

## P R E F A C E.

**T**HE great Ideas formed from consulting ancient Authors in their Descriptions of the famous Edifices in *Greece*, and the little Improvement or Certainty to be obtained of their real Excellence, from consulting modern Travellers, was the Motive, and no doubt a very proper one, which induced *Monf. Le Roy, a Frenchman*, to visit the once so famed City of *ATHENS*: Who, there assisted by Royal Munificence and every other Requisite which could aid his own great Genius, has removed the Fable of Antiquity; and, by Representation, not only given us the present Situation of the Remains of those valuable Monuments, but, likewise, from his painful Researches into the various and just Proportions, filled our Imaginations with their former Beauty and Magnificence; and, at the same Time, by his Rules and Observations, given us many Lessons for easy and perfect Imitation.

And though we gladly acknowledge the Benefits received from *Mess. Wood and Dawkins*, yet we cannot but lament that their elegant Designs are without such Observations as must occur in those Treasures of Antiquity, which might improve or assist the best Architect of our Time.

In this, *Le Roy* has been very ample, and well deserves our Thanks. The Necessity of such a Procedure will be found on comparing the Sheets before us, in which will appear a vast Difference between the Proportion, Elegance, and Use of the ancient Edifices, and those to be met with in the best Structures of our Time. And many great Lights are thrown on some seeming obscure Passages of *Vitruvius*, who, having drawn his Judgment in Architecture from those pure Fountains of Antiquity, transmitted that Knowledge to Posterity in an unpolluted Stream; which, if it had descended so to us, would no doubt have well answered the Purpose of Instruction intended by that great Master. Whether to Negligence or Design, we may ascribe it, cannot be determined, but this may be averred, that even his best Commentators are extremely incorrect and inconsistent, and so deviate from his Design in Architecture, that there is rarely now to be met with the least Composition deserving his Name; the supplying of which Loss, as also an Attempt to restore Architecture to its ancient Dignity, are intended by the ensuing Work. A Work it is hoped, executed in such a Manner (no Inquiry, Labour or Expence having been spared) as to adorn the Libraries of the Learned and Curious; and, at the same Time, capable of aiding the Student, and assisting the Master, even to acquire in that Science what may be termed the Sublime.

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