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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

London, 1721

Bolonia, Modena, Parma, Turin, &c.

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In pomp the shady *Appennines* arise,
 And lift th' aspiring nation to the skies;
 No land like *Italy* erects the fight
 By such a vast ascent, or swells to such a height:
 Her num'rous states the tow'ring hills divide,
 And see the billows rise on either side;
 At *Pisa* here the range of mountains ends,
 And here to high *Ancona's* shores extends:
 In their dark womb a thousand rivers lye,
 That with continu'd streams the double sea supply.

Bologna, Modena, Parma, Turin, &c.

AFTER a very tedious journey over the *Appennines*, we at last came to the river that runs at the foot of them, and was formerly called the little *Rhine*. Following the course of this river we arrived in a short time at *Bologna*.

——— *Parvique Bononia Rheni.* Sil. It. 8.

Bologna water'd by the petty *Rhine*.

We here quickly felt the difference of the northern from the southern side of the mountains, as well in the coldness of the air, as in the badness of the wine. This town is famous for the richness of the soil that lyes about it, and the magnificence of its Convents. It is likewise esteemed the third in *Italy* for pictures, as having been the school of the *Lombard* painters. I saw in it three rarities of different kinds, which pleased me more than any other shows of the place. The first was an authentick silver Medal of the younger *Brutus*, in the hands of an eminent Antiquary. One may see the character of the person in the features of the face, which is exquisitely well cut. On the reverse is the cap of liberty, with a dagger on each side of it, subscribed *Id. Mar.* for the Ides of *March*, the famous date of *Cæsar's* murder. The second was a picture of *Ra-*

phel's

phel's in St. *Giouanni* in *Monte*. It is extremely well preserved, and represents St. *Cecilia* with an instrument of musick in her hands. On one side of her are the figures of St. *Paul*, and St. *John*; and on the other, of *Mary Magdalene*, and St. *Austin*. There is something wonderfully divine in the airs of this picture. I cannot forbear mentioning, for my third curiosity, a new Stair-case that strangers are generally carried to see, where the easiness of the ascent within so small a compass, the disposition of the lights, and the convenient landing, are admirably well contrived. The wars of *Italy*, and the season of the year, made me pass through the Dutchies of *Modena*, *Parma*, and *Savoy* with more haste than I would have done at another time. The soil of *Modena* and *Parma* is very rich and well cultivated. The palaces of the Princes are magnificent, but neither of them is yet finished. We procured a licence of the Duke of *Parma* to enter the Theater and Gallery, which deserve to be seen as well as any thing of that nature in *Italy*. The Theater is, I think, the most spacious of any I ever saw, and at the same time so admirably well contrived, that from the very depth of the stage the lowest sound may be heard distinctly to the farthest part of the audience, as in a whispering-place; and yet if you raise your voice as high as you please, there is nothing like an echo to cause in it the least confusion. The Gallery is hung with a numerous collection of pictures, all done by celebrated hands. On one side of the gallery is a large room adorned with inlaid tables, cabinets, works in amber, and other pieces of great art and value. Out of this we were led into another great room, furnished with old Inscriptions, Idols, Busts, Medals, and the like Antiquities. I could have spent a day with great satisfaction in this apartment, but had only time to pass my eye over the Medals, which are in great number, and many of them very rare. The scarcest of all is a *Pescennius Niger* on a Medalion well preserved. It was coined at *Antioch*, where this Emperor trifled away his time till he lost his Life and Empire. The reverse is a *Dea Salus*. There are two of *Otho*, the reverse a *Serapis*; and two of *Messalina* and *Poppæa* in middle brass, the reverses of the Emperor *Claudius*. I saw two Medalions of *Plotina* and *Matidia*, the reverse to each a *Pietas*; with two Medals of *Pertinax*, the reverse of one *Vota Decennialia*, and of the other *Diis Custodibus*; and another of *Gordianus Africanus*, the reverse I have forgot.

The Principalities of *Modena* and *Parma* are much about the same extent, and have each of them two large towns, besides a great number of little villages. The Duke of *Parma* however is much richer than the Duke

Duke of *Modena*. Their subjects would live in great plenty amidst so rich and well cultivated a soil, were not the taxes and impositions so very exorbitant; for the Courts are much too splendid and magnificent for the territories that lye about them, and one cannot but be amazed to see such a profusion of wealth laid out in Coaches, Trappings, Tables, Cabinets, and the like precious toys, in which there are few Princes of *Europe* who equal them, when at the same time they have not had the generosity to make Bridges over the rivers of their countries for the convenience of their subjects, as well as strangers, who are forced to pay an unreasonable exaction at every ferry upon the least rising of the waters. A man might well expect in these small governments a much greater regulation of affairs, for the ease and benefit of the people, than in large overgrown states, where the rules of justice, beneficence, and mercy may be easily put out of their course, in passing through the hands of deputies, and a long subordination of officers. And it would certainly be for the good of mankind to have all the mighty Empires and Monarchies of the world cantoned out into petty States and Principalities, that, like so many large families, might lye under the eye and observation of their proper Governors; so that the care of the Prince might extend it self to every individual person under his protection. But since such a general scheme can never be brought about, and if it were, it would quickly be destroyed by the ambition of some particular state aspiring above the rest, it happens very ill at present to be born under one of these petty Sovereigns, that will be still endeavouring, at his subjects cost, to equal the pomp and grandeur of greater Princes, as well as to out-vie those of his own rank.

For this reason there are no people in the world who live with more ease and prosperity than the subjects of little Common-wealths, as on the contrary there are none who suffer more under the grievances of a hard government, than the subjects of little Principalities. I left the road of *Milan*, on my right-hand, having before seen that city, and after having passed through *Asti*, the frontier town of *Savoy*, I at last came within sight of the *Po*, which is a fine river even at *Turin*, though within six miles of its source. This river has been made the scene of two or three poetical stories. *Ovid* has chosen it out to throw his *Phaeton* into it, after all the smaller rivers had been dried up in the conflagration.

I have read some Botanical criticks, who tell us the Poets have not rightly followed the traditions of Antiquity, in metamorphosing the sisters of *Phaëton* into Poplars, who ought to have been turned into Larch-trees; for that it is this kind of tree which sheds a Gum, and is commonly
found

found on the banks of the *Po*. The change of *Cycnus* into a Swan, which closes up the disasters of *Phaeton's* family, was wrought on the same place where the sisters were turned into trees. The descriptions that *Virgil* and *Ovid* have made of it cannot be sufficiently admired.

Claudian has set off his description of the *Eridanus*, with all the poetical stories that have been made of it.

— Ille caput placidis sublime fluentis
 Extulit, et totis lucem spargentia ripis
 Aurea roranti micuerunt cornua vultu.
 Non illi madidum vulgaris Arundine crinem
 Velat bonos, rami caput umbravere virentes
 Heliadum, totisque fluunt electra capillis.
 Palla tegit latos humeros, curruque paterno
 Intextus Phaëton glaucos incendit amictus:
 Fultaque sub gremio calatis nobilis astris
 Ætherium probat urna decus. Namque omnia luctas
 Argumenta sui Titan signavit Olympo,
 Mutatumque senem plumis, et fronde sorores,
 Et fluvium, nati qui vulnera lavit anbeli.
 Stat gelidis Auriga plagis, vestigia fratris
 Germana servant Hyades, Cycnique sodalis
 Lacteus extentas aspergit circulus alas.
 Stellifer Eridanus sinuatis fluctibus errans.
 Clara noti convexa rigat. — *Claudian. de Sexto Conf. Honorii.*

His head above the floods he gently rear'd,
 And as he rose his golden horns appear'd,
 That on the forehead shone divinely bright,
 And o'er the banks diffus'd a yellow light:
 No interwoven Reeds a garland made,
 To hide his brows within the vulgar shade,
 But Poplar wreaths around his temples spread,
 And tears of Amber trickled down his head:
 A spacious veil from his broad shoulders flew,
 That set th' unhappy *Phaeton* to view:
 The flaming Chariot and the Steeds it show'd,
 And the whole Fable in the mantle glow'd:
 Beneath his arm an Urn supported lyes
 With stars embellish'd, and fictitious skies.

For

For *Titan*, by the mighty loss dismay'd,
 Among the Heav'ns th'immortal fact display'd,
 Lest the remembrance of his grief should fail,
 And in the Constellations wrote his tale.
 A Swan in memory of *Cycnus* shines;
 The mourning Sisters weep in Watry signs;
 The burning Chariot, and the Charioteer,
 In bright *Boötes* and his Wane appear;
 Whilst in a Track of Light the Waters run,
 That wash'd the body of his blasted son.

The river *Po* gives a name to the chief street of *Turin*, which fronts the Duke's Palace, and, when finished, will be one of the noblest in *Italy* for its length. There is one convenience in this City that I never observed in any other, and which makes some amends for the badness of the pavement. By the help of a river that runs on the upper side of the town, they can convey a little stream of water through all the most considerable streets, which serves to cleanse the gutters, and carries away all the filth that is swept into it. The manager opens his sluice every night, and distributes the water into what quarters of the town he pleases. Besides the ordinary convenience that arises from it, it is of great use when a fire chances to break out, for at a few minutes warning they have a little river running by the very wall of the house that is burning. The Court of *Turin* is reckoned the most splendid and polite of any in *Italy*; but by reason of its being in mourning, I could not see it in its magnificence. The common people of this state are more exasperated against the *French* than even the rest of the *Italians*. For the great mischiefs they have suffered from them are still fresh upon their memories, and notwithstanding this interval of peace, one may easily trace out the several marches which the *French* armies have made through their country, by the ruine and desolation they have left behind them. I passed through *Piemont* and *Savoy*, at a time when the Duke was forced, by the necessity of his affairs, to be in alliance with the *French*.

I came directly from *Turin* to *Geneva*, and had a very easie journey over mount *Cennis*, though about the beginning of *December*, the snows having not yet fallen. On the top of this high mountain is a large Plain, and in the midst of the plain a beautiful Lake, which would be very extraordinary were there not several mountains in the neighbourhood rising over it. The Inhabitants thereabout pretend that it is unfathomable,

and I question not but the waters of it fill up a deep valley, before they come to a level with the surface of the plain. It is well stocked with Trouts, though they say it is covered with Ice three quarters of the year.

There is nothing in the natural face of *Italy* that is more delightful to a traveller, than the several Lakes which are dispersed up and down among the many breaks and hollows of the *Alpes* and *Appennines*. For as these vast heaps of mountains are thrown together with so much irregularity and confusion, they form a great variety of hollow bottoms, that often lye in the figure of so many artificial Basins; where, if any fountains chance to rise, they naturally spread themselves into Lakes before they can find any issue for their waters. The ancient *Romans* took a great deal of pains to hew out a passage for these Lakes to discharge themselves into some neighbouring river, for the bettering of the air, or the recovering of the soil that lay underneath them. The draining of the *Fucinus* by the Emperor *Claudius*, with the prodigious multitude of spectators who attended it, and the famous *Naumachia* and splendid entertainment which were made upon it before the sluices were opened, is a known piece of history. In all our journey through the *Alpes*, as well when we climbed as when we descended them, we had still a river running along with the road, that probably at first occasioned the discovery of this passage. I shall end this chapter with a description of the *Alpes*, as I did the last with those of the *Appennines*. The Poet perhaps would not have taken notice, that there is no spring nor summer on these mountains, but because in this respect the *Alpes* are quite different from the *Appennines*, which have as delightful green spots among them as any in *Italy*.

*Cuncta gelu canaque eternum grandine tecta,
Atque ævi glaciem cohibent: riget ardua montis
Ætherii facies, surgentique obvia Phæbo.
Duratus nescit flammis mollire pruinas.
Quantum Tartareus regni pallentis hiatus
Ad manes imos atque atræ stagna paludis
A superâ tellure patet: tam longa per auras
Erigitur tellus, et cælum intercipit umbrâ.
Nullum ver usquam, nullique æstatis honores;
Sola jugis habitat diris, sedesque tuetur
Perpetuas deformis hyems: illa undique nubes.
Huc atras agit et mixtos cum grandine nimbos:
Nam cuncti flatus ventique furentia regna.*

II *Alpinâ*

*Alpinâ posuere domo, caligat in altis
Obtutus saxis, abeuntque in nubila montes.*

Sil-It. L. 3.

Stiff with eternal Ice, and hid Snow,
That fell a thousand centuries ago,
The mountain stands; nor can the rising sun
Unfix her frosts, and teach 'em how to run:
Deep as the dark infernal waters lye
From the bright regions of the chearful sky,
So far the proud ascending rocks invade
Heav'n's upper realms, and cast a dreadful shade:
No spring, nor summer, on the mountain seen,
Smiles with gay fruits, or with delightful green;
But hoary winter, unadorn'd and bare,
Dwells in the dire retreat, and freezes there;
There she assembles all her blackest storms,
And the rude hail in rattling tempests forms;
Thither the loud tumultuous winds resort,
And on the mountain keep their boist'rous court,
That in thick show'rs her rocky summit shrouds,
And darkens all the broken view with clouds.

GENEVA and the LAKE.

NEAR St. Julian in Savoy the *Alpes* begin to enlarge themselves on all sides, and open into a vast circuit of ground, which in respect of the other parts of the *Alpes* may pass for a plain champian country. This extent of lands, with the *Leman Lake*, would make one of the prettiest and most defensible dominions in *Europe*, was it all thrown into a single state, and had *Geneva* for its metropolis. But there are three powerful neighbours who divide among them the greatest part of this fruitful country. The Duke of *Savoy* has the *Chablais*, and all the fields that lye beyond the *Arve*, as far as to the *Ecluse*. The King