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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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N^o 160. *Tuesday, April 18. 1710.*

From my own Apartment, April 17.

A Common civility to an impertinent fellow, often draws upon one a great many unforeseen troubles; and if one doth not take particular care, will be interpreted by him as an overture of friendship and intimacy. This I was very sensible of this morning. About two hours before day, I heard a great rapping at my door, which continued some time, till my Maid could get her self ready to go down and see what was the occasion of it. She then brought me up word, that there was a Gentleman who seemed very much in haste, and said he must needs speak with me. By the description she gave me of him, and by his voice, which I could hear as I lay in my bed, I fancied him to be my old acquaintance the *Upholsterer*, whom I met the other day in *St. James's-Park*. For which reason, I bid her tell the Gentleman, whoever he was, that I was indisposed, that I could see no body, and that, if he had any thing to say to me, I desired he would leave it in writing. My Maid, after having delivered her message, told me, that the Gentleman said he would stay at the next Coffee-house till I was stirring, and bid her be sure to tell me, that the *French* were driven from the *Scarp*, and that *Donay* was invested. He gave her the name of another town, which I found she had dropped by the way.

As much as I love to be informed of the success of my brave countrymen, I do not care for hearing of a victory before day, and was therefore very much out of humour at this unseasonable visit. I had no sooner recovered my temper, and was falling asleep, but I was immediately startled by a second rap; and upon my Maid's opening the door, heard the same voice ask her, If her master was yet up? And at the same time bid her tell me, that he was come on purpose to talk with me about a piece of Home-news that every body in town will be full of two hours hence. I ordered my Maid as soon as she came into the room, without hearing her message, to tell the Gentleman, that whatever his News was, I would
rather

rather hear it two hours hence than now; and that I persisted in my resolution not to speak with any body that morning. The Wench delivered my answer presently, and shut the door. It was impossible for me to compose my self to Sleep after two such unexpected alarms; for which reason I put on my Clothes in a very peevish humour. I took several turns about my Chamber, reflecting with a great deal of anger and contempt on these Volunteers in Politicks, that undergo all the pain, watchfulness, and disquiet of a First Minister, without turning it to the advantage either of themselves or their country; and yet it is surprizing to consider how numerous this Species of men is. There is nothing more frequent than to find a Taylor breaking his rest on the Affairs of Europe, and to see a cluster of Porters sitting upon the Ministry. Our streets swarm with Politicians, and there is scarce a shop which is not held by a Statesman. As I was musing after this manner, I heard the Upholsterer at the door delivering a Letter to my Maid, and begging her, in very great hurry, to give it to her Master as soon as ever he was awake, which I opened, and found as follows:

Mr. Bickerstaffe,

I Was to wait upon you about a week ago, to let you know, that the honest Gentlemen whom you conversed with upon the Bench at the end of the Mall, having heard that I had received five Shillings of you, to give you a hundred Pounds upon the Great Turk's being driven out of Europe, desired me to acquaint you, that every one of that Company would be willing to receive five Shillings, to pay a hundred Pounds on the same Conditions. Our last advices from Muscovy making this a fairer Bet than it was a week ago, I do not question but you will accept the wager.

But this is not my present Business. If you remember, I whispered a word in your ear as we were walking up the Mall, and you see what has happened since. If I had seen you this morning, I would have told you in your ear another secret. I hope you will be recovered of your Indisposition by to-morrow morning, when I will wait on you at the same hour as I did this; my private Circumstances being such, that I cannot well appear in this quarter of the town after it is day.

I have been so taken up with the late good news from Holland, and expectation of further particulars, as well as with other Transactions, of which I will tell you more to-morrow morning, that I have not slept a wink these three nights.

I have reason to believe, that Picardy will soon follow the example of Artois, in case the enemy continue in their present resolution of flying away from us. I think I told you last time we were together my opinion about the Detulle.

The honest Gentlemen upon the Bench bid me tell you, they would be glad to see you often among them. We shall be there all the warm hours of the day during the present posture of affairs.

This happy opening of the Campaign will, I hope, give us a very joyful summer; and I propose to take many a pleasant walk with you, if you will sometimes come into the Park; for that is the only place in which I can be free from the malice of my enemies. Farewel till three-a-Clock to-morrow morning. I am

Your most Humble Servant, &c.

P. S. The King of Sweden is still at Bender.

I should have fretted my self to death at this promise of a second Visit, if I had not found in his Letter an intimation of the good news which I have since heard at large. I have however ordered my Maid to tie up the Knocker of my door, in such a manner as she would do if I was really indisposed. By which means I hope to escape breaking my Morning's rest.

N^o 161. *Thursday, April 20. 1710.*

-----*Nunquam libertas gratior exstat*
Quam sub rege pio.-----

From my own Apartment, April 19.

I Was walking two or three days ago in a very pleasing retirement, and amusing my self with the reading of that ancient and beautiful Allegory, called *The Table of Cebes*. I was at last so tired with my walk, that I fate down to rest my self upon a Bench that stood in the
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