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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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SOME "THERMOMETERS" AND A "WEATHER-GLASS"

A toy of German origin now popular in America is called the "matrimony thermometer." If the bulb is held in the hand, the heat vaporizes the colored liquid contained in the instrument, which bubbles up into the tube; and the warmer the hand the higher the bubbling extends. The attached scale bears little pictures marked "flirting," "jealous," "in love," etc.

This device is reminiscent of an imaginary one described by Joseph Addison. He dreamed, we are told, that he and some friends dissected a coquette's heart and found that the pericardial fluid "had in it all the qualities of that spirit which is made use of in the thermometer, to show the change in the weather." He proceeds:

"Nor must I here omit an experiment one of the company assures us he himself had made with this liquor, which he found in great quantity about the heart of a coquette whom he had formerly dissected. He affirmed to us that he had actually enclosed it in a small tube after the manner of a weather-glass; but that, instead of acquainting him with the variations of the atmosphere, it showed him the qualities of those persons who entered the room where it stood. He affirmed, also, that it rose at the approach of a plume of feathers, an embroidered coat or a pair of fringed gloves; and that it fell as soon as an ill-shaped periwig, a clumsy pair of shoes or an unfashionable coat came into his house; nay, he proceeded so far as to assure us that, upon his laughing aloud when he stood by it, the liquor mounted very sensibly and immediately sunk again upon his looking serious. In short, he told us that he knew very well by this invention whenever he had a man of sense or a coxcomb in his room."

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