



UNIVERSITÄTS-
BIBLIOTHEK
PADERBORN

Universitätsbibliothek Paderborn

The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

London, 1721

No 100. Monday, July 6.

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-53597](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-53597)

“ fore for the lights to be extinguished, that I might not be led astray
 “ by partiality or compassion, from doing justice on the criminal. Upon
 “ the lighting of the flambeaux a second time, I looked upon the face
 “ of the dead person, and to my unspeakable joy, found that it was not
 “ my son. It was for this reason that I immediately fell upon my knees,
 “ and gave thanks to God. As for my eating heartily of the food you
 “ have set before me, you will cease to wonder at it, when you know
 “ that the great anxiety of mind I have been in, upon this occasion, since
 “ the first complaints you brought me, has hindered my eating any thing
 “ from that time till this very moment.

N^o 100. Monday, July 6.

*Hoc vos præcipuè, niveæ, decet, hoc ubi vidi,
 Oscula ferre humero, quà patet, usque libet.* Ovid.

THERE is a certain female ornament by some called a Tucker, and by others the Neck-piece, being a slip of fine linnen or muslin that used to run in a small kind of ruffle round the uppermost verge of the women's stays, and by that means covered a great part of the shoulders and bosom. Having thus given a definition, or rather description of the Tucker, I must take notice, that our Ladies have of late thrown aside this fig-leaf, and exposed in its primitive nakedness that gentle swelling of the breast which it was used to conceal. What their design by it is, they themselves best know.

I observed this as I was sitting the other day by a famous she visitant at my Lady *Lizard's*, when accidentally as I was looking upon her face, letting my sight fall into her bosom, I was surprized with beauties which I never before discovered, and do not know where my eye would have run, if I had not immediately checked it. The Lady her self could not forbear blushing when she observed by my looks, that she had made her neck too beautiful and glaring an object, even for a man of my character and gravity. I could scarce forbear making use of my hand to cover so unseemly a sight.

If we survey the pictures of our great-grand-mothers in Queen *Elizabeth's* time, we see them cloathed down to the very wrists, and up to the very chin. The hands and face were the only samples they gave of their beautiful persons. The following age of females made larger discoveries of their complexion. They first of all tucked up their garments to the elbow, and notwithstanding the tenderness of the sex, were content, for the information of mankind, to expose their arms to the coldness of the air, and injuries of the weather. This artifice hath succeeded to their wishes, and betrayed many to their arms, who might have escaped them had they been still concealed.

About the same time the Ladies considering that the neck was a very modest part in a human body, they freed it from those yokes, I mean those monstrous linnen ruffs, in which the simplicity of their grand-mothers had enclosed it. In proportion as the age refined, the dress still sunk lower, so that when we now say a woman has a handsome neck, we reckon into it many of the adjacent parts. The disuse of the Tucker has still enlarged it, infomuch that the neck of a fine woman at present takes in almost half the body.

Since the female neck thus grows upon us, and the Ladies seem disposed to discover themselves to us more and more, I would fain have them tell us once for all how far they intend to go, and whether they have yet determined among themselves where to make a stop.

For my own part, their necks, as they call them, are no more than *Busts* of alablaster in my eye. I can look upon

The yielding marble of a snowy breast,

with as much coldness as this line of Mr. *Waller* represents in the object it self. But my fair readers ought to consider, that all their beholders are not *Nestors*. Every man is not sufficiently qualified with age and philosophy to be an indifferent spectator of such allurements. The eyes of young men are curious and penetrating, their imaginations of a roving nature, and their passions under no discipline or restraint. I am in pain for a woman of rank when I see her thus exposing her self to the regards of every impudent staring fellow. How can she expect that her quality can defend her, when she gives such provocation? I could not but observe last winter, that upon the disuse of the neck-piece (the Ladies will pardon me if it is not the fashionable term of art) the whole tribe of oglers gave their eyes a new determination, and stared the fair sex in the neck rather than in the face. To prevent these sawcy familiar

T 2

glances,

glances, I would entreat my gentle Readers to s^o on their Tuckers again, to retrieve the modesty of their characters, and not to imitate the nakedness, but the innocence of their mother *Eve*.

What most troubles and indeed surprizes me in this particular, I have observed that the leaders in this fashion were most of them married women. What their design can be in making themselves bare, I cannot possibly imagine. No body exposes wares that are appropriated. When the bird is taken the snare ought to be removed. It was a remarkable circumstance in the institution of the severe *Lycurgus*. As that great Law-giver knew that the wealth and strength of a republic consisted in the multitude of citizens, he did all he could to encourage marriage: in order to it he prescribed a certain loose dress for the *Spartan* maids, in which there were several artificial rents and openings, that upon putting themselves in motion discovered several limbs of the body to the beholders. Such were the baits and temptations made use of, by that wise Law-giver, to incline the young men of his age to marriage. But when the maid was once sped, she was not suffered to tantalize the male part of the common-wealth: her garments were closed up, and stitched together with the greatest care imaginable. The shape of her limbs and complexion of her body had gained their ends, and were ever after to be concealed from the notice of the public.

I shall conclude this discourse of the Tucker with a moral which I have taught upon all occasions, and shall still continue to inculcate into my female Readers; namely, that nothing bestows so much beauty on a woman as modesty. This is a maxim laid down by *Ovid* himself, the greatest master in the art of love. He observes upon it, that *Venus* pleases most when she appears (*semi-reducta*) in a figure withdrawing her self from the eye of the beholder. It is very probable he had in his thoughts the statue which we see in the *Venus de Medicis*, where she is represented in such a shy retiring posture, and covers her bosom with one of her hands. In short, modesty gives the maid greater beauty than even the bloom of youth, it bestows on the wife the dignity of a matron, and reinstates the widow in her virginity.



Tuesday,