THE AESTHETIC DOCTRINE OF MONTESQUIEU: ITS APPLICATION IN HIS WRITINGS

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649038756

The Aesthetic Doctrine of Montesquieu: Its Application in His Writings by Edwin Preston Dargan

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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EDWIN PRESTON DARGAN

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Trieste

THE AESTHETIC DOCTRINE OF MONTESQUIEU

ITS APPLICATION IN HIS WRITINGS

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY IN CONFORMITY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

EDWIN PRESTON DARGAN

BALTIMORE
J. H. FURST COMPANY
1907

Forberg

TO

R. H. W.

—"*Ore ai trovet ço que tant avons quis.*"

PREFACE.

The present study was undertaken from a desire to acquire familiarity with the writings of a great Frenchman, and with the purpose of discovering his artistic ideas, of determining his strictly literary value. The desire has been satisfied, but the purpose remains only partly fulfilled. It was hoped that his Aesthetic Doctrine could be made the kernel of a treatment which would include a thorough study of Montesquieu's style, of his setting, of his precursors and influence. Especially was it hoped that there would be opportunity to engage in the fecund criticism of his general ideas.

The writer has not abandoned all hopes of completing this treatment, for which much material has been already collected. During two years, Montesquieu has been the thing most prominently before him; one does not quit a great thinker so easily. At present, however, in view of the specific demands of dissertation-writing and other circumstances, it has seemed best to submit only what may prove, it is trusted, a tolerably exhaustive and rounded presentation of the Doctrine. A final chapter on application has been added, to point, at least, along other paths.

Thanks are due for courteous assistance to the officials of the Library of Congress, of the British Museum and of the Bibliothèque Nationale. More especially would the writer speak in grateful acknowledgment of the encouragement given and the allowances made by his two very considerate referees.

E. P. D.

(April, 1906.)

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