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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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N^o 131. *Tuesday, July 31.**----- Ipsæ rursum concedite sylva.*

Virg.

IT is usual for a man who loves country sports to preserve the game in his own grounds, and divert himself upon those that belong to his neighbour. My friend Sir R^oGER generally goes two or three miles from his house, and gets into the frontiers of his estate, before he beats about in search of a Hare or Partridge, on purpose to spare his own fields, where he is always sure of finding diversion when the worst comes to the worst. By this means the breed about his house has time to encrease and multiply, besides that the sport is the more agreeable where the game is harder to come at, and where it does not lie so thick as to produce any perplexity or confusion in the pursuit. For these reasons the country Gentleman, like the Fox, seldom preys near his own home.

In the same manner I have made a month's excursion out of the town, which is the great field of game for sportsmen of my species, to try my fortune in the country, where I have started several subjects, and hunted them down, with some pleasure to my self, and I hope to others. I am here forced to use a great deal of diligence before I can spring any thing to my mind, whereas in town, whilst I am following one character, it is ten to one but I am crossed in my way by another, and put up such a variety of odd creatures in both sexes, that they foil the scent of one another, and puzzle the chace. My greatest difficulty in the country is to find sport, and in town to chuse it. In the mean time, as I have given a whole month's rest to the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, I promise my self abundance of new game upon my return thither.

It is indeed high time for me to leave the country, since I find the whole neighbourhood begin to grow very inquisitive after my name and character: My love of solitude, taciturnity, and particular way of life, having raised a great curiosity in all these parts.

The notions which have been framed of me are various; some look upon me as very proud, some as very modest, and some as very melancholy.

choly. *Will Wimble*, as my friend the Butler tells me, observing me very much alone, and extremely silent when I am in company, is afraid I have killed a man. The country people seem to suspect me for a Conjuror; and some of them hearing of the visit which I made to *Moll White*, will needs have it that Sir ROGER has brought down a Cunning-man with him, to cure the old woman, and free the country from her charms. So that the character which I go under in part of the neighbourhood, is what they here call a *white Witch*.

A Justice of Peace, who lives about five miles off, and is not of Sir ROGER's party, has it seems said twice or thrice at his table, that he wishes Sir ROGER does not harbour a Jesuit in his house, and that he thinks the Gentlemen of the country would do very well to make me give some account of my self.

On the other side, some of Sir ROGER's friends are afraid the old Knight is imposed upon by a designing fellow, and as they have heard he converses very promiscuously when he is in town, do not know but he has brought down with him some discarded Whig, that is fullen, and says nothing, because he is out of place.

Such is the variety of opinions which are here entertained of me, so that I pass among some for a disaffected person, and among others for a Popish Priest; among some for a wizard, and among others for a murderer; and all this for no other reason, that I can imagine, but because I do not hoot and hollow and make a noise. It is true, my friend Sir ROGER tells them *that it is my way*, and that I am only a Philosopher; but this will not satisfy them. They think there is more in me than he discovers, and that I do not hold my tongue for nothing.

For these and other reasons I shall set out for *London* to-morrow, having found by experience that the country is not a place for a person of my temper, who does not love jollity, and what they call good-neighbourhood. A man that is out of humour when an unexpected guest breaks in upon him, and does not care for sacrificing an afternoon to every chance-comer; that will be the master of his own time, and the pursuer of his own inclinations, makes but a very unfociable figure in this kind of life. I shall therefore retire into the town, if I may make use of that phrase, and get into the crowd again as fast as I can, in order to be alone. I can there raise what Speculations I please upon others, without being observed my self, and at the same time enjoy all the advantages of company with all the privileges of solitude. In the meanwhile, to finish the month, and conclude these my rural Speculations, I

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shall here insert a letter from my friend WILL HONEYCOMB, who has not lived a month for these forty years out of the smoke of *London*, and rallies me after his way upon my country life.

Dear SPEC.

“ I Suppose this letter will find thee picking of daisies, or smelling to a
 “ lock of hay, or passing away thy time in some innocent country
 “ diversion of the like nature. I have however orders from the Club to
 “ fummon thee up to town, being all of us curfedly afraid thou wilt not
 “ be able to relish our company, after thy conversations with *Moll White*
 “ and *Will Wimble*. Pr’ythee don’t fend us up any more stories of a
 “ cock and a bull, nor frighten the town with spirits and witches. Thy
 “ Speculations begin to smell confoundedly of woods and meadows. If
 “ thou dost not come up quickly, we shall conclude thou art in love with
 “ one of Sir ROGER’s dairy maids. Service to Knight. Sir ANDREW
 “ is grown the cock of the Club since he left us, and if he does not re-
 “ turn quickly, will make every mother’s son of us common-wealths
 “ men.

Dear SPEC, thine eternally,

WILL. HONEYCOMB.

N^o 135. Saturday, August 4.

Est brevitatis opus, ut currat sententia----- Hor.

I Have somewhere read of an eminent person, who used in his private offices of devotion to give thanks to Heaven that he was born a *Frenchman*: for my own part I look upon it as a peculiar blessing that I was born an *Englishman*. Among many other reasons, I think my self very happy in my country, as the *language* of it is wonderfully adapted to a man who is sparing of his words, and an enemy to loquacity.

As I have frequently reflected on my good fortune in this particular, I shall communicate to the publick my Speculations upon the *English*

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tongue,