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

In Four Volumes

**Addison, Joseph**

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“ 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. *Ironsides*, 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 result 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 composition, which may be imputed to inadvertency, or to the imperfection of

of human nature. The truth of it is, there can be no more a perfect work in the world than a perfect man. To say of a celebrated piece that there are faults in it, is in effect to say no more, than that the Author of it was a man. For this reason I consider every Critic that attacks an Author in high reputation as the slave in the *Roman* triumph, who was to call out to the conqueror, *Remember, Sir, that you are a man.* I speak this in relation to the following Letter, which criticises the works of a great Poet, whose very faults have more beauty in them than the most elaborate compositions of many more correct writers. The remarks are very curious and just, and introduced by a compliment to the work of an Author, who I am sure would not care for being praised at the expence of another's reputation. I must therefore desire my correspondent to excuse me, if I do not publish either the preface or conclusion of his Letter, but only the critical part of it.

S I R,

\* \* \* \* \*

“ OUR Tragedy writers have been notoriously defective in giving  
 “ proper sentiments to the persons they introduce. Nothing is  
 “ more common than to hear an heathen talking of Angels and Devils,  
 “ the joys of heaven and the pains of hell, according to the christian  
 “ system. *Lee's Alcander* discovers himself to be a *Cartesian* in the first  
 “ page of *OEdipus*.

——— *The Sun's sick too,*  
*Shortly he'll be an earth*———

“ As *Dryden's Cleomenes* is acquainted with the *Copernican* hypothesis  
 “ two thousand years before its invention.

*I am pleas'd with my own work ; Jove was not more*  
*With infant nature, when his spacious hand*  
*Had rounded this huge ball of earth and seas,*  
*To give it the first push, and see it rowl*  
*Along the vast abyss*———

“ I have now Mr. *Dryden's Don Sebastian* before me, in which I find  
 “ frequent allusions to ancient history, and the old mythology of the  
 “ heathen. It is not very natural to suppose a King of *Portugal* would  
 “ be borrowing thoughts out of *Ovid's Metamorphosis* when he talked  
 “ even

“ even to those of his own Court, but to allude to these *Roman* fables  
 “ when he talks to an Emperor of *Barbary*, seems very extraordinary.  
 “ But observe how he defies him out of the Classics in the following  
 “ lines :

*Why didst thou not engage me man to man,  
 And try the virtue of that Gorgon face  
 To stare me into statue ?*

“ *Almeyda* at the same time is more book-learned than *Don Sebastian*.  
 “ She plays an *Hydra* upon the Emperor that is full as good as the  
 “ *Gorgon*.

*O that I had the fruitful heads of Hydra,  
 That one might bourgeon where another fell !  
 Still wou'd I give thee work, still, still, thou tyrant,  
 And hiss thee with the last——*

“ She afterwards, in allusion to *Hercules*, bids him *lay down the Lion's*  
 “ *skin, and take the distaff*; and in the following speech utters her pas-  
 “ sion still more learnedly.

*No, were we join'd, ev'n tho' it were in death,  
 Our bodies burning in one funeral pile,  
 The prodigy of Thebes wou'd be renew'd,  
 And my divided flame should break from thine.*

“ The Emperor of *Barbary* shows himself acquainted with the *Roman*  
 “ Poets as well as either of his prisoners, and answers the foregoing  
 “ speech in the same classic strain.

*Serpent, I will engender poison with thee.  
 Our offspring, like the seed of dragons teeth,  
 Shall issue arm'd, and fight themselves to death.*

“ *Ovid* seems to have been *Muley Molock's* favourite Author, witness  
 “ the lines that follow.

*She's still inexorable, still imperious  
 And loud, as if like Bacchus born in thunder.*

“ I shall conclude my remarks on his part, with that poetical complaint  
 “ of his being in love, and leave my Reader to consider how prettily it  
 “ would found in the mouth of an Emperor of *Morocco*.

*The*

*The God of love once more has shot his fires  
Into my soul, and my whole heart receives him.*

“ *Muley Zeydan* is as ingenious a man as his brother *Muley Molock* ;  
“ as where he hints at the story of *Castor* and *Pollux*.

——— *May we ne'er meet !  
For like the twins of Leda, when I mount  
He gallops down the skies*———

“ As for the *Mufti* we will suppose that he was bred up a scholar,  
“ and not only versed in the law of *Mahomet*, but acquainted with all  
“ kinds of polite learning. For this reason he is not at all surprized  
“ when *Dorax* calls him a *Phaeton* in one place, and in another tells him  
“ he is like *Archimedes*.

“ The *Mufti* afterwards mentions *Ximenes*, *Albornoz*, and Cardinal  
“ *Wolfey* by name. The Poet seems to think he may make every person,  
“ in his Play, know as much as himself, and talk as well as he could  
“ have done on the same occasion. At least I believe every Reader will  
“ agree with me, that the above-mentioned sentiments, to which I might  
“ have added several others, would have been better suited to the Court  
“ of *Augustus*, than that of *Muley Molock*. I grant they are beautiful in  
“ themselves, and much more so in that noble language which was pe-  
“ culiar to this great Poet. I only observe that they are improper for  
“ the persons who make use of them. *Dryden* is indeed generally wrong  
“ in his sentiments. Let any one read the dialogue between *Octavia* and  
“ *Cleopatra*, and he will be amazed to hear a *Roman Lady's* mouth filled  
“ with such obscene raillery. If the virtuous *Octavia* departs from her  
“ character, the loose *Dolabella* is no less inconsistent with himself, when,  
“ all of a sudden, he drops the *Pagan* and talks in the sentiments of re-  
“ vealed religion.

——— *Heav'n has but  
Our sorrow for our sins, and then delights  
To pardon erring man : sweet mercy seems  
Its darling attribute, which limits justice ;  
As if there were degrees in infinite ;  
And infinite wou'd rather want perfection  
Than punish to extent*———

“ I might show several faults of the same nature in the celebrated  
“ *Aurence-Zebe*. The impropriety of thoughts in the speeches of the  
“ great

“ great *Mogul* and his *Emprefs* has been generally censured. Take the  
 “ sentiments out of the shining dress of words, and they would be too  
 “ coarse for a scene in *Billinggate*.

\* \* \* \* \*

*I am, &c.*

N<sup>o</sup> III. *Saturday, July 18.*

*Hic aliquis de gente hircosâ centurionum  
 Dicat : quod satis est sapio mihi ; non ego curo  
 Esse quod Arcefilas, ærumnosique Solones.* Perf.

I Am very much concerned when I see young Gentlemen of fortune and quality so wholly set upon pleasures and diversions, that they neglect all those improvements in wisdom and knowledge which may make them easie to themselves and useful to the world. The greatest part of our *British* youth lose their figure and grow out of fashion by that time they are five and twenty. As soon as the natural gaiety and amiableness of the young man wears off, they have nothing left to recommend them, but *lie by* the rest of their lives among the lumber and refuse of the species. It sometimes happens indeed, that for want of applying themselves in due time to the pursuits of knowledge, they take up a book in their declining years, and grow very hopeful scholars by that time they are threescore. I must therefore earnestly press my Readers, who are in the flower of their youth, to labour at those accomplishments which may set off their persons when their bloom is gone, and to *lay in* timely provisions for manhood and old age. In short, I would advise the youth of fifteen to be dressing up every day the man of fifty, or to consider how to make himself venerable at threescore.

Young men, who are naturally ambitious, would do well to observe how the greatest men of antiquity made it their ambition to excell all their contemporaries in knowledge. *Julius Cæsar* and *Alexander*, the