

The Spectator's Account of Himself Quotations

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"I was born to a small hereditary estate...without the loss or acquisition of a single field or meadow, during the space of six hundred years."

Explanation:

The narrator describes his family's old estate. It passed from father to son for hundreds of years without any changes.

"There runs a story in the family, that when my mother was gone with child of me about three months, she dreamt that she was brought to bed of a judge."

Explanation: The narrator shares a family tale. His mother dreamt he would become a judge before he was born.

"I threw away my rattle before I was two months old, and would not make use of my coral till they had taken away the bells from it."

Explanation: He explains that he was a serious and quiet baby. He did not like noisy toys even as a child.

"...for during the space of eight years, excepting in the public exercises of the college, I scarce uttered the quantity of an hundred words."

Explanation: The narrator says he hardly spoke at university. He was famous for being very quiet.

"An insatiable thirst after knowledge carried me into all the countries of Europe in which there was anything new or strange to be seen."

Explanation: He traveled widely in Europe. He wanted to learn about new places and things.

"Thus I live in the world rather as a Spectator of mankind than as one of the species;"

Explanation: The narrator calls himself a 'Spectator.' He means he likes to watch people and events instead of joining in.

"I never espoused any part with violence,... between the Whigs and Tories, unless I shall be forced to declare myself by the hostilities of either side."

Explanation: He stays neutral in political debates. He does not take any side unless forced.

"There are three very material points which I have not spoken to in this paper... I mean an account of my name, my age, and my lodgings."

Explanation: The narrator purposely keeps his personal details secret—name, age, and address unmentioned.

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