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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

London, 1721

N° 209. Tuesday, October 30.

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-53621](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-53621)

poses the supreme Being wills nothing but what is for our good, and that he knows better than our selves what is so.

N^o 209. *Tuesday, October 30.*

Τιτωαικός ἐδὲ χρῆμι' ἀνὴρ λυσιζεταί
Ἑδλῆς ἀμεινον, ἐδὲ ῥίγιον κακῆς.

Simonides.

THERE are no Authors I am more pleased with, than those who shew humane nature in a variety of views, and describe the several ages of the world in their different manners. A Reader cannot be more rationally entertained, than by comparing the virtues and vices of his own times, with those which prevailed in the times of his fore-fathers; and drawing a parallel in his mind between his own private character, and that of other persons, whether of his own age, or of the ages that went before him. The contemplation of mankind under these changeable colours, is apt to shame us out of any particular vice, or animate us to any particular virtue; to make us pleased or displeased with our selves in the most proper points, to clear our minds of prejudice and prepossession, and rectify that narrowness of temper which inclines us to think amiss of those who differ from our selves.

If we look into the manners of the most remote ages of the world, we discover humane nature in her simplicity; and the more we come downward towards our own times, may observe her hiding her self in artifices and refinements, polished insensibly out of her original plainness, and at length entirely lost under form and ceremony, and (what we call) good breeding. Read the accounts of men and women as they are given us by the most ancient writers, both sacred and prophane, and you would think you were reading the history of another species.

Among the writers of antiquity, there are none who instruct us more openly in the manners of their respective times in which they lived, than those who have employed themselves in satyr, under what dress soever it may appear; as there are no other Authors whose province it is to enter

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ter so directly into the ways of men, and set their miscarriages in so strong a light.

Simonides, a Poet famous in his generation, is I think Author of the oldest Satyr that is now extant; and, as some say, of the first that was ever written. This Poet flourished about four hundred years after the siege of *Troy*; and shews, by his way of writing, the simplicity, or rather coarseness, of the age in which he lived. I have taken notice, in my hundred and sixty first Speculation, that the rule of observing what the *French* call the *Bienfaisance*, in an allusion, has been found out of latter years; and that the ancients, provided there was a likeness in their similitudes, did not much trouble themselves about the decency of the comparison. The Satyrs or Iambicks of *Simonides*, with which I shall entertain my Readers in the present paper, are a remarkable instance of what I formerly advanced. The subject of this Satyr is Woman. He describes the sex in their several characters, which he derives to them from a fanciful supposition raised upon the doctrine of *Præ-existence*. He tells us, That the Gods formed the Souls of women out of those seeds and principles which compose several kinds of animals and elements; and that their good or bad dispositions arise in them according as such and such seeds and principles predominate in their constitutions. I have translated the Author very faithfully, and if not word for word (which our language would not bear) at least so as to comprehend every one of his sentiments, without adding any thing of my own. I have already apologized for this Author's want of delicacy, and must further premise, That the following Satyr affects only some of the lower part of the sex, and not those who have been refined by a polite education, which was not so common in the age of this Poet.

In the beginning God made the Souls of womankind out of different materials, and in a separate state from their bodies.

The Souls of one kind of women were formed out of those ingredients which compose a Swine. - A woman of this make is a slut in her house, and a glutton at her table. She is uncleanly in her person, a slattern in her dress, and her family is no better than a dunghil.

A second sort of female Soul was formed out of the same materials that enter into the composition of a Fox. Such an one is what we call a notable discerning woman, who has an insight into every thing, whether it be good or bad. In this species of females there are some virtuous and some vicious.

A third kind of women were made up of Canine particles. These are what we commonly call Scolds, who imitate the animals out of which they were taken, that are always busy and barking, that snarl at every one who comes in their way, and live in perpetual clamour.

The fourth kind of women were made out of the earth. These are your sluggards, who pass away their time in indolence and ignorance, hover over the fire a whole winter, and apply themselves with alacrity to no kind of business but eating.

The fifth species of females were made out of the sea. These are women of variable uneven tempers, sometimes all storm and tempest, sometimes all calm and sunshine. The stranger who sees one of these in her smiles and smoothness, would cry her up for a miracle of good humour; but on a sudden her looks and words are changed, she is nothing but fury and outrage, noise and hurricane.

The sixth species were made up of the ingredients which compose an ass, or a beast of burden. These are naturally exceeding slothful, but upon the husband's exerting his authority, will live upon hard fare, and do every thing to please him. They are however far from being averse to Venereal pleasure, and seldom refuse a male companion.

The cat furnished materials for a seventh species of women, who are of a melancholy, froward, unamiable nature, and so repugnant to the offers of love, that they fly in the face of their husband when he approaches them with conjugal endearments. This species of women are likewise subject to little thefts, cheats, and pilferings.

The Mare with a flowing mane, which was never broke to any servile toil and labour, composed an eighth species of women. These are they who have little regard for their husbands, who pass away their time in dressing, bathing, and perfuming; who throw their hair into the nicest curls, and trick it up with the fairest flowers and garlands. A woman of this species is a very pretty thing for a stranger to look upon, but very detrimental to the owner, unless it be a King or Prince who takes a fancy to such a toy.

The ninth species of females were taken out of the Ape. These are such as are both ugly and ill-natured, who have nothing beautiful in themselves, and endeavour to detract from or ridicule every thing which appears so in others.

The tenth and last species of women were made out of the Bee: and happy is the man who gets such an one for his wife. She is altogether faultless and unblameable; her family flourishes and improves by her
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good management. She loves her husband, and is beloved by him. She brings him a race of beautiful and virtuous children. She distinguishes her self among her sex. She is surrounded with graces. She never sits among the loose tribe of women, nor passes away her time with them in wanton discourses. She is full of virtue and prudence, and is the best wife that Jupiter can bestow on man.

I shall conclude these Iambicks with the motto of this paper, which is a fragment of the same Author: *A man cannot possess any thing that is better than a good woman, nor any thing that is worse than a bad one.*

As the Poet has shewn a great penetration in this diversity of female characters, he has avoided the fault which *Juvenal* and *Monfieur Boileau* are guilty of, the former in his sixth, and the other in his last Satyr, where they have endeavoured to expose the sex in general, without doing justice to the valuable part of it. Such levelling Satyrs are of no use to the world, and for this reason I have often wondered how the *French* Author above-mentioned, who was a man of exquisite judgment, and a lover of virtue, could think humane nature a proper subject for Satyr in another of his celebrated pieces, which is called *The Satyr upon Man*. What vice or frailty can a discourse correct, which censures the whole species alike, and endeavours to shew by some superficial strokes of wit, that brutes are the more excellent creatures of the two? A Satyr should expose nothing but what is corrigible, and make a due discrimination between those who are, and those who are not the proper objects of it.

N^o 211. Thursday, November 1.

Fictis meminere nos joculari Fabulis.

Phæd.

HAVING lately translated the fragment of an old Poet, which describes womankind under several characters, and supposes them to have drawn their different manners and dispositions from those animals and elements out of which he tells us they were compounded; I had some thoughts of giving the sex their revenge, by laying together

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