

in Literature, for the generous and disinterested purposes of good which he cherished—his uniform kindness of feeling and sentiment—his genial or humane dispositions—the moral, and even religious, tone of his writings—nobler than even Addison's, as Addison rather only followed in the wake of Steele, though it was in such a way as to surpass his leader in the peculiar path he had struck out. Steele had even more papers than Addison in the serials we have named: he is the writer of no fewer than 510, while Addison contributes 369: Pope is the author of 3 in the *Spectator*, and 8 in the *Guardian*.

"*Par nobile fratrum!*" There is, perhaps, not a paper to which either of these literary friends lent his name but had the best moral and social interests of his fellows at heart, whether it was satire or playful ridicule, or apologue, or the direct moral disquisition or essay, which was the vehicle employed. In every way in which virtue could be insinuated and vice discountenanced, religion even inculcated, and hostility to it repressed—by allegory, by fable, by fictitious example, by ingenious invention, by feigned correspondence, by direct precept—daily the *Spectator* came into friendly contact with the general mind, and contributed to social amenity and the public good. It is perhaps impossible to calculate the amount of moral benefit which these delightful essays, in their silent ministry, have been the indirect means of effecting. The reputation which Steele and Addison have justly won for themselves by their writings in the *Spectator*, the *Tatler*, and the *Guardian*, is perhaps more enviable than the fame of greater authors in their most elaborate works.

Sir Richard Steele's was also the merit of having originated that style of composition which has become such a power in our own day—we mean serial writing—as in our magazines, reviews, and in the editorials and other essays of our daily or weekly newspapers. Newspapers are very different productions from what they were when they had not matter enough to fill up the sheet, and a blank space was left for the purchaser to communicate with his friends, if he had a mind, an ingenious device, as at once an inducement to purchase, and a mode of supplementing a lack of news. Defoe first united the newspaper and the literary "*feuille*." It was the *Tatlers* and *Spectators* chiefly, however, that originated the magazines and essay writing of modern times. Was this a service, or was it not? There are not wanting those who regard it as a decided injury to literature. It has impaired the power of writing, it is alleged, and frittered down authorship from what it was in former times to very humble dimensions. It has diverted the current of reading, too, it is thought, from more massive and abler works to the more fugitive productions of the daily print, or the weekly or monthly periodical. An injury is thus done, it is urged, both to the writer and the reader of such fugitive compositions. We have not the Bacon and the Lockes and the great theological writers of a former age; we have not the stalwart minds fed on such food, or disciplined by such writings. We certainly have no sympathy with these views; we cannot concur in such a mode of regarding the question. Perhaps a great part of the massy authorship of former times