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"[The Spectator] Issue 1, Thursday, March 1, 1711"

By Joseph Addison

*Transcription, correction, editorial commentary, and markup by Staff and
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THE SPECTATOR #1, ^{Spectator}

Thursday, March 1, 1711.

- Recto -

*Non fumum exfulgere, sed ex fumo dare lucem Cogitat, ut speciosa
dehinc miracula promat. --Hor.,* ^{horace}

To be Continued every Day.

I HAVE observed, that a Reader seldom peruses a Book with Pleasure 'till he knows whether the Writer of it be a black or a fair Man, ^{black}, of a mild or choleric Disposition, ^{choleric}, Married or a Batchelor, with other Particulars of the like nature, that conduce, ^{conduce} very much to the right Understanding of an Author. To gratify this Curiosity, which is so natural to a Reader, I design this Paper, and my next, as Prefatory, ^{prefatory} Discourses to my following Writings, and shall give some Account in them of the several persons that are engaged in this Work. As the chief trouble of Compiling, Digesting, and Correcting will fall to my Share, I must do myself the Justice to open the Work with my own History.

I was born to a small Hereditary Estate, which according to the tradition of the village where it lies, was bounded by the same Hedges and Ditches in William the Conqueror's, ^{William} Time that it is at present, and has been delivered down from Father to Son whole and entire, without the Loss or Acquisition of a single

Field or Meadow, during the Space of six hundred Years. There runs a Story in the Family, that when my Mother was gone with Child of me about three Months, she dreamt that she was brought to Bed of a Judge. Whether this might proceed from a Law-suit which was then depending in the Family, or my Fathers being a Justice of the Peace, I cannot determine; for I am not so vain as to think it presaged, ^{presaged} any Dignity that I should arrive at in my future Life, though that was the Interpretation the Neighbourhood put upon it. The Gravity of my Behaviour at my very first Appearance in the World, and all the Time that I sucked, ^{sucked}, seemed to favour my Mothers Dream: For, as she has often told me, I threw away my Rattle before I was two Months old, and would that was the Interpretation which the Neighbourhood put upon not make use of my Coral, ^{coral} till they had taken away the Bells from it.

As for the rest of my Infancy, there being nothing in it remarkable, I shall pass it over in Silence. I find that, during my Nonage, ^{nonage}, I had the reputation of a very sullen Youth, but was always a Favourite of my School-master, who used to say, that my parts, ^{parts} were solid and would wear well. I had not been long at the University, before I distinguished myself by a most profound Silence: For, during the Space of eight Years, excepting in the publick Exercises of the College, I scarce uttered the Quantity of an hundred Words; and indeed do not remember that I ever spoke three Sentences together in my whole Life. Whilst I was in this Learned Body, I applied myself with so much Diligence to my Studies, that there are very few celebrated Books, either in the Learned or the Modern Tongues, which I am not acquainted with.

Upon the Death of my Father I was resolved to travel into Foreign Countries, and therefore left the University, with the Character of an odd unaccountable Fellow, that had a great deal of Learning, if I would but show it. An insatiable Thirst after Knowledge carried me into all the Countries of Europe, in which there was any thing new or strange to be seen; nay, to such a Degree was my curiosity raised, that having read the controversies of some great Men concerning the Antiquities of *Egypt*, I made a Voyage to *Grand Cairo*, on purpose to take the Measure of a Pyramid; and, as soon as I had set my self right in that Particular, returned to my Native Country with great Satisfaction.

I have passed my latter Years in this City, where I am frequently seen in most publick Places, tho there are not above half a dozen of my select Friends that know me; of whom my next Paper shall give a more particular Account. There is no place of general Resort wherein I do not often make my appearance; sometimes I am seen thrusting my Head into a Round of Politicians at Wills, ^{wills}, and listening with great Attention to the Narratives that are made in those little Circular Audiences. Sometimes I smook a Pipe at *Childs*; and, while I seem attentive to nothing but the Post-man, ^{post-man}, over-hear the Conversation of every Table in the Room. I appear on *Sunday* nights at *St. James's Coffee* House, and sometimes join the little Committee of Politicks in the Inner-Room, as one who comes there to hear and improve. My Face is likewise very well known at the *Grecian*, the *Cocoa-Tree*, and in the Theaters both of *Drury Lane* and *the Hay-Market*, ^{theatres}. I have been taken for a Merchant

- Verso -

upon the *Exchange* for above these ten Years, and sometimes pass for a *Jew* in the Assembly of Stock-Jobbers, ^{stock-jobbers} at *Jonathans*. In short, where-ever I see a Cluster of People, I always mix with them, tho I never open my Lips but in my own Club.

Thus I live in the World, rather as a Spectator of Mankind, than as one of the Species; by which means I have made my self a Speculative Statesman, Soldier, Merchant, and Artizan, without ever meddling with any

Practical Part in Life. I am very well versed in the Theory of an Husband, or a Father, and can discern the Errors in the Oeconomy, Business, and Diversion of others, better than those who are engaged in them; as Standers-by discover Blots, ^{blots}, which are apt to escape those who are in the Game. I never espoused any Party with Violence, and am resolved to observe an exact Neutrality between the Whigs and Tories, ^{politics}, unless I shall be forced to declare myself by the Hostilities of either side. In short, I have acted in all the parts of my Life as a Looker-on, which is the Character, ^{character} I intend to preserve in this Paper.

I have given the Reader just so much of my History and Character, as to let him see I am not altogether unqualified for the Business I have undertaken. As for other Particulars in my Life and Adventures, I shall insert them in following Papers, as I shall see occasion. In the mean time, when I consider how much I have seen, read, and heard, I begin to blame my own Taciturnity, ^{taciturnity}; and since I have neither Time nor Inclination to communicate the Fulness of my Heart in Speech, I am resolved to do it in Writing; and to Print my self out, if possible, before I Die. I have been often told by my Friends that it is Pity so many useful Discoveries which I have made, should be in the possession of a Silent Man. For this Reason therefore, I shall publish a Sheet full of Thoughts every Morning, for the Benefit of my Contemporaries; and if I can any way contribute to the Diversion or Improvement of the Country in which I live, I shall leave it, when I am summoned out of it, with the secret Satisfaction of thinking that I have not Lived in vain.

There are three very material Points which I have not spoken to in this Paper, and which, for several important Reasons, I must keep to my self; at least for some Time: I mean, an Account of my Name, my Age, and my Lodgings. I must confess I would gratify my Reader in any thing that is reasonable; but as for these three Particulars, though I am sensible they might tend very much to the Embellishment of my Paper, I cannot yet come to a Resolution of communicating them to the Publick. They would indeed draw me out of that Obscurity which I have enjoyed for many Years, and expose me in Publick Places to several Salutes and Civilities, which have been always very disagreeable to me; for the greatest pain I can suffer, is the being talked to, and being stared at. It is for this Reason likewise, that I keep my Complexion and Dress, as very great Secrets; tho it is not impossible, but I may make Discoveries of both in the Progress of the Work I have undertaken.

After having been thus particular upon my self; I shall in tomorrows Paper give an Account of those Gentlemen who are concerned with me in this Work. For, as I have before intimated, ^{intimated}, a Plan of it is laid and concerted, ^{concerted} (as all other Matters of Importance are) in a Club. However, as my Friends have engaged me to stand in the Front, those who have a mind to correspond with me, may direct their Letters *To the Spectator*, at Mr. *Buckleys*, in *Little Britain*. For I must further acquaint the Reader, that tho our Club meets only on *Tuesdays* and *Thursdays*, we have appointed a Committee to sit every Night, for the Inspection of all such Papers as may contribute to the Advancement of the Public Weal, ^{weal}.

C., ^{clio}

Footnotes

Spectator *The Spectator* is the most famous work of journalism of the eighteenth century in English. It helped define what journalism could be. The series of daily essays, published like a newspaper, set the pattern for a kind of writing that persists to the present day. Comparatively short essays on topics of interest to middle-class readers (politics, fashion, the arts), written in straightforward, unfussy prose without professional jargon: this is a mode of writing that is still standard in print and online journalism. A collaboration between Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, *The Spectator* was for a long time after its initial run in 1711 and 1712 held up to English students and readers as a model of prose style, and although to our eyes there are moments where the prose feels a little archaic, Addison and Steele's version of English prose is much closer to the way that we write now than the prose from a hundred, or even fifty years earlier (Elizabethan prose, for example, is far more challenging to most modern readers than that period's poetry, which is a reversal from what we might expect.) Addison and Steele's main influence on writers and readers over the last three hundred years may lie mostly in the way that the two of them developed and popularized a style of English prose that is more or less the one that we still use in much expository writing.

In modern times, *The Spectator* has been credited with being essential to the formation of what the sociologist Jürgen Habermas has influentially dubbed “the bourgeois public sphere.” Habermas describes the bourgeois public sphere as being made up of private individuals coming together to constitute a public, in this case a public that was not affiliated with the government or the church, but an independent body that could discuss important issues on its own. Gathered together in coffee houses, over tea tables, or simply in their homes, readers of *The Spectator* were among the first citizens to have a print publication that became a common frame of reference for middle-class English-speaking people. The journal set an agenda and a way of thinking about society and the arts that seemed derived, not from the aristocracy or the church, but from the shared world of the readers themselves.

The Spectator followed on the heels of *The Tatler*, which had run from April 12, 1709 to December 30, 1710. Steele had taken the lead with *The Tatler*, asking for help from Addison and others on occasion to fill out the pages. But it was Addison who seems to have been the leader for *The Spectator*, supplying the first issue and many others after that. In this case, timing was everything. Addison and his Whig party had just lost a parliamentary election towards the end of 1710. Addison was a cabinet member, at the center of government policy-making, so he suddenly found himself kicked out of office with time on his hands; writing for in collaboration with his old friend Richard Steele was just the thing to keep his hand in the public conversation. *The Spectator* differed in format in significant ways from its immediate predecessor. It was published daily, except for Sunday; *The Tatler* had come out three days a week. Where *The Tatler* had generally had several items in each issue, most issues of *The Spectator* focused on a single topic. The new journal also had a different framing device than the older one. Where Steele had arranged the articles in *The Tatler* by the imagined location in London from which various “correspondents” were sending him information (theater news coming from Will's Coffee House, political news from the St. James Coffee House, the whole thing being a parody of the way that official newspapers published correspondence from foreign cities), *The Spectator* had a fictional “club” that would come up with ideas. Steele described its members in the second issue: there was a country squire, Sir Roger de Coverly, a lawyer, a businessman (Sir Andrew

Freeport), a soldier (Major Sentry), an aging libertine (Will Honeycomb), and a clergyman. Between them, the Club represented many of the important segments of middle-class culture in the eighteenth century. The Spectator Club never worked quite as it seems to have been intended—relatively few issues feature it in any central way—but it was another means by which the journal was projecting itself as giving a voice to a variety of contemporary interests.

And the journal occasionally referred to the coffee-house culture that middle-class people (well, middle-class men, since women were generally not welcome) had developed in this period, a milieu (depicted here), where men met to socialize, gossip, talk over issues of the day, read from the coffee-shop's stock of newspapers and journals (which were expensive enough that individuals might not subscribe), and get their caffeine fix satisfied.

Most importantly, *The Spectator* introduces a new kind of persona, what critics call an *eidolon*, in the figure of “Mr. Spectator,” in whose voice all of the essays were composed, no matter which of the two men was the actual author. *The Spectator* did not invent the concept of the *eidolon*, but it provided perhaps its most influential model, one imitated over and over again in works such as Benjamin Franklin’s “Silence Dogood” pieces in *The New England Courant* (1721), Samuel Johnson’s *Rambler* essays (1750-52), and even the Federalist essays composed by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay to defend the U. S. Constitution. Mr. Spectator projected himself as a civilized man of the world, an observer looking on society like a fly on the wall. He is well educated, but not a specialist in anything, which enables him to comment on all sorts of things. In the course of its run, *The Spectator* offers essays on fashion, on politics, on religion, on literature. Steele’s essay on Inkle and Yarico (#11) popularized the story to eighteenth-century readers; it would become a cultural phenomenon, with plays, musicals, and poems about the doomed pair of lovers abounding in English-speaking culture over the next few decades. Addison’s essays on John Milton’s epic *Paradise Lost* and the series generally known as “the pleasures of the imagination” became widely influential works of literary criticism and aesthetic theory that to some extent established a paradigm for what modern criticism could be. To be sure, this is a very male *eidolon*, and it is no surprise to discover that *The Spectator’s* essays are very frequently condescending towards women readers. In the 1740s, Eliza Haywood published a journal called *The Female Spectator* <http://www2.scc.rutgers.edu/spectator/haywood/>, one that forms a nice counterweight to the bluff masculinity of Addison and Steele’s journal.

The Spectator ran from March 3, 1711 to December 6, 1712, comprising 555 issues in all. (On his own, Addison revived *The Spectator* briefly for a few months in 1714, but these essays were generally not as popular.) Of these, about 250 issues each were written by Addison and Steele; Addison’s cousin Eustace Budgell contributed a small number, as did the poet John Hughes. Over time, we hope to add more issues of both *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* to this digital anthology.

horace "He intends not smoke from the flame, but fire from the smoke, so as to reveal wonderful things. Horace." Addison is quoting here from "The Art of Poetry," a verse treatise by the Roman poet Horace that was widely read in the eighteenth century. Addison could count on most of his educated readers knowing the allusion, since the poem was so widely taught in secondary schools. The joke here is that Addison is imagining this essay as being read aloud in smoke-filled coffeehouses.

black Dark or light skinned.

choleric A relaxed or angry disposition.

conduce Contribute to.

prefatory introductory.

William The Norman warlord who defeated the English king Harold at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 and became William I.

presaged Predict or foretell.

sucked breastfed

coral That is, his teething ring; these were often made of coral in this period.

nonage Youth or childhood. Source: Oxford English Dictionary

parts Characteristics or elements of a person.

wills Wills was a popular coffee shop. Coffee-drinking was comparatively new to England, having arrived as a practice, probably from Turkey, a few decades before. But coffee shops were everywhere in London in the early eighteenth century, becoming popular places for men (and they were almost-always male dominated domains) to socialize while they satisfied their cravings for caffeine and (since smoking pipes was also popular) nicotine. Over the next few lines, Mr. Spectator names several of the most popular coffee shops in central London at the time.

post-man one of the daily newspapers in London at that time

theatres The theaters on Drury Lane and the Hay-Market were the two state-licensed playhouses in central London. As Mr. Spectator implies here, theaters were as much places to be seen by others as to see a play; they were intensely social spaces, where theatergoers enjoyed the spectacle of other audience members almost as much--and sometimes more--than they enjoyed the performances on the stage.

stock-jobbers stockbrokers, but the sense here is more pejorative than the word is today; selling stock in private companies was comparatively new, and looked at with suspicion by some

blots Exposed pieces in a game like backgammon, checkers, or chess. Source: Oxford English Dictionary

politics The Whigs and the Tories were the two main political factions of the day. The *Spectator* positioned itself as a neutral journal, and part of the reason why Addison and Steele tried to stay anonymous was to keep up that pretense, since they were both well known to be Whigs.

character Addison is punning here on the sense of character as personal identity and character as a printed mark on a page.

taciturnityilence

intimatedshared confidentially

concertedarranged or contrived by two or more people working "in concert"

weal welfare and happiness

clio Addison identified the essays that he wrote with the letters C, L, I, or O, which collectively spell out Clio, the muse of history.

"[The Spectator] Issue 415, Thursday, June 26, 1712"

By Joseph Addison

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- Recto -

THE SPECTATOR, #415

Thursday, June 26, 1712

Adde tot egregias urbes, operumque laborem. Virg., ^{Adde}

Having already shewn how the Fancy is affected by the Works of Nature, and afterwards considered in general both the Works of Nature and of Art, how they mutually assist and compleat each other, in forming such Scenes and Prospects as are most apt to delight the Mind of the Beholder, I shall in this Paper throw together some Reflections on that Particular Art, which has a more immediate Tendency, than any other, to produce those Primary Pleasures of the Imagination, which have hitherto been the Subject of this Discourse. The Art I mean is that of Architecture, which I shall consider only with regard to the Light in which the foregoing Speculations have placed it, without entring into those Rules and Maxims which the great Masters of Architecture have laid down, and explained at large in numberless Treatises upon that Subject.

Greatness , in the Works of Architecture, may be considered as relating to the Bulk and Body of the Structure, or to the *Manner* in which it is built. As for the first, we find the Ancients, especially among the Eastern Nations of the World, infinitely superior to the Moderns.

Not to mention the Tower of *Babel* , of which an old Author says, there were the Foundations to be seen in his time, which looked like a spacious Mountain; what could be more noble than the Walls of *Babylon* , its hanging Gardens, and its Temple to *Jupiter Belus* , that rose a Mile high by Eight several Stories, each Story a Furlong in Height, and on the Top of which was the *Babylonian* Observatory; I might here, likewise, take Notice of the huge Rock that was cut into the Figure of *Semiramis* , with the smaller Rocks that lay by it in the Shape of Tributary Kings; the prodigious Basin, or artificial Lake, which took in the whole *Euphrates* , till such time as a new Canal was formed for its Reception, with the several Trenches through which that River was conveyed. I know there are persons who look upon some of these Wonders of Art as Fabulous, but I cannot find any Grounds for such a Suspicion, unless it be that we have no such Works among us at present. There were indeed many greater Advantages for Building in those Times, and in that Part of the World, than have been met with ever since. The Earth was extremely fruitful, Men lived generally on Pasturage, which requires a much smaller number of Hands than Agriculture: There were few Trades to employ the busie Part of Mankind, and fewer Arts and Sciences to give Work to Men

of Speculative Tempers; and what is more than all the rest, the Prince was absolute; so that when he went to War, he put himself at the Head of a whole People: As we find *Semiramis* leading her two Millions to the Field, and yet over-powered by the Number of her Enemies. 'Tis no wonder, therefore, when she was at Peace, and turned her Thoughts on Building, that she could accomplish so great Works, with such a prodigious Multitude of Labourers: Besides that, in her Climate, there was small Interruption of Frosts and Winters, which make the Northern Workmen lie half the Year Idle. I might mention too, among the Benefits of the Climate, what Historians say of the Earth, that it sweated out a Bitumen or natural kind of Mortar, which is doubtless the same with that mentioned in Holy Writ, as contributing to the Structure of *Babel*. *Slime they used instead of Mortar.*

In *Egypt* we still see their Pyramids, which answer to the Descriptions that have been made of them; and I question not but a traveller might find out some Remains of the Labyrinth that covered a whole Province, and had a hundred Temples disposed among its several Quarters and Divisions.

The Wall of *China* is one of these Eastern Pieces of Magnificence, which makes a Figure even in the Map of the World, altho an Account of it would have been thought Fabulous, were not the Wall it self still extant.

We are obliged to Devotion for the noblest Buildings that have adorned the several Countries of the World. It is this which has set Men at work on Temples and Publick Places of Worship, not only that they might, by the Magnificence of the Building, invite the Deity to reside within it, but that such stupendous Works might, at the same time, open the Mind to vast Conceptions, and fit it to converse with the Divinity of the Place. For every thing that is Majestick imprints an Awfulness and Reverence on the Mind of the Beholder, and strikes in with the Natural Greatness of the Soul.

In the Second place we are to consider *Greatness of Manner* in Architecture, which has such Force upon the Imagination, that a small Building, where it appears, shall give the Mind nobler Ideas than one of twenty times the Bulk, where the Manner is ordinary or little. Thus, perhaps, a Man would have been more astonished with the Majestick Air that appeared in one of *Protogenes*'s Statues of *Alexander*, tho' no bigger than the Life, than he might have been with Mount *Athos*, had it been cut into the Figure of the Hero, according to the Proposal of *Phidias*, with a River in one Hand, and a City in the other.

Let any one reflect on the Disposition of Mind he finds in himself, at his first Entrance into the *Pantheon* at Rome, and how his Imagination is filled with something Great and Amazing; and, at the same time, consider how little, in proportion, he is affected with the Inside of a *Gothick* Cathedral, tho' it be five times larger than the other; which can arise from nothing else, but the Greatness of the Manner in the one, and the Meanness in the other.

I have seen an Observation upon this Subject in a *French* Author, which very much pleased me. It is in Monsieur *Freart*'s Parallel of the Ancient and Modern Architecture.,^{Freart} I shall give it the Reader with the same Terms of Art which he has made use of. *I am observing (says he) a thing which, in my Opinion, is very curious, whence it proceeds, that in the same Quantity of Superficies, the one Manner seems*

- Verso -

great and magnificent, and the other poor and trifling; the Reason is fine and uncommon. I say then, that to introduce into Architecture this Grandeur of Manner, we ought so to proceed, that the Division of the Principal Members of the Order may consist but of few Parts, that they be all great and of a bold and ample Relievo, and Swelling; and that the Eye, beholding nothing little and mean, the Imagination may be more

vigorously touched and affected with the Work that stands before it. For example; In a Cornice, if the Gola or Cynatium of the Corona, the Coping, the Modillions or Dentelli, make a noble Show by their graceful Projections, if we see none of that ordinary Confusion which is the Result of those little Cavities, Quarter Rounds of the Astragal and I know not how many other intermingled Particulars, which produce no Effect in great and massy Works, and which very unprofitably take up place to the Prejudice of the Principal Member, it is most certain that this Manner will appear Solemn and Great; as on the contrary, that it will have but a poor and mean Effect, where there is a Redundancy of those smaller Ornaments, which divide and scatter the Angles of the Sight into such a Multitude of Rays, so pressed together that the whole will appear but a Confusion.

Among all the Figures in Architecture, there are none that have a greater Air than the Concave and the Convex, and we find in all the Ancient and Modern Architecture, as well in the remote Parts of *China*, as in Countries nearer home, that round Pillars and Vaulted Roofs make a great Part of those Buildings which are designed for Pomp and Magnificence. The Reason I take to be, because in these Figures we generally see more of the Body, than in those of other Kinds. There are, indeed, Figures of Bodies, where the Eye may take in two Thirds of the Surface; but as in such Bodies the Sight must split upon several Angles, it does not take in one uniform Idea, but several Ideas of the same kind. Look upon the Outside of a Dome, your Eye half surrounds it; look up into the Inside, and at one Glance you have all the Prospect of it; the entire Concavity falls into your Eye at once, the Sight being as the Center that collects and gathers into it the Lines of the whole Circumference: In a Square Pillar, the Sight often takes in but a fourth Part of the Surface: and in a Square Concave, must move up and down to the different Sides, before it is Master of all the inward Surface. For this Reason, the Fancy is infinitely more struck with the View of the open Air, and Skies, that passes through an Arch, than what comes through a Square, or any other Figure. The Figure of the Rainbow does not contribute less to its Magnificence, than the Colours to its Beauty, as it is very poetically described by the Son of *Sirach*: *Look upon the Rainbow, and praise him that made it; very beautiful it is in its Brightness; it encompasses the Heavens with a glorious Circle, and the Hands of the Almighty have bended it.*

Having thus spoken of that Greatness which affects the Mind in Architecture, I might next shew the Pleasure that arises in the Imagination from what appears new and beautiful in this Art; but as every Beholder has naturally a greater Taste of these two Perfections in every Building which offers it self to his View, than of that which I have hitherto considered, I shall not trouble my Reader with any Reflections upon it. It is sufficient for my present Purpose, to observe, that there is nothing in this whole Art which pleases the Imagination, but as it is Great, Uncommon, or Beautiful.

O.

Footnotes

- Adde "Count, too, those many stately cities, monument to human toil." from Book II of Virgil's *Georgics*.
- Freart Addison is referring to, and quoting (with some small changes) from Roland Freart's treatise *A Parallel of The Antient Architecture with the Modern* , translated by John Evelyn and published in London in 1664. This quote appears on pages 10 and 11.

"[The Spectator] Issue 412, Monday, June 23, 1712"

By Joseph Addison

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THE SPECTATOR, #412

Divisum sic breve fiet Opus. -----Mart., ^{Mart}

Monday, June 23. 1712

- Recto -

I shall first consider those Pleasures of the Imagination, which arise from the actual View and Survey of outward Objects: And these, I think, all proceed from the Sight of what is *Great, Uncommon, or Beautiful* . There may, indeed, be something so terrible or offensive, that the Horror or Loathsomeness of an Object may over-bear the Pleasure which results from its *Greatness, Novelty, or Beauty* ; but still there will be such a Mixture of Delight in the very Disgust it gives us, as any of these three Qualifications are most conspicuous and prevailing.

By *Greatness* , I do not only mean the Bulk of any single Object, but the Largeness of a whole View, considered as one entire Piece. Such are the Prospects of an open Champaign Country, a vast uncultivated Desart, of huge Heaps of Mountains, high Rocks and Precipices, or a wide Expanse of Waters, where we are not struck with the Novelty or Beauty of the Sight, but with that rude kind of Magnificence which appears in many of these stupendous Works of Nature. Our Imagination loves to be filled with an Object, or to grasp at any thing that is too big for its Capacity. We are flung into a pleasing Astonishment at such unbounded Views, and feel a delightful Stillness and Amazement in the Soul at the Apprehension of them. The Mind of Man naturally hates every thing that looks like a Restraint upon it, and is apt to fancy it self under a sort of Confinement, when the Sight is pent up in a narrow Compass, and shortned on every side by the Neighbourhood of Walls or Mountains. On the contrary, a spacious Horizon is an Image of Liberty, where the Eye has Room to range abroad, to expatiate at large on the Immensity of its Views, and to lose it self amidst the Variety of Objects that offer themselves to its Observation. Such wide and undetermined Prospects are as pleasing to the Fancy, as the Speculations of Eternity or Infinitude are to the Understanding.

But if there be a Beauty or Uncommonness joined with this Grandeur, as in a troubled Ocean, a Heaven adorned with Stars and Meteors, or a spacious Landskip, ^{Landskip} cut out into Rivers, Woods, Rocks, and Meadows, the Pleasure still grows upon us, as it rises from more than a single Principle.

Every thing that is *new* or *uncommon* raises a Pleasure in the Imagination, because it fills the Soul with an agreeable Surprize, gratifies its Curiosity, and gives it an Idea of which it was not before possest. We are indeed so often conversant with one Set of Objects, and tired out with so many repeated Shows of the same Things, that whatever is new or uncommon contributes a little to vary human Life, and to divert our Minds, for a while, with the Strangeness of its Appearance: It serves us for a kind of Refreshment, and takes off from that Satiety we are apt to complain of in our usual and ordinary Entertainments. It is this that bestows Charms on a Monster, and makes even the Imperfections of Nature please us. It is this that recommends Variety, where the Mind is every Instant called off to something new, and the Attention not suffered to dwell too long, and waste it self on any particular Object. It is this, likewise, that improves what is great or beautiful, and make it afford the Mind a double Entertainment. Groves, Fields, and Meadows, are at any Season of the Year pleasant to look upon, but never so much as in the Opening of the Spring, when they are all new and fresh, with their first Gloss upon them, and not yet too much accustomed and familiar to the Eye. For this Reason there is nothing that more enlivens a Prospect than Rivers, Jetteaus, or Falls of Water, where the Scene is perpetually shifting, and entertaining the Sight every Moment with something that is new. We are quickly tired with looking upon Hills and Vallies, where every thing continues fixed and settled in the same Place and Posture, but find our Thoughts a little agitated and relieved at the Sight of such Objects as are ever in Motion, and sliding away from beneath the Eye of the Beholder.

But there is nothing that makes its Way more directly to the Soul than *Beauty* , which immediately diffuses a secret Satisfaction and Complacency through the Imagination, and gives a Finishing to any thing that is Great or Uncommon. The very first Discovery of it strikes the Mind with an inward Joy, and spreads a Cheerfulness and Delight through all its Faculties. There is not perhaps any real Beauty or Deformity more in one Piece of Matter than another, because we might have been so made, that whatsoever now appears loathsome to us, might have shewn it self agreeable; but we find by Experience, that there are several Modifications of Matter which the Mind, without any previous Consideration, pronounces at first sight Beautiful or Deformed. Thus we see that every different Species of sensible Creatures has its different Notions of Beauty, and that each of them is most affected with the Beauties of its own Kind. This is no where more remarkable than in Birds of the same Shape and Proportion, where we often see the Male determined in his Courtship by the single Grain or Tincture of a Fea-

- Verso -

ther, and never discovering any Charms but in the Colour of its Species.

Scit thalamo servare fidem, sanctasque veretur, ^{Scit}
Connubii leges, non illum in pectore candor
Sollicitat niveus; neque pravum accendit amorem
Splendida Lanugo, vel honesta in vertice crista,
Purpureusve nitor pennarum; ast agmina latè
Fæminea explorat cautus, maculasque requirit
Cognatas, paribusque interlita corpora guttis:
Ni faceret, pictis sylvam circum undique monstros
Confusam aspiceres vulgò, partusque biformes,

*Et genus ambiguum, et Veneris monumenta nefandæ.
Hinc merula in nigro se oblectat nigra marito,
Hinc socium lasciva petit Philomela canorum,
Agnoscitque pares sonitus, hinc Noctua tetram
Canitiem alarum, et glaucos miratur ocellos.
Nempe sibi semper constat, crescitque quotannis
Lucida progenies, castos confessa parentes;
Dum virides inter saltus lucosque sonoros
Vere novo exultat, plumasque decora Juventus
Explicat ad solem, patriisque coloribus ardet.*

There is a second Kind of *Beauty* that we find in the several Products of Art and Nature, which does not work in the Imagination with that Warmth and Violence as the Beauty that appears in our proper Species, but is apt however to raise in us a secret Delight, and a kind of Fondness for the Places or Objects in which we discover it. This consists either in the Gaiety or Variety of Colours, in the Symmetry and Proportion of Parts, in the Arrangement and Disposition of Bodies, or in a just Mixture and Concurrence of all together. Among these several Kinds of Beauty the Eye takes most Delight in Colours. We no where meet with a more glorious or pleasing Show in Nature than what appears in the Heavens at the rising and setting of the Sun, which is wholly made up of those different Stains of Light that shew themselves in Clouds of a different Situation. For this Reason we find the Poets, who are always addressing themselves to the Imagination, borrowing more of their Epithets from Colours than from any other Topic. As the Fancy delights in every thing that is Great, Strange, or Beautiful, and is still more pleased the more it finds of these Perfections in the same Object, so is it capable of receiving a new Satisfaction by the Assistance of another Sense. Thus any continued Sound, as the Musick of Birds, or a Fall of Water, awakens every moment the Mind of the Beholder, and makes him more attentive to the several Beauties of the Place that lye before him. Thus if there arises a Fragrancy of Smells or Perfumes, they heighten the Pleasures of the Imagination, and make even the Colours and Verdure of the Landskip appear more agreeable; for the Ideas of both Senses recommend each other, and are pleasanter together than when they enter the Mind separately: As the different Colours of a Picture, when they are well disposed, set off one another, and receive an additional Beauty from the Advantage of their Situation.

O., ^o

Footnotes

Mart "The task, broken up, becomes shorter." from the *Epigrams* of the Roman poet Martial.

LandskipLandscape

Scit The Latin poem is by Addison himself. The translation, by an unknown writer, comes from a 1744 edition of the *Spectator* .

"The feather'd Husband, to his partner true,
Preserves connubial Rites inviolate.
With cold Indifference every Charm he sees,
The milky Whiteness of the stately Neck,
The shing Down, proud Crest, and purple Wings:
But cautious with a searching Eye explores
The female Tribes, his proper Mate to find,
With kindred Colours mark'd: Did he not so,
The Grove with painted Monsters wou'd abound,
Th'ambiguous Product of unnatural Love.
The Black-bird hence selects her sooty Spouse:
The Nightingale her musical Compeer,
Lur'd by the well-known Voice: the Bird of Night,
Smit with his dusky Wings, and greenish Eyes,
Woos his dun Paramour. The beauteous Race
Speak the chaste loves of their Progenitors;
When, by the Spring invited, they exult
In Woods and Fields, and to the Sun unfold
Their Plumes, that with paternal Colours glow."

O Addison signed each issue of the journal that he wrote with either C, L, I, O, the letters spelling the name "Clio," the muse of history.

"[The Spectator] Issue 413, Tuesday, June 24, 1712"

By Joseph Addison

Transcription, correction, editorial commentary, and markup by Project Gutenberg and Staff and Research Assistants at The University of Virginia

The Spectator No. 413

Tuesday, June 24, 1712

—Causa latet, vis est notissima— Ovid.

Though in Yesterday's Paper we considered how every thing that is Great, New, or Beautiful, is apt to affect the Imagination with Pleasure, we must own that it is impossible for us to assign the necessary Cause of this Pleasure, because we know neither the Nature of an Idea, nor the Substance of a Human Soul, which might help us to discover the Conformity or Disagreeableness of the one to the other; and therefore, for want of such a Light, all that we can do in Speculations of this kind is to reflect on those Operations of the Soul that are most agreeable, and to range under their proper Heads, what is pleasing or displeasing to the Mind, without being able to trace out the several necessary and efficient Causes from whence the Pleasure or Displeasure arises.

Final Causes lye more bare and open to our Observation, as there are often a great Variety that belong to the same Effect; and these, tho' they are not altogether so satisfactory, are generally more useful than the other, as they give us greater Occasion of admiring the Goodness and Wisdom of the first Contriver.

One of the Final Causes of our Delight, in any thing that is great, may be this. The Supreme Author of our Being has so formed the Soul of Man, that nothing but himself can be its last, adequate, and proper Happiness. Because, therefore, a great Part of our Happiness must arise from the Contemplation of his Being, that he might give our Souls a just Relish of such a Contemplation, he has made them naturally delight in the Apprehension of what is Great or Unlimited. Our Admiration, which is a very pleasing Motion of the Mind, immediately rises at the Consideration of any Object that takes up a great deal of Room in the Fancy, and by Consequence, will improve into the highest Pitch of Astonishment and Devotion when we contemplate his Nature, that is neither circumscribed by Time nor Place, nor to be comprehended by the largest Capacity of a Created Being.

He has annexed a secret Pleasure to the Idea of any thing that is new or uncommon, that he might encourage us in the Pursuit after Knowledge, and engage us to search into the Wonders of his Creation; for every new Idea brings such a Pleasure along with it, as rewards any Pains we have taken in its Acquisition, and consequently serves as a Motive to put us upon fresh Discoveries.

He has made every thing that is beautiful in our own Species pleasant, that all Creatures might be tempted to multiply their Kind, and fill the World with Inhabitants; for 'tis very remarkable that where-ever Nature is crost in the Production of a Monster (the Result of any unnatural Mixture) the Breed is incapable of propagating its Likeness, and of founding a new Order of Creatures; so that unless all Animals were allured by the Beauty of their own Species, Generation would be at an End, and the Earth unpeopled.

In the last Place, he has made every thing that is beautiful in all other Objects pleasant, or rather has made so many Objects appear beautiful, that he might render the whole Creation more gay and delightful. He has given almost every thing about us the Power of raising an agreeable Idea in the Imagination: So that it is impossible for us to behold his Works with Coldness or Indifference, and to survey so many Beauties without a secret Satisfaction and Complacency. Things would make but a poor Appearance to the Eye, if we saw them only in their proper Figures and Motions: And what Reason can we assign for their exciting in us many of those Ideas which are different from any thing that exists in the Objects themselves, (for such are Light and Colours) were it not to add Supernumerary Ornaments to the Universe, and make it more agreeable to the Imagination? We are every where entertained with pleasing Shows and Apparitions, we discover Imaginary Glories in the Heavens, and in the Earth, and see some of this Visionary Beauty poured out upon the whole Creation; but what a rough unsightly Sketch of Nature should we be entertained with, did all her Colouring disappear, and the several Distinctions of Light and Shade vanish? In short, our Souls are at present delightfully lost and bewildered in a pleasing Delusion, and we walk about like the enchanted Hero of a Romance, who sees beautiful Castles, Woods and Meadows; and at the same time hears the warbling of Birds, and the purling of Streams; but upon the finishing of some secret Spell, the fantastick Scene breaks up, and the disconsolate Knight finds himself on a barren Heath, or in a solitary Desert. It is not improbable that something like this may be the State of the Soul after its first Separation, in respect of the Images it will receive from Matter; tho indeed the Ideas of Colours are so pleasing and beautiful in the Imagination, that it is possible the Soul will not be deprived of them, but perhaps find them excited by some other Occasional Cause, as they are at present by the different Impressions of the subtle Matter on the Organ of Sight.

I have here supposed that my Reader is acquainted with that great Modern Discovery, which is at present universally acknowledged by all the Enquirers into Natural Philosophy: Namely, that Light and Colours, as apprehended by the Imagination, are only Ideas in the Mind, and not Qualities that have any Existence in Matter. As this is a Truth which has been proved incontestably by many Modern Philosophers, and is indeed one of the finest Speculations in that Science, if the English Reader would see the Notion explained at large, he may find it in the Eighth Chapter of the second Book of Mr. Lock's Essay on Human Understanding.

O.

Mr. Spectator,

I would not divert the Course of your Discourses, when you seem bent upon obliging the World with a train of Thinking, which, rightly attended to, may render the Life of every Man who reads it, more easy and happy for the future. The Pleasures of the Imagination are what bewilder Life, when Reason and Judgment do not interpose; It is therefore a worthy Action in you to look carefully into the Powers of Fancy, that other Men, from the Knowledge of them, may improve their Joys and allay their Grievs, by a just use of that Faculty: I say, Sir, I would not interrupt you in the progress of this Discourse; but if you will do me the Favour of inserting this Letter in your next Paper, you will do some Service to the Public, though not in so noble a way of Obliging, as that of improving their Minds. Allow me, Sir, to acquaint you with a Design (of which I am partly Author), though it tends to no greater a Good than that of getting Money. I should not

hope for the Favour of a Philosopher in this Matter, if it were not attempted under all the Restrictions which you Sages put upon private Acquisitions.

The first Purpose which every good Man is to propose to himself, is the Service of his Prince and Country; after that is done, he cannot add to himself, but he must also be beneficial to them. This Scheme of Gain is not only consistent with that End, but has its very Being in Subordination to it; for no Man can be a Gainer here but at the same time he himself, or some other, must succeed in their Dealings with the Government. It is called the Multiplication Table, and is so far calculated for the immediate Service of Her Majesty, that the same Person who is fortunate in the Lottery of the State, may receive yet further Advantage in this Table. And I am sure nothing can be more pleasing to Her gracious Temper than to find out additional Methods of increasing their good Fortune who adventure anything in Her Service, or laying Occasions for others to become capable of serving their Country who are at present in too low Circumstances to exert themselves. The manner of executing the Design is, by giving out Receipts for half Guineas received, which shall entitle the fortunate Bearer to certain Sums in the Table, as is set forth at large in the Proposals Printed the 23rd instant. There is another Circumstance in this Design, which gives me hopes of your Favour to it, and that is what Tully advises, to wit, that the Benefit is made as diffusive as possible. Every one that has half a Guinea is put into a possibility, from that small Sum, to raise himself an easy Fortune; when these little parcels of Wealth are, as it were, thus thrown back again into the Redonation of Providence, we are to expect that some who live under Hardship or Obscurity, may be produced to the World in the Figure they deserve by this means. I doubt not but this last Argument will have Force with you, and I cannot add another to it, but what your Severity will, I fear, very little regard; which is, that

I am, Sir, Your greatest Admirer,

Richard Steele.

"[The Spectator] Issue 414, Wednesday, June 25, 1712"

By Joseph Addison

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THE SPECTATOR #414

- Recto -

-----Alterius sic

Altera poscit opem res et conjurat amicè. , ^{Avia}

Wednesday June 25. 1712.

If we consider the Works of Nature and Art, as they are qualified to entertain the Imagination, we shall find the last very defective, in Comparison of the former; for though they may sometimes appear as Beautiful or Strange, they can have nothing in them of that Vastness and Immensity, which afford so great an Entertainment to the Mind of the Beholder. The one may be as Polite and Delicate as the other, but can never shew her self so August and Magnificent in the Design. There is something more bold and masterly in the rough careless Strokes of Nature, than in the nice Touches and Embellishments of Art. The Beauties of the most stately Garden or Palace lie in a narrow Compass, the Imagination immediately runs them over, and requires something else to gratifie her; but, in the wide Fields of Nature, the Sight wanders up and down without Confinement, and is fed with an infinite variety of Images, without any certain Stint or Number. For this Reason we always find the Poet in Love with a Country-Life, where Nature appears in the greatest Perfection, and furnishes out all those Scenes that are most apt to delight the Imagination.

Scriptorum chorus omnis amat nemus & fugit Urbes.

Hor., ^{Hor}

*Hic Secura quies, & nescia fallere vita,
Dives opum variarum; hic latis otia fundis,
Speluncæ, vivique lacus, hic frigida Tempe,
Mugitusque boum, mollesque sub arbore somni.*

Virg., ^{Virg}

But tho' there are several of these wild Scenes, that are more delightful than any artificial Shows; yet we find the Works of Nature still more pleasant, the more they resemble those of Art: For in this case our Pleasure rises from a double Principle; from the Agreeableness of the Objects to the Eye, and from their Similitude to other Objects: We are pleased as well with comparing their Beauties, as with surveying them, and can represent them to our Minds, either as Copies or Originals. Hence it is that we take Delight in a Prospect which is well laid out, and diversified with Fields and Meadows, Woods and Rivers; in those accidental Landskips, ^{Landskips} of Trees, Clouds and Cities, that are sometimes found in the Veins of Marble; in the curious Fret-work of Rocks and Grottos; and, in a Word, in any thing that hath such a Variety or Regularity as may seem the Effect of Design, in what we call the Works of Chance.

If the Products of Nature rise in Value, according as they more or less resemble those of Art, we may be sure that artificial Works receive a greater Advantage from their Resemblance of such as are natural; because here the Similitude is not only pleasant, but the Pattern more perfect. The prettiest Landskip I ever saw, was one drawn on the Walls of a dark Room, which stood opposite on one side to a navigable River, and on the other to a Park. The Experiment is very common in Opticks, ^{camera} Here you might discover the Waves and Fluctuations of the Water in strong and proper Colours, with the Picture of a Ship entering at one end, and sailing by Degrees through the whole Piece. On another there appeared the Green Shadows of Trees, waving to and fro with the Wind, and Herds of Deer among them in Miniature, leaping about upon the Wall. I must confess, the Novelty of such a Sight may be one occasion of its Pleasantness to the Imagination, but certainly the chief Reason is its near Resemblance to Nature, as it does not only, like other Pictures, give the Colour and Figure, but the Motion of the Things it represents.

We have before observed, that there is generally in Nature something more Grand and August, than what we meet with in the Curiosities of Art. When therefore, we see this imitated in any measure, it gives us a nobler and more exalted kind of Pleasure than what we receive from the nicer and more accurate Productions of Art. On this Account our *English Gardens* are not so entertaining to the Fancy as those in *France* and *Italy*, where we see a large Extent of Ground covered over with an agreeable mixture of Garden and Forest, which represent every where an artificial Rudeness, much more charming than that Neatness and Elegancy

- Verso -

which we meet with in those of our own Country. It might, indeed, be of ill Consequence to the Publick, as well as unprofitable to private Persons, to alienate so much Ground from Pasturage, and the Plow, in many Parts of a Country that is so well peopled, and cultivated to a far greater Advantage. But why may not a whole Estate be thrown into a kind of Garden by frequent Plantations, that may turn as much to the Profit, as the Pleasure of the Owner? A Marsh overgrown with Willows, or a Mountain shaded with Oaks, are not only more beautiful, but more beneficial, than when they lie bare and unadorned. Fields of Corn make a pleasant Prospect, and if the Walks were a little taken care of that lie between them, if the natural Embroidery of the Meadows were helpt and improved by some small Additions of Art, and the several Rows of Hedges set off by Trees and Flowers, that the Soil was capable of receiving, a Man might make a pretty Landskip of his own Possessions.

Writers who have given us an Account of *China*, tell us the Inhabitants of that Country laugh at the Plantations of our *Europeans*, which are laid out by the Rule and Line; because, they say, any one may place Trees in equal Rows and uniform Figures. They chuse rather to shew a Genius in Works of this Nature, and therefore always conceal the Art by which they direct themselves. They have a Word, it

seems, in their Language, by which they express the particular Beauty of a Plantation that thus strikes the Imagination at first Sight, without discovering what it is that has so agreeable an Effect. Our *British* Gardeners, on the contrary, instead of humouring Nature, love to deviate from it as much as possible. Our Trees rise in Cones, Globes, and Pyramids. We see the Marks of the Scissars upon every Plant and Bush. I do not know whether I am singular in my Opinion, but, for my own part, I would rather look upon a Tree in all its Luxuriance and Diffusion of Boughs and Branches, than when it is thus cut and trimmed into a Mathematical Figure; and cannot but fancy that an Orchard in Flower looks infinitely more delightful, than all the little Labyrinths of the more finished Parterre. But as our great Modellers of Gardens have their Magazines of Plants to dispose of, it is very natural for them to tear up all the beautiful Plantations of Fruit Trees, and contrive a Plan that may most turn to their own Profit, in taking off their Evergreens, and the like Moveable Plants, with which their Shops are plentifully stocked.

O.

Footnotes

- Avia "Each demands the help of another." From the Roman poet Horace, *Ars Poetica*.
- Hor "Every chorus of writers loves the grove and flees the cities." from one of the *Epistles* by the Latin poet Horace.
- Virg "The peace of broad domains, caverns, and natural lakes, and cool vales--all are theirs." from book II of the *Georgics* by the Roman poet Virgil. Loeb Classical Library translation.
- Landscape
- camera Landscape. Addison is describing a *camera obscura*, a dark room or a box with a pinhole on one side through which light is let in; on the opposite side or wall, an image of what is outside the room or box appears, upside -down, as in this image. The phenomenon has been known since antiquity, and there was a great deal of interest in it in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when optics was becoming a modern science. Artists, for example, used them to achieve greater realism in when painting landscape scenes. The experiments with the camera obscura in this period ultimately led to the development of modern photography in the first decades of the nineteenth century. A modern photographic camera is in essence a small *camera obscura* with a means of making a permanent record, chemical or digital, of the image projected through a lens.

"[The Spectator] Issue 411, Saturday, June 21, 1712"

By Joseph Addison

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- Recto -

THE SPECTATOR, #411, ^{Spectator}

June 24, 1712

*Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
Trita solo; juvat integros accedere fonteis;
Atque haurire: -----* ^{Lucretius} Lucr.,

Our Sight is the most perfect and most delightful of all our Senses. It fills the Mind with the largest Variety of Ideas, converses with its Objects at the greatest Distance, and continues the longest in Action without being tired or satiated with its proper Enjoyments. The Sense of Feeling can indeed give us a Notion of Extension, Shape, and all other Ideas that enter at the Eye, except Colours; but at the same time it is very much streightned and confined in its Operations, to the number, bulk, and distance of its particular Objects. Our Sight seems designed to supply all these Defects, and may be considered as a more delicate and diffusive kind of Touch, that spreads it self over an infinite Multitude of Bodies, comprehends the largest Figures, and brings into our reach some of the most remote Parts of the Universe.

It is this Sense which furnishes the Imagination with its Ideas; so that by the Pleasures of the Imagination or Fancy (which I shall use promiscuously) I here mean such as arise from visible Objects, either when we have them actually in our View, or when we call up their Ideas in our Minds by Paintings, Statues, Descriptions, or any the like Occasion. We cannot indeed have a single Image in the Fancy that did not make its first Entrance through the Sight; but we have the Power of retaining, altering and compounding those Images, which we have once received, into all the varieties of Picture and Vision that are most agreeable to the *Imagination* ; for by this Faculty a Man in a Dungeon is capable of entertaining himself with Scenes and Landskips more beautiful than any that can be found in the whole Compass of Nature.

There are few Words in the *English* Language which are employed in a more loose and uncircumscribed Sense than those of the *Fancy* and the *Imagination* . I therefore thought it necessary to fix and determine the Notion of these two Words, as I intend to make use of them in the Thread of my following Speculations, that the Reader may conceive rightly what is the Subject which I proceed upon. I must therefore desire him to remember, that by the Pleasures of the Imagination, I mean only such Pleasures as arise originally from

Sight, and that I divide these Pleasures into two Kinds: My Design being first of all to Discourse of those Primary Pleasures of the Imagination, which entirely proceed from such Objects as are before our Eyes; and in the next place to speak of those Secondary Pleasures of the Imagination which flow from the Ideas of visible Objects, when the Objects are not actually before the Eye, but are called up into our Memories, or formed into agreeable Visions of Things that are either Absent or Fictitious.

The Pleasures of the Imagination, taken in the full Extent, are not so gross as those of Sense, nor so refined as those of the Understanding. The last are, indeed, more preferable, because they are founded on some new Knowledge or Improvement in the Mind of Man; yet it must be confest, that those of the Imagination are as great and as transporting as the other. A beautiful Prospect delights the Soul, as much as a Demonstration; and a Description in *Homer* has charmed more Readers than a Chapter in *Aristotle*. Besides, the Pleasures of the Imagination have this Advantage, above those of the Understanding, that they are more obvious, and more easie to be acquired. It is but opening the Eye, and the Scene enters. The Colours paint themselves on the Fancy, with very little Attention of Thought or Application of Mind in the Beholder. We are struck, we know not how, with the Symmetry of any thing we see, and immediately assent to the Beauty of an Object, without enquiring into the particular Causes and Occasions of it.

A Man of a Polite Imagination is let into a great many Pleasures, that the Vulgar are not capable of receiving. He can converse with a Picture, and find an agreeable Companion in a Statue. He meets with a secret Refreshment in a Description, and of

- Verso -

-ten feels a greater Satisfaction in the Prospect of Fields and Meadows, than another does in the Possession. It gives him, indeed, a kind of Property in every thing he sees, and makes the most rude uncultivated Parts of Nature administer to his Pleasures: So that he looks upon the World, as it were in another Light, and discovers in it a Multitude of Charms, that conceal themselves from the generality of Mankind.

There are, indeed, but very few who know how to be idle and innocent, or have a Relish of any Pleasures that are not Criminal; every Diversion they take is at the Expence of some one Virtue or another, and their very first Step out of Business is into Vice or Folly. A Man should endeavour, therefore, to make the Sphere of his innocent Pleasures as wide as possible, that he may retire into them with Safety, and find in them such a Satisfaction as a wise Man would not blush to take. Of this Nature are those of the Imagination, which do not require such a Bent of Thought as is necessary to our more serious Employments, nor, at the same time, suffer the Mind to sink into that Negligence and Remissness, which are apt to accompany our more sensual Delights, but, like a gentle Exercise to the Faculties, awaken them from Sloth and Idleness, without putting them upon any Labour or Difficulty.

We might here add, that the Pleasures of the Fancy are more conducive to Health, than those of the Understanding, which are worked out by Dint of Thinking, and attended with too violent a Labour of the Brain. Delightful Scenes, whether in Nature, Painting, or Poetry, have a kindly Influence on the Body, as well as the Mind, and not only serve to clear and brighten the Imagination, but are able to disperse Grief and Melancholy, and to set the Animal Spirits in pleasing and agreeable Motions. For this Reason Sir *Francis Bacon*, in his *Essay upon Health*, ^{Bacon}, has not thought it improper to prescribe to his Reader a Poem or a Prospect, where he particularly dissuades him from knotty and subtile Disquisitions, and advises him to pursue Studies that fill the Mind with splendid and illustrious Objects, as Histories, Fables, and Contemplations of Nature.

I have in this Paper, by way of Introduction, settled the Notion of those Pleasures of the *Imagination* which are the Subject of my present Undertaking, and endeavoured, by several Considerations, to recommend to my Reader the Pursuit of those Pleasures. I shall, in my next Paper, examine the several Sources from whence these Pleasures are derived.

O.

Footnotes

- Spectator Issues number 411 to 421 of the *Spectator*, all of them written by Joseph Addison, have become known as the "Pleasures of the Imagination" series. They were originally written as one essay, perhaps when Addison was a student at Oxford. The original manuscript still exists, and is housed now at Harvard University. Addison revised the essay, and broke up it up into separate parts for publication in the *Spectator*. Collectively, the series has become known as one of the most important and influential aesthetic treatises in English from the eighteenth century.
- Lucretius "A pathless country of the Pierides I traverse, where no other foot has ever trod. I love to approach virgin springs, and there to drink." From Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*.
- Bacon Addison is alluding to an essay called "Of Regimen" by the English philosopher and politician Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626), an essay probably written in about 1597: "There is a wisdom in this beyond the rules of physic: a man's own observation, what he finds good of, and what he finds hurt of, is the best physic to preserve health; but it is a safer conclusion to say, 'This agreeth not well with me, therefore I will not continue it;' than this, 'I find no offence of this, therefore I may use it:' for strength of nature in youth passeth over many excesses which are owing a man till his age. Discern of the coming on of years, and think not to do the same things still; for age will not be defied. Beware of sudden change in any great point of diet, and, if necessity enforce it, fit the best to it; for it is a secret both in nature and state, that it is safer to change many things than one. Examine thy customs of diet, sleep, exercise, apparel, and the like; and try, in any thing thou shalt judge hurtful, to discontinue it by little and little; but so, as if thou dost find any inconvenience by the change, thou come back to it again: for it is hard to distinguish that which is generally held good and wholesome, from that which is good particularly, and fit for thine own body. To be free-minded and cheerfully disposed at hours of meat and of sleep, and of exercise, is one of the best precepts of long lasting. As for the passions and studies of the mind, avoid envy, anxious fears, anger, fretting inwards, subtle and knotty inquisitions, joys and exhilarations in excess, sadness not communicated. Entertain hopes, mirth rather than joy, variety of delights, rather than surfeit of them; wonder and admiration, and therefore novelties; studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects, as histories, fables, and contemplations of nature. If you fly physic in health altogether, it will be too strange for your body when you shall need it; if you make it too familiar, it will work no extraordinary effect when sickness cometh. I commend rather some diet for certain seasons, than frequent use of physic, except it be grown into a custom; for those diets alter the body more, and trouble it less. Despise no new accident in your body, but ask opinion of it. In sickness, respect health principally; and in health, action: for those that put their bodies to endure in health, may, in most sicknesses which are not very sharp, be cured only with diet and tendering. Celsus could never have spoken it as a physician, had he not been a wise man withal, when he giveth it for one of the great precepts of health and lasting, that a man do vary and interchange contraries, but with an inclination to the more benign extreme: use fasting and full eating, but rather full eating; watching and sleep, but rather sleep; sitting and exercise, but rather exercise, and the like: so shall nature be cherished, and yet taught masteries. Physicians are some of them so pleasing and conformable to the humour of the patient, as they press not the true cure of the disease: and some other are so regular in proceeding according to art for the disease, as they respect not sufficiently the condition of the patient. Take one of a middle temper; or, if it may not be found in one man, combine two of either sort; and forget not to call as well the best acquainted with your body, as the best reputed of for his faculty." [source: Wikimedia Commons]

Selections from: Oroonoko, or, The Royal Slave: A True History

By Aphra Behn

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Selected Text

[Title Page] OROONOKO:OR, THE Royal Slave. A TRUE HISTORY. By Mrs. A. BEHN. LONDON, Printed for Will. Canning, at his Shop in the Temple-Cloysters. 1688. [i] TO THE Right Honourable THE Lord MAITLAND. My Lord, Since the World is grown so Nice and Critical upon Dedications, and will Needs be Judging the Book, by the Wit of the Patron; we ought, with a great deal of Circumspection, to chuse a Person against whom there can be no [ii] Exception; and whose Wit, and Worth, truly Merits all that one is capable of saying upon that Occasion. The most part of Dedications are charg'd with Flattery; and if the World knows a Man has some Vices, they will not allow one to speak of his Virtues. This, my Lord, is for want of thinking Rightly; if Men wou'd consider with Reason, they wou'd have another sort of Opinion, and Esteem of Dedications; and wou'd believe almost every Great Man has enough to make him Worthy of all that can be said of him there. My Lord, a Picture-drawer, when he intends to make a good Picture, essays the Face many Ways, and in [iii] many Lights, before he begins; that he may chuse, from the several turns of it, which is most Agreeable, and gives it the best Grace; and if there be a Scar, an ungrateful Mole, or any little Defect, they leave it out; and yet make the Picture extreamly like: But he who has the good Fortune to draw a Face that is exactly Charming in all its Parts and Features, what Colours or Agreements can be added to make it Finer? All that he can give is but its due; and Glories in a Piece whose Original alone gives it its Perfection. An ill Hand may diminish, but a good Hand cannot augment its Beauty. A Poet is a Painter [iv] in his way; he draws to the Life, but in another kind; we draw the Nobler part, the Soul and Mind; the Pictures of the Pen shall out-last those of the Pencil, and even Worlds themselves. 'Tis a short Chronicle of those Lives that possibly wou'd be forgotten by other Historians, or lye neglected there, however deserving an immortal Fame; for Men of eminent Parts are as Exemplary as even Monarchs themselves; and Virtue is a noble Lesson to be learn'd, and 'tis by Comparison we can Judge and Chuse. 'Tis by such illustrious Presidents Presidents Presidents Precedents. Source: Oxford English Dictionary - [UV Astudstaff], as your Lordship, the World can be Better'd and Refin'd; when a great part of the lazy Nobility [v] - breaks after 'Nobility shall, with Shame, behold the admirable Accomplishments of a Man so Great, and so Young. Your Lordship has Read innumerable Volumes of Men, and Books; not Vainly for the gust of Novelty, but Knowledge, excellent Knowledge: Like the industrious Bee, from every Flower you return Laden with the precious Dew, which you are sure to turn to the Publick Good. You hoard no one Perfection, but lay it all out in the Glorious Service of your Religion and Country; to both which you are a useful and necessary Honour: They both want such Supporters; and 'tis only Men of so elevated Parts, [vi] and fine Knowledge; such noble Principles of Loyalty and Religion this Nation Sighs for. Where shall we find a Man so Young, like St. Augustine, in the midst of all his Youth and Gaiety, Teaching the

World divine Precepts, true Notions of Faith, and Excellent Morality, and, at the same time, be also a perfect Pattern of all that accomplish a Great Man? You have, my Lord, all that refin'd Wit that Charms, and the Affability that Obliges; a Generosity that gives a Lustre to your Nobility; that Hospitality, and Greatness of Mind, that engages the World; and that admirable Conduct, that so [vii]well Instructs it. Our Nation ought to regret and bemoan their Misfortunes, for not being able to claim the Honour of the Birth of a Man who is so fit to serve his Majesty, and his Kingdoms, in all Great and Publick Affairs: And to the Glory of your Nation be it spoken, it produces more considerable Men, for all fine Sence, Wit, Wisdom, Breeding, and Generosity (for the generality of the Nobility) than all other Nations can Boast; and the Fruitfulness of your Virtues sufficiently make amends for the Barrenness of your Soil: Which however cannot be incommode to your Lordship; since your Quality, and the [viii]Veneration that the Commonalty naturally pay their Lords, creates a flowing Plenty there—that makes you Happy. And to compleat your Happiness, my Lord, Heaven has blest you with a Lady, to whom it has given all the Graces, Beauties, and Virtues of her Sex; all the Youth, Sweetness of Nature; of a most illustrious Family; and who is a most rare Example to all Wives of Quality, for her eminent Piety, Easiness, and Condescention; and as absolutely merits Respect from all the World, as she does that Passion and Resignation she receives from your Lordship; and which is, on her part, with so much Tenderness [ix] - breaks after 'Tend'return'd. Methinks your tranquil Lives are an Image of the new Made and Beautiful Pair in Paradise: And 'tis the Prayers and Wishes of all, who have the Honour to know you, that it may Eternally so continue, with Additions of all the Blessings this World can give you. My Lord, the Obligations I have to some of the Great Men of your Nation, particularly to your Lordship, gives me an Ambition of making my Acknowledgments, by all the Opportunities I can; and such humble Fruits, as my Industry produces, I lay at your Lordships Feet. This is a [x]true Story, of a Man Gallant enough to merit your Protection; and, had he always been so Fortunate, he had not made so Inglorious an end: The Royal Slave I had the Honour to know in my Travels to the other World; and though I had none above me in that Country, yet I wanted power to preserve this Great Man. If there be any thing that seems Romantick, I beseech your Lordship to consider, these Countries do, in all things, so far differ from ours, that they produce unconceivable Wonders; at least, they appear so to us, because New and Strange. What I have mention'd I have taken-care shou'd [xi]be Truth, let the Critical Reader judge as he pleases. 'Twill be no Commendation to the Book, to assure your Lordship I writ it in a few Hours, though it may serve to Excuse some of its Faults of Connexion; for I never rested my Pen a Moment for Thought: 'Tis purely the Merit of my Slave that must render it worthy of the Honour it begs; and the Author of that of Subscribing herself, My Lord, Your Lordship's most oblig'dand obedient Servant, A. BEHN.