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

In Four Volumes

**Addison, Joseph**

**London, 1721**

No 556. Friday, June 18. 1714.

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-53597](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-53597)

*Vol. 8<sup>th</sup>*

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N<sup>o</sup> 556. *Friday, June 18. 1714.*

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*Qualis ubi in lucem coluber, mala gramina pastus,  
Frigida sub terra tumidum quem bruma tegebat;  
Nunc positus novus exuviis, nitidusque juventa,  
Lubrica convolvit sublato pectore terga  
Arduus ad solem, et linguis micat ore trifulcis.*

Virg.

**U**PON laying down the office of SPECTATOR, I acquainted the world with my design of electing a new Club, and of opening my mouth in it after a most solemn manner. Both the election and the ceremony are now past; but not finding it so easy as I at first imagined, to break through a fifty years silence, I would not venture into the world under the character of a man who pretends to talk like other people, until I had arrived at a full freedom of speech.

I shall reserve for another time the history of such Club or Clubs of which I am now a talkative, but unworthy member; and shall here give an account of this surprizing change which has been produced in me, and which I look upon to be as remarkable an accident as any recorded in history, since that which happened to the son of *Cræsus*, after having been many years as much tongue-tied as my self.

Upon the first opening of my mouth, I made a speech consisting of about half a dozen well-turned periods; but grew so very hoarse upon it, that for three days together, instead of finding the use of my tongue, I was afraid that I had quite lost it. Besides, the unusual extension of my muscles on this occasion, made my face ache on both sides to such a degree, that nothing but an invincible resolution and perseverance could have prevented me from falling back to my monosyllables.

I afterwards made several essays towards speaking; and that I might not be startled at my own voice, which has happened to me more than once, I used to read aloud in my chamber, and have often stood in the middle of the street to call a Coach, when I knew there was none within hearing.

VOL. IV.

H

When



When I was thus grown pretty well acquainted with my own voice, I laid hold of all opportunities to exert it. Not caring however to speak much by my self, and to draw upon me the whole attention of those I conversed with, I used, for some time, to walk every morning in the *Mall*, and talk in chorus with a parcel of *Frenchmen*. I found my modesty greatly relieved by the communicative temper of this nation, who are so very sociable, as to think they are never better company than when they are all opening at the same time.

I then fancied I might receive great benefit from female conversation, and that I should have a convenience of talking with the greater freedom, when I was not under any impediment of thinking: I therefore threw my self into an assembly of Ladies, but could not for my life get in a word among them; and found that if I did not change my company, I was in danger of being reduced to my primitive taciturnity.

The Coffee-houses have ever since been my chief places of resort, where I have made the greatest improvements; in order to which I have taken a particular care never to be of the same opinion with the man I conversed with. I was a Tory at *Button's*, and a Whig at *Child's*; a friend to the *Englishman*, or an advocate for the *Examiner*, as it best served my turn: some fancy me a great enemy to the *French King*, though, in reality, I only make use of him for a help to discourse. In short, I wrangle and dispute for exercise; and have carried this point so far, that I was once like to have been run through the body for making a little too free with my betters.

In a word, I am quite another man to what I was.

——— *Nil fuit unquam*  
*Tam dispar sibi* ———

My old acquaintance scarce know me; nay, I was asked the other day by a *Jew* at *Jonathan's*, whether I was not related to a dumb Gentleman, who used to come to that Coffee-house? But I think I never was better pleased in my life than about a week ago, when, as I was battling it across the table with a young *Templar*, his companion gave him a pull by the sleeve, begging him to come away, for that the old prig would talk him to death.

Being now a very good proficient in discourse, I shall appear in the world with this addition to my character, that my countrymen may reap the fruits of my new acquired loquacity.

Those



Those who have been present at publick disputes in the University, know that it is usual to maintain heresies for argument's sake. I have heard a man a most impudent Socinian for half an hour; who has been an orthodox Divine all his life after. I have taken the same method to accomplish my self in the gift of utterance, having talked above a twelve-month, not so much for the benefit of my hearers as of my self. But since I have now gained the faculty, I have been so long endeavouring after, I intend to make a right use of it, and shall think my self obliged, for the future, to speak always in truth and sincerity of heart. While a man is learning to fence, he practises both on friend and foe; but when he is a Master in the art, he never exerts it but on what he thinks the right side.

That this last allusion may not give my reader a wrong idea of my design in this paper, I must here inform him, that the Author of it is of no faction, that he is a friend to no interests but those of truth and virtue, nor a foe to any but those of vice and folly. Though I make more noise in the world than I used to do, I am still resolved to act in it as an indifferent SPECTATOR. It is not my ambition to encrease the number either of Whigs or Tories, but of wise and good men, and I could heartily wish there were not faults common to both parties, which afford me sufficient matter to work upon, without descending to those which are peculiar to either.

If in a multitude of Counsellors there is safety, we ought to think our selves the securest nation in the world. Most of our garrets are inhabited by Statesmen, who watch over the liberties of their country, and make a shift to keep themselves from starving, by taking into their care the properties of all their fellow-subjects.

As these politicians of both sides have already worked the nation into a most unnatural ferment, I shall be so far from endeavouring to raise it to a greater height, that, on the contrary, it shall be the chief tendency of my papers, to inspire my countrymen with a mutual good-will and benevolence. Whatever faults either party may be guilty of, they are rather inflamed than cured by those reproaches, which they cast upon one another. The most likely method of rectifying any man's conduct, is, by recommending to him the principles of truth and honour, religion and virtue; and so long as he acts with an eye to these principles, whatever party he is of, he cannot fail of being a good *Englishman*, and a lover of his country.



As for the persons concerned in this work, the names of all of them, or at least of such as desire it, shall be published hereafter: 'till which time I must entreat the courteous reader to suspend his curiosity, and rather to consider what is written, than who they are that write it.

Having thus adjusted all necessary preliminaries with my Reader, I shall not trouble him with any more prefatory discourses, but proceed in my old method, and entertain him with Speculations on every useful subject that falls in my way.

N<sup>o</sup> 557. Monday, June 30.

*Quippe domum timet ambiguum, Tyriosque bilingues.* Virg.

**T**HERE is nothing, says Plato, so delightful, as the hearing or the speaking of truth. For this reason there is no conversation so agreeable as that of the man of integrity, who hears without any intention to betray, and speaks without any intention to deceive.

Among all the accounts which are given of *Cato*, I do not remember one that more redounds to his honour than the following passage related by *Plutarch*. As an advocate was pleading the cause of his client before one of the Prætors, he could only produce a single witness in a point where the law required the testimony of two persons; upon which the advocate insisted on the integrity of that person whom he had produced; but the Prætor told him, That where the law required two witnesses, he would not accept of one, though it were *Cato* himself. Such a speech from a person who sat at the head of a court of Justice, while *Cato* was still living, shews us, more than a thousand examples, the high reputation this great man had gained among his contemporaries upon the account of his sincerity.

When such an inflexible integrity is a little softened and qualified by the rules of conversation and good-breeding, there is not a more shining virtue in the whole catalogue of social duties. A man however ought to take great care not to polish himself out of his veracity, nor to refine his behaviour to the prejudice of his virtue. This