

Swift died a "drivel and a show," the victim of disappointed ambition and defeated effort, of a life spent in the thankless task of writing for party, of affections either "frozen at their source," or stifled by vanity—if not the heartless pleasure felt in tampering with the fondest affections of others—of a heart turned in upon itself because its possessor had excluded every object from its embrace, and perhaps a mind suffering the proper retribution of powers wasted in a constant war with every social amenity, and with mankind.

"The memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus" intended to expose all charlatanism in Science, and the more vain and idle questions in philosophy, with an especial eye perhaps to the Royal Society, lately chartered by Charles the Second, was the joint work of Pope, Arbuthnot, and a few others, though undoubtedly Arbuthnot must have ascribed to him the chief hand in its production. These were another outcome of the age—an age just emerging from the frivolities of the times of the second Charles, and not yet settled down in anything like serious thought and decent manners—with the predominating tendency to the ironical and burlesque, and minds apparently adapted to that particular vein of writing. The same vein is seen in many of the papers of the *Spectator*, the *Guardian*, and the *Tatler*, which introduced so new a style of composition. The age must be ridiculed, or playfully bantered, into wise and decent conduct. Its weaknesses must have the finger of lenient but faithful scorn pointed at them. The ludicrous or frivolous in conduct and manners always tempt to such an exposure. Sir Richard Steele, a man who had himself mixed a good deal in dissipated and fashionable life, who was familiar with the false arts, the vain pretensions, the idle maxims and practices, of the social state, conceived the idea of reforming it, or so far putting a restraint upon its manners, not by the more serious appliances of religion and morality, but by the play of wit, the strokes of kindly humour, and at most the sharply-pointed weapons of friendly satire, and innocent raillery. With this view he started the *Tatler*, a sheet of modest pretensions, issued on three days in the week, occupied with brief essays, and a few items of intelligence, the news of the day. It was an original idea for which Steele does not get sufficient credit. Defoe had begun something of the kind in his "Advice from the Scandalous Club"—an appendix to a news-publication—intended, as Defoe expressed it, to "wheedle men into the knowledge of the world, who, rather than take more pains, would be contented with ignorance, and enquire into nothing." It is not certain, however, that Steele took his suggestion from this, or if he did, it was no more than the suggestion; the idea, as fully wrought out, was his own, and it was admirably wrought out. Nothing could exceed the grace, and ingenuity, and sweet and playful humour that were displayed in the tri-weekly portraiture of life and manners. It was succeeded by the *Spectator*, which was published daily. The *Spectator* would seem to have been Addison's idea, at least we owe the delightful description of that most interesting personage to his pen. There could hardly be a more felicitous thought certainly for a serial publication, with the