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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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The Projector having thus settled matters, to the good liking of all that heard him, he left his seat at the table, and planted himself before the fire, where I had unluckily taken my stand for the convenience of overhearing what he said. Whether he had observed me to be more attentive than ordinary, I cannot tell, but he had not stood by me above a quarter of a minute, but he turned short upon me on a sudden, and catching me by a button of my coat, attacked me very abruptly after the following manner. Besides, Sir, I have heard of a very extraordinary genius for Musick that lives in *Switzerland*, who has so strong a spring in his fingers, that he can make the board of an organ sound like a drum, and if I could but procure a subscription of about ten thousand pound every winter, I would undertake to fetch him over, and oblige him by articles to set every thing that should be sung upon the *English* Stage. After this he looked full in my face, expecting I would make an answer; when, by good luck, a Gentleman that had entred the Coffee-house since the Projector applied himself to me, hearing him talk of his *Swiss* compositions, cryed out with a kind of laugh, Is our Musick then to receive further improvements from *Switzerland*? This alarmed the Projector, who immediately let go my button, and turned about to answer him. I took the opportunity of the diversion, which seemed to be made in favour of me, and laying down my peny upon the bar, retired with some precipitation.

N^o 34. *Monday, April 9.*

Cognatis maculis similis fera ----- *parcit*

Juv.

THE Club of which I am a Member, is very luckily composed of such persons as are engaged in different ways of life, and deputed as it were out of the most conspicuous classes of mankind: By this means I am furnished with the greatest variety of hints and materials, and know every thing that passes in the different quarters and divisions,

vifions, not only of this great City, but of the whole Kingdom. My readers too have the fatisfaction to find, that there is no rank or degree among them who have not their representative in this Club, and that there is always some body present who will take care of their respective interests, that nothing may be written or published to the prejudice or infringement of their just rights and privileges.

I last night fate very late in company with this select body of friends, who entertained me with several remarks which they and others had made upon these my Speculations, as also with the various success, which they had met with among their several ranks and degrees of readers. WILL. HONEYCOMB told me, in the softest manner he could, That there were some Ladies (but for your comfort, says WILL, they are not those of the most wit) that were offended at the liberties I had taken with the Opera and the Puppet-show; That some of them were likewise very much surprized, that I should think such serious points as the Dress and Equipage of persons of Quality, proper subjects for raillery.

He was going on, when Sir ANDREW FREEPORT took him up short and told him, That the papers he hinted at had done great good in the city, and that all their Wives and Daughters were t he better for them: And further added, That the whole city thought themselves very much obliged to me for declaring my generous intentions to scourge vice and folly as they appear in a multitude, without condescending to be a publisher of particular Intrigues and Cuckoldoms. In short, says Sir ANDREW, if you avoid that foolish beaten road of falling upon Aldermen and Citizens, and employ your pen upon the vanity and luxury of Courts, your paper must needs be of general use.

Upon this my friend the TEMPLER told Sir ANDREW, That he wondered to hear a man of his sense talk after that manner; that the City had always been the province for Satyr; and that the Wits of King *Charles's* time jested upon nothing else during his whole reign. He then shewed, by the examples of *Horace*, *Juvenal*, *Boileau*, and the best writers of every age, that the follies of the Stage and Court had never been accounted too sacred for ridicule, how great soever the persons might be that patronized them. But after all, says he, I think your raillery has made too great an excursion, in attacking several persons of the Inns of Court; and I do not believe you can shew me any precedent for your behaviour in that particular.

My good friend Sir ROGER DE COVERLEY, who had said nothing all this while, began his speech with a Pish! and told us, That he wondered

dered to see so many men of sense so very serious upon fooleries. Let our good friend, says he, attack every one that deserves it: I would only advise you, Mr. SPECTATOR, applying himself to me, to take care how you meddle with Country Squires: They are the ornaments of the *English* nation; men of good heads and sound bodies! and let me tell you, some of them take it ill of you, that you mention Fox-hunters with so little respect.

Captain SENTRY spoke very sparingly on this occasion. What he said was only to commend my prudence in not touching upon the Army, and advised me to continue to act discreetly in that point.

By this time I found every subject of my Speculations was taken away from me, by one or other of the Club; and began to think my self in the condition of the good man that had one wife who took a dislike to his grey hairs, and another to his black, till by their picking out what each of them had an aversion to, they left his head altogether bald and naked.

While I was thus musing with my self, my worthy friend the CLERGYMAN, who, very luckily for me, was at the Club that night, undertook my cause. He told us, that he wondered any order of persons should think themselves too considerable to be advised: That it was not Quality, but Innocence, which exempted men from reproof: That Vice and Folly ought to be attacked where-ever they could be met with, and especially when they were placed in high and conspicuous stations of life. He further added, That my Paper would only serve to aggravate the pains of poverty, if it chiefly exposed those who are already depressed, and in some measure turned into ridicule, by the meanness of their conditions and circumstances. He afterwards proceeded to take notice of the great use this paper might be of to the publick, by reprehending those Vices which are too trivial for the chastisement of the Law, and too fantastical for the cognizance of the Pulpit. He then advised me to prosecute my undertaking with chearfulness, and assured me, that whoever might be displeas'd with me, I should be approved by all those whose praises do honour to the persons on whom they are bestowed.

The whole Club pays a particular deference to the discourse of this Gentleman, and are drawn into what he says, as much by the candid ingenious manner with which he delivers himself, as by the strength of Argument and force of Reason which he makes use of. WILL. HONEYCOMB immediately agreed, that what he had said was right; and that for his part, he would not insist upon the quarter which he had demanded for the Ladies. Sir ANDREW gave up the City with the same frankness.

The TEMPLER would not stand out; and was followed by Sir ROGER and the CAPTAIN: who all agreed that I should be at liberty to carry the war into what quarter I pleased; provided I continued to combat with criminals in a body, and to assault the vice without hurting the person.

This debate, which was held for the good of mankind, put me in mind of that which the *Roman* Triumvirate were formerly engaged in, for their destruction. Every man at first stood hard for his friend, till they found that by this means they should spoil their proscription: And at length, making a sacrifice of all their acquaintance and relations, furnished out a very decent execution.

Having thus taken my resolutions to march on boldly in the cause of Virtue and good Sense, and to annoy their adversaries in whatever degree or rank of men they may be found: I shall be deaf for the future to all the remonstrances that shall be made to me on this account. If *Punch* grows extravagant, I shall reprimand him very freely: If the Stage becomes a nursery of folly and impertinence, I shall not be afraid to animadvert upon it. In short, if I meet with any thing in City, Court, or Country, that shocks modesty or good manners, I shall use my utmost endeavours to make an example of it. I must however intreat every particular person, who does me the honour to be a reader of this paper, never to think himself, or any one of his friends or enemies, aimed at in what is said: For I promise him, never to draw a faulty character which does not fit at least a thousand people; or to publish a single paper that is not written in the spirit of benevolence, and with a love to mankind.

N^o 35. *Tuesday, April 10.*

Risu inepto res ineptior nulla est.

Mart.

AMONG all kinds of writing, there is none in which Authors are more apt to miscarry than in works of Humour, as there is none in which they are more ambitious to excell. It is not an imagination that teems with monsters, an head that is filled with extravagant con-