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asterisk works " not fitted for family reading." And we think it unwise to contrast books with one another. Many will recognize the books that form the groundwork of this article, and we have no desire to advertise them to those who do not know them. Stanley Weyman, in *Ovington's Bank*, has given a splendid picture of the railway-speculating era and the financial convulsions that followed. He holds the reader's attention from beginning to end, and his love tale is as natural as it is pleasing. Two new novelists have rightly won attention. *Experience*, by Miss Cotton, is a story that avoids the sensational, deals frankly with many matters of importance and gives us insight into the influence of Christianity on life. Dr. MacKenna, in *Flower o' the Heather*, proves himself to be as clever a novelist as he is brilliant as an essayist and his book is as charming in its portrayal of pure womanhood as it is stirring as a picture of the persecution of the Covenanters in Scotland. These books that have recently appeared prove that English fiction can be pure, wholesome and attractive. But there is room for a writer who can, without pedantry or shibboleth, do for Evangelical Churchmanship what Charlotte Yonge has done for Tractarianism. We can never forget that Fiction has come to stay and cannot be excluded from our homes. It has far more to do with the making of character than most Churchmen believe.

ADDISON AS A STUDENT OF NATURE.

[*The following paper was written for a Literary Society by the late Rev. G. S. Streatfeild, who kindly sent it to us for publication. We greatly regret that before it was possible for it to appear in these pages he passed away.*]

WE associate the name of Joseph Addison with the study of human nature rather than of nature in the larger sense of the word ; yet there are many indications in his writings that, had he lived at the end, instead of at the beginning, of the eighteenth century, and when the love of the beautiful in nature had taken possession of the educated mind, his name might have been associated with the romantic revival that characterized the age of Wordsworth and Coleridge. He may not have possessed that " personal sympathy with nature " that is observed in the writings of Andrew Marvell, the last of the earlier romantic school : the classical reaction, in which Davenant and Waller led the way, and

which found its perfect expression in the work of Pope, had firmly established itself before the day of Addison. The age in which his lot was cast was destitute of the sentiment and spirit of mysticism that distinguish the modern outlook on the world of nature. There are, however, many passages in the *Spectator* from Addison's pen which prove that the works of creation, whether above or around him, kindled his sympathetic, not to say his enthusiastic, interest.

Indeed, to us it must seem strange that, although he was well acquainted with the unrivalled charms of Swiss scenery, they should find no place in the pages of the *Spectator*. If we wish to know what he thought of Switzerland, we must refer to his "Remarks on Italy." In December, 1701, he left Italy for Switzerland, travelling by the Mont Cenis route for Geneva. There he made a considerable stay, and became acquainted with the country by a voyage round the Lake. In his "Remarks on Italy" he describes, but without enthusiasm, some of the features of the country in the neighbourhood of Geneva; the same may be said of his visit to the Tyrol. The only occasion on which his language rises to enthusiasm is on the sight of the Bernese Oberland from the city of Berne, which is "the noblest view in the world"; but there is no attempt at description. Perhaps the best *description* of Alpine scenery is to be found in No. 161 of the *Tatler*, but it is fanciful and imaginative in the extreme. In his "Letter to Lord Halifax," one of Addison's best attempts at poetry, written during his journey from Italy to Switzerland, there is little to suggest that the scenery through which he is passing made any deep impression, but it must be remembered that the journey was undertaken in mid-winter. Little, however, as he has to say about Switzerland, no one can read his Essays without learning that he was keenly sensitive to the charms of nature. Nor can any one be acquainted with his hymns without realising how his soul kindles with spiritual fire in contemplation of nature's works. It has been said that "to read or sing a hymn by Addison is to be in contact with a spirit that in God's works sees God. To him the world is beautiful because God made it and dwells in it." As he looks forth upon the world of nature, he seems to anticipate the thought of Cowper, who bids his readers

> "Lift to heaven an unpresumptuous eye,
> And smiling say, My Father made them all."

The following selection of passages will illustrate Addison's attitude towards nature :—

No. 565. " I was yesterday about sunset walking in the open fields until the night insensibly fell upon me. I at first amused myself with all the richness and variety of colours which appeared in the western parts of heaven ; in proportion as they faded and went out several stars and planets appeared one after another, until the whole firmament was in a glow. The blueness of the ether was exceedingly heightened and enlivened by the season of the year (he was writing in July) and by the rays of all those luminaries that passed through it. The galaxy (i.e. the ' milky way ') appeared in its most beautiful white. To complete the scene, the full moon rose at length in that clouded majesty which Milton takes notice of, and opened to the eye a new picture of nature, which was more finely shaded and disposed among softer lights than that which the sun had before discovered to us. . . . As I was surveying the moon walking in her brightness, and taking her progress among the constellations, a thought rose in me which I believe very often perplexes and disturbs men of serious and contemplative natures. David himself fell into it in that reflection, ' When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained ; what is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou regardest him ? ' "

We note that Addison was before his time in preferring nature to art. Pope had declared himself on the same side, but, though theoretically agreeing with Addison, his practice was very inconsistent with his theory. While lavishing his satire on the formal and artificial fashion of gardening that had so long prevailed, he made his five acres at Twickenham a conspicuous example of formality. Addison really lived at the turn of the tide ; England's slavish copying of the Dutch school of gardening came to an end at the death of William the Third in 1702. The reaction therefore in favour of nature, as opposed to art, may be said to have begun with the eighteenth century, and Addison may be regarded as the champion, or one of the champions, of the change. He had the ear of educated England, and such was the respect in which the *Spectator* was held that the opinions expressed in its pages were not likely to be lost on the reader. In No. 414 Addison declares plainly against art and in favour of nature.

" 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 . . . 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 gratify 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 the 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, et fugit urbes."

. . . . . .

Our British gardeners, 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 scissors 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 luxuriancy and diffusion of boughs and branches, than when it is 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 most finished parterre."

We shall hardly agree with our author when he goes on to say, "but though 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 art." What Addison meant to say was surely that, as has been well observed, "the secret of making a garden beautiful is to let art unobtrusively assist nature."

Ten years before writing for the *Spectator*, Addison had, in a letter to the poet Congreve, confessed his preference for natural beauty by contrasting the pleasure-grounds of Fontainebleau with those of Versailles. In an essay contributed to the *Guardian* he returns to the subject:—

"I am, however, so singular as to prefer Fontainebleau to all the rest. It is situated among rocks and woods that give you a fine variety of savage prospects. The King has humoured the genius of the place, and only made use of so much art as is necessary to help and regulate nature, without reforming her too much. . . . For my part I think there is something more charming in these rude heaps of stone than in so many statues; and would as soon see a river winding through woods and meadows, as when it is tossed up in so many whimsical figures as at Versailles."

No. 477, published September, 1712, possesses a peculiar interest because it appears to describe what we may call Addison's ideal garden; and we should like to indulge the thought that we have here a description of his own garden at Bilton, near Rugby, where he bought an estate in 1711, and where his only child, Charlotte, lived until her death in 1797. In such a conjecture we should be hardly justified in view of the fact that the grounds still retain indications of a formality which do not harmonize with the features depicted in this number of the *Spectator*. "Addison," says Alicia Amherst in her *History of Gardening in England*, "lived at one time at Bilton, in Warwickshire, and his garden is not in a natural style. Part of the garden dates from 1623; some of it was altered in the nineteenth century, but the arbour used by Addison is still there. It is of classical 'Queen Anne' style of architecture, with a straight bench, facing a view of the garden, with nothing rustic about it. There are still, however, in the garden, two old cut yew arbours, also good yew and holly hedges."

No. 477 is in the form of a letter, but the internal evidence is strong that it came from Addison's pen. In any case we may regard the letter as expressing his own views on the subject; nor could he have indicated more clearly than he did in this letter how completely, at least in theory, he had broken with the past in respect of horticulture. I wish time permitted the reading of the letter, but it is very long, and it would be difficult to make selections; but we may notice in passing that the essay contains an expression of his love for birds. "There is another circumstance in which I am very particular, or as my neighbours call me, very whimsical: as my garden invites into it all the birds of the country, by offering them the conveniency of springs and shades, solitudes and shelter, I do not suffer any one to destroy their nests in the spring, or drive them from their usual haunts in fruit time. I value my garden more for being full of black-birds than cherries, and very frankly give them their fruit for their songs."

Nor was it only songsters that possessed a charm for the ears of Addison. He loved to hear the rooks cawing in the tree-tops. One of the delights of Sir Roger de Coverley's country home was its rookery.

No. 110. "At a little distance from Sir Roger's house, among the ruins of an old abbey, there is a long walk of aged elms; which

are shot up so very high, that when one passes under them, the rooks and crows that rest upon the tops of them seem to be cawing in another region. I am very much delighted with this sort of noise, which I consider as a kind of natural prayer to that Being who supplies the wants of his whole creation, and who, in the beautiful language of the Psalms, feedeth the young ravens that call upon him."

Addison was a great tree-lover, and he has no words too strong for the reckless felling of timber. The heading of No. 589 is an apposite quotation from his favourite Ovid:

> "Persequitur scelus ille suum: labefactaque tandem
> Ictibus innumeris, adductaque funibus, arbor
> Corruit.

"He follows up his own wickedness; and the tree ready to fall at length by innumerable blows, and pulled by ropes attached to it, falls."

"I am so great an admirer of trees that the spot of ground I have chosen to build a small seat upon, in the country, is almost in the middle of a large wood. I was obliged, much against my will, to cut down several trees, that I might have any such thing as a walk in my gardens; but then I have taken care to leave the space, between every walk, as much a wood as I found it. The moment you turn either to the right or left you are in a forest, where nature presents you with a much more beautiful scene than could have been raised by art. Instead of tulips or carnations, I can show you oaks in my gardens of four hundred years standing, and a knot of elms that might shelter a troop of horse from the rain.

"It is not without the utmost indignation that I observe several prodigal young heirs in the neighbourhood felling down the most glorious monuments of their ancestors' industry, and ruining, in a day, the product of ages."

Although himself a townsman, Addison goes to the country to find his type of the happy man.

No. 610. "The story of Gyges, the rich Lydian monarch, is a memorable instance to our present purpose. The oracle being asked by Gyges who was the happiest man, replied, Aglaüs. Gyges, who had expected to have heard himself named on this occasion, was much surprised, and very curious to know who this Aglaüs should be. After much inquiry he was found to be an obscure countryman, who employed all his time in cultivating a garden, and a few acres of land about his house."

Before passing from Addison as a horticulturist I draw attention to what has always seemed to me one of the most charming specimens of Addison's style and wit. It is called "A Visit to a Garden," and will be found as No. 218 of the *Tatler*; from first to last it is a plea for nature as opposed to art. Addison lived in the age of

tulippomania, when, as it has been said, " the gamble in tulips was as wild and ruinous as that of the South Sea stock, or shares in the Mississippi Bubble." To Addison's common sense and good taste this fashion was nothing short of ridiculous, and in his characteristic way he attacks it with the weapon of ridicule. Our time-limit forbids my reading the whole of it, but I will endeavour to put before you the gist of the paper, quoting some of the most amusing parts of it :

" I chanced to rise very early one particular morning, and took a walk into the country to divert myself among the fields and meadows, while the green was new, and the flowers in their bloom. As at this season of the year every lane is a beautiful walk, and every hedge full of nosegays, I lost myself with a great deal of pleasure among several thickets and bushes that were filled with a great variety of birds, and an agreeable confusion of notes, which formed the pleasantest scene in the world to one who had passed a whole winter in noise and smoke. The freshness of the dews that lay upon every thing about me, with the cool breath of the morning which inspired the birds with so many delightful instincts, created in me the same kind of animal pleasure, and made my heart overflow with such secret emotions of joy and satisfaction as are not to be described or accounted for."

In a heavy shower of rain the writer takes refuge in the porch of a house, and whilst sitting there overhears a very earnest conversation, which at first causes him great surprise.

" My curiosity was raised when I heard the names of Alexander the Great and Artaxerxes ; and as their talk seemed to run on ancient heroes, I concluded there could not be any secret in it ; for which reason I thought I might fairly listen to what they said. After several parallels between great men, which appeared to me altogether groundless and chimerical, I was surprised to hear one say that he valued the Black Prince more than the Duke of Vendosme. How the Duke of Vendosme should become a rival of the Black Prince, I could not conceive ; and was more startled when I heard a second affirm, with great vehemence, that if the Emperor of Germany was not going off, he should like him better than either of them. He added, that though the season was so changeable, the Duke of Marlborough was in blooming beauty. I was wondering to myself from whence they had received this odd intelligence ; especially when I heard them mention the names of several other great generals, as the Prince of Hesse and the King of Sweden, who, they said, were both running away. To which they added what I entirely agreed with them in, that the crown of France was very weak, but that the Marshal Villars still kept his colours."

The gentleman of the house at this juncture invites the writer to walk in his garden, promising that he will show him "such a blow of tulips as was not to be matched in the whole country."

". . . I was awakened out of these my speculations by observing the company often seemed to laugh at me. I accidentally praised a tulip as one of the finest I ever saw; upon which they told me it was a common Fool's Coat. Upon that I praised a second which it seems was but another kind of Fool's Coat. I had the same fate with two or three more, for which reason I desired the owner of the garden to let me know which were the finest of the flowers; for that I was so unskilful in the art that I thought the most beautiful were the most valuable, and that which had the gayest colours the most beautiful. The gentleman smiled at my ignorance. He seemed a very plain honest man, and a person of good sense, had not his head been touched with that distemper which Hippocrates calls the *Τυλιππομανία*, insomuch that he would talk very rationally on any subject in the world but a tulip.

"He told me that he valued the bed of flowers, which lay before us, and was not above twenty yards in length and two in breadth, more than he would the best hundred acres in England, and added, that it would have been worth twice the money it is, if a foolish cook-maid of his had not almost ruined him the last winter by mistaking a hand-ful of tulip-roots for a heap of onions, and by that means, says he, made me a dish of pottage that cost me above a thousand pounds sterling. He then showed me what he thought the finest of his tulips, which I found received all their value from their rarity and oddness, and put me in mind of your great fortunes, which are not always the greatest beauties.

"I have often looked upon it as a piece of happiness, that I have never fallen into any of these fantastical tastes, nor esteemed any thing the more for its being uncommon and hard to be met with. For this reason I look upon the whole country in spring time as a spacious garden and make as many visits to a spot of daisies, or a bank of violets as a florist does to his borders or parterres. There is not a bush in blossom within a mile of me which I am not acquainted with, nor scarce a daffodil or cowslip that withers away in my neighbourhood without my missing it. I walked home in this temper of mind through several fields and meadows with an unspeakable pleasure, not without reflecting on the bounty of Providence which has made the most pleasing and most beautiful objects the most ordinary and common."

(*To be concluded.*)