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

In Four Volumes

**Addison, Joseph**

**London, 1721**

No 93. Saturday, Nov. 12 1709.

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N<sup>o</sup> 93. Saturday, Nov. 12. 1709.

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Dear Sir,

**I** Believe this is the first Letter that was ever sent you from the middle Region, where I am at this present writing. Not to keep you in suspense, it comes to you from the top of the highest mountain in Switzerland, where I am now shivering among the eternal Frosts and Snows. I can scarce forbear dating it in December, though they call it the first of August at the bottom of the mountain. I assure you, I can hardly keep my Ink from freezing in the middle of the Dog-days. I am here entertained with the prettiest variety of Snow-prospects that you can imagine, and have several pits of it before me that are very near as old as the mountain it self; for in this country, it is as lasting as Marble. I am now upon a spot of it, which they tell me fell about the reign of Charlemain or King Pepin. The Inhabitants of the country are as great Curiosities as the country it self: They generally hire themselves out in their youth, and if they are Musquet-proof till about fifty, they bring home the money they have got, and the limbs they have left, to pass the rest of their time among their native mountains. One of the Gentlemen of the place, who is come off with the loss of an Eye only, told me by way of boast, That there were now seven wooden legs in his family; and that for these Four generations, there had not been one in his line that carried a whole body with him to the grave. I believe you will think the Style of this Letter a little extraordinary; but the Rehearsal will tell you, that People in clouds must not be confined to speak sense; and I hope we that are above them may claim the same privilege. Wherever I am, I shall always be,

SIR, Your most Obedient,

Most Humble Servant.

From my own Apartment, November 11.

I had several Hints and Advertisements from unknown hands, that some, who are enemies to my Labours, design to demand the fashionable way of



of Satisfaction for the disturbance my Lucubrations have given them. I confess, as things now stand, I do not know how to deny such Inviters, and am preparing my self accordingly: I have bought Pumps and Files, and am every morning practising in my chamber. My neighbour, the Dancing-master, has demanded of me, Why I take this liberty, since I would not allow it him? But I answered, His was an act of an Indifferent nature, and mine of Necessity. My late treatises against Duels have so far disoblighd the fraternity of the noble Science of Defence, that I can get none of them to show me so much as one Pass. I am therefore obligd to learn by Book, and have accordingly several volumes, wherein all the Postures are exactly delineated. I must confess, I am shy of letting people see me at this exercise, because of my Flannel waistcoat, and my Spectacles, which I am forced to fix on, the better to observe the posture of the enemy.

I have upon my Chamber-walls, drawn at full length, the figures of all sorts of men, from eight foot to three foot two inches. Within this height I take it, that all the fighting men of *Great Britain* are comprehended. But as I push, I make allowances for my being of a lank and spare body, and have chalked out in every figure my own dimensions; for I scorn to rob any man of his life or to take advantage of his breadth: Therefore I press purely in a line down from his Nose, and take no more of him to assault, than he has of me: For to speak impartially, if a lean fellow wounds a fat one in any part to the right or left, whether it be in *Carte* or in *Tierce*, beyond the dimensions of the said lean fellow's own breadth, I take it to be murder, and such a murder as is below a Gentleman to commit. As I am spare, I am also very tall, and behave my self with relation to that advantage with the same Punctilio; and I am ready to stoop or stand, according to the stature of my adversary. I must confess, I have had great success this morning, and have hit every figure round the room in a mortal part, without receiving the least hurt, except a little scratch by falling on my face, in pushing at one at the lower end of my chamber; but I recovered so quick, and jumped so nimbly into my Guard, that if he had been alive, he could not have hurt me. It is confessed, I have writ against Duels with some warmth; but in all my discourses, I have not ever said, that I knew how a Gentleman could avoid a Duel if he were provok'd to it; and since that Custom is now become a Law, I know nothing but the Legislative power, with new animadversions upon it, can put us in a capacity of denying Challenges, though we are afterwards hanged for it. But no more of this at present. As things

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stand,



stand, I shall put up no more affronts; and I shall be so far from taking ill Words, that I will not take ill Looks. I therefore warn all young hot fellows, not to look hereafter more terrible than their neighbours; for if they stare at me with their Hats cocked higher than other people, I won't bear it. Nay, I give warning to all people in general to look kindly at me; for I'll bear no frowns, even from Ladies; and if any Woman pretends to look scornfully at me, I shall demand satisfaction of the next of kin of the Masculine Gender.

*Sir Richard Steele assisted in this paper.*

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N<sup>o</sup> 97. *Tuesday, November 22. 1709.*

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*Illud maxime rarum genus est eorum, qui aut eccellente ingenii magnitudine, aut præclara eruditione atque doctrina, aut utraque re ornati, Spatium de liberandi habuerunt, quem potissimum vitæ cursum sequi vellent.* Tull. Offic.

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*From my own Apartment, November 21.*

**H**AVING swept away prodigious multitudes in one of my late papers, and brought a great destruction upon my own Species, I must endeavour in this to raise fresh recruits, and, if possible, to supply the places of the unborn and the deceased. It is said of *Xerxes*, That when he stood upon a hill, and saw the whole country round him covered with his army, he burst out in tears, to think that not one of that multitude would be alive a hundred years after. For my part, when I take a survey of this populous City, I can scarce forbear weeping, to see how few of its Inhabitants are now living. It was with this thought that I drew up my last Bill of Mortality, and endeavoured to set out in it the great number of persons who have perished by a distemper (commonly known by the name of Idleness) which has long raged in the world, and destroys