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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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No 63. Saturday, May 12.

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“ on a Mountebank’s stage, or to be masters of the ceremonies in a Bear-garden: yet these are they who have the most admirers. But it often happens, to their mortification, that as their Readers improve their stock of sense, (as they may by reading better books, and by conversation with men of judgment) they soon forsake them.

I must not dismiss this subject without observing, that as Mr. *Lock* in the passage above-mentioned has discovered the most fruitful source of Wit, so there is another of a quite contrary nature to it, which does likewise branch it self out into several kinds. For not only the *Resemblance* but the *Opposition* of Ideas does very often produce Wit; as I could shew in several little points, turns, and antitheses, that I may possibly enlarge upon in some future Speculation.

N^o 63. Saturday, May 12.

*Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam
Jungere si velit, et varias inducere plumas
Undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atrum
Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne;
Spectatum admissi risum teneatis amici?
Credite, Pisones, isti tabula fore librum
Persimilem, cujus, velut ægri somnia, vane
Finguntur species-----*

Hor.

IT is very hard for the mind to disengage it self from a subject in which it has been long employed. The thoughts will be rising of themselves from time to time, though we give them no encouragement; as the tossings and fluctuations of the sea continue several hours after the winds are laid.

It is to this that I impute my last night’s Dream or Vision, which formed into one continued allegory the several schemes of Wit, whether

ther false, mixed, or true, that have been the subject of my late papers.

Methoughts I was transported into a country that was filled with prodigies and enchantments, governed by the goddesses of FALSHOOD, and entitled the *region of false Wit*. There was nothing in the fields, the woods, and the rivers, that appeared natural. Several of the trees blossomed in leaf-gold, some of them produced bone-lace, and some of them precious stones. The fountains bubbled in an Opera tune, and were filled with Stags, Wild-boars, and Mermaids, that lived among the waters; at the same time that Dolphins and several kinds of fish played upon the banks, or took their pastime in the meadows. The birds had many of them golden beaks, and human voices. The flowers perfumed the air with smells of incense, amber-greese, and pulvillos; and were so interwoven with one another, that they grew up in pieces of embroidery. The winds were filled with sighs and messages of distant lovers. As I was walking to and fro in this enchanted wilderness, I could not forbear breaking out into soliloquies upon the several wonders which lay before me, when to my great surprize I found there were artificial Echoes in every walk, that by repetitions of certain words which I spoke, agreed with me, or contradicted me, in every thing I said. In the midst of my conversation with these invisible companions, I discovered in the center of a very dark grove a monstrous fabrick built after the *Gotbick* manner, and covered with innumerable devices in that barbarous kind of sculpture. I immediately went up to it, and found it to be a kind of heathen temple consecrated to the God of *Dullness*. Upon my entrance I saw the deity of the place dressed in the habit of a Monk, with a book in one hand and a rattle in the other. Upon his right hand was *Industry*, with a lamp burning before her; and on his left *Caprice*, with a Monky sitting on her shoulder. Before his feet there stood an *Altar* of a very odd make, which, as I afterwards found, was shaped in that manner to comply with the inscription that surrounded it. Upon the Altar there lay several offerings of *Axes*, *Wings*, and *Eggs*, cut in paper, and inscribed with verses. The Temple was filled with votaries, who applied themselves to different diversions, as their fancies directed them. In one part of it I saw a regiment of *Anagrams*, who were continually in motion, turning to the right or to the left, facing about, doubling their ranks, shifting their stations, and throwing themselves into all the figures, and counter-marches of the most changeable and perplexed exercise.

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Not far from these was a body of *Acrosticks*, made up of very disproportioned persons. It was disposed into three columns, the Officers planting themselves in a line on the left hand of each column. The Officers were all of them at least six foot high, and made three rows of very proper men; but the common Soldiers, who filled up the spaces between the Officers, were such dwarfs, cripples, and scarecrows, that one could hardly look upon them without laughing. There were behind the *Acrosticks* two or three files of *Chronograms*, which differed only from the former, as their Officers were equipped (like the figure of Time) with an hour-glass in one hand, and a scythe in the other, and took their posts promiscuously among the private men whom they commanded.

In the body of the temple, and before the very face of the Deity, methoughts I saw the Phantom of *Tryphiodorus* the *Lipogrammatist*, engaged in a ball with four and twenty persons, who pursued him by turns through all the intricacies and labyrinths of a country dance, without being able to overtake him.

Observing several to be very busie at the western end of the *Temple*, I enquired into what they were doing, and found there was in that quarter the great magazine of *Rebus's*. These were several things of the most different natures tied up in bundles, and thrown upon one another in heaps like faggots. You might behold an anchor, a night-rail, and a hobby-horse bound up together. One of the workmen seeing me very much surpris'd, told me, there was an infinite deal of Wit in several of those bundles, and that he would explain them to me if I pleas'd: I thanked him for his civility, but told him I was in very great haste at that time. As I was going out of the *Temple*, I observed in one corner of it a cluster of men and women laughing very heartily, and diverting themselves at a game of *Crambo*. I heard several *double rhymes* as I pass'd by them, which rais'd a great deal of mirth.

Not far from these was another set of merry people engaged at a diversion, in which the whole jest was to mistake one person for another. To give occasion for these ludicrous mistakes, they were divided into pairs, every pair being cover'd from head to foot with the same kind of dress, though perhaps there was not the least resemblance in their faces. By this means an old man was sometimes mistaken for a boy, a woman for a man, and a black-a-moor for an *European*, which very often produced great peals of laughter. These I guess'd to be a party of *Punns*. But being very desirous to get out of this world of magick, which had almost turn'd my brain, I left the *Temple*, and cross'd over the fields
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that lay about it with all the speed I could make. I was not gone far before I heard the found of trumpets and alarms, which seemed to proclaim the march of an enemy; and, as I afterwards found, was in reality what I apprehended it. There appeared at a great distance a very shining light, and in the midst of it a person of a most beautiful aspect; her name was TRUTH. On her right hand there marched a male Deity, who bore several quivers on his shoulders, and grasped several Arrows in his hand. His name was *Wit*. The approach of these two enemies filled all the territories of *False Wit* with an unspeakable consternation, in so much that the Goddesses of those Regions appeared in person upon the frontiers, with the several inferior Deities, and the different bodies of forces which I had before seen in the Temple, who were now drawn up in array, and prepared to give their foes a warm reception. As the march of the enemy was very slow, it gave time to the several Inhabitants who bordered upon the *Regions* of FALSHOOD to draw their forces into a body, with a design to stand upon their guard as neuters, and attend the issue of the combat.

I must here inform my Reader, that the frontiers of the enchanted region, which I have before described, were inhabited by the Species of MIXED WIT, who made a very odd appearance when they were mustered together in an army. There were men whose bodies were stuck full of darts, and women whose eyes were burning-glasses: men that had hearts of fire, and women that had breasts of snow. It would be endless to describe several Monsters of the like nature, that composed this great army; which immediately fell asunder and divided it self into two parts, the one half throwing themselves behind the banners of TRUTH, and the others behind those of FALSHOOD.

The Goddesses of FALSHOOD was of a gigantick stature, and advanced some paces before the front of the Army; but as the dazzling light, which flowed from TRUTH, began to shine upon her, she faded insensibly; infomuch that in a little space she looked rather like an huge Phantom, than a real substance. At length, as the Goddesses of TRUTH approached still nearer to her, she fell away entirely, and vanished amidst the brightness of her presence; so that there did not remain the least trace or impression of her figure in the place where she had been seen.

As at the rising of the Sun the Constellations grow thin, and the Stars go out one after another, till the whole Hemisphere is extinguished; such was the vanishing of the Goddesses: and not only of the Goddesses her self, but of the whole Army that attended her, which sympathized
with

with their leader, and shrunk into nothing, in proportion as the Goddess disappeared. At the same time the whole Temple sunk, the fish betook themselves to the streams and the wild beasts to the woods, the fountains recovered their murmurs, the birds their voices, the trees their leaves, the flowers their scents, and the whole face of nature its true and genuine appearance. Though I still continued asleep, I fancied my self as it were awakened out of a dream, when I saw this region of Prodigies restored to woods and rivers, fields and meadows.

Upon the removal of that wild scene of wonders, which had very much disturbed my imagination, I took a full survey of the persons of WIT and TRUTH; for indeed it was impossible to look upon the first, without seeing the other at the same time. There was behind them a strong and compact body of Figures. The genius of *Heroick Poetry* appeared with a Sword in her hand, and a Lawrel on her head. *Tragedy* was crowned with Cypress, and covered with robes dipped in blood. *Satyr* had smiles in her look, and a dagger under her garment. *Rhetorick* was known by her Thunderbolt; and *Comedy* by her Mask. After several other figures, *Epigram* marched up in the rear, who had been posted there at the beginning of the expedition, that he might not revolt to the enemy, whom he was suspected to favour in his heart. I was very much awed and delighted with the appearance of the God of *Wit*; there was something so amiable and yet so piercing in his looks, as inspired me at once with love and terror. As I was gazing on him to my unspeakable joy, he took a quiver of arrows from his shoulder, in order to make me a present of it; but as I was reaching out my hand to receive it of him, I knocked it against a chair, and by that means awaked.

N° 68. *Friday, May 18.*

Nos duo turba sumus-----

Ovid.

ONE would think that the larger the company is in which we are engaged, the greater variety of thoughts and subjects would be started in discourse; but instead of this, we find that Conversation

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