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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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lick it with her tongue till the blood came; which gave her a very silly satisfaction, as imagining the blood came from the file, notwithstanding all the smart was in her own tongue.

N^o 27. *Friday, March 23.*

----- *dii visa secundant.*

Luc.

IT is an old observation, that a time of peace is always a time of Prodigies; for as our news-writers must adorn their papers with that which the criticks call, *The Marvellous*, they are forced in a dead calm of affairs, to ransack every element for proper amusements, and either to astonish their Readers from time to time with a strange and wonderful sight, or be content to lose their custom. The sea is generally filled with monsters when there are no fleets upon it. Mount *Ætna* immediately began to rage upon the extinction of the rebellion: and woe to the people of *Catanea*, if the peace continues; for they are sure to be shaken every week with earthquakes, till they are relieved by the siege of some other great town in *Europe*. The air has likewise contributed its quota of Prodigies. We had a blazing star by the last mail from *Genoa*; and in the present dearth of battels have been very opportunely entertained, by persons of undoubted credit, with a Civil war in the clouds, where our sharp-sighted malecontents discovered many objects invisible to an eye that is dimmed by *Whig*-principles.

I question not but this paper will fall in with the present humour, since it contains a very remarkable vision of a *Higbland Seer*, who is famous among the mountains, and known by the name of *Second-sighted-Sawney*. Had he been able to write, we might probably have seen this vision sooner in print; for it happened to him very early in the late hard winter; and is transmitted to me by a student at *Glasgow*, who took the whole relation from him, and stuck close to the facts, though he has delivered them in his own style.

Sawney was descended of an ancient family, very much renowned for their skill in prognosticks. Most of his ancestors were second-sighted, and his mother but narrowly escaped being burnt for a witch. As he was going out one morning very early to steal a sheep, he was seized on the sudden with a fit of second-sight. The face of the whole country about him was changed in the twinkling of an eye, and presented him with a wide prospect of new scenes and objects, which he had never seen till that day.

He discovered at a great distance from him a large fabrick, which cast such a glistering light about it, that it looked like a huge rock of Diamond. Upon the top of it was planted a standard, streaming in a strong northern wind, and embroidered with a mixture of Thistles and Flower-de-luces. As he was amusing himself with this strange sight, he heard a bagpipe at some distance behind him, and, turning about, saw a General, who seemed very much animated with the sound of it, marching towards him at the head of a numerous army. He learnt, upon enquiry, that they were making a procession to the structure which stood before him, and which he found was the *Temple of rebellion*. He immediately struck in with them; but described this march to the temple with so much horror, that he shivered every joynt all the while he spoke of it. They were forced to clamber over so many rocks, and to tread upon the brink of so many precipices, that they were very often in danger of their lives. *Sawney* declared, that, for his own part, he walked in fear of his neck every step he took. Upon their coming within a few furlongs of the temple, they passed through a very thick grove, consecrated to a deity who was known by the name of *Treason*. They here dispersed themselves into abundance of labyrinths and covered walks, which led to the temple. The path was so very slippery, the shade so exceeding gloomy, and the whole wood so full of echoes, that they were forced to march with the greatest wariness, circumspection and silence. They at length arrived at a great gate, which was the principal avenue to that magnificent fabrick. *Sawney* stood some time at the entrance to observe the splendour of the building, and was not a little entertained with a prodigious number of statues, which were planted up and down in a spacious court that lay before it; but, upon examining it more nicely, he found the whole fabrick, which made such a glittering appearance, and seemed impregnable, was composed of ice, and that the several statues which seemed at a distance to be made of the whitest marble, were nothing else but so many figures in snow. The front of the temple was
very

very curiously adorned with Stars and Garters, Ducal Coronets, General's staffs, and many other emblems of honour wrought in the most beautiful frost-work. After having stood at gaze some time before this great gate, he discovered on it an inscription, signifying it to be the *Gate of Perjury*. There was erected near it a great Colossus in snow that had two faces, and was drest like a *Jesuit*, with one of its hands upon a book, and the other grasping a dagger. Upon entering into the Court, he took a particular survey of several of the figures. There was Sedition with a trumpet in her hand, and Rapine in the garb of a Highlander: Ambition, Envy, Disgrace, Poverty, and Disappointment, were all of them represented under their proper emblems. Among other statues, he observed that of Rumour whispering an idiot in the ear, who was the representative of Credulity; and Faction embracing with her hundred arms an old-fashioned figure in a steeple-crowned hat, that was designed to express a cunning old gipsy, called Passive-obedience. Zeal too had a place among the rest, with a bandage over her eyes, though one would not have expected to have seen her represented in snow. But the most remarkable object in this court-yard, was a huge tree that grew up before the porch of the temple, and was of the same kind with that, which *Virgil* tells us flourished at the entrance of the infernal regions. For it bore nothing but dreams, which hung in clusters under every leaf of it. The travellers refreshed themselves in the shade of this tree before they entered the *Temple of Rebellion*, and after their frights and fatigues, received great comfort in the fruit which fell from it. At length the gates of the temple flew open, and the crowd rushed into it. In the centre of it was a grim idol, with a sword in the right hand, and a firebrand in the left. The fore-part of the Pedestal was curiously embossed with a triumph; while the back-part, that lay more out of sight, was filled with gibbets and axes. This dreadful idol is worshipped, like several of old, with human sacrifices, and his votaries were consulting among themselves, how to gratify him with Hecatombs; when, on a sudden, they were surprized with the alarm of a great light which appeared in the southern part of the Heavens, and made its progress directly towards them. This light appeared as a great mass of flame, or rather glory, like that of the sun in its strength. There were three figures in the midst of it, who were known by their several hieroglyphicks, to be Religion, Loyalty, and Valour. The last had a graceful air, a blooming countenance, and a star upon its breast, which shot forth several pointed beams of a peculiar lustre. The glory which encompassed them, covered the place, and darted its rays with so much strength,

that.

that the whole fabrick and all its ornaments began to melt. The several emblems of honour, which were wrought on the front in the brittle materials above-mentioned, trickled away under the first impressions of the heat. In short, the thaw was so violent, that the temple and statues ran off in a sudden torrent, and the whole winter-piece was dissolved. The covered walks were laid open by the light which shone through every part of them, and the Dream-tree withered like the famous gourd, that was smitten by the noon-day Sun. As for the votaries, they left the place with the greatest precipitation, and dispersed themselves by flight into a thousand different paths among the mountains.

N^o 28. *Monday, March 26.*

----- *Incendia lumen*
Præbebant, aliquisque malo fuit usus in illo. Ov. Met.

SIR *Francis Bacon*, in the dedication before his history of *Henry the Seventh*, observes, that peaceable times are the best to live in, though not so proper to furnish materials for a writer: as hilly countries afford the most entertaining prospects, though a man would chuse to travel through a plain one. To this we may add, that the times, which are full of disorders and tumults, are likewise the fullest of instruction. History indeed furnishes us with very distinct accounts of factions, conspiracies, civil wars and rebellions, with the fatal consequences that attend them: but they do not make such deep and lasting impressions on our minds, as events of the same nature, to which we have our selves been witnesses, and in which we or our friends and acquaintance have been sufferers. As adversity makes a man wise in his private affairs, civil calamities give him prudence and circumspection in his publick conduct.

The miseries of the civil war under the reign of King *Charles the First*, and the consequences which ensued upon them, did, for many years, deter the inhabitants of our Island from the thoughts of engaging anew in such desperate undertakings; and convinced them, by fatal experience, that nothing could be so pernicious to the *English*, and so opposite