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

In Four Volumes

**Addison, Joseph**

**London, 1721**

N° 227. Tuesday, November 20.

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N<sup>o</sup> 227. Tuesday, November 20.

\*Ω μοι ἐγὼ τι πάθω; τί δ' ὄνομα; ἔχ' ὑπακίεις;  
 Τὰν βαίταν ἀποδὺς εἰς κύματα τῶνα ἀλείψαι  
 \*Ὡπερ τῶς θύνας σκοπιάζεται \*Ὀλπις ὁ γεωδύς.  
 Κῆκα μὴ ποθάνω, τό γε μὰν τεῦν ἄδ' ὑ τέτυκται.

Theoc.

**I**N my last *Thursday's* paper I made mention of a place called the *Lover's Leap*, which I find has raised a great curiosity among several of my correspondents. I there told them that this Leap was used to be taken from a promontory of *Leucas*. This *Leucas* was formerly a part of *Acarmania*, being joined to it by a narrow neck of land, which the sea has by length of time overflowed and washed away; so that at present *Leucas* is divided from the continent, and is a little Island in the *Ionian* sea. The promontory of this Island, from whence the lover took his leap, was formerly called *Leucate*. If the reader has a mind to know both the Island and the promontory by their modern titles, he will find in his map the ancient Island of *Leucas* under the name of *St. Mauro*, and the ancient promontory of *Leucate* under the name of *The Cape of St. Mauro*.

Since I am engaged thus far in antiquity, I must observe that *Theocritus* in the motto prefixed to my paper, describes one of the despairing shepherds addressing himself to his mistress after the following manner: *Alas! what will become of me? wretch that I am! will you not hear me? I will throw off my cloaths, and take a leap into that part of the sea which is so much frequented by Olphis the fisherman. And though I should escape with my life, I know you will be pleased with it.* I shall leave it with the Critics to determine whether the place, which this shepherd so particularly points out, was not the above-mentioned *Leucate*, or at least some other lovers leap, which was supposed to have had the same effect: I cannot believe, as all the interpreters do, that the shepherd means nothing further here than that he would drown himself, since he represents the issue of his leap as doubtful, by adding, that if he should escape with

life,

life, he knows his mistress would be pleased with it; which is according to our interpretation, that she would rejoice any way to get rid of a lover who was so troublesome to her.

After this short preface, I shall present my reader with some letters which I have received upon this subject. The first is sent me by a Physician.

*Mr. SPECTATOR,*

“**T**HE lover’s leap which you mention in your 223d paper, was generally, I believe, a very effectual cure for love, and not only for love, but for all other evils. In short, Sir, I am afraid it was such a leap as that which *Hero* took to get rid of her passion for *Leander*. A man is in no great danger of breaking his heart, who breaks his neck to prevent it. I know very well the wonders which ancient authors relate concerning this leap; and in particular, that very many persons who tried it, escaped not only with their lives but their limbs. If by this means they got rid of their love, though it may in part be ascribed to the reasons you give for it; why may not we suppose, that the cold bath into which they plunged themselves, had also some share in their cure? A leap into the sea, or into any creek of salt waters, very often gives a new motion to the spirits, and a new turn to the blood; for which reason we prescribe it in distempers which no other medicine will reach. I could produce a quotation out of a very venerable author, in which the phrenzy produced by love, is compared to that which is produced by the biting of a mad dog. But as this comparison is a little too coarse for your paper, and might look as if it were cited to ridicule the author who has made use of it; I shall only hint at it, and desire you to consider whether, if the phrenzy produced by these two different causes be of the same nature, it may not very properly be cured by the same means.

*I am, Sir, Your most humble Servant,*

*and well-wisher, ÆSCULAPIUS.*

*Mr. SPECTATOR,*

“**I** Am a young woman crossed in love. My story is very long and melancholy. To give you the heads of it; a young gentleman, after having made his applications to me for three years together, and filled my head with a thousand dreams of happiness, some few days since married another. Pray tell me in what part of the world

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“ your

“ your Promontory lies, which you call *The Lovers Leap*, and whether  
 “ one may go to it by land? But, alas, I am afraid it has lost its virtue,  
 “ and that a woman of our times will find no more relief in taking such  
 “ a Leap, than in singing an Hymn to *Venus*. So that I must cry out  
 “ with *Dido* in *Dryden's Virgil*,

*Ab! cruel Heaven, that made no cure for love!*

Your disconsolate Servant, ATHENAIS.

MISTER SPICTATUR,

“ MY heart is so full of loves and passions for Mrs. *Gwinifrid*, and  
 “ she is so pettish, and over-run with Cholers against me, that  
 “ if I had the good happiness to have my dwelling (which is placed by  
 “ my Great-cranfather upon the pottom of an hill) no farther distance  
 “ but twenty mile from the Loser's Leap, I could indeed indeafour to  
 “ preak my neck upon it on purpose. Now, good Mister SPICTATUR  
 “ of *Crete Prittain*, you must know it, there ifs in *Caernarvanshire* a  
 “ fery pig mountain, the clory of all *Wales*, which ifs named *Penmain-*  
 “ *maure*, and you must also know it ifs no great journey on foot from  
 “ me; but the road is stony and bad for shooes. Now there is upon the  
 “ forehead of this mountain a very high rock, (like a parish steeple) that  
 “ cometh a huge deal over the sea; so when I am in my melancholies,  
 “ and I do throw my self from it, I do desire my fery good friend to tell  
 “ me in his *Spictatur*, if I shall be cure of my grievous losfes; for there  
 “ is the sea clear as the class, and afs creen as the leek: then likewise,  
 “ if I be drown, and preak my neck, if Mrs. *Gwinifrid* will not lose me  
 “ afterwards. Pray be speedy in your answers, for I am in crete haste,  
 “ and it is my tesires to do my pusines without losf of time. I remain  
 “ with cordial affections, your ever losing friend,

*Davyth ap Shenkyn.*

P. S. “ My Law-fuits have brought me to *London*, but I have lost my  
 “ causes; and so have made my resolutions to go down and leap before  
 “ the frosts begin; for I am apt to take colds.

Ridicule, perhaps, is a better expedient against love than sober advice, and I am of opinion that *Hudibras* and *Don Quixote* may be as effectual to cure the extravagancies of this passion, as any of the old Philosophers. I shall therefore publish, very speedily, the translation of a little *Greek Manuscript*, which is sent me by a learned friend. It appears to have been

been a piece of those records which were kept in the little temple of *Apollo*, that stood upon the promontory of *Leucate*. The reader will find it to be a summary account of several persons who tried the lovers leap, and of the success they found in it. As there seem to be in it some Anachronisms and Deviations from the ancient Orthography, I am not wholly satisfied my self that it is authentick, and not rather the production of one of those *Grecian* Sophisters, who have imposed upon the world several spurious works of this nature. I speak this by way of precaution, because I know there are several writers, of uncommon erudition, who would not fail to expose my ignorance, if they caught me tripping in a matter of so great moment.

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N<sup>o</sup> 229. *Thursday, November 22.*

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----- *Spirat adhuc amor*

*Vruntque commissi calores*

*Æoliæ fidibus puella.*

Hor.

**A**MONG the many famous pieces of antiquity which are still to be seen at *Rome*, there is the Trunk of a Statue which has lost the arms, legs, and head; but discovers such an exquisite workmanship in what remains of it, that *Michael Angelo* declared he had learned his whole art from it. Indeed he studied it so attentively, that he made most of his Statues, and even his pictures in that *Gusto*, to make use of the *Italian* phrase; for which reason this maimed Statue is still called *Michael Angelo's School*.

A fragment of *Sappho*, which I design for the subject of this paper, is in as great reputation among the Poets and Critics, as the mutilated figure above-mentioned is among the Statuaries and Painters. Several of our Country-men, and Mr. *Dryden* in particular, seem very often to have copied after it in their Dramatic writings, and in their poems upon love.

Whatever might have been the occasion of this Ode, the *English* Reader will enter into the beauties of it, if he supposes it to have been written

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