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RETROSPECTION.

THE year is drawing to its close,
As I kneel to-night in prayer,
And the weight of sixty long years and more,
Has silvered my jet black hair with its score,
And furrowed my cheek with care.

I'm reviewing my life to-night,
My life that I cannot mend,
And the long stretch of years seems idly spent,
Its sorrows and tears and joys all blent,
A solemn significance lend.

Has my life been full of self?
Have I tried in my feeble way
To still the anguish of some aching heart,
To rob the bitter pain of half its smart,
To lead from darkness into day?

In sight of the cruel world,
Has my life been void and cold?
A page whose blotted lines no meaning bore,
A life whose days of usefulness were o'er,
A something that for naught was sold?

But oh, my Father! now to-night,
In whose pure sight I soon shall stand,
I would that thou alone should'st read my life,
For through my tears I cannot read aright,
Lead thou me to the better land.

JOSEPH ADDISON.

THE literature of the Restoration had palled upon the taste of the English people before Addison appeared, but to him were given the qualifications to fill the vacancy thus created. No power is more formidable than the power of making men ridiculous; in this Addison stands unrivalled; yet his deepest sense of the ludicrous is tempered by politeness and kindness. Macaulay says of him: "He was the great satirist who alone knew how to use ridicule without abusing it, who without inflicting a wound effected a great social reform, and who reconciled wit and virtue after a long and disastrous separation, during which wit had been led astray by profligacy and virtue by fanaticism."

Joseph Addison (1672-1719), a clergyman's son, was educated at Oxford. Among his fellow-students he was distinguished for his delicate feelings, sly manners, and assiduous

application. Even in college days his reputation for ability and learning was marked, and it is said that in after years the professors expressed their sorrow that no copy of his remarkable exercises in composition had been preserved. His knowledge of the classics was extensive. Many Latin poems which were well received at both Universities issued from his pen while he was a student at Oxford. His first flight in English verse was an address to Dryden, which gained the great man's friendship, while by "a Poem to His Majesty," the king's favor was won, and a pension bestowed upon the fortunate writer enabled him to cultivate his taste by travel.

To celebrate the battle of Blenheim he wrote "The Campaign," which was as much admired by the public as by the ministers of state. This poem eulogizes Marlborough's qualities of greatness, his energy, sagacity, and knowledge of the science of war. Addison's particularly lucky hit was likening Marlborough to an angel guiding a whirlwind. Soon after "The Campaign," was published the narrative of his travels in Italy. The reading world was disappointed, but in time the tide turned, and before the work could be reproduced it was sold for many times its original value. The style is pure and graceful, exhibiting proofs not only of his scholarship but also of his humor, morality, and religious spirit. Macaulay censures this agreeable work, the history of a tour to cultivate the classics, on account of its faults of omission. Though rich in extracts from Latin poets, it contains scarcely any reference to the Latin orators and historians, ignoring entirely the noble literature of modern Italy, though noticing the Gondolier's songs.

The brilliancy of his imagination found expression in the articles which appeared in the *Spectator* and the *Tatler*; here the great moral satirist found full scope for his powers; never has the English language been written with such sweetness, grace and facility.