

166

BOHN'S BRITISH CLASSICS.

---

BURKE'S WORKS.

*Preliminary Volume to the Standard Library Edition  
Burke's Works.*

---

L I F E

OF

THE RIGHT HON. EDMUND BURKE,

BY

JAMES PRIOR, ESQ.

FIFTH EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED.

With Fine Portrait.

*Printed uniformly with the present Edition, to which it forms an  
essential accompaniment Volume.*

*Price 3s. 6d.*

THE WORKS

OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDMUND BURKE.

VOL. I.

A VINDICATION OF NATURAL SOCIETY.  
AN ESSAY ON THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.  
POLITICAL MISCELLANIES.

LONDON:  
HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

MDCCLIV.

V306L29

A855.1

3209

# CONTENTS.

## VOL. I.

	PAGE
A VINDICATION OF NATURAL SOCIETY: or, a View of the Miseries and Evils arising to Mankind from every Species of Artificial Society	1
A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS OF THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL; with an Introductory Discourse concerning Taste	49
Introduction. On Taste	52
PART I.	
SECT. I. Novelty	67
II. Pain and Pleasure	68
III. The Difference between the Removal of Pain, and positive Pleasure	70
IV. Of Delight and Pleasure, as opposed to each other	71
V. Joy and Grief	73
VI. Of the Passions which belong to Self-preservation	74
VII. Of the Sublime	ib.
VIII. Of the Passions which belong to Society	75
IX. The final cause of the Difference between the Passions belonging to Self-preservation, and those which regard the Society of the Sexes	76
X. Of Beauty	77
XI. Society and Solitude	78
XII. Sympathy, Imitation, and Ambition	ib.
XIII. Sympathy	79
XIV. The Effects of Sympathy in the Distresses of others	ib.
XV. Of the Effects of Tragedy	81

	PAGE
SECT. XVI. Imitation . . . . .	82
XVII. Ambition . . . . .	83
XVIII. The Recapitulation . . . . .	84
XIX. The Conclusion . . . . .	85

#### ON THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.—PART II.

SECT. I. Of the Passion caused by the Sublime . . . . .	88
II. Terror . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
III. Obscurity . . . . .	89
IV. Of the Difference between Clearness and Obscurity with regard to the Passions . . . . .	90
[IV.] The same subject continued . . . . .	91
V. Power . . . . .	94
VI. Privation . . . . .	99
VII. Vastness . . . . .	100
VIII. Infinity . . . . .	101
IX. Succession and Uniformity . . . . .	102
X. Magnitude in Building . . . . .	103
XI. Infinity in pleasing Objects . . . . .	104
XII. Difficulty . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
XIII. Magnificence . . . . .	105
XIV. Light . . . . .	106
XV. Light in Building . . . . .	108
XVI. Colour considered as productive of the Sublime . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
XVII. Sound and Loudness . . . . .	109
XVIII. Suddenness . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
XIX. Intermitting . . . . .	110
XX. The Cries of Animals . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
XXI. Smell and Taste. Bitters and Stenches . . . . .	111
XXII. Feeling. Pain . . . . .	112

#### ON THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.—PART III.

SECT. I. Of Beauty . . . . .	113
II. Proportion not the Cause of Beauty in Vegetables . . . . .	114
III. Proportion not the Cause of Beauty in Animals . . . . .	117
IV. Proportion not the Cause of Beauty in the Human Species . . . . .	118
V. Proportion further considered . . . . .	122
VI. Fitness not the cause of Beauty . . . . .	125
VII. The real Effects of Fitness . . . . .	127

CONTENTS.

vii

	PAGE
SECT. VIII. The Recapitulation . . . . .	129
IX. Perfection not the cause of Beauty . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
X. How far the Idea of Beauty may be applied to the Qualities of the Mind . . . . .	130
XI. How far the Idea of Beauty may be applied to Virtue . . . . .	131
XII. The real Cause of Beauty . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
XIII. Beautiful Objects small . . . . .	132
XIV. Smoothness . . . . .	133
XV. Gradual Variation . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
XVI. Delicacy . . . . .	134
XVII. Beauty in Colour . . . . .	135
XVIII. Recapitulation . . . . .	136
XIX. The Physiognomy . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
XX. The Eye . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
XXI. Ugliness . . . . .	137
XXII. Grace . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
XXIII. Elegance and Speciousness . . . . .	138
XXIV. The Beautiful in Feeling . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
XXV. The Beautiful in Sounds . . . . .	140
XXVI. Taste and Smell . . . . .	141
XXVII. The Sublime and Beautiful compared . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>

ON THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.—PART IV.

SECT. I. Of the efficient Cause of the Sublime and Beautiful . . . . .	143
II. Association . . . . .	144
III. Cause of Pain and Fear . . . . .	145
IV. Continued . . . . .	146
V. How the Sublime is produced . . . . .	147
VI. How Pain can be a Cause of Delight . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
VII. Exercise necessary for the finer Organs . . . . .	148
VIII. Why things not dangerous sometimes produce a Passion like Terror . . . . .	149
IX. Why visual Objects of great Dimensions are sublime . . . . .	<i>ib.</i>
X. Unity, why requisite to Vastness . . . . .	150
XI. The artificial Infinite . . . . .	151
XII. The Vibrations must be similar . . . . .	152
XIII. The Effects of Succession in visual objects explained . . . . .	153
XIV. Locke's Opinion concerning Darkness considered . . . . .	155
XV. Darkness terrible in its own nature . . . . .	156
XVI. Why Darkness is terrible . . . . .	157
XVII. The Effects of Blackness . . . . .	158

	PAGE
SECT. XVIII. The Effects of Blackness moderated . . . . .	182
XIX. The physical Cause of Love . . . . .	183
XX. Why Smoothness is beautiful . . . . .	184
XXI. Sweetness, its Nature . . . . .	185
XXII. Sweetness relaxing . . . . .	18
XXIII. Variation, why beautiful . . . . .	16
XXIV. Concerning Smallness . . . . .	1638
XXV. Of Colour . . . . .	166.
ON THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.—PART V.	
89	89
SECT. I. Of Words . . . . .	100
II. The Common Effects of Poetry, not by raising Ideas of things . . . . .	91
III. General Words before Ideas . . . . .	1794
IV. The Effect of Words . . . . .	1799
V. Examples that Words may affect without raising Images . . . . .	1700
VI. Poetry not strictly an imitative Art . . . . .	1701
VII. How Words influence the Passions . . . . .	1702
	1703
	1704
SHORT ACCOUNT OF A LATE SHORT ADMINISTRATION . . . . .	185.
OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE PUBLICATION, INTITLED THE PRESENT STATE OF THE NATION . . . . .	15 6
THOUGHTS ON THE CAUSE OF THE PRESENT DISCONTENTS . . . . .	1858 300.
X SPEECH ON AMERICAN TAXATION . . . . .	19 38.
SPEECHES AT MR. BURKE'S ARRIVAL AT BRISTOL, AND AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE POLL . . . . .	0 438.
SPEECH ON MOVING HIS RESOLUTIONS FOR CONCILIATION WITH AMERICA . . . . .	1 2 450



A VINDICATION  
OF  
NATURAL SOCIETY:  
OR, A VIEW OF  
THE MISERIES AND EVILS ARISING TO MANKIND  
FROM EVERY SPECIES OF  
ARTIFICIAL SOCIETY.  
IN A LETTER TO LORD \*\*\*\*,  
BY A LATE NOBLE WRITER.

1756.

## P R E F A C E.

BEFORE the philosophical works of Lord BOLINGBROKE had appeared, great things were expected from the leisure of a man, who, from the splendid scene of action in which his talents had enabled him to make so conspicuous a figure, had retired to employ those talents in the investigation of truth. Philosophy began to congratulate herself upon such a prodigy, a prodigy from the world of business, and hoped to have extended her power under the auspices of such a leader. In the midst of these pleasing expectations, the works themselves at last appeared in *full body*, and with great pomp. Those who searched in them for new discoveries in the mysteries of nature; those who expected something which might explain or direct the operations of the mind; those who hoped to see morality illustrated and enforced; those who looked for new helps to society and government; those who desired to see the characters and passions of mankind delineated; in short, all who consider such things as philosophy, and require some of them at least in every philosophical work, all these were certainly disappointed; they found the landmarks of science precisely in their former places: and they thought they received but a poor recompense for this disappointment, in seeing every mode of religion attacked in a lively manner, and the foundation of every virtue, and of all government, supported with great art and much ingenuity. What advantage do we derive from such writings? What delight can a man find in employing a capacity which might be usefully exerted for the noblest purposes, in a sort of sullen labour, in which, if the author could succeed, he is obliged to own, that nothing could be more fatal to mankind than his success?

I cannot conceive how this sort of writers propose to com-

## PREFACE.

pass the designs they pretend to have in view, by the insinuations which they employ. Do they pretend to exalt the mind of man, by proving him no better than a beast? Do they think to enforce the practice of virtue, by denying that vice and virtue are distinguished by good or ill fortune here, or by happiness or misery hereafter? Do they imagine they shall increase our piety, and our reliance on God, by exploding his providence, and insisting that he is neither just nor good? Such are the doctrines which, sometimes concealed, sometimes openly and fully avowed, are found to prevail throughout the writings of Lord BOLINGBROKE; and such are the reasonings which this noble writer and several others have been pleased to dignify with the name of philosophy. If these are delivered in a specious manner, and in a style above the common, they cannot want a number of admirers as much docility as can be wished for in disciples. To these the editor of the following little piece has addressed it: there is no reason to conceal the design of it any longer.

The design was, to show that, without the exertion of any considerable forces, the same engines which were employed for the destruction of religion, might be employed with equal success for the subversion of government; and that specious arguments might be used against those things which they, who doubt of everything else, will never permit to be questioned. It is an observation which I think Isocrates makes in one of his orations against the sophists, that it is far more easy to maintain a wrong cause, and to support paradoxical opinions to the satisfaction of a common auditory, than to establish a doubtful truth by solid and conclusive arguments. When men find that something can be said in favour of what, on the very proposal, they have thought utterly indefensible, they grow doubtful of their own reason; they are thrown into a sort of pleasing surprise; they run along with the speaker, charmed and captivated to find such a plentiful harvest of reasoning, where all seemed barren and unpromising. This is the fairy land of philosophy. And it very frequently happens, that those pleasing impressions on the imagination, subsist and produce their effect, even after the understanding has been satisfied of their unsubstantial nature. There is a sort of gloss upon ingenious falsehoods, that dazzles the imagination, but which neither belongs to, nor becomes the

sober aspect of, truth] I have met with a quotation in Lord Coke's Reports that pleased me very much, though I do not know from whence he has taken it: "*Interdum fucata falsitas, (says he,) in multis est probabilior, et sæpe rationibus vincit nudam veritatem.*" In such cases, the writer has a certain fire and alacrity inspired into him by a consciousness, that, let it fare how it will with the subject, his ingenuity will be sure of applause; and this alacrity becomes much greater if he acts upon the offensive, by the impetuosity that always accompanies an attack, and the unfortunate propensity which mankind have to the finding and exaggerating faults. The editor is satisfied that a mind, which has no restraint from a sense of its own weakness, of its subordinate rank in the creation, and of the extreme danger of letting the imagination loose upon some subjects, may very plausibly attack everything the most excellent and venerable; that it would not be difficult to criticise the creation itself; and that if we were to examine the divine fabrics by our ideas of reason and fitness, and to use the same method of attack by which some men have assaulted revealed religion, we might with as good colour, and with the same success, make the wisdom and power of God in his creation appear to many no better than foolishness. There is an air of plausibility which accompanies vulgar reasonings and notions, taken from the beaten circle of ordinary experience, that is admirably suited to the narrow capacities of some, and to the laziness of others. But this advantage is in a great measure lost, when a painful, comprehensive survey of a very complicated matter, and which requires a great variety of considerations, is to be made; when we must seek in a profound subject, not only for arguments, but for new materials of argument, their measures and their method of arrangement; when we must go out of the sphere of our ordinary ideas, and when we can never walk sure, but by being sensible of our blindness. And this we must do, or we do nothing, whenever we examine the result of a reason which is not our own. Even in matters which are, as it were, just within our reach, what would become of the world, if the practice of all moral duties, and the foundations of society, rested upon having their reasons made clear and demonstrative to every individual?

The editor knows that the subject of this letter is not so

fully handled as obviously it might; it was not his design to say all that could possibly be said. It had been inexcusable to fill a large volume with the abuse of reason; nor would such an abuse have been tolerable, even for a few pages, if some under-plot, of more consequence than the apparent design, had not been carried on.

Some persons have thought that the advantages of the state of nature ought to have been more fully displayed. This had undoubtedly been a very ample subject for declamation; but they do not consider the character of the piece. The writers against religion, whilst they oppose every system, are wisely careful never to set up any of their own. If some inaccuracies in calculation, in reasoning, or in method, be found, perhaps these will not be looked upon as faults by the admirers of Lord BOLINGBROKE; who will, the editor is afraid, observe much more of his Lordship's character in such particulars of the following letter, than they are likely to find of that rapid torrent of an impetuous and overbearing eloquence, and the variety of rich imagery for which that writer is justly admired.