in Action: But on the other side, it was in truth an unhappinesse, to expresse himselfe so ill, especially writing (as he did) in a season of the ablest Pennes; And his obscuritie had this strange fortune; That

Tacit. lib. 1.
Annal.

though he were best practised, and best followed by his owne Countrymen ; yet after the reviving and repolishing of good Literature, (which the combustions and tumults of the middle Age had uncivillized) he was best, or at least, first understood by strangers : For of the Italians that tooke him in hand, Those that were Gramarians seeme to have wanted Mathematicall knowledge ; and the Mathematicians perhaps wanted Gramer : till both were sufficiently conioyned, in Leon-Batista Alberti the Florentine, whom I repute the first learned Architect, beyond the Alpes ; But hee studied more indeede to make himselfe an Author, then to illustrate his Master. Therefore among his Commenters, I must (for my private conceite) yeild the chiefe praise unto the French, in Philander ; and to the high Germans, in Gualterus Rivius : who, besides his notes, hath likewise published the most elaborate translation, that I thinke is extant in any vulgar speech of the world : though not without bewayling, now and then, some defect of Artificiall tearmes in his owne ; as I must likewise ; For if the Saxon, (our mother tongue) did complaine ;

as iustly (I doubt) in this point may the Daughter: Languages, for the most part in tearmes of Art and Erudition, retayning their originall povertie, and rather growing rich and abundant, in complementall phrases and such froth. Touching divers moderne men that have written out of meere practise, I shall give them their due, upon occasion.

And now, after this short Censure of others, I would faine satisfie an Obiection or two, which seeme to lie somewhat heavily upon my selfe; It will be said that I handle an Art, no way suteable either to my employments, or to my fortune. And so I shall stand charged, both with Intrusion, and with Impertinency.

To the First I answer, that though by the ever acknowledged goodnesse of my most deare and gracious SOVERAIGNE; and by his long indulgent toleration of my defects, I have borne abroad some part of his civill service; yet when I came home, and was againe resolved into mine owne simplicitie, I found it fitter for my Pen (at least in this first publique adventure) to deale with these plaine complements, and tractable Materials; then with the Labe-