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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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*Quem prestare potest mulier galeata pudorem
 Quae fugit a sexu?-----*

Juv.

WHEN the wife of *Hector*, in *Homer's Iliads*, discourses with her husband about the battel in which he was going to engage, the Heroe, desiring her to leave that matter to his care, bids her go to her maids and mind her spinning: by which the Poet intimates, that men and women ought to busie themselves in their proper spheres, and on such matters only as are fuitable to their respective sex.

I am at this time acquainted with a young Gentleman, who has passed a great part of his life in the nursery, and, upon occasion, can make a caudle or a sack posset better than any man in *England*. He is likewise a wonderful Critick in cambrick and muslins, and will talk an hour together upon a sweet-meat. He entertains his mother every night with observations that he makes both in Town and Court: as what Lady shews the nicest fancy in her dress; what man of quality wears the fairest whig; who has the finest linnen, who the prettiest snuff-box, with many other the like curious remarks that may be made in good company.

On the other hand I have very frequently the opportunity of seeing a rural *Andromache*, who came up to Town last winter, and is one of the greatest fox hunters in the country. She talks of hounds and horses, and makes nothing of leaping over a six-bar gate. If a man tells her a wag-gish story, she gives him a push with her hand in jest, and calls him an impudent dog; and if her servant neglects his business, threatens to kick him out of the house. I have heard her, in her wrath, call a substantial tradesman a lousie cur; and remember one day, when she could not think of the name of a person, she described him, in a large company of Men and Ladies, by the fellow with the broad shoulders.

If those speeches and actions, which in their own nature are indifferent, appear ridiculous when they proceed from a wrong sex, the faults and imper-

imperfections of one sex transplanted into another, appear black and monstrous. As for the men, I shall not in this paper any further concern my self about them; but as I would fain contribute to make woman-kind, which is the most beautiful part of the creation, entirely amiable, and wear out all those little spots and blemishes that are apt to rise among the charms which nature has poured out upon them, I shall dedicate this paper to their service. The spot which I would here endeavour to clear them of, is that party-rage which of late years is very much crept into their conversation. This is, in its nature, a male vice, and made up of many angry and cruel passions that are altogether repugnant to the softness, the modesty, and those other endearing qualities which are natural to the fair sex. Women were formed to temper mankind, and sooth them into tenderness and compassion; not to set an edge upon their minds, and blow up in them those passions which are too apt to rise of their own accord. When I have seen a pretty mouth uttering calumnies and invectives, what would I not have given to have stopt it? how have I been troubled to see some of the finest features in the world grow pale, and tremble with party-rage? *Camilla* is one of the greatest beauties in the *British* nation, and yet values her self more upon being the *Virago* of one party, than upon being the Toast of both. The dear creature, about a week ago, encountered the fierce and beautiful *Penthesilea* across a tea-table; but in the height of her anger, as her hand chanced to shake with the earnestness of the dispute, she scalded her fingers, and spilt a dish of tea upon her petticoat. Had not this accident broke off the debate, no body knows where it would have ended.

There is one consideration which I would earnestly recommend to all my female readers, and which, I hope, will have some weight with them. In short, it is this, that there is nothing so bad for the face as party-zeal. It gives an ill-natured cast to the eye, and a disagreeable sourness to the look; besides, that it makes the lines too strong, and flushes them worse than brandy. I have seen a woman's face break out in heats, as she has been talking against a great Lord, whom she had never seen in her life; and indeed never knew a party-woman that kept her beauty for a twelve-month. I would therefore advise all my female readers, as they value their complexions, to let alone all disputes of this nature; though, at the same time I would give free liberty to all superannuated motherly partizans to be as violent as they please, since there will be no danger either of their spoiling their faces, or of their gaining converts.

For

For my own part, I think a man makes an odious and despicable figure, that is violent in a party; but a woman is too sincere to mitigate the fury of her principles with temper and discretion, and to act with that caution and reservedness which are requisite in our sex. When this unnatural zeal gets into them, it throws them into ten thousand heats and extravagances; their generous Souls set no bounds to their love, or to their hatred; and whether a Whig or Tory, a Lap-dog or a Gallant, an Opera or a Puppet-show, be the object of it, the passion, while it reigns, engrosses the whole woman.

I remember when Dr. *Titus Oates* was in all his glory, I accompanied my friend *WILL. HONEYCOMB* in a visit to a Lady of his acquaintance: We were no sooner sat down, but upon casting my eyes about the room, I found in almost every corner of it a print that represented the Doctor in all magnitudes and dimensions. A little after, as the Lady was discoursing my friend, and held her snuff-box in her hand, who should I see in the lid of it but the Doctor. It was not long after this, when she had occasion for her handkerchief, which upon the first opening discovered among the plaits of it the figure of the Doctor. Upon this my friend *WILL.* who loves raillery, told her, that if he was in *Mr. True-love's* place (for that was the name of her husband) he should be made as uneasy by a handkerchief as ever *Othello* was. *I am afraid,* said she, *Mr. HONEYCOMB,* you are a Tory; tell me truly, are you a friend to the Doctor or not? *WILL.* instead of making her a reply, smiled in her face (for indeed she was very pretty) and told her that one of her patches was dropping off. She immediately adjusted it, and looking a little seriously, *Well,* says she, *I'll be hanged if you and your silent friend there are not against the Doctor in your hearts, I suspected as much by his saying nothing.* Upon this she took her fan into her hand, and upon the opening of it again displayed to us the figure of the Doctor, who was placed with great gravity among the flicks of it. In a word, I found that the Doctor had taken possession of her thoughts, her discourse, and most of her furniture; but finding myself pressed too close by her question, I winked upon my friend to take his leave, which he did accordingly.

Monday,