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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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N^o 440.

Friday, July 25.

Vivere si rectè nescis, discede peritis.

Hor.

I Have already given my Reader an account of a sett of merry fellows, who are passing their summer together in the country, being provided of a great house, where there is not only a convenient apartment for every particular person, but a large infirmary for the reception of such of them as are any way indisposed, or out of humour. Having lately received a letter from the Secretary of this society, by order of the whole fraternity, which acquaints me with their behaviour during the last week, I shall here make a present of it to the public.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

“ WE are glad to find that you approve the establishment which
 “ we have here made for the retrieving of good manners and
 “ agreeable conversation, and shall use our best endeavours so to improve
 “ our selves in this our summer retirement, that we may next winter
 “ serve as patterns to the town. But to the end that this our institution
 “ may be no less advantageous to the public than to our selves, we shall
 “ communicate to you one week of our proceedings, desiring you at the
 “ same time, if you see any thing faulty in them, to favour us with your
 “ admonitions. For you must know, Sir, that it has been proposed a-
 “ mong us to chuse you for our Visitor, to which I must further add,
 “ that one of the College having declared last week, he did not like the
 “ *Spectator* of the day, and not being able to assign any just reasons for
 “ such his dislike, he was sent to the infirmary, *Nemine contradicente*.
 “ On *Monday* the assembly was in very good humour, having received
 “ some recruits of *French* claret that morning; when unluckily, towards
 “ the middle of the dinner, one of the company swore at his servant in
 “ a very rough manner, for having put too much water in his wine.
 “ Upon which the president of the day, who is always the mouth of the
 “ company, after having convinced him of the impertinence of his pas-

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sion,

“ fion, and the insult it had made upon the company, ordered his man
 “ to take him from the table, and convey him to the infirmary. There
 “ was but one more sent away that day; this was a Gentleman who is
 “ reckoned by some persons one of the greatest Wits, and by others one
 “ of the greatest Boobys about town. This you will say is a strange cha-
 “ racter, but what makes it stranger yet, it is a very true one, for he is
 “ perpetually the reverse of himself, being always merry or dull to excess.
 “ We brought him hither to divert us, which he did very well upon the
 “ road, having lavished away as much wit and laughter upon the hackney
 “ coach-man, as might have served him during his whole stay here, had
 “ it been duly managed. He had been lumpish for two or three days,
 “ but was so far connived at, in hopes of recovery, that we dispatched
 “ one of the briskest fellows among the brotherhood into the infirmary,
 “ for having told him at table he was not merry. But our President ob-
 “ serving that he indulged himself in this long fit of stupidity, and con-
 “ struing it as a contempt of the College, ordered him to retire into the
 “ place prepared for such companions. He was no sooner got into it,
 “ but his wit and mirth returned upon him in so violent a manner, that
 “ he shook the whole infirmary with the noise of it, and had so good
 “ an effect upon the rest of the patients, that he brought them all out to
 “ dinner with him the next day.

“ On *Tuesday* we were no sooner sat down, but one of the company
 “ complained that his head aaked; upon which another asked him, in
 “ an insolent manner, what he did there then; this insensibly grew into
 “ some warm words; so that the President, in order to keep the peace,
 “ gave directions to take them both from the table, and lodge them in
 “ the infirmary. Not long after, another of the company telling us, he
 “ knew by a pain in his shoulder that we should have some rain, the Pre-
 “ sident ordered him to be removed, and placed as a weather-glass in the
 “ apartment above-mentioned.

“ On *Wednesday* a Gentleman having received a letter written in a
 “ woman’s hand, and changing colour twice or thrice as he read it, de-
 “ sired leave to retire into the infirmary. The President consented, but
 “ denied him the use of pen, ink and paper till such time as he had slept
 “ upon it. One of the company being seated at the lower end of the
 “ table, and discovering his secret discontent by finding fault with every
 “ dish that was served up, and refusing to laugh at any thing that was
 “ said, the President told him, that he found he was in an uneasy seat,
 “ and desired him to accommodate himself better in the infirmary. Af-
 “ ter

“ ter dinner a very honest fellow chancing to let a punn fall from him,
 “ his neighbour cryed out, *to the infirmary*; at the same time pretend-
 “ ing to be sick at it, as having the same natural antipathy to a punn,
 “ which some have to a cat. This produced a long debate. Upon the
 “ whole the Punnster was acquitted, and his neighbour sent off.

“ On *Thursday* there was but one delinquent. This was a Gentleman
 “ of strong voice, but weak understanding. He had unluckily engaged
 “ himself in a dispute with a man of excellent sense, but of a modest
 “ elocution. The man of heat replied to every answer of his antagonist
 “ with a louder note than ordinary, and only raised his voice when he
 “ should have enforced his argument. Finding himself at length driven
 “ to an absurdity, he still reasoned in a more clamorous and confused
 “ manner, and to make the greater impressiion upon his hearers, con-
 “ cluded with a loud thump upon the table. The President immediately
 “ ordered him to be carried off, and dieted with water-gruel, till such
 “ time as he should be sufficiently weakened for conversation.

“ On *Friday* there passed very little remarkable, saving only, that fe-
 “ veral petitions were read of the persons in custody, desiring to be re-
 “ leased from their confinement, and vouching for one another's good
 “ behaviour for the future.

“ On *Saturday* we received many excuses from persons who had found
 “ themselves in an unsociable temper, and had voluntarily shut themselves
 “ up. The infirmary was indeed never so full as on this day, which I
 “ was at some loss to account for, till upon my going abroad I observed
 “ that it was an easterly wind. The retirement of most of my friends
 “ has given me opportunity and leisure of writing you this letter, which
 “ I must not conclude without assuring you, that all the members of our
 “ College, as well those who are under confinement, as those who are
 “ at liberty, are your very humble servants, though none more than,

Ec.



Saturday,