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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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“ his labours. When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible
 “ fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far be-
 “ yond all that they looked for. And they repenting and groaning for
 “ anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves ; This was he whom we
 “ had some time in derision, and a proverb of reproach. We fools ac-
 “ counted his life madness, and his end to be without honour. How is he
 “ numbred among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints!

If the Reader would see the description of a life that is passed away in vanity, and among the shadows of pomp and greatness, he may see it very finely drawn in the same place. In the mean time, since it is necessary in the present constitution of things, that order and distinction should be kept up in the world, we should be happy, if those who enjoy the upper stations in it, would endeavour to surpass others in virtue, as much as in rank, and by their humanity and condescension make their superiority easy and acceptable to those who are beneath them ; and if, on the contrary, those who are in the meaner posts of life, would consider how they may better their condition hereafter, and by a just deference and submission to their superiors, make them happy in those blessings with which Providence has thought fit to distinguish them.

N^o 221. *Tuesday, November 13.*

----- *Ab ovo*

Usque ad mala-----

Hor.

WHEN I have finished any of my Speculations, it is my method to consider which of the ancient Authors have touched upon the subject that I treat of. By this means I meet with some celebrated thought upon it, or a thought of my own expressed in better words, or some similitude for the illustration of my subject. This is what gives birth to the motto of a Speculation, which I rather chuse to take out of the Poets than the Prose-writers, as the former generally give a finer turn to a thought than the latter, and by couching it in few words, and in harmonious numbers, make it more portable to the memory.

My

My Reader is therefore sure to meet with at least one good line in every paper, and very often finds his imagination entertained by a hint that awakens in his memory some beautiful passage of a Classic Author.

It was a saying of an ancient Philosopher, which I find some of our writers have ascribed to Queen *Elizabeth*, who perhaps might have taken occasion to repeat it, That a good face is a Letter of recommendation. It naturally makes the beholders inquisitive into the person who is the owner of it, and generally prepossesses them in his favour. A handsome motto has the same effect. Besides that, it always gives a supernumerary beauty to a paper, and is sometimes in a manner necessary when the writer is engaged in what may appear a Paradox to vulgar minds, as it shews that he is supported by good authorities, and is not singular in his opinion.

I must confess the Motto is of little use to an unlearned Reader; for which reason I consider it only as *a word to the wise*. But as for my unlearned friends, if they cannot relish the Motto, I take care to make provision for them in the body of my paper. If they do not understand the sign that is hung out, they know very well by it, that they may meet with entertainment in the house; and I think I was never better pleased than with a plain man's compliment, who upon his friend's telling him that he would like the *Spectator* much better if he understood the Motto, replied, *Good wine needs no bush*.

I have heard of a couple of Preachers in a country town, who endeavoured which should out-shine one another, and draw together the greatest congregation. One of them being well versed in the Fathers, used to quote every now and then a *Latin* sentence to his illiterate hearers, who it seems found themselves so edified by it, that they flocked in greater numbers to this learned man than to his Rival. The other finding his congregation mouldering every *Sunday*, and hearing at length what was the occasion of it, resolved to give his Parish a little *Latin* in his turn; but being unacquainted with any of the Fathers, he digested into his Sermons the whole book of *Quæ Genus*, adding however such explications to it as he thought might be for the benefit of his people. He afterwards entred upon *As in præsentis*, which he converted in the same manner to the use of his parishioners. This in a very little time thickened his audience, filled his Church, and routed his antagonist.

The natural love to *Latin*, which is so prevalent in our common people, makes me think that my Speculations fare never the worse among them for that little scrap which appears at the head of them; and what

the more encourages me in the use of quotations in an unknown tongue, is, that I hear the Ladies, whose approbation I value more than that of the whole learned world, declare themselves in a more particular manner pleased with my *Greek Motto's*.

Designing this day's work for a dissertation upon the two Extremities of my paper, and having already dispatched my Motto, I shall, in the next place, discourse upon those single capital letters which are placed at the end of it, and which have afforded great matter of speculation to the Curious. I have heard various conjectures upon this subject. Some tell us, that C is the mark of those papers that are written by the Clergyman, though others ascribe them to the Club in general. That the papers marked with R were written by my friend Sir ROGER. That L signifies the Lawyer, whom I have described in my second Speculation; and that T stands for the Trader or Merchant: But the letter X, which is placed at the end of some few of my papers, is that which has puzzled the whole town, as they cannot think of any name which begins with that letter, except *Xenophon* and *Xerxes*, who can neither of them be supposed to have had any hand in these Speculations.

In answer to these inquisitive Gentlemen, who have many of them made enquiries of me by Letter, I must tell them the reply of an ancient Philosopher, who carried something hidden under his Cloak. A certain acquaintance desiring him to let him know what it was he covered so carefully; *I cover it*, says he, *on purpose that you should not know*. I have made use of these obscure marks for the same purpose. They are, perhaps, little Amulets or Charms to preserve the paper against the fascination or malice of evil eyes; for which reason I would not have my Reader surprized, if hereafter he sees any of my papers marked with a Q, a Z, a Y, an &c. or with the word *Abracadabra*.

I shall however so far explain my self to the Reader, as to let him know that the letters C, L, and X are cabalistical, and carry more in them than it is proper for the world to be acquainted with. Those who are versed in the philosophy of *Pythagoras*, and swear by the *Tetractys*, that is, the number Four, will know very well that the number *Ten*, which is signified by the letter X, (and which has so much perplexed the town) has in it many particular powers; that it is called by Platonic writers the Compleat Number; that one, two, three and four put together make up the number Ten; and that Ten is all. But these are not mysteries for ordinary Readers to be let into. A man must have spent many years in hard study before he can arrive at the knowledge of them.

We

We had a rabbinical Divine in *England*, who was Chaplain to the Earl of *Essex* in Queen *Elizabeth's* time, that had an admirable head for secrets of this nature. Upon his taking the Doctor of Divinity's degree, he preached before the University of *Cambridge*, upon the first verse of the first chapter of the first book of *Chronicles*, in which, says he, you will see the three following words,

Adam, Sheth, Enosh.

He divided this short text into many parts, and discovering several mysteries in each word, made a most learned and elaborate discourse. The name of this profound Preacher was Doctor *Alabaster*, of whom the Reader may find a more particular account in Doctor *Fuller's* book of *English Worthies*. This instance will, I hope, convince my Readers that there may be a great deal of fine writing in the capital letters which bring up the rear of my paper, and give them some satisfaction in that particular. But as for the full explication of these matters, I must refer them to time, which discovers all things.

N^o 223. *Thursday, November 15.*

*O suavis anima! qualem bonam
Antehac fuisse, tales cum sint reliquie!*

Phad.

WHEN I reflect upon the various fate of those multitudes of ancient writers who flourished in *Greece* and *Italy*, I consider Time as an immense ocean, in which many noble Authors are entirely swallowed up, many very much shattered and damaged, some quite dis-jointed and broken into pieces, while some have wholly escaped the common wreck; but the number of the last is very small.

Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto.

Among the mutilated Poets of antiquity, there is none whose fragments are so beautiful as those of *Sappho*. They give us a taste of her way of writing, which is perfectly conformable with that extraordinary

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