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**The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.**

In Four Volumes

**Addison, Joseph**

**London, 1721**

N° 211. Thursday, November 1.

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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<sup>o</sup> 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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in another paper the many vicious characters which prevail in the male world, and shewing the different ingredients that go to the making up of such different humours and constitutions. *Horace* has a thought which is something akin to this, when, in order to excuse himself to his *Mistress*, for an invective which he had written against her, and to account for that unreasonable fury with which the heart of man is often transported, he tells us, that when *Prometheus* made his man of clay, in the kneading up of the heart he seasoned it with some furious particles of the *Lion*. But upon turning this plan to and fro in my thoughts, I observed so many unaccountable humours in man, that I did not know out of what animals to fetch them. Male souls are diversify'd with so many characters, that the world has not variety of materials sufficient to furnish out their different tempers and inclinations. The creation, with all its animals and elements, would not be large enough to supply their several extravagances.

Instead therefore of pursuing the thought of *Simonides*, I shall observe that as he has expos'd the vicious part of women from the doctrine of *Præexistence*, some of the ancient Philosophers have, in a manner, satyrized the vicious part of the human species in general, from a notion of the soul's *Postexistence*, if I may so call it; and that as *Simonides* describes brutes entering into the composition of women, others have represented humane souls as entering into brutes. This is commonly termed the doctrine of *Transmigration*, which supposes that humane souls, upon their leaving the body, become the souls of such kinds of brutes as they most resemble in their manners; or to give an account of it, as *Mr. Dryden* has described it in his translation of *Pythagoras* his speech in the fifteenth book of *Ovid*, where that Philosopher dissuades his hearers from eating flesh.

*Thus all things are but alter'd, nothing dies,  
And here and there th' unbody'd spirit flies:  
By time, or force, or sickness disposs'd,  
And lodges where it lights in bird or beast,  
Or hunts without till ready limbs it find,  
And actuates those according to their kind:  
From tenement to tenement is toss'd:  
The soul is still the same, the figure only lost.  
Then let not piety be put to flight,  
To please the taste of glutton-appetite;*

*But*

But suffer inmate souls secure to dwell,  
 Least from their seats your parents you expel;  
 With rabid hunger feed upon your kind,  
 Or from a beast dislodge a brother's mind.

Plato in the vision of *Erus the Armenian*, which I may possibly make the subject of a future speculation, records some beautiful transmigrations; as that the soul of *Orpheus*, who was musical, melancholy, and a woman-hater, entered into a Swan; the soul of *Ajax*, which was all wrath and fierceness, into a Lion; the soul of *Agamemnon*, that was rapacious and imperial, into an Eagle; and the soul of *Thersites*, who was a mimick and a buffoon, into a Monkey.

Mr. *Congreve*, in a Prologue to one of his Comedies, has touched upon this doctrine with great humour.

Thus Aristotle's soul, of old that was,  
 May now be damn'd to animate an ass;  
 Or in this very house, for ought we know,  
 Is doing painful penance in some Beau.

I shall fill up this paper with some Letters which my last *Tuesday's* Speculation has produced. My following correspondents will shew, what I there observed, that the Speculation of that day affects only the lower part of the sex.

From my house in the Strand, October 30, 1711.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

UPON reading your *Tuesday's* paper, I find by several symptoms in my constitution, that I am a Bee. My shop, or if you please to call it so, my Cell, is in that great Hive of females which goes by the name of the *New-Exchange*; where I am daily employed in gathering together a little stock of gain from the finest flowers about the town, I mean the Ladies and the Beaus. I have a numerous swarm of children, to whom I give the best education I am able: but, Sir, it is my misfortune to be married to a Drone, who lives upon what I get without bringing any thing into the common stock. Now, Sir, as on the one hand I take care not to behave my self towards him like a Wasp, so likewise I would not have him look upon me as a Humble Bee; for which reason I do all I can to put him upon laying up provisions for a bad day, and frequently represent to him the fatal effects his sloth and

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“ negligence may bring upon us in our old age. I must beg that you will  
 “ join with me in your good advice upon this occasion, and you will for  
 “ ever oblige

*Your humble Servant,* MELISSA.

S I R, *Piccadilly, October 31, 1711.*

“ I Am joined in wedlock for my sins to one of those Fillies who are  
 “ described in the old Poet with that hard name you gave us the  
 “ other day. She has a flowing mane, and a skin as soft as silk: but,  
 “ Sir, she passes half her life at her glass, and almost ruins me in ribbons.  
 “ For my own part, I am a plain handicraft man, and in danger of break-  
 “ ing by her laziness and expensiveness. Pray, Master, tell me in your  
 “ next paper, whether I may not expect of her so much drudgery as to  
 “ take care of her family, and curry her hide in case of refusal.

*Your loving friend,* Barnaby Brittle.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

*Cheapside, October 30.*

“ I Am mightily pleased with the humour of the Cat, be so kind as to  
 “ enlarge upon that subject.

*Yours till death,* Josiah Henpeck.

P. S. “ You must know I am married to a *Grimalkin*.

S I R,

*Wapping, October 31, 1711.*

“ EVER since your *Spectator* of Tuesday last came into our family,  
 “ my husband is pleased to call me his *Oceana*, because the foolish  
 “ old Poet that you have translated says, That the souls of some women  
 “ are made of sea-water. This, it seems, has encouraged my sauce-box  
 “ to be witty upon me. When I am angry, he cries, Pr’ythee my dear  
 “ *be calm*; when I chide one of my servants, pr’ythee child *do not bluster*.  
 “ He had the impudence about an hour ago to tell me, that he was a  
 “ seafaring man, and must expect to divide his life between *Storm* and  
 “ *Sunshine*. When I better my self with any spirit in my family, it is  
 “ *high sea* in his house; and when I sit still without doing any thing, his  
 “ affairs forsooth are *wind-bound*. When I ask him whether it rains, he  
 “ makes answer, it is no matter, so that it be *fair weather* within doors.  
 “ In short, Sir, I cannot speak my mind freely to him, but I either *swell*  
 “ or *rage*, or do something that is not fit for a civil woman to hear.  
 “ Pray Mr. SPECTATOR, since you are so sharp upon other women, let  
 “ us know what materials your wife is made of, if you have one. I sup-  
 “ pose

“ pose you would make us a parcel of poor-spirited tame infipid crea-  
 “ tures; but, Sir, I would have you to know, we have as good passions  
 “ in us as your self, and that a woman was never designed to be a milk-  
 “ sop.

*MARTHA TEMPEST.*

N<sup>o</sup> 213. *Saturday, November 3.*

----- *Mens sibi conscia recti.*

Virg.

**I**T is the great art and secret of Christianity, if I may use that phrase, to manage our actions to the best advantage, and direct them in such a manner, that every thing we do may turn to account at that great day, when every thing we have done will be set before us.

In order to give this consideration its full weight, we may cast all our actions under the division of such as are in themselves either good, evil, or indifferent. If we divide our intentions after the same manner, and consider them with regard to our actions, we may discover that great art and secret of religion which I have here mentioned.

A good intention joined to a good action, gives it its proper force and efficacy; joined to an evil action, extenuates its malignity, and in some cases may take it wholly away; and joined to an indifferent action, turns it to virtue, and makes it meritorious as far as humane actions can be so.

In the next place, to consider in the same manner the influence of an evil intention upon our actions. An evil intention perverts the best of actions, and makes them in reality what the fathers with a witty kind of zeal have termed the virtues of the heathen world, so many *shining sins*. It destroys the innocence of an indifferent action, and gives an evil action all possible blackness and horror, or in the emphatical language of sacred Writ, makes *sin exceeding sinful*.

If, in the last place, we consider the nature of an indifferent intention, we shall find that it destroys the merit of a good action; abates, but never takes away, the malignity of an evil action; and leaves an indifferent action in its natural state of indifference. It