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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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Materiam superabat opus. -----

Ovid.

From my own Apartment, September 13.

IT is my custom in a dearth of News, to entertain my self with those collections of Advertisements that appear at the end of all our public Prints. These I consider as accounts of News from the Little World, in the same manner that the foregoing parts of the paper are from the Great. If in one we hear that a Sovereign Prince is fled from his Capital city, in the other we hear of a Tradesman who hath shut up his Shop, and run away. If in one we find the Victory of a General, in the other we see the Desertion of a private Soldier. I must confess, I have a certain weakness in my temper, that is often very much affected by these little domestick Occurrences, and have frequently been caught with tears in my eyes over a melancholy Advertisement.

But to consider this subject in its most ridiculous Lights, Advertisements are of great use to the Vulgar: First of all, as they are instruments of Ambition. A man that is by no means big enough for the *Gazette*, may easily creep into the Advertisements; by which means we often see an Apothecary in the same paper of news with a Plenipotentiary, or a Running-footman with an Ambassador. An Advertisement from *Piccadilly* goes down to Posterity, with an Article from *Madrid*; and *John Bartlett* of *Goodman's Fields* is celebrated in the same paper with the Emperor of *Germany*. Thus the Fable tells us, That the Wren mounted as high as the Eagle, by getting upon his back.

A second use which this sort of writings have been turned to of late years, has been the management of Controversy, infomuch that above half the Advertisements one meets with now-a-days are purely Polemical. The Inventors of *Strops for Razors* have written against one another this way for several years, and that with great bitterness; as the whole argument

ment *pro* and *con* in the case of the *Morning Gowns* is still carried on after the same manner. I need not mention the several Proprietors of *Dr. Anderson's Pills*; nor take notice of the many Satyrical works of this nature so frequently published by *Dr. Clark*, who has had the confidence to advertise upon that learned Knight, my very worthy Friend, *Sir William Read*: But I shall not interpose in their quarrel; *Sir William* can give him his own in Advertisements, that, in the judgment of the impartial, are as well penned as the Doctor's.

The third and last use of these writings is, to inform the world where they may be furnished with almost every thing that is necessary for life. If a man has Pains in his Head, Cholicks in his Bowels, or Spots in his Clothes, he may here meet with proper Cures and Remedies. If a man would recover a Wife or a Horse that is stolen or strayed; if he wants new Sermons, Electuaries, Asses Milk, or any thing else, either for his body or his mind, this is the place to look for them in.

The great Art in writing Advertisements, is the finding out a proper method to catch the Reader's eye; without which a good thing may pass over unobserved, or be lost among Commissions of Bankrupt. Asterisks and Hands were formerly of great use for this purpose. Of late years, the *N. B.* has been much in fashion; as also little Cuts and Figures, the invention of which we must ascribe to the Author of *Spring-truffles*. I must not here omit the blind *Italian* Character, which being scarce legible, always fixes and detains the eye, and gives the curious Reader something like the satisfaction of prying into a secret.

But the great skill in an Advertiser, is chiefly seen in the Style which he makes use of. He is to mention *the universal Esteem, or general Reputation*, of things that were never heard of. If he is a Physician or Astrologer, he must change his Lodgings frequently, and (though he never saw any body in them besides his own family) give publick notice of it, *For the information of the Nobility and Gentry*. Since I am thus usefully employed in writing Criticisms on the works of these diminutive Authors, I must not pass over in silence an Advertisement which has lately made its appearance, and is written altogether in a *Ciceronian* manner. It was sent to me, with five shillings, to be inserted among my Advertisements; but as it is a Pattern of good writing in this way, I shall give it a place in the body of my paper.

THE highest compounded Spirit of Lavender, the most glorious (if the expression may be used) enlivening Scent and Flavour that can possibly

possibly be, which so raptures the Spirits, delights the Gust, and gives such Airs to the Countenance, as are not to be imagined but by those that have tried it. The meanest sort of the thing is admired by most Gentlemen and Ladies; but this far more, as by far it exceeds it, to the gaining among all a more than common esteem. It is sold (in neat Flint bottles fit for the Pocket) only at the *Golden-key* in *Warton's-court* near *Holborn-bars*, for 3 s. 6 d. with Directions.

At the same time that I recommend the several Flowers in which this Spirit of Lavender is wrapped up, (if the expression may be used) I cannot excuse my Fellow-labourers for admitting into their papers several uncleanly Advertisements, not at all proper to appear in the works of polite Writers. Among these I must reckon the *Carminitive Wind-expelling Pills*. If the Doctor had called them his Carminitive Pills, he had done as cleanly as any one could have wished; but the second word entirely destroys the decency of the first. There are other absurdities of this nature so very gross, that I dare not mention them; and shall therefore dismiss this subject, with a publick admonition to *Michael Parrot*, That he do not presume any more to mention a certain Worm he knows of, which, by the way, has grown seven foot in my memory; for, if I am not much mistaken, it is the same that was but nine foot long about six months ago.

By the remarks I have here made, it plainly appears, that a collection of Advertisements is a kind of Miscellany; the writers of which, contrary to all Authors, except men of Quality, give money to the Booksellers who publish their Copies. The Genius of the Bookseller is chiefly shown in his method of ranging and digesting these little Tracts. The last paper I took up in my hands, places them in the following order:

The true Spanish Blacking for shoes, &c.

The Beautifying Cream for the face, &c.

Pease and Plaisters, &c.

Nectar and Ambrosia, &c.

Four Freehold Tenements of 15 l. per Annum, &c.

** The Present State of England, &c.

†† Annotations upon the Tatler, &c.

A Commission of Bankrupt being awarded against B. L. Bookseller, &c.