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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

London, 1721

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N^o 271.

Thursday, January 10.

Mille trahens varios adverso sole colores.

Virg.

I Receive a double advantage from the letters of my correspondents; first, as they shew me which of my papers are most acceptable to them; and in the next place, as they furnish me with materials for new Speculations. Sometimes indeed I do not make use of the letter it self, but form the hints of it into plans of my own invention; sometimes I take the liberty to change the language or thought into my own way of speaking and thinking, and always (if it can be done without prejudice to the sense) omit the many compliments and applauses which are usually bestowed upon me.

Besides the two advantages above-mentioned, which I receive from the letters that are sent me, they give me an opportunity of lengthening out my paper by the skilful management of the subscribing part at the end of them, which perhaps does not a little conduce to the ease, both of my self and Reader.

Some will have it, that I often write to my self, and am the only punctual correspondent I have. This objection would indeed be material, were the letters I communicate to the publick stuffed with my own commendations, and if, instead of endeavouring to divert or instruct my Readers, I admired in them the beauty of my own performances. But I shall leave these wise conjecturers to their own imaginations, and produce the three following letters for the entertainment of the day.

S I R,

“ I Was last *Thursday* in an assembly of Ladies, where there were thir-
 “ teen different coloured hoods. Your *Spectator* of that day
 “ lying upon the table, they ordered me to read it to them, which I did
 “ with a very clear voice, till I came to the *Greek* verse at the end of it.
 “ I must confess I was a little startled at its popping upon me so unexpect-
 “ edly; however, I covered my confusion as well as I could, and after
 “ having

“ having muttered two or three hard words to my self, laught heartily,
 “ and cryed, *A very good Jest, Faith.* The Ladies desired me to ex-
 “ plain it to them, but I begg’d their pardon for that, and told them
 “ that if it had been proper for them to hear, they may be sure the Au-
 “ thor would not have wrapt it up in *Greek.* I then let drop several
 “ expressions, as if there was something in it that was not fit to be spoken
 “ before a company of Ladies. Upon which the Matron of the assembly,
 “ who was dressed in a cherry-coloured hood, commended the discretion
 “ of the Writer, for having thrown his filthy thoughts into *Greek,* which
 “ was likely to corrupt but few of his Readers. At the same time she
 “ declared her self very well pleased, that he had not given a decisive
 “ opinion upon the new-fashioned hoods; for to tell you truly, says she,
 “ I was afraid he would have made us ashamed to shew our heads. Now,
 “ Sir, you must know, since this unlucky accident happened to me in a
 “ company of Ladies, among whom I passed for a most ingenious man, I
 “ have consulted one who is very well versed in the *Greek* language, and
 “ he assures me upon his word, that your late quotation means no more,
 “ than that *manners and not dress are the ornaments of a woman.* If
 “ this comes to the knowledge of my female admirers, I shall be very
 “ hard put to it to bring my self off handsomely. In the mean while I
 “ give you this account, that you may take care hereafter not to betray
 “ any of your well-wishers into the like inconveniencies. It is in the
 “ number of these that I beg leave to subscribe my self,

Tom. Trippit.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

“ **Y**OUR Readers are so well pleased with your character of Sir
 “ **ROGER DE COVERLY,** that there appeared a sensible joy in
 “ every Coffee-house, upon hearing the old Knight was come to town.
 “ I am now with a knot of his admirers, who make it their joint request
 “ to you, that you would give us public notice of the window or bal-
 “ cony where the Knight intends to make his appearance. He has al-
 “ ready given great satisfaction to several who have seen him at *Squire’s*
 “ Coffee-house. If you think fit to place your short face at Sir **ROGER’S**
 “ left elbow, we shall take the hint, and gratefully acknowledge so great
 “ a favour.

I am, SIR,

Your most devoted humble Servant, C. D.

C c c 2

SIR,

S I R,

“ **K** NOWING you are very inquisitive after every thing that is curi-
 “ ous in nature, I will wait on you if you please in the dusk of the
 “ evening, with my *Show* upon my back, which I carry about with me in
 “ a box, as only consisting of a man, a woman, and an horse. The two first
 “ are married, in which state the little cavalier has so well acquitted him-
 “ self, that his Lady is with child. The big-bellied woman, and her
 “ husband, with their whimsical palfry, are so very light, that when they
 “ are put together into a scale, an ordinary man may weigh down the
 “ whole family. The little man is a bully in his nature; but when he
 “ grows choleric I confine him to his box ’till his wrath is over, by which
 “ means I have hitherto prevented him from doing mischief. His Horse
 “ is likewise very vicious, for which reason I am forced to tie him close
 “ to his manger with a pack-thread. The woman is a Coquet. She
 “ struts as much as it is possible for a Lady of two foot high, and would
 “ ruin me in silks, were not the quantity that goes to a large pin-cushion
 “ sufficient to make her a gown and petticoat. She told me the
 “ other day, that she heard the Ladies wore coloured hoods, and order-
 “ ed me to get her one of the finest blue. I am forced to comply with
 “ her demands while she is in her present condition, being very wil-
 “ ling to have more of the same breed. I do not know what she may
 “ produce me, but provided it be a *Show* I shall be very well satisfied.
 “ Such novelties should not, I think, be concealed from the *British*
 “ *Spectator*; for which reason I hope you will excuse this presump-
 “ tion in,

Your most Dutiful, most Obedient,

and most humble Servant, S. T.



Tuesday