

occasions not grovelling; pure without scrupulosity, and exact without apparent elaboration; always equable and always easy."

"Throughout we have precise contrasts, which serve only for clearness."

"He makes comparatively little use of contrast for the purpose of giving clearness to his views."

"There is some coldness and monotony in Addison's style."

"Strength is not a feature of Addison's prose. He has neither sublimity nor vigour."

"He is never feeble, and he did not wish to be energetic; he is never rapid, and he never stagnates."

"It is upon the witty vein in his writings that Addison's fame is durably founded. His elegant satires on the manners of his time will be read when his grave essays are glanced at as productions . . . too superficial to be permanent. He is the great English example of polite ridicule."

"His humour, which is peculiar to himself, is so happily diffused so as to give the grace of novelty to domestic scenes and daily occurrences."

"Addison's mirth: a mirth consistent with tender compassion for all that is frail, and with profound reverence for all that is sublime."

"His tone is that of a gentleman, in whom the quickest sense of the ludicrous is constantly tempered by good nature and good breeding."

"Instead of the new wit of the coffee-house, men found themselves smiling with a humourist who came nearer than any man, before or since, to the humour of Shakespeare."

"It was his principal endeavor to avoid all harshness and severity of diction."

"Elegance is the ruling quality of Addison's style. He sacrifices everything to the unctuous junction of syllables and the harmonious combination of ideas."

"There is an undercurrent of poetry in all this. It has flowed through his prose a thousand times more sincere and beautiful than in his verses. Rich oriental fancies are displayed, not with a shower of sparks as in Voltaire, but in a calm and abundant light. . . . The music of the vast cadenced and tranquil phrases leads the mind gently amidst romantic splendors and enchantments, and the deep sentiment of ever young nature recalls the happy quietude of Spenser. Through gentle rilleries or moral essays we feel that the author's imagination is happy, delighted in the contemplation of the swaying to and fro of the forest-tops which clothe the mountains, the eternal verdure of the valleys invigorated by fresh springs, and the wide view undulating far away on the distant horizon. Great and simple sentiments naturally join these noble images, and their measured harmony creates a unique spectacle, worthy to fascinate the heart of a good man by its gravity and sweetness. Such are the Visions of Mirza."

