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In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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N^o 218. Thursday, August 30. 1710.

Scriptorum Chorus omnis amat nemus et fugit urbes. Hor.

From my own Apartment, August 30.

I Chanced to rise very early one particular morning this Summer, and took a walk into the country to divert my self among the fields and meadows, while the Green was new, and the Flowers in their bloom. As at this season of the year every Lane is a beautiful walk, and every Hedge full of Nofegays, I lost my self with a great deal of pleasure among several Thickets and Bushes that were filled with a great variety of Birds, and an agreeable confusion of Notes, which formed the pleasantest Scene in the world to one who had passed a whole winter in noise and smoke. The freshness of the Dews that lay upon every thing about me, with the cool breath of the morning, which inspired the Birds with so many delightful Instincts, created in me the same kind of animal pleasure, and made my heart overflow with such secret emotions of joy and satisfaction as are not to be described or accounted for. On this occasion, I could not but reflect upon a beautiful Simile in *Milton*:

*As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houses thick, and sewers, annoy the air,
Forth issuing on a Summer's morn, to breathe
Among the pleasant Villages, and Farms
Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight:
The smell of Grain, or tedded Grass, or Kine,
Or Dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound.*

Those who are conversant in the writings of polite Authors, receive an additional entertainment from the Country, as it revives in their memories those charming descriptions with which such Authors do frequently abound.

I was thinking of the foregoing beautiful Simile in *Milton*, and applying it to my self, when I observed to the windward of me a black Cloud falling to the earth in long trails of Rain, which made me betake my self for shelter to a house which I saw at a little distance from the place where I was walking. As I sat in the Porch, I heard the voices of two or three persons, who seemed very earnest in discourse. My Curiosity was raised when I heard the names of *Alexander the Great* and *Artaxerxes*; and as their talk seemed to run on ancient Heroes, I concluded there could not be any secret in it; for which reason I thought I might very fairly listen to what they said.

After several Parallels between great Men, which appeared to me altogether groundless and chimerical, I was surprized to hear one say, That he valued the *Black Prince* more than the Duke of *Vendosme*. How the Duke of *Vendosme* should become a Rival of the *Black Prince's*, I could not conceive: And was more startled when I heard a second affirm with great vehemence, That if the Emperor of *Germany* was not going off, he should like him better than either of them. He added, That though the season was so changeable, the Duke of *Marlborough* was in blooming beauty. I was wondering to my self from whence they had received this odd intelligence, especially when I heard them mention the names of several other great Generals, as the Prince of *Hesse*, and the King of *Sweden*, who, they said, were both running away. To which they added, what I entirely agreed with them in, That the Crown of *France* was very weak, but that the *Mareschal Villars* still kept his Colours. At last one of them told the company, If they would go along with him, he would show them a Chimney-sweeper and a Painted Lady in the same bed, which he was sure would very much please them. The shower which had driven them, as well as my self, into the house, was now over: and as they were passing by me into the Garden, I asked them to let me be one of their company.

The Gentleman of the house told me, if I delighted in Flowers, it would be worth my while, for that he believed he could show me such a blow of Tulips as was not to be matched in the whole country.

I accepted the offer, and immediately found that they had been talking in terms of Gardening, and that the Kings and Generals they had mentioned were only so many Tulips, to which the Gardiners, according to their usual custom, had given such high titles and appellations of honour.

I was very much pleased and astonished at the glorious Show of these gay Vegetables, that arose in great profusion on all the banks about us.

Sometimes I considered them with the eye of an ordinary Spectator as so many beautiful Objects, vernished over with a natural gloss, and stained with such a variety of Colours, as are not to be equalled in any artificial Dyes or Tinctures. Sometimes I considered every Leaf as an elaborate piece of Tissue, in which the threads and fibres were woven together into different Configurations, which gave a different colouring to the Light as it glanced on the several parts of the surface. Sometimes I considered the whole bed of Tulips, according to the notion of the greatest Mathematician and Philosopher that ever lived, as a multitude of Optick Instruments, designed for the separating Light into all those various colours of which it is composed.

I was awakened out of these my Philosophical Speculations, by observing the company often seemed to laugh at me. I accidentally praised a Tulip as one of the finest that I ever saw; upon which they told me, it was a common Fool's coat. Upon that I praised a second, which it seems was but another kind of Fool's-coat. I had the same fate with two or three more; for which reason I desired the Owner of the Garden to let me know which were the finest of the flowers, for that I was so unskilful in the Art, that I thought the most beautiful were the most valuable, and that those which had the gayest colours were the most beautiful. The Gentleman smiled at my ignorance: He seemed a very plain honest man, and a person of good sense, had not his head been touched with that distemper which *Hippocrates* calls the *Tulippo-Mania*, *Τυλιππομανία*; in-somuch that he would talk very rationally on any Subject in the world but a Tulip.

He told me, That he valued the bed of Flowers which lay before us, and was not above twenty yards in length, and two in breadth, more than he would the best hundred Acres of land in *England*; and added, That it would have been worth twice the money it is, if a foolish Cook-maid of his had not almost ruined him the last winter, by mistaking an handful of Tulip-roots for an heap of Onions, and by that means (says he) made me a dish of Pottage, that cost me above 1000*l.* Sterling. He then showed me what he thought the finest of his Tulips, which I found received all their value from their rarity and oddness, and put me in mind of your great Fortunes, which are not always the greatest Beauties.

I have often looked upon it as a piece of happiness, that I have never fallen into any of these fantastical Tastes, nor esteemed any thing the more for its being uncommon and hard to be met with. For this reason, I look upon the whole country in Spring-time as a spacious Garden,

and

and make as many visits to a spot of Daisies, or a bank of Violets, as a Florist does to his Borders and Parterres. There is not a Bush in blossom within a mile of me which I am not acquainted with, nor scarce a Daffodil or Cowslip that withers away in my neighbourhood without my missing it. I walked home in this temper of mind through several fields and meadows with an unspeakable pleasure, not without reflecting on the bounty of Providence, which has made the most pleasing and most beautiful objects the most ordinary and most common.

N^o 220. *Tuesday, September 5. 1710.*

*Insani sanus nomen ferat, æquus iniqui,
Ultra quam satis est, virtutem si petat ipsam.* Hor.

From my own Apartment, September 4.

HAVING received many Letters filled with compliments and acknowledgments for my late useful discovery of the Political Barometer, I shall here communicate to the publick an account of my Ecclesiastical Thermometer, the latter giving as manifest Prognostications of the changes and revolutions in Church, as the former does of those in State, and both of them being absolutely necessary for every prudent subject who is resolved to keep what he has, and get what he can.

The Church Thermometer, which I am now to treat of, is supposed to have been invented in the Reign of *Henry* the Eighth, about the time when that religious Prince put some to death for owning the Pope's Supremacy, and others for denying Transubstantiation. I do not find, however, any great use made of this Instrument till it fell into the hands of a learned and vigilant Priest or Minister, (for he frequently wrote himself both one and the other) who was some time Vicar of *Bray*. This

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