# The Spectator, Volumes 1, 2 and 3: With Translations and Index for the Series

Richard, Sir Steele; Joseph Addison

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*Richard, Sir Steele; Joseph Addison*

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# THE SPECTATOR

## A NEW EDITION

## REPRODUCING THE ORIGINAL TEXT BOTH AS FIRST ISSUED AND AS CORRECTED BY ITS AUTHORS

## WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND INDEX

BY


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## INTRODUCTION

When Richard Steele, in number 555 of his 'Spectator', signed its last paper and named those who had most helped him

'to keep up the spirit of so long and approved a performance,'

he gave chief honour to one who had on his page, as in his heart, no name but Friend. This was

'the gentleman of whose assistance I formerly boasted in the Preface and concluding Leaf of my 'Tatlers'. I am indeed much more proud of his long-continued Friendship, than I should be of the fame of being thought the author of any writings which he himself is capable of producing. I remember when I finished the 'Tender Husband', I told

him there was nothing I so ardently wished, as that we might some time or other publish a work, written by us both, which should bear the name of THE MONUMENT, in Memory of our Friendship.'

Why he refers to such a wish, his next words show. The seven volumes of the 'Spectator', then complete, were to his mind The Monument, and of the Friendship it commemorates he wrote,

'I heartily wish what I have done here were as honorary to that sacred name as learning, wit, and humanity render those pieces which I have taught the reader how to distinguish for his.'

So wrote Steele; and the 'Spectator' will bear witness how religiously his friendship was returned. In number 453, when, paraphrasing David's Hymn on Gratitude, the 'rising soul' of Addison surveyed the mercies of his God, was it not Steele whom he felt near to him at the Mercy-seat as he wrote

Thy bounteous hand with worldly bliss
  Has made my cup run o'er,
And in a kind and faithful Friend
  Has doubled all my store?

The _Spectator_, Steele-and-Addison's _Spectator_, is a monument befitting the most memorable friendship in our history. Steele was its projector, founder, editor, and he was writer of that part of it which took the widest grasp upon the hearts of men. His sympathies were with all England. Defoe and he, with eyes upon the future, were the truest leaders of their time. It was the firm hand of his friend Steele that helped Addison up to the place in literature which became him. It was Steele who caused the nice critical taste which Addison might

have spent only in accordance with the fleeting fashions of his time, to be inspired with all Addison's religious earnestness, and to be enlivened with the free play of that sportive humour, delicately whimsical and gaily wise, which made his conversation the delight of the few men with whom he sat at ease. It was Steele who drew his friend towards the days to come, and made his gifts the wealth of a whole people. Steele said in one of the later numbers of his _Spectator_, No. 532, to which he prefixed a motto that assigned to himself only the part of whetstone to the wit of others,

'I claim to myself the merit of having extorted excellent productions from a person of the greatest abilities, who would not have let them appear by any other means.'

There were those who argued that he was too careless of his own fame in unselfish labour for the exaltation of his friend, and, no doubt, his rare generosity of temper has been often misinterpreted. But for that Addison is not answerable. And why should Steele have defined his own merits? He knew his countrymen, and was in too genuine accord with the spirit of a time then distant but now come, to doubt that, when he was dead, his whole life's work would speak truth for him to posterity.

The friendship of which this work is the monument remained unbroken from boyhood until death. Addison and Steele were schoolboys together at the Charterhouse. Addison was a dean's son, and a private boarder; Steele, fatherless, and a boy on the foundation. They were of like age. The register of Steele's baptism, corroborated by the entry made on his admission to the Charterhouse (which also implies that he was baptized on the day of his birth) is March 12,

1671, Old Style; New Style, 1672. Addison was born on May-day, 1672. Thus there was a difference of only seven weeks.

Steele's father according to the register, also named Richard, was an attorney in Dublin. Steele seems to draw from experience--although he is not writing as of himself or bound to any truth of personal detail--when in No. 181 of the 'Tatler' he speaks of his father as having died when he was not quite five years of age, and of his mother as 'a very beautiful woman, of a noble spirit.' The first Duke of Ormond is referred to by Steele in his Dedication to the 'Lying Lover' as the patron of his infancy; and it was by this nobleman that a place was found for him, when in his thirteenth year, among the foundation boys at the Charterhouse, where he first met with Joseph Addison. Addison, who was at school at Lichfield in 1683-4-5, went to the Charterhouse in 1686, and left in 1687, when he was entered of Queen's College, Oxford. Steele went to Oxford two years later, matriculating at Christ Church, March 13, 1689-90, the year in which Addison was elected a Demy of Magdalene. A letter of introduction from Steele, dated April 2, 1711, refers to the administration of the will of 'my uncle Gascoigne, to whose bounty I owe a liberal education.' This only representative of the family ties into which Steele was born, an 'uncle' whose surname is not that of Steele's mother before marriage, appears, therefore, to have died just before or at the time when the 'Spectator' undertook to publish a sheetful of thoughts every morning, and--Addison here speaking for him--looked forward to

'leaving his country, when he was summoned out of it, with the secret satisfaction of thinking that he had not lived in vain.'

To Steele's warm heart Addison's friendship stood for all home blessings he had missed. The sister's playful grace, the brother's love, the mother's sympathy and simple faith in God, the father's guidance, where were these for Steele, if not in his friend Addison?

Addison's father was a dean; his mother was the sister of a bishop; and his ambition as a schoolboy, or his father's ambition for him, was only that he should be one day a prosperous and pious dignitary of the Church. But there was in him, as in Steele, the genius which shaped their lives to its own uses, and made them both what they are to us now. Joseph Addison was born into a home which the steadfast labour of his father, Lancelot, had made prosperous and happy. Lancelot Addison had earned success. His father, Joseph's grandfather, had been also a clergyman, but he was one of those Westmoreland clergy of whose simplicity and poverty many a joke has been made. Lancelot got his education as a poor child in the Appleby Grammar School; but he made his own way when at College; was too avowed a Royalist to satisfy the Commonwealth, and got, for his zeal, at the Restoration, small reward in a chaplaincy to the garrison at Dunkirk. This was changed, for the worse, to a position of the same sort at Tangier, where he remained eight years. He lost that office by misadventure, and would have been left destitute if Mr. Joseph Williamson had not given him a living of £120 a-year at Milston in Wiltshire. Upon this Lancelot Addison married Jane Gulstone, who was the daughter of a Doctor of Divinity, and whose brother became Bishop of Bristol. In the little Wiltshire parsonage Joseph Addison and his younger brothers and sisters were born. The essayist was named Joseph after his father's patron, afterwards Sir Joseph Williamson, a friend high in office. While the

children grew, the father worked. He showed his ability and loyalty in books on West Barbary, and Mahomet, and the State of the Jews; and he became one of the King's chaplains in ordinary at a time when his patron Joseph Williamson was Secretary of State. Joseph Addison was then but three years old. Soon afterwards the busy father became Archdeacon of Salisbury, and he was made Dean of Lichfield in 1683, when his boy Joseph had reached the age of 11. When Archdeacon of Salisbury, the Rev. Lancelot Addison sent Joseph to school at Salisbury; and when his father became Dean of Lichfield, Joseph was sent to school at Lichfield, as before said, in the years 1683-4-5. And then he was sent as a private pupil to the Charterhouse. The friendship he there formed with Steele was ratified by the approval of the Dean. The desolate boy with the warm heart, bright intellect, and noble aspirations, was carried home by his friend, at holiday times, into the Lichfield Deanery, where, Steele wrote afterwards to Congreve in a Dedication of the 'Drummer',

'were things of this nature to be exposed to public view, I could show under the Dean's own hand, in the warmest terms, his blessing on the friendship between his son and me; nor had he a child who did not prefer me in the first place of kindness and esteem, as their father loved me like one of them.'

Addison had two brothers, of whom one traded and became Governor of Fort George in India, and the other became, like himself, a Fellow of Magdalene College, Oxford. Of his three sisters two died young, the other married twice, her first husband being a French refugee minister who became a Prebendary of Westminster. Of this sister of Addison's, Swift said she was 'a sort of wit, very like him. I was not fond of her.'

In the latter years of the seventeenth century, when Steele and Addison were students at Oxford, most English writers were submissive to the new strength of the critical genius of France. But the English nation had then newly accomplished the great Revolution that secured its liberties, was thinking for itself, and calling forth the energies of writers who spoke for the people and looked to the people for approval and support. A new period was then opening, of popular influence on English literature. They were the young days of the influence now full grown, then slowly getting strength and winning the best minds away from an imported Latin style adapted to the taste of patrons who sought credit for nice critical discrimination. In 1690 Addison had been three years, Steele one year, at Oxford. Boileau was then living, fifty-four years old; and Western Europe was submissive to his sway as the great monarch of literary criticism. Boileau was still living when Steele published his 'Tatler', and died in the year of the establishment of the 'Spectator'. Boileau, a true-hearted man, of genius and sense, advanced his countrymen from the nice weighing of words by the Précieuses and the grammarians, and by the French Academy, child of the intercourse between those ladies and gentlemen. He brought ridicule on the inane politeness of a style then in its decrepitude, and bade the writers of his time find models in the Latin writers who, like Virgil and Horace, had brought natural thought and speech to their perfection. In the preceding labour for the rectifying of the language, preference had been given to French words of Latin origin. French being one of those languages in which Latin is the chief constituent, this was but a fair following of the desire to make it run pure from its source.

If the English critics who, in Charles the Second's time, submitted to

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