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**The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.**

In Four Volumes

**Addison, Joseph**

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Naples.

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## N A P L E S.

**M**Y first days at *Naples* were taken up with the sight of processions, which are always very magnificent in the Holy-Week. It would be tedious to give an account of the several representations of our Saviour's death and resurrection, of the figures of himself, the Blessed Virgin, and the Apostles, which are carryed up and down on this occasion, with the cruel penances that several inflict on themselves, and the multitude of ceremonies that attend these solemnities. I saw, at the same time, a very splendid procession for the accession of the Duke of *Anjou* to the Crown of *Spain*, in which the Vice-Roy bore his part at the left-hand of Cardinal *Cantelmi*. To grace the parade, they exposed, at the same time, the blood of *St. Januarius*, which liquefied at the approach of the Saint's head, though, as they say, it was hard congealed before. I had twice an opportunity of seeing the operation of this pretended miracle, and must confess I think it so far from being a real miracle, that I look upon it as one of the most bungling tricks that I ever saw: Yet it is this that makes as great a noise as any in the *Roman* Church, and that Monsieur *Paschal* has hinted at among the rest, in his marks of the true religion. The modern *Neapolitans* seem to have copied it out from one, which was shown in a town of the Kingdom of *Naples*, as long ago as in *Horace's* time.

— *Dehinc Gnatia lymphis*  
*Iratis extructa dedit risusque jocosque,*  
*Dum flammâ sine thura liquefcere limine Sacro*  
*Persuadere cupit: credat Judæus apella,*  
 Non ego—

Sat. 5. L. 1.

At *Gnatia* next arriv'd, we laugh'd to see  
 The superstitious croud's simplicity,

That

That in the sacred temple needs would try  
 Without a fire th' unheated gums to fry ;  
 Believe who will the solemn sham, not I.

One may see at least that the heathen Priesthood had the same kind of secret among them, of which the *Roman* Catholicks are now masters.

I must confess, though I had lived above a year in a *Roman* Catholick country, I was surprized to see many ceremonies and superstitions in *Naples*, that are not so much as thought of in *France*. But as it is certain there has been a kind of secret reformation made, though not publickly owned, in the *Roman* Catholick church, since the spreading of the Protestant religion, so we find the several nations are recovered out of their ignorance, in proportion as they converse more or less with those of the reformed churches. For this reason the *French* are much more enlightened than the *Spaniards* or *Italians*, on occasion of their frequent controversies with the *Huguenots*; and we find many of the *Roman* Catholick Gentlemen of our own country, who will not stick to laugh at the superstitions they sometimes meet with in other nations.

I shall not be particular in describing the grandeur of the city of *Naples*, the beauty of its pavement, the regularity of its buildings, the magnificence of its churches and convents, the multitude of its inhabitants, or the delightfulness of its situation, which so many others have done with a great deal of leisure and exactness. If a war should break out, the town has reason to apprehend the exacting of a large contribution, or a bombardment. It has but seven gallies, a mole, and two little castles, which are capable of hindering an enemy's approaches. Besides, that the sea, which lyes near it, is not subject to storms, has no sensible flux and reflux, and is so deep, that a vessel of burden may come up to the very mole. The houses are flat roof'd to walk upon, so that every bomb that fell on them would take effect.

Pictures, statues, and pieces of antiquity are not so common at *Naples*, as one might expect in so great and ancient a city of *Italy*; for the Vice-Roys take care to send into *Spain* every thing that is valuable of this nature. Two of their finest modern statues are those of *Apollo* and *Minerva*, placed on each side of *Sannazarius's* tomb. On the face of this monument, which is all of marble, and very neatly wrought, is represented, in *Bas relief*, *Neptune* among the Satyrs, to show that this Poet was the inventor of piscatory eclogues. I remember *Hugo Grotius* describes

describes himself in one of his Poems, as the first that brought the Muses to the sea-side, but he must be understood only of the Poets of his own country. I here saw the temple that *Sannazarius* mentions in his invocation of the Blessed Virgin, at the beginning of his *De partu Virginis*, which was all raised at his own expence.

—*Niveis tibi si solennia templis  
Serta damus; si mansuras tibi ponimus aras  
Exciso in scopulo, fluctus unde aurea canos  
Despiciens celso de culmine Mergilline  
Attollit, nautisque procul venientibus offert.  
Tu vatem ignarumque viae insuetumque labori  
Diva mone*—————

L. I.

Thou bright celestial Goddess, if to thee  
An acceptable temple I erect,  
With fairest flowers and freshest garlands deck'd,  
On tow'ring rocks, whence *Margilline* spies  
The ruffled deep in storms and tempests rise;  
Guide thou the pious Poet, nor refuse  
Thine own propitious aid to his unpractis'd Muse.

There are several very delightful prospects about *Naples*, especially from some of the religious houses; for one seldom finds in *Italy* a spot of ground more agreeable than ordinary, that is not covered with a convent. The Cupola's of this city, though there are many of them, do not appear to the best advantage when one surveys them at a distance, as being generally too high and narrow. The Marquis of *Medina Cidonia*, in his Vice-Royalty, made the shell of a house, which he had not time to finish, that commands a view of the whole bay, and would have been a very noble building had he brought it to perfection.

It stands so on the side of a mountain that it would have had a garden to every story, by the help of a bridge which was to have been laid over each garden.

The bay of *Naples* is the most delightful one that I ever saw. It lies in almost a round figure of about thirty miles in the diameter. Three parts of it are sheltered with a noble circuit of woods and mountains. The high promontory of *Surrentum* divides it from the bay of *Salernum*. Between the utmost point of this promontory, and the Isle of *Capera*, the sea enters by a freight of about three miles wide. This Island stands

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as a vast Mole, which seems to have been planted there on purpose to break the violence of the waves that run into the bay. It lyes long-ways, almost in a parallel line to *Naples*. The excessive height of its rocks secures a great part of the bay from winds and waves, which enter again between the other end of this Island and the Promontory of *Miseno*. The bay of *Naples* is called the *Crater* by the old Geographers, probably from this its resemblance to a round bowl half filled with liquor. Perhaps *Virgil*, who composed here a great part of his *Æneids*, took from hence the plan of that beautiful harbour, which he has made in his first book; for the *Libyan* port is but the *Neapolitan* bay in little.

*Est in secessu longo locus. Insula portum  
Efficit objectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto  
Frangitur, inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos:  
Hinc atque hinc vastæ rupes geminique minantur  
In cælum scopuli, quorum sub vertice latè  
Æquora tuta silent, tum Silvæ scena coruscis  
Desuper, horrentique atrum nemus imminet umbrâ.*

1. Æn.

Within a long recess there lyes a Bay,  
An island shades it from the rousing sea,  
And forms a port secure for ships to ride.  
Broke by the jutting land on either side,  
In double streams the briny waters glide,  
Between two rows of rocks: a *Sylvan* scene  
Appears above, and groves for ever green.

Dryden.

*Naples* stands in the bosom of this bay, and has the pleasantest situation in the world, though by reason of its western mountains, it wants an advantage *Vitruvius* would have to the front of his Palace, of seeing the setting Sun.

One would wonder how the *Spaniards*, who have but very few forces in the kingdom of *Naples*, should be able to keep a people from revolting, that has been famous for its mutinies and seditions in former ages. But they have so well contrived it, that though the subjects are miserably harassed and oppressed, the greatest of their oppressors are those of their own body. I shall not mention any thing of the Clergy, who are sufficiently reproached in most Itineraries for the universal poverty that one meets with in this noble and plentiful kingdom. A great part of the people is in a state of vassalage to the Barons, who are the harshest tyrants

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in the world to those that are under them. The vassals indeed are allowed, and invited to bring in their complaints and appeals to the Vice-Roy, who to foment divisions, and gain the hearts of the populace, does not stick at imprisoning and chastising their masters very severely on occasion. The subjects of the Crown are notwithstanding much more rich and happy than the vassals of the Barons. Infomuch that when the King has been upon the point of selling a town to one of his Barons, the inhabitants have raised the sum upon themselves, and presented it to the King, that they might keep out of so insupportable a slavery. Another way the *Spaniards* have taken to grind the *Neapolitans*, and yet to take off the *Odium* from themselves, has been by erecting several Courts of Justice, with a very small pension for such as sit at the head of them, so that they are tempted to take bribes, keep causes undecided, encourage law-suits, and do all they can to fleece the people, that they may have wherewithal to support their own dignity. It is incredible how great a multitude of retainers to the Law there are at *Naples*. It is commonly said, that when *Innocent* the eleventh had desired the Marquis of *Carpio* to furnish him with thirty thousand head of Swine, the Marquis answered him, that for his Swine he could not spare them, but if his Holiness had occasion for thirty thousand Lawyers he had them at his service. These Gentlemen find a continual employ for the fiery temper of the *Neapolitans*, and hinder them from uniting in such common friendships and alliances as might endanger the safety of the government. There are very few persons of consideration who have not a cause depending; for when a *Neapolitan* Cavalier has nothing else to do, he gravely shuts himself up in his closet, and falls a tumbling over his papers to see if he can start a law-suit, and plague any of his neighbours. So much is the Genius of this people changed since *Statius's* time.

*Nulla foro rabies, aut stricta jurgia legis  
Morum jura viris solum et sine fascibus equum.*

Sil. L. 3.

By love of right and native justice led,  
In the straight paths of equity they tread;  
Nor know the bar, nor fear the Judge's frown,  
Unpractis'd in the wranglings of the gown.

There is another circumstance which makes the *Neapolitans*, in a very particular manner, the oppressors of each other. The Gables of *Naples* are very high on oil, wine, tobacco, and indeed on almost every thing that

that can be eaten, drank or worn. There would have been one on fruit, had not *Massianello's* rebellion abolished it, as it has probably put a stop to many others. What makes these imposts more intolerable to the poorer sort, they are laid on all butchers meat, while at the same time the fowl and gibier are tax-free. Besides, all meat being taxed equally by the pound, it happens that the duty lyes heaviest on the coarser sorts, which are most likely to fall to the share of the common people, so that beef perhaps pays a third, and veal a tenth of its price to the government, a pound of either sort having the same tax fixed on it. These gabels are most of them at present in the hands of private men; for as the King of *Spain* has had occasion for mony he has borrowed it of the rich *Neapolitans*, on condition that they should receive the interest out of such or such gabels 'till he could repay them the principal.

This he has repeated so often that at present there is scarce a single gabel unmortgaged; so that there is no place in *Europe* which pays greater taxes, and at the same time no Prince who draws less advantage from them. In other countries the people have the satisfaction of seeing the mony they give spent in the necessities, defence, or ornament of their State, or at least in the vanity or pleasures of their Prince: but here most of it goes to the enriching of their fellow-subjects. If there was not so great a plenty of every thing in *Naples* the people could not bear it. The *Spaniard* however reaps this advantage from the present posture of affairs, that the murmurs of the people are turned upon their own countrymen, and what is more considerable, that almost all the persons, of the greatest wealth and power in *Naples* are engaged by their own interests to pay these impositions chearfully, and to support the government which has laid them on. For this reason, though the poorer sort are for the Emperor, few of the persons of consequence can endure to think of a change in their present establishment; though there is no question but the King of *Spain* will reform most of these abuses, by breaking or retrenching the power of the Barons, by cancelling several unnecessary employs, or by ransoming or taking the gabels into his own hands. I have been told too, there is a law of *Charles* the fifth something like our statute of Mort-main, which has laid dormant ever since his time, and will probably have new life put into it under the reign of an active Prince. The inhabitants of *Naples* have been always very notorious for leading a life of laziness and pleasure, which I take to arise partly out of the wonderful plenty of their country, that does not make labour so necessary to them, and partly out of the temper of their climate, that relaxes the fibres of

their bodies, and disposes the people to such an idle indolent humour. Whatever it proceeds from, we find they were formerly as famous for it as they are at present.

This was perhaps the reason that the ancients tell us one of the *Sirens* was buried in this city, which thence received the name of *Parthenope*.

——— *Improba Siren*

*Desidia* ——

Hor. Sa. 3. L. 2.

Sloth, the deluding *Siren* of the mind.

——— *Et in otia natam*

*Parthenopen* ——

Ov. Met. L. 15.

——— *Otiosa Neapolis.*

H. Ep. 5.

*Parthenope*, for idle hours design'd,  
To luxury and ease unbends the mind.

*Parthenope non dives opum, non spreta vigoris,  
Nam molles urbi ritus atque hospita Musis  
Otia, et exemptum curis gravioribus ævum:  
Sirenum dedit una suum et memorabile nomen  
Parthenope muris Acheloiæ, equore cujus  
Regnavere diu cantus, cum dulce per undas  
Exitium miseris caneret non prospera nautis.*

Sil. It. L. 12.

Here wanton *Naples* crowns the happy shore,  
Nor vainly rich, nor despicably poor,  
The town in soft solemnities delights,  
And gentle Poets to her arms invites;  
The people, free from cares, serene and gay,  
Pass all their mild untroubled hours away.  
*Parthenope* the rising city nam'd,  
A *Siren*, for her songs and beauty fam'd,  
That oft had drown'd among the neighb'ring seas  
The list'ning wretch, and made destruction please.

*Has ego te sedes (nam nec mihi barbara Thrace  
Nec Libye natale solum) transferre laboro:  
Quas te mollis hyems et frigida temperat æstas,  
Quas imbelle fretum, torpentibus alluit undis:  
Pax secura locis, et desidis otia vitæ,*

*Et*



*Et nunquam turbata quies, somnique peracti:  
Nulla foro rabies, &c.*

Stat. Sil. L. 3:

These are the gentle seats that I propose;  
For not cold *Scythia's* undissolving snows,  
Nor the parch'd *Libyan* sands thy husband bore,  
But mild *Parthenope's* delightful shore,  
Where hush'd in calms the bord'ring ocean laves  
Her silent coast, and rolls in languid waves;  
Refreshing winds the summer's heats assuage,  
And kindly warmth disarms the winter's rage;  
Remov'd from noise and the tumultuous war,  
Soft sleep and downy ease inhabit there,  
And dreams unbroken with intruding care.

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*The Antiquities and Natural Curiosities  
that lye near the City of Naples.*

**A**T about eight miles distance from *Naples* lyes a very noble scene of antiquities. What they call *Virgil's* tomb is the first that one meets with on the way thither. It is certain this Poet was buried at *Naples*, but I think it is almost as certain that his tomb stood on the other side of the town which looks towards *Vesuvio*. By this tomb is the entry into the grotto of *Pausilypo*. The common people of *Naples* believe it to have been wrought by magick, and that *Virgil* was the magician; who is in greater repute among the *Neapolitans* for having made the Grotto, than the *Aeneid*.

If a man would form to himself a just idea of this place, he must fancy a vast rock undermined from one end to the other, and a highway running through it, near as long and as broad as the Mall in *St. James's* park. This subterraneous passage is much mended since *Seneca* gave so

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