



UNIVERSITÄTS-
BIBLIOTHEK
PADERBORN

Universitätsbibliothek Paderborn

The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

London, 1721

No 89. Tuesday, June 12.

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

N° 89. Tuesday, June 12.

-----*Petite hinc juvenesque senesque
Finem animo certum, miserisque viatica canis.
Cras hoc fiet. Idem cras fiet. Quid? quasi magnum
Nempe diem donas; sed cum lux altera venit,
Jam cras hesternum consumpsimus; ecce aliud cras
Egerit hos annos, et semper paulum erit ultra.
Nam quamvis prope te, quamvis temone sub uno
Vertentem sese frustra sectabere cantum.*

Per.

AS my correspondents upon the subject of love are very numerous, it is my design, if possible, to range them under several heads, and address my self to them at different times. The first branch of them, to whose service I shall dedicate this paper, are those that have to do with women of dilatory tempers, who are for spinning out the time of courtship to an immoderate length, without being able either to close with their lovers, or to dismiss them. I have many letters by me filled with complaints against this sort of women. In one of them no less a man than a brother of the coiff tells me, that he began his suit *Vicesimo nono Caroli secundi* before he had been a twelve-month at the *Temple*; that he prosecuted it for many years after he was called to the Bar; that at present he is a Serjeant at Law; and notwithstanding he hoped that matters would have been long since brought to an issue, the fair one still demurrs. I am so well pleased with this Gentleman's Phrase, that I shall distinguish this sect of women by the title of *Demurrers*. I find by another letter from one that calls himself *Thyrsis*, that his mistress has been demurring above these seven years. But among all my Plaintiffs of this nature, I most pity the unfortunate *Philander*, a man of a constant passion and plentiful fortune, who sets forth that the timorous and irresolute *Sylvia* has demurred till she is past child-bearing. *Strepson* appears by

by his letter to be a very choleric lover, and irrevocably smitten with one that demurs out of self-interest. He tells me with great passion that she has bubbled him out of his youth; that she drilled him on to five and fifty, and that he verily believes she will drop him in his old age if she can find her account in another. I shall conclude this narrative with a letter from honest SAM. HOPEWELL, a very pleasant fellow, who it seems has at last married a *Demurrer*: I must only premise, that SAM. who is a very good bottle-companion, has been the diversion of his friends, upon account of his passion, ever since the year one thousand six hundred and eighty one.

Dear Sir,

“ YOU know very well my passion for Mrs. Martha, and what a dance
 “ she has led me: she took me out at the age of two and twen-
 “ ty, and dodged with me above thirty years. I have loved her till she is
 “ grown as gray as a cat, and am with much ado become the master of
 “ her person, such as it is at present. She is however in my eye a very
 “ charming old woman. We often lament that we did not marry soon-
 “ er, but she has no body to blame for it but her self: You know very
 “ well that she would never think of me whilst she had a tooth in her
 “ head. I have put the date of my passion (*Anno Amoris trigesimo pri-*
 “ *mo*) instead of a posie, on my wedding-ring. I expect you should send
 “ me a congratulatory letter, or, if you please, an *Epithalamium*, upon
 “ this occasion.

Mrs. Martha's and yours eternally,

SAM. HOPEWELL.

In order to banish an evil out of the world, that does not only produce great uneasiness to private persons, but has also a very bad influence on the publick, I shall endeavour to shew the folly of *Demurring* from two or three reflections, which I earnestly recommend to the thoughts of my fair Readers.

First of all I would have them seriously think on the shortness of their time. Life is not long enough for a Coquette to play all her tricks in. A timorous woman drops into her grave before she has done deliberating. Were the age of man the same that it was before the flood, a Lady might sacrifice half a century to a scruple, and be two or three ages in demurring. Had she nine hundred years good, she might hold out to the conversion of the *Jews* before she thought fit to be prevailed upon. But,
 alas!

alas! she ought to play her part in haste, when she considers that she is suddenly to quit the stage, and make room for others.

In the second place, I would desire my female Readers to consider, that as the term of life is short, that of beauty is much shorter. The finest skin wrinkles in a few years, and loses the strength of its colouring so soon, that we have scarce time to admire it. I might embellish this subject with roses and rain-bows, and several other ingenious conceits, which I may possibly reserve for another opportunity.

There is a third consideration which I would likewise recommend to a Demurrer, and that is the great danger of her falling in love when she is about threescore, if she cannot satisfy her doubts and scruples before that time. There is a kind of *latter spring*, that sometimes gets into the blood of an old woman, and turns her into a very odd sort of an animal. I would therefore have the Demurrer consider what a strange figure she will make, if she chances to get over all difficulties, and comes to a final resolution, in that unseasonable part of her life.

I would not however be understood, by any thing I have here said, to discourage that natural modesty in the sex, which renders a retreat from the first approaches of a lover both fashionable and graceful; all that I intend, is, to advise them, when they are prompted by reason and inclination, to demurr only out of form, and so far as decency requires. A virtuous woman should reject the first offer of marriage, as a good man does that of a Bishoprick; but I would advise neither the one nor the other to persist in refusing what they secretly approve. I would in this particular propose the example of *Eve* to all her daughters, as *Milton* has represented her in the following passage, which I cannot forbear transcribing entire, though only the twelve last lines are to my present purpose.

*The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands ;
 Under his forming hands a creature grew,
 Manlike, but diff'rent sex, so lovely fair,
 That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
 Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd ;
 And in her looks, which from that time infus'd
 Sweetness into my heart unfelt before,
 And into all things from her air inspir'd
 The spirit of love and amorous delight.
 She disappear'd, and left me dark ; I wak'd
 To find her, or for ever to deplore*

Her

Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:
 When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
 Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
 With what all earth or heaven could bestow
 To make her amiable. On she came,
 Led by her heav'nly Maker, though unseen,
 And guided by his voice, nor uninform'd
 Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rites:
 Grace was in all her steps, heav'n in her eye,
 In every gesture dignity and love.
 I overjoy'd, could not forbear aloud.

This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfill'd
 Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
 Giver of all things fair, but fairest this
 Of all thy gifts, nor enviest. I now see
 Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, my self....

She heard me thus, and tho' divinely brought,
 Yet innocence and virgin modesty,
 Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,
 That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won,
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retir'd
 The more desirable, or to say all,
 Nature her self, though pure of sinful thought,
 Wrought in her so, that seeing me she turn'd;
 I follow'd her: She what was honour knew,
 And with obsequious majesty approv'd
 My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bow'r
 I led her blushing like the morn—

The End of the Second. Volume.



