There are several allusions to contemporaries in Defoe’s curious book, *The Consolidator*, published in March, 1705, to which little attention has apparently been given. On page 27 Defoe refers thus to Addison’s *Campaign*, published only a few months before:

Ad…son may tell his master my Lord … the reason from nature, why he would not take the Court’s word, nor write the poem called *The Campaign*, till he had 200l. per annum secured to him; since ’tis known they have but one author in the nation that writes for’em for nothing, and he is labouring very hard to obtain the title of blockhead, and not be paid for it.

The story is, of course, well known how, after the battle of Blenheim, Godolphin asked Halifax if he knew any one who could worthily celebrate the occasion, and how Halifax replied that he knew of one well qualified, but that he would not desire him to write, because, while too many blockheads were maintained in luxury at the public expense, men who were really an honour to their age and country were allowed to languish in obscurity. The result was that Godolphin agreed, before the proposed poem was commenced, to make Addison a Commissioner of Appeal in the Excise, and promised that something more considerable should follow. Early in 1706, at Godolphin’s recommendation. Addison was made Under Secretary of State. But who was the one author who, according to Defoe, wrote for the Government for nothing?

In another place (pages 96-108) Defoe describes a machine called the “Cogitator”, used in the moon, and remarks that it would be very useful to people who are always travelling in thought, but never delivered into action; it would, therefore, be “of singular use to honest S…., whose peculiar it was, to be always beginning Projects, but never finish any.” Is this an allusion to Steele?