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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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No 102. Wednesday, July 8.

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“ world, I cannot but set a particular mark of distinction upon those
 “ who abound most in the virtues of their nation, and least with its im-
 “ perfections. When therefore I see the good sense of an *Englishman*
 “ in its highest perfection, without any mixture of the spleen, I hope
 “ you will excuse me if I admire the character, and am ambitious of
 “ subscribing my self,

S I R, Yours, &c.

N^o 102. Wednesday, July 8.

----- *Natos ad flumina primum*
Deferimus, sævoque gelu duramus et undis.

Virg.

I Am always beating about in my thoughts for something that may turn to the benefit of my dear countrymen. The present season of the year having put most of them in flight summer-suits, has turned my Speculations to a subject that concerns every one who is sensible of cold or heat, which I believe takes in the greatest part of my Readers.

There is nothing in nature more inconstant than the *British* climate, if we except the humour of its inhabitants. We have frequently in one day all the seasons of the year. I have shivered in the dog-days, and been forced to throw off my coat in *January*. I have gone to bed in *August* and rose in *December*. Summer has often caught me in my *Drap de Berry*, and winter in my *Doily* suit.

I remember a very whimsical fellow (commonly known by the name of *Posture-master*) in King *Charles* the Second's reign, who was the plague of all the Taylors about town. He would often send for one of them to take measure of him, but would so contrive it as to have a most immoderate rising in one of his shoulders. When the cloaths were brought home, and tryed upon him, the deformity was removed into the other shoulder. Upon which the Taylor begged pardon for the mistake, and mended it as fast as he could; but upon a third tryal found him a freight shouldered man as one would desire to see, but a little unfortunate in a humpt back. In short, this wandering tumour puzzled all the
 work-

workmen about town, who found it impossible to accommodate so changeable a customer. My Reader will apply this to any one who would adapt a suit to a season of our *English* climate.

After this short descant on the uncertainty of our *English* weather, I come to my moral.

A man should take care that his body be not too soft for his climate; but rather, if possible, harden and season himself beyond the degree of cold wherein he lives. Daily experience teaches us how we may inure our selves by custom to bear the extremities of weather without injury. The inhabitants of *Nova Zembla* go naked without complaining of the bleakness of the air in which they are born, as the armies of the northern nations keep the field all winter. The softest of our *British* Ladies expose their arms and necks to the open air, which the men could not do without catching cold, for want of being accustomed to it. The whole body by the same means might contract the same firmness and temper. The *Scythian* that was asked how it was possible for the inhabitants of his frozen climate to go naked, replied, *Because we are all over face.* Mr. *Lock* advises parents to have their children's feet washed every morning in cold water, which might probably prolong multitudes of lives.

I verily believe a cold Bath would be one of the most healthful exercises in the world, were it made use of in the education of youth. It would make their bodies more than proof to the injuries of the air and weather. It would be something like what the Poets tell us of *Achilles*, whom his mother is said to have dipped, when he was a child, in the river *Styx*. The story adds, that this made him invulnerable all over, excepting that part which the mother held in her hand during this immersion, which by that means lost the benefit of these hardning waters. Our common practice runs in a quite contrary method. We are perpetually softning our selves by good fires and warm cloaths. The air within our rooms has generally two or three more degrees of heat in it than the air without doors.

Crassus is an old lethargick Valetudinarian. For these twenty years last past he has been cloathed in frize of the same colour and of the same piece. He fancies he should catch his death in any other kind of manufacture, and though his avarice would incline him to wear it till it was thread-bare, he dares not do it lest he should take cold when the nap is off. He could no more live without his frize coat than without his skin. It is not indeed so properly his coat as what the Anatomists call one of the *Integuments* of the body.

How different an old man is *Crassus* from my self. It is indeed the particular distinction of the *Ironsides* to be robust and hardy, to defie the cold and rain, and let the weather do its worst. My father lived till a hundred without a cough, and we have a tradition in the family, that my grandfather used to throw off his hat and go open breasted after four-score. As for my self, they used to fowse me over head and ears in water when I was a boy, so that I am now looked upon as one of the most case-hardened of the whole family of the *Ironsides*. In short, I have been so plunged in water and inured to the cold, that I regard my self as a piece of true-tempered *Steele*, and can say with the above-mentioned *Scythian*, that I am face, or if my enemies please, forehead, all over.

N^o 103. *Thursday, July 9.*

Dum flammis Jovis, et sonitus imitatur Olympi. Virg.

I Am considering how most of the great *Phænomena*, or appearances in nature, have been imitated by the art of man. Thunder is grown a common drug among the Chymists. Lightning may be bought by the pound. If a man has occasion for a Lambent flame, you have whole sheets of it in a handful of Phosphor. Showers of rain are to be met with in every water-work; and we are informed, that some years ago the Vertuoso's of *France* covered a little vault with artificial snow, which they made to fall above an hour together for the entertainment of his present Majesty.

I am led into this train of thinking by the noble fire-work that was exhibited last night upon the *Thames*. You might there see a little sky filled with innumerable blazing Stars and Meteors. Nothing could be more astonishing than the pillars of flame, clouds of smoke, and multitudes of stars mingled together in such an agreeable confusion. Every Rocket ended in a Constellation, and strowed the air with such a shower of silver spangles, as opened and enlightened the whole scene from time to time. It put me in mind of the lines in *OEdipus*,

Why