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The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.

In Four Volumes

Addison, Joseph

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N^o 159. Saturday, September 12.

*Præsens vel imo tollere de gradu
Mortale corpus, vel superbos
Vertere funeribus triumphos.*

Hor.

S I R,

“ HAVING read over your paper of *Tuesday* last, in which you
 “ recommend the pursuits of wisdom and knowledge to those
 “ of the fair sex, who have much time lying upon their hands,
 “ and among other motives make use of this, That several women, thus
 “ accomplished, have raised themselves by it to considerable posts of ho-
 “ nour and fortune: I shall beg leave to give you an instance of this kind,
 “ which many now living can testify the truth of, and which I can assure
 “ you is matter of fact.

“ About twelve years ago I was familiarly acquainted with a Gentle-
 “ man, who was in a post that brought him a yearly revenue, sufficient
 “ to live very handsomly upon. He had a wife, and no child but a
 “ daughter, whom he bred up, as I thought, too high for one that could
 “ expect no other fortune than such a one as her father could raise out
 “ of the income of his place; which, as they managed it, was scarce
 “ sufficient for their ordinary expences. Miss *Betty* had always the best
 “ sort of cloaths, and was hardly allowed to keep company but with
 “ those above her rank; so that it was no wonder she grew proud and
 “ haughty towards those she looked upon as her inferiors. There lived
 “ by them a barber who had a daughter about Miss’s age, that could
 “ speak *French*, had read several books at her leisure hours, and was a
 “ perfect mistress of her needle and in all kinds of female manufacture.
 “ She was at the same time a pretty, modest, witty girl. She was hired
 “ to come to Miss an hour or two every day, to talk *French* with her
 “ and teach her to work, but Miss always treated her with great con-
 “ tempt; and when *Molly* gave her any advice, rejected it with scorn.

“ About

“ About the same time several young fellows made their addresses to
“ Miss *Betty*, who had indeed a great deal of wit and beauty, had they
“ not been infected with so much vanity and self-conceit. Among the
“ rest was a plain sober young man, who loved her almost to distraction.
“ His passion was the common talk of the neighbourhood, who used to
“ be often discoursing of Mr. *T*——’s Angel, for that was the name
“ he always gave her in ordinary conversation. As his circumstances
“ were very indifferent, he being a younger brother, Mistress *Betty* re-
“ jected him with disdain. Inasmuch that the young man, as is usual among
“ those who are crossed in love, put himself aboard the fleet, with a reso-
“ lution to seek his fortune, and forget his Mistress. This was very hap-
“ py for him, for in a very few years, being concerned in several captures,
“ he brought home with him an estate of about twelve thousand pounds.
“ Mean while days and years went on, Miss lived high and learnt but
“ little, most of her time being employed in reading plays and practising
“ to dance, in which she arrived at great perfection. When of a sudden,
“ at a change of Ministry, her father lost his place, and was forced to
“ leave *London*, where he could no longer live upon the foot he had
“ formerly done. Not many years after I was told the poor Gentleman
“ was dead, and had left his widow and daughter in a very desolate condi-
“ tion, but I could not learn where to find them, though I made what in-
“ quiry I could; and I must own, I immediately suspected their pride
“ would not suffer them to be seen or relieved by any of their former
“ acquaintance. I had left enquiring after them for some years, when I
“ happened, not long ago, as I was asking at a house for a Gentleman I
“ had some business with, to be led into a parlor by a handsome young
“ woman, who I presently fancied was that very daughter I had so long
“ sought in vain. My suspicion increased, when I observed her to blush
“ at the sight of me, and to avoid, as much as possible, looking upon,
“ or speaking to me: Madam, said I, are not you Mistress such a one?
“ at which words the tears ran down her cheeks, and she would fain have
“ retired without giving me an answer; but I stopped her, and being
“ to wait a while for the Gentleman I was to speak to, I resolved not to
“ lose this opportunity of satisfying my curiosity. I could not well di-
“ scern by her dress, which was genteel though not fine, whether she was
“ the Mistress of the house, or only a servant: but supposing her to be
“ the first, I am glad, Madam, said I, after having long inquired after you,
“ to have so happily met with you, and to find you Mistress of so fine a
“ place. These words were like to have spoiled all, and threw her into
“ such

“ such a disorder, that it was some time before she could recover her
“ self; but as soon as she was able to speak, Sir, said she, you are mistaken;
“ I am but a servant. Her voice fell in these last words, and she burst a-
“ gain into tears. I was sorry to have occasioned in her so much grief and
“ confusion, and said what I could to comfort her. Alas, Sir, said she,
“ my condition is much better than I deserve, I have the kindest and best
“ of women for my Mistress. She is wife to the Gentleman you come
“ to speak withal. You know her very well, and have often seen her
“ with me. To make my story short, I found that my late friend’s daugh-
“ ter was now a servant to the barber’s daughter, whom she had former-
“ ly treated so disdainfully. The Gentleman at whose house I now was,
“ fell in love with *Moll*, and being Master of a great fortune, married
“ her, and lives with her as happily, and as much to his satisfaction as he
“ could desire. He treats her with all the friendship and respect possi-
“ ble, but not with more than her behaviour and good qualities deserve.
“ And it was with a great deal of pleasure I heard her maid dwell so long
“ upon her commendation. She informed me, that after her father’s
“ death, her mother and she lived for a while together in great poverty.
“ But her mother’s spirit could not bear the thoughts of asking relief of
“ any of her own, or her husband’s acquaintance; so that they retired
“ from all their friends, until they were providentially discovered by
“ this new-married woman, who heaped on them favours upon favours.
“ Her mother died shortly after, who, while she lived, was better pleased
“ to see her daughter a beggar, than a servant. But being freed by her
“ death, she was taken into this Gentlewoman’s family, where she now
“ lived, though much more like a friend or companion, than like a ser-
“ vant.

“ I went home full of this strange adventure, and about a week after
“ chancing to be in company with Mr. *T.* the rejected lover whom I
“ mentioned in the beginning of my letter, I told him the whole story
“ of his Angel, not questioning but he would feel on this occasion the
“ usual pleasure of a resenting lover, when he hears that fortune has a-
“ venged him of the cruelty of his Mistress. As I was recounting to
“ him at large these several particulars, I observed that he covered his face
“ with his hand, and that his breast heaved as though it would have burst
“ which I took at first to have been a fit of laughter; but upon lift-
“ ing up his head I saw his eyes all red with weeping. He forced a
“ smile at the end of my story, and parted.

“ About a fortnight after I received from him the following letter.

VOL. IV.

L I

Dear

Dear Sir,

I Am infinitely obliged to you for bringing me news of my Angel. I have since married her, and think the low circumstances she was reduced to a piece of good luck to both of us, since it has quite removed that little pride and vanity, which was the only part of her character that I disliked, and given me an opportunity of showing her the constant and sincere affection, which I professed to her in the time of her prosperity.

Tours, R. T.

N^o 160.

Monday, September 14.

Solventur risu tabulae, tu missus abibis.

Hor.

FROM writing the history of Lions, I lately went off to that of Ants, but to my great surprize, I find that some of my good Readers have taken this last to be a work of invention, which was only a plain narrative of matter of fact. They will several of them have it that my last *Thursday* and *Friday's* papers are full of concealed satyr, and that I have attacked people in the shape of pismires, whom I durst not meddle with in the shape of men. I must confess that I write with fear and trembling ever since that ingenious person the *Examiner* in his little pamphlet, which was to make way for one of his following papers, found out treason in the word *Expect*.

But I shall for the future leave my friend to manage the controverſie in a separate work, being unwilling to fill with disputes a paper which was undertaken purely out of good-will to my countrymen. I must therefore declare that those jealousies and suspicions, which have been raised in some weak minds, by means of the two above-mentioned discourses concerning ants or pismires, are altogether groundless. There is not an emmet in all that whole narrative who is either Whig or Tory; and I could heartily wish, that the individuals of all parties among us, had the good of their country at heart, and endeavoured to advance it by the same spirit