



UNIVERSITÄTS-
BIBLIOTHEK
PADERBORN

Universitätsbibliothek Paderborn

The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

London, 1721

No 37. Thursday, April 12.

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-53633](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-53633)

N^o 37. Thursday, April 12.

-----*Non illa colo calathifve Minervæ
Fœmineas assueta manus.*-----

Virg.

SOME months ago, my friend Sir ROGER being in the country, enclosed a letter to me, directed to a certain Lady whom I shall here call by the name of *Leonora*, and as it contained matters of consequence, desired me to deliver it to her with my own hand. Accordingly I waited upon her Ladyship pretty early in the morning, and was desired by her woman to walk into her Lady's Library, till such time as she was in a readiness to receive me. The very sound of a *Lady's Library* gave me a great curiosity to see it; and, as it was some time before the Lady came to me, I had an opportunity of turning over a great many of her books, which were ranged together in a very beautiful order. At the end of the *Folio's* (which were finely bound and gilt) were great Jars of *China* placed one above another in a very noble piece of Architecture. The *Quarto's* were separated from the *Octavo's* by a pile of smaller vessels, which rose in a delightful Pyramid. The *Octavo's* were bounded by Tea-dishes of all shapes, colours and sizes, which were so disposed on a wooden frame, that they looked like one continued Pillar indented with the finest strokes of sculpture, and stained with the greatest variety of dyes. That part of the Library which was designed for the reception of Plays and Pamphlets, and other loose papers, was enclosed in a kind of square, consisting of one of the prettiest grotesque works that ever I saw, and made up of Scaramouches, Lions, Monkies, Mandarines, Trees Shells, and a thousand other odd figures in *China* ware. In the midst of the room was a little Japan table, with a quire of gilt Paper upon it, and on the Paper a silver Snuff-box made in the shape of a little book. I found there were several other counterfeit books upon the upper shelves, which were carved in wood, and served only to fill up the numbers, like Fagots in the muster of a Regiment. I was wonderfully pleased with
such

such a mixt kind of furniture, as seem'd very suitable to both the Lady and the Scholar, and did not know at first whether I should fancy my self in a Grotto, or in a Library.

Upon my looking into the books, I found there were some few which the Lady had bought for her own use, but that most of them had been got together, either because she had heard them praised, or because she had seen the Authors of them. Among several that I examined, I very well remember these that follow.

- Ogleby's Virgil.*
- Dryden's Juvenal.*
- Cassandra.*
- Cleopatra.*
- Astræa.*
- Sir *Isaac Newton's* works.
- The *Grand Cyrus*; with a Pin stuck in one of the middle leaves.
- Pembroke's Arcadia.*
- Lock of human understanding; with a paper of Patches in it.
- A Spelling-book.
- A Dictionary for the explanation of hard words.
- Sherlock* upon Death.
- The fifteen comforts of Matrimony.
- Sir *William Temple's* Essays.
- Father *Malbranche's* search after Truth, translated into *English*.
- A book of Novels.
- The Academy of Compliments.
- Culpepper's* Midwifery.
- The Ladies Calling.
- Tales in verse by Mr. *Durfey*: Bound in red leather, gilt on the back, and doubled down in several places.
- All the *Classick* Authors in wood.
- A set of *Elzivirs* by the same hand.
- Clelia*: Which opened of it self in the place that describes two Lovers in a Bower.
- Baker's* Chronicle.
- Advice to a Daughter.
- The new *Atalantis*, with a Key to it.
- Mr. *Steele's* Christian Heroe.
- A Prayer book: With a bottle of *Hungary* water by the side of it.

Dr.

Dr. *Sacheverell's* Speech.

Fielding's Tryal.

Seneca's Morals.

Taylor's holy Living and Dying.

La Ferte's Instructions for Country Dances.

I was taking a Catalogue in my pocket-book of these, and several other Authors, when *Leonora* entred, and upon my presenting her with the Letter from the Knight, told me, with an unspeakable grace, that she hoped Sir ROGER was in good health: I answered *Yes*, for I hate long speeches, and after a bow or two retired.

Leonora was formerly a celebrated beauty, and is still a very lovely woman. She has been a widow for two or three years, and being unfortunate in her first marriage, has taken a resolution never to venture upon a second. She has no children to take care of, and leaves the management of her Estate to my good friend Sir ROGER. But as the mind naturally sinks into a kind of Lethargy, and falls asleep, that is not agitated by some favourite pleasures and pursuits, *Leonora* has turned all the passions of her Sex, into a love of books and retirement. She converses chiefly with men, (as she has often said her self) but it is only in their writings; and admits of very few male-visitants, except my friend Sir ROGER, whom she hears with great pleasure, and without scandal. As her reading has lain very much among Romances, it has given her a very particular turn of thinking, and discovers it self even in her house, her gardens, and her furniture. Sir ROGER has entertained me an hour together with a description of her country-seat, which is situated in a kind of wilderness, about an hundred miles distant from *London*, and looks like a little enchanted Palace. The rocks about her are shaped into artificial grottoes covered with wood-bines and jessamines. The woods are cut into shady walks, twisted into bowers, and filled with cages of Turtles. The springs are made to run among pebbles, and by that means taught to murmur very agreeably. They are likewise collected into a beautiful Lake, that is inhabited by a couple of Swans, and empties itself by a little rivulet which runs through a green meadow, and is known in the family by the name of *The purling Stream*. The Knight likewise tells me, that this Lady preserves her game better than any of the Gentlemen in the country, not (says Sir ROGER) that she sets so great a value upon her Partridges and Pheasants, as upon her Larks and Nightingales. For she says that every bird which is killed in her ground, will spoil a consort, and that she shall certainly miss him the next year. When

When I think how odly this Lady is improved by learning, I look upon her with a mixture of admiration and pity. Amidst these innocent entertainments which she has formed to her self, how much more valuable does she appear than those of her Sex, who employ themselves in diversions that are less reasonable, though more in fashion? What improvements would a woman have made, who is so susceptible of impressions from what she reads, had she been guided to such books as have a tendency to enlighten the understanding and rectify the passions, as well as to those which are of little more use than to divert the imagination?

But the manner of a Lady's employing her self usefully in reading shall be the subject of another Paper, in which I design to recommend such particular books as may be proper for the improvement of the Sex. And as this is a subject of a very nice nature, I shall desire my correspondents to give me their thoughts upon it.

N^o 39. *Saturday, April 14.*

*Multa fero, ut placem genus irritabile vatum,
Cum scribo -----*

Hor.

AS a perfect Tragedy is the noblest production of human nature, so it is capable of giving the mind one of the most delightful and most improving entertainments. A virtuous man (says *Seneca*) struggling with misfortunes, is such a spectacle as Gods might look upon with pleasure: And such a pleasure it is which one meets with in the representation of a well-written Tragedy. Diversions of this kind wear out of our thoughts every thing that is mean and little. They cherish and cultivate that humanity which is the ornament of our nature. They soften insolence, soothe affliction, and subdue the mind to the dispensations of Providence.

It is no wonder therefore that in all the polite nations of the world, this part of the *Drama* has met with publick encouragement.