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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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veral critical dissertations, moral reflections, * * * * *

The following part of the paragraph is so much to my advantage, and beyond any thing I can pretend to, that I hope my Reader will excuse me for not inserting it.

N^o 102. *Wednesday, June 27.*

----- *Lusus animo debent aliquando dari,
Ad cogitandum melior ut redeat sibi.* Phædr.

I Do not know whether to call the following Letter a fatyr upon Coquettes, or a representation of their several fantastical accomplishments, or what other title to give it; but as it is I shall communicate it to the publick. It will sufficiently explain its own intentions, so that I shall give it my Reader at length without either Preface or Postscript.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

“ **W**OMEN are armed with Fans as men with Swords, and some-
 “ times do more execution with them. To the end there-
 “ fore that Ladies may be entire Mistresses of the weapon which they
 “ bear, I have erected an Academy for the training up of young women
 “ in the *Exercise of the Fan*, according to the most fashionable airs and
 “ motions that are now practised at Court. The Ladies who *carry*
 “ Fans under me are drawn up twice a day in my great Hall, where they
 “ are instructed in the use of their Arms, and *exercised* by the following
 “ words of command,

*Handle your Fans,
 Unfurl your Fans,
 Discharge your Fans,
 Ground your Fans,
 Recover your Fans,
 Flutter your Fans.*

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“ By

“ By the right observation of these few plain words of command, a woman of a tolerable genius who will apply herself diligently to her exercise for the space of one half year, shall be able to give her Fan all the graces that can possibly enter into that little modish machine.

“ But to the end that my Readers may form to themselves a right notion of this *Exercise*, I beg leave to explain it to them in all its parts. When my female Regiment is drawn up in array, with every one her weapon in her hand, upon my giving the word to *handle their Fans*, each of them shakes her Fan at me with a smile, then gives her right-hand woman a tap upon the shoulder, then presses her lips with the extremity of her Fan, then lets her arms fall in an easy motion, and stands in a readiness to receive the next word of Command. All this is done with a close Fan, and is generally learned in the first week.

“ The next motion is that of *unfurling the Fan*, in which are comprehended several little flurts and vibrations, as also gradual and deliberate openings, with many voluntary fallings asunder in the Fan itself, that are seldom learned under a month's practice. This part of the *Exercise* pleases the spectators more than any other, as it discovers on a sudden an infinite number of Cupids, Garlands, Altars, Birds, Beasts, Rain-bows, and the like agreeable figures, that display themselves to view, whilst every one in the regiment holds a picture in her hand.

“ Upon my giving the word to *discharge their Fans*, they give one general crack that may be heard at a considerable distance when the wind sits fair. This is one of the most difficult parts of the *Exercise*; but I have several Ladies with me, who at their first entrance could not give a pop loud enough to be heard at the further end of a room, who can now *discharge a Fan* in such a manner, that it shall make a report like a pocket-pistol. I have likewise taken care (in order to hinder young women from letting off their Fans in wrong places or unsuitable occasions) to shew upon what subject the crack of a Fan may come in properly: I have likewise invented a Fan, with which a girl of sixteen, by the help of a little wind which is enclosed about one of the largest sticks, can make as loud a crack as a woman of fifty with an ordinary Fan.

“ When the Fans are thus *discharged*, the word of command in course is to *ground their Fans*. This teaches a Lady to quit her Fan gracefully when she throws it aside in order to take up a pack of cards,

“ adjust

“ adjust a curl of hair, replace a falling pin, or apply her self to any
 “ other matter of importance. This part of the *Exercise*, as it only con-
 “ sists in tossing a Fan with an air upon a long table (which stands by for
 “ that purpose) may be learned in two days time as well as in a twelve-
 “ month.

“ When my female regiment is thus disarmed, I generally let them
 “ walk about the room for some time; when on a sudden (like Ladies
 “ that look upon their watches after a long visit) they all of them hasten
 “ to their arms, catch them up in a hurry, and place themselves in their
 “ proper stations upon my calling out *recover your Fans*. This part
 “ of the *Exercise* is not difficult, provided a woman applies her thoughts
 “ to it.

“ The *fluttering of the Fan* is the last, and indeed the master-piece
 “ of the whole *Exercise*; but if a Lady does not mis-spend her time,
 “ she may make her self mistress of it in three months. I generally lay
 “ aside the dog-days and the hot time of the summer for the teaching this
 “ part of the *Exercise*, for as soon as ever I pronounce *flutter your Fans*,
 “ the place is filled with so many zephyrs and gentle breezes as are very
 “ refreshing in that season of the year, though they might be dangerous
 “ to Ladies of a tender constitution in any other.

“ There is an infinite variety of motions to be made use of in the
 “ *flutter of a Fan*: There is the angry Flutter, the modest Flutter, the
 “ timorous Flutter, the confused Flutter, the merry Flutter, and the a-
 “ morous Flutter. Not to be tedious, there is scarce any emotion in
 “ the mind which does not produce a suitable agitation in the Fan;
 “ insomuch, that if I only see the Fan of a disciplined Lady, I know ve-
 “ ry well whether she laughs, frowns, or blushes. I have seen a Fan so
 “ very angry, that it would have been dangerous for the absent lover
 “ who provoked it to have come within the wind of it: and at other
 “ times so very languishing, that I have been glad for the Lady's sake
 “ the lover was at a sufficient distance from it. I need not add, that a
 “ Fan is either a Prude or Coquette, according to the nature of the per-
 “ son who bears it. To conclude my letter, I must acquaint you that I
 “ have from my own observations compiled a little Treatise for the use
 “ of my scholars, intitled, *The passions of the Fan*; which I will commu-
 “ nicate to you, if you think it may be of use to the publick. I shall
 “ have a general review on *Thursday* next; to which you shall be very
 “ welcome if you will honour it with your presence.

I am, &c.

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P. S. “ I

P. S. " I teach young Gentlemen the whole art of gallanting a Fan.

N. B. " I have several little plain Fans made for this use, to avoid
" expence.

N^o 105. Saturday, June 30.

-----*Id arbitror*

Adprime in vita esse utile, ne quid nimis.

Ter. And.

MY friend WILL. HONEYCOMB values himself very much upon what he calls the knowledge of mankind, which has cost him many disasters in his youth; for WILL. reckons every misfortune that he has met with among the women, and every rencounter among the men, as parts of his education, and fancies he should never have been the man he is, had not he broke windows, knocked down constables, disturbed honest people with his midnight serenades, and beat up a lewd woman's quarters, when he was a young fellow. The engaging in adventures of this nature WILL. calls the studying of mankind; and terms this knowledge of the town, the knowledge of the world. WILL. ingenuously confesses, that for half his life his head aaked every morning with reading of men over-night; and at present comforts himself under certain pains which he endures from time to time, that without them he could not have been acquainted with the gallantries of the age. This WILL. looks upon as the learning of a Gentleman, and regards all other kinds of science as the accomplishments of one whom he calls a Scholar, a Bookish man, or a Philosopher.

For these reasons WILL. shines in mixed company, where he has the discretion not to go out of his depth, and has often a certain way of making his real ignorance appear a seeming one. Our Club however has frequently caught him tripping, at which times they never spare him. For as WILL. often insults us with the knowledge of the town, we sometimes take our revenge upon him by our knowledge of books.

He was last week producing two or three letters which he writ in his youth to a Coquette Lady. The raillery of them was natural, and well enough