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**The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.**

In Four Volumes

**Addison, Joseph**

**London, 1721**

No 109. Thursday, July 16.

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 N<sup>o</sup> 109. *Thursday, July 16.*


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*Pugnabat tunicâ sed tamen illa tegi.*


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Ovid.

I Have received many letters from persons of all conditions in reference to my late discourse concerning the *Tucker*. Some of them are filled with reproaches and invectives. A lady who subscribes herself *Tereminta*, bids me in a very pert manner mind my own affairs, and not pretend to meddle with their linnen; for that they do not dress for an old fellow, who cannot see them without a pair of spectacles. Another who calls herself *Bubnelia*, vents her passion in scurrilous terms; an old ninnyhammer, a dotard, a nincompoop, is the best language she can afford me. *Florella* indeed expostulates with me upon the subject, and only complains that she is forced to return a pair of stays which were made in the extremity of the fashion, that she might not be thought to encourage peeping.

But if on the one side I been used ill, (the common fate of all reformers) I have on the other side received great applauses and acknowledgments for what I have done, in having put a seasonable stop to this unaccountable humour of stripping, that was got among our *British* Ladies. As I would much rather the world should know what is said to my praise, than to my disadvantage, I shall suppress what has been written to me by those who have reviled me on this occasion, and only publish those letters which approve my proceedings.

S I R,

“ I Am to give you thanks in the name of half a dozen superannuated beauties, for your paper of the 6th instant. We all of us pass for women of fifty, and a man of your sense knows how many additional years are always to be thrown into female computations of this nature. We are very sensible that several young flirts about town had a design to cast us out of the fashionable world, and to leave us in the lurch by some of their late refinements. Two or three of them have been heard to say, that they would kill every old woman about town. In order

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“ to

“ to it, they began to throw off their cloaths as fast as they could, and  
 “ have played all those pranks which you have so seasonably taken notice  
 “ of. We were forced to uncover after them, being unwilling to give  
 “ out so soon, and be regarded as Veterans in the *beau monde*. Some of us  
 “ have already caught our deaths by it. For my own part I have not been  
 “ without a cold ever since this foolish fashion came up. I have followed  
 “ it thus far with the hazard of my life, and how much further I must go  
 “ no body knows, if your paper does not bring us relief. You may as-  
 “ sure your self that all the antiquated necks about town are very much  
 “ obliged to you. Whatever fires and flames are concealed in our bo-  
 “ soms (in which perhaps we vye with the youngest of the sex) they are  
 “ not sufficient to preserve us against the wind and weather. In taking  
 “ so many old women under your care, you have been a real *Guardian* to  
 “ us, and saved the life of many of your cotemporaries. In short, we all  
 “ of us beg leave to subscribe our selves,

*Most venerable* NESTOR,

*Your most humble Servants and Sisters.*

I am very well pleased with this approbation of my good sisters. I must  
 confess I have always looked on the Tucker to be the *Decus et Tutamen*,  
 the ornament and defence of the female neck. My good old Lady, the  
 Lady *Lizard*, condemned this fashion from the beginning, and has ob-  
 served to me, with some concern, that her sex, at the same time they  
 are letting down their stays, are tucking up their petticoats, which grow  
 shorter and shorter every day. The leg discovers it self in proportion  
 with the neck. But I may possibly take another occasion of handling this  
 extremity, it being my design to keep a watchful eye over every part of  
 the female sex, and to regulate them from head to foot. In the mean  
 time I shall fill up my paper with a letter which comes to me from ano-  
 ther of my obliged Correspondents.

*Dear* GUARDEE,

“ THIS comes to you from one of those *Untuckered* Ladies whom  
 “ you were so sharp upon on *Monday* was fennight. I think my  
 “ self mightily beholden to you for the reprehension you then gave us.  
 “ You must know I am a famous Olive beauty. But though this complexion  
 “ makes a very good face when there are a couple of black sparkling  
 “ eyes set in it, it makes but a very indifferent neck. Your fair women  
 “ therefore

“ therefore thought of this fashion to insult the Olives and the Brunetts.  
 “ They know very well that a neck of Ivory does not make so fine a  
 “ show as one of Alabaster. It is for this reason, Mr. *Ironside*, that they  
 “ are so liberal in their discoveries. We know very well, that a woman  
 “ of the whitest neck in the world, is to you no more than a woman of  
 “ snow; but *Ovid*, in Mr. *Duke*'s translation of him, seems to look up-  
 “ on it with another eye when he talks of *Corinna*, and mentions

——— *Her heaving breast,  
 Courting the hand, and suing to be prest.*

“ Women of my complexion ought to be more modest, especially since  
 “ our faces debar us from all artificial whitenings. Could you examine  
 “ many of these Ladies who present you with such beautiful snowy chests,  
 “ you would find that they are not all of a piece. Good Father *Nestor*  
 “ do not let us alone till you have shortned our necks, and reduced them  
 “ to their ancient standard.

*I am your most obliged, humble servant,*  
 Olivia.

I shall have a just regard to *Olivia*'s remonstrance, though at the same  
 time I cannot but observe that her modesty seems to be entirely the re-  
 sult of her complexion.

N<sup>o</sup> 110. *Friday, July 17.*

----- *Non ego paucis  
 Offendor maculis, quas aut incuria fudit  
 Aut humana parum cavit natura*-----

**T**HE candor which *Horace* shows in the motto of my paper, is  
 that which distinguishes a Critic from a Caviller. He declares  
 that he is not offended with those little faults in a poetical com-  
 position, which may be imputed to inadvertency, or to the imperfection  
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