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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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through those immeasurable depths of *Ether*, and running their appointed courses? Our eyes may hereafter be strong enough to command this magnificent prospect, and our understandings able to find out the several uses of these great parts of the Universe. In the mean time they are very proper objects for our imaginations to contemplate, that we may form more exalted notions of infinite wisdom and power, and learn to think humbly of our selves, and of all the little works of human Invention.

N^o 104.

Friday, July 10.

Quæ è longinquo magis placent.

Tacit.

ON *Tuesday* last I published two letters written by a Gentleman in his travels. As they were applauded by my best Readers, I shall this day publish two more from the same hand. The first of them contains a matter of fact which is very curious, and may deserve the attention of those who are versed in our *British* antiquities.

S I R,

Blois, May 15. N. S.

“ BECAUSE I am at present out of the road of news, I shall send you a story that was lately given me by a Gentleman of this country, who is descended from one of the persons concerned in the Relation, and very inquisitive to know if there be any of the family now in *England*.

“ I shall only premise to it, that this story is preserved with great care among the writings of this Gentleman’s family, and that it has been given to two or three of our *English* Nobility, when they were in these parts, who could not return any satisfactory answer to the Gentleman, whether there be any of that family now remaining in *Great Britain*.

“ In the Reign of King *John* there lived a nobleman called *John de Sigonia*, Lord of that place in *Tourraine*. His Brothers were *Philip* and *Briant*. *Briant*, when very young, was made one of the *French* King’s

“ King’s pages, and served him in that Quality when he was taken priso-
 “ ner by the *English*. The King of *England* chanced to see the Youth,
 “ and being much pleased with his person and behaviour, begged him of
 “ the King his prisoner. It happened, some years after this, that *John*,
 “ the other brother, who, in the course of the war, had raised himself
 “ to a considerable post in the *French* army, was taken prisoner by *Bri-*
 “ *ant*, who at that time was an officer in the King of *England*’s guards.
 “ *Briant* knew nothing of his brother, and being naturally of an haugh-
 “ ty temper, treated him very insolently, and more like a criminal than a
 “ prisoner of war. This *John* repented so highly, that he challenged him
 “ to a single combat. The challenge was accepted, and time and place
 “ assigned them by the King’s appointment. Both appeared on the day
 “ prefixed, and entered the lists compleatly armed amidst a great mul-
 “ titude of Spectators. Their first encounters were very furious, and
 “ the success equal on both sides; till after some toil and bloodshed they
 “ were parted by the seconds to fetch breath, and prepare
 “ themselves afresh for the combat. *Briant*, in the mean time, had cast
 “ his eye upon his brother’s Escutcheon, which he saw agree in all points
 “ with his own. I need not tell you after this with what joy and sur-
 “ prize the story ends. King *Edward*, who knew all the particulars of
 “ it, as a mark of his esteem, gave to each of them, by the King of *France*’s
 “ consent, the following coat of arms, which I will send you in the ori-
 “ ginal language, not being Herald enough to blazon it in *English*.

*Le Roi d’Angleterre par permission du Roi de France, pour perpétu-
 elle memoire de leurs grands faits d’armes & fidelité envers leurs Rois,
 leur donna par Ampliation à leurs Armes en une croix d’argent Canton-
 née de quatre Coquilles d’or en Champ de Sable, qu’ils avoient Aupara-
 vant, une endenteuse faite en façons de Croix de guëulle inserée au de-
 dans de la ditte croix d’argent & par le milieu d’icelle qui est participa-
 tion des deux Croix que portent les dits Rois en la Guerre.*

“ I am afraid by this time, you begin to wonder that I should send you
 “ for news a tale of three or four hundred years old; and I dare say ne-
 “ ver thought, when you desired me to write to you, that I should
 “ trouble you with a story of King *John*, especially at a time when there
 “ is a Monarch on the *French* throne that furnishes discourse for *Europe*.
 “ But I confess I am the more fond of the relation, because it brings to
 “ mind the noble exploits of our own countrymen: tho’, at the same time,
 “ I must own it is not so much the vanity of an *Englishman* which puts
 “ me

“ me upon writing it, as that I have of taking any occasion to subscribe
 “ my self, *S I R, Yours, &c.*

S I R,

Blois, May 20, N. S.

“ I Am extremely obliged to you for you last kind letter, which was
 “ the only *English* that had been spoken to me in some months to-
 “ gether, for I am at present forced to think the absence of my country-
 “ men my good fortune:

Votum in amante novum! vellem quod amatur abesset.

“ This is an advantage that I could not have hoped for, had I staid near
 “ the *French* court, though I must confess I would not but have seen it, be-
 “ cause I believe it showed me some of the finest places and of the grea-
 “ test persons in the world. One cannot hear a name mentioned in it
 “ that does not bring to mind a piece of a *Gazette*, nor see a man that
 “ has not signalized himself in a battel. One would fancy ones self to be
 “ in the enchanted palaces of a romance; one meets with so many He-
 “ roes, and finds something so like scenes of Magick in the gardens, sta-
 “ tues, and water-works. I am ashamed that I am not able to make a
 “ quicker progress through the *French* tongue, because I believe it is im-
 “ possible for a learner of a language to find in any nation such advan-
 “ tages as in this, where every body is so very courteous and so very
 “ talkative. They always take care to make a noise as long as they are
 “ in company, and are as loud, any hour of the morning, as our own
 “ countrymen at midnight. By what I have seen, there is more mirth
 “ in the *French* conversation, and more wit in the *English*. You a-
 “ bound more in jests, but they in laughter. Their language is indeed
 “ extremely proper to tattle in, it is made up of so much repetition and
 “ compliment. One may know a foreigner by his answering only No
 “ or Yes to a question, which a *Frenchman* generally makes a sentence
 “ of. They have a set of ceremonious phrases that run through all ranks
 “ and degrees among them. Nothing is more common than to hear a
 “ shopkeeper desiring his neighbour to have the goodness to tell him what
 “ is a clock, or a couple of coblers that are extremely glad of the honour
 “ of seeing one another.

“ The face of the whole country, where I now am, is at this season
 “ pleasant beyond imagination. I cannot but fancy the birds of this place,
 “ as well as the men, a great deal merrier than those of our own Nati-
 “ on. I am sure the *French* Year has got the start of ours more in the
 works

“ works of nature than in the new stile. I have past one *March* in my
 “ life without being ruffled by the winds, and one *April* without being
 “ washed with rains.

I am, SIR, Yours, &c.

N^o 105. *Saturday, July 11.*

*Quod neque in Armeniis tigres fecere latebris:
 Perdere nec fetus ausa leæna suos.
 At teneræ faciunt, sed non impunè, puellæ;
 Sæpe suos utero quæ necat, ipsa perit.*

Ov.

THERE was no part of the show on the Thanksgiving-day that so much pleased and affected me as the little boys and girls who were ranged with so much order and decency in that part of the *Strand* which reaches from the *Maypole* to *Exeter-Change*. Such a numerous and innocent multitude, cloathed in the charity of their benefactors, was a spectacle pleasing both to God and man, and a more beautiful expression of joy and thanksgiving than could have been exhibited by all the pomps of a *Roman* triumph. Never did a more full and unspotted chorus of human creatures join together in a hymn of devotion. The care and tenderness which appeared in the looks of their several instructors, who were disposed among this little helpless people, could not forbear touching every heart that had any sentiments of humanity.

I am very sorry that Her Majesty did not see this assembly of objects so proper to excite that charity and compassion which she bears to all who stand in need of it, though at the same time I question not but her Royal bounty will extend it self to them. A charity bestowed on the education of so many of her young subjects, has more merit in it than a thousand pensions to those of a higher fortune who are in greater stations in life.

I have always looked on this institution of charity-schools, which, of late years, has so universally prevailed through the whole nation, as the glory of the age we live in, and the most proper means that can be made use