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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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*Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam,
 Rectique cultus pectora roborant:
 Uicunque defecere mores,
 Dedecorant bene nata culpa.*

Hor.

AS I was yesterday taking the air with my friend Sir ROGER, we were met by a fresh-coloured ruddy young man, who rid by us full speed, with a couple of servants behind him. Upon my enquiry who he was, Sir ROGER told me that he was a young Gentleman of a considerable estate, who had been educated by a tender mother that lived not many miles from the place where we were. She is a very good Lady, says my friend, but took so much care of her son's health, that she has made him good for nothing. She quickly found that reading was bad for his eyes, and that writing made his head ake. He was let loose among the woods as soon as he was able to ride on horse-back, or to carry a gun upon his shoulder. To be brief, I found, by my friend's account of him, that he had got a great stock of health, but nothing else; and that if it were a man's business only to live, there would not be a more accomplished young fellow in the whole county.

The truth of it is, since my residing in these parts, I have seen and heard innumerable instances of young heirs and elder brothers, who either from their own reflecting upon the estates they are born to, and therefore thinking all other accomplishments unnecessary, or from hearing these notions frequently inculcated to them by the flattery of their servants and domesticks, or from the same foolish thoughts prevailing in those who have the care of their education, are of no manner of use but to keep up their families, and transmit their lands and houses in a line to posterity.

This makes me often think on a story I have heard of two friends, which I shall give my Reader at large, under feigned names. The moral

ral of it may, I hope, be useful, though there are some circumstances which make it rather appear like a Novel, than a true story.

Eudoxus and *Leontine* began the world with small estates. They were both of them men of good sense and great virtue. They prosecuted their studies together in their earlier years, and entered into such a friendship as lasted to the end of their lives. *Eudoxus*, at his first setting out in the world, threw himself into a Court, where by his natural endowments and his acquired abilities he made his way from one post to another, till at length he had raised a very considerable fortune. *Leontine* on the contrary sought all opportunities of improving his mind by study, conversation and travel. He was not only acquainted with all the sciences, but with the most eminent professors of them throughout *Europe*. He knew perfectly well the interests of its Princes, with the customs and fashions of their Courts, and could scarce meet with the name of an extraordinary person in the Gazette whom he had not either talked to or seen. In short, he had so well mixt and digested his knowledge of men and books, that he made one of the most accomplished persons of his age. During the whole course of his studies and travels he kept up a punctual correspondence with *Eudoxus*, who often made himself acceptable to the principal men about Court by the intelligence which he received from *Leontine*. When they were both turned of forty (an age in which, according to Mr. Cowley, *there is no dallying with life*) they determined, pursuant to the resolution they had taken in the beginning of their lives, to retire, and pass the remainder of their days in the country. In order to this, they both of them married much about the same time. *Leontine*, with his own and his wife's fortune, bought a farm of three hundred a year, which lay within the neighbourhood of his friend *Eudoxus*, who had purchased an estate of as many thousands. They were both of them *Fathers* about the same time, *Eudoxus* having a son born to him, and *Leontine* a daughter; but to the unspeakable grief of the latter, his young wife (in whom all his happiness was wrapt up) died in a few days after the birth of her daughter. His affliction would have been insupportable, had he not been comforted by the daily visits and conversations of his friend. As they were one day talking together with their usual intimacy, *Leontine*, considering how incapable he was of giving his daughter a proper education in his own house, and *Eudoxus* reflecting on the ordinary behaviour of a son who knows himself to be the heir of a great estate, they both agreed upon an exchange of children, namely that the boy should be bred up with *Leontine* as his son, and that

the girl should live with *Eudoxus* as his daughter, till they were each of them arrived at years of discretion. The wife of *Eudoxus*, knowing that her son could not be so advantageously brought up as under the care of *Leontine*, and considering at the same time that he would be perpetually under her own eye, was by degrees prevailed upon to fall in with the project. She therefore took *Leonilla*, for that was the name of the girl, and educated her as her own daughter. The two friends on each side had wrought themselves to such an habitual tenderness for the children who were under their direction, that each of them had the real passion of a father, where the title was but imaginary. *Florio*, the name of the young Heir that lived with *Leontine*, though he had all the duty and affection imaginable for his supposed parent, was taught to rejoice at the sight of *Eudoxus*, who visited his friend very frequently, and was dictated by his natural affection, as well as by the rules of prudence, to make himself esteemed and beloved by *Florio*. The boy was now old enough to know his supposed father's circumstances, and that therefore he was to make his way in the world by his own industry. This consideration grew stronger in him every day, and produced so good an effect, that he applied himself with more than ordinary attention to the pursuit of every thing which *Leontine* recommended to him. His natural abilities, which were very good, assisted by the directions of so excellent a counsellor, enabled him to make a quicker progress than ordinary through all the parts of his education. Before he was twenty years of age, having finished his studies and exercises with great applause, he was removed from the University to the Inns of Court, where there are very few that make themselves considerable proficient in the studies of the place, who know they shall arrive at great estates without them. This was not *Florio's* case, he found that three hundred a year was but a poor estate for *Leontine* and himself to live upon, so that he studied without intermission till he gained a very good insight into the constitution and laws of his country.

I should have told my Reader, that whilst *Florio* lived at the house of his foster-father, he was always an acceptable guest in the family of *Eudoxus*, where he became acquainted with *Leonilla* from her infancy. His acquaintance with her by degrees grew into love, which in a mind trained up in all the sentiments of honour and virtue became a very uneasy passion. He despaired of gaining an Heiress of so great a fortune, and would rather have died than attempted it by any indirect methods. *Leonilla*, who was a woman of the greatest beauty joined with the greatest modesty, entertained at the same time a secret passion for *Florio*, but conducted

ducted her self with so much prudence that she never gave him the least intimation of it. *Florio* was now engaged in all those arts and improvements that are proper to raise a man's private fortune, and give him a figure in his country, but secretly tormented with that passion which burns with the greatest fury in a virtuous and noble heart, when he received a sudden summons from *Leontine* to repair to him into the country the next day. For it seems *Eudoxus* was so filled with the report of his son's reputation, that he could no longer withhold making himself known to him. The morning after his arrival at the house of his supposed father, *Leontine* told him that *Eudoxus* had something of great importance to communicate to him; upon which the good man embraced him, and wept. *Florio* was no sooner arrived at the great house that stood in his neighbourhood, but *Eudoxus* took him by the hand, after the first salutes were over, and conducted him into his closet. He there opened to him the whole secret of his parentage and education, concluding after this manner. *I have no other way left of acknowledging my gratitude to Leontine, than by marrying you to his daughter. He shall not lose the pleasure of being your father, by the discovery I have made to you. Leonilla too shall be still my daughter; her filial piety, though misplaced, has been so exemplary that it deserves the greatest reward I can confer upon it. You shall have the pleasure of seeing a great estate fall to you, which you would have lost the relish of, had you known your self born to it. Continue only to deserve it in the same manner you did before you were possessed of it. I have left your mother in the next room. Her heart yearns towards you. She is making the same discoveries to Leonilla which I have made to your self.* *Florio* was so overwhelmed with this profusion of happiness, that he was not able to make a reply, but threw himself down at his father's feet, and amidst a flood of tears, kissed and embraced his knees, asking his blessing, and expressing in dumb show those sentiments of love, duty and gratitude that were too big for utterance. To conclude, the happy pair were married, and half *Eudoxus's* estate settled upon them. *Leontine* and *Eudoxus* passed the remainder of their lives together; and received in the dutiful and affectionate behaviour of *Florio* and *Leonilla* the just recompence, as well as the natural effects, of that care which they had bestowed upon them in their education.