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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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Pectoribus inhians spirantia consulit exta. Virg.

HAVING already given an account of the dissection of a *Beau's Head*, with the several discoveries made on that occasion, I shall here, according to my promise, enter upon the dissection of a *Coquette's Heart*, and communicate to the publick such particularities as we observed in that curious piece of Anatomy.

I should perhaps have waved this undertaking, had not I been put in mind of my promise by several of my unknown correspondents, who are very importunate with me to make an example of the *Coquette*, as I have already done of the *Beau*. It is therefore in compliance with the request of friends, that I have looked over the minutes of my former dream, in order to give the public an exact relation of it, which I shall enter upon without further preface.

Our Operator, before he engaged in this visionary dissection, told us, that there was nothing in his art more difficult, than to lay open the heart of a *Coquette*, by reason of the many labyrinths and recesses which are to be found in it, and which do not appear in the heart of any other animal.

He desired us first of all to observe the *Pericardium*, or outward case of the heart, which we did very attentively; and by the help of our glasses discerned in it millions of little scars, which seemed to have been occasioned by the points of innumerable darts and arrows, that from time to time had glanced upon the outward coat; though we could not discover the smallest orifice, by which any of them had entred and pierced the inward substance.

Every smatterer in Anatomy knows, that this *Pericardium*, or case of the heart, contains in it a thin reddish liquor, supposed to be bred from the vapours which exhale out of the heart, and being stopt here, are condensed into this watry substance. Upon examining this liquor, we found that it had in it all the qualities of that spirit which is made use of in the Thermometer, to shew the change of weather.

Nor

Nor must I here omit an experiment one of the company assured us he himself had made with this liquor, which he found in great quantity about the heart of a Coquette whom he had formerly dissected. He affirmed to us, that he had actually enclosed it in a small Tube made after the manner of a weather-glass; but that instead of acquainting him with the variations of the Atmosphere, it shewed him the qualities of those persons who entered the room where it stood. He affirmed also, that it rose at the approach of a plume of feathers, an embroidered coat, or a pair of fringed gloves; and that it fell as soon as an ill shaped perriwig, a clumsy pair of shoes, or an unfashionable coat came into his house: nay, he proceeded so far as to assure us, that upon his laughing aloud when he stood by it, the liquor mounted very sensibly, and immediately sunk again upon his looking serious. In short, he told us, that he knew very well by this invention whenever he had a man of sense or a coxcomb in his room.

Having cleared away the *Pericardium*, or the case and liquor above-mentioned, we came to the heart it self. The outward surface of it was extremely slippery, and the *Mucro*, or point, so very cold withal, that upon endeavouring to take hold of it, it glided through the fingers like a smooth piece of ice.

The fibres were turned and twisted in a more intricate and perplexed manner than they are usually found in other hearts; insomuch that the whole heart was wound up together like a Gordian knot, and must have had very irregular and unequal motions, whilst it was employed in its vital function.

One thing we thought very observable, namely, that upon examining all the vessels which came into it or issued out of it, we could not discover any communication that it had with the tongue.

We could not but take notice likewise, that several of those little nerves in the heart which are affected by the sentiments of love, hatred, and other passions, did not descend to this before us from the brain, but from the muscles which lie about the eye.

Upon weighing the heart in my hand, I found it to be extremely light, and consequently very hollow, which I did not wonder at when upon looking into the inside of it, I saw multitudes of cells and cavities running one within another, as our Historians describe the apartments of *Rosalind's* bower. Several of these little hollows were stuffed with innumerable sorts of trifles, which I shall forbear giving any particular account of, and shall therefore only take notice of what lay first and uppermost, which upon our unfolding it, and applying our Microscope to it, appeared to be a flame-coloured hood.

We were informed that the Lady of this heart, when living, received the addresses of several who made love to her, and did not only give each of them encouragement, but made every one she conversed with believe that she regarded him with an eye of kindness; for which reason we expected to have seen the impression of multitudes of faces among the several plaits and foldings of the heart, but to our great surprize not a single print of this nature discovered it self 'till we came into the very core and center of it. We there observed a little figure, which, upon applying our glasses to it, appeared dressed in a very fantastick manner. The more I looked upon it, the more I thought I had seen the face before, but could not possibly recollect either the place or time; when at length, one of the company, who had examined this figure more nicely than the rest, shewed us plainly by the make of its face, and the several turns of its features, that the little idol which was thus lodged in the very middle of the heart was the deceased Beau, whose head I gave some account of in my last *Tuesday's* paper.

As soon as we had finished our dissection, we resolved to make an experiment of the heart, not being able to determine among our selves the nature of its substance, which differed in so many particulars from that of the heart in other females. Accordingly we laid it into a pan of burning coals, when we observed in it a certain Salamandrine quality, that made it capable of living in the midst of fire and flame, without being consumed, or so much as singed.

As we were admiring this strange *Phænomenon*, and standing round the heart in the circle, it gave a most prodigious sigh or rather crack, and dispersed all at once in smoke and vapour. This imaginary noise, which methoughts was louder than the burst of a cannon, produced such a violent shake in my brain, that it dissipated the fumes of sleep, and left me in an instant broad awake.



Saturday,