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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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N^o 106. *Monday, July 2.*

-----*Hinc tibi copia
Manabit ad plenum benigno
Ruris honorum opulenta cornu.*

Hor.

HAVING often received an invitation from my friend Sir ROGER DE COVERLY to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither, and am settled with him for some time at his country-house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing Speculations. Sir ROGER, who is very well acquainted with my humour, lets me rise and go to bed when I please, dine at his own table or in my chamber as I think fit, sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. When the Gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shews me at a distance. As I have been walking in his fields I have observed them stealing a sight of me over an hedge, and have heard the Knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir ROGER's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons; for as the Knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants; and as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him: by this means his domesticks are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take his Valet de Chambre for his brother, his Butler is grey-headed, his Groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his Coachman has the looks of a Privy-Counsellor. You see the goodness of the Master even in the old house-dog, and in a grey pad that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness out of regard to his past services, though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the joy that appeared in the countenances of these ancient domesticks upon my friend's arrival at his country-seat. Some of them could not refrain from tears at the

the sight of their old Master; every one of them pressed forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old Knight, with a mixture of the father and the master of the family, tempered the enquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good-nature engages every body to him, so that when he is pleasant upon any of them, all his family are in good humour, and none so much as the person whom he diverts himself with: on the contrary, if he coughs, or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his Butler, who is a very prudent man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow-servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they have often heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion, when Sir ROGER is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man who is ever with Sir ROGER, and has lived at his house in the nature of a Chaplain above thirty years. This Gentleman is a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation: he heartily loves Sir ROGER, and knows that he is very much in the old Knight's esteem; so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependant.

I have observed in several of my papers, that my friend Sir ROGER, amidst all his good qualities, is something of an humourist; and that his Virtues, as well as Imperfections, are as it were tinged by a certain extravagance, which makes them particularly *his*, and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in it self, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of Sense and Virtue would appear in their common and ordinary colours. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned? and without staying for my answer told me, that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table; for which reason, he desired a particular friend of his at the University to find him out a Clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and, if possible, a man that understood a little of Back-gammon. My friend, says Sir ROGER, found me out this Gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good Scholar though he does not shew it. I have given him the parsonage of the parish; and because I know his value,
have

have settled upon him a good Annuity for life. If he out-lives me, he shall find that he was higher in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years; and though he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked any thing of me for himself, though he is every day solliciting me for something in behalf of one or other of my tenants his parishioners. There has not been a law-suit in the parish since he has lived among them: If any dispute arises, they apply themselves to him for the decision; if they do not acquiesce in his judgment, which I think never happened above once, or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a present of all the good Sermons which have been printed in *English*, and only begged of him that every *Sunday* he would pronounce one of them in the Pulpit. Accordingly, he has digested them into such a series, that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued system of practical Divinity.

As Sir ROGER was going on in his story, the Gentleman we were talking of came up to us; and upon the Knight's asking him who preached to morrow (for it was *Saturday* night) told us the Bishop of *St. Asaph* in the morning, and Dr. *South* in the afternoon. He then shewed us his list of Preachers for the whole year, where I saw with a great deal of pleasure Archbishop *Tillotson*, Bishop *Saunderson*, Doctor *Barrow*, Doctor *Calamy*, with several living Authors who have published Discourses of Practical Divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the Pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a good aspect and a clear voice; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as the discourses he pronounced, that I think I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A Sermon repeated after this manner, is like the composition of a Poet in the mouth of a graceful Actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our Country-clergy would follow this example; and instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater Masters. This would not only be more easie to themselves, but more edifying to the people.