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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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what is very remarkable, the Tories are now forced to have recourse to those laws for shelter and protection: by which they tacitly do honour to the Whig-scheme, and own it more accommodated to the happiness of the people, than that which they espouse.

I hope I need not qualify these remarks with a supposition which I have gone upon through the whole course of my papers, that I am far from considering a great part of those who call themselves Tories, as enemies to the present establishment; and that by the Whigs I always mean those who are friends to our constitution both in church and state. As we may look upon these to be, in the main, true lovers of their religion and country, they seem rather to be divided by accidental friendships and circumstances, than by any essential distinction.

N^o 55.*Friday, June 29.**----- cæsus artemque repono.*

Virg.

A Rising of parliament being a kind of cessation from politicks, the *Free-holder* cannot let his paper drop at a more proper juncture. I would not be accessary to the continuing of our political ferment, when occasions of dispute are not administered to us by matters depending before the legislature; and when debates without doors naturally fall with those in the two houses of Parliament. At the same time a *British* Freeholder would very ill discharge his part, if he did not acknowledge, with becoming duty and gratitude, the excellency and seasonableness of those laws, by which the representatives of men in his rank have recovered their country in a great measure out of its confusions, and provided for its future peace and happiness under the present establishment. Their unanimous and regular proceeding, under the conduct of that honourable person who fills their chair with the most consummate abilities, and hath justly gained the esteem of all sides by the impartiality of his behaviour; the absolute necessity of some acts which they have passed, and their dis-inclination to extend them any longer, than that necessity required; their manifest aversion to enter upon schemes, which
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the enemies of our peace had insinuated to have been their design; together with that temper so suitable to the dignity of such an assembly, at a juncture when it might have been expected that very unusual heats would have arisen in a House of Commons, so zealous for their King and country; will be sufficient to quiet those groundless jealousies and suspicions, which have been industriously propagated by the ill-wishers to our constitution.

The undertaking, which I am now laying down, was entered upon in the very crisis of the late rebellion, when it was the duty of every *Briton* to contribute his utmost assistance to the government, in a manner suitable to his station and abilities. All services, which had a tendency to this end, had a degree of merit in them, in proportion as the event of that cause which they espoused was then doubtful. But at present they might be regarded, not as duties of private men to their endangered country, but as insults of the successful over their defeated enemies.

Our nation indeed continues to be agitated with confusions and tumults; but, God be thanked, these are only the impotent remains of an unnatural rebellion, and are no more than the after-tossings of a sea when the storm is laid. The enemies of his present Majesty, instead of seeing him driven from his throne, as they vainly hoped, find him in a condition to visit his dominions in *Germany*, without any danger to himself or to the publick; whilst his dutiful subjects would be in no ordinary concern upon this occasion, had they not the consolation to find themselves left under the protection of a Prince, who makes it his ambition to copy out his Royal father's example; and who, by his duty to his Majesty, and affection to his people, is so well qualified to be the guardian of the realm.

It would not be difficult to continue a paper of this kind, if one were disposed to resume the same subjects, and weary out the Reader with the same thoughts in a different phrase, or to ramble through the cause of Whig and Tory, without any certain aim or method, in every particular discourse. Such a practice in political writers, is like that of some preachers taken notice of by Dr. *South*, who being prepared only upon two or three points of doctrine, run the same round with their audience, from one end of the year to the other, and are always forced to tell them, by way of preface, These are particulars of so great importance, that they cannot be sufficiently *inculcated*. To avoid this method of Tautology, I have endeavoured to make every paper a distinct Essay upon some particular subject, without deviating into points foreign to the tenor

nor of each discourse. They are indeed most of them Essays upon government, but with a view to the present situation of affairs in *Great Britain*; so that if they have the good fortune to live longer than works of this nature generally do, future readers may see in them, the complexion of the times in which they were written. However, as there is no employment so irksome, as that of transcribing out of one's self, next to that of transcribing out of others, I shall let drop the work, since there do not occur to me any material points arising from our present situation, which I have not already touched upon.

As to the reasonings in these several papers, I must leave them to the judgment of others. I have taken particular care that they should be conformable to our constitution, and free from that mixture of violence and passion, which so often creeps into the works of political writers. A good cause doth not want any bitterness to support it, as a bad one cannot subsist without it. It is indeed observable, that an Author is scurrilous in proportion as he is dull; and seems rather to be in a passion, because he cannot find out what to say for his own opinion, than because he has discovered any pernicious absurdities in that of his antagonists. A man satirized by writers of this class, is like one burnt in the hand with a cold iron: there may be ignominious terms and words of infamy in the stamp, but they leave no impresson behind them.

It would indeed have been an unpardonable insolence for a fellow-subject to treat in a vindictive and cruel style, those persons whom his Majesty has endeavoured to reduce to obedience by *gentle methods*, which he has declared from the throne to be *most agreeable to his inclinations*. May we not hope that all of this kind, who have the least sentiments of honour or gratitude, will be won over to their duty by so many instances of Royal clemency, in the midst of so many repeated provocations! May we not expect that *Cicero's* words to *Cæsar*, in which he speaks of those who were *Cæsar's* enemies, and of his conduct towards them, may be applied to his Majesty; *Omnes enim qui fuerunt, aut suâ pertinaciâ vitam miserunt, aut tuâ misericordiâ retinuerunt; ut aut nulli supersint de inimicis, aut qui superfuerunt, amicissimi sint.* — *Quare gaude tuo isto tam excellenti bono, et frueri cum fortunâ, et gloriâ, tum etiam naturâ, et moribus tuis. Ex quo quidem maximus est fructus, jucunditasque sapienti* — *Nilil habet nec fortuna tua majus, quam ut possis, nec natura tua melius, quam ut velis, quamplurimos conservare.*

As for those papers of a gayer turn, which may be met with in this collection, my Reader will of himself, consider, how requisite they are to
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gain and keep up an audience to matters of this nature; and will perhaps be the more indulgent to them, if he observes, that they are none of them without a moral, nor contain any thing but what is consistent with decency and good manners.

It is obvious that the design of the whole work, has been to free the peoples minds from those prejudices conveyed into them, by the enemies to the present establishment, against the King and Royal Family, by opening and explaining their real characters; to set forth his Majesty's proceedings, which have been very grossly misrepresented, in a fair and impartial light; to shew the reasonableness and necessity of our opposing the Pretender to his dominions, if we have any regard to our religion and liberties: and, in a word, to incline the minds of the people to the desire and enjoyment of their own happiness. There is no question, humanly speaking, but these great ends will be brought about insensibly, as men will grow weary of a fruitless opposition; and be convinced by experience, of a necessity to acquiesce under a government which daily gathers strength, and is able to disappoint the utmost efforts of its enemies. In the mean while, I would recommend to our malecontents, the advice given by a great moralist to his friend upon another occasion; that he would shew it was in the power of wisdom to compose his passions; and let that be the work of reason which would certainly be the effect of time.

I shall only add, that if any writer shall do this paper so much honour, as to inscribe the title of it, to others, which may be published upon the laying down of this work; the whole praise, or dispraise of such a performance, will belong to some other Author; this fifty fifth being the last paper that will come from the hand of the *Free-holder*.



