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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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Virgil's poetry, it was to be ascribed to a deficiency in the art it self, and not in the genius of this great man. There were however some envious murmurs and detractions heard among the croud, as if there were very frequently verses in him which flagged or wanted spirit, and were rather to be looked upon as faultless than beautiful. But these injudicious censures were heard with a general indignation.

I need not observe to my learned Reader, that the foregoing story of the *German* and *Portuguese* is almost the same in every particular with that of the two rival soldiers in *Cesar's* Commentaries. This prolusion ends with the performance of an *Italian* Poet, full of those little witticisms and conceits which have infected the greatest part of modern poetry.

N^o 123. Saturday, August 1.

— *hic murus abeneus esto*
Nil conscire sibi—

THERE are a sort of Knights-errant in the world, who, quite contrary to those in romance, are perpetually seeking adventures to bring virgins into distress, and to ruin innocence. When men of rank and figure pass away their lives in these criminal pursuits and practices, they ought to consider that they render themselves more vile and despicable than any innocent man can be, whatever low station his fortune or birth have placed him in. Title and ancestry render a good man more illustrious, but an ill one more contemptible.

*Thy father's merit sets thee up to view,
 And plants thee in the fairest point of light,
 To make thy virtues or thy faults conspicuous.*

Cato.

I have often wondered, that these deflowers of innocence, though dead to all the sentiments of virtue and honour, are not restrained by compassion and humanity. To bring sorrow, confusion and infamy
 into

into a family, to wound the heart of a tender parent, and stain the life of a poor deluded young woman with a dishonour that can never be wiped off, are circumstances one would think sufficient to check the most violent passion in a heart which has the least tincture of pity and good-nature. Would any one purchase the gratification of a moment at so dear a rate? and entail a lasting misery on others, for such a transient satisfaction to himself? nay, for a satisfaction that is sure, at some time or other, to be followed with remorse? I am led to this subject by two Letters which came lately to my hands. The last of them is, it seems, the copy of one sent by a mother to one who had abused her daughter; and though I cannot justify her sentiments at the latter end of it, they are such as might arise in a mind which had not yet recovered its temper after so great a provocation. I present the Reader with it as I received it, because I think it gives a lively idea of the affliction which a fond parent suffers on such an occasion.

S I R,

—shire, July, 1713.

THE other day I went into the house of one of my tenants, whose wife was formerly a servant in our family, and (by my grandmother's kindness) had her education with my mother from her infancy; so that she is of a spirit and understanding greatly superior to those of her own rank. I found the poor woman in the utmost disorder of mind and attire, drowned in tears, and reduced to a condition that looked rather like stupidity than grief. She leaned upon her arm over a table, on which lay a Letter folded up and directed to a certain Nobleman, very famous in our parts for low-intrigue, or (in plainer words) for debauching country girls; in which number is the unfortunate daughter of my poor tenant, as I learn from the following Letter written by her mother. I have sent you here a copy of it, which, made publick in your paper, may perhaps furnish useful reflections to many men of figure and quality, who indulge themselves in a passion which they possess but in common with the vilest part of mankind.

My Lord,

LAST night I discovered the injury you have done to my daughter. "Heaven knows how long and piercing a torment that short-lived shameful pleasure of yours must bring upon me; upon me, from whom you never received any offence. This consideration alone should have deterred a noble mind from so base and ungenerous an act. But, alas!

D d 2

" what

“ what is all the grief that must be my share, in comparifon of that, with
“ which you have requited her by whom you have been obliged? lofs of
“ good name, anguish of heart, fhame and infamy, are what muft inevi-
“ tably fall upon her, unlefs ſhe gets over them by what is much worfe,
“ open impudence, profefled lewdnefs, and abandoned proftitution.
“ Theſe are the returns you have made to her, for putting in your power
“ all her livelihood and dependance, her virtue and reputation. O, my
“ Lord, ſhould my ſon have praftiſed the like on one of your daugh-
“ ters! — I know you ſwell with indignation at the very mention of
“ it, and would think he deſerved a thouſand deaths, ſhould he make
“ ſuch an attempt upon the honour of your family. It is well, my Lord.
“ And is then the honour of your daughter, whom ſtill, though it had
“ been violated, you might have maintained in plenty, and even luxury,
“ of greater moment to her, than to my daughter hers, whoſe only ſu-
“ ſtenance it was? and muſt my ſon, void of all the advantages of a ge-
“ nerous education, muſt he, I ſay, conſider: and may your Lordſhip be
“ excuſed from all reflection? Eternal contumely attend that guilty title
“ which claims exemption from thought, and arrogates to its wearers
“ the prerogative of brutes. Ever curſed be its falſe luſtre, which could
“ dazzle my poor daughter to her undoing. Was it for this that the ex-
“ alted merits, and godlike virtues of your great anceſtor were honoured
“ with a Coronet, that it might be a pander to his poſterity, and confer
“ a privilege of diſhonouring the innocent and defenceleſs? at this rate
“ the laws of rewards ſhould be inverted, and he who is generous and
“ good ſhould be made a beggar and a ſlave; that induſtry and honeſt
“ diligence may keep his poſterity unſpotted, and preſerve them from
“ ruining virgins, and making whole families unhappy. Wretchednefs
“ is now become my everlaſting portion! Your crime, my Lord, will
“ draw perdition even upon my head. I may not ſue for forgivenefs of
“ my own failings and miſdeeds, for I never can forgive yours; but ſhall
“ curſe you with my dying breath, and at the laſt tremendous day ſhall
“ hold forth in my arms my much wronged child, and call aloud for ven-
“ geance on her defiler. Under theſe preſent horrors of mind I could
“ be content to be your chief tormentor, ever paying you mock reve-
“ rence, and founding in your ears, to your unutterable loathing, the
“ empty title which inſpired you with preſumption to tempt, and over-
“ awed my daughter to comply.

“ Thus have I given ſome vent to my ſorrow, nor fear I to awaken
“ you to repentance, ſo that your ſin may be forgiven: the divine laws
“ have

“ have been broken, but much injury, irreparable injury, has been also
 “ done to me, and the just judge will not pardon that until I do.

My Lord, your conscience will help you to my name.

N^o 124.

Monday, August 3.

Quid fremat in terris violentius?

Juv.

More roarings of the Lion.

Mr. GUARDIAN,

“ **B**EFORE I proceed to make you my propofals, it will be ne-
 cessary to inform you, that an uncommon ferocity in my coun-
 tenance, together with the remarkable flatness of my nose, and
 “ extent of my mouth, have long since procured me the name of *Lion*
 “ in this our university.

“ The vast emolument that, in all probability, will accrue to the Pub-
 lick from the roarings of my new erected likeness at *Button's*, hath
 “ made me desirous of being as like him in that part of his character, as
 “ I am told I already am in all parts of my person. Wherefore I most
 “ humbly propose to you, that (as it is impossible for this one *Lion* to
 “ roar, either long enough or loud enough against all the things that are
 “ roar-worthy in these Realms) you would appoint him a Sub-Lion, as a
 “ *Præfectus Provinciae*, in every county in *Great Britain*, and 'tis my
 “ request, that I may be instituted his under-roarer in this university,
 “ town, and county of *Cambridge*, as my resemblance does, in some
 “ measure, claim that I should.

“ I shall follow my Metropolitan's example, in roaring only against
 “ those enormities that are too slight and trivial for the notice or cen-
 “ sures of our Magistrates, and shall communicate my roarings to him
 “ monthly, or oftner if occasion requires, to be inserted in your papers
 “ *cum privilegio*.

“ I shall not omit giving informations of the improvement or decay of
 “ punning, and may chance to touch upon the rise and fall of *Tuckers*;

“ but