

The Epistle to the Reader.

the Pains to read it. I have so little *Affectation* to be in Print, that if I were not flattered, this Essay might be of some use to others, as I think, it has been to me, I should have confined it to the view of some Friends, who gave the first Occasion to it. My appearing therefore in Print, being on purpose to be as useful as I may, I think it necessary to make what I have to say as easie and intelligible to all sorts of Readers as I can. And I had much rather the speculative and quick-sighted should complain of my being in some parts tedious, than that any one, not accustomed to abstract Speculations, or prepossessed with different Notions, should mistake, or not comprehend my meaning.

It will possibly be censured as a great piece of *Vanity*, or *Insolence* in me, to pretend to instruct this our knowing Age, it amounting to little less, when I own that I publish it with hopes it may be useful to others. But if it may be permitted to speak freely of those, who with a feigned Modesty condemn as useless what they themselves write, methinks it savours much more of *Vanity* or *Insolence*, to publish a Book for any other end; and he fails very much of that Respect he owes the Publick, who prints, and consequently expects Men should read that, wherein he intends not they should meet with any thing of Use to themselves or others: and should nothing else be found allowable in this Treatise, yet my Design will not cease to be so; and the Goodness of my intention ought to be some Excuse for the Worthlessness of my Present. 'Tis that chiefly which secures me from the Fear of Censure, which I expect not to escape more than better Writers. Men's Principles, Notions, and Relishes are so different, that it is hard to find a Book which pleases or displeases all Men. I acknowledge the Age we live in, is not the least knowing, and therefore not the most easie to be satisfied; which if I have not the good luck to doe, no Body yet ought to be offended with me. I plainly tell all my Readers, except half a dozen, this Treatise was not at first intended for them; and therefore they need not be at the Trouble to be of that number. But yet if any one thinks fit to be angry, and rail at it, he may do it securely: For I shall find some better way of spending my time, than in such kind of Conversation. I shall always have the satisfaction to have aimed sincerely at Truth and Usefulness, though in one of the meanest ways. The Commonwealth of Learning, is not at this time without Master-Builders, whose mighty Designs in advancing the Sciences, will leave lasting Monuments to the Admiration of Posterity; But every one must not hope to be a Boyle, or a Sydenham; and in an Age that produces such Masters, as the Great — Huygenius, and the incomparable Mr. Newton, with some other of that Strain; 'tis Ambition enough to be employed as an Under-Labourer in clearing the Ground a little, and removing some of the Rubbish, that lies in the way to Knowledge; which certainly had been very much more advanced in the World, if