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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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Qui fit, Mæcnas, ut nemo, quam sibi sortem

Seu ratio dederit, seu fors objecerit, illa

Contentus vivat: laudet diversa sequentes?

O fortunati mercatores, gravis annis

Miles ait, multo jam fractus membra labore!

Contra mercator, navim jactantibus austris,

Militia est potior. Quid enim? concurritur? horæ

Momento cita mors venit, aut victoria laeta.

Agricolam laudat juris legumque peritus,

Sub galli cantum consultor ubi ostia pulsat.

Ille, datis vadibus, qui rure extractus in urbem est,

Solos felices viventes clamat in urbe.

Cætera de genere hoc (adeo sunt multa) loquacem

Delassare valent Fabium. Ne te morer, audi

Quo rem deducam. Si quis deus, en ego, dicat,

Jam faciam quod vultis: eris tu, qui modo miles,

Mercator: tu consultus modo, rusticus. Hinc vos,

Vos hinc mutatis discedite partibus. Eja,

Quid statis? Nolint. Atqui licet esse beatis.----- Hor.

IT is a celebrated thought of *Socrates*, that if all the misfortunes of mankind were cast into a publick stock, in order to be equally distributed among the whole species, those who now think themselves the most unhappy, would prefer the share they are already possessed of, before that which would fall to them by such a division. *Horace* has carried this thought a great deal further in the motto of my paper, which implies that the hardships or misfortunes we lie under, are more easy to us than those

those of any other person would be, in case we could change conditions with him.

As I was ruminating on these two remarks, and seated in my elbow-chair, I insensibly fell asleep; when, on a sudden, methought there was a proclamation made by *Jupiter*, that every mortal should bring in his griefs and calamities, and throw them together in a heap. There was a large plain appointed for this purpose. I took my stand in the center of it, and saw with a great deal of pleasure the whole human species marching one after another, and throwing down their several loads, which immediately grew up into a prodigious mountain that seemed to rise above the clouds.

There was a certain Lady of a thin airy shape, who was very active in this solemnity. She carried a magnifying glass in one of her hands, and was cloathed in a loose flowing robe, embroidered with several figures of fiends and spectres, that discovered themselves in a thousand chimerical shapes, as her garment hovered in the wind. There was something wild and distracted in her looks. Her name was *FANCY*. She led up every mortal to the appointed place, after having very officiously assisted him in making up his pack, and laying it upon his shoulders. My heart melted within me to see my fellow-creatures groaning under their respective burthens, and to consider that prodigious bulk of human calamities which lay before me.

There were however several persons who gave me great diversion upon this occasion. I observed one bringing in a fardel very carefully concealed under an old embroidered cloak, which, upon his throwing it into the heap, I discovered to be Poverty. Another, after a great deal of puffing, threw down his luggage; which upon examining, I found to be his wife.

There were multitudes of Lovers faddled with very whimsical burthens, composed of darts and flames; but, what was very odd, though they sighed as if their hearts would break under these bundles of calamities, they could not persuade themselves to cast them into the heap, when they came up to it; but after a few faint efforts, shook their heads and marched away, as heavy loaden as they came. I saw multitudes of old women throw down their wrinkles, and several young ones who stripped themselves of a tawny skin. There were very great heaps of red noses, large lips, and rusty teeth. The truth of it is, I was surprized to see the greatest part of the mountain made up of bodily deformities. Observing one advancing towards the heap with a larger cargo than ordinary upon

upon his back, I found upon his near approach, that it was only a natural hump which he disposed of, with great joy of heart, among his collection of human miseries. There were likewise diltempers of all sorts, though I could not but observe, that there were many more imaginary than real. One little packet I could not but take notice of, which was a complication of all the diseases incident to human nature, and was in the hand of a great many fine people: this was called the Spleen. But what most of all surprized me, was a remark I made, that there was not a single vice or folly thrown into the whole heap: at which I was very much astonished, having concluded within my self, that every one would take this opportunity of getting rid of his passions, prejudices and frailties.

I took notice in particular of a very profligate fellow, who I did not question came laden with his crimes, but upon searching into his bundle, I found that instead of throwing his guilt from him, he had only laid down his memory. He was followed by another worthless Rogue, who flung away his modesty instead of his ignorance.

When the whole race of mankind had thus cast their burdens, the *Phantom* which had been so busie on this occasion, seeing me an idle spectator of what passed, approached towards me. I grew uneasie at her presence, when of a sudden she held her magnifying glass full before my eyes. I no sooner saw my face in it, but was startled at the shortness of it, which now appeared to me in its utmost aggravation. The immoderate breadth of the features made me very much out of humour with my own countenance, upon which I threw it from me like a mask. It happened very luckily, that one who stood by me had just before thrown down his visage, which, it seems, was too long for him. It was indeed extended to a most shameful length; I believe the very chin was, modestly speaking, as long as my whole face. We had both of us an opportunity of mending our selves, and, all the contributions being now brought in, every man was at liberty to exchange his misfortune for those of another person. But as there arose many new incidents in the sequel of my vision, I shall reserve them for the subject of my next paper.

