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

In Four Volumes

**Addison, Joseph**

**London, 1721**

N° 311. Tuesday, February 26.

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In the mean time we have fair warning given us by this doughty body of statesmen; and as *Sylla* saw many *Marius's* in *Cæsar*, so I think we may discover many *Torcy's* in this college of *Academicians*. Whatever we think of our selves, I am afraid neither our *Smyrna* or *St. James's* will be a match for it. Our *Coffee-houses* are, indeed, very good institutions, but whether or no these our *British* schools of politics may furnish out as able *Envoys* and *Secretaries* as an *Academy* that is set apart for that purpose, will deserve our serious consideration: especially if we remember that our country is more famous for producing men of integrity than *Statesmen*; and that on the contrary, *French* truth and *British* policy makes a conspicuous figure in NOTHING, as the *Earl of Rochester* has very well observed in his admirable *Poem* upon that barren subject.

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N<sup>o</sup> 311. Tuesday, February 26.

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*Nec Veneris pharetris macer est; aut lampade fervet:  
Inde faces ardent, veniunt a dote sagittæ.* Juv.

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Mr. SPECTATOR,

“ I Am amazed that among all the variety of characters, with which  
 “ you have enriched your Speculations, you have never given us a  
 “ picture of those audacious young fellows among us, who com-  
 “ monly go by the name of *Fortune-stealers*. You must know, Sir, I am  
 “ one who live in a continual apprehension of this sort of people, that  
 “ lye in wait, day and night, for our children, and may be considered as  
 “ a kind of kidnappers within the law. I am the father of a young heiress,  
 “ whom I begin to look upon as marriageable, and who has looked upon  
 “ her self as such for above these six years. She is now in the eigh-  
 “ teenth year of her age. The *Fortune-hunters* have already cast their  
 “ eyes upon her, and take care to plant themselves in her view whene-  
 “ ver she appears in any public assembly. I have my self caught a young  
 “ jack-a-napes, with a pair of silver fringed gloves, in the very fact. You  
 “ must know, Sir, I have kept her as a prisoner of state ever since she  
 “ was in her teens. Her chamber windows are cross-barred, she is not  
 “ permitted

" permitted to go out of the house but with her keeper, who is a staye d  
 " relation of my own; I have likewise forbid her the use of pen and ink  
 " for this twelve months last past, and do not suffer a ban-box to be car-  
 " ried into her room before it has been searched. Notwithstanding these  
 " precautions, I am at my wits end for fear of any sudden surprize.  
 " There were, two or three nights ago, some fiddles heard in the street,  
 " which I am afraid portend me no good; not to mention a tall *Irisb*  
 " man, that has been walking before my house more than once this win-  
 " ter. My kinswoman likewise informs me, that the girl has talked to  
 " her twice or thrice of a gentleman in a fair wig, and that she loves to  
 " go to church more than ever she did in her life. She gave me the slip  
 " about a week ago, upon which my whole house was in alarm. I im-  
 " mediately dispatched a hue and cry after her to the Change, to her  
 " mantua-maker, and to the young Ladies that visit her; but after above  
 " an hours search she returned of herself, having been taking a walk, as  
 " she told me, by *Rosamond's* pond. I have hereupon turned off her  
 " woman, doubled her guards, and given new instructions to my relati-  
 " on, who, to give her her due, keeps a watchful eye over all her moti-  
 " ons. This, Sir, keeps me in a perpetual anxiety, and makes me very  
 " often watch when my daughter sleeps, as I am afraid she is even with  
 " me in her turn. Now, Sir, what I would desire of you is, to repre-  
 " sent to this fluttering tribe of young fellows, who are for making their  
 " fortunes by these indirect means, that stealing a man's daughter for the  
 " sake of her portion, is but a kind of tolerated robbery; and that they  
 " make but a poor amends to the father, whom they plunder after this  
 " manner, by going to bed with his child. Dear Sir, be speedy in your  
 " thoughts on this subject, that, if possible, they may appear before the  
 " disbanding of the army.

*I am, S I R,*

*Your most humble Servant, Tim. Watchwell.*

*Themistocles*, the great *Athenian* General, being asked whether he would  
 chuse to marry his daughter to an indigent man of merit, or to a worth-  
 less man of an estate, replied, that he would prefer a man without an  
 estate, to an estate without a man. The worst of it is, our modern for-  
 tune-hunters are those who turn their heads that way, because they are  
 good for nothing else. If a young fellow finds he can make nothing of  
*Cook* and *Littleton*, he provides himself with a ladder of ropes, and by  
 that means very often enters upon the premises.

The same art of scaling has likewise been practis'd with good success by many military engineers. Stratagems of this nature make parts and industry superfluous, and cut short the way to riches.

Nor is vanity a less motive than idleness to this kind of mercenary pursuit. A Fop who admires his person in a glass, soon enters into a resolution of making his fortune by it, not questioning but every woman that falls in his way will do him as much justice as he does himself. When an heiress sees a man throwing particular graces into his ogle, or talking loud within her hearing, she ought to look to her self; but if withal she observes a pair of red-heels, a patch, or any other particularity in his dress, she cannot take too much care of her person. These are baits not to be trifled with, charms that have done a world of execution, and made their way into hearts which have been thought impregnable. The force of a man with these qualifications is so well known, that I am credibly informed there are several female undertakers about the Change, who upon the arrival of a likely man out of a neighbouring kingdom, will furnish him with proper dress from head to foot, to be paid for at a double price on the day of marriage.

We must however distinguish between fortune-hunters and fortune-stealers. The first are those assiduous gentlemen who employ their whole lives in the chace, without ever coming at the quarry. *Suffenus* has combed and powdered at the Ladies for thirty years together, and taken his stand in a side box, 'till he is grown wrinkled under their eyes. He is now laying the same snares for the present generation of beauties, which he practis'd on their mothers. *Cottilus*, after having made his applications to more than you meet with in Mr. *Cowley's* ballad of mistresses, was at last smitten with a city Lady of 20000 *l.* sterling; but died of old age before he could bring matters to bear. Nor must I here omit my worthy friend Mr. HONEYCOMB, who has often told us in the club, that for twenty years successively, upon the death of a childless rich man, he immediately drew on his boots, called for his horse, and made up to the widow. When he is rallied upon his ill success, WILL with his usual gaiety tells us, that he always found her præ-engaged.

Widows are indeed the great game of your fortune-hunters. There is scarce a young fellow in the town of six foot high, that has not pass'd in review before one or other of these wealthy relicts. *Hudibras's* Cupid, who

————— took his stand  
Upon a widow's jointure land,

is daily employed in throwing darts, and kindling flames. But as for widows, they are such a subtle generation of people, that they may be left to their own conduct; or if they make a false step in it, they are answerable for it to no body but themselves. The young innocent creatures who have no knowledge and experience of the world, are those whose safety I would principally consult in this speculation. The stealing of such an one should, in my opinion, be as punishable as a rape. Where there is no judgment, there is no choice; and why the inveigling a woman before she is come to years of discretion, should not be as criminal as the seducing of her before she is ten years old, I am at a loss to comprehend.

N<sup>o</sup> 317. Tuesday, March 4.

—fruges consumere nati.

Hor.

**A**UGUSTUS, a few moments before his death, asked his friends who stood about him, if they thought he had acted his part well; and upon receiving such an answer as was due to his extraordinary merit, *Let me then, says he, go off the stage with your applause;* using the expression with which the Roman Actors made their *Exit* at the conclusion of a Dramatic piece. I could wish that men, while they are in health, would consider well the nature of the part they are engaged in, and what figure it will make in the minds of those they leave behind them: whether it was worth coming into the world for, whether it be suitable to a reasonable Being; in short, whether it appears graceful in this life, or will turn to an advantage in the next. Let the sycophant, or buffoon, the satyrift, or the good companion, consider with himself, when his body shall be laid in the grave, and his soul pass into another state of existence, how much it will redound to his praise to have it said of him, that no man in *England* eat better, that he had an admirable talent at turning his friend into ridicule, that no body out-did him at an ill-natured jest, or that he never went to bed before he had dispatched his third bottle. These are, however, very common funeral orations, and

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Elogi-