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The Tatler

The appearance of the first issue of *The Tatler* in 1709 is usually regarded as the beginning of periodical publication in England. Its founder, Richard Steele (1672–1729), intended ‘a paper, which should observe upon the manners of the pleasurable, as well as the busy part of mankind ... by way of a letter of intelligence, consisting of such parts as might gratify the curiosity of persons of all conditions, and of each sex’. The ‘datelines’ of the reports, on news, literature, and plain gossip, were from the most famous coffee houses of early Georgian London, and the contributors included Jonathan Swift and Joseph Addison. The magazine was published for only two years, from April 1709 to January 1711: shortly afterwards, Steele and Addison co-founded *The Spectator*. This four-volume edition was issued in 1797 by a consortium of publishers, including John Nichols. Volume 3 contains numbers 115 to 189.

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The Tatler

VOLUME 3

RICHARD STEELE



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THE
T A T L E R.

VOLUME THE THIRD.



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ORIGINAL DEDICATION

TO TATLER, VOL. III.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM, LORD COWPER ^a,

BARON OF WINGHAM.

MY LORD,

AFTER having long celebrated the superior graces and excellencies, among men, in an imaginary character, I do myself the honour to shew my

^a William Cowper, esq; soon after being called to the bar, was appointed one of king William's council; he succeeded fir Nathan Wright, as lord keeper of the great seal, Oct. 11, 1705; was created baron Cowper of Wingham, Nov. 9, 1706, and appointed lord chancellor, May 4, 1707; which post he held till Sept. 14, 1710. On the accession of king George he was again appointed lord chancellor, and, on resigning the great seal, was created earl Cowper, and viscount Fordwich, March 18, 1717-18. He nobly refused to accept new-years-gifts from the counsellors at law, which had been long given to his predecessors; and, what is still more to his honour, foresaw and opposed the destructive measures of the South Sea bubble, in 1720. He died Oct. 10, 1723. It is recorded, and ought always to be mentioned to the honour of lord Cowper, that when he was chancellor, though in friendship with the duke of Marlborough, and of the same political principles, he nobly refused, and persisted in his refusal, to put the broad seal of his office to a tremendous commission for making his grace generalissimo for life.

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ORIGINAL DEDICATION

eneration for transcendent merit under my own name, in this address to your lordship. The just application of those high accomplishments of which you are master, has been an advantage to all your fellow-subjects; and it is from the common obligation you have laid upon all the world, that I, though a private man, can pretend to be affected with, or take the liberty to acknowledge, your great talents and public virtues.

It gives a pleasing prospect to your friends, that is to say, to the friends of your country, that you have passed through the highest offices, at an age when others usually do but form to themselves the hopes of them. They may expect to see you in the house of lords as many years as you were ascending to it. It is our common good, that your admirable eloquence can now no longer be employed, but in the expression of your own sentiments and judgment. The

As lord Cowper was a man of principle, and of the party which Swift abandoned and abused, his lordship is grossly misrepresented in the pamphlets of that licentious writer, especially in the *Examiner*, and what he calls his *History of the Four last Years of Q. Anne*, compiled from no better materials than the lies of the day, which were coined, and delivered out to him for the purpose of writing libels and party papers. For the proof of this, the reader is referred to the *Miscellaneous Works of the Earl of Chesterfield*, 1777, vol. ii. p. 498, 4to. 2 vols. Earl Cowper's public character is well known. He was the patron and friend of Mr. John Hughes, whom, when chancellor, he appointed his secretary for the commissions of the peace, without any previous solicitation. On his resignation of the great seal, he recommended him to his successor, lord C. Parker. The curious may see vouchers of his taste and private virtues, in Hughes's *Correspondence*, *passim*, 3 vols. cr. 8vo. 1772.

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skilful pleader is now for ever changed into the just judge ; which latter character your lordship exerts with so prevailing an impartiality, that you win the approbation even of those who dissent from you, and you always obtain favour, because you are never moved by it.

This gives you a certain dignity peculiar to your present situation, and makes the equity, even of a lord high chancellor, appear but a degree towards the magnanimity of a peer of Great Britain.

Forgive me, my lord, when I cannot conceal from you, that I shall never hereafter behold you, but I shall behold you, as lately, defending the brave and the unfortunate ^b.

When we attend to your lordship engaged in a discourse, we cannot but reflect upon the many requisites which the vain-glorious speakers of antiquity have demanded in a man who is to excel in oratory ; I say, my lord, when we reflect upon the precepts by viewing the example, though there is no excellence proposed by those rhetoricians wanting, the whole art seems to be resolved into that one motive of speaking, sincerity in the intention. The graceful manner, the apt gesture, and the assumed concern, are impotent helps to persuasion, in comparison of the honest countenance of him who utters what he really means. From whence it is, that all the beauties which others attain with labour, are in your lordship but the natural effects of the heart that dictates.

^b The duke of Marlborough.

iv ORIGINAL DEDICATION, &c.

It is this noble simplicity, which makes you surpass mankind in the faculties wherein mankind are distinguished from other creatures, reason and speech.

If these gifts were communicated to all men in proportion to the truth and ardour of their hearts, I should speak of you with the same force as you express yourself on any other subject. But I resist my present impulse, as agreeable as it is to me; though indeed, had I any pretensions to a fame of this kind, I should, above all other themes, attempt a panegyric upon my lord Cowper: for the only sure way to a reputation for eloquence, in an age wherein that perfect orator lives, is to choose an argument, upon which he himself must of necessity be silent.

I am, my lord,
 Your lordship's most devoted,
 most obedient, and most humble servant,

RICHARD STEELE ^c.

^c 'When Steele's patent, as governor of the theatre-royal, passed the great seal, lord chancellor Cowper, in compliment to sir Richard, would receive no fee.' *Life of C. Cibber*, vol. ii. p. 47, edit. 1756, 2 vols. 12mo.