

# Tatler 10, April 30, 1709 (Steele)

No. 10.

By Mrs. JENNY DISTAFF, half-sister to Mr. BICKERSTAFF.

From Saturday, April 30, to Tuesday, May 3, 1709.

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From my own Apartment, May 1.

My brother Isaac having a sudden occasion to go out of town, ordered me to take upon me the despatch of the next advices from home, with liberty to speak it my own way; not doubting the allowances which would be given to a writer of my sex. You may be sure I undertook it with much satisfaction, and I confess, I am not a little pleased with the opportunity of running over all the papers in his closet, which he has left open for my use on this occasion. The first that I lay my hands on, is, a treatise concerning "The Empire of Beauty," and the effects it has had in all nations of the world, upon the public and private actions of men; with an appendix, which he calls, "The Bachelor's Scheme for Governing his Wife." The first thing he makes this gentleman propose, is, that she shall be no woman; for she is to have an aversion to balls,

to operas, to visits: she is to think his company sufficient  
to fill up  
all the hours of life with great satisfaction: she is never to  
believe  
any other man wise, learned, or valiant; or at least but in a  
second  
degree. In the next place, he intends she shall be a cuckold;  
but  
expects, that he himself must live in perfect security from  
that terror.  
He dwells a great while on instructions for her discreet  
behaviour, in  
case of his falsehood. I have not patience with these  
unreasonable  
expectations, therefore turn back to the treatise itself.  
Here, indeed,  
my brother deduces all the revolutions among men from the  
passion of  
love; and in his preface, answers that usual observation  
against us,  
that there is no quarrel without a woman in it, with a gallant  
assertion, that there is nothing else worth quarrelling for.  
My brother  
is of a complexion truly amorous; all his thoughts and actions  
carry in  
them a tincture of that obliging inclination; and this turn  
has opened  
his eyes to see, we are not the inconsiderable creatures which  
unlucky  
pretenders to our favour would insinuate. He observes that no  
man begins  
to make any tolerable figure, till he sets out with the hopes  
of  
pleasing some one of us. No sooner he takes that in hand, but  
he pleases  
every one else by-the-bye. It has an immediate effect upon his  
behaviour. There is Colonel Ranter, who never spoke without an

oath,  
till he saw the Lady Betty Modish; now never gives his man an  
order, but it is, "Pray, Tom, do it." The drawers where he  
drinks live  
in perfect happiness. He asked Will at the "George" the other  
day how he  
did? Where he used to say, "Damn it, it is so," he now  
believes there is  
some mistake: he must confess, he is of another opinion; but  
however he  
won't insist.

Every temper, except downright insipid, is to be animated and  
softened  
by the influence of beauty: but of this untractable sort is a  
lifeless  
handsome fellow that visits us, whom I have dressed at this  
twelvemonth;  
but he is as insensible of all the arts I use, as if he  
conversed all  
that time with his nurse. He outdoes our whole sex in all the  
faults our  
enemies impute to us; he has brought laziness into an opinion,  
and makes  
his indolence his philosophy: insomuch, that no longer ago  
than  
yesterday in the evening he gave me this account of himself:  
"I am,  
madam, perfectly unmoved at all that passes among men, and  
seldom give  
myself the fatigue of going among them; but when I do, I  
always appear  
the same thing to those whom I converse with. My hours of  
existence, or  
being awake, are from eleven in the morning to eleven at  
night; half of  
which I live to myself, in picking my teeth, washing my hands,

paring my  
nails, and looking in the glass. The insignificancy of my  
manners to the  
rest of the world makes the laughers call me a \_quidnunc\_, a  
phrase I  
shall never inquire what they mean by it. The last of me each  
night is  
at St. James's Coffee-house, where I converse, yet never fall  
into a  
dispute on any occasion, but leave the understanding I have,  
passive of  
all that goes through it, without entering into the business  
of life.  
And thus, madam, have I arrived by laziness, to what others  
pretend to  
by devotion, a perfect neglect of the world." Sure, if our sex  
had the  
liberty of frequenting public-houses and conversations, we  
should put  
these rivals of our faults and follies out of countenance.  
However, we  
shall soon have the pleasure of being acquainted with them one  
way or  
other, for my brother Isaac designs, for the use of our sex,  
to give the  
exact characters of all the chief politicians who frequent any  
of the  
coffee-houses from St. James's to the Change; but designs to  
begin with  
that cluster of wise heads, as they are found sitting every  
evening,  
from the left side of the fire, at the Smyrna, to the door.  
This  
will be of great service for us, and I have authority to  
promise an  
exact journal of their deliberations; the publication of which  
I am to

be allowed for pin-money. In the meantime, I cast my eye upon  
a new  
book, which gave me a more pleasing entertainment, being a  
sixth part of  
"Miscellany Poems," published by Jacob Tonson, which I find,  
by my  
brother's notes upon it, no way inferior to the other volumes.  
There  
are, it seems, in this, a collection of the best pastorals  
that have  
hitherto appeared in England; but among them, none superior to  
that  
dialogue between Sylvia and Dorinda, written by one of my own  
sex,  
where all our little weaknesses are laid open in a manner more  
just,  
and with, truer raillery than ever man yet hit upon.

*Only this I now discern.  
From the things thou'st have me learn;  
That womankind's peculiar joys  
From past or present beauties rise.*

But to reassume my first design, there cannot be a greater  
instance of  
the command of females, than in the prevailing charms of the  
heroine in  
the play which was acted this night, called "All for Love; or,  
The World  
Well Lost." The enamoured Antony resigns glory and power to  
the  
force of the attractive Cleopatra, whose charms were the  
defence of her  
diadem, against a people otherwise invincible. It is so  
natural for  
women to talk of themselves, that it is to be hoped all my own  
sex, at

least, will pardon me, that I could fall into no other discourse. If we have their favour, we give ourselves very little anxiety for the rest of our readers. I believe I see a sentence of Latin in my brother's day-book of wit, which seems applicable on this occasion, and in contempt of the critics.

*Tristitiam et metus  
Tradam protectis in mare Criticum  
Portare ventis.*

But I am interrupted by a packet from Mr. Kidney from the St. James's Coffee-house, which I am obliged to insert in the very style and words which Mr. Kidney uses in his letter.

*St. James's Coffee-house, May 2.*

We are advised by letters from Berne, dated the 1st instant, N.S., that the Duke of Berwick arrived at Lyons the 25th of the last month, and continued his journey the next day to visit the passes of the mountains, and other posts in Dauphine and Provence. These letters also informed us, that the miseries of the people in France are heightened to that degree, that unless a peace be speedily concluded, half of that kingdom would perish for want of bread. On the 24th, the Marshal de Thesse passed through Lyons, in his way to Versailles; and two battalions, which were marching from Alsace to reinforce the army of the

Duke of  
Berwick, passed also through that place. Those troops were to  
be  
followed by six Battalions more.

Letters from Naples of the 16th of April say, that the Marquis  
de Prie's  
son was arrived there, with instructions from his father, to  
signify to  
the viceroy the necessity his Imperial Majesty was under, of  
desiring an  
aid from that kingdom, for carrying on the extraordinary  
expenses of the  
war. On the 14th of the same month, they made a review of the  
Spanish  
troops in that garrison, and afterwards of the marines; one  
part of whom  
will embark with those designed for Barcelona, and the rest  
are to be  
sent on board the galleys appointed to convoy provisions to  
that place.

We hear from Rome, by letters dated the 20th of April, that  
the Count de  
Mellos, envoy from the King of Portugal, had made his public  
entry into  
that city with much state and magnificence. The Pope has  
lately held two  
other consistories, wherein he made a promotion of two  
cardinals; but  
the acknowledgment of King Charles is still deferred.

Letters from other parts of Italy advise us, that the Doge of  
Venice  
continues dangerously ill: that the Prince de Carignan, having  
relapsed  
into a violent fever, died the 23rd of April, in his 80th  
year.

Advices from Vienna of the 27th of April import, that the Archbishop of Salzburg is dead, who is succeeded by Count Harrach, formerly Bishop of Vienna, and for these last three years coadjutor to the said Archbishop; and that Prince Maximilian of Lichtenstein has likewise departed this life, at his country seat called Cromaw in Moravia. These advices add, that the Emperor has named Count Zinzendorf, Count Goes, and Monsieur Consbruck, for his plenipotentiaries in an ensuing treaty of peace; and they hear from Hungary, that the Imperialists have had several successful skirmishes with the malcontents.

Letters from Paris, dated May the 6th, say, that the Marshal de Thesse arrived there on the 29th of the last month; and that the Chevalier de Beuil was sent thither by Don Pedro Ronquillo with advice, that the confederate squadron appeared before Alicante the 17th, and having for some time cannonaded the city, endeavoured to land some troops for the relief of the castle; but General Stanhope finding the passes well guarded, and the enterprise dangerous, demanded to capitulate for the castle; which being granted him, the garrison, consisting of 600 regular troops, marched out with their arms and baggage the day following; and being received on board, they immediately set sail for Barcelona. These



letters add, that the march of the French and Swiss regiments is further deferred for a few days; and that the Duke of Noailles was just ready to set out for Roussillon, as well as the Count de Bezons for Catalonia.

The same advices say, bread was sold at Paris for 6d. per pound; and that there was not half enough, even at that rate, to supply the necessities of the people, which reduced them to the utmost despair; that 300 men had taken up arms, and having plundered the market of the suburb St. Germain, pressed down by their multitude the King's Guards who opposed them. Two of those mutineers were afterwards seized, and condemned to death; but four others went to the magistrate who pronounced that sentence, and told him, he must expect to answer with his own life for those of their comrades. All order and sense of government being thus lost among the enraged people, to keep up a show of authority, the captain of the Guards, who saw all their insolence, pretended, that he had represented to the King their deplorable condition, and had obtained their pardon. It is further reported, that the Dauphin and Duchess of Burgundy, as they went to the Opera, were surrounded by crowds of people, who upbraided them with their neglect of the general calamity, in going to diversions, when the whole

people were  
ready to perish for want of bread. Edicts are daily published  
to  
suppress these riots, and papers, with menaces against the  
Government,  
are publicly thrown about. Among others, these words were  
dropped in a  
court of justice: "France wants a Ravilliac or a Jesuit to  
deliver her."

Besides this universal distress, there is a contagious  
sickness, which,  
it is feared, will end in a pestilence. Letters from Bordeaux  
bring  
accounts no less lamentable: the peasants are driven by hunger  
from  
their abodes into that city, and make lamentations in the  
streets  
without redress.

We are advised by letters from the Hague, dated the 10th  
instant, N.S.,  
that on the 6th, the Marquis de Torcy arrived there from  
Paris; but the  
passport, by which he came, having been sent blank by Monsieur  
Rouillé,  
he was there two days before his quality was known. That  
Minister  
offered to communicate to Monsieur Heinsius the proposals  
which he had  
to make; but the pensionary refused to see them, and said, he  
would  
signify it to the States, who deputed some of their own body  
to acquaint  
him, That they would enter into no negotiation till the  
arrival of his  
Grace the Duke of Marlborough, and the other Ministers of the  
Alliance.

Prince Eugene was expected there the 12th instant from Brussels. It is said, that besides Monsieur de Torcy and Monsieur Pajot, Director-general of the Posts, there are two or three persons at the Hague whose names are not known; but it is supposed that the Duke d'Alba, ambassador from the Duke of Anjou, was one of them. The States have sent letters to all the cities of the Provinces, desiring them to send their deputies to receive the propositions of peace made by the Court of France.