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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

London, 1721

No 50. Friday, April 27.

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But to come into common life: I shall pass by the consideration of those Stage Coxcombs that are able to shake a whole Audience, and take notice of a particular sort of men who are such provokers of mirth in conversation, that it is impossible for a Club or merry-meeting to subsist without them; I mean those honest Gentlemen that are always exposed to the wit and raillery of their well-wishers and companions; that are pelted by men, women, and children, friends, and foes, and, in a word, stand as *Butts* in conversation, for every one to shoot at that pleases. I know several of these *Butts* who are men of wit and sense, though by some odd turn of humour, some unlucky cast in their person or behaviour, they have always the misfortune to make the company merry. The truth of it is, a man is not qualified for a *Butt*, who has not a good deal of wit and vivacity, even in the ridiculous side of his character. A stupid *Butt* is only fit for the conversation of ordinary people: Men of wit require one that will give them play, and bestir himself in the absurd part of his behaviour. A *Butt* with these accomplishments frequently gets the Laugh on his side, and turns the ridicule upon him that attacks him. Sir *John Falstaff* was an Hero of this species, and gives a good description of himself in his capacity of a *Butt*, after the following manner; *Men of all sorts* (says that merry Knight) *take a pride to gird at me. The brain of man is not able to invent any thing that tends to laughter more than I invent, or is invented on me. I am not only witty in my self, but the cause that Wit is in other men.*

N^o 50. Friday, April 27.

Nunquam aliud natura, aliud sapientia dixit. Juv.

WHEN the four *Indian* Kings were in this country about a twelve-month ago, I often mixed with the rabble, and followed them a whole day together, being wonderfully struck with the sight of every thing that is new or uncommon. I have, since their departure, employed a friend to make many enquiries of their Landlord the Upholsterer,

sterer, relating to their manners and conversation, as also concerning the remarks which they made in this country: for, next to the forming a right notion of such strangers, I should be desirous of learning what ideas they have conceived of us.

The Upholsterer finding my friend very inquisitive about these his Lodgers, brought him some time since a little bundle of papers, which he assured him were written by King *Sa Ga Yean Qua Rash Tow*, and, as he supposes, left behind by some mistake. These papers are now translated, and contain abundance of very odd observations, which I find this little fraternity of Kings made during their stay in the Isle of *Great Britain*. I shall present my reader with a short Specimen of them in this paper, and may perhaps communicate more to him hereafter. In the article of *London* are the following words, which without doubt are meant of the Church of *St. Paul*.

“ On the most rising part of the town there stands a huge house, big
 “ enough to contain the whole nation of which I am King. Our good
 “ Brother *E Tow O Koam*, King of the *Rivers*, is of opinion it was
 “ made by the hands of that great God to whom it is consecrated. The
 “ Kings of *Granajah* and of the *Six Nations* believe that it was created
 “ with the Earth, and produced on the same day with the Sun and
 “ Moon. But for my own part, by the best information that I could
 “ get of this matter, I am apt to think that this prodigious Pile was
 “ fashioned into the shape it now bears by several tools and instruments,
 “ of which they have a wonderful variety in this country. It was proba-
 “ bly at first an huge mis-shapen rock that grew upon the top of the hill,
 “ which the natives of the country (after having cut it into a kind of
 “ regular figure) bored and hollowed with incredible pains and industry,
 “ till they had wrought in it all those beautiful vaults and caverns into
 “ which it is divided at this day. As soon as this rock was thus curi-
 “ ously scooped to their liking, a prodigious number of hands must have
 “ been employed in chipping the out-side of it, which is now as smooth
 “ as the surface of a pebble; and is in several places hewn out into Pil-
 “ lars, that stand like the trunks of so many trees bound about the top
 “ with garlands of leaves. It is probable that when this great work was
 “ begun, which must have been many hundred years ago, there was some
 “ religion among this people, for they give it the name of a Temple, and
 “ have a tradition that it was designed for men to pay their devotion in.
 “ And indeed, there are several reasons which make us think, that the
 “ natives of this country had formerly among them some sort of wor-

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“ ship;

“ ship; for they set apart every seventh day as sacred: but upon my going into one of these holy houses on that day, I could not observe any circumstance of devotion in their behaviour: there was indeed a man in black who was mounted above the rest, and seemed to utter something with a great deal of vehemence; but as for those underneath him, instead of paying their worship to the Deity of the place, they were most of them bowing and curtesying to one another, and a considerable number of them fast asleep.

“ The Queen of the country appointed two men to attend us, that had enough of our language to make themselves understood in some few particulars. But we soon perceived these two were great enemies to one another, and did not always agree in the same story. We could make a shift to gather out of one of them, that this Island was very much infested with a monstrous kind of Animals, in the shape of men, called *Whigs*; and he often told us, that he hoped we should meet with none of them in our way, for that if we did, they would be apt to knock us down for being Kings.

“ Our other interpreter used to talk very much of a kind of Animal called a *Tory*, that was as great a monster as the *Whig*, and would treat us as ill for being Foreigners. These two creatures, it seems, are born with a secret antipathy to one another, and engage when they meet as naturally as the Elephant and the Rhinoceros. But as we saw none of either of these species, we are apt to think that our guides deceived us with misrepresentations and fictions, and amused us with an account of such monsters as are not really in their country.

“ These particulars we made a shift to pick out from the discourse of our interpreters; which we put together as well as we could, being able to understand but here and there a word of what they said, and afterwards making up the meaning of it among our selves. The men of the country are very cunning and ingenious in handicraft works; but withal so very idle, that we often saw young lusty raw-boned fellows carried up and down the streets in little covered rooms by a couple of Porters, who are hired for that service. Their dress is likewise very barbarous, for they almost strangle themselves about the neck, and bind their bodies with many ligatures, that we are apt to think are the occasion of several distempers among them, which our country is entirely free from. Instead of those beautiful feathers with which we adorn our heads, they often buy up a monstrous bush of hair, which covers their heads, and falls down in a large fleece below the middle of
“ their

“ their backs ; with which they walk up and down the streets, and are
“ as proud of it as if it was of their own growth.

“ We were invited to one of their publick diversions, where we hoped
“ to have seen the great men of their country running down a Stag or
“ pitching a Bar, that we might have discovered who were the persons
“ of the greatest abilities among them ; but instead of that, they conveyed
“ us into an huge room lighted up with abundance of candles, where
“ this lazy people sat still above three hours to see several feats of in-
“ genuity performed by others, who it seems were paid for it.

“ As for the women of the country, not being able to talk with them,
“ we could only make our remarks upon them at a distance. They
“ let the hair of their heads grow to a great length ; but as the men make
“ a great show with heads of hair that are none of their own, the
“ women, who they say have very fine heads of hair, tie it up in a knot,
“ and cover it from being seen. The women look like Angels, and would
“ be more beautiful than the Sun, were it not for little black spots that
“ are apt to break out in their faces, and sometimes rise in very odd fi-
“ gures. I have observed that those little blemishes wear off very soon ;
“ but when they disappear in one part of the face, they are very apt to
“ break out in another, insomuch that I have seen a spot upon the fore-
“ head in the afternoon, which was upon the chin in the morning.

The Author then proceeds to shew the absurdity of breeches and pet-
ticoats, with many other curious observations, which I shall reserve for
another occasion. I cannot however conclude this paper without taking
notice, that amidst these wild remarks, there now and then appears some-
thing very reasonable. I cannot likewise forbear observing, that we are
all guilty in some measure of the same narrow way of thinking, which
we meet with in this abstract of the *Indian Journal* ; when we fancy the
customs, dresses, and manners of other countries are ridiculous and ex-
travagant, if they do not resemble those of our own.



Thursday,