

Mr. Good

Mr. Knight says He could have con-
vinced you that you are mistaken had
you try'd to hear him, but desires me
to say that He rests upon His integrity
and assurance that no allegations you
have made can be proved, or any way
affect Him.

Dec^r 22^d —
1720

Richard Steele

STEELE (Sir Richard), 1672—1729.

"He ranks first among English humourists for geniality without boisterousness, and sentiment without gush."—George Saintsbury. He excelled as a satirist, and a storyteller. He had a wide knowledge of the world, and considerable dramatic skill. Though overshadowed in some measure by his illustrious friend, Addison; many of his papers equal anything Addison ever wrote.

Sir Richard Steele was born in Dublin in March, 1672, the son of an attorney. He was educated at the Charterhouse (1684), where Addison was his schoolfellow, and whence in 1690 he went up to Oxford. At college he dabbled in verse, and in 1695 published "The Procession," an elegy on Queen Mary. In 1700 he severely wounded an Irishman in a duel; and a strange outcome of this was his devotional manual, "The Christian Hero" (1701). In 1707 he was appointed by Harley to the post of Gazetteer with £300 a year. On 12th April, 1709, appeared the first number of the tri-weekly "Tatler," which was continued until January, 1711. It was succeeded by the more famous "Spectator," which ceased 6th December, 1712, and was in its turn followed by the "Guardian." In all these enterprises Steele enjoyed the aid of his old friend Addison. For some time he was engaged in controversy with Swift. He entered Parliament for Stockbridge, dropping the "Guardian" for the professedly political "Englishman." In 1714 he was impeached for scilicet utterances in the "Crisis," and expelled from the House. Again a member of Parliament and knighted, he continued to produce periodicals and pamphlets, one of which, "The Plebeian," involved him in a painful controversy with Addison. He was made a patentee of Drury Lane Theatre, where in 1722 he produced "The Conscious Lovers," his best comedy. He died 1st September, 1729, at Carmarthen.

2211-3-3-0

M. Knightly
Oxford
1709
Cooper's
M. Knightly
Oxford
1709
Cooper's

STEELE (SIR RICHARD)—*continued.*

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Autograph note, five lines obl. 8vo to the same, asking him to come to Mr. Edgewomb's. . . . Steele rides with the Duke of Mountague.
£12 10 0 *Apl. 6th, 1712*

Mr Good

Mr Knight says he could have convinced you that you are mistaken had you stay'd to hear him, but desires me to say that he rests upon his integrity and ^{assurance} ~~appearance~~ that no allegations you have made can be proved, or any way affect him.

Richard Steele

Dec 22d

1720.

I believe that this note refers to some dispute arising out of the South Sea Bubble affair. There was a Robert Knight who was cashier of the South Sea Co. His son married Henrietta St John (later Lady Luxborough, friend of Shenstone and Somerville. In July, 1720, the shares of the company had reached the 1000 mark. In August they began to fall, and by November they were 135. Thousands were ruined.

Steele warmly combatted the South Sea mania in two pamphlets, one of which had appeared on February 1, 1720, and the other on February 27.

(Collection of Captain F. L. Pleadwell)