



ADDISON









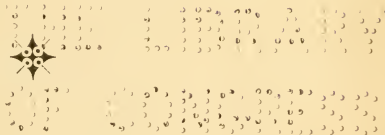
ADDISON

BY

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

WITH NOTES BY

MARGARET A. EATON, A. B.



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INTRODUCTION.

Probably no writer who ever lived has succeeded in producing such scholarly, and at the same time such popular and intensely interesting work, as Thomas Babington Macaulay. Certainly his essays are the most brilliant series in the English language.

Macaulay's father was a Scotchman who had lived for some time in the West Indies and who, on his return to England, had joined the anti-slavery party. Thomas, his eldest son, was born at Rothley Temple, October 25, 1800. He was a remarkable child, with a passion for reading and a wonderful memory. He did not care for games nor for the companionship of boys of his own age, but amused himself by writing hymns, essays, poems and histories. At thirteen he wrote:—"The books which I am at present employed in reading to myself are, in English, Plutarch's "Lives," and Milner's "Ecclesiastical History;" in French, Fénelon's "Dialogues of the Dead." I shall send you back the volumes of Madam de Genlis's "*Petit Romans*" as soon as possible, and should be very much obliged for one or two more of them."

In 1818 he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, and soon distinguished himself in literature and in debate. Mathematics he hated and studied only under protest, but he read everything from Plato to the latest novel. He could take in the contents of a page almost at a glance and finish a whole book while another was reading a chapter. What he read he never forgot. He could repeat "Paradise Lost" by heart, and two newspaper poems which he had once read in a Cambridge coffee-house, he was able to recall word for word forty years later.

While at college he won the chancellor's medal for a poem on "Pompeii," and, after taking his degree, was elected to a fellowship.

Soon after he began to contribute to the magazines, and in 1825 his essay on Milton appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*. At that time the reputation of Milton was under a cloud in England owing to the influence of Johnson's life. This essay of Macaulay's was not so much a critical estimate of the poet as an eloquent appeal in his behalf. As such it had a wonderful success and its author rapidly became famous.

In 1825 he was admitted to the bar, but his literary work increased more rapidly than his law practice. Four years later, however, he gave up both to enter Parliament. Here he made many brilliant speeches and won renown as a debater. His conversational powers, too, were remarkable. Everything that he had ever read or heard he could recall on the instant, and his fund of information was exhaustless.

In 1834 he was made president of a Law Commission for India and for three years he lived in Calcutta where he obtained much of the information which make his essays on Clive and Warren Hastings so absorbingly interesting.

On his return to England he again entered Parliament and became War Secretary in 1839. In spite of his many duties he still found time to write essays, and in 1842 made a new departure by publishing the "Lays of Ancient Rome."

Two years later, he entered upon his greatest work, the "History of England from the Time of James II." His avowed purpose was to write a book which should "supersede the last fashionable novel on the tables of young ladies." And, strange as it may seem, he succeeded. The volumes were awaited with the greatest eagerness and the publishers could hardly keep pace with the demand.

Only four volumes of this work were ever finished. Macaulay's incessant labors had told upon his strength and he died December 28, 1859, three years after receiving the title of

Baron. He was buried in Westminster Abbey near Johnson and Addison.

Macaulay's chief characteristic was his intensity. He never did anything by halves and it is this trait that often makes his writings only partially true. His style well repays careful study, for it is always clear and forceful and often full of glow and eloquence. There is not a feeble line in all his work. "The first rule of all writing," he has said, "that rule to which every other is subordinate, is that the words used by the writer shall be such as most fully and precisely convey his meaning to the great body of his readers."

LIST OF MACAULAY'S CHIEF WORKS.

ESSAYS.

Milton, 1825.

The West Indies, 1825.

The London University, 1825.

Machiavelli, 1827.

Social and Industrial Capacities of Negroes, 1827.

John Dryden, 1828.

History, 1828.

Hallam's Constitutional History, 1828.

Mill on Government, 1829.

Utilitarian Theory of Government, 1829.

Southey's Colloquies on Society, 1830.

Civil Disabilities of the Jews, 1831.

Moore's Life of Byron, 1831.

Boswell's Life of Johnson, 1831.

Lord Nugent's Memorials of Hampden, 1831.

Rev. Edward Nare's Memoirs of Mirabeau, 1832.

Horace Walpole, 1833.

Earl of Chatham, 1834.

Sir James Mackintosh, 1835.

Lord Bacon, 1837.

Sir William Temple, 1838.

Gladstone on Church and State, 1839.

Lord Clive, 1840.

Von Rouke, 1840.

Leigh Hunt, 1841.

Lord Holland, 1841.

Warren Hastings, 1841.

Frederick the Great, 1842.

Madam D'Arblay, 1843.

Addison, 1843.

Barrere, 1844.

Earl of Chatham, 1844.

BIOGRAPHIES (ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANICA.)

Frances Atterbury, 1853.

John Bunyan, 1854.

Oliver Goldsmith, 1856.

Samuel Johnson, 1856.

William Pitt, 1859.

Lays of Ancient Rome, 1842.

History of England from the Accession of James II., 1848.



JOSEPH ADDISON

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF ADDISON.

Some reviewers are of opinion that a lady who dares to publish a book renounces by that act the franchises appertaining to her sex, and can claim no exemption from the utmost rigor of critical procedure. From that opinion we ⁵ dissent. We admit, indeed, that, in a country which boasts of many female writers eminently qualified by their talents and acquirements to influence the public mind, it would be of most pernicious consequence that inaccurate history ¹⁰ or unsound philosophy should be suffered to pass uncensured, merely because the offender chanced to be a lady. But we conceive that, on such occasions, a critic would do well to imitate the courteous knight who found him- ¹⁵ self compelled by duty to keep the lists against Bradamante. He, we are told, defended successfully the cause of which he was the champion, but, before the fight began, ex-

^{17.} **Bradamante.** A lady knight-errant in Ariosto's "Orlando Furioso," XLV. The courteous knight was Ruggiero.

changed Balisarda for a less deadly sword, of which he carefully blunted the point and edge.

Nor are the immunities of sex the only
 5 immunities which Miss Aikin may rightfully
 plead. Several of her works, and especially
 the very pleasing "Memoirs of the Court of
 King James I.," have fully entitled her to the
 privileges enjoyed by good writers. One of
 10 those privileges we hold to be this: that such
 writers, when, either from the unlucky choice
 of a subject or from the indolence too often
 produced by success, they happen to fail, shall
 not be subjected to the severe discipline which
 15 it is sometimes necessary to inflict upon dunces
 and imposters, but shall merely be reminded
 by a gentle touch, like that with which the
 Laputan flapper roused his dreaming lord,
 that it is high time to wake.

20 Our readers will probably infer from what
 we have said that Miss Aikin's book has
 disappointed us. The truth is, that she is not

1. **Balisarda.** Ruggiero's enchanted sword which could cut through any substance.

5. **Miss Lucy Aikin,** (1781-1864.) A well-known critic and compiler. It is her "Life of Joseph Addison" that Macaulay is reviewing in this essay.

18. **Laputan flapper.** In Dean Swift's story of "Gulliver's Travels," the hero visits the country of Laputa where the inhabitants are so absent-minded that they have to be attended by a servant whose business it is to flap them with a bladder to keep their attention aroused.

well acquainted with her subject. No person who is not familiar with the political and literary history of England during the reigns of William III., of Anne, and of George I., can possibly write a good life of Addison. Now,⁵ we mean no reproach to Miss Aikin, and many will think that we pay her a compliment, when we say that her studies have taken a different direction. . She is better acquainted with Shakespeare and Raleigh than with Congreve and¹⁰ Prior, and is far more at home among the ruffs and peaked beards of Theobald's than among the Steenkirks and flowing periwigs which surrounded Queen Anne's tea table at Hampton. She seems to have written about the¹⁵ Elizabethan age, because she had read much about it; she seems, on the other hand, to have read a little about the age of Addison, because she had determined to write about it. The consequence is, that she has had to²⁰

10. **Sir Walter Raleigh**, (1552-1618.) Noted as a statesman, explorer and author as well as for his chivalry to Queen Elizabeth.

10. **Congreve and Prior.** Both poets of the time of Addison.

12. **Theobald's.** The country seat of Cecil, Lord of Burleigh, the famous minister of Queen Elizabeth. It was afterwards one of the residences of James I. and the place of his death.

13. **Steenkirks.** At the battle of Steenkirks in Holland, when William III. was defeated, the fine gentlemen of the court rode into the fight with their cravats all disordered. After this it became the fashion to wear loosely arranged cravats of lace called "Steenkirks."

14. **Hampton Court.** A palace on the Thames, built by Cardinal Wolsey and afterwards the favorite residence of many of the English sovereigns.

describe men and things without having either a correct or a vivid idea of them, and that she has often fallen into errors of a very serious kind. The reputation which Miss Aikin has
5 justly earned stands so high, and the charm of Addison's letters is so great, that a second edition of this work may probably be required. If so, we hope that every paragraph will be revised, and that every date and fact about
10 which there can be the smallest doubt will be carefully verified.

To Addison himself we are bound by a sentiment as much like affection as any sentiment can be which is inspired by one who has
15 been sleeping a hundred and twenty years in Westminster Abbey. We trust, however, that this feeling will not betray us into that abject idolatry which we have often had occasion to reprehend in others, and which seldom fails
20 to make both the idolator and the idol ridiculous. A man of genius and virtue is but a man. All his powers cannot be equally developed, nor can we expect from him perfect self-knowledge. We need not, therefore, hesi-
25 tate to admit that Addison has left us some compositions which do not rise above mediocrity, some heroic poems hardly equal to

Parnell's, some criticisms as superficial as Dr. Blair's, and a tragedy not very much better than Dr. Johnson's. It is praise enough to say of a writer, that, in a high department of literature in which many eminent writers have distinguished themselves, he has had no equal; and this may with strict justice be said of Addison.

As a man he may not have deserved the adoration which he received from those, who, bewitched by his fascinating society, and indebted for all the comforts of life to his generous and delicate friendship, worshipped him nightly in his favorite temple at Button's. But, after full inquiry and impartial reflection, we have long been convinced that he deserved as much love and esteem as can be justly claimed by any of our infirm and erring race. Some blemishes may undoubtedly be detected in his character; but the more carefully it is examined, the more will it appear,

1. **Thomas Parnell**, (1679-1717.) An Irish poet of Queen Anne's reign. His best known poem is the "Hermit."

2. **Dr. Blair**, (1718-1800.) A Scotch preacher and professor of rhetoric at Edinburgh University.

3. **Dr. Samuel Johnson**, (1709-1784.) The foremost man of letters of his time. The play referred to is his "Irene," which is here compared with Addison's "Cato."

14. **Button's**. A celebrated London coffee-house in Queen Anne's reign. These coffee-houses were virtually clubs where the wits and scholars used to assemble for social intercourse.

to use the phrase of the old anatomists, sound in the noble parts, free from all taint of perfidy, of cowardice, of cruelty, of ingratitude, of envy. Men may easily be named in whom some particularly good disposition has been more conspicuous than in Addison. But the just harmony of qualities, the exact temper between the stern and the humane virtues, the habitual observance of every law, not only of moral rectitude, but of moral grace and dignity, distinguish him from all men who have been tried by equally strong temptations, and about whose conduct we possess equally full information.

His father was the Rev. Lancelot Addison, who, though eclipsed by his more celebrated son, made some figure in the world, and occupies with credit two folio pages in the "Biographia Britannica." Lancelot was sent up, as a poor scholar, from Westmoreland to Queen's College, Oxford, in the time of the Commonwealth, made some progress in learning, became, like most of his fellow students,

19. **Biographia Brittanica.** A series of short biographical sketches published in London, 1747-1766.

21. **Queen's College.** So named in 1340 for Philippa, Queen of Edward III.

22. **Commonwealth** The period from 1649 to the Restoration in 1660, established by Cromwell.

a violent Royalist, lampooned the heads of the university, and was forced to ask pardon on his bended knees. When he had left college, he earned a humble subsistence by reading the liturgy of the fallen church⁵ to the families of those sturdy squires whose manor houses were scattered over the Wilds of Sussex. After the restoration, his loyalty was rewarded with the post of chaplain to the garrison of Dunkirk. When¹⁰ Dunkirk was sold to France, he lost his employment. But Tangier had been ceded by Portugal to England as a part of the marriage portion of the Infanta Catherine; and to Tangier, Lancelot Addison was sent.¹⁵ A more miserable situation can hardly be conceived. It was difficult to say whether the unfortunate settlers were more tormented by the heats, or by the rains; by the soldiers within the wall, or by the Moors without it.²⁰ One advantage the chaplain had. He enjoyed

⁵ **Fallen church.** The Episcopal, whose worship was forbidden under Cromwell and replaced by the Presbyterian.

⁸ **Wilds of Sussex** This region was originally a forest and *wild* is the A. S. *weald*, meaning forest.

¹⁰ **Dunkirk.** A fortified seaport in France on the Straits of Dover. It was captured by Cromwell in 1658, but afterward sold to France by Charles II.

¹² **Tangier.** A port of Morocco on the Straits of Gibraltar.

¹⁴ **Infanta.** A name given to the Spanish princesses of the royal blood with the exception of the eldest.

an excellent opportunity of studying the history and manners of Jews and Mohammedans; and of this opportunity he appears to have made excellent use. On his return to England, after
5 some years of banishment, he published an interesting volume on the "Polity and Religion of Barbary," and another on the "Hebrew Customs and the State of Rabbinical Learning." He rose to eminence in his profession, and
10 became one of the royal chaplains, a doctor of divinity, Archdeacon of Salisbury, and Dean of Lichfield. It is said that he would have been made a bishop after the Revolution, if he had not given offence to the government
15 by strenuously opposing, in the Convention of 1689, the liberal policy of William and Tillotson.

In 1672, not long after Dr. Addison's return from Tangier, his son Joseph was born. Of
20 Joseph's childhood we know little. He learned his rudiments at schools in his father's neighborhood, and was then sent to the Charter House. The anecdotes which are popularly related about his boyish tricks do not harmonize

17. **Tillotson.** (1630-1694.) A noted prelate of the English church who was made Archbishop of Canterbury by William III.

22. **Charter House.** A famous London school for boys founded for the benefit of "the sons of poor gentlemen." Thackeray describes the place in the "Newcomes."

very well with what we know of his riper years. There remains a tradition that he was the ring-leader in a barring-out, and another tradition that he ran away from school, and hid himself in a wood, where he fed on berries, and slept⁵ in a hollow tree, till, after a long search, he was discovered and brought home. If these stories be true, it would be curious to know by what moral discipline so mutinous and enterprising a lad was transformed into the gentlest¹⁰ and most modest of men.

We have abundant proof, that, whatever Joseph's pranks may have been, he pursued his studies vigorously and successfully. At fifteen he was not only fit for the university, but¹⁵ carried thither a classical taste and a stock of learning which would have done honor to a master of arts. He was entered at Queen's College, Oxford; but he had not been many months there when some of his Latin verses²⁰ fell by accident into the hands of Dr. Lancaster, Dean of Magdalen College. The young scholar's diction and versification were already such as veteran professors might envy. Dr. Lancaster was desirous to serve a boy of such²⁵ promise; nor was an opportunity long wanting.

3. **Barring-out.** An old custom of shutting the master out of the school-room until he had come to terms.

The Revolution had just taken place, and nowhere had it been hailed with more delight than at Magdalen College. That great and opulent corporation had been treated by James,
 5 and by his chancellor, with an insolence and injustice, which, even in such a prince and in such a minister, may justly excite amazement, and which had done more than even the prosecution of the bishops to alienate the
 10 Church of England from the throne. A president, duly elected, had been violently expelled from his dwelling; a Papist had been set over the society by a royal mandate; the fellows who, in conformity with their oaths,
 15 had refused to submit to this usurper, had been driven forth from their quiet cloisters and gardens, to die of want, or to live on charity. But the day of redress and retribution speedily came. The intruders were ejected; the venerable
 20 house was again inhabited by its old inmates; learning flourished under the rule of the wise and virtuous Hough; and with learn-

1. **Revolution.** That of 1688 which made William of Orange King of England.

5. **Chancellor.** Jeffreys, a judge noted for his cruelty and persecutions.

9 **Prosecution.** Six bishops had been prosecuted in 1687 by James II. for refusing to read before their congregations a Declaration of Indulgence to Catholics.

11. **President.** Dr. John Hough, (1651-1743.) He was president of Magdalen during Addison's residence there.

ing was united a mild and liberal spirit too often wanting in the princely colleges of Oxford. In consequence of the troubles through which the society had passed, there had been no valid election of new members⁵ during the year 1688. In 1689, therefore, there were twice the ordinary number of vacancies; and thus Dr. Lancaster found it easy to procure for his young friend admittance to the advantages of a foundation then¹⁰ generally esteemed the wealthiest in Europe.

At Magdalen, Addison resided during ten years. He was at first one of those scholars who are called "Demies," but was subsequently elected a fellow. His college is still¹⁵ proud of his name; his portrait still hangs in the hall; and strangers are still told that his favorite walk was under the elms which fringe the meadow on the banks of the Cherwell. It is said, and is highly probable, that he was²⁰ distinguished among his fellow students by the delicacy of his feelings, by the shyness of his manners, and by the assiduity with which he prolonged his studies far into the night. It is certain that his reputation for ability and²⁵

14. **Demies.** The corporation of the college consisted of a president and thirty scholars called "demies." The fellows form the governing body of their college but are not necessarily resident.

learning stood high. Many years later the ancient doctors of Magdalen continued to talk in their common room of his boyish compositions, and expressed their sorrow that no copy
5 of exercises so remarkable had been preserved.

It is proper, however, to remark that Miss Aikin has committed the error, very pardonable in a lady, of overrating Addison's classical attainments. In one department of learning,
10 indeed, his proficiency was such as it is hardly possible to overrate. His knowledge of the Latin poets, from Lucretius and Catullus, down to Claudian and Prudentius, was singularly exact and profound. He understood them
15 thoroughly, entered into their spirit, and had the finest and most discriminating perception of all their peculiarities of style and melody; nay, he copied their manner with admirable skill, and surpassed, we think, all their British
20 imitators who had preceded him, Buchanan and Milton alone excepted. This is high praise; and beyond this we cannot with justice

12. **Lucretius**, (95-55 B.C.) A great Roman poet. His *De Rerum Natura* is perhaps the greatest didactic poem ever written.

12. **Catullus**, (86-46 B.C.) A celebrated lyric poet.

13. **Claudian**. A writer of epics and the last of the classical poets.

13. **Prudentius**. A Christian poet of Spanish origin.

20. **Buchanan**, (1506-1582.) A famous scholar, tutor of Mary Queen of Scots, and the young James VI. He is noted for his polished Latin style.

go. It is clear that Addison's serious attention during his residence at the university was almost entirely concentrated on Latin poetry, and that, if he did not wholly neglect other provinces of ancient literature, he vouchsafed⁵ them only a cursory glance. He does not appear to have obtained more than an ordinary acquaintance with the political and moral writers of Rome; nor was his own Latin prose by any means equal to his Latin verse. His¹⁰ knowledge of Greek, though doubtless such as was, in his time, thought respectable at Oxford, was evidently less than that which many lads now carry away every year from Eton and Rugby. A minute examination of¹⁵ his works, if we had time to make such an examination, would fully bear out these remarks. We will briefly advert to a few of the facts on which our judgment is grounded.

Great praise is due to the notes which Addi-²⁰son appended to his version of the second and third books of the "Metamorphoses." Yet those notes, while they show him to have been, in his own domain, an accomplished scholar, show also how confined that domain²⁵

¹⁵ Eton and Rugby. The two great English schools for boys.

²² M tamorphoses. Mythological poems by the Latin poet Ovid.

was. They are rich in apposite references to Virgil, Statius, and Claudian; but they contain not a single illustration drawn from the Greek poets. Now if, in the whole compass of Latin
 5 literature, there be a passage which stands in need of illustration drawn from the Greek poets, it is the story of Pentheus in the third book of the "Metamorphoses." Ovid was indebted for that story to Euripides and
 10 Theocritus, both of whom he had sometimes followed minutely. But neither to Euripides nor to Theocritus does Addison make the faintest allusion; and we therefore believe that we do not wrong him by supposing that he
 15 had little or no knowledge of their works.

His travels in Italy, again, abound with classical quotations happily introduced; but scarcely one of those quotations is in prose. He draws more illustrations from Ausonius
 20 and Manilius than from Cicero. Even his notions of the political and military affairs of the Romans seem to be derived from poets and poetasters. Spots made memorable by events

2. **Statius**, (45-96.) A Latin poet, author of the "Thebais."

9. **Euripides**, (481 B. C.) The last of the three great Greek writers of tragedy. The other two were Sophocles and Æschylus.

10. **Theocritus**. A Sicilian poet of the third century B. C. His idyls are the greatest in Greek literature.

20. **Ausonius and Manilius**. Both minor poets of the Augustan era.

which have changed the destinies of the world, and which have been worthily recorded by great historians, bring to his mind only scraps of some ancient versifier. In the gorge of the Apennines he naturally remembers the hardships which Hannibal's army endured, and proceeds to cite, not the authentic narrative of Polybius, not the picturesque narrative of Livy, but the languid hexameters of Silius Italicus. On the banks of the Rubicon he never thinks of Plutarch's lively description, or of the stern conciseness of the Commentaries, or of those Letters to Atticus which so forcibly express the alterations of hope and fear in a sensitive mind at a great crisis. His only authority for the events of the civil war is Lucan.

All the best ancient works of art at Rome

6. **Hannibal**, (247-183 B. C.) A Carthaginian who invaded Italy and defeated the Romans in many battles. He was finally defeated by Scipio.

8. **Polybius**, (204 B. C.) He wrote a general history of Greece and Rome only five books of which are now extant.

8. **Livy**, (59 B.C.-18 A.D.) One of the greatest Roman historians. He wrote the "Annals of Rome" from its foundation to the year 9 B.C.

9. **Silius Italicus**. A poet of little note who wrote an epic on the second war with Hannibal.

10. **Rubicon**. The river forming the boundary line between Gaul and Italy. The crossing of this river by one nation or the other was virtually a declaration of war.

11. **Plutarch**, (66-120.) A great Greek biographer.

12. **Commentaries**. Cæsar's history of the Gallic War.

13. **Atticus**. These letters were addressed to him by Cicero.

16. **Lucan**, (37 A.D.) Author of a poem describing the civil war between Cæsar and Pompey.

and Florence are Greek. Addison saw them, however, without recalling one single verse of Pindar, of Callimachus, or of the Attic dramatists; but they brought to his recollection
 5 innumerable passages of Horace, Juvenal, Statius, and Ovid.

The same may be said of the treatise on medals. In that pleasing work we find about three hundred passages extracted with great
 10 judgment from the Roman poets; but we do not recollect a single passage taken from any Roman orator or historian, and we are confident that not a line is quoted from any Greek
 15 writer. No person who had derived all his information on the subject of medals from Addison would suspect that the Greek coins were in historical interest equal, and in beauty of execution far superior, to those of Rome.

If it were necessary to find any further
 20 proof that Addison's classical knowledge was confined within narrow limits, that proof would be furnished by his "Essay on the Evidences of Christianity." The Roman poets throw

3. **Pindar**, (522 B.C.) The greatest Greek lyric poet.

3. **Callimachus**. A Greek epigrammatic poet.

5. **Horace**. A great Augustan poet. His odes and satires are the most perfect in the Latin tongue.

5. **Juvenal**, (56-140.) A celebrated satirist who inveighed bitterly against the crimes and follies of Roman society.

little or no light on the literary and historical questions which he is under the necessity of examining in that essay. He is, therefore, left completely in the dark; and it is melancholy to see how helplessly he gropes his way from ⁵ blunder to blunder. He assigns as grounds for his religious belief stories as absurd as that of the Cock Lane ghost, and forgeries as rank as Ireland's Vortigern; puts faith in the lie about the Thundering Legion; is convinced ¹⁰ that Tiberius moved the senate to admit Jesus among the gods; and pronounces the letter of Agbarus, King of Edessa, to be a record of great authority. Nor were these errors the effects of superstition, for to superstition Addi- ¹⁵ son was by no means prone. The truth is, that he was writing about what he did not understand.

Miss Aikin has discovered a letter, from which it appears, that, while Addison resided ²⁰

8 **Cock Lane ghost.** A ghost supposed to haunt the bed of a young girl who lived in Cock Lane in 1762. It was found to be an imposture.

9. **Vortigern.** Ireland forged a lease for Stratford-on-Avon containing the pretended signature of Shakespeare, and pretended to have found an unpublished tragedy called "Vortigern and Rowena."

10. **Thundering Legion.** There is a story that a legion of Christians in the army of Marcus Aurelius, having prayed for rain, were answered by a thunder storm. Hence their name.

11. **Tiberius,** (42 B.C. 37 A.D.) The second Roman emperor.

13. **Agbarus.** Legend says that this king, falling ill and hearing of the wonderful cures of Jesus, wrote a letter to him, and received a reply promising that one of the disciples should be sent to him.

at Oxford, he was one of several writers whom the booksellers engaged to make an English version of Herodotus; and she infers that he must have been a good Greek scholar. We
5 can allow very little weight to this argument, when we consider that his fellow-laborers were to have been Boyle and Blackmore. Boyle is remembered chiefly as the nominal author of the worst book on Greek history and philology
10 that ever was printed; and this book, bad as it is, Boyle was unable to produce without help. Of Blackmore's attainments in the ancient tongues, it may be sufficient to say, that in his prose he has confounded an
15 aphorism with an apothegm, and that when, in his verse, he treats of classical subjects, his habit is to regale his readers with four false quantities to a page.

It is probable that the classical acquirements
20 of Addison were of as much service to him as if they had been more extensive. The world generally gives its admiration, not to the man who does what nobody else even attempts to do, but to the man who does best what multi-

3. **Herodotus**, (434 B.C.) The earliest Greek historian, often called the 'Father of History.'

7. **Boyle and Blackmore**. Both rather dull and prosaic writers of the period. The latter was court physician.

tudes do well. Bentley was so immeasurably superior to all other scholars of his time, that few among them could discover his superiority. But the accomplishment in which Addison excelled his contemporaries was then, as it is now, highly valued and assiduously cultivated at all English seats of learning. Everybody who had been at a public school had written Latin verses: many had written such verses with tolerable success, and were quite able to appreciate, though by no means able to rival, the skill with which Addison imitated Virgil. His lines on the "Barometer" and the "Bowling Green" were applauded by hundreds to whom the "Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris" was as unintelligible as the hieroglyphics on an obelisk.

Purity of style, and an easy flow of numbers, are common to all Addison's Latin poems. Our favorite piece is the "Battle of the Cranes and Pygmies," for in that piece we discern a gleam of the fancy and humor which many years later enlivened thousands of breakfast tables. Swift boasted that he was never known

1. **Richard Bentley**, (1662-1742.) The foremost divine and classical scholar of his time. He exposed the spurious character of the "Epistles of Phalaris," edited by Boyle.

24. **Jonathan Swift**, (1666-1745.) A distinguished master of English prose. His best known work is "Gulliver's Travels."

to steal a hint; and he certainly owed as little to his predecessors as any modern writer. Yet we cannot help suspecting that he borrowed, perhaps unconsciously, one of the 5 happiest touches in his "Voyage to Lilliput" from Addison's verses. Let our readers judge.

"The Emperor," says Gulliver, "is taller by about the breadth of my nail than any of his court, which alone is enough to strike an awe 10 into the beholders."

About thirty years before "Gulliver's Travels" appeared, Addison wrote these lines: —

15 "Jamque acies inter medias sese arduus infert
Pygmeadum ductor, qui, majestate verendus,
Incessuque gravis, reliquos supereminet omnes
Mole gigantea, mediamque exsurgit in ulnam."

The Latin poems of Addison were greatly and justly admired both at Oxford and Cam- 20 bridge, before his name had ever been heard by the wits who thronged the coffee-houses round Drury Lane Theatre. In his twenty-second year he ventured to appear before the public as a writer of English verse. He

5. **Lilliput.** The land of the pygmies where Gulliver first sojourns

17. "And now into the midst of the line of battle the bold leader of the Pygmies makes his way, who, awful in his majesty and commanding in his mein, all the rest o'ertops with his gigantic form, and rises to the middle of the arm."

22. **Drury Lane.** The leading theatre of the time. This region was really the literary center of the town.

addressed some complimentary lines to Dryden, who, after many triumphs and many reverses, had at length reached a secure and lonely eminence among the literary men of that age. Dryden appears to have been much⁵ gratified by the young scholar's praise; and an interchange of civilities and good offices followed. Addison was probably introduced by Dryden to Congreve, and was certainly presented by Congreve to Charles Montague,¹⁰ who was then chancellor of the exchequer, and leader of the Whig party in the House of Commons.

At this time, Addison seemed inclined to devote himself to poetry. He published a¹⁵ translation of part of the fourth "Georgic," "Lines to King William," and other performances of equal value; that is to say, of no value at all. But in those days the public was in the habit of receiving with applause pieces which²⁰ would now have little chance of obtaining the Newdigate prize or the Seatonian prize. And

5. **John Dryden.** The most famous poet of the period. He was made laureate in 1668.

9. **Congreve,** (1670-1729.) A dramatic poet greatly admired for his fine workmanship.

10. **Charles Montague,** (1661-1715) Earl of Halifax, a close friend of Addison's and Chancellor of the Exchequer under William III.

16. **Georgics.** Pastoral Poems of Vergil.

22. **Prize.** These were scholarships given for the best English poems, the first at Oxford, the second at Cambridge.

the reason is obvious. The heroic couplet was then the favorite measure. The art of arranging words in that measure, so that the lines may flow smoothly, that the accents may fall correctly, that the rhymes may strike the ear strongly, and that there may be a pause at the end of every distich, is an art as mechanical as that of mending a kettle, or shoeing a horse, and may be learned by any human being who has sense enough to learn anything. But, like other mechanical arts, it was gradually improved by means of many experiments and many failures. It was reserved for Pope to discover the trick, to make himself complete master of it, and to teach it to everybody else. From the time when his "Pastorals" appeared, heroic versification became matter of rule and compass; and before long all artists were on a level. Hundreds of dunces who never blundered on one happy thought or expression were able to write reams of couplets, which, as far as euphony was concerned, could not be distinguished from those of Pope himself, and which very clever writers of the reign of

1. **Heroic couplet.** Iambic pentameter verse. Lowell calls it 'the rocking-horse measure.'

13. **Alexander Pope, (1688-1744.)** Pope brought this kind of couplet to its greatest perfection. It lends itself most readily to his clever, caustic mind and keen wit.

Charles II.—Rochester, for example, or Marvell, or Oldham — would have contemplated with admiring despair.

Ben Jonson was a great man, Hoole a very small man. But Hoole, coming after Pope, ⁵ had learned how to manufacture decasyllable verses, and poured them forth by thousands and tens of thousands, all as well turned, as smooth, and as like each other as the blocks which have passed through Mr. Brunel's mill ¹⁰ in the dockyard at Portsmouth. Ben's heroic couplets resemble blocks rudely hewn out by an unpracticed hand with a blunt hatchet. Take as a specimen his translation of a celebrated passage in the "Æneid":— ¹⁵

"This child our parent earth, stirr'd up with spite
Of all the gods, brought forth, and, as some write,
She was last sister of that giant race
That sought to scale Jove's court, right swift of pace,
And swifter far of wing, a monster vast ²⁰
And dreadful. Look, how many plumes are placed
On her huge corpse, so many waking eyes
Stick underneath, and, which may stranger rise
In the report, as many tongues she wears."

1. **Rochester**, (1647-1680.) A favorite of Charles II., a man of wit and talent but licentious and vicious.

1. **Marvell**. A friend of Milton's and a poet of no small ability.

2. **Oldham**, (1653-1683.) He wrote satires in imitation of Juvenal.

4. **Ben Jonson**, (1574-1637.) Probably the greatest English dramatist after Shakespeare. He was poet laureate in 1619

5. **Hoole**, (1727-1803.) Wrote translations and inferior dramas.

10. **Brunel**. A noted engineer in his day. He constructed the first tunnel under the Thames.

24. These lines are a translation of the "Æneid," Book IV., lines 178-183, and occur in Jonson's "Poetaster," V., 1.

Compare with these jagged, misshapen distichs the neat fabric which Hoole's machine produces in unlimited abundance. We take the first lines on which we open in his version
 5 of Tasso. They are neither better nor worse than the rest:—

“O thou, whoe'er thou art, whose steps are led,
 By choice or fate, these lonely shores to tread,
 No greater wonders east or west can boast
 10 Than yon small island on the pleasing coast.
 If e'er thy sight would blissful scenes explore,
 The current pass, and seek the further shore.”

Ever since the time of Pope there has been a glut of lines of this sort; and we are now as
 15 little disposed to admire a man for being able to write them as for being able to write his name. But in the days of William III. such versification was rare; and a rhymmer who had any skill in it passed for a great poet, just as,
 20 in the dark ages, a person who could write his own name passed for a great clerk. Accordingly, Duke, Stepney, Granville, Walsh, and others whose only title to fame was that they said in tolerable meter what might have
 25 been as well said in prose, or what was not worth saying at all, were honored with marks

5. **Torquato Tasso**, (1544-1595) An Italian epic poet. His chief work is "Jerusalem Delivered."

22. All minor English poets of Addison's day.

of distinction which ought to be reserved for genius. With these Addison must have ranked, if he had not earned true and lasting glory by performances which very little resembled his juvenile poems. 5

Dryden was now busied with Virgil, and obtained from Addison a critical preface to the "Georgics." In return for this service, and for other services of the same kind, the veteran poet, in the postscript to the translation of the 10 "Æneid," complimented his young friend with great liberality, and indeed with more liberality than sincerity. He affected to be afraid that his own performance would not sustain a comparison with the version of the fourth "Georgic," 15 by "the most ingenious Mr. Addison of Oxford." "After his bees," added Dryden, "my latter swarm is scarcely worth the hiving."

The time had now arrived when it was 20 necessary for Addison to choose a calling. Everything seemed to point his course towards the clerical profession. His habits were regular, his opinions orthodox. His college had large ecclesiastical preferment in its gift, and 25 boasts that it has given at least one bishop

17. **After his bees.** The fourth Georgic has for its subject the keeping of bees.

to almost every see in England. Dr. Lancelot Addison held an honorable place in the Church, and had set his heart on seeing his son a clergyman. It is clear, from some
5 expressions in the young man's rhymes, that his intention was to take orders. But Charles Montague interfered. Montague had first brought himself into notice by verses, well
timed and not contemptibly written, but never,
10 we think, rising above mediocrity. Fortunately for himself and for his country, he early quitted poetry, in which he could never have attained a rank as high as that of Dorset or Rochester, and turned his mind to official and
15 parliamentary business. It is written that the ingenious person who undertook to instruct Rasselas, prince of Abyssinia, in the art of flying, ascended an eminence, waved his wings, sprang into the air, and instantly dropped into
20 the lake. But it is added that the wings which were unable to support him through the sky, bore him up effectually as soon as he was in the water. This is no bad type of the fate of Charles Montague, and of men like
25 him. When he attempted to soar into the

13. **Earl of Dorset**, (1637-1706.) A courtier of Charles II. and a generous patron of letters.

17. **Rasselas**. The hero of the tale of that name by Dr. Johnson. He is said to have written it in a week's time to pay for his mother's funeral.

regions of poetical invention, he altogether failed; but as soon as he had descended from that ethereal elevation into a lower and grosser element, his talents instantly raised him above the mass. He became a distinguished finan-⁵ cier, debater, courtier, and party leader. He still retained his fondness for the pursuits of his early days; but he showed that fondness, not by wearying the public with his own feeble performances, but by discovering and encour-¹⁰ aging literary excellence in others. A crowd of wits and poets, who would easily have vanquished him as a competitor, revered him as a judge and a patron. In his plans for the encouragement of learning, he was cordially¹⁵ supported by the ablest and most virtuous of his colleagues, the Lord Chancellor Somers. Though both these great statesmen had a sincere love of letters, it was not solely from a love of letters that they were desirous to enlist²⁰ youths of high intellectual qualifications in the public service. The Revolution had altered the whole system of government. Before that event, the press had been controlled by censors, and the Parliament had sat only two²⁵ months in eight years. Now the press was

17. Lord Somers, (1652-1716.) A man of great learning and leader of the Whig party. He was lord chancellor under William III.

free, and had begun to exercise unprecedented influence on the public mind. Parliament met annually, and sat long. The chief power in the State had passed to the House of
5 Commons. At such a conjuncture it was natural that literary and oratorical talents should rise in value. There was danger that a government which neglected such talents might be subverted by them. It was, there-
10 fore, a profound and enlightened policy which led Montague and Somers to attach such talents to the Whig party by the strongest ties both of interest and of gratitude.

It is remarkable that in a neighboring coun-
15 try we have recently seen similar effects follow from similar causes. The Revolution of July, 1830, established representative government in France. The men of letters instantly rose to the highest importance in the State. At the
20 present moment, most of the persons whom we see at the head both of the Administration and of the Opposition have been professors, historians, journalists, poets. The influence of the literary class in England during the
25 generation which followed the Revolution was great, but by no means so great as it has lately been in France; for in England the aristocracy

of intellect had to contend with a powerful and deeply rooted aristocracy of a very different kind. France had no Somersets and Shrewsburies to keep down her Addisons and Priors.

It was in the year 1699, when Addison had⁵ just completed his twenty-seventh year, that the course of his life was finally determined. Both the great chiefs of the ministry were kindly disposed towards him. In political opinions he already was, what he continued to¹⁰ be through life, a firm though a moderate Whig. He had addressed the most polished and vigorous of his early English lines to Somers, and had dedicated to Montague a Latin poem, truly Virgilian both in style and¹⁵ rhythm, on the peace of Ryswick. The wish of the young poet's great friends was, it should seem, to employ him in the service of the Crown abroad. But an intimate knowledge of the French language was a qualification indis-²⁰ pensable to a diplomatist; and this qualification Addison had not acquired. It was therefore thought desirable that he should pass some time on the Continent in preparing himself for

3. **Duke of Somerset**, (1661-1748.) A leading Whig statesman.

4. **Shrewsbury**. A lawyer of note, afterward chancellor.

16. **Peace of Ryswick**, (1697.) A temporary peace between England and Holland on the one side, and Louis XIV. of France on the other. The latter was seeking to gain the crown of Spain for his house.

official employment. His own means were not such as would enable him to travel; but a pension of three hundred pounds a year was procured for him by the interest of the lord
5 chancellor. It seems to have been apprehended that some difficulty might be started by the rulers of Magdalen College; but the chancellor of the exchequer wrote in the strongest terms to Hough. The State — such
10 was the purport of Montague's letter — could not at that time spare to the Church such a man as Addison. Too many high civil posts were already occupied by adventurers, who, destitute of every liberal art and sentiment, at
15 once pillaged and disgraced the country which they pretended to serve. It had become necessary to recruit for the public service from a very different class,—from that class of which Addison was a representative. The
20 close of the minister's letter was remarkable. "I am called," he said, "an enemy of the Church; but I will never do it any other injury than keeping Mr. Addison out of it."

This interference was successful; and in the
25 summer of 1699 Addison, made a rich man by his pension, and still retaining his fellowship, quitted his beloved Oxford, and set out on his

travels. He crossed from Dover to Calais, proceeded to Paris, and was received there with great kindness and politeness by a kinsman of his friend Montague, Charles, Earl of Manchester, who had just been appointed⁵ ambassador to the court of France. The countess, a Whig and a toast, was probably as gracious as her lord; for Addison long retained an agreeable recollection of the impression which she at this time made on him, and, in¹⁰ some lively lines written on the glasses of the Kit Cat Club, described the envy which her cheeks, glowing with the genuine bloom of England, had excited among the painted beauties of Versailles. 15

Louis XIV. was at this time expiating the vices of his youth by a devotion which had no root in reason, and bore no fruit of charity. The servile literature of France had changed its character to suit the changed character of²⁰ the prince. No book appeared that had not an air of sanctity. Racine, who was just dead, had passed the close of his life in writing

7. **A toast.** That is a reigning beauty whose health was often drunk among gentlemen.

12. **Kit Cat Club.** A club of gentlemen devoted to the House of Hanover; so named from Christopher Catt, a noted pastry cook who used to supply them with pies.

22. **Jean Baptiste Racine,** (1639-1699.) The greatest French tragic dramatist. His sacred dramas were those of "Esther" and "Athalie."

sacred dramas; and Dacier was seeking for the Athanasian mysteries in Plato. Addison described this state of things in a short but lively and graceful letter to Montague. Another letter, written about the same time to the lord chancellor, conveyed the strongest assurances of gratitude and attachment. "The only return I can make to your lordship," said Addison, "will be to apply myself entirely to my business." With this view he quitted Paris, and repaired to Blois, a place where it was supposed that the French language was spoken in its highest purity, and where not a single Englishman could be found. Here he passed some months pleasantly and profitably. Of his way of life at Blois, one of his associates, an abbé named Philippeaux, gave an account to Joseph Spence. If this account is to be trusted, Addison studied much, mused much, talked little, had fits of absence, and either had no love affairs or was too discreet to confide them to the abbé. A man who, even when surrounded by fellow countrymen and fellow

1. **Andre Dacier**, (1651-1722.) The royal librarian and a famous philologist.

2. **Athanasius**, (246-273.) The great Alexandrian bishop, reputed author of the creed which bears his name.

2. **Plato**, (429-347 B.C.) The great father of Academic philosophy.

18. **Joseph Spence**. A professor of poetry at Oxford whose "Anecdotes" are full of interesting information about the famous men of his day.

students, had always been remarkably shy and silent, was not likely to be loquacious in a foreign tongue and among foreign companions. But it is clear from Addison's letters, some of which were long after published in the "Guardian," that, while he appeared to be absorbed in his own meditations, he was really observing French society with that keen and sly, yet not ill-natured side glance which was peculiarly his own.

10

From Blois he returned to Paris, and, having now mastered the French language, found great pleasure in the society of French philosophers and poets. He gave an account, in a letter to Bishop Hough, of two highly interesting conversations, one with Malebranche, the other with Boileau. Malebranche expressed great partiality for the English, and extolled the genius of Newton, but shook his head when Hobbes was mentioned, and was indeed so unjust as to call the author of the

6 **Guardian.** The second in the famous series of the three serial papers conducted by Richard Steele. It followed the "Spectator" and Addison was a frequent contributor.

16. **Nicolas Malebranche**, (1638-1715.) A French philosopher of note.

17. **Boileau.** A poet and satirist.

19. **Sir Isaac Newton**, (1642-1727.) One of the greatest of English philosophers. He discovered the law of gravitation.

20. **Thomas Hobbes**, (1588-1679.) A philosopher whose chief work, the "Leviathan," declared that absolutism was the only possible basis of society.

“ Leviathan ” a poor silly creature. Addison’s modesty restrained him from fully relating, in his letter, the circumstances of his introduction to Boileau. Boileau having survived the
 5 friends and rivals of his youth — old, deaf, and melancholy — lived in retirement, seldom went either to court or to the Academy, and was almost inaccessible to strangers. Of the English and of English literature he knew nothing.
 10 He had hardly heard the name of Dryden. Some of our countrymen, in the warmth of their patriotism, have asserted that this ignorance must have been affected. We own that we see no ground for such a supposition.
 15 English literature was to the French of the age of Louis XIV. what German literature was to our own grandfathers. Very few, we suspect, of the accomplished men who, sixty or seventy years ago, used to dine in Leicester Square with
 20 Sir Joshua, or at Streatham with Mrs. Thrale, had the slightest notion that Wieland was one

7. **Academy.** A French society of eminent scholars and writers organized in 1635 by Cardinal Richelieu. Its purpose is to protect the purity of the language and to pronounce judgment on all literary questions.

20. **Sir Joshua Reynolds, (1723-1792.)** The most famous portrait painter of England and intimate with all the literateurs of his time.

20. **Mrs. Thrale.** The wife of a wealthy brewer of London whose salon attracted all the literary lights of the period. Dr. Johnson, who was for long her guest, said of her: “ If not the wisest woman in the world, she was undoubtedly one of the wisest.”

21. **Wieland.** A German poet and novelist.

of the first wits and poets, and Lessing, beyond all dispute, the first critic in Europe. Boileau knew just as little about the "Paradise Lost," and about "Absalom and Achitophel;" but he had read Addison's Latin poems, and⁵ admired them greatly. They had given him, he said, quite a new notion of the state of learning and taste among the English. Johnson will have it that these praises were insincere. "Nothing," says he, "is better known¹⁰ of Boileau, " than that he had an injudicious and peevish contempt for modern Latin; and therefore his profession of regard was probably the effect of his civility rather than approbation." Now, nothing is better known of¹⁵ Boileau than that he was singularly sparing of compliments. We do not remember that either friendship or fear ever induced him to bestow praise on any composition which he did not approve. On literary questions his²⁰ caustic, disdainful, and self-confident spirit rebelled against that authority to which everything else in France bowed down. He had the spirit to tell Louis XIV., firmly and even

1. **Lessing**, (1729-1781.) A Great German poet and critic. Best known to English readers by his dramatic criticism, his drama, "Nathan the Wise," and his "Laocoön," a study of the relative functions of painting and poetry.

4. "**Absalom and Achitophel.**" A political satire by John Dryden.

rudely, that his Majesty knew nothing about poetry, and admired verses which were detestable. What was there in Addison's position that could induce the satirist whose stern and fastidious temper had been the dread of two generations to turn sycophant for the first and last time? Nor was Boileau's contempt of modern Latin either injudicious or peevish. He thought, indeed, that no poem of the first order would ever be written in a dead language. And did he think amiss? Has not the experience of centuries confirmed his opinion? Boileau also thought it probable that, in the best modern Latin, a writer of the Augustan age would have detected ludicrous improprieties. And who can think otherwise? What modern scholar can honestly declare that he sees the smallest impurity in the style of Livy? Yet is it not certain that, in the style of Livy, Pollio, whose taste had been formed on the banks of the Tiber, detected the inelegant idiom of the Po? Has any modern scholar understood Latin better than Frederick the Great understood French? Yet is it

15. **Augustan age.** During the reign of the Emperor Augustus Latin literature attained its highest degree of perfection.

20. **Pollio,** (76 B.C.-5 A.D.) A Roman poet, historian, critic and orator.

24. **Frederick the Great.** King of Prussia. He laid the foundation of the present German Empire.

not notorious that Frederick the Great — after reading, speaking, writing French, and nothing but French, during more than half a century; after unlearning his mother tongue in order to learn French; after living familiarly during ⁵ many years with French associates — could not, to the last, compose in French without imminent risk of committing some mistake which would have moved a smile in the literary circles of Paris? Do we believe that Erasmus ¹⁰ and Fracastorius wrote Latin as well as Dr. Robertson and Sir Walter Scott wrote English? And are there not in the “Dissertation on India,” the last of Dr. Robertson’s works, in “Waverley,” in “Marmion,” Scotticisms at ¹⁵ which a London apprentice would laugh? But does it follow, because we think thus, that we can find nothing to admire in the noble alcaics of Gray, or in the playful elegiacs of Vincent Bourne? Surely not. Nor was ²⁰ Boileau so ignorant or tasteless as to be in-

10. **Erasmus**, (1467-1536) A great Dutch scholar, friend of Luther, and at one time professor of Greek at Cambridge.

11. **Fracastorius**, (1483-1533.) An Italian physician who attained some fame for his poetry.

12. **Dr. Robertson**, (1721-1793.) A Scotch minister whose histories became noted.

19. **Alcaics of Gray**. The alcaic stanza is a very beautiful lyric meter first used by the Greek poet Alcæus.

19. **Thomas Gray**, (1716-1771,) was one of the first of the Romanticists who were devoted to everything Greek.

20. **Bourne**, (1695-1747.) A scholar who wrote entirely in Latin.

capable of appreciating good modern Latin. In the very letter to which Johnson alludes, Boileau says, "*Ne croyez pas pourtant que je veuille par là blâmer les vers Latins que vous*
m'avez envoyés d'un de vos illustres académiciens. Je les ai trouvés fort beaux, et dignes de Vida et de Sannazar mais non pas d'Horace et de Virgile." Several poems in modern Latin have been praised by Boileau
 10 quite as liberally as it was his habit to praise anything. He says, for example, of the Père Fraguier's epigrams, that Catullus seems to have come to life again. But the best
 proof that Boileau did not feel the undiscern-
 15 ing contempt for modern Latin verses which has been imputed to him, is, that he wrote and published Latin verses in several meters. Indeed it happens, curiously enough, that the
 most severe censure ever pronounced by him on
 20 modern Latin is conveyed in Latin hexameter. We allude to the fragment which begins:—

" Quid numeris iterum me balbutire Latinis,
 Longe Alpes citra natum de patre Sicambro,
 Musa jubes? "

7. **Vida and Sannazar.** Both writers of Latin verse.

8. Do not suppose, however, that by that I mean to criticise the Latin verses of one of your illustrious academicians which you have sent me. I have found them worthy of Vida and of Sannazar, but not of Horace or of Vergil.

12. **Pere Fraguier.** A French Jesuit who wrote short, pointed Latin verses.

24. " Why, Muse, do you bid me, born far this side of the Alps, of a Sicambrian father, to lisp again in Latin numbers? "

For these reasons we feel assured that the praise which Boileau bestowed on the *Machinæ Gesticulantes* and the *Gerano-Pygmæomachia* was sincere. He certainly opened himself to Addison with a freedom⁵ which was a sure indication of esteem. Literature was the chief subject of conversation. The old man talked on his favorite theme much and well, indeed, as his young hearer thought, incomparably well. Boileau had un-¹⁰doubtedly some of the qualities of a great critic. He wanted imagination; but he had strong sense. His literary code was formed on narrow principles; but in applying it he showed great judgment and penetration. In¹⁵ mere style, abstracted from the ideas of which style is the garb, his taste is excellent. He was well acquainted with the great Greek writers; and, though unable fully to appreciate their creative genius, admired the majestic simplicity²⁰ of their manner, and had learned from them to despise bombast and tinsel. It is easy, we think, to discover in the "Spectator" and the "Guardian" traces of the influence, in part salutary and in part pernicious, which the²⁵ mind of Boileau had on the mind of Addison.

3. *Machinæ Gesticulantes*. A puppet show; *Gerano Pygmæomachia*, "The Battle of the Cranes and Pygmies." Both titles of two of Addison's Latin poems

While Addison was at Paris, an event took place which made that capital a disagreeable residence for an Englishman and a Whig. Charles, second of the name, King of Spain, died, and bequeathed his dominions to Philip, Duke of Anjou, a younger son of the Dauphin. The King of France, in direct violation of his engagements both with Great Britain and with the States General, accepted the bequest on behalf of his grandson. The house of Bourbon was at the summit of human grandeur. England had been outwitted, and found herself in a situation at once degrading and perilous. The people of France, not presaging the calamities by which they were destined to expiate the perfidy of their sovereign, went mad with pride and delight. Every man looked as if a great estate had just been left him. "The French conversation," said Addison, "begin^s to grow insupportable; that which was before the vainest nation in the world is now worse than ever." Sick of the arrogant exultation of the Parisians, and

6. **Dauphin.** The name given to the heir apparent of the French throne.

7. **King of France.** That is, Louis XIV.

9. **States-General.** The national assembly of Holland, composed of representatives of the various provinces.

10. **Bourbon.** This family occupied the throne of France from Henry IV., 1553, to the downfall of Louis Philippe, in 1848.

probably foreseeing that the peace between France and England could not be of long duration, he set off for Italy.

In December, 1700, he embarked at Marseilles. As he glided along the Ligurian⁵ coast, he was delighted by the sight of myrtles and olive trees, which retained their verdure under the winter solstice. Soon, however, he encountered one of the black storms of the Mediterranean. The captain of the ship gave¹⁰ up all for lost, and confessed himself to a capuchin who happened to be on board. The English heretic, in the meantime, fortified himself against the terrors of death with devotions of a very different kind. How strong an¹⁵ impression this perilous voyage made on him appears from the ode, "How are thy servants blest, O Lord!" which was long after published in the "Spectator." After some days of discomfort and danger, Addison was glad to²⁰ land at Savona, and to make his way, over mountains where no road had yet been hewn out by art, to the city of Genoa.

At Genoa, still ruled by her own doge and by the nobles whose names were inscribed on²⁵

5. **Ligurian.** The coast of Genoa, formerly inhabited by the Ligures.

21. **Savona.** A seaport near Genoa.

24. **Doge.** The chief magistrate of the old Italian republics.

her Book of Gold, Addison made a short stay. He admired the narrow streets overhung by long lines of towering palaces, the walls rich with frescoes, the gorgeous temple of the
 5 Annunciation, and the tapestries whereon were recorded the long glories of the house of Doria. Thence he hastened to Milan, where he contemplated the Gothic magnificence of the cathedral with more wonder than pleasure.
 10 He passed Lake Benacus while a gale was blowing, and saw the waves raging as they raged when Virgil looked upon them. At Venice, then the gayest city in Europe, the traveler spent the Carnival, the gayest season
 15 of the year, in the midst of masques, dances, and serenades. Here he was at once diverted and provoked by the absurd dramatic pieces which then disgraced the Italian stage. To one of those pieces, however, he was indebted
 20 for a valuable hint. He was present when a ridiculous play on the death of Cato was

1. **Book of Gold.** The *Libro d'Oro* was the state register of the nobility in Genoa and Venice.

7. **House of Doria.** One room in the palace of this illustrious family contained tapestries wrought with the figures of all the great persons it had produced.

8. **The Gothic,** or pointed architecture of Mediæval times was regarded as little short of barbaric in Addison's time.

10. **Lake Benacus.** The largest and most beautiful lake of northern Italy. Now called *Lago di Garda*.

14. **Carnival.** A Roman Catholic festival or period of indulgence immediately preceding the Lenten season.

performed. Cato, it seems, was in love with the daughter of Scipio. The lady had given her heart to Cæsar. The rejected lover determined to destroy himself. He appeared seated in his library, a dagger in his hand, a ⁵ Plutarch and a Tasso before him; and in this position he pronounced a soliloquy before he struck the blow. We are surprised that so remarkable a circumstance as this should have escaped the notice of all Addison's biographers. ¹⁰ There cannot, we conceive, be the smallest doubt that this scene, in spite of its absurdities and anachronisms, struck the traveler's imagination, and suggested to him the thought of bringing "Cato" on the English stage. It is ¹⁵ well known that about this time he began his tragedy, and that he finished the first four acts before he returned to England.

On his way from Venice to Rome, he was drawn some miles out of the beaten road by a ²⁰ wish to see the smallest independent state in Europe. On a rock where the snow still lay, though the Italian spring was now far advanced, was perched the little fortress of San Marino. The roads which led to the secluded town were ²⁵

24. **San Marino.** The oldest and smallest republic in the world. It is situated in central Italy on a high plateau and its area is only twenty-seven square miles.

so bad, that few travelers had ever visited it, and none had ever published an account of it. Addison could not suppress a good-natured smile at the simple manners and institutions of this singular community; but he observed, with the exultation of a Whig, that the rude mountain tract which formed the territory of the republic swarmed with an honest, healthy, and contented peasantry, while the rich plain which surrounded the metropolis of civil and spiritual tyranny was scarcely less desolate than the uncleared wilds of America.

At Rome, Addison remained on his first visit only long enough to catch a glimpse of St Peter's and of the Pantheon. His haste is the more extraordinary, because the Holy Week was close at hand. He has given no hint which can enable us to pronounce why he chose to fly from a spectacle which every year allures from distant regions persons of far less taste and sensibility than his. Possibly, traveling, as he did, at the charge of a government distinguished by its enmity to the Church of

15 **St. Peter's.** The largest Christian cathedral in the world. The foundations were laid in Rome in the year 1406, and the most famous artists, including Michael Angelo and Raphael, took charge of its erection.

15 **Pantheon.** An ancient and remarkably preserved Roman temple. It was built by Agrippa, 27 B.C., and dedicated to all the gods. (*pas*, all; *theos*, god.) It is now used as a church.

16 **Holy Week.** The last seven days of Lent.

Rome, he may have thought that it would be imprudent in him to assist at the most magnificent rite of that Church. Many eyes would be upon him, and he might find it difficult to behave in such a manner as to give offence⁵ neither to his patrons in England nor to those among whom he resided. Whatever his motives may have been, he turned his back on the most august and affecting ceremony which is known among men, and posted along¹⁰ the Appian Way to Naples.

Naples was then destitute of what are now, perhaps, its chief attractions. The lovely bay and the awful mountain were indeed there; but a farmhouse stood on the theatre of Her-¹⁵culaneum, and rows of vines grew over the streets of Pompeii. The temples of Pæstum had not, indeed, been hidden from the eye of man by any great convulsion of nature; but, strange to say, their existence was a secret²⁰ even to artists and antiquaries. Though situated within a few hours' journey of a great

11. **Appian Way.** The oldest and most famous of all the roads of Ancient Rome. It was lined with the tombs of many famous men.

17. **Herculaneum and Pompeii** The two cities near Naples which were completely buried by the great eruption of Vesuvius in 79 A.D. See the letters of the elder Pliny and Bulwer's novel, "The Last Days of Pompeii."

17. **Pæstum.** A Roman town forty miles south of Naples, celebrated for its Doric temples.

capital, where Salvator had not long before painted, and where Vico was then lecturing, those noble remains were as little known to Europe as the ruined cities overgrown by the
 5 forests of Yucatan. What was to be seen at Naples, Addison saw. He climbed Vesuvius, explored the tunnel of Posilipo, and wandered among the vines and almond trees of Capreæ. But neither the wonders of nature, nor those of
 10 art, could so occupy his attention as to prevent him from noticing, though cursorily, the abuses of the government and the misery of the people. The great kingdom which had just descended to Philip V. was in a state of paralytic dotage.
 15 Even Castile and Aragon were sunk in wretchedness. Yet, compared with the Italian dependencies of the Spanish Crown, Castile and Aragon might be called prosperous. It is clear that all the observations which Addison
 20 made in Italy tended to confirm him in the political opinions which he had adopted at home. To the last he always spoke of foreign

1. **Salvator Rosa**, (1615-1673.) A great Neapolitan artist whose landscape painting marked a distinct stage in the history of painting.

2. **Vico**, (1668-1744.) An Italian philosopher and critic.

7. **Posilipo**. An ancient tunnel built before the Christian era through a promontory in the Bay of Naples. It is 2200 feet long, and still in use.

8. **Capreæ**. Now Capri. A very beautiful island at the entrance of the Bay of Naples. It was for ten years the residence of the Emperor Tiberius.

17. **Castile and Aragon**. The chief states of Spain.

travel as the best cure for Jacobitism. In his "Freeholder," the Tory fox hunter asks what traveling is good for, except to teach a man to jabber French and to talk against passive obedience. (18) (17)

From Naples, Addison returned to Rome by sea, along the coast which his favorite Virgil had celebrated. The felucca passed the headland where the oar and trumpet were placed by the Trojan adventurers on the tomb¹⁰ of Misenus, and anchored at night under the shelter of the fabled promontory of Circe. The voyage ended in the Tiber, still overhung with dark verdure, and still turbid with yellow sand, as when it met the eyes of Æneas.¹⁵ From the ruined port of Ostia the stranger hurried to Rome, and at Rome he remained during those hot and sickly months, when, even in the Augustan age, all who could make their escape fled from mad dogs and from²⁰ streets black with funerals, to gather the first

1. **Jacobitism.** An English political party devoted to the exiled House of Stuart, and who made many plots to restore James II to the throne.

2. **Freeholder.** A political paper published for a short time by Addison.

2. **Tory fox hunters.** See numbers 22, 44, and 47 of the "Freeholder."

8. **Felucca.** A kind of oared vessel used in the Mediterranean.

11. **Misenus.** A trumpeter said to have been buried on the promontory of Capo di Miseno. See "Æneid," Book VI.

12 **Circe** Monte Circeo, supposed to have been the abode of the famous sorceress.

figs of the season in the country. It is probable that when he, long after, poured forth in verse his gratitude to the Providence which had enabled him to breath unhurt in tainted
5 air, he was thinking of the August and September which he passed at Rome. 1136

It was not until the latter end of October that he tore himself away from the master-pieces of ancient and modern art which are
10 collected in the city so long the mistress of the world. He then journeyed northward, passed through Sienna, and for a moment forgot his prejudices in favor of classic architecture as he looked on the magnificent cathedral. At
15 Florence he spent some days with the Duke of Shrewsbury, who, — cloyed with the pleasures of ambition, and impatient of its pains; fearing both parties, and loving neither — had determined to hide in an Italian retreat talents
20 and accomplishments, which, if they had been united with fixed principles and civil courage, might have made him the foremost man of his age. These days, we are told, passed pleasantly, and we can easily believe it; for Addi-
25 son was a delightful companion when he was at his ease; and the duke, though he seldom

16. Duke of Shrewsbury. Active in the Revolution of 1689 and Secretary of State under William III.

forgot that he was a Talbot, had the invaluable art of putting at ease all who came near him.

Addison gave some time to Florence, and especially to the sculptures in the Museum, which he preferred even to those of the Vatican. He then pursued his journey through a country in which the ravages of the last war were still discernible, and in which all men were looking forward with dread to a still fiercer conflict. Eugene had already descended from the Rhætian Alps to dispute with Catinat the rich plain of Lombardy. The faithless ruler of Savoy was still reckoned among the allies of Louis. England had not yet actually declared war against France; but Manchester had left Paris; and the negotiations which produced the Grand Alliance against the house of Bourbon were in progress. Under such circumstances, it was desirable for an English traveler to reach neutral ground

6. **Vatican.** The Papal palace at Rome. It is the largest building of the kind in the world and its art treasures are untold.

10. **Conflict.** The War of the Spanish Succession was just beginning.

10. Prince Eugene was leader of the Austrian forces, and Catinat commanded the French army in Italy.

13. **Savoy.** The Duke of Savoy, although at first loyal to Louis XIV., afterward joined the Allies, and was rewarded, at the end of the war, with the Island of Sicily.

16. **Manchester.** The English ambassador to France.

17. **Grand Alliance.** This consisted of the states of Germany, England, Holland, Austria, and Portugal. Its purpose was to prevent Spain from falling into the hands of France.

without delay. Addison resolved to cross Mont Cenis. It was December; and the road was very different from that which now reminds the stranger of the power and genius of Napoleon. The winter, however, was mild; and the passage was, for those times, easy. To this journey Addison alluded, when, in the ode which we have already quoted, he said that for him the Divine Goodness had warmed the hoary Alpine hills.

It was in the midst of the eternal snow that he composed his "Epistle" to his friend Montague, now Lord Halifax. That "Epistle," once widely renowned, is now known only to curious readers, and will hardly be considered by those to whom it is known as in any perceptible degree heightening Addison's fame. It is, however, decidedly superior to any English composition which he had previously published. Nay, we think it quite as good as any poem in heroic meter which appeared during the interval between the death of Dryden and the publication of the "Essay on Criticism." It contains passages as good as the second-rate passages of Pope, and would

2. **Mont Cenis.** The mountain pass between Italy and France. In 1871 it was pierced by a tunnel.

23. **Essay on Criticism.** A didactic poem written by Pope when he was only twenty-one years old.

have added to the reputation of Parnell or Prior.

But, whatever be the literary merits or defects of the "Epistle," it undoubtedly does honor to the principles and spirit of the author. Halifax had now nothing to give. He had fallen from power, had been held up to obloquy, had been impeached by the House of Commons, and, though his peers had dismissed the impeachment, had, as it seemed, little chance of ever again filling high office. The "Epistle," written at such a time, is one among many proofs that there was no mixture of cowardness or meanness in the suavity and moderation which distinguished Addison from all the other public men of those stormy times.

At Geneva the traveller learned that a partial change of ministry had taken place in England, and that the Earl of Manchester had become secretary of state. Manchester exerted himself to serve his young friend. It was thought advisable that an English agent should be near the person of Eugene in Italy; and Addison, whose diplomatic education was now finished, was the man selected. He was preparing to enter on his honorable functions

when all his prospects were for a time darkened by the death of William III.

Anne had long felt a strong aversion — personal, political, and religious — to the Whig party. That aversion appeared in the first measures of her reign. Manchester was deprived of the seals after he had held them only a few weeks. Neither Somers nor Halifax was sworn of the Privy Council. Addison shared the fate of his three patrons. His hopes of employment in the public service were at an end; his pension was stopped; and it was necessary for him to support himself by his own exertions. He became tutor to a young English traveler, and appears to have rambled with his pupil over great part of Switzerland and Germany. At this time he wrote his pleasing treatise on medals. It was not published till after his death; but several distinguished scholars saw the manuscript, and gave just praise to the grace of the style and to the learning and ingenuity evinced by the quotations.

From Germany, Addison repaired to Hol-

7. **Deprived of the Seals.** That is, they were asked to resign. The seals are the ministers' emblem of office.

9. **Privy Council.** A council unlimited in number and selected by the crown to act as advisors in all matters of state. Its duties are now purely normal, all its powers having passed either to the Cabinet or to Committees of Parliament.

land, where he learned the melancholy news of his father's death. After passing some months in the United Provinces he returned, about the close of the year 1703, to England. He was there cordially received by his friends, and introduced by them into the Kit Cat Club, a society in which were collected all the various talents and accomplishments which then gave luster to the Whig party.

Addison was, during some months after his return from the Continent, hard pressed by pecuniary difficulties; but it was soon in the power of his noble patrons to serve him effectually. A political change — silent and gradual, but of the highest importance — was in daily progress. The accession of Anne had been hailed by the Tories with transports of joy and hope; and for a time it seemed that the Whigs had fallen never to rise again. The throne was surrounded by men supposed to be attached to the prerogative and to the Church; and among these none stood so high in the favor of the sovereign as the Lord Treasurer Godolphin and the Captain General Marlborough.

3. **United Provinces.** The various States of Holland.

23. **Earl of Godolphin,** (1645-1712.) A noted minister under both William and Anne, but lacking in moral principle.

24. **Duke of Marlborough,** (1650-1722.) John Churchill was one of the most brilliant of English generals. It was he who won the great victories of Malplaquet, Oudenarde, and Blenheim.

The country gentlemen and country clergymen had fully expected that the policy of these ministers would be directly opposed to that which had been almost constantly followed by William; that the landed interest would be favored at the expense of trade; that no addition would be made to the funded debt; that the privileges conceded to Dissenters by the late King would be curtailed, if not withdrawn; that the war with France, if there must be such a war, would, on our part, be almost entirely naval; and that the government would avoid close connections with foreign powers, and, above all, with Holland.

But the country gentlemen and country clergymen were fated to be deceived, not for the last time. The prejudices and passions which raged without control in vicarages, in cathedral closes, and in the manor houses of fox-hunting squires, were not shared by the chiefs of the ministry. Those statesmen saw that it was both for the public interest and for their own interest to adopt a Whig policy, at least as respected the alliances of the country and the conduct of the war. But, if the foreign

9. Dissenters. The name given to all English Protestants who have separated from the Established Church.

policy of the Whigs were adopted, it was impossible to abstain from adopting, also, their financial policy. The natural consequences followed. The rigid Tories were alienated from the government. The votes ⁵ of the Whigs became necessary to it. The votes of the Whigs could be secured only by further concessions; and further concessions the Queen was induced to make.

At the beginning of the year 1704, the ¹⁰ state of parties bore a close analogy to the state of parties in 1826. In 1826, as in 1704, there was a Tory ministry divided into two hostile sections. The position of Mr. Canning and his friends in 1826 corresponded to ¹⁵ that which Marlborough and Godolphin occupied in 1704. Nottingham and Jersey were, in 1704, what Lord Eldon and Lord Westmoreland were in 1826. The Whigs of 1704 were in a situation resembling that in which ²⁰ the Whigs of 1826 stood. In 1704, Somers, Halifax, Sunderland, Cowper, were not in office. There was no avowed coalition between

14. **George Canning**, (1770-1827.) An English statesman and prime minister. He did much to further Catholic emancipation and free trade.

17. **Nottingham and Jersey**. Secretaries of state under William and Anne.

18. **Eldon and Westmoreland**. The former was lord chancellor from 1801 to 1827. The latter was lord of the Privy Seal.

22. All ministers of the crown.

them and the moderate Tories. It is probable that no direct communication tending to such a coalition had yet taken place; yet all men saw that such a coalition was inevitable, nay, that
5 it was already half formed. Such, or nearly such, was the state of things when tidings arrived of the great battle fought at Blenheim on the 13th of August, 1704. By the Whigs the news was hailed with transports of joy and
10 pride. No fault, no cause of quarrel, could be remembered by them against the commander whose genius had in one day changed the face of Europe, saved the imperial throne, humbled the house of Bourbon, and secured the Act of
15 Settlement against foreign hostility. The feeling of the Tories was very different. They could not, indeed, without imprudence, openly express regret at an event so glorious to their country; but their congratulations were so
20 cold and sullen as to give deep disgust to the victorious general and his friends.

Godolphin was not a reading man. Whatever time he could spare from business he was

7. Blenheim was a small village in Bavaria where the French suffered a great defeat at the hands of the English and Prince Eugene.

13. **The Imperial Throne.** That of the German empire, then occupied by the Archduke of Austria.

15. **Act of Settlement.** An act passed in 1701 excluding Catholics from the English throne and fixing the succession on the House of Hanover.

in the habit of spending at Newmarket or at the card table. But he was not absolutely indifferent to poetry, and he was too intelligent an observer not to perceive that literature was a formidable engine of political warfare, and that⁵ the great Whig leaders had strengthened their party, and raised their character, by extending a liberal and judicious patronage to good writers. He was mortified, and not without reason, by the exceeding badness of the¹⁰ poems which appeared in honor of the battle of Blenheim. One of these poems has been rescued from oblivion by the exquisite absurdity of three lines:—

“ Think of two thousand gentlemen at least, 15
 And each man mounted on his capering beast;
 Into the Danube they were pushed by shoals.”

Where to procure better verses the treasurer did not know. He understood how to negotiate a loan, or remit a subsidy; he was also well²⁰ versed in the history of running horses and fighting cocks; but his acquaintance among the poets was very small. He consulted Halifax; but Halifax affected to decline the office of adviser. He had, he said, done his best,²⁵ when he had power, to encourage men whose

1. **Newmarket.** Here are the chief race courses in England.

abilities and acquirements might do honor to their country. Those times were over. Other maxims had prevailed. Merit was suffered to pine in obscurity; and the public money
5 was squandered on the undeserving. "I do know," he added, "a gentleman who would celebrate the battle in a manner worthy of the subject; but I will not name him." Godolphin, who was expert at the soft answer which
10 turneth away wrath, and who was under the necessity of paying court to the Whigs, gently replied that there was too much ground for Halifax's complaints, but that what was amiss should in time be rectified, and that in the
15 meantime the services of a man such as Halifax had described should be liberally rewarded. Halifax then mentioned Addison, but mindful of the dignity, as well as of the pecuniary interest, of his friend, insisted that the min-
20 ister should apply in the most courteous manner to Addison himself; and this Godolphin promised to do.

Addison then occupied a garret up three pair of stairs, over a small shop in the Hay-
25 market. In this humble lodging he was surprised, on the morning which followed the

25. **Haymarket.** A street in London, so named because carts, filled with hay and straw for sale, formerly stood there.

conversation between Godolphin and Halifax, by a visit from no less a person than the Right Hon. Henry Boyle, then chancellor of the exchequer, and afterwards Lord Carlton. This high-born minister had been sent by the lord treasurer as ambassador to the needy poet. Addison readily undertook the proposed task,—a task which, to so good a Whig, was probably a pleasure. When the poem was little more than half finished he showed it to Godolphin, who was delighted with it, and particularly with the famous similitude of the angel. Addison was instantly appointed to a commissionership worth about two hundred pounds a year, and was assured that this appointment was only an earnest of greater favors.

The “Campaign” came forth, and was as much admired by the public as by the minister. It pleases us less, on the whole, than the “Epistle” to Halifax; yet it undoubtedly ranks high among the poems which appeared during the interval between

¹² **Similitude of the angel.** The following is the passage referred to:—

“ So when an angel by divine command
With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
Such as of late, o'er pale Britannia pass'd,
Calm and serene he drives the furious blast;
And, pleas'd th' Almighty's orders to perform,
Rides in the whirlwind and direct's the storm.”

the death of Dryden and the dawn of Pope's genius. The chief merit of the "Campaign," we think, is that which was noticed by Johnson,—the manly and rational rejection of
5 fiction. The first great poet whose works have come down to us sang of war long before war became a science or a trade. If, in his time, there was enmity between two little Greek towns, each poured forth its crowd of
10 citizens, ignorant of discipline, and armed with implements of labor rudely turned into weapons. On each side appeared conspicuous a few chiefs, whose wealth had enabled them to procure good armor, horses and chariots,
15 and whose leisure had enabled them to practise military exercises. One such chief — if he were a man of great strength, agility, and courage — would probably be more formidable than twenty common men; and the
20 force and dexterity with which he flung his spear might have no inconsiderable share in deciding the event of the day. Such were probably the battles with which Homer was familiar. But Homer related the actions of
25 men of a former generation; of men who sprang from the gods, and communed with the

gods face to face; of men, one of whom could with ease hurl rocks which two sturdy hinds of a later period would be unable even to lift. He therefore naturally represented their martial exploits as resembling in kind, but far⁵ surpassing in magnitude, those of the stoutest and most expert combatants of his own age. Achilles, clad in celestial armor, drawn by celestial coursers, grasping the spear which none but himself could raise, driving all Troy¹⁰ and Lycia before him, and choking Scamander with dead, was only a magnificent exaggeration of the real hero, who, strong, fearless, accustomed to the use of weapons, guarded by a shield and helmet of the best Sidonian¹⁵ fabric, and whirled along by horses of Thessalian breed, struck down with his own right arm foe after foe. In all rude societies similar notions are found. There are at this day countries where the Lifeguardsman Shaw²⁰

8. **Achilles.** The hero of the Iliad, and mightiest warrior of the Greeks.

11. **Lycia.** The Lycians were a people of Asia Minor, neighbors and allies of the Trojans.

11. **Scamander.** A river near the city of Troy.

15. **Sidonian.** Sidon was an ancient Phœnician city, famous for its rich purple dye and its glass manufactures.

17 **Thessalian** Thessaly was one of the northern provinces of ancient Greece, noted for its fine horses.

20. **Shaw.** A pugilist of some notoriety who won distinction for bravery in the Battle of Waterloo.

would be considered as a much greater warrior than the Duke of Wellington. Bonaparte loved to describe the astonishment with which the Mamelukes looked at his diminutive
 5 figure. Mourad Bey, distinguished above all his fellows by his bodily strength, and by the skill with which he managed his horse and his saber, could not believe that a man, who was scarcely five feet high and rode like a
 10 butcher, could be the greatest soldier in Europe.

Homer's descriptions of war had, therefore, as much truth as poetry requires. But truth was altogether wanting to the performances of
 15 those who, writing about battles which had scarcely anything in common with the battles of his times, servilely imitated his manner. The folly of Silius Italicus, in particular, is positively nauseous. He undertook to record
 20 in verse the vicissitudes of a great struggle between generals of the first order; and his

4. **Mamelukes.** They were originally slaves purchased by the Sultan of Egypt and organized into an army. It was not long, however, before they overthrew the Sultan and set up a dynasty of their own. They were masters in Egypt until 1811, when they were massacred at Cairo by Mehemet Ali. Napoleon defeated them in the great battle of the Pyramids in 1797.

5. **Mourad Bey.** Leader of the Mamelukes in the battle of the Pyramids.

18. **Silius Italicus** Author of the epic poem on the second Punic War, from which the following incidents are taken. See a Roman history of this period.

narrative is made up of the hideous wounds which these generals inflicted with their own hands. Asdrubal flings a spear which grazes the shoulder of the consul Nero; but Nero sends his spear into Asdrubal's side. Fabius⁵ slays Thuris and Butes, and Maris and Arses, and the long-haired Adherbes, and the gigantic Thylis, and Sapharus and Monæsus, and the trumpeter Morinus. Hannibal runs Perusinus through the groin with a stake, and breaks¹⁰ the backbone of Telesinus with a huge stone. This detestable fashion was copied in modern times, and continued to prevail down to the age of Addison. Several versifiers had described William as turning thousands to flight¹⁵ by his single prowess, and dying the Boyne with Irish blood. Nay, so estimable a writer as John Philips, the author of the "Splendid Shilling," represented Marlborough as having won the battle of Blenheim merely by strength²⁰ of muscle and skill in fence. The following lines may serve as an example:—

"Churchill, viewing where
The violence of Tallard most prevailed,

16. **Boyne.** A river in Ireland where the final battle was fought in which William III. defeated James II.

18. **John Philips.** A minor poet of the time. The Tories induced him to write a poem on Blenheim as an offset to Addison's.

24. **Tallard.** The French marshal.

Came to oppose his slaughtering arm. With speed
 Precipitate he rode, urging his way
 O'er hills of gasping heroes, and fallen steeds
 Rolling in death. Destruction, grim with blood,
 5 Attends his furious course. Around his head
 The glowing balls play innocent, while he
 With dire impetuous sway deals fatal blows
 Among the flying Gauls. In Gallic blood
 He dyes his reeking sword, and strews the ground
 10 With headless ranks. What can they do? Or how
 Withstand his wide destroying sword?"

Addison, with excellent sense and taste,
 departed from this ridiculous fashion. He
 reserved his praise for the qualities which
 15 made Marlborough truly great, — energy,
 sagacity, military science; but, above all, the
 poet extolled the firmness of that mind, which
 in the midst of confusion, uproar and slaughter,
 examined and disposed everything with the
 20 serene wisdom of a higher intelligence.

Here it was that he introduced the famous
 comparison of Marlborough to an angel guid-
 ing the whirlwind. We will not dispute the
 general justice of Johnson's remarks on this
 25 passage. But we must point out one circum-
 stance which appears to have escaped all the
 critics. The extraordinary effect which this
 simile produced when it first appeared, and
 which to the following generation seemed
 30 inexplicable, is doubtless to be chiefly attri-

buted to a line which most readers now regard as a feeble parenthesis :—

“Such as, of late, o'er pale Britannia pass'd.”

Addison spoke, not of a storm, but of the storm. The great tempest of November, 1703⁵ — the only tempest which in our latitude has equaled the rage of a tropical hurricane — had left a dreadful recollection in the minds of all men. No other tempest was ever, in this country, the occasion of a parliamentary address or of a public fast. Whole fleets had been cast away. Large mansions had been blown down. One prelate had been buried beneath the ruins of his palace. London and Bristol had presented the appearance of cities¹⁵ just sacked. Hundreds of families were still in mourning. The prostrate trunks of large trees, and the ruins of houses still attested, in all the southern counties, the fury of the blast. The popularity which the simile of the angel²⁰ enjoyed among Addison's contemporaries has always seemed to us to be a remarkable instance of the advantage which, in rhetoric and poetry, the particular has over the general.

25

Soon after the “Campaign,” was published

Addison's narrative of his travels in Italy. The first effect produced by this narrative was disappointment. The crowd of readers who expected politics and scandal, speculations on
5 the projects of Victor Amadeus, and anecdotes about the jollities of convents and the amours of cardinals and nuns, were confounded by finding that the writer's mind was much more occupied by the war between the Trojans and
10 Rutulians than by the war between France and Austria; and that he seemed to have heard no scandal of later date than the gallantries of the Empress Faustina. In time, however, the judgment of the many was overruled by that
15 of the few; and before the book was reprinted it was so eagerly sought that it sold for five times the original price. It is still read with pleasure. The style is pure and flowing; the classical quotations and allusions are numerous
20 and happy; and we are now and then charmed by that singularly humane and delicate humor in which Addison excelled all men. Yet this agreeable work, even when considered merely as the history of a literary tour, may justly be

5. **Victor Amadeus.** Duke of Savoy.

10. **Rutulians.** A tribe of ancient Italy living on the coast of Latium. According to the story, they were conquered by Æneas and his followers.

13. **Faustina.** The wife of Marcus Aurelius.

censured on account of its faults of omission. We have already said that, though rich in extracts from the Latin poets, it contains scarcely any references to the Latin orators and historians. We must add that it contains little, or rather no information respecting the history and literature of modern Italy. To the best of our remembrance, Addison does not mention Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Boiardo, Berni, Lorenzo de Medici, or Machiavelli. He coldly tells us that at Ferrara he saw the tomb of Ariosto, and that at Venice he heard the gondoliers sing verses of Tasso. But for Tasso and Ariosto he cared far less than for Valerius Flaccus and Sidonius Apollinaris. The gentle flow of the Ticin brings a

9. **Dante Alighieri**, (1265-1321.) The greatest of Italian poets. Author of the "Divine Comedy," an imaginary journey through hell, purgatory, and paradise.

9. **Petrarch**, (1304-1374.) An Italian lyric poet.

9. **Boccaccio**, (1313-1375.) An early Italian novelist. His chief work is the "Decameron."

9. **Boiardo**, (1434-1494) His chief poem is "Orlando Furioso."

10. **Berni**. A writer of graceful Latin verses.

10. **Lorenzo de Medici**, (1448-1492.) A great nobleman of Florence who made the city the richest and most beautiful in Italy. His father was Pope Leo IX.

11. **Machiavelli**, (1469-1527.) A Florentine statesman whose name has become a synonym for deceit.

15. **Flaccus**. A Roman poet of the time of the Emperor Vespasian.

15. **Apollinaris**. An early Christian writer of the fifth century.

16. **Ticin**. A river which flows from Switzerland through Lake Maggiore, into the Po. Hannibal fought a battle here.

line of Silius to his mind. The sulphurous steam of Albula suggests to him several passages of Martial. But he has not a word to say of the illustrious dead of Santa Croce; ⁵ he crosses the wood of Ravenna without recollecting the Specter Huntsman, and wanders up and down Rimini without one thought of Francesca. At Paris he had eagerly sought an introduction to Boileau; ¹⁰ but he seems not to have been at all aware that at Florence he was in the vicinity of a poet with whom Boileau could not sustain a comparison,—of the greatest lyric poet of modern times, Vincenzo Filicaja. This is the ¹⁵ more remarkable because Filicaja was the favorite poet of the accomplished Somers, under whose protection Addison travelled, and to whom the account of the travels is dedicated. The truth is, that Addison knew little, ²⁰ and cared less, about the literature of modern Italy. His favorite models were Latin. His

3. **Martial**, (40 A.D.) A famous Latin writer of epigrams.

4. **Santa Croce**. A church in Florence where many of the most illustrious men of Italy are buried.

5. **Ravenna**. An old Italian town. The burial place of Dante. The tale of the "Specter Huntsman" is in Boccaccio's "Decameron."

7. **Rimini**. A city on the Adriatic. For the story of Francesca di Rimini see Dante's "Inferno," Canto V. It is one of the most tragic in all literature.

14. **Filicaja**, (1642-1707.) His ode to Italy is used by Byron in the fourth canto of "Childe Harold."

favorite critics were French. Half the Tuscan poetry that he had read seemed to him monstrous, and the other half tawdry.

His travels were followed by the lively opera of "Rosamond." This piece was ill set⁵ to music, and therefore failed on the stage; but it completely succeeded in print, and is indeed excellent in its kind. The smoothness with which the verses glide, and the elasticity with which they bound, is, to our ears at least, very¹⁰ pleasing. We are inclined to think that if Addison had left heroic couplets to Pope, and blank verse to Rowe and had employed himself in writing airy and spirited songs, his reputation as a poet would have stood far¹⁵ higher than it now does. Some years after his death, "Rosamond" was set to new music by Dr. Arne, and was performed with complete success. Several passages long retained their popularity and were daily sung, during²⁰ the latter part of the reign of George II., at all the harpsichords in England.

While Addison thus amused himself, his prospects and the prospects of his party were constantly becoming brighter and brighter.²⁵

⁵. The music for this opera was written by Dr Arne when he was only eighteen.

¹³. **Nicholas Rowe**, (1674-1718.) A dramatist and poet laureate under George I. He issued the first critical edition of Shakespeare.

In the spring of 1705, the ministers were freed from the restraint imposed by a House of Commons in which Tories of the most perverse class had the ascendancy. The elections were
5 favorable to the Whigs. The coalition which had been tacitly and gradually formed was now openly avowed. The Great Seal was given to Cowper. Somers and Halifax were sworn of the Council. Halifax was sent in the
10 following year to carry the decorations of the Order of the Garter to the Electoral Prince of Hanover, and was accompanied on this honorable mission by Addison, who had just been made undersecretary of state. The secretary
15 of state under whom Addison first served was Sir Charles Hedges, a Tory; but Hedges was soon dismissed to make room for the most vehement of Whigs, Charles, Earl of Sunderland. In every department of the state,
20 indeed, the High Churchmen were compelled to give place to their opponents. At the close of 1707, the Tories who still remained in

7. **The Great Seal** is the emblem of royalty and is placed only on the most important documents.

11. **Order of the Garter.** An order of knighthood founded by Edward III. in 1344. Membership is restricted to the sovereign, Prince of Wales, certain chosen princes and twenty-five regular knights. Others must be admitted by special statute.

11. **Prince of Hanover.** George I.

office strove to rally, with Harley at their head; but the attempt, though favored by the Queen,—who had always been a Tory at heart, and who had now quarreled with the Duchess of Marlborough,—was unsuccessful.⁵ The time was not yet. The captain general was at the height of popularity and glory. The Low Church party had a majority in Parliament. The country squires and rectors, though occasionally uttering a savage growl, were for the most part in a state of torpor which lasted till they were roused into activity, and indeed into madness, by the prosecution of Sacheverell. Harley and his adherents were compelled to retire. The victory of the Whigs¹⁵ was complete. At the general election of 1708, their strength in the House of Commons became irresistible; and before the end of that year Somers was made lord president of the Council, and Wharton lord lieutenant of Ireland.²⁰

Addison sat for Malmesbury in the House

1. **Harley.** Earl of Oxford. A favorite of Queen Anne but impeached for treason by George I.

5. **Duchess of Marlborough.** For many years she ruled the queen and dispensed favors at her own pleasure.

6. **Captain general.** Duke of Marlborough.

14 **Sacheverell,** (1672-1724.) A college mate of Addison's who gave great offence by preaching sermons denouncing toleration to dissenters. He was impeached by the House of Commons and suspended for three years.

20. **Thomas Wharton,** (1640-1715.) A Whig statesman and one of the first adherents of William of Orange.

of Commons which was elected in 1708; but the House of Commons was not the field for him. The bashfulness of his nature made his wit and eloquence useless in debate. He once
5 rose, but could not overcome his diffidence, and ever after remained silent. Nobody can think it strange that a great writer can fail as a speaker; but many probably will think it
10 strange that Addison's failure as a speaker should have had no unfavorable effect on his success as politician. In our time, a man of high rank and great fortune might, though speaking very little and very ill, hold a considerable post; but it would now be inconceivable
15 that a mere adventurer—a man who, when out of office, must live by his pen—should in a few years become successively under secretary of state, chief secretary for Ireland, and secretary of state, without some oratorical talent. Addi-
20 son, without high birth and with little property, rose to a post which dukes, the heads of the great houses of Talbot, Russell, and Bentinck, have thought it an honor to fill. Without opening his lips in debate, he rose to a post, the
25 highest that Chatham or Fox ever reached;

25. **Earl of Chatham**, (1708-1778) William Pitt, one of the greatest English orators and Premier under George III. A staunch friend of the American colonies

25. **Charles James Fox**, (1749-1806) A brilliant orator, the Liberal leader and rival of Pitt. He advocated the abolition of the slave trade.

and this he did before he had been nine years in Parliament. We must look for the explanation of this seeming miracle to the peculiar circumstances in which that generation was placed. During the interval which elapsed⁶ between the time when the censorship of the press ceased, and the time when parliamentary proceedings began to be freely reported, literary talents were, to a public man, of much more importance, and oratorical talents of¹⁰ much less importance, than in our time. At present, the best way of giving rapid and wide publicity to a fact or an argument is to introduce that fact or argument into a speech made in Parliament. If a political tract were to¹⁵ appear superior to "The Conduct of the Allies," or to the best numbers of the "Freeholder," the circulation of such a tract would be languid indeed, when compared with the circulation of every remarkable word uttered²⁰ in the deliberations of the legislature. A speech made in the House of Commons at four in the morning is on thirty thousand tables before ten. A speech made on the Monday is read on the Wednesday by multi-²⁵tudes in Antrim and Aberdeenshire. The

¹⁶ *Conduct of the Allies.* A political pamphlet written by Dean Swift advising the nation to make peace with France.

^{26.} *Antrim and Aberdeenshire.* Towns, the one in Ireland, the other in Scotland.

orator, by the help of the shorthand writer, has to a great extent superseded the pamphleteer. It was not so in the reign of Anne. The best speech could then produce no effect
5 except on those who heard it. It was only by means of the press that the opinion of the public without doors could be influenced; and the opinion of the public without doors could not but be of the highest importance in a
10 country governed by parliaments, and indeed at that time governed by triennial parliaments. The pen was therefore a more formidable political engine than the tongue. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox contended only in Parliament.
15 But Walpole and Pulteney, the Pitt and Fox of an earlier period, had not done half of what was necessary when they sat down among the acclamations of the House of Commons. They had still to plead their cause before the
20 country, and this they could do only by means of the press. Their works are now forgotten; but it is certain that there were in Grub Street few more assiduous scribblers

15. **Sir Robert Walpole**, (1676-1745.) A leading Whig and prime minister to George I.

15. **William Pulteney**, (1682-1764) Leader of the opposition against Walpole.

23. **Grub Street**. A street of cheap lodging houses in London frequented by penniless writers who were willing to do almost any kind of "hack" work.

of Thoughts, Letters, Answers, Remarks, than these two great chiefs of parties. Pulteney, when leader of the Opposition, and possessed of thirty thousand a year, edited the "Craftsman." Walpole, though not a man of literary habits, was the author of at least ten pamphlets, and retouched and corrected many more. These facts sufficiently show of how great importance literary assistance then was to the contending parties. St. John was certainly, in Anne's reign, the best Tory speaker; Cowper was probably the best Whig speaker: but it may well be doubted whether St. John did so much for the Tories as Swift, and whether Cowper did so much for the Whigs as Addison. When these things are duly considered, it will not be thought strange that Addison should have climbed higher in the State than any other Englishman has ever, by means merely of literary talents, been able to climb. Swift would in all probability have climbed as high if he had not been encumbered by his cassock and his pudding sleeves. As far as the homage of the great went, Swift

10. **St. John.** Earl of Bolingbroke. A leading Tory statesman and associate of Pulteney in his opposition to Walpole.

24. **Pudding sleeves.** An allusion to the dress of an Anglican or Catholic clergyman.

had as much of it as if he had been lord treasurer.

To the influence which Addison derived from his literary talents was added all the
5 influence which arises from character. The world, always ready to think the worst of needy political adventurers, was forced to make one exception. Restlessness, violence, audacity, laxity of principle, are the vices
10 ordinarily attributed to that class of men. But faction itself could not deny that Addison had, through all changes of fortune, been strictly faithful to his early opinions and to his early friends; that his integrity was without
15 stain; that his whole deportment indicated a fine sense of the becoming; that, in the utmost heat of controversy, his zeal was tempered by a regard for truth, humanity, and social decorum; that no outrage could ever pro-
20 voke him to retaliation unworthy of a Christian and a gentleman; and that his only faults were a too sensitive delicacy and a modesty which amounted to bashfulness.

He was undoubtedly one of the most
25 popular men of his time; and much of his popularity he owed, we believe, to that very timidity which his friends lamented. That

timidity often prevented him from exhibiting his talents to the best advantage; but it propitiated Nemesis. It averted that envy which would otherwise have been excited by fame so splendid, and by so rapid an elevation.⁵ No man is so great a favorite with the public as he who is at once an object of admiration, of respect, and of pity; and such were the feelings which Addison inspired. Those who enjoyed the privilege of hearing his familiar¹⁰ conversation declared with one voice that it was superior even to his writings. The brilliant Mary Montagu said that she had known all the wits, and that Addison was the best company in the world. The malignant¹⁵ Pope was forced to own that there was a charm in Addison's talk which could be found nowhere else. Swift, when burning with animosity against the Whigs, could not but confess to Stella that, after all, he had never²⁰ known any associate so agreeable as Addison. Steele, an excellent judge of lively conversation, said that the conversation of Addison

3. **Nemesis.** The Greek goddess of vengeance.

13. **Mary Montagu,** (1690-1762.) A beautiful and brilliant woman, author of a series of letters to eminent men. She first introduced into England inoculation for smallpox.

20. **Stella.** Miss Mary Johnson to whom Swift addressed his "Journal to Stella."

22 **Richard Steele,** (1671-1724.) A writer of note, editor of the *Tatler* and a friend of Addison.

was at once the most polite and the most mirthful that could be imagined; that it was Terence and Catullus in one, heightened by an exquisite something which was neither
 5 Terence nor Catullus, but Addison alone. Young, an excellent judge of serious conversation, said that, when Addison was at his ease, he went on in a noble strain of thought and language, so as to chain the attention of every
 10 hearer. Nor were Addison's great colloquial powers more admirable than the courtesy and softness of heart which appeared in his conversation. At the same time, it would be too much to say that he was wholly devoid of the
 15 malice which is, perhaps, inseparable from a keen sense of the ludicrous. He had one habit which both Swift and Stella applauded, and which we hardly know how to blame. If his first attempts to set a presuming dunce right
 20 were ill received, he changed his tone, "assented with civil leer," and lured the flattered coxcomb deeper and deeper into absurdity. That such was his practice we

3. **Terence**, (185-159 B C) One of the greatest writers of comedies. He was originally a Roman slave.

6. **Edward Young**. A poet, best known as the author of "Night Thoughts"

21 This quotation is from Pope who said that Addison was one to
 "Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
 And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer."

should, we think, have guessed from his works. The "Tatler's" criticisms on Mr. Softly's sonnet, and the "Spectator's" dialogue with the politician who is so zealous for the honor of Lady Q—p—t—s, are excellent specimens⁵ of this innocent mischief.

Such were Addison's talents for conversation. But his rare gifts were not exhibited to crowds or to strangers. As soon as he entered a large company, as soon as he saw an¹⁰ unknown face, his lips were sealed, and his manners became constrained. None who met him only in great assemblies would have been able to believe that he was the same man who had often kept a few friends listening and¹⁵ laughing round a table from the time when the play ended till the clock of St. Paul's in Covent Garden struck four. Yet, even at such a table, he was not seen to the best advantage. To enjoy his conversation in the highest per-²⁰fection, it was necessary to be alone with him, and to hear him, in his own phrase, think aloud. "There is no such thing," he used to say, "as real conversation but between two persons."

This timidity — a timidity surely neither²⁵

2. Mr. Softly. A character in the *Tatler*.

5. Lady Q-p-t-s. *Spectator*, Nos 567, 568.

18. Covent Garden. *Covent* is a corruption of *convent*. The garden once belonged to Westminster Abbey, but is now a square in London well-known for its fruit and flower markets.

ungraceful nor unamiable — led Addison into the two most serious faults which can with justice be imputed to him. He found that wine broke the spell which lay on his fine
5 intellect, and was therefore too easily seduced into convivial excess. Such excess was in that age regarded, even by grave men, as the most venial of all peccadillos, and was so far from being a mark of ill breeding that it was
10 almost essential to the character of a fine gentleman. But the smallest speck is seen on a white ground; and almost all the biographers of Addison have said something about this failing. Of any other statesman or writer of
15 Queen Anne's reign, we should no more think of saying that he sometimes took too much wine than that he wore a long wig and a sword.

To the excessive modesty of Addison's nature we must ascribe another fault, which
20 generally arises from a very different cause. He became a little too fond of seeing himself surrounded by a small circle of admirers to whom he was as a king or rather as a god. All these men were far inferior to him in
25 ability, and some of them had very serious faults. Nor did those faults escape his observation; for, if ever there was an eye which saw

through and through men, it was the eye of Addison. But, with the keenest observation and the finest sense of the ridiculous, he had a large charity. The feeling with which he looked on most of his humble companions was⁵ one of benevolence, slightly tinctured with contempt. He was at perfect ease in their company; he was grateful for their devoted attachment; and he loaded them with benefits. Their veneration for him appears to have¹⁰ exceeded that with which Johnson was regarded by Boswell, or Warburton by Hurd. It was not in the power of adulation to turn such a head, or deprave such a heart, as Addison's; but it must in candor be admitted,¹⁵ that he contracted some of the faults which can scarcely be avoided by any person who is so unfortunate as to be the oracle of a small literary coterie.

One member of this little society was²⁰ Eustace Budgell, a young templar of some literature, and a distant relation of Addison. There was at this time no stain on the

^{12.} **James Boswell**, (1740-1795.) The famous biographer of Dr Johnson. He was a Scotch lawyer who left his home only to get a sight of the great doctor, and afterward spent his life in studying Johnson's character and treasuring all his sayings. Hence his biography is a masterpiece of its kind

^{12.} **William Warburton**, (1698-1779.) A celebrated English divine. His writings were edited with a highly eulogistic introduction by his friend, Richard Hurd, Bishop of Worcester.

character of Budgell; and it is not improbable that his career would have been prosperous and honorable, if the life of his cousin had been prolonged. But when the master was
 5 laid in the grave, the disciple broke loose from all restraint, descended rapidly from one degree of vice and misery to another, ruined his fortune by follies, attempted to repair it by crimes, and at length closed a wicked and
 10 unhappy life by self-murder. Yet, to the last, the wretched man—gambler, lampooner, cheat, forger, as he was—retained his affection and veneration for Addison, and recorded those feelings in the last lines which he traced before he
 15 hid himself from infamy under London Bridge.

Another of Addison's favorite companions was Ambrose Philips, a good Whig and a middling poet, who had the honor of bringing into fashion a species of composition which
 20 has been called, after his name, *Namby Pamby*. But the most remarkable members of the little senate, as Pope long afterwards called it, were Richard Steele and Thomas Tickell.

14 **Last lines.** On his desk were found the words, "What Cato did, and Addison approved, cannot be wrong"

17 **Ambrose Philips**, (1671-1749.) He wrote a play, "The Distressed Mother," to which Addison takes Sir Roger de Coverley in No. 335 of the *Spectator*

23. **Tickell**, (1686-1740.) Known chiefly for his "Elegy to Addison," of which Johnson said, "There is not a more sublime or more eloquent funeral poem to be found in the whole compass of English literature."

Steele had known Addison from childhood. They had been together at the Charter House and at Oxford; but circumstances had then, for a time, separated them widely. Steele had left college without taking a degree, had been⁵ disinherited by a rich relation, had led a vagrant life, had served in the army, had tried to find the philosopher's stone, and had written a religious treatise and several comedies. He was one of those people whom it is¹⁰ impossible either to hate or to respect. His temper was sweet, his affections warm, his spirits lively, his passions strong, and his principles weak. His life was spent in sinning and repenting; in inculcating what was right,¹⁵ and doing what was wrong. In speculation he was a man of piety and honor; in practice he was much of the rake and a little of the swindler. He was, however, so good-natured that it was not easy to be seriously angry with²⁰ him, and that even rigid moralists felt more inclined to pity than to blame him when he dived himself into a sponging house, or drank himself into a fever. Addison regarded Steele with kindness not unmingled with scorn, tried,²⁵

23. **Sponging house.** The name given to the house where persons arrested for debt were allowed to remain twenty-four hours before going to prison, in order that they might have an opportunity of settling the debt through their friends.

with little success, to keep him out of scrapes, introduced him to the great, procured a good place for him, corrected his plays, and, though by no means rich, lent him large sums of money. One of these loans appears, from a letter dated August, 1708, to have amounted to a thousand pounds. These pecuniary transactions probably led to frequent bickerings. It is said that, on one occasion, Steele's negligence or dishonesty provoked Addison to repay himself by the help of a bailiff. We cannot join with Miss Aiken in rejecting this story. Johnson heard it from Savage, who heard it from Steele. Few private transactions which took place a hundred and twenty years ago are proved by stronger evidence than this. But we can by no means agree with those who condemn Addison's severity. The most amiable of mankind may well be moved to indignation when what he has earned hardly, and lent with great inconvenience to himself, for the purpose of relieving a friend in distress, is squandered with insane profusion. We will illustrate our meaning by an example which is not the less striking because it is taken from fiction. Dr. Harrison, in Fielding's "Amelia,"

13. Richard Savage. A minor poet of the time.

26. Henry Fielding, (1714-1754.) One of the earliest and greatest of English novelists. His best works are "Tom Jones and Amelia."

is represented as the most benevolent of human beings; yet he takes in execution, not only the goods, but the person, of his friend Booth. Dr. Harrison resorts to this strong measure because he has been informed that⁵ Booth, while pleading poverty as an excuse for not paying just debts, has been buying fine jewelry and setting up a coach. No person who is well acquainted with Steele's life and correspondence can doubt that he behaved¹⁰ quite as ill to Addison as Booth was accused of behaving to Dr. Harrison. The real history, we have little doubt, was something like this: a letter comes to Addison, imploring help in pathetic terms, and promising reformation and¹⁵ speedy repayment. Poor Dick declares that he has not an inch of candle, or a bushel of coals, or credit with the butcher for a shoulder of mutton. Addison is moved. He determines to deny himself some medals which are want-²⁰ing to his series of the Twelve Cæsars, to put off buying the new edition of Bayle's Dictionary, and to wear his old sword and buckles another year: in this way he manages to send a hundred pounds to his friend. The next²⁵ day he calls on Steele, and finds scores of

²⁰. Pierre Bayle. A learned French philosopher. The work referred to is his "Historical and Critical Dictionary."

gentlemen and ladies assembled. The fiddles are playing. The table is groaning under Champagne, Burgundy, and pyramids of sweetmeats. Is it strange that a man whose kindness is thus abused should send sheriff's officers to reclaim what is due to him?

Tickell was a young man, fresh from Oxford, who had introduced himself to public notice by writing a most ingenious and graceful little poem in praise of the opera of "Rosamond." He deserved, and at length attained, the first place in Addison's friendship. For a time Steele and Tickell were on good terms; but they loved Addison too much to love each other, and at length became as bitter enemies as the rival bulls in Virgil.

At the close of 1708 Wharton became lord lieutenant of Ireland, and appointed Addison chief secretary. Addison was consequently under the necessity of quitting London for Dublin. Besides the chief secretaryship, which was then worth about two thousand pounds a year, he obtained a patent appointing him keeper of the Irish Records for life, with a salary of three or four hundred a year. Budgell accompanied his cousin in the capacity of private secretary.

16. Rival bulls. *Georgics*, III., 220-225.

Wharton and Addison had nothing in common but Whiggism. The lord lieutenant was not only licentious and corrupt, but was distinguished from other libertines and jobbers by a callous impudence which presented the strongest contrast to the secretary's gentleness and delicacy. Many parts of the Irish administration at this time appear to have deserved serious blame; but against Addison there was not a murmur. He long afterwards¹⁰ asserted, what all the evidence which we have ever seen tends to prove, that his diligence and integrity gained the friendship of all the most considerable persons in Ireland.

The parliamentary career of Addison in¹⁵ Ireland has, we think, wholly escaped the notice of all his biographers. He was elected member for the borough of Cavan in the summer of 1709; and in the journals of two sessions his name frequently occurs. Some²⁰ of the entries appear to indicate that he so far overcame his timidity as to make speeches. Nor is this by any means improbable, for the Irish House of Commons was a far less formidable audience than the English House, and²⁵ many tongues which were tied by fear in the greater assembly became fluent in the smaller.

Gerard Hamilton, for example, who, from fear of losing the fame gained by his single speech, sat mute at Westminster during forty years, spoke with great effect at Dublin when he was
5 secretary to Lord Halifax.

While Addison was in Ireland, an event occurred to which he owes his high and permanent rank among British writers. As yet his fame rested on performances, which,
10 though highly respectable, were not built for duration, and which would, if he had produced nothing else, have now been almost forgotten, — on some excellent Latin verses, on some English verses which occasionally rose above
15 mediocrity, and on a book of travels, agreeably written, but not indicating any extraordinary powers of mind. These works showed him to be a man of taste, sense, and learning. The time had come when he was to prove
20 himself a man of genius, and to enrich our literature with compositions which will live as long as the English language.

In the spring of 1709, Steele formed a literary project, of which he was far indeed
25 from foreseeing the consequences. Periodical papers had during many years been published in London. Most of these were political; but

in some of them questions of morality, taste, and love casuistry had been discussed. The literary merit of these works was small indeed, and even their names are now known only to the curious. 5

Steele had been appointed gazetteer by Sunderland, at the request, it is said, of Addison, and thus had access to foreign intelligence earlier and more authentic than was in those times within the reach of an ordinary news-¹⁰ writer. This circumstance seems to have suggested to him the scheme of publishing a periodical paper on a new plan. It was to appear on the days on which the post left London for the country, which were, in that ¹⁵ generation, the Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. It was to contain the foreign news, accounts of theatrical representations, and the literary gossip of Will's and of the Grecian. It was also to contain remarks on ²⁰ the fashionable topics of the day, compliments to beauties, pasquinades on noted sharpers, and criticisms on popular preachers. The aim of Steele does not appear to have been at

6. **Gazetteer.** One appointed by the state to edit the official organ known as the *Gazette*. It is still issued twice a week and contains all proclamations, orders, and legal notices.

19. **Will's and the Grecian.** Well-known coffee-houses.

22. **Pasquinades.** Lampoons, named from their employment by a noted Italian wit, Pasquinado.

first higher than this. He was not ill qualified to conduct the work which he had planned. His public intelligence he drew from the best sources. He knew the town, and had paid
5 dear for his knowledge. He had read much more than the dissipated men of that time were in the habit of reading. He was a rake among scholars, and a scholar among rakes. His style was easy and not incorrect, and,
10 though his wit and humor were of no high order, his gay animal spirits imparted to his compositions an air of vivacity which ordinary readers could hardly distinguish from comic genius. His writings have been well compared
15 to those light wines, which, though deficient in body and flavor, are yet a pleasant small drink, if not kept too long, or carried too far.

Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., astrologer, was an imaginary person, almost as well known in
20 that age, as Mr. Paul Pry or Mr. Samuel Pickwick, in ours. Swift had assumed the name of Bickerstaff in a satirical pamphlet against Partridge, the maker of almanacs.

20. **Paul Pry.** A comedy of John Pool.

23. John Partridge had for a number of years issued vague prophecies. These Swift ridiculed by publishing a pamphlet, called *Predictions* for the year 1708, which among other things, declared that Partridge would die on the night of March 29. Shortly after that date he issued another pamphlet giving a very pathetic account of Partridge's death. The victim of this joke was foolish enough to write a reply declaring that he was still alive, and was overwhelmed with ridicule.

Partridge had been fool enough to publish a furious reply. Bickerstaff had rejoined in a second pamphlet still more diverting than the first. All the wits had combined to keep up the joke; and the town was long in convulsions of laughter. Steele determined to employ the name which this controversy had made popular; and in 1709 it was announced that Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., astrologer, was about to publish a paper called the "Tatler." 10

Addison had not been consulted about this scheme; but, as soon as he heard of it, he determined to give his assistance. The effect of that assistance cannot be better described than in Steele's own words. "I fared," he 15 said, "like a distressed prince who calls in a powerful neighbor to his aid. I was undone by my auxiliary. When I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him." "The paper," he says elsewhere, "was 20 advanced indeed. It was raised to a greater thing than I intended it."

It is probable that Addison, when he sent across St. George's Channel his first contributions to the "Tatler," had no notion of the 25 extent and variety of his own powers. He was the possessor of a vast mine, rich with a

hundred ores; but he had been acquainted only with the least precious part of his treasures, and had hitherto contented himself with producing sometimes copper, and sometimes lead, intermingled with a little silver. All at once, and by mere accident, he has lighted on an inexhaustible vein of the finest gold.

The mere choice and arrangement of his words would have sufficed to make his essays classical; for never—not even by Dryden, not even by Temple—had the English language been written with such sweetness, grace, and facility. But this was the smallest part of Addison's praise. Had he clothed his thoughts in the half French style of Horace Walpole, or in the half Latin style of Dr. Johnson, or in the half German jargon of the present day, his genius would have triumphed over all faults of manner. As a moral satirist he stands unrivaled. If ever the best "Tatlers" and "Spectators" were equaled in their own kind, we should be inclined to guess that

12. **Sir William Temple**, (1628-1699) A statesman whose essays are models of elegant English.

17. **Horace Walpole**. Youngest son of Sir Robert Walpole, famous for his Letters.

18. **German jargon**. No doubt a reference to Carlyle whose style was influenced by his fondness for German literature.

it must have been by the lost comedies of Menander.

In wit, properly so called, Addison was not inferior to Cowley or Butler. No single ode of Cowley contains so many happy⁵ analogies as are crowded into the lines to Sir Godfrey Kneller; and we would undertake to collect from the "Spectators" as great a number of ingenious illustrations as can be found in "Hudibras." The still higher faculty¹⁰ of invention Addison possessed in still larger measure. The numerous fictions, generally original, often wild and grotesque, but always singularly graceful and happy, which are found in his essays, fully entitle him to the rank of a¹⁵ great poet,—a rank to which his metrical compositions give him no claim. As an observer of life, of manners, of all the shades of human character, he stands in the first class; and what he observed he had the art²⁰ of communicating in two widely different ways. He could describe virtues, vices, habits, whims,

2. **Menander.** A noted Greek writer of comedy. Not one of his hundred works has come down to us.

4. **Cowley**, 1618-1667.) A poet of the so-called "conceited" school of the seventeenth century.

4. **Samuel Butler**, 1612-1680.) A satirist of the Puritans. His mock-heroic poem, "Hudibras," afforded great amusement to Charles II. and his court.

7. **Kneller.** A German artist, court painter to Charles II.

as well as Clarendon. But he could do something better: he could call human beings into existence, and make them exhibit themselves. If we wish to find anything more vivid than
5 Addison's best portraits, we must go either to Shakespeare or to Cervantes.

But what shall we say of Addison's humor, of his sense of the ludicrous, of his power of awakening that sense in others, and of drawing
10 mirth from incidents which occur every day, and from little peculiarities of temper and manner such as may be found in every man? We feel the charm; we give ourselves up to it; but we strive in vain to analyze it.

15 Perhaps the best way of describing Addison's peculiar pleasantry is to compare it with the pleasantry of some other great satirists. The three most eminent masters of the art of ridicule during the eighteenth
20 century were, we conceive, Addison, Swift, and Voltaire. Which of the three had the greatest power of moving laughter may be questioned; but each of them, within his own domain, was supreme.

1. **Earl of Clarendon**, (1618-1674.) Lord Chancellor of James I, and author of a history of the war between Charles I. and Parliament.

6. **Cervantes**, (1547-1616.) A great Spanish writer. His "Don Quixote," a romance ridiculing the practices of chivalry, is one of the greatest works in any literature.

21. **Voltaire**, (1694-1778). A noted French poet and philosopher.

Voltaire is the prince of buffoons. His merriment is without disguise or restraint. He gambols; he grins; he shakes the sides; he points the finger; he turns up the nose; he shoots out the tongue. The manner of Swift⁵ is the very opposite to this. He moves laughter, but never joins in it. He appears in his works such as he appeared in society. All the company are convulsed with merriment; while the Dean, the author of all the¹⁰ mirth, preserves an invincible gravity and even sourness of aspect, and gives utterance to the most eccentric and ludicrous fancies with the air of a man reading the commination service.

The manner of Addison is as remote from¹⁵ that of Swift as from that of Voltaire. He neither laughs out like the French wit, nor, like the Irish wit, throws a double portion of severity into his countenance while laughing inwardly, but preserves a look peculiarly his²⁰ own,—a look of demure serenity, disturbed only by an arch sparkle of the eye, an almost imperceptible elevation of the brow, an almost imperceptible curl of the lip. His tone is never that either of a Jack Pudding or of a²⁵

14. **Commination service.** A service of the Church of England read on Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent.

25. **Jack Pudding.** A juggler, a coarse and vulgar person

Cynic. It is that of a gentleman in whom the quickest sense of the ridiculous is constantly tempered by good nature and good breeding.

We own that the humor of Addison is, in
 5 our opinion, of more delicious flavor than the
 humor of either Swift or Voltaire. Thus much,
 at least, is certain, that both Swift and Voltaire
 have been successfully mimicked, and that no
 man has yet been able to mimic Addison. The
 10 letter of the Abbé Coyer to Pansophe is Voltaire
 all over, and imposed, during a long time, on the
 Academicians of Paris. There are passages in
 Arbuthnot's satirical works which we, at least,
 cannot distinguish from Swift's best writing.
 15 But of the many eminent men who have made
 Addison their model, though several have
 copied his mere diction with happy effect,
 none has been able to catch the tone of his
 pleasantry. In the "World," in the "Conno-
 20 isseur," in the "Mirror," in the "Lounger,"
 there are numerous papers written in obvious
 imitation of his "Tatlers" and "Spectators."
 Most of these papers have some merit; many

1. **Cynics.** A sect of Greek philosophers who disregarded the customs of society.

10. **Abbe Coyer.** A well-known French Jesuit.

13. **John Arbuthnot,** (1667-1735.) A physician of great learning and wit. He was a friend of Swift and Pope, and his "Memoirs of Martinus Scriberlius" is a brilliant piece of sarcastic humor.

20. All contemporary periodicals of low grade.

are very lively and amusing; but there is not a single one which could be passed off as Addison's on a critic of the smallest perspicacity.

But that which chiefly distinguishes Addison from Swift, from Voltaire, from almost all the other great masters of ridicule, is the grace, the nobleness, the moral purity, which we find even in his merriment. Severity, gradually hardening and darkening into misanthropy, characterizes the work of Swift. The nature of Voltaire was, indeed, not inhuman; but he venerated nothing. Neither in the masterpieces of art nor in the purest examples of virtue, neither in the Great First Cause nor in the awful enigma of the grave, could he see anything but subjects for drollery. The more solemn and august the theme, the more monkey-like was his grimacing and chattering. The mirth of Swift is the mirth of Mephistopheles; the mirth of Voltaire is the mirth of Puck. If, as Soame Jenyns oddly imagined, a portion of the happiness of seraphim and just men made perfect be derived

21. **Mephistopheles.** One of the names given to the personification of the principle of evil.

22. **Puck.** An elf in Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream."

22. **Soame Jenyns,** (1704-1787.) Author of a work on the Inter al Evidence of the Christian Religion.

from an exquisite perception of the ludicrous, their mirth must surely be none other than the mirth of Addison,—a mirth consistent with tender compassion for all that is frail, and with profound reverence for all that is sublime. Nothing great, nothing amiable, no moral duty, no doctrine of natural or revealed religion, has ever been associated by Addison with any degrading idea. His humanity is without a parallel in literary history. The highest proof of virtue is to possess boundless power without abusing it. No kind of power is more formidable than the power of making men ridiculous; and that power Addison possessed in boundless measure. How grossly that power was abused by Swift and by Voltaire is well known. But of Addison it may be confidently affirmed that he has blackened no man's character, nay, that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find in all the volumes which he has left us a single taunt which can be called ungenerous or unkind. Yet he had detractors, whose malignity might have seemed to justify as terrible a revenge as that which men not superior to him in genius wreaked on Bettesworth and on

26. **Bettesworth.** An Irish barrister, a victim of Swift's satire.

Franc de Pompignan. He was a politician; he was the best writer of his party; he lived in times of fierce excitement, in times when persons of high character and station stooped to scurrility such as is now practiced only by the basest of mankind: yet no provocation and no example could induce him to return railing for railing.

Of the service which his essays rendered to morality it is difficult to speak too highly. It is true that, when the "Tatler" appeared, that age of outrageous profaneness and licentiousness which followed the Restoration had passed away. Jeremy Collier had shamed the theaters into something which, compared with the excesses of Etherege and Wycherley, might be called decency; yet there still lingered in the public mind a pernicious notion that there was some connection between genius and profligacy, between the domestic virtues and the sullen formality of the Puritans. That error it is the glory of Addison to have dispelled. He taught the nation that the faith

1. **Franc de Pompignan.** A conceited French poet ridiculed by Voltaire.

14. **Collier.** An English clergyman who helped by his writings to bring about a reform in the stage.

16. **Etherege.** A dramatist of the Restoration.

16. **Wycherley.** A writer of licentious comedies.

and the morality of Hale and Tillotson might be found in company with wit more sparkling than the wit of Congreve, and with humor richer than the humor of Vanbrugh. So effectually, indeed, did he retort on vice the mockery which had recently been directed against virtue, that since his time the open violation of decency has always been considered among us as the mark of a fool. And this revolution, the greatest and most salutary ever affected by any satirist, he accomplished, be it remembered, without writing one personal lampoon.

In the early contributions of Addison to the "Tatler" his peculiar powers were not fully exhibited; yet from the first his superiority to all his coadjutors was evident. Some of his later "Tatlers" are fully equal to anything that he ever wrote. Among the portraits, we most admire Tom Folio, Ned Softly, and the Political Upholsterer. The proceedings of the "Court of Honor," the "Thermometer of Zeal,"

1. Sir Matthew Hale, (1609-1676). A celebrated lawyer.

1. Tillotson, (1630-1694.) Archbishop of Canterbury.

4. Vanbrugh. A dramatist of great grossness.

20. Tom Folio. *Tatler*, No. 158.

20. Ned Softly. *Tatler*, No. 163.

21. Political Upholsterer. *Tatler*, Nos. 155 and 160.

22. Court of Honor. *Tatler*, Nos. 250, 253, 256, 259, 262, 265.

22. Thermometer of Zeal. *Tatler*, No. 220.

the story of the "Frozen Words," the "Memoirs of the Shilling," are excellent specimens of that ingenious and lively species of fiction in which Addison excelled all men. There is one still better paper of the same class; but⁵ though that paper, a hundred and thirty-three years ago, was probably thought as edifying as one of Smalridge's sermons, we dare not indicate it to the squeamish readers of the nineteenth century. 10

During the session of Parliament which commenced in November, 1709, and which the impeachment of Sacheverell has made memorable, Addison appears to have resided in London. The "Tatler" was now more popular¹⁵ than any periodical paper had ever been, and his connection with it was generally known: it was not known, however, that almost everything good in the "Tatler" was his. The truth is, that the fifty or sixty numbers which we²⁰ owe to him were not merely the best, but so decidedly the best, that any five of them are more valuable than all the two hundred numbers in which he had no share.

He required at this time all the solace which²⁵ he could derive from literary success. The

1. Frozen Words. *Tatler*, No. 254.

2. Memoirs of a Shilling. *Tatler*, No 249.

Queen had always disliked the Whigs. She had during some years disliked the Marlborough family ; but, reigning by a disputed title, she could not venture directly to oppose herself to a majority of both houses of Parliament ; and, engaged as she was in a war on the event of which her own crown was staked, she could not venture to disgrace a great and successful general. But at length, in the year 1710, the causes which had restrained her from showing her aversion to the Low Church party ceased to operate. The trial of Sacheverell produced an outbreak of public feeling scarcely less violent than the outbreaks which we can ourselves remember in 1820 and in 1831. The country gentlemen, the country clergymen, the rabble of the towns, were all, for once, on the same side. It was clear that, if a general election took place before the excitement abated, the Tories would have a majority. The services of Marlborough had been so splendid that they were no longer necessary. The Queen's throne was secure from all attack on the part of Louis : indeed, it seemed much more likely that the English and German armies would divide the spoils of Versailles and Marli than

26. Marli. The seat of a beautiful chateau of Louis XIV.

that a marshal of France would bring back the Pretender to St. James's. The Queen, acting by the advice of Harley, determined to dismiss her servants. In June the change commenced. Sunderland was the first who fell. The Tories⁵ exulted over his fall. The Whigs tried, during a few weeks, to persuade themselves that her Majesty had acted only from personal dislike to the secretary, and that she meditated no further alteration; but early in August, Godol-¹⁰phin received a letter from Anne, which directed him to break his white staff. Even after this event, the irresolution or dissimulation of Harley kept up the hopes of the Whigs during another month, and then the ruin¹⁵ became rapid and violent. The Parliament was dissolved. The ministers were turned out. The Tories were called to office. The tide of popularity ran violently in favor of the High Church party. The party, feeble in the late²⁰ House of Commons, was now irresistible. The power which the Tories had thus suddenly acquired, they used with blind and stupid ferocity. The howl which the whole pack set up for prey and for blood appalled²⁵

2. **Pretender.** The son of James II who made several attempts to gain the throne from William III.

2. **St James's.** The London residence of the English sovereign.

even him who had roused and unchained them. When, at this distance of time, we calmly review the conduct of the discarded ministers, we cannot but feel a movement of indignation
5 at the injustice with which they were treated. No body of men had ever administered the government with more energy, ability, and moderation; and their success has been proportioned to their wisdom. They had saved
10 Holland and Germany. They had humbled France. They had, as it seemed, all but torn Spain from the house of Bourbon. They had made England the first power in Europe. At home they had united England and Scotland.
15 They had respected the rights of conscience and the liberty of the subject. They retired, leaving their country at the height of prosperity and glory. And yet they were pursued to their retreat by such a roar of obloquy as
20 never was raised against the government which threw away thirteen colonies, or against the government which sent a gallant army to perish in the ditches of Walcheren.

None of the Whigs suffered more in the
25 general wreck than Addison. He had just

14. The union of England and Scotland under one sovereign was accomplished July 22, 1706.

23. **Walcheren.** A Dutch province. Seven thousand men died here of malaria in the expedition against Napoleon in 1806.

sustained some heavy pecuniary losses, of the nature of which we are imperfectly informed, when his secretaryship was taken from him. He had reason to believe that he should also be deprived of the small Irish office which he held by patent. He had just resigned his fellowship. It seems probable he had already ventured to raise his eyes to a great lady, and that while his political friends were in power, and while his own fortunes were rising, he had been, in the phrase of the romances which were then fashionable, "permitted to hope." But Mr. Addison, the ingenious writer, and Mr. Addison, the chief secretary, were, in her ladyship's opinion, two very different persons. All these calamities united, however, could not disturb the serene cheerfulness of a mind conscious of innocence, and rich in its own wealth. He told his friends, with smiling resignation, that they ought to admire his philosophy; that he had lost at once his fortune, his place, his fellowship, and his mistress; that he must think of turning tutor again: and yet that his spirits were as good as ever.

25

He had one consolation. Of the unpopularity which his friends had incurred, he had

no share. Such was the esteem with which he was regarded, that, while the most violent measures were taken for the purpose of forcing Tory members on Whig corporations, he was
5 returned to Parliament without even a contest. Swift, who was now in London, and who had already determined on quitting the Whigs, wrote to Stella in these remarkable words:
“ The Tories carry it among the new members
10 six to one. Mr. Addison’s election has passed easy and undisputed, and I believe, if he had a mind to be king, he would hardly be refused.”

The good will with which the Tories
15 regarded Addison is the more honorable to him, because it had not been purchased by any concession on his part. During the general election, he published a political journal entitled the “ Whig Examiner.” Of
20 that journal it may be sufficient to say, that Johnson, in spite of his strong political prejudices, pronounced it to be superior in wit to any of Swift’s writings on the other side. When it ceased to appear, Swift, in a letter to
25 Stella, expressed his exultation at the death of so formidable an antagonist. “ He might well rejoice,” says Johnson, “ at the death of

that which he could not have killed." "On no occasion," he adds, "was the genius of Addison more vigorously exerted, and on none did the superiority of his powers more evidently appear." 5

The only use which Addison appears to have made of the favor with which he was regarded by the Tories was to save some of his friends from the general ruin of the Whig party. He felt himself to be in a situation 10 which made it his duty to take a decided part in politics. But the case of Steele and of Ambrose Philips was different. For Philips, Addison even condescended to solicit, with what success we have not ascertained. Steele 15 held two places: he was gazetteer, and he was also a commissioner of stamps. The gazette was taken from him; but he was suffered to retain his place in the Stamp Office on an implied understanding that he should not be 20 active against the new government; and he was, during more than two years, induced by Addison to observe this armistice with tolerable fidelity.

Isaac Bickerstaff accordingly became silent 25 upon politics, and the article of news which had once formed about one third of his paper

altogether disappeared. The "Tatler" had completely changed its character: it was now nothing but a series of essays on books, morals, and manners. Steele, therefore, resolved to bring it to a close, and to commence a new work on an improved plan. It was announced that this new work would be published daily. The undertaking was generally regarded as bold, or rather rash; but the event amply justified the confidence with which Steele relied on the fertility of Addison's genius. On the 2d of January, 1711, appeared the last "Tatler." At the beginning of March following, appeared the first of an incomparable series of papers, containing observations on life and literature by an imaginary Spectator.

The Spectator himself was conceived and drawn by Addison; and it is not easy to doubt that the portrait was meant to be in some features a likeness of the painter. The Spectator is a gentleman who, after passing a studious youth at the university, has travelled on classic ground, and has bestowed much attention on curious points of antiquity. He has, on his return, fixed his residence in London, and has observed all the forms of life

which are to be found in that great city, has daily listened to the wits of Will's, has smoked with the philosophers of the Grecian, and has mingled with the parsons at Child's and with the politicians at the St. James's. In ⁵ the morning he often listens to the hum of the Exchange; in the evening his face is constantly to be seen in the pit of the Drury Lane Theater. But an insurmountable bashfulness prevents him from opening his mouth, ¹⁰ except in a small circle of intimate friends.

These friends were first sketched by Steele. Four of the club — the templar, the clergyman, the soldier, and the merchant — were uninteresting figures, fit only for a back-¹⁵ ground; but the other two — an old country baronet and an old town rake — though not delineated with a very delicate pencil, had some good strokes. Addison took the rude outlines into his own hands, retouched them, ²⁰ colored them, and is in truth the creator of the Sir Roger de Coverley and the Will Honeycomb with whom we are all familiar.

The plan of the Spectator must be allowed to be both original and eminently happy. ²⁵ Every valuable essay in the series may be

5. Child's and St. James's Well-known clubs of that time.

read with pleasure separately; yet the five or six hundred essays form a whole, and a whole which has the interest of a novel. It must be remembered, too, that at that time no novel
 5 giving a lively and powerful picture of the common life and manners of England had appeared. Richardson was working as a compositor. Fielding was robbing bird's nests. Smollett was not yet born. The nar-
 10 rative, therefore, which connects together the Spectator's essays gave to our ancestors their first taste of an exquisite and untried pleasure. That narrative was indeed constructed with no art or labor. The events were such events as
 15 occur every day. Sir Roger comes up to town to see Eugenio, as the worthy baronet always calls Prince Eugene, goes with the Spectator on the water to Spring Gardens, walks among the tombs in the Abbey, and is
 20 frightened by the Mohawks, but conquers his apprehension so far as to go the theater when the "Distressed Mother" is acted. The Spectator pays a visit in the summer to Coverley

7. **Samuel Richardson**, (1689-1761.) The first novelist in the modern sense. His most celebrated stories are "Pamela," "Clarissa Harlowe" and "Sir Charles Grandison."

9. **Smollett**, (1721-1771.) Another novelist of the period.

18. **Spring Gardens**. A London place of amusement.

20. **Mohawks**. A club of ruffians who infested the streets of London at night.

Hall, is charmed with the old house, the old butler, and the old chaplain, eats a jack caught by Will Wimble, rides to the assizes, and hears a point of law discussed by Tom Touchy. At last a letter from the honest butler brings to the club the news that Sir Roger is dead. Will Honeycomb marries and reforms at sixty. The club breaks up, and the Spectator resigns his functions. Such events can hardly be said to form a plot; yet they are related with such truth, such grace, such wit, such humor, such pathos, such knowledge of the human heart, such knowledge of the ways of the world, that they charm us on the hundredth perusal. We have not the least doubt, that, if Addison had written a novel on an extensive plan, it would have been superior to any that we possess. As it is, he is entitled to be considered not only as the greatest of the English essayists, but as the forerunner of the great English novelists.

We say this of Addison alone; for Addison is the Spectator. About three sevenths of the work are his; and it is no exaggeration to say that his worst essay is as good as the best essay of any of his coadjutors. His best essays approach near to absolute perfection;

nor is their excellence more wonderful than their variety. His invention never seems to flag; nor is he ever under the necessity of repeating himself, or of wearing out a subject.

⁵ There are no dregs in his wine. He regales us after the fashion of that prodigal nabob who held that there was only one good glass in a bottle. As soon as we have tasted the first sparkling foam of a jest, it is withdrawn,

¹⁰ and a fresh draught of nectar is at our lips. On the Monday we have an allegory as lively and ingenious as Lucian's "Auction of Lives"; on the Tuesday, an Eastern apologue as richly colored as the tales of Scheherezade;

¹⁵ on the Wednesday, a character described with the skill of La Bruyère; on the Thursday, a scene from common life equal to the best chapters in the "Vicar of Wakefield"; on the Friday, some sly Horatian pleasantry on fash-

²⁰ ionable follies, on hoops, patches, or puppet shows; and on the Saturday, a religious meditation which will bear a comparison with the finest passages in Massillon.

12. *Lucian*. A Greek satirist of the time of the Emperor Trajan.

14. *Scheherezade*. The Arabian queen who postponed her death by telling the king a story every night which she broke off at such an interesting point that she was spared each day that she might finish the tale.

16. *La Bruyere*, (1644-1696.) A distinguished French moralist.

18. *Vicar of Wakefield*. A novel by Oliver Goldsmith.

22. *Massillon*, (1663-1742.) A French preacher of great eloquence.

It is dangerous to select where there is so much that deserves the highest praise. We will venture, however, to say that any person who wishes to form a just notion of the extent and variety of Addison's powers will do well⁵ to read at one sitting the following papers,—the two "Visits to the Abbey," the "Visit to the Exchange," the "Journal of the Retired Citizen," the "Vision of Mirza," the "Transmigrations of Pug the Monkey," and the¹⁰ "Death of Sir Roger de Coverley."

The least valuable of Addison's contributions to the "Spectator" are, in the judgment of our age, his critical papers; yet his critical papers are always luminous, and often ingen-¹⁵ious. The very worst of them must be regarded as creditable to him, when the character of the school in which he had been trained is fairly considered. The best of them were much too good for his readers. In truth,²⁰ he was not so far behind our generation as he was before his own. No essays in the "Spectator" were more censured and derided than those in which he raised his voice against the contempt with which our fine old ballads were²⁵ regarded, and showed the scoffers that the same gold which, burnished and polished,

gives lustre to the "Æneid" and the "Odes of Horace" is mingled with the rude dross of "Chevy Chace."

It is not strange that the success of the
5 "Spectator" should have been such as no
similar work has ever obtained. The number
of copies daily distributed was at first three
thousand. It subsequently increased, and had
risen to near four thousand when the stamp
10 tax was imposed. That tax was fatal to a
crowd of journals. The "Spectator," how-
ever, stood its ground, doubled its price, and,
though its circulation fell off, still yielded a
large revenue both to the state and to the
15 authors. For particular papers, the demand
was immense; of some, it is said, twenty
thousand copies were required. But this was
not all. To have the "Spectator" served up
every morning with the bohea and rolls was a
20 luxury for the few. The majority were con-
tent to wait till essays enough had appeared
to form a volume. Ten thousand copies of
each volume were immediately taken off, and
new editions were called for. It must be

3. **Chevy Chace.** An old English ballad describing the frays between Lord Percy and the Douglas on the Scottish border.

10 **Stamp tax.** A duty requiring a half-penny stamp on each half sheet of printed matter. Its object was to reduce the number of journals attacking the government.

remembered that the population of England was then hardly a third of what it now is. The number of Englishmen who were in the habit of reading was probably not a sixth of what it now is. A shopkeeper or a farmer⁵ who found any pleasure in literature was a rarity. Nay, there was doubtless more than one knight of the shire whose country seat did not contain ten books, receipt books and books on farriery included. In these circumstances,¹⁰ the sale of the "Spectator" must be considered as indicating a popularity quite as great as that of the most successful works of Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Dickens in our own time.

At the close of 1712 the "Spectator"¹⁵ ceased to appear. It was probably felt that the short-faced gentleman and his club had been long enough before the town and that it was time to withdraw them, and to replace them by a new set of characters. In a few²⁰ weeks the first number of the "Guardian" was published; but the "Guardian" was unfortunate both in its birth and in its death. It began in dullness, and disappeared in a tempest of faction. The original plan was bad.²⁵ Addison contributed nothing till sixty-six numbers had appeared; and it was then

impossible to make the "Guardian" what the "Spectator" had been. Nestor Ironside and the Miss Lizards were people to whom even he could impart no interest. He could only
5 furnish some excellent little essays, both serious and comic; and this he did.

Why Addison gave no assistance to the "Guardian" during the first two months of its existence is a question which has puzzled the
10 editors and biographers, but which seems to us to admit of a very easy solution. He was then engaged in bringing his "Cato" on the stage.

The first four acts of this drama had been
15 lying in his desk since his return from Italy. His modest and sensitive nature shrank from the risk of a public and shameful failure; and, though all who saw the manuscript were loud in praise, some thought it possible that an
20 audience might become impatient even of very good rhetoric, and advised Addison to print the play without hazarding a representation. At length, after many fits of apprehension, the poet yielded to the urgency of his political
25 friends, who hoped that the public would discover some analogy between the followers of

12. *Cato*. A drama describing the career of Cato the younger who, after Pompey's defeat, went to Africa and finally took his own life.

Cæsar and the Tories, between Sempronius and the apostate Whigs, between Cato struggling to the last for the liberties of Rome, and the band of patriots who still stood firm round Halifax and Wharton. 5

Addison gave the play to the managers of Drury Lane Theatre, without stipulating for any advantage to himself. They therefore thought themselves bound to spare no cost in scenery and dresses. The decorations, it is ¹⁰ true, would not have pleased the skillful eye of Mr. Macready. Juba's waistcoat blazed with gold lace; Marcia's hoop was worthy of a duchess on the birthday; and Cato wore a wig worth fifty guineas. The prologue was ¹⁵ written by Pope, and is undoubtedly a dignified and spirited composition. The part of the hero was excellently played by Booth. Steele undertook to pack a house. The boxes were in a blaze with the stars of the ²⁰ peers in opposition. The pit was crowded with attentive and friendly listeners from the Inns of Court and the literary coffee-houses. Sir Gilbert Heathcote, governor of the Bank of

1. **Sempronius.** A Roman senator and a character in the play.

12. **Macready**, (1793-1873.) One of the greatest of Shakespearian actors.

18. **Booth.** The favorite actor of the day;

England, was at the head of a powerful body of auxiliaries from the city, warm men and true Whigs, but better known at Jonathan's and Garraway's than in the haunts of wits and
5 critics.

These precautions were quite superfluous. The Tories, as a body, regarded Addison with no unkind feelings. Nor was it for their interest — professing, as they did, profound
10 reverence for law and prescription, and abhorrence both of popular insurrections and of standing armies — to appropriate to themselves reflections thrown on the great military chief and demagogue who, with the support of
15 the legions and of the common people, subverted all the ancient institutions of his country. Accordingly, every shout that was raised by the members of the Kit Cat was echoed by the High Churchmen of the October; and the
20 curtain at length fell amidst thunders of unanimous applause.

The delight and admiration of the town were described by the "Guardian" in terms which we might attribute to partiality, were it not
25 that the "Examiner," the organ of the minis-

4. Jonathan's and Garraway's. Merchants' clubs.

19. October. A Tory club where the members' favorite drink was October ale.

try, held similar language. The Tories, indeed, found much to sneer at in the conduct of their opponents. Steele had on this, as on other occasions, shown more zeal than taste or judgment. The honest citizens who marched ⁵ under the orders of Sir Gibby, as he was facetiously called, probably knew better when to buy and when to sell stock than when to clap and when to hiss at a play, and incurred some ridicule by making the hypocritical ¹⁰ Sempronius their favorite, and by giving to his insincere rants louder plaudits than they bestowed on the temperate eloquence of Cato. Wharton, too, who had the incredible effrontery to applaud the lines about flying ¹⁵ from prosperous vice and from the power of impious men to a private station, did not escape the sarcasms of those who justly thought that he could fly from nothing more vicious or impious than himself. The epi- ²⁰logue, which was written by Garth, a zealous Whig, was severely and not unreasonably censured as ignoble and out of place. But Addison was described, even by the bitterest Tory writers, as a gentleman of wit and virtue, ²⁵

6. **Sir Gibby.** Sir Gilbert Heathcote, a wealthy merchant.

21. **Sir Samuel Garth.** Court physician of George I. He wrote a poem called the "Dispensary."

in whose friendship many persons of both parties were happy, and whose name ought not to be mixed up with factious squabbles.

Of the jests by which the triumph of the
5 Whig party was disturbed, the most severe and happy was Bolingbroke's. Between two acts he sent for Booth to his box, and presented him, before the whole theatre, with a purse of fifty guineas for defending the cause
10 of liberty so well against a perpetual dictator. This was a pungent allusion to the attempt which Marlborough had made, not long before his fall, to obtain a patent creating him captain general for life.

15 It was April, and in April a hundred and thirty years ago the London season was thought to be far advanced. During a whole month, however, "Cato" was performed to overflowing houses, and brought into the
20 treasury of the theatre twice the gains of an ordinary spring. In the summer the Drury Lane company went down to act at Oxford, and there, before an audience which retained an affectionate remembrance of Addison's
25 accomplishments and virtues, his tragedy was acted during several days. The gownsmen

26. **Gownsmen.** The students, all of whom wear gowns in the English colleges.

began to besiege the theatre in the forenoon, and by one in the afternoon all the seats were filled.

About the merits of the piece which had so extraordinary an effect, the public, we suppose, has made up its mind. To compare it with the masterpieces of the Attic stage, with the great English dramas of the time of Elizabeth, or even with the productions of Schiller's manhood, would be absurd indeed. Yet it¹⁰ contains excellent dialogue and declamation, and, among plays fashioned on the French model, must be allowed to rank high; not, indeed, with "Athalie" or "Saul," but, we think, not below "Cinna," and certainly above¹⁵ any other English tragedy of the same school, above many of the plays of Corneille, above many of the plays of Voltaire and Alfieri, and above some plays of Racine. Be this as it may, we have little doubt that "Cato" did as²⁰ much as the "Tatlers," "Spectators," and "Freeholders" united to raise Addison's fame among his contemporaries.

The modesty and good nature of the suc-

7. **Attic stage.** That is, the Greek dramas.

9. **Schiller,** 1759-1805.) A great German dramatist. He shares with Gæthe the distinction of being the greatest poet of his country.

14. **Saul.** A drama by Alfieri.

15. **Cinna.** A drama by Corneille, (1606-1684.)

cessful dramatist had tamed even the malignity of faction. But literary envy, it should seem, is a fiercer passion than party spirit. It was by a zealous Whig that the fiercest attack on the Whig tragedy was made. John Dennis published "Remarks on Cato," which were written with some acuteness and with much coarseness and asperity. Addison neither defended himself nor retaliated. On many points he had an excellent defense, and nothing would have been easier than to retaliate, for Dennis had written bad odes, bad tragedies, bad comedies; he had, moreover, a larger share than most men of those infirmities and eccentricities which excite laughter; and Addison's power of turning either an absurd book or an absurd man into ridicule was unrivaled. Addison, however, serenely conscious of his superiority, looked with pity on his assailant, whose temper, naturally irritable and gloomy, had been soured by want, by controversy, and by literary failures.

But among the young candidates for Addison's favor there was one distinguished by talents from the rest, and distinguished, we fear, not less by malignity and insincerity.

5. John Dennis, (1679-1734.) A dramatic critic. He was constantly in controversy with the writers of his day.

Pope was only twenty-five. But his powers had expanded to their full maturity; and his best poem, the "Rape of the Lock," had recently been published. Of his genius, Addison had always expressed high admiration; ⁵ but Addison had early discerned, what might, indeed, have been discerned by an eye less penetrating than his, that the diminutive, crooked, sickly boy was eager to revenge himself on society for the unkindness of nature. ¹⁰ In the "Spectator," the "Essay on Criticism" had been praised with cordial warmth; but a gentle hint had been added, that the writer of so excellent a poem would have done well to avoid ill-natured personalities. Pope, though ¹⁵ evidently more galled by the censure than gratified by the praise, returned thanks for the admonition, and promised to profit by it. The two writers continued to exchange civilities, counsel, and small good offices. Addi- ²⁰ son publicly extolled Pope's miscellaneous pieces; and Pope furnished Addison with a prologue. This did not last long. Pope hated Dennis, whom he had injured without provocation. The appearance of the "Re- ²⁵ marks on Cato" gave the irritable poet an opportunity of venting his malice under the

show of friendship; and such an opportunity could not but be welcome to a nature which was implacable in enmity, and which always preferred the tortuous to the straight path. He published, accordingly, the "Narrative of the Frenzy of John Dennis." But Pope had mistaken his powers. He was a great master of invective and sarcasm; he could dissect a character in terse and sonorous couplets, brilliant with antithesis; but of dramatic talent he was altogether destitute. If he had written a lampoon on Dennis, such as that on Atticus or that on Sporus, the old grumbler would have been crushed. But Pope writing dialogue resembled — to borrow Horace's imagery and his own — a wolf, which, instead of biting, should take to kicking, or a monkey which should try to sting. The Narrative is utterly contemptible. Of argument there is not even a show; and the jests are such as, if they were introduced into a farce, would call forth the hisses of the shilling gallery. Dennis raves about the drama; and the nurse thinks he is calling for a dram. "There is," he cries, "no peripetia in the tragedy, no change of fortune,

12. *Atticus* is the name under which Pope attacked Addison in the "Epistle to Arbuthnot." *Sporus* was that under which he attacked Lord Hervey.

25. *Peripetia*. That part of the drama in which the plot is disclosed.

no change at all." "Pray, good sir, be not angry," says the old woman; "I'll fetch change." This is not exactly the pleasantry of Addison.

There can be no doubt that Addison saw⁵ through this officious zeal and felt himself deeply aggrieved by it. So foolish and spiteful a pamphlet could do him no good, and, if he were thought to have any hand in it, must do him harm. Gifted with incomparable¹⁰ powers of ridicule, he had never, even in self-defense, used those powers inhumanly or uncourteously; and he was not disposed to let others make his fame and his interests a pretext under which they might commit out-¹⁵rages from which he had himself constantly abstained. He accordingly declared that he had no concern in the Narrative, that he disapproved of it, and that if he answered the remarks, he would answer them like a gentle-²⁰man; and he took care to communicate this to Dennis. Pope was bitterly mortified; and to this transaction we are inclined to ascribe the hatred with which he ever after regarded Addison.

25

In September, 1713, the "Guardian" ceased to appear. Steele had gone mad

about politics. A general election had just taken place. He had been chosen member for Stockbridge, and he fully expected to play a first part in Parliament. The immense
5 success of the "Tatler" and "Spectator" had turned his head. He had been the editor of both those papers, and was not aware how entirely they owed their influence and popularity to the genius of his friend. His spirits,
10 always violent, were now excited by vanity, ambition, and faction, to such a pitch that he every day committed some offence against good sense and good taste. All the discreet and moderate members of his own party re-
15 gretted and condemned his folly. "I am in a thousand troubles," Addison wrote, "about poor Dick, and wish that his zeal for the public may not be ruinous to himself. But he has sent me word that he is determined to go
20 on, and that any advice I may give him in that particular will have no weight with him."

Steele set up a political paper called the "Englishman," which, as it was not supported by contributions from Addison, completely
25 failed. By this work, by some other writings of the same kind, and by the airs which he gave himself at the first meeting of the new

Parliament, he made the Tories so angry that they determined to expel him. The Whigs stood by him gallantly, but were unable to save him. The vote of expulsion was regarded by all dispassionate men as a tyrannical exercise of the power of the majority. But Steele's violence and folly, though they by no means justified the steps which his enemies took, had completely disgusted his friends; nor did he ever again regain the place which he had held in the public estimation.

Addison about this time conceived the design of adding an eighth volume to the "Spectator." In June, 1714, the first number of the new series appeared, and during about six months three papers were published weekly. Nothing can be more striking than the contrast between the "Englishman" and the eighth volume of the "Spectator," between Steele without Addison and Addison without Steele. The "Englishman" is forgotten: the eighth volume of the "Spectator" contains, perhaps, the finest essays, both serious and playful, in the English language.

Before this volume was completed, the death of Anne produced an entire change in the administration of public affairs. The blow fell

suddenly. It found the Tory party distracted by internal feuds, and unprepared for any great effort. Harley had just been disgraced. Bolingbroke, it was supposed, would be the
5 chief minister. But the Queen was on her deathbed before the white staff had been given; and her last public act was to deliver it with a feeble hand to the Duke of Shrewsbury. The emergency produced a coalition
10 between all sections of public men who were attached to the Protestant succession. George I. was proclaimed without opposition. A council, in which the leading Whigs had seats, took the direction of affairs till the new King
15 should arrive. The first act of the lords justices was to appoint Addison their secretary.

There is an idle tradition that he was directed to prepare a letter to the King, that
20 he could not satisfy himself as to the style of this composition, and that the lords justices called in a clerk, who at once did what was wanted. It is not strange that a story so flattering to mediocrity should be popular, and
25 we are sorry to deprive dunces of their consolation. But the truth must be told. It was

11. Protestant succession. The securing of the English throne to the House of Hanover.

well observed by Sir James Mackintosh, whose knowledge of these times was unequalled, that Addison never, in any official document, affected wit or eloquence, and that his dispatches are, without exception, remarkable⁵ for unpretending simplicity. Everybody who knows with what ease Addison's finest essays were produced must be convinced, that, if well-turned phrases had been wanted, he would have had no difficulty in finding them.¹⁰ We are, however, inclined to believe that the story is not absolutely without a foundation. It may well be that Addison did not know, till he had consulted experienced clerks who remembered the time when William III. was¹⁵ absent on the Continent, in what form a letter from the Council of Regency to the King ought to be drawn. We think it very likely that the ablest statesmen of our time—Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmer-²⁰ston, for example—would, in similar circumstances, be found quite as ignorant. Every office has some little mysteries which the

1. **Sir James Mackintosh**, (1765-1832.) A distinguished philosopher and historian.

20. **Lord John Russell**, (1792-1878.) A prime minister and author of the Reform Bill of 1834.

20. **Sir Robert Peel**, (1788-1850.) One of the greatest statesmen of the present century. Noted for his repeal of the Common Laws.

20. **Lord Palmerston**, (1784-1865.) A distinguished prime minister.

dullest man may learn with a little attention, and which the greatest man cannot possibly know by intuition. One paper must be signed by the chief of the department; another by his
5 deputy; to a third the royal sign manual is necessary. One communication is to be registered, and another is not. One sentence must be in black ink, and another in red ink. If the ablest secretary for Ireland were moved to
10 the India Board, if the ablest president of the India Board were moved to the War Office, he would require instruction on points like these; and we do not doubt that Addison required such instruction when he became, for the first
15 time, secretary to the lords justices.

George I. took possession of his kingdom without opposition. A new ministry was formed, and a new Parliament favorable to the Whigs chosen. Sunderland was appointed
20 lord lieutenant of Ireland, and Addison again went to Dublin as chief secretary.

At Dublin Swift resided; and there was much speculation about the way in which the Dean and the Secretary would behave towards
25 each other. The relations which existed between these remarkable men form an interesting and pleasing portion of literary history.

They had early attached themselves to the same political party and to the same patrons. While Anne's Whig ministry was in power, the visits of Swift to London, and the official residence of Addison in Ireland, had given them 5 opportunities of knowing each other. They were the two shrewdest observers of their age; but their observations on each other had led them to favorable conclusions. Swift did full justice to the rare powers of conversation 10 which were latent under the bashful deportment of Addison. Addison, on the other hand, discerned much good nature under the severe look and manner of Swift; and, indeed, the Swift of 1708 and the Swift of 1738 were 15 two very different men.

But the paths of the two friends diverged widely. The Whig statesmen loaded Addison with solid benefits. They praised Swift, asked him to dinner, and did nothing more for him. 20 His profession laid them under a difficulty. In the State they could not promote him; and they had reason to fear, that, by bestowing preferment in the Church on the author of the "Tale of a Tub," they might give scandal to 25 the public, which had no high opinion of their

25. **Tale of a Tub.** A keen satire on the abuses in the church.

orthodoxy. He did not make fair allowance for the difficulties which prevented Halifax and Somers from serving him, thought himself an ill-used man, sacrificed honor and consistency to revenge, joined the Tories, and became their most formidable champion. He soon found, however, that his old friends were less to blame than he had supposed. The dislike with which the Queen and the heads of the Church regarded him was insurmountable ; and it was with the greatest difficulty that he obtained an ecclesiastical dignity of no great value, on condition of fixing his residence in a country which he detested.

Difference of political opinion had produced, not, indeed, a quarrel, but a coolness between Swift and Addison. They at length ceased altogether to see each other. Yet there was between them a tacit compact like that between the hereditary guests in the " Iliad " : —

Ἐγχεα δ' ἀλλήλων ἀλεώμεθα καὶ δι' ὀμίλον
 Πολλοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἐμοὶ Τρῶες κλειτοὶ τ' ἐπικούροι,
 Κτείνειν, ὅν κε θεός γε πόρῃ καὶ ποσσὶ κιχείω,
 Πολλοὶ δ' αὖ σοὶ Ἀχαιοὶ, ἐναίρεμεν, ὅν κε δύνηαι.

Iliad, Lib. VI. 226-229.

21. Bryant's translation : —

" And let us in the tumult of the fray,
 Avoid each other's spears, for there will be
 Of Trojans and of their renowned allies
 Enough for me to slay, whene'er a god
 Shall bring them in my way. In turn for thee
 Are many Greeks to smite, whomever thou
 Canst overcome."

It is not strange that Addison, who calumniated and insulted nobody, should not have calumniated or insulted Swift; but it is remarkable that Swift, to whom neither genius nor virtue was sacred, and who generally⁵ seemed to find, like most other renegades, a peculiar pleasure in attacking old friends, should have shown so much respect and tenderness to Addison.

Fortune had now changed. The accession¹⁰ of the House of Hanover had secured in England the liberties of the people, and in Ireland the dominion of the Protestant caste. To that caste Swift was more odious than any other man. He was hooted and even¹⁵ pelted in the streets of Dublin, and could not venture to ride along the strand for his health without the attendance of armed servants. Many whom he had formerly served now libeled and insulted him. At this time Addi-²⁰son arrived. He had been advised not to show the smallest civility to the Dean of St. Patrick's. He had answered, with admirable spirit, that it might be necessary for men whose fidelity to their party was suspected, to²⁵ hold no intercourse with political opponents;

^{15.} Because he was suspected of being implicated in a plot to restore the Stuarts.

but that one who had been a steady Whig in the worst times might venture, when the good cause was triumphant, to shake hands with an old friend who was one of the vanquished
5 Tories. His kindness was soothing to the proud and cruelly wounded spirit of Swift; and the two great satirists resumed their habits of friendly intercourse.

Those associates of Addison whose political
10 opinions agreed with his shared his good fortune. He took Tickell with him to Ireland. He procured for Budgell a lucrative place in the same kingdom. Ambrose Philips was provided for in England. Steele had injured
15 himself so much by his eccentricity and perverseness that he obtained but a very small part of what he thought his due. He was, however, knighted; he had a place in the household; and he subsequently received
20 other marks of favor from the court.

Addison did not remain long in Ireland. In 1715 he quitted his secretaryship for a seat at the Board of Trade. In the same year his comedy of the "Drummer" was brought on
25 the stage. The name of the author was not announced. The piece was coldly received;

23. Board of Trade. The branch of the government that deals with commerce and statistics.

and some critics have expressed a doubt whether it were really Addison's. To us the evidence, both external and internal, seems decisive. It is not in Addison's best manner; but it contains numerous passages which no⁵ other writer known to us could have produced. It was again performed after Addison's death, and, being known to be his, was loudly applauded.

Towards the close of the year 1715, while¹⁰ the Rebellion was still raging in Scotland, Addison published the first number of a paper called the "Freeholder." Among his political works the "Freeholder" is entitled to the first place. Even in the "Spectator" there are¹⁵ few serious papers nobler than the character of his friend, Lord Somers, and certainly no satirical papers superior to those in which the Tory fox hunter is introduced. This character is the original of Squire Western, and is drawn²⁰ with all Fielding's force and with a delicacy of which Fielding was altogether destitute. As none of Addison's works exhibits stronger marks of his genius than the "Freeholder," so none does more honor to his moral charac-²⁵

11. **Rebellion of 1715.** A rising of the Jacobites, whose object was to restore the Stuarts.

20. **Squire Western.** A character in Fielding's "Tom Jones."

ter. It is difficult to extol too highly the candor and humanity of a political writer whom even the excitement of civil war cannot hurry into unseemly violence. Oxford, it is
5 well known, was then the stronghold of Toryism. The High Street had been repeatedly lined with bayonets in order to keep down the disaffected gowmsmen; and traitors pursued by the messengers of the government had
10 been concealed in the garrets of several colleges. Yet the admonition which, even under such circumstances, Addison addressed to the university, is singularly gentle, respectful, and even affectionate: indeed, he could not find it
15 in his heart to deal harshly even with imaginary persons. His fox hunter, though ignorant, stupid, and violent, is at heart a good fellow, and is at last reclaimed by the clemency of the King. Steele was dissatisfied with his friend's
20 moderation, and, though he acknowledged that the "Freeholder" was excellently written, complained that the ministry played on a lute when it was necessary to blow the trumpet. He accordingly determined to execute a flour-
25 ish after his own fashion, and tried to rouse the public spirit of the nation by means of a paper called the "Town Talk," which is now

as utterly forgotten as his "Englishman," as his "Crisis," as his "Letter to the Bailiff of Stockbridge," as his "Reader": in short, as everything that he wrote without the help of Addison. 5

In the same year in which the "Drummer" was acted, and in which the first numbers of the "Freeholder" appeared, the estrangement of Pope and Addison became complete. Addison had from the first seen that Pope ¹⁰ was false and malevolent. Pope had discovered that Addison was jealous. The discovery was made in a strange manner. Pope had written the "Rape of the Lock," in two cantos, without supernatural machinery. ¹⁵ These two cantos had been loudly applauded, and by none more loudly than by Addison. Then Pope thought of the sylphs and gnomes. Ariel, Momentilla, Crispissa, and Umbriel, and resolved to interweave the Rosicrucian ²⁰ mythology with the original fabric. He asked Addison's advice. Addison said that the poem as it stood was a delicious little thing, and entreated Pope not to run the risk of marring what was so excellent in trying to ²⁵

²⁰ Rosicrucian. A German sect supposed to have been founded in the fourteenth century. They pretended to effect strange and magical deeds and to have strange spirits at their command.

mend it. Pope afterwards declared that this insidious council first opened his eyes to the baseness of him who gave it.

Now there can be no doubt that Pope's
5 plan was most ingenious, and that he afterwards
executed it with great skill and success; but
does it necessarily follow that Addison's
advice was bad? And, if Addison's advice
was bad, does it necessarily follow that it was
10 given from bad motives? If a friend were to
ask us whether we would advise him to risk
his all in a lottery of which the chances were
ten to one against him, we should do our best
to dissuade him from running such a risk.
15 Even if he were so lucky as to get the thirty
thousand pound prize, we should not admit
that we had counseled him ill, and we should
certainly think it the height of injustice in him
to accuse us of having been actuated by malice.
20 We think Addison's advice good advice. It
rested on a sound principle, the result of long
and wide experience. The general rule un-
doubtedly is, that, when a successful work of
imagination has been produced, it should not
25 be recast. We cannot at this moment call to
mind a single instance in which this rule has
been transgressed with happy effect, except

the instance of the "Rape of the Lock." Tasso recast his "Jerusalem." Akenside recast his "Pleasures of the Imagination," and his "Epistle to Curio." Pope himself, emboldened, no doubt, by the success with which he had expanded and remodeled the "Rape of the Lock," made the same experiment on the "Dunciad." All these attempts failed. Who was to foresee that Pope would, once in his life, be able to do what he could not himself do twice, and what nobody else has ever done?

Addison's advice was good; but, had it been bad, why should we pronounce it dishonest? Scott tells us that one of his best friends predicted the failure of "Waverly." Herder adjured Goethe not to take so unpromising a subject as Faust. Hume tried to dissuade Robertson from writing the "History of Charles the Fifth." Nay, Pope himself was one of those who prophesied that "Cato" would never succeed on the stage, and advised Addison to print it without risking a repre-

2. **Mark Akenside**, (1721-1770.) A physician who won much success as a poet.

8 **Dunciad**. A satire which attacked a large number of the writers of that day.

16. **Herder**, (1744-1803.) A philosopher who did much to establish modern German literature.

17. **David Hume**, (1711-1776.) A great English historian and philosopher.

sentation. But Scott, Goethe, Robertson, Addison had the good sense and generosity to give their advisers credit for the best intentions. Pope's heart was not of the same kind
5 with theirs.

In 1715, while he was engaged in translating the "Iliad," he met Addison at a coffee-house. Philips and Budgell were there; but their sovereign got rid of them, and asked Pope
10 to dine with him alone. After dinner, Addison said that he lay under a difficulty which he wished to explain. "Tickell," he said, "translated some time ago the first book of the 'Iliad.' I have promised to look it
15 over and correct it. I cannot therefore ask to see yours; for that would be double dealing." Pope made a civil reply, and begged that his second book might have Addison's revision. Addison readily agreed, looked over the
20 second book, and sent it back with warm commendations.

Tickell's version of the first book appeared soon after this conversation. In the preface all rivalry was earnestly disclaimed. Tickell
25 declared that he should not go on with the "Iliad." That enterprise he should leave to powers which he admitted to be superior to

his own. His only view, he said, in publishing this specimen was to bespeak the favor of the public to a translation of the "Odyssey," in which he had made some progress.

Addison and Addison's devoted followers⁵ pronounced both the versions good, but maintained that Tickell's had more of the original. The town gave a decided preference to Pope's. We do not think it worth while to settle such a question of precedence. Neither of the¹⁰ rivals can be said to have translated the "Iliad," unless, indeed, the word "translation" be used in the sense which it bears in the "Midsummer Night's Dream." When Bottom makes his appearance with an ass's head instead¹⁵ of his own, Peter Quince exclaims, "Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art translated." In this sense, undoubtedly, the readers of either Pope or Tickell may very properly exclaim, "Bless thee, Homer! thou art²⁰ translated indeed."

Our readers will, we hope, agree with us in thinking that no man in Addison's situation could have acted more fairly and kindly, both towards Pope and towards Tickell, than he²⁵ appears to have done. But an odious sus-

14. *Midsummer Night's Dream.* Act III., Scene I., line 121.

picion had sprung up in the mind of Pope. He fancied, and he soon firmly believed, that there was a deep conspiracy against his fame and his fortunes. The work on which he had
5 staked his reputation was to be depreciated. The subscription, on which rested his hopes of a competence, was to be defeated. With this view, Addison had made a rival translation; Tickell had consented to father it; and the
10 wits of Button's had united to puff it.

Is there any external evidence to support this grave accusation? The answer is short. There is absolutely none.

Was there any internal evidence which
15 proved Addison to be the author of this version? Was it a work which Tickell was incapable of producing? Surely not. Tickell was a fellow of a college at Oxford, and must be supposed to have been able to construe the
20 "Iliad;" and he was a better versifier than his friend. We are not aware that Pope pretended to have discovered any turns of expression peculiar to Addison. Had such terms of expression been discovered, they
25 would be sufficiently accounted for by supposing Addison to have corrected his friend's lines, as he owned that he had done.

Is there anything in the character of the accused persons which makes the accusation probable? We answer confidently, Nothing. Tickell was long after this time described by Pope himself as a very fair and worthy man.⁵ Addison had been, during many years, before the public. Literary rivals, political opponents, had kept their eyes on him. But neither envy nor faction, in their utmost rage, had ever imputed to him a single deviation¹⁰ from the laws of honor and of social morality. Had he been, indeed, a man meanly jealous of fame, and capable of stooping to base and wicked arts for the purpose of injuring his competitors, would his vices have remained¹⁵ latent so long? He was a writer of tragedy: had he ever injured Rowe? He was a writer of comedy: had he not done ample justice to Congreve, and given valuable help to Steele? He was a pamphleteer: have not his good²⁰ nature and generosity been acknowledged by Swift, his rival in fame, and his adversary in politics?

That Tickell should have been guilty of a villainy seems to us highly improbable. That²⁵ Addison should have been guilty of a villainy seems to us highly improbable. But that

these two men should have conspired together to commit a villainy seems to us improbable in a tenfold degree. All that is known to us of their intercourse tends to prove that it was not the intercourse of two accomplices in crime. These are some of the lines in which Tickell poured forth his sorrow over the coffin of Addison:—

10 “ Or dost thou warn poor mortals left behind,
 A task well suited to thy gentle mind?
 Oh, if sometimes thy spotless form descend,
 To me thine aid, thou guardian genius, lend.
 When rage misguides me, or when fear alarms,
 When pain distresses, or when pleasure charms,
 15 In silent whisperings purer thoughts impart,
 And turn from ill a frail and feeble heart;
 Lead through the paths thy virtue trod before,
 Till bliss shall join, nor death can part us more.”

In what words, we should like to know, did this guardian genius invite his pupil to join in a plan such as the editor of the “*Satirist*” would hardly dare to propose to the editor of the “*Age*”?

We do not accuse Pope of bringing an accusation which he knew to be false. We have not the smallest doubt that he believed it to be true; and the evidence on which he believed it he found in his own bad heart. His own life was one long series of tricks, as mean and as malicious as that of which he

suspected Addison and Tickell. He was all stiletto and mask. To injure, to insult, and to save himself from the consequences of injury and insult by lying and equivocating, was the habit of his life. He published a lampoon on ⁵ the Duke of Chandos: he was taxed with it, and he lied and equivocated. He published a lampoon on Aaron Hill: he was taxed with it, and he lied and equivocated. He published a still fouler lampoon on Lady Mary Wortley ¹⁰ Montagu: he was taxed with it, and he lied with more than usual effrontery and vehemence. He puffed himself and abused his enemies under feigned names. He robbed himself of his own letters, and then raised the ¹⁵ hue and cry after them. Besides his frauds of malignity, of fear, of interest and of vanity, there were frauds which he seemed to have committed from love of fraud alone. He had a habit of strategem, a pleasure in outwitting ²⁰ all who came near him. Whatever his object might be, the indirect road to it was that which he preferred. For Bolingbroke, Pope undoubtedly felt as much love and veneration as it was in his nature to feel for any human ²⁵ being; yet Pope was scarcely dead when it

8. Aaron Hill. A dramatic writer of some merit.

11. Lady Wortley Montagu. "Dunciad," Book II, 1, 135.

was discovered, that, from no motive except the mere love of artifice, he had been guilty of an act of gross perfidy to Bolingbroke.

Nothing was more natural than that such a
5 man as this should attribute to others that
which he felt within himself. A plain, prob-
able, coherent explanation is frankly given to
him; he is certain that it is all a romance. A
line of conduct scrupulously fair, and even
10 friendly, is pursued towards him: he is con-
vinced that it is merely a cover for a vile
intrigue by which he is to be disgraced and
ruined. It is vain to ask him for proofs. He
has none, and wants none, except those which
15 he carries in his own bosom.

Whether Pope's malignity at length provoked Addison to retaliate for the first and last time, cannot now be known with certainty.

We have only Pope's story, which runs
20 thus: a pamphlet appeared containing some
reflections which stung Pope to the quick.
What those reflections were, and whether they
were reflections of which he had a right
to complain, we have now no means of decid-
25 ing. The Earl of Warwick, a foolish and
vicious lad, who regarded Addison with the

3. **Perfidy.** He was accused of committing a breach of trust in publishing certain letters of Bolingbroke.

feelings with which such lads generally regard their best friends, told Pope, truly or falsely, that this pamphlet had been written by Addison's direction. When we consider what a tendency stories have to grow in passing even⁵ from one honest man to another honest man, and when we consider that to the name of honest men neither Pope nor the Earl of Warwick had a claim, we are not disposed to attach much importance to this anecdote.¹⁰

It is certain, however, that Pope was furious. He had already sketched the character of Atticus in prose. In his anger he turned this prose into the brilliant and energetic lines which everybody knows by heart, or ought to¹⁵ know by heart, and sent them to Addison. One charge which Pope has enforced with great skill is probably not without foundation. Addison was, we are inclined to believe, too fond of presiding over a circle of humble²⁰ friends. Of the other imputations which these famous lines are intended to convey, scarcely one has ever been proved to be just, and some are certainly false. That Addison was not in the habit of "damning with faint praise"²⁵ appears from innumerable passages in his writings, and from none more than from those

in which he mentions Pope. And it is not merely unjust, but ridiculous, to describe a man who made the fortune of almost every one of his intimate friends, as “so obliging
 8 that he ne'er obliged.”

That Addison felt the sting of Pope's satire keenly we cannot doubt; that he was conscious of one of the weaknesses with which he was reproached, is highly probable: but his
 10 heart, we firmly believe, acquitted him of the gravest part of the accusation. He acted like himself. As a satirist, he was at his own weapons more than Pope's match, and he would have been at no loss for topics. A dis-
 15 torted and diseased body, tenanted by a yet more distorted and diseased mind; spite and envy thinly disguised by sentiments as benevolent and noble as those which Sir Peter Teazle admired in Mr. Joseph Surface; a feeble,
 20 sickly licentiousness; an odious love of filthy and noisome images,—these were things which a genius less powerful than that to which we owe the “Spectator” could easily have held up to the mirth and hatred of mankind.
 25 Addison had, moreover, at his command other means of vengeance, which a bad man

19. Sir Peter Teazle and Joseph Surface are both characters in the “School for Scandal,” a famous comedy by Sheridan.

would not have scrupled to use. He was powerful in the State. Pope was a Catholic; and in those times a minister would have found it easy to harass the most innocent Catholic by innumerable petty vexations.⁵ Pope, nearly twenty years later, said that "through the lenity of the government alone he could live with comfort." Consider," he exclaimed, "the injury that a man of high rank and credit may do to a private person,¹⁰ under penal laws and many other disadvantages." It is pleasing to reflect that the only revenge which Addison took was to insert in the "Freeholder" a warm encomium on the translation of the "Iliad," and to exhort all¹⁵ lovers of learning to put down their names as subscribers. There could be no doubt, he said, from the specimens already published, that the masterly hand of Pope would do as much for Homer as Dryden had done for²⁰ Virgil. From that time to the end of his life he always treated Pope, by Pope's own acknowledgment, with justice. Friendship was, of course, at an end.

One reason which induced the Earl of²⁵ Warwick to play the ignominious part of tale-bearer on this occasion may have been his

dislike of the marriage which was about to take place between his mother and Addison. The countess dowager, a daughter of the old and honorable family of the Middletons of Chirk, a family which, in any country but ours, would be called noble, resided at Holland House. Addison had, during some years, occupied at Chelsea a small dwelling, once the abode of Nell Gwynn. Chelsea is now a district of London, and Holland House may be called a town residence; but, in the days of Anne and George I., milkmaids and sportsmen wandered between green hedges, and over fields bright with daisies, from Kensington almost to the shore of the Thames. Addison and Lady Warwick were country neighbors, and became intimate friends. The great wit and scholar tried to allure the young lord from the fashionable amusements of beating watchmen, breaking windows, and rolling women in hogsheads down Holborn Hill, to the study of letters and the practice of virtue. These well-meant exertions did little good, however, either to the disciple or to the

7. **Holland House** A beautiful mansion near London, built in the time of Elizabeth. It was long celebrated as the resort of the most brilliant and witty society of the time.

9. **Nell Gwynn.** A notorious actress and favorite of Charles II.

master. Lord Warwick grew up a rake, and Addison fell in love. The mature beauty of the countess has been celebrated by poets in language which, after a very large allowance has been made for flattery, would lead us to⁵ believe that she was a fine woman; and her rank doubtless heightened her attractions. The courtship was long. The hopes of the lover appear to have risen and fallen with the fortunes of his party. His attachment was at¹⁰ length matter of such notoriety, that, when he visited Ireland for the last time, Rowe addressed some consolatory verses to the Chloe of Holland House. It strikes us as a little strange that in these verses Addison should¹⁵ be called Lycidas, a name of singularly evil omen for a swain just about to cross St. George's Channel.

At length Chloe capitulated. Addison was indeed able to treat with her on equal terms.²⁰ He had reason to expect preferment even higher than that which he had attained. He had inherited the fortune of a brother who died governor of Madras. He had purchased an

13. *Chloe*. One of the favorite names for a shepherdess in classic pastorals.

16 *Lycidas*. An unfortunate name because Milton in his famous elegy uses it for his friend, Edward King, who was drowned while crossing St. George's channel.

estate in Warwickshire, and had been welcomed to his domain in very tolerable verse by one of the neighboring squires, the poetical fox hunter, William Somerville. In August, 5 1716, the newspapers announced that Joseph Addison, Esq., famous for many excellent works both in verse and prose, had espoused the Countess Dowager of Warwick.

He now fixed his abode at Holland House, 10 a house which can boast of a greater number of inmates distinguished in political and literary history than any other private dwelling in England. His portrait still hangs there. The features are pleasing; the complexion is 15 remarkably fair; but in the expression we trace rather the gentleness of his disposition than the force and keenness of his intellect.

Not long after his marriage, he reached the height of civil greatness. The Whig govern- 20 ment had, during some time, been torn by internal dissensions. Lord Townshend led one section of the cabinet, Lord Sunderland the other. At length, in the spring of 1717, Sunderland triumphed. Townshend retired 25 from office, and was accompanied by Walpole and Cowper. Sunderland proceeded to recon-

21. Lord Townshend Negotiator of the treaty which bound the Netherlands to support the Hanoverian succession.

struct the ministry, and Addison was appointed secretary of state. It is certain that the seals were pressed upon him, and were at first declined by him. Men equally versed in official business might easily have been found ;⁵ and his colleagues knew that they could not expect assistance from him in debate. He owed his elevation to his popularity, to his stainless probity, and to his literary fame.

But scarcely had Addison entered the cabinet when his health began to fail. From one serious attack he recovered in the autumn ; and his recovery was celebrated in Latin verses, worthy of his own pen, by Vincent Bourne, who was then at Trinity College,¹⁵ Cambridge. A relapse soon took place, and in the following spring Addison was prevented by a severe asthma from discharging the duties of his post. He resigned it, and was succeeded by his friend Craggs, a young man²⁰ whose natural parts, though little improved by cultivation, were quick and showy, whose graceful person and winning manners had made him generally acceptable in society, and who, if he had lived, would probably have²⁵ been the most formidable of all the rivals of Walpole.

As yet there was no Joseph Hume. The ministers, therefore, were able to bestow on Addison a retiring pension of fifteen hundred pounds a year. In what form this pension
5 was given, we are not told by the biographers, and have not time to inquire; but it is certain that Addison did not vacate his seat in the House of Commons.

Rest of mind and body seemed to have
10 re-established his health, and he thanked God, with cheerful piety, for having set him free both from his office and from his asthma. Many years seemed to be before him; and he meditated many works,—a tragedy on the
15 death of Socrates, a translation of the Psalms, a treatise on the evidences of Christianity. Of this last performance, a part, which we could well spare, has come down to us.

But the fatal complaint soon returned, and
20 gradually prevailed against all the resources of medicine. It is melancholy to think that the last months of such a life should have been overclouded both by domestic and by political vexations. A tradition which began
25 early, which has been generally received, and

1. **Joseph Hume.** An economist, who introduced many reforms in Parliament.

15. **Socrates,** (469-399 B.C.) A great Athenian philosopher, the teacher of Plato.

to which we have nothing to oppose, has represented his wife as an arrogant and imperious woman. It is said that, till his health failed him, he was glad to escape from the countess dowager and her magnificent⁵ dining room, blazing with the gilded devices of the house of Rich, to some tavern where he could enjoy a laugh, a talk about Virgil and Boileau, and a bottle of claret with the friends of his happier days. All those friends, how-¹⁰ ever, were not left to him. Sir Richard Steele had been gradually estranged by various causes. He considered himself as one who, in evil times, had braved martyrdom for his political principles, and demanded, when the¹⁵ Whig party was triumphant, a large compensation for what he had suffered when it was militant. The Whig leaders took a very different view of his claims. They thought that he had, by his own petulance and folly,²⁰ brought them as well as himself into trouble, and though they did not absolutely neglect him, doled out favors to him with a sparing hand. It was natural that he should be angry with them, and especially angry with Addison.²⁵ But what, above all, seems to have disturbed

7. **House of Rich.** Another name for Holland House, whose founder was named Rich.

Sir Richard was the elevation of Tickell, who at thirty was made by Addison undersecretary of state; while the editor of the "Tatler" and "Spectator," the author of the "Crisis," the
5 member for Stockbridge, who had been persecuted for firm adherence to the House of Hanover, was, at near fifty, forced, after many solicitations and complaints, to content himself with a share in the patent of Drury Lane
10 Theater. Steele himself says, in his celebrated letter to Congreve, that Addison, by his preference of Tickell, "incurred the warmest resentment of other gentlemen;" and every-
15 thing seems to indicate that, of those resentful gentlemen, Steele was himself one.

While poor Sir Richard was brooding over what he considered as Addison's unkindness, a new cause of quarrel arose. The Whig party, already divided against itself, was rent
20 by a new schism. The celebrated bill for limiting the number of peers had been brought in. The proud Duke of Somerset, first in rank of all the nobles whose religion permitted them to sit in Parliament, was the ostensible
25 author of the measure; but it was supported, and in truth devised, by the prime minister.

We are satisfied that the bill was most pernicious, and we fear that the motives which induced Sunderland to frame it were not honorable to him; but we cannot deny that it was supported by many of the best and wisest⁵ men of that age. Nor was this strange. The royal prerogative had, within the memory of the generation then in the vigor of life, been so grossly abused, that it was still regarded with a jealousy, which, when the peculiar¹⁰ situation of the house of Brunswick is considered, may perhaps be called immoderate. The particular prerogative of creating peers had, in the opinion of the Whigs, been grossly abused by Queen Anne's last ministry; and¹⁵ even the Tories admitted that her Majesty, in swamping, as it has since been called, the Upper House, had done what only an extreme case could justify. The theory of the English Constitution, according to many high author-²⁰ities, was that three independent powers — the sovereign, the nobility, and the commons — ought constantly to act as checks on each other. If this theory was sound, it seemed to follow that to put one of these powers under²⁵

11. **Brunswick.** Another name for the House of Hanover.

15 Queen Anne had created twelve new Tory peers to break the Whig opposition in the House of Lords.

the absolute control of the other two, was absurd. But if the number of peers were unlimited, it could not well be denied that the Upper House was under the absolute control
5 of the Crown and the Commons, and was indebted only to their moderation for any power which it might be suffered to retain.

Steele took part with the Opposition, Addison with the ministers. Steele, in a paper
10 called the "Plebeian," vehemently attacked the bill. Sunderland called for help on Addison, and Addison obeyed the call. In a paper called the "Old Whig" he answered and, indeed, refuted Steele's arguments. It seems
15 to us that the premises of both the controversialists were unsound; that on those premises Addison reasoned well, and Steele ill; and consequently Addison brought out a false conclusion, while Steele blundered upon the
20 truth. In style, in wit, and in politeness, Addison maintained his superiority, though the "Old Whig" is by no means one of his happiest performances.

At first both the anonymous opponents
25 observed the laws of propriety. But at length Steele so far forgot himself as to throw an odious imputation on the morals of the chiefs

of the administration. Addison replied with severity, but, in our opinion, with less severity than was due to so grave an offense against morality and decorum; nor did he, in his just anger, forget for a moment the laws of good⁵ taste and good breeding. One calumny which has been often repeated, and never yet contradicted, it is our duty to expose. It is asserted in the "Biographia Britannica," that Addison designated Steele as "little Dicky."¹⁰ This assertion was repeated by Johnson, who had never seen the "Old Whig," and was therefore excusable. It has also been repeated by Miss Aikin, who has seen the "Old Whig," and for whom, therefore, there is less excuse.¹⁵ Now, it is true that the words "little Dicky" occur in the "Old Whig," and that Steele's name was Richard. It is equally true that the words "little Isaac" occur in the "Duenna," and that Newton's name was Isaac. But we²⁰ confidently affirm that Addison's little Dicky had no more to do with Steele than Sheridan's little Isaac with Newton. If we apply the words "little Dicky" to Steele, we deprive a very lively and ingenious passage, not only of²⁵ all its wit, but of all its meaning. Little Dicky

19. **Duenna.** A celebrated comic opera by Richard Sheridan.

was the nickname of Henry Norris, an actor of remarkably small stature, but of great humor, who played the usurer Gomez, then a most popular part, in Dryden's "Spanish Friar."

5 The merited reproof which Steele had received, though softened by some kind and courteous expressions, galled him bitterly. He replied with little force and great acrimony; but no rejoinder appeared. Addison
10 was fast hastening to his grave, and had, we may well suppose, little disposition to prosecute a quarrel with an old friend. His complaint had terminated in dropsy. He bore up long and manfully; but at length he
15 abandoned all hope, dismissed his physicians, and calmly prepared himself to die.

His works he intrusted to the care of Tickell, and dedicated them a very few days before his death to Craggs, in a letter written
20 with the sweet and graceful eloquence of a Saturday's "Spectator." In this, his last composition, he alluded to his approaching end in words so manly, so cheerful, and so tender, that it is difficult to read them without
25 tears. At the same time, he earnestly recommended the interests of Tickell to the care of Craggs.

Within a few hours of the time at which this dedication was written, Addison sent to beg Gay, who was then living by his wits about town, to come to Holland House. Gay went, and was received with great kindness. To his amazement, his forgiveness was implored by the dying man. Poor Gay, the most good-natured and simple of mankind, could not imagine what he had to forgive. There was, however, some wrong, the remembrance of which weighed on Addison's mind, and which he declared himself anxious to repair. He was in a state of extreme exhaustion, and the parting was doubtless a friendly one on both sides. Gay supposed that some plan to serve him had been in agitation at court, and had been frustrated by Addison's influence. Nor was this improbable. Gay had paid assiduous court to the royal family. But in the Queen's days he had been the eulogist of Bolingbroke and was still connected with many Tories. It is not strange that Addison, while heated by conflict, should have thought himself justified in obstructing the preferment of one whom he might regard as a political enemy. Neither is it strange, that when reviewing his whole life,

3. John Gay, (1688-1732) A poet of some note. His best known works are the "Shepherd's Week" and the "Beggar's Opera."

and earnestly scrutinizing all his motives, he should think that he had acted an unkind and ungenerous part in using his power against a distressed man of letters, who was as harmless and as helpless as a child.

One inference may be drawn from this anecdote. It appears that Addison on his deathbed called himself to a strict account, and was not at ease till he had asked pardon for an injury which it was not even suspected that he had committed, for an injury which would have caused disquiet only to a very tender conscience. It is not, then, reasonable to infer, that, if he had really been guilty of forming a base conspiracy against the fame and fortunes of a rival, he would have expressed some remorse for so serious a crime? But it is unnecessary to multiply arguments and evidence for the defense, when there is neither argument nor evidence for the accusation.

The last moments of Addison were perfectly serene. His interview with his son-in-law is universally known. "See," he said, "how a Christian can die." The piety of Addison was, in truth, of a singularly cheerful character. The feeling which predominates in

all his devotional writings is gratitude. God was to him the all-wise and all-powerful friend who had watched over his cradle with more than maternal tenderness; who had listened to his cries before they could form themselves⁵ in prayer; who had preserved his youth from the snares of vice; who had made his cup run over with worldly blessings; who had doubled the value of those blessings by bestowing a thankful heart to enjoy them, and dear friends¹⁰ to partake them; who had rebuked the waves of the Lingurian gulf, had purified the autumnal air of the Campagna, and had restrained the avalanches of Mount Cenis. Of the Psalms, his favorite was that which represents¹⁵ the Ruler of all things under the endearing image of a shepherd, whose crook guides the flock safe, through gloomy and desolate glens, to meadows well watered and rich with herbage. On that goodness to which he²⁰ ascribed all the happiness of his life, he relied in the hour of death with the love which casteth out fear. He died on the 17th of June, 1719. He had just entered on his forty-eighth year.

25

13. *Campagna*. A malarial tract of land in southern Italy.

15. Addison's version of the twenty-third Psalm was published in No. 144 of the *Spectator*.

His body lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, and was borne thence to the Abbey at dead of night. The choir sang a funeral hymn. Bishop Atterbury, one of
5 those Tories who had loved and honored the most accomplished of the Whigs, met the corpse, and led the procession by torchlight, round the shrine of St. Edward and the graves of the Plantagenets, to the chapel of Henry
10 VII. On the north side of that chapel, in the vault of the house of Albemarle, the coffin of Addison lies next to the coffin of Montague. Yet a few months, and the same mourners passed again along the same aisle. The same
15 sad anthem was again chanted. The same vault was again opened, and the coffin of Craggs was placed close to the coffin of Addison.

Many tributes were paid to the memory of
20 Addison; but one alone is now remembered. Tickell bewailed his friend in an elegy which would do honor to the greatest name in our literature, and which unites the energy and magnificence of Dryden to the tenderness and

1. **Jerusalem Chamber.** A hall in Westminster Abbey hung with tapestries depicting the history of Jerusalem.

8. **St. Edward.** King of England, 1041-1066.

9. **Plantagenets.** The English ruling House from Henry II. to Richard III

purity of Cowper. This fine poem was prefixed to a superb edition of Addison's works, which was published in 1721 by subscription. The names of the subscribers proved how widely his fame had been spread. That his countrymen should be eager to possess his writings, even in a costly form, is not wonderful; but it is wonderful, that, though English literature was then little studied on the continent, Spanish grandees, Italian prelates, marshals of France should be found in the list. Among the most remarkable names are those of the Queen of Sweden, of Prince Eugene, of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, of the Dukes of Parma, Modena, and Guastalla, of the Doge of Genoa, of the Regent Orleans, and of Cardinal Dubois. We ought to add that this edition, though eminently beautiful, is in some important points defective; nor, indeed, do we yet possess a complete collection of Addison's writings.

It is strange that neither his opulent and noble widow, nor any of his powerful and attached friends should have thought of placing even a simple tablet, inscribed with his name, on the walls of the Abbey. It was not

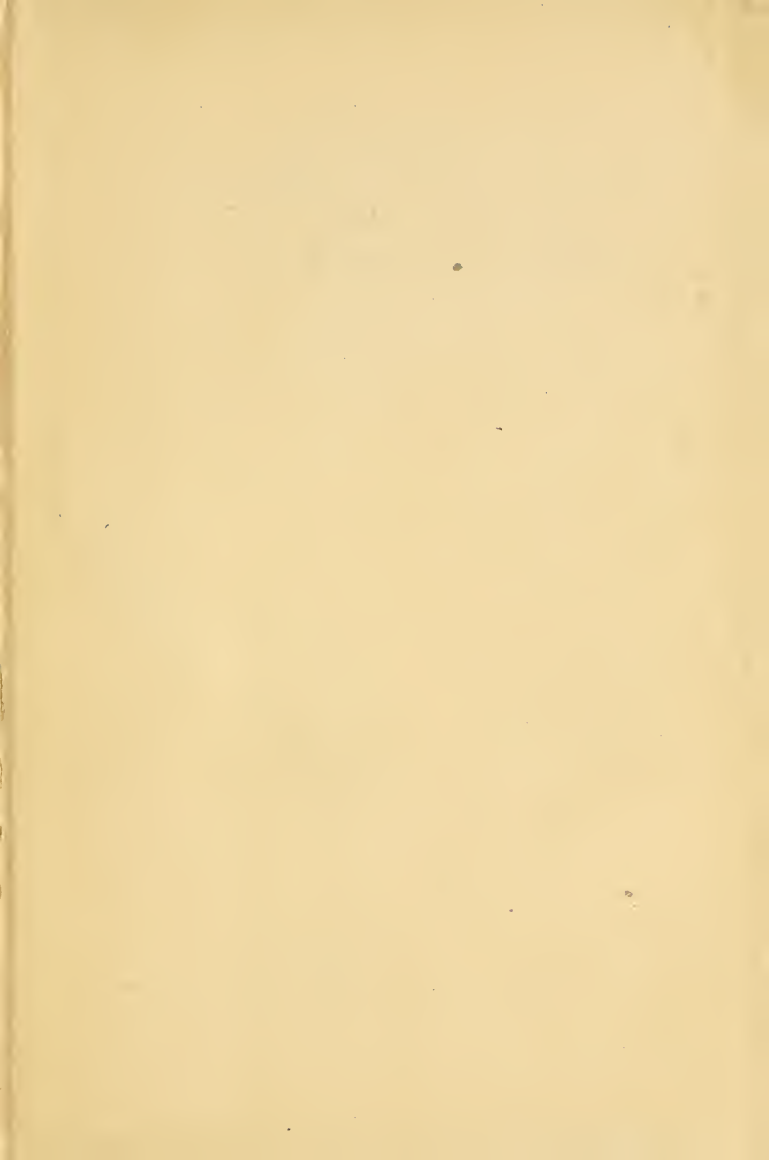
1. **William Cowper**, (1731-1800.) A distinguished poet, the first of the Romantics.

till three generations had laughed and wept over his pages that the omission was supplied by the public veneration. At length, in our own time, his image, skillfully graven, appeared
5 in Poets' Corner. It represents him, as we can conceive him,—clad in his dressing gown, and freed from his wig,—stepping from his parlor at Chelsea into his trim little garden, with the account of the "Everlasting Club," or the
10 "Loves of Hilpa and Shalum," just finished for the next day's "Spectator," in his hand. Such a mark of national respect was due to the unsullied statesman, to the accomplished scholar, to the master of pure English elo-
15 quence, to the consummate painter of life and manners. It was due, above all, to the great satirist, who alone knew how to use ridicule without abusing it, who, without inflicting a wound, effected a great social reform, and who
20 reconciled wit and virtue, after a long and disastrous separation, during which wit had been led astray by profligacy, and virtue by fanaticism.

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