JOSEPH ADDISON
Born at Milston in Wiltshire, 1672; educated at Lichfield Grammar School, the Charterhouse and Magdalen College, Oxford, where he was a Demy and Fellow. M.P. for Malmesbury, Under-Secretary of State, Secretary of the Irish Government and Secretary of State in England, he died in 1719 at Holland House, his wife's London residence.

SIR RICHARD STEELE
Born at Dublin in 1672; educated at the Charterhouse and Merton College, Oxford. He was elected M.P. for Stockbridge in 1713, for Boroughbridge in 1715 (in which year he was knighted) and for Wendover in 1722. He died at Llangunnor in 1729.
I'll lay thee in a Wilderness of Sweets,
Whatever to the Sense can grateful be
I have collected there.—I want but Thee.
My Husband's gone a Journey far away,
Much Gold he took abroad and long will stay,
He nam'd for his Return a distant Day.

Upon her Tongue did such smooth Mischief dwell,
And from her Lips such welcome Flattery fell,
Th' unguarded Youth, in Silken Fetters by'd,
Resign'd his Reason, and with Ease comply'd.
Thus does the Ox to his own Slaughter go,
And thus is senseless of th' impending Blow.
Thus flies the simple Bird into the Snare,
That skilful Fowlers for his Life prepare.
But let my Sons attend, Attend may they
Whom Youthful Vigour may to Sin betray;
Let them false Charmers fly, and guard their Hearts
Against the wily Wanton's pleasing Arts.
With Care direct their Steps, nor turn astray
To tread the Paths of her deceitful Way;
Lest they too late of Her fell Power complain,
And fall, where many mightier have been slain.

Avia Pieridum peragro loca,
nullius ante
Tvilia solo; juvat integros accedere fontes,
Aique haurire... 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 strengthened 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 its 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 into 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 confess, 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 charm'd 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 easy 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 often 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, has not thought it improper to prescribe to his Reader a Poem or a Prospect, where he particularly dissuades him from knotty and subtle 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.

---

No. 412. Saturday, June 21, 1712

IIIUSUR recre breve set opus.—Mart.

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 Horrour or Loathsomeness of an Object may overbear 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 Champain 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 Stilness 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 Confine ment, when the Sight is pent up in a narrow Compass, and shortened 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 cut out into Rivers, Woods, Rocks, and Meadows, the Pleasure still grows upon us, as it arises 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 Surprise, gratifies its Curiosity, and gives it an Idea of which it was not before posset. We are indeed so often conversant with one Sett 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 makes 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 fixt 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 Feather, and never discovering any Charms but in the Colour of its Species.
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

No. 413.  
[ADDISON.]  
Tuesday, June 24.

... Causa latet; vis est notissima ... —Ovid.

Though in Yesterday’s Paper we consider’d 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 lie more bare and open to our Observation, as there are often a greater 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 Acquisitions, 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 in 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 Desart. 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 suppos'd 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. Locke's Essay on Human Understanding.

---

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 herself 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 Touched 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 a Country-Life, where Nature appears in the greatest Perfection, and furnishes out all those Scenes that are most apt to delight the Imagination.

---

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 of Trees, Clouds and Cities, that are sometimes found in the Veins of Marble; in the curious Pret-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. 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 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 helped 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 choose 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 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 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 most 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.

No. 415.
[ADDISON.]

Add to egregias urbes, operumque laborem.—Virg.

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 forgoing Speculations have placed it, without entering 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 Antients, 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 busy 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 three Millions to the Field, and yet overpowered 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 lye 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 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 Majestic 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 Majestic Air that appeared in one of Lysippus’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 Heroe, 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. 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 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 Relief, 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 Cymatium 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 will have but a poor and mean Effect, where there is a Redundancy of those smaller Ornamens, 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 intire Convexity 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 most High have bended it.*

Having thus spoken of that Greatness which affects the Mind in Architecture, I might next shew the Pleasure that rises 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.

No. 416.

[ADDISON.]  

*Quatenus hoc simile est oculis, quod mente videmus.*—Lucr.

I AT first divided the Pleasures of the Imagination, into such as arise from Objects that are actually before our Eyes, or that once entered in at our Eyes, and are afterwards called up into the Mind either barely by its own Operations, or on occasion of something without us, as Statues, or Descriptions. We have already considered the first Division, and shall therefore enter on the other, which, for Distinction sake, I have called the Secondary Pleasures of the Imagination. When I say the Ideas we receive from Statues, Descriptions, or such like

Occasions; are the same that were once actually in our View, it must not be understood that we had once seen the very Place, Action, or Person which are carved or described. It is sufficient, that we have seen Places, Persons, or Actions in general, which bear a Resemblance, or at least some remote Analogy with what we find represented. Since it is in the Power of the Imagination, when it is once Stocked with particular Ideas, to enlarge, compound, and vary them at her own Pleasure.

Among the different Kinds of Representation, Statuaries is the most natural, and shews us something likest the Object that is represented. To make use of a common Instance, let one who is born Blind take an Image in his Hands, and trace out with his Fingers the different Furrows and Impressions of the Chisel, and he will easily conceive how the Shape of a Man, or Beast, may be represented by it; but should he draw his Hand over a Picture, where all is smooth and uniform, he would never be able to imagine how the several Prominencies and Depressions of a human Body could be shewn on a plain Piece of Canvas, that has in it no Unevenness or Irregularity. *Description* runs yet further from the things it represents than Painting; for a Picture bears a real Resemblance to its Original, which Letters and Syllables are wholly void of. Colours speak all Languages, but Words are understood only by such a People or Nation. For this reason, tho’ Men’s Necessities quickly put them on finding out Speech, Writing is probably of a later Invention than Painting; particularly we are told, that in *America* when the Spaniards first arrived there, Expresses were sent to the Emperor of *Mexico* in Paint, and the News of his Country delineated by the Strokes of a Pencil, which was a more natural Way than that of Writing, tho’ at the same time much more imperfect, because it is impossible to draw the little connexions of Speech, or to give the Picture of a Conjunction or an Adverb. It would be yet more strange, to represent visible Objects by Sounds that have no Ideas annexed to them, and to make something like Description in Musick. Yet it is certain, there may be confused, imperfect Notions of this Nature raised in the Imagination by an Artificial Composition of Notes; and we find that great Masters in the Art are able, sometimes to set their Hearers in the heat and hurry of a Battel, to overcast their Minds with melancholy Scenes and Apprehensions of Deaths and Funerals, or to lull them into pleasing Dreams of Groves and Elisiums.

In all these Instances, this Secondary Pleasure of the Imagination proceeds from that Action of the Mind, which compares the Ideas arising from the Original Objects, with the Ideas we receive from the Statue, Picture, Description, or
Sound that represents them. It is impossible for us to give
the necessary Reason, why this Operation of the Mind is
attended with so much Pleasure, as I have before observed
on the same Occasion; but we find a great variety of Entertain-
ments derived from this single Principle: For it is this that not
only gives us a relish of Statuary, Painting and Description,
but makes us delight in all the Actions and Arts of Mimickry.
It is this that makes the several kinds of Wit pleasant, which
consists, as I have formerly shewn, in the Affinity of Ideas:
And we may add, it is this also that raises the little Satis-
faction we sometimes find in the different Sorts of false Wit;
whether it consist in the Affinity of Letters, as an Anagram,
Acrostick; or of Syllables, as in Doggerel Rhimes, Ecchos; or
of Words, as in Puns, Quibbles; or of a whole Sentence or
Poem, to Wings, and Altars. The final Cause, probably, of
annexing Pleasure to this Operation of the Mind, was to
quicken and encourage us in our Searches after Truth, since
the distinguishing one thing from another, and the right dis-
cerning betwixt our Ideas, depends wholly upon our com-
paring them together, and observing the Congruity or Dis-
agreement that appears among the several Works of Nature.

But I shall here confine my self to those Pleasures of the
Imagination, which proceed from Ideas raised by Words,
because most of the Observations that agree with Descriptions,
are equally Applicable to Painting and Statuary.

Words, when well chosen, have so great a Force in them, that
a Description often gives us more lively Ideas than the Sight
of Things themselves. The Reader finds a Scene drawn in
Stronger Colours, and painted more to the Life in his Imagina-
tion, by the help of Words, than by an actual Survey of the
Scene which they describe. In this Case the Poet seems to
get the better of Nature; he takes, indeed, the Landskip after
her, but gives it more vigorous Touches, heightens its Beauty,
and so enlivens the whole Piece, that the Images which flow
from the Objects themselves appear weak and faint, in Com-
parison of those that come from the Expressions. The Reason,
probably, may be, because in the Survey of any Object, we
have only so much of it painted on the Imagination, as comes
in at the Eye; but in its Description, the Poet gives us as free
a View of it as he pleases, and discovers to us several Parts,
that either we did not attend to, or that lay out of our Sight
when we first beheld it. As we look on any Object, our Idea
of it is, perhaps, made up of two or three simple Ideas; but
when the Poet represents it, he may either give us a more
complex Idea of it, or only raise in us such Ideas as are most
apt to affect the Imagination.

No. 416. Friday, June 27, 1712
THE SPECTATOR

It may be here worth our while to examine, how it comes to
pass that several Readers, who are all acquainted with the same
Language, and know the meaning of the Words they read,
should nevertheless have a different Relish of the same Des-
criptions. We find one transported with a Passage, which
another runs over with Coldness and Indifference, or finding
the Representation extremely natural, where another can
perceive nothing of Likeness and Conformity. This different
Taste must proceed either from the Perfection of Imagination
in one more than in another, or from the different Ideas that
several Readers affix to the same Words. For, to have a true
Relish, and form a right Judgment of a Description, a Man
should be born with a good Imagination, and must have well
weighed the Force and Energy that lye in the several Words
of a Language, so as to be able to distinguish which are most
significant and expressive of their proper Ideas, and what
additional Strength and Beauty they are capable of receiving
from Conjunction with others. The Fancy must be warm, to
retain the Print of those Images it hath received from outward
Objects; and the Judgment discerning, to know what Express-
ions are most proper to cloath and adorn them to the best
Advantage. A Man who is deficient in either of these Respects,
tho' he may receive the general Notion of a Description, can
never see distinctly all its particular Beauties: As a Person
with a weak Sight may have the confused Prospect of a Place
that lyes before him, without entering into its several Parts,
or discerning the variety of its Colours in their full Glory and
Perfection.

No. 417. [ADDISON.]
Saturday, June 28.

Quem tu, Melpomene, semel
Nascentem placido lumina videris,
Illum non labor Isthmus
Clariisque pugnem, non aequus iriger, &c.

Sed quad Tibur aquae fertile perfuunt,
Et spissae nemorum conae
Fingent Aeolio carmine nobilem.—Hor.

We may observe, that any single Circumstance of what we
have formerly seen often raises up a whole Scene of Imagery,
and awakens numberless Ideas that before slept in the Imagi-
nation; such a particular Smell or Colour is able to fill the
Mind, on a sudden, with the Picture of the Fields or Gardens
where we first met with it, and to bring up into View all the
Variety of Images that once attended it. Our Imagination takes the hint, and leads us unexpectedly into Cities or Theatres, Plains or Meadows. We may further observe, when the Fancy thus reflects on the Scenes that have past in it formerly, those, which were at first pleasant to behold, appear more so upon Reflection, and that the Memory heightens the Delightfulness of the Original. A Cartesian would account for both these Instances in the following Manner.

The Sett of Ideas which we received from such a Prospect or Garden, having entered the Mind at the same time, have a Sett of Traces belonging to them in the Brain, bordering very near upon one another; when, therefore, any one of these Ideas arises in the Imagination, and consequently dispatches a flow of Animal Spirits to its proper Trace, these Spirits, in the Violence of their Motion, run not only into the Trace, to which they were more particularly directed, but into several of those that lye about it: By this means they awaken other Ideas of the same Sett, which immediately determine a new Dispatch of Spirits, but in the same manner open other Neighbouring Traces, till at last the whole Sett of them is blown up, and the whole Prospect or Garden flourishes in the Imagination. But because the Pleasure we received from these Places far surpassed, and overcame the little Disagreeableness we found in them, for this Reason there was at first a wider Passage worn in the Pleasure Traces, and, on the contrary, so narrow a one in those which belonged to the disagreeable Ideas, that they were quickly stopt up, and rendered incapable of receiving any Animal Spirits, and consequently of exciting any unpleasant Ideas in the Memory.

It would be in vain to enquire, whether the Power of imagining Things strongly proceeds from any greater Perfection in the Soul, or from any nicer Texture in the Brain of one Man than of another. But this is certain, that a noble Writer should be born with this Faculty in its full Strength and Vigour, so as to be able to receive lively Ideas from outward Objects, to retain them long, and to range them together, upon occasion, in such Figures and Representations as are most likely to hit the Fancy of the Reader. A Poet should take as much Pains in forming his Imagination, as a Philosopher in cultivating his Understanding. He must gain a due Relish of the Works of Nature, and be thoroughly conversant in the various Scenery of a Country Life.

When he is stored with Country Images, if he would go beyond Pastoral, and the lower kinds of Poetry, he ought to acquaint himself with the Pomp and Magnificence of Courts. He should be very well versed in every thing that is noble and stately in the Productions of Art, whether it appear in Painting or Statuary, in the great Works of Architecture which are in their present Glory, or in the Ruins of those which flourished in former Ages.

Such Advantages as these help to open a Man's Thoughts, and to enlarge his Imagination, and will therefore have their Influence on all kinds of Writing, if the Author knows how to make right use of them. And among those of the learned Languages who excel in this Talent, the most perfect in their several kinds, are perhaps Homer, Virgil, and Ovid. The first strikes the Imagination wonderfully with what is Great, the second with what is Beautiful, and the last with what is Strange. Reading the Iliad is like travelling through a Country uninhabited, where the Fancy is entertained with a thousand Savage Prospects of vast Deserts, wide uncultivated Marshes, huge Forests, mishapen Rocks and Precipices. On the contrary, the Aeneid is like a well ordered Garden, where it is impossible to find out any Part unadorned, or to cast our Eyes upon a single Spot, that does not produce some beautiful Plant or Flower. But when we are in the Metamorphosis, we are walking on enchanted Ground, and see nothing but Scenes of Magick lying round us.

Homer is in his Province, when he is describing a Battel or a Multitude, a Heroe or a God. Virgil is never better pleas'd, than when he is in his Elysium, or copying out an entertaining Picture. Homer's Epithets generally mark out what is great, Virgil's what is Agreeable. Nothing can be more Magnificent than the Figure Jupiter makes in the first Iliad, nor more charming than that of Venus in the first Aeneid.

Homer's Persons are most of them God-like and Terrible; Virgil has scarce admitted any into his Poem, who are not beautiful, and has taken particular Care to make his Heroe so.

In a word, Homer fills his Readers with Sublime Ideas, and, I believe, has raised the Imagination of all the good Poets that
have come after him. I shall only instance *Horace*, who immediately takes Fire at the first Hint of any Passage in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* and always rises above himself, when he has *Homer* in his View. *Virgil* has drawn together, into his *Aeneid*, all the pleasing Scences his Subject is capable of admitting, and in his *Georgics* has given us a Collection of the most delightful Landskips that can be made out of Fields and Woods, Herds of Cattle, and Swarms of Bees.

*Ovid*, in his *Metamorphosis*, has shown us how the Imagination may be affected by what is Strange. He describes a Miracle in every Story, and always gives us the Sight of some new Creature at the end of it. His Art consists chiefly in well-timing his Description, before the first Shape is quite worn off, and the new one perfectly finished; so that he every where entertains us with something we never saw before, and shows Monster after Monster, to the end of the *Metamorphosis*.

If I were to name a Poet that is a perfect Master in all these Arts of working on the Imagination, I think *Milton* may pass for one: And if his *Paradise Lost* falls short of the *Aeneid* or *Iliad* in this respect, it proceeds rather from the Fault of the Language in which it is written, than from any Defect of Genius in the Author. So Divine a Poem in *English*, is like a stately Palace, built of Brick, where one may see Architecture in as great a Perfection as in one of Marble, tho’ the Materials are of a coarser Nature. But to consider it only as it regards our present Subject: What can be conceived greater than the Battel of Angels, the Majesty of Messiah, the Stature and Behaviour of Satan and his Peers? What more beautiful than *Pandæmonium*, Paradise, Heaven, Angels, *Adam* and *Eve*? What more strange, than the Creation of the World, the several Metamorphoses of the fallen Angels, and the surprising Adventures their Leader meets with in his Search after Paradise? No other Subject could have furnished a Poet with Scenes so proper to strike the Imagination, as no other Poet could have painted those Scenes in more strong and lively Colours.

No. 418. Monday, June 30, 1712

[ADDISON.]

. . . *Ferat & rubus asper amomum.—Virg.*

The Pleasures of these Secondary Views of the Imagination, are of a wider and more universal Nature than those it has when joined with Sight; for not only what is Great, Strange or Beautiful, but any Thing that is Disagreeable when looked upon, pleases us in an apt Description. Here, therefore, we must enquire after a new Principle of Pleasure, which is nothing else but the Action of the Mind, which compares the Ideas that arise from Words, with the Ideas that arise from the Objects themselves; and why this Operation of the Mind is attended with so much Pleasure, we have before considered. For this Reason therefore, the Description of a Dunghill is pleasing to the Imagination, if the Image be represented to our Minds by suitable Expressions; tho’, perhaps, this may be more properly called the Pleasure of the Understanding than of the Fancy, because we are not so much delighted with the Image that is contained in the Description, as with the Aptness of the Description to excite the Image.

But if the Description of what is Little, Common or Deformed, be acceptable to the Imagination, the Description of what is Great, Surprising or Beautiful, is much more so; because here we are not only delighted with comparing the Representation with the Original, but are highly pleased with the Original itself. Most Readers, I believe, are more charmed with *Milton’s* Description of Paradise, than of Hell; they are both, perhaps, equally perfect in their Kind, but in the one the Brimstone and Sulphur are not so refreshing to the Imagination, as the Beds of Flowers and the Wilderness of Sweets in the other.

There is yet another Circumstance which recommends a Description more than all the rest, and that is, if it represents to us such Objects as are apt to raise a secret Ferment in the Mind of the Reader, and to work, with Violence, upon his Passions. For, in this Case, we are at once warmed and enlightened, so that the Pleasure becomes more Universal, and is several ways qualified to entertain us. Thus, in Painting, it is pleasant to look on the Picture of any Face, where the Resemblance is hit, but the Pleasure increases, if it be the Picture of a Face that is beautiful, and is still greater, if the Beauty be softened with an Air of Melancholy or Sorrow. The two leading Passions which the more serious Parts of Poetry endeavour to stir up in us, are Terror and Pity. And here, by the way, one would wonder how it comes to pass, that such Passions as are very unpleasant at all other times, are very agreeable when excited by proper Descriptions. It is not strange, that we should take Delight in such Passages as are apt to produce Hope, Joy, Admiration, Love, or the like Emotions in us, because they never rise in the Mind without an inward Pleasure which attends them. But how comes it to pass, that we should take delight in being terrified or dejected by a Description, when we find so much Uneasiness in the Fear or Grief which we receive from any other Occasion?
If we consider, therefore, the Nature of this Pleasure, we shall find that it does not arise so properly from the Description of what is Terrible, as from the Reflection we make on our selves at the time of reading it. When we look on such hideous Objects, we are not a little pleased to think we are in no Danger of them. We consider them at the same time, as Dreadful and Harmless; so that the more frightful Appearance they make, the greater is the Pleasure we receive from the Sense of our own Safety. In short, we look upon the Terrors of a Description, with the same Curiosity and Satisfaction that we survey a dead Monster.

... Informe cadaver
Prostratus: nequeunt explorari corda tuenda
Terribiles oculos, tumultum, villosaque setis
Pectora semiferi, alque extinctos faucibus ignes.—Virg.

It is for the same Reason that we are delighted with the reflecting upon Dangers that are past, or in looking on a Precipice at a distance, which would fill us with a different kind of Horrour, if we saw it hanging over our Heads.

In the like manner, when we read of Torments, Wounds, Deaths, and the like dismal Accidents, our Pleasure does not flow so properly from the Grief which such melancholy Descriptions give us, as from the secret Comparison which we make between our selves and the Person who suffers. Such Representations teach us to set a just Value upon our own Condition, and make us prize our good Fortune, which exempts us from the like Calamities. This is, however, such a kind of Pleasure as we are not capable of receiving, when we see a Person actually lying under the Tortures that we meet with in a Description; because, in this Case, the Object presses too close upon our Senses, and bears so hard upon us, that it does not give us Time or Leisure to reflect on our selves. Our Thoughts are so intent upon the Miseries of the Sufferer, that we cannot turn them upon our own Happiness. Whereas, on the contrary, we consider the Misfortunes we read in History or Poetry, either as past, or as fictitious, so that the Reflection upon our selves rises in us insensibly, and over-bears the Sorrow we conceive for the Sufferings of the Afflicted.

But because the Mind of Man requires something more perfect in Matter, than what it finds there, and can never meet with any Sight in Nature which sufficiently answers its highest Ideas of Pleasantness; or, in other Words, because the Imagination can fancy to it self Things more Great, Strange, or Beautiful, than the Eye ever saw, and is still sensible of some Defect in what it has seen; on this account it is the part of a

Poet to humour the Imagination in its own Notions, by mending and perfecting Nature where he describes a Reality, and by adding greater Beauties than are put together in Nature, where he describes a Fiction.

He is not obliged to attend her in the slow Advances which she makes from one Season to another, or to observe her Conduct in the successive Production of Plants and Flowers. He may draw into his Description all the Beauties of the Spring and Autumn, and make the whole Year contribute something to render it the more agreeable. His Rose-trees, Wood-bines and Jessamines may flower together, and his Beds be covered at the same time with Lilies, Violets, and Amaranths. His Soil is not restrained to any particular Sett of Plants, but is proper either for Oaks or Mirtles, and adapts it self to the Products of every Climate. Oranges may grow wild in it; Myrrh may be met with in every Hedge, and if he thinks it proper to have a Grove of Spices, he can quickly command Sun enough to raise it. If all this will not furnish out an agreeable Scene, he can make several new Species of Flowers, with richer Scents and higher Colours than any that grow in the Gardens of Nature. His Consorts of Birds may be as full and harmonious, and his Woods as thick and gloomy as he pleases. He is at no more Expence in a long Vista, than a short one, and can as easily throw his Cascades from a Precipice of half a Mile high, as from one of twenty Yards. He has his Choice of the Winds, and can turn the Course of his Rivers in all the variety of Meanders, that are most delightful to the Reader's Imagination. In a Word, he has the modelling of Nature in his own Hands, and may give her what Charms he pleases, provided he does not reform her too much, and run into Absurdities, by endeavouring to excel.

... Menti gratissimus error.—Hor.

There is a kind of Writing, wherein the Poet quite loses sight of Nature, and entertains his Reader's Imagination with the Characters and Actions of such Persons as have many of them no Existence, but what he bestows on them. Such are Fairies, Witches, Magicians, Demons, and departed Spirits. This Mr. Dryden calls the Fairy Way of Writing, which is, indeed, more difficult than any other that depends on the Poet's Fancy, because he has no Pattern to follow in it, and must work altogether out of his own Invention.
THE SPECTATOR  No. 419.  Tuesday, July 1, 1712

There is a very odd turn of Thought required for this sort of Writing, and it is impossible for a Poet to succeed in it, who has not a particular Cast of Fancy, and an Imagination naturally fruitful and superstitious. Besides this, he ought to be very well versed in Legends and Fables, antiquated Romances, and the Traditions of Nurses and old Women, that he may fall in with our natural Prejudices, and humour those Notions which we have imbibed in our Infancy. For, otherwise, he will be apt to make his Fairies talk like People of his own Species, and not like other Sets of Beings, who converse with different Objects, and think in a different manner from that of Mankind;

Sylvis deducti caveant, me judice, Fauni
Ne velut innati trivitis, ac pene forenses,
Aut nimium teneris juventutur versibus ... —Hor.

I do not say with Mr. Bays in the Rehearsal, that Spirits must not be confined to speak Sense, but it is certain their Sense ought to be a little discoloured, that it may seem particular, and proper to the Person and Condition of the Speaker.

These Descriptions raise a pleasing kind of Horrour in the Mind of the Reader, and amuse his Imagination with the Strangeness and Novelty of the Persons who are represented in them. They bring up into our Memory the Stories we have heard in our Childhood, and favour those secret Terrors and Apprehensions to which the Mind of Man is naturally subject. We are pleased with surveying the different Habits and Behaviours of Foreign Countries; how much more must we be delighted and surprised when we are led, as it were, into a new Creation, and see the Persons and Manners of another Species? Men of cold Fancies, and Philosophical Dispositions, object to this kind of Poetry, that it has not Probability enough to affect the Imagination. But to this it may be answered, that we are sure, in general, there are many intellectual Beings in the World besides our selves, and several Species of Spirits, who are subject to different Laws and Oeconomies from those of Mankind; when we see, therefore, any of these represented naturally, we cannot look upon the Representation as altogether impossible; nay, many are possessed with such false Opinions, as dispose them to believe these particular Delusions; at least, we have all heard so many pleasing Relations in favour of them, that we do not care for seeing through the Falshood, and willingly give our selves up to so agreeable an Imposture.

The Ancients have not much of this Poetry among them, for, indeed, almost the whole Substance of it owes its Original to the Darkness and Superstition of later Ages, when pious Frauds were made use of to amuse Mankind, and frighten them into a Sense of their Duty. Our Forefathers looked upon Nature with more Reverence and Horrour, before the World was enlightened by Learning and Philosophy, and loved to astonish themselves with the Apprehensions of Witchcraft, Prodigies, Charms and Enchantments. There was not a Village in England that had not a Ghost in it, the Church-yards were all haunted, every large Common had a Circle of Fairies belonging to it, and there was scarce a Shepherd to be met with who had not seen a Spirit.

Among all the Poets of this Kind our English are much the best, by what I have yet seen, whether it be that we abound with more Stories of this Nature, or that the Genius of our Country is fitter for this sort of Poetry. For the English are naturally Fanciful, and very often disposed by that Gloominess and Melancholy of Temper, which is so frequent in our Nation, to many wild Notions and Visions, to which others are not so liable.

Among the English, Shakespear has incomparably excelled all others. That noble Extravagance of Fancy, which he had in so great Perfection, thoroughly qualified him to touch this weak superstitious Part of his Reader's Imagination; and made him capable of succeeding, where he had nothing to support him besides the Strength of his own Genius. There is something so wild and yet so solemn in the Speeches of his Ghosts, Fairies, Witches and the like Imaginary Persons, that we cannot forbear thinking them natural, tho' we have no Rule by which to judge of them, and must confess, if there are such Beings in the World, it looks highly probable they should talk and act as he has represented them.

There is another sort of Imaginary Beings, that we sometimes meet with among the Poets, when the Author represents any Passion, Appetite, Virtue or Vice, under a visible Shape, and makes it a Person or an Actor in his Poem. Of this Nature are the Descriptions of Hunger and Envy in Ovid, of Fame in Virgil, and of Sin and Death in Milton. We find a whole Creation of the like shadowy Persons in Spenser, who had an admirable Talent in Representations of this kind. I have discoursed of these Emblematical Persons in former Papers, and shall therefore only mention them in this Place. Thus we see how many ways Poetry addresses it self to the Imagination, as it has not only the whole Circle of Nature for its Province, but makes new Worlds of its own, shews us Persons who are not to be found in Being, and represents even the Faculties of
the Soul, with her several Virtues and Vices, in a sensible Shape and Character.

I shall, in my two following Papers, consider in general, how other kinds of Writing are qualified to please the Imagination; with which I intend to conclude this Essay.

No. 420.

[ADDISON.]

Quocunque volent animum auditoris agunto.—Hor.

As the Writers in Poetry and Fiction borrow their several Materials from outward Objects, and join them together at their own Pleasure, there are others who are obliged to follow Nature more closely, and to take entire Scenes out of her. Such are Historians, natural Philosophers, Travellers, Geographers, and, in a Word, all who describe visible Objects of a real Existence.

It is the most agreeable Talent of an Historian to be able to draw up his Armies and fight his Battels in proper Expressions, to set before our Eyes the Divisions, Cabals and Jealousies of Great Men, and to lead us Step by Step into the several Actions and Events of his History. We love to see the Subject unfolding it self by just Degrees, and breaking upon us insensibly, that so we may be kept in a pleasing Suspense, and have Time given us to raise our Expectations, and to side with one of the Parties concerned in the Relation. I confess this shews more the Art than the Veracity of the Historian, but I am only to speak of him as he is qualified to please the Imagination. And in this respect Livy has, perhaps, excelled all who went before him, or have written since his Time. He describes every thing in so lively a Manner, that his whole History is an admirable Picture, and touches on such proper Circumstances in every Story, that this Reader becomes a kind of Spectator, and feels in himself all the variety of Passions which are correspondent to the several Parts of the Relation.

But among this Sett of Writers, there are none who more gratifie and enlarge the Imagination, than the Authors of the new Philosophy, whether we consider their Theories of the Earth or Heavens, the Discoveries they have made by Glasses, or any other of their Contemplations on Nature. We are not a little pleased to find every green Leaf swarm with Millions of Animals, that at their largest Growth are not visible to the naked Eye. There is something very engaging to the Fancy, as well as to our Reason, in the Treatises of Metals, Minerals, Plants, and Meteors. But when we survey the whole Earth at once, and the several Planets that lye within its Neighbourhood, we are filled with a pleasing Astonishment, to see so many Worlds hanging one above another, and sliding round their Axles in such an amazing Pomp and Solemnity. If, after this, we contemplate those wide Fields of Ether, that reach in height as far as from Saturn to the fixt Stars, and run abroad almost to an infinitude, our Imagination finds its Capacity filled with so immense a Prospect, and puts it self upon the Stretch to comprehend it. But if we yet rise higher, and consider the fixt Stars as so many vast Oceans of Flame, that are each of them attended with a different Sett of Planets, and still discover new Firmaments and new Lights, that are sunk farther in those unfathomable Depths of Ether, so as not to be seen by the strongest of our Telescopes, we are lost in such a Labarinth of Suns and Worlds, and confounded with the Immensity and Magnificence of Nature.

Nothing is more pleasant to the Fancy, than to enlarge it self, by Degrees, in its Contemplation of the various Proportions which its several Objects bear to each other, when it compares the Body of Man to the Bulk of the whole Earth, the Earth to the Circle it describes round the Sun, that Circle to the Sphere of the fixt Stars, the Sphere of the fixt Stars to the Circuit of the whole Creation, the whole Creation it self to the Infinite Space that is every where diffused about it; or when the Imagination works downward, and considers the Bulk of a Human Body, in respect of an Animal a hundred times less than a Mite, the particular Limbs of such an Animal, the different Springs which actuate the Limbs, the Spirits which set these Springs a going, and the proportionable Minuteness of these several Parts, before they have arrived at their full Growth and Perfection. But if, after all this, we take the least Particle of these Animal Spirits, and consider its Capacity of being wrought into a World, that shall contain within those narrow Dimensions a Heaven and Earth, Stars and Planets, and every different Species of living Creatures, in the same Analogy and Proportion they bear to each other in our own Universe; such a Speculation, by reason of its Nicety, appears ridiculous to those who have not turned their Thoughts that way, tho' at the same time it is founded on no less than the Evidence of a Demonstration. Nay, we might yet carry it farther, and discover in the smallest Particle of this little World a new inexhausted Fund of Matter, capable of being spun out into another Universe.

I have dwelt the longer on this Subject, because I think it may shew us the proper Limits, as well as the Defectiveness, of our Imagination; how it is confined to a very small Quantity
of Space, and immediately stopt in its Operations, when it endeavours to take in any thing that is very great, or very little. Let a Man try to conceive the different Bulk of an Animal, which is twenty, from another which is a hundred times less than a Mite, or to compare, in his Thoughts, a length of a thousand Diameters of the Earth, with that of a Million, and he will quickly find that he has no different Measures in his Mind, adjusted to such extraordinary Degrees of Grandeur or Minuteness. The Understanding, indeed, opens an infinite Space on every side of us, but the Imagination, after a few faint Efforts, is immediately at a stand, and finds her self swallowed up in the Immensity of the Void that surrounds it: Our Reason can pursue a Particle of Matter through an infinite variety of Divisions, but the Fancy soon loses sight of it, and feels in it self a kind of Chasm, that wants to be filled with Matter of a more sensible Bulk. We can neither widen, nor contract the Faculty to the Dimensions of either Extreme: The Object is too big for our Capacity, when we would comprehend the Circumference of a World, and dwindles into nothing, when we endeavour after the Idea of an Atom.

It is possible this Defect of Imagination may not be in the Soul it self, but as it acts in Conjunction with the Body. Perhaps there may not be room in the Brain for such a variety of Impressions, or the Animal Spirits may be incapable of figuring them in such a manner, as is necessary to excite so very large or very minute Ideas. However it be, we may well suppose that Beings of a higher Nature very much excel us in this respect, as it is probable the Soul of Man will be infinitely more perfect hereafter in this Faculty, as well as in all the rest; insomuch that, perhaps, the Imagination will be able to keep Pace with the Understanding, and to form in it self distinct Ideas of all the different Modes and Quantities of Space.

No. 421. Thursday, July 3.

[ADDISON.]

Ignoris errare locis, ignota videere
Flumina gaudebat; studio minuente laborem.—Ovid.

The Pleasures of the Imagination are not wholly confined to such particular Authors as are conversant in material Objects, but are often to be met with among the Polite Masters of Morality, Criticism, and other Speculations abstracted from Matter, who, tho' they do not directly treat of the visible Parts of Nature, often draw from them their Similitudes, Metaphors, and Allegories. By these Allusions a Truth in the Under-

standing is as it were reflected by the Imagination; we are able to see something like Colour and Shape in a Notion, and to discover a Scheme of Thoughts traced out upon Matter. And here the Mind receives a great deal of Satisfaction, and has two of its Faculties gratified at the same time, while the Fancy is busie in copying after the Understanding, and transcribing Ideas out of the Intellectual World into the Material.

The Great Art of a Writer shews it self in the Choice of pleasing Allusions, which are generally to be taken from the great or beautiful Works of Art or Nature; for though whatever is New or Uncommon is apt to delight the Imagination, the chief Design of an Allusion being to illustrate and explain the Passages of an Author, it should be always borrowed from what is more known and common, than the Passages which are to be explained.

Allegories, when well chosen, are like so many Tracks of Light in a Discourse, that make every thing about them clear and beautiful. A noble Metaphor, when it is placed to an Advantage, casts a kind of Glory round it, and darts a Lustre through a whole Sentence; These different Kinds of Allusion are but so many different Manners of Similitude, and, that they may please the Imagination, the Likeness ought to be very exact, or very agreeable, as we love to see a Picture where the Resemblance is just, or the Posture and Air graceful. But we often find eminent Writers very faulty in this respect; great Scholars are apt to fetch their Comparisons and Allusions from the Sciences in which they are most conversant, so that a Man may see the Compass of their Learning in a Treatise on the most indifferent Subject. I have read a Discourse upon Love, which none but a profound Chymist could understand, and have heard many a Sermon that should only have been preached before a Congregation of Cartesians. On the contrary, your Men of Business usually have recourse to such Instances as are too mean and familiar. They are for drawing the Reader into a Game of Chess or Tennis, or for leading him from Shop to Shop, in the Cant of particular Trades and Employments. It is certain, there may be found an infinite Variety of very agreeable Allusions in both these kinds, but, for the generality, the most entertaining ones lie in the Works of Nature, which are obvious to all Capacities, and more delightful than what is to be found in Arts and Sciences.

It is this Talent of affecting the Imagination, that gives an Embellishment to good Sense, and makes one Man's Compositions more agreeable than another's. It sets off all Writings in general, but is the very Life and highest Perfection of Poetry. Where it shines in an Eminent Degree, it has preserved
several Poems for many Ages, that have nothing else to recommend them; and where all the other Beauties are present, the Work appears dry and insipid, if this single one be wanting. It has something in it like Creation; It bestows a kind of Existence, and draws up to the Reader's View several Objects which are not to be found in Being. It makes Additions to Nature, and gives a greater Variety to God's Works. In a word, it is able to beautifie and adorn the most illustrious Scenes in the Universe, or to fill the Mind with more glorious Shows and Apparitions, than can be found in any Part of it.

We have now discovered the several Originals of those Pleasures that gratify the Fancy; and here, perhaps, it would not be very difficult to cast under their proper Heads those contrary Objects, which are apt to fill it with Distaste and Terreur; for the Imagination is as liable to Pain as Pleasure. When the Brain is hurt by any Accident, or the Mind disordered by Dreams or Sickness, the Fancy is over-run with wild dismal Ideas, and terrified with a thousand hideous Monsters of its own framing.

Eumenidum veluti demens videt agmina Pentheus,
Et solem geminum, & duplex se ostendere Thetas.
Aut Agamemnonius scenis agitatus Orestes,
Armam facibus mahrem & serpentibus abris
Cum fugit, utriciquesque sedent in limine Dirae.—Virg.

There is not a Sight in Nature so mortifying as that of a Distracted Person, when his Imagination is troubled, and his whole Soul disordered and confused. Babylon in Ruins is not so melancholy a Spectacle. But to quit so disagreeable a Subject, I shall only consider by way of Conclusion, what an infinite Advantage this Faculty gives an Almighty Being over the Soul of Man, and how great a measure of Happiness or Misery we are capable of receiving from the Imagination only.

We have already seen the Influence that one Man has over the Fancy of another, and with what Ease he conveys it to a Variety of Imagery; how great a Power then may we suppose lodged in him, who knows all the ways of affecting the Imagination, who can infuse what Ideas he pleases, and fill those Ideas with Terreur and Delight to what Degree he thinks fit? He can excite Images in the Mind without the help of Words, and make Scenes rise up before us and seem present to the Eye, without the Assistance of Bodies or Exterior Objects. He can transport the Imagination with such beautiful and glorious Visions, as cannot possibly enter into our present Conceptions, or haunt it with such ghastly Spectres and Apparitions, as would make us hope for Annihilation, and think Existence no better than a Curse. In short, he can so exquisitely ravish or torture the Soul through this single Faculty, as might suffice to make the whole Heaven or Hell of any finite Being.

This Essay on the Pleasures of the Imagination having been published in separate Papers, I shall conclude it with a Table of the principal Contents of each Paper.

The CONTENTS.

PAPER I.

The Perfection of our Sight above our other Senses. The Pleasures of the Imagination arise originally from Sight. The Pleasures of the Imagination divided under two Heads. The Pleasures of the Imagination in some Respects equal to those of the Understanding. The Extent of the Pleasures of the Imagination. The Advantages a Man receives from a Relish of these Pleasures. In what Respect they are preferable to those of the Understanding.

PAPER II.

Three Sources of all the Pleasures of the Imagination, in our Survey of outward Objects. How what is Great pleases the Imagination. How what is New pleases the Imagination. How what is Beautiful in our own Species, pleases the Imagination. How what is Beautiful in general pleases the Imagination. What other Accidental Causes may contribute to the heightening of these Pleasures.

PAPER III.

Why the Necessary Cause of our being pleased with what is Great, New, or Beautiful, unknown. Why the Final Cause more known and more useful. The Final Cause of our being pleased with what is Great. The Final Cause of our being pleased with what is New. The Final Cause of our being pleased with what is Beautiful in our own Species. The Final Cause of our being pleased with what is Beautiful in general.

PAPER IV.

The Works of Nature more pleasant to the Imagination than those of Art. The Works of Nature still more pleasant, the more they resemble those of Art. The Works of Art more pleasant, the more they resemble those of Nature. Our English Plantations and Gardens considered in the foregoing Light.

PAPER V.

Of Architecture as it affects the Imagination... Greatness in Architecture relates either to the Bulk or to the Manner. Greatness
of Bulk in the Ancient Oriental Buildings. The Ancient Accounts of these Buildings confirm'd, 1. From the Advantages, for raising such Works, in the first Ages of the World and in the Eastern Climates: 2. From several of them which are still Extant. Instances how Greatness of Manner affects the Imagination. A French Author's Observation on this Subject. Why Concave and Convex Figures give a Greatness of Manner to Works of Architecture. Everything that pleases the Imagination in Architecture is either Great, Beautiful, or New.

PAPER VI.

The Secondary Pleasures of the Imagination. The several Sources of these Pleasures, (Statuary, Painting, Description and Music) compared together. The Final Cause of our receiving Pleasure from these several Sources. Of Descriptions in Particular. The Power of Words over the Imagination. Why one Reader more pleased with Descriptions than another.

PAPER VII.

How a whole Set of Ideas Hang together, &c. A Natural Cause assigned for it. How to perfect the Imagination of a Writer. Who among the Ancient Poets had this Faculty in its greatest Perfection. Homer excelled in Imagining what is Great; Virgil in Imagining what is Beautiful; Ovid in Imagining what is New. Our own Country-Man Milton, very perfect in all three respects.

PAPER VIII.

Why any thing that is unpleasant to behold, pleases the Imagination when well Described. Why the Imagination receives a more Exquisite Pleasure from the Description of what is Great, New, or Beautiful. The Pleasure still heightened, if what is described raises Passion in the Mind. Disagreeable Passions pleasing when raised by apt Descriptions. Why Terrore and Grief are pleasing to the Mind when excited by Descriptions. A particular Advantage the Writers in Poetry and Fiction have to please the Imagination. What Liberties are allowed them.

PAPER IX.

Of that kind of Poetry which Mr. Dryden calls the Fairy-Way of Writing. How a Poet should be Qualified for it. The Pleasures of the Imagination that arise from it. In this respect, why the Moderns excell the Ancients. Why the English excell the Moderns. Who the Best among the English. Of Emblematical Persons.

No. 422. [STEELE.] Friday, July 4.

Haec . . . scripsi . . . non oii abundantia sed amoris erga te.—
Tull. Epis.

I do not know any thing which gives greater Disturbance to Conversation, than the false Notion some People have of Raillery. It ought certainly to be the first Point to be aimed at in Society, to gain the good Will of those with whom you converse. The way to that, is to shew you are well inclined towards them: What then can be more absurd, than to set up for being extremely sharp and biting, as the Term is, in your Expressions to your Familiars? A Man who has no good Quality but Courage, is in a very ill way towards making an agreeable Figure in the World, because that which he has superior to other People cannot be exerted, without raising himself an Enemy. Your Gentleman of a Satyrical Vein is in the like Condition. To say a thing which perplexes the Heart of him you speak to, or brings Blushes into his Face, is a degree of Murder; and it is, I think, an unpardonable Offence to shew a Man you do not care, whether he is pleased or displeased. But won't you then take a Jest? Yes, but pray let it be a Jest. It is no Jest to put me, who am so unhappy as to have an utter Aversion to speaking to more than one Man at a time, under a necessity to explain my self in much Company, and reducing me to Shame and Derision, except I perform what my Infirmity of Silence disables me to do.

Callisthenes has great Wit accompanied with that Quality (without which a Man can have no Wit at all) a sound
Lactantius, On the Nature of Things

...what we see in the mind is like what we see with the eye.

Virgil, Georgics

And then the others, so many noble ones raised by our labors.

Virgil, Georgics

[He resteth; calleth low, and sleep is soft under a tree.]

...therefore there stand before us these, giving us cool images

Ye peace they have and a life of innocence rich in variety: they

Horace, Epistles

Each writer has his town and loves his country.

...proves the other friend—Horace. The Art of Poetry

Each by himself in vain put together their force is strong and each

Ovid, Heroides

The cause is hidden, the effect well known.

Addison

There shines, that with parental colours glow,

in woods and fields, and in the sun which

When, by the shining word, they catch

Speaks the fairest love of their propitious

Woo'd, through the mournful, the beneficent race

Smile with the dusky wings and genial eyes;

Sweet by the well-known voice: the bird of night,

The nightingale, the musical companion;

The black-bird bequeath fleets her sorry strokes;

The amorous poet of immortal love

That steeds with crimson mantles would express;

The glory, with crimson mantles would express

With kindred colors mantle: did he not so

With kindred colors mantle: did he not so

The lovely, when the female music, the

But cautious with a scrutinizing expression

The shining down, round and ample wings;

With cool indifference, why should the stately head,

Preserve companions, the invisible

The eagle, his husband to this partner true,

Divided, the work becomes brief—Martial, Epigrams

...and here to drink—Lactantius, On the Nature of Things

...do not, there are flocks by any flock I love to approach within

...in heavy thought. I traverse splendid races of the Phœbe, the

—Ovid, Metamorphoses

He loved to roam through unvisited spots, by the banks of undiscovered rivers, and to find wonders made the happier high.

—Horace, The Art of Poetry

...and make men's spirits where they will.

Poetry

...painted our her obisons and scandalous speeches...—Horace, The Art of Poetry...should not be too gaudy some with their Tender things, as they were.

In my judgment the Poem, here is shown, and all of the woods.

A most splendid employment—Horace, Epistles

—Virgil, The Aeneid

The mouth that frames no more, and his eyebrows, his eyes, becloud his meagre breast, his grey size.

The winds, the neighborhood, with glad surprise,

—Virgil, Eclogues

...And myrt instead of thorns shall grow,

...And open this his rolling eyes a sparkling grace, and breathed a youthful vigor on this face...—Virgil, The Aeneid

...was a godless...—Virgil, The Aeneid

...in perilous, and her noble Down, down her feet, and in truth the She spoke and turned away, and she turned her neck drooped to...—Horace, Odes

—from, The Iliad

He spoke, the son of Kronos, and nodded his head with the dark...—Horace, Odes

Thou's head and poet's grace shall guide him to fame for thine affection...—Horace, Odes...shall make him a famous poesy...—Horace, Odes...that low past...—Horace, Odes...the lowest Achaenes can...—Horace, Odes...will love practice in the...—Horace, Odes...will move that most...—Horace, Odes...and gentle...—Horace, Odes...He whom you look'd upon...—Horace, Odes...