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

In Four Volumes

**Addison, Joseph**

**London, 1721**

Prologue to the Tender Husband.

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*Prologue to the TENDER HUSBAND.\**Spoken by Mr. *W I L K S.*

**I**N the first rise and infancy of Farce,  
 When Fools were many, and when Plays were scarce,  
 The raw unpractis'd authors could, with ease,  
 A young and unexperienc'd audience please:  
 No single Character had e'er been shown,  
 But the whole herd of Fops was all their own;  
 Rich in Originals, they set to view,  
 In every piece, a Coxcomb that was new.

But now our *British* Theatre can boast  
 Droles of all kinds, a vast Unthinking host!  
 Fruitful of folly and of vice, it shows  
 Cuckolds, and Citts, and Bawds, and Pimps, and Beaux;  
 Rough-country Knights are found of every shire;  
 Of every fashion gentle Fops appear;  
 And Punks of different characters we meet,  
 As frequent on the Stage as in the Pit.  
 Our modern Wits are forc'd to pick and cull,  
 And here and there by chance glean up a Fool:  
 Long e'er they find the necessary spark,  
 They search the Town, and beat about the Park:

To

\* *A Comedy written by Sir Richard Steele.*



To all his most frequented haunts resort,  
 Oft dog him to the Ring, and oft to Court;  
 As love of pleasure, or of place invites:  
 And sometimes catch him taking Snuff at *White's*.

Howe'er, to do you right, the present age  
 Breeds very hopeful Monsters for the stage;  
 That scorn the paths their dull forefathers trod,  
 And wo'n't be blockheads in the Common road.  
 Do but survey this crowded house to-night:  
 -----Here's still encouragement for those that write.

Our Author, to divert his friends to-day,  
 Stocks with Variety of fools his Play;  
 And that there may be something gay, and new,  
 Two Ladies-errant has expos'd to view:  
 The first a Damsel, travell'd in Romance;  
 The 2<sup>d</sup> other more refin'd; she comes from *France*:  
 Rescue, like courteous Knights, the Nymph from danger;  
 And kindly treat, like well-bred men, the Stranger.

