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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

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I consider writers in the same view this sage Astrologer does the heavenly bodies. Some of them are stars that scatter light, as others do darkness. I could mention several Authors who are tenebrificous stars of the first magnitude, and point out a knot of Gentlemen who have been dull in consort, and may be looked upon as a dark constellation. The nation has been a great while benighted with several of these antiluminaries. I suffered them to ray out their darkness as long as I was able to endure it, till at length I came to a resolution of rising upon them, and hope in a little time to drive them quite out of the *British* Hemisphere.

N^o 583. *Friday, August 20.*

*Ipse thymum pinosque ferens de montibus aliis,
Tecta serat latè circum, cui talia curæ:
Ipse labore manum duro terat, ipse feraces
Figat humo plantas, et amicos irriget imbres.* Virg.

EVERY station of life has duties which are proper to it. Those who are determined by choice to any particular kind of business, are indeed more happy than those who are determined by necessity, but both are under an equal obligation of fixing on employments, which may be either useful to themselves or beneficial to others. No one of the sons of *Adam* ought to think himself exempt from that labour and industry, which were denounced to our first parent, and in him to all his posterity. Those to whom birth or fortune may seem to make such an application unnecessary, ought to find out some calling or profession for themselves, that they may not lye as a burden on the species, and be the only useles parts of the creation.

Many of our country Gentlemen in their busie hours apply themselves wholly to the chase, or to some other diversion which they find in the fields and woods. This gave occasion to one of our most eminent *English* writers to represent every one of them as lying under a kind of curse pronounced to them in the words of *Goliath*, *I will give thee to the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field.*

VOL. IV.

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Though exercises of this kind, when indulged with moderation, may have a good influence both on the mind and body, the country affords many other amusements of a more noble kind.

Among these I know none more delightful in itself, and beneficial to the publick, than that of *PLANTING*. I could mention a Nobleman whose fortune has placed him in several parts of *England*, and who has always left these visible marks behind him, which show he has been there: he never hired a house in his life, without leaving all about it the seeds of wealth, and bestowing legacies on the posterity of the owner. Had all the Gentlemen of *England* made the same improvements upon their estates, our whole country would have been at this time as one great garden. Nor ought such an employment to be looked upon as too inglorious for men of the highest rank. There have been heroes in this art, as well as in others. We are told in particular of *Cyrus* the Great, that he planted all the lesser *Asia*. There is indeed something truly magnificent in this kind of amusement: it gives a nobler air to several parts of nature; it fills the earth with a variety of beautiful scenes, and has something in it like creation. For this reason the pleasure of one who plants is something like that of a Poet, who, as *Aristotle* observes, is more delighted with his productions than any other writer or artist whatsoever.

Plantations have one advantage in them which is not to be found in most other works, as they give a pleasure of a more lasting date, and continually improve in the eye of the planter. When you have finished a building, or any other undertaking of the like nature, it immediately decays upon your hands; you see it brought to its utmost point of perfection, and from that time hastening to its ruine. On the contrary, when you have finished your plantations, they are still arriving at greater degrees of perfection as long as you live, and appear more delightful in every succeeding year, than they did in the foregoing.

But I do not only recommend this art to men of estates as a pleasing amusement, but as it is a kind of virtuous employment, and may therefore be inculcated by moral motives; particularly from the love which we ought to have for our country, and the regard which we ought to bear to our posterity. As for the first, I need only mention what is frequently observed by others, that the increase of forest-trees does by no means bear a proportion to the destruction of them, insomuch that in a few ages the nation may be at a loss to supply itself with timber sufficient for the fleets of *England*. I know when a man talks of posterity in matters of this nature, he is looked upon with an eye of ridicule by the
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cunning and selfish part of mankind. Most people are of the humour of an old fellow of a college, who when he was pressed by the society to come into something that might redound to the good of their successors, grew very peevish, *We are always doing*, says he, *something for posterity, but I would fain see posterity do something for us.*

But I think men are inexcusable, who fail in a duty of this nature, since it is so easily discharged. When a man considers, that the putting a few twigs into the ground, is doing good to one who will make his appearance in the world about fifty years hence, or that he is perhaps making one of his own descendants easie or rich, by so inconsiderable an expence, if he finds himself averse to it, he must conclude that he has a poor and base heart, void of all generous principles and love to mankind.

There is one consideration, which may very much enforce what I have here said. Many honest minds that are naturally disposed to do good in the world, and become beneficial to mankind, complain within themselves that they have not talents for it. This therefore is a good office, which is suited to the meanest capacities, and which may be performed by multitudes, who have not abilities sufficient to deserve well of their country, and to recommend themselves to their posterity, by any other method. It is the phrase of a friend of mine, when any useful country neighbour dies, that *you may trace him*: which I look upon as a good funeral oration, at the death of an honest Husbandman, who has left the impressions of his industry behind him, in the place where he has lived.

Upon the foregoing considerations, I can scarce forbear representing the subject of this paper as a kind of moral virtue: which, as I have already shown, recommends itself likewise by the pleasure that attends it. It must be confessed, that this is none of those turbulent pleasures which is apt to gratifie a man in the heats of youth; but if it be not so tumultuous, it is more lasting. Nothing can be more delightful, than to entertain our selves with prospects of our own making, and to walk under those shades which our own industry has raised. Amusements of this nature compose the mind, and lay at rest all those passions which are uneasy to the Soul of man, besides, that they naturally engender good thoughts, and dispose us to laudable contemplations. Many of the old Philosophers passed away the greatest parts of their lives among their gardens. *Epicurus* himself could not think sensual pleasure attainable in any other scene. Every Reader who is acquainted with *Homer*, *Virgil* and *Horace*, the greatest genius's of all antiquity, knows very well with

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how much rapture they have spoken on this subject; and that *Virgil* in particular has written a whole book on the art of planting.

This art seems to have been more especially adapted to the nature of man in his Primæval state, when he had life enough to see his productions flourish in their utmost beauty, and gradually decay with him. One who lived before the flood might have seen a wood of the tallest oaks in the acorn. But I only mention this particular, in order to introduce in my next paper, a history which I have found among the accounts of *China*, and which may be looked upon as an Antediluvian novel.

N° 584. Monday, August 23.

*Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori,
Hic nemus, hic toto tecum consumerer ævo.*

Virg.

HILPA was one of the 150 daughters of *Zilpah*, of the race of *Cobu*, by whom some of the learned think is meant *Cain*. She was exceedingly beautiful, and when she was but a girl of three-score and ten years of age, received the addresses of several who made love to her. Among these were two brothers, *Harpath* and *Shalum*; *Harpath* being the first-born, was master of that fruitful region which lies at the foot of mount *Tirzah*, in the southern parts of *China*. *Shalum* (which is to say the Planter in the *Chinese* language) possessed all the neighbouring hills, and that great range of mountains which goes under the name of *Tirzah*. *Harpath* was of a haughty contemptuous spirit; *Shalum* was of a gentle disposition, beloved both by God and man.

It is said that, among the Antediluvian women, the daughters of *Cobu* had their minds wholly set upon riches; for which reason the beautiful *Hilpa* preferred *Harpath* to *Shalum*, because of his numerous flocks and herds, that covered all the low country which runs along the foot of mount *Tirzah*, and is watered by several fountains and streams breaking out of the sides of that mountain.

Harpath made so quick a dispatch of his courtship, that he married *Hilpa* in the hundredth year of her age; and being of an insolent temper,