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**The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.**

In Four Volumes

**Addison, Joseph**

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dred pipes at a sitting; of others who have not missed their morning's draught for twenty years together: sometimes they speak in raptures of a run of ale in King *Charles's* reign; and sometimes reflect with astonishment upon games at whisk, which have been miraculously recovered by members of the society, when in all human probability the case was desperate.

They delight in several old catches, which they sing at all hours to encourage one another to moisten their clay, and grow immortal by drinking; with many other edifying exhortations of the like nature.

There are four general Clubs held in a year, at which times they fill up vacancies, appoint waiters, confirm the old fire-maker, or elect a new one, settle contributions for coals, pipes, tobacco, and other necessaries.

The senior member has out-lived the whole Club twice over, and has been drunk with the grandfathers of some of the present sitting members.

N<sup>o</sup> 73.*Thursday, May 24.*-----*O Dea certe!*

Virg.

**I**T is very strange to consider, that a creature like man, who is sensible of so many weaknesses and imperfections, should be actuated by a love of fame: that vice and ignorance, imperfection and misery should contend for praise, and endeavour as much as possible to make themselves objects of admiration.

But notwithstanding man's essential perfection is but very little, his comparative perfection may be very considerable. If he looks upon himself in an abstracted light, he has not much to boast of; but if he considers himself with regard to others, he may find occasion of glorying, if not in his own virtues, at least in the absence of another's imperfections. This gives a different turn to the reflections of the wise man and the fool. The first endeavours to shine in himself, and the last to out-shine others. The first is humbled by the sense of his own infirmities, the last is lifted up by the discovery of those which he observes in other men. The  
wife



wise man considers what he wants, and the fool what he abounds in. The wise man is happy when he gains his own approbation, and the fool when he recommends himself to the applause of those about him.

But however unreasonable and absurd this passion for admiration may appear in such a creature as man, it is not wholly to be discouraged; since it often produces very good effects, not only as it restrains him from doing any thing which is mean and contemptible, but as it pushes him to actions which are great and glorious. The principle may be defective or faulty, but the consequences it produces are so good, that, for the benefit of mankind, it ought not to be extinguished.

It is observed by *Cicero*, that men of the greatest and the most shining parts are the most actuated by ambition; and if we look into the two sexes, I believe we shall find this principle of action stronger in women than in men.

The passion for praise, which is so very vehement in the fair Sex, produces excellent effects in women of sense, who desire to be admired for that only which deserves admiration: and I think we may observe, without a compliment to them, that many of them do not only live in a more uniform course of virtue, but with an infinitely greater regard to their honour, than what we find in the generality of our own sex. How many instances have we of Chastity, Fidelity, Devotion? How many Ladies distinguish themselves by the education of their children, care of their families, and love of their husbands, which are the great qualities and achievements of womankind: as the making of war, the carrying on of traffick, the administration of justice, are those by which men grow famous, and get themselves a name.

But as this passion for admiration, when it works according to reason, improves the beautiful part of our species in every thing that is laudable; so nothing is more destructive to them when it is governed by vanity and folly. What I have therefore here to say, only regards the vain part of the sex, whom for certain reasons, which the Reader will hereafter see at large, I shall distinguish by the name of *Idols*. An *Idol* is wholly taken up in the adorning of her person. You see in every posture of her body, air of her face, and motion of her head, that it is her business and employment to gain adorers. For this reason your *Idols* appear in all publick places and assemblies, in order to seduce men to their worship. The Play-house is very frequently filled with *Idols*; several of them are carried in procession every evening about the Ring, and several of them set up their worship even in Churches. They are to be accosted in the  
language



language proper to the Deity. Life and death are in their power: Joys of Heaven and pains of Hell are at their disposal: Paradise is in their arms, and Eternity in every moment that you are present with them. Raptures, transports and ecstasies are the rewards which they confer: Sighs and tears, prayers and broken hearts are the offerings which are paid to them. Their smiles make men happy; their frowns drive them to despair. I shall only add under this head, that *Ovid's* book of *the Art of Love* is a kind of heathen ritual, which contains all the forms of worship which are made use of to an *Idol*.

It would be as difficult a task to reckon up these different kinds of *Idols*, as *Milton's* was to number those that were known in *Canaan*, and the lands adjoining. Most of them are worshipped, like *Moloch*, in fires and flames. Some of them, like *Baal*, love to see their votaries cut and flayed, and shedding their blood for them. Some of them, like the *Idol* in the *Apocrypha*, must have treats and collations prepared for them every night. It has indeed been known, that some of them have been used by their incensed worshippers like the *Chinese Idols*, who are whipped and scourged when they refuse to comply with the prayers that are offered to them.

I must here observe, that those Idolaters who devote themselves to the *Idols* I am here speaking of, differ very much from all other kinds of Idolaters. For as others fall out because they worship different *Idols*, these Idolaters quarrel because they worship the same.

The intention therefore of the *Idol* is quite contrary to the wishes of the Idolater; as the one desires to confine the *Idol* to himself, the whole business and ambition of the other is to multiply adorers. This humour of an *Idol* is prettily described in a Tale of *Chaucer*: He represents one of them sitting at a table with three of her votaries about her, who are all of them courting her favour, and paying their adorations: She smiled upon one, drank to another, and trod upon the other's foot which was under the table. Now which of these three, says the old Bard, do you think was the favourite? In troth, says he, not one of all the three.

The behaviour of this old *Idol* in *Chaucer*, puts me in mind of the beautiful *Clarinda*, one of the greatest *Idols* among the moderns. She is worshipped once a week by candle-light in the midst of a large congregation generally called an Assembly. Some of the gayest youths in the nation endeavour to plant themselves in her eye, while she sits in form with multitudes of tapers burning about her. To encourage the zeal of her Idolaters, she bestows a mark of her favour upon every one of them be-



fore they go out of her presence. She asks a question of one, tells a story to another, glances an ogle upon a third, takes a pinch of snuff from the fourth, lets her fan drop by accident to give the fifth an occasion of taking it up. In short, every one goes away satisfied with his success, and encouraged to renew his Devotions at the same canonical hour that day sevensnight.

An *Idol* may be undeified by many accidental causes. Marriage in particular is a kind of counter-*Apotheosis*, or a Deification inverted. When a man becomes familiar with his Goddess, she quickly sinks into a woman.

Old age is likewise a great decayer of your *Idol*: The truth of it is, there is not a more unhappy being than a superannuated *Idol*, especially when she has contracted such airs and behaviour as are only graceful when her worshippers are about her.

Considering therefore that in these and many other cases the *Woman* generally out-lives the *Idol*, I must return to the Moral of this paper, and desire my fair Readers to give a proper direction to their passion for being admired: In order to which, they must endeavour to make themselves the objects of a reasonable and lasting admiration. This is not to be hoped for from beauty, or dress, or fashion, but from those inward ornaments which are not to be defaced by time or sickness, and which appear most amiable to those who are most acquainted with them.

N<sup>o</sup> 74. Friday, May 25.

-----*Pendent opera interrupta*-----

Virg.

I N my last *Monday's* paper I gave some general instances of those beautiful strokes which please the Reader in the old Song of *Chey-Chase*; I shall here, according to my promise, be more particular, and shew that the sentiments in that Ballad are extremely natural and poetical, and full of the majestic simplicity which we admire in the greatest of the ancient Poets: for which reason I shall quote several passages of