



N^o 4. Monday, March 5.

— *Egregii Mortalem altique silenti?*

Hor.

AN Author, when he first appears in the World, is very apt to believe it has nothing to think of but his Performances. With a good Share of this Vanity in my Heart, I made it my Business these three Days to listen after my own Fame; and as I have sometimes met with Circumstances which did not displease me, I have been encounter'd by others which gave me as much Mortification. It is incredible to think how empty I have in this Time observed some Part of the Species to be, what mere Blanks they are when they first come abroad in the Morning, how utterly they are at a Stand till they are set a going by some Paragraph in a News-Paper: Such Persons are very acceptable to a young Author, for they desire no more in any thing but to be new to be agreeable. If I found Consolation among such, I was as much disquieted by the Incapacity of others. These are Mortals who have a certain Curiosity without Power of Reflexion, and perused my Papers like Spectators rather than Readers. But there is so little Pleasure in Inquiries that so nearly concern our selves, (it being the worst way in the World to Fame, to be too anxious about it) that upon the whole I resolv'd for the future to go on in my ordinary Way; and without too much Fear or Hope about the Business of Reputation, to be very careful of the Design of my Actions, but very negligent of the Consequences of them.

It is an endless and frivolous Pursuit to act by any other Rule than the Care of satisfying our own Minds in what we do. One would think a silent Man, who concerned himself with no one breathing, should be very little liable to Misinterpretations; and yet I remember I was once taken up for a Jesuit, for no other Reason but my profound Taciturnity. It is from this Misfortune, that

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to be out of Harm's Way, I have ever since affected Crowds. He who comes into Assemblies only to gratify his Curiosity, and not to make a Figure, enjoys the Pleasures of Retirement in a more exquisite Degree, than he possibly could in his Closet; the Lover, the Ambitious, and the Miser, are followed thither by a worse Croud than any they can withdraw from. To be exempt from the Passions with which others are tormented, is the only pleasing Solitude. I can very justly say with the ancient Sage, *I am never less alone than when alone.* As I am insignificant to the Company in publick Places, and as it is visible I do not come thither as most do, to shew my self; I gratify the Vanity of all who pretend to make an Appearance, and have often as kind Looks from well-dress'd Gentlemen and Ladies, as a Poet would bestow upon one of his Audience. There are so many Gratifications attend this publick sort of Obscurity, that some little Distastes I daily receive have lost their Anguish; and I did the other Day, without the least Displeasure, overhear one say of me, *That strange Fellow*; and another answer, *I have known the Fellow's Face these twelve Years, and so must you; but I believe you are the first ever asked who he was.* There are, I must confess, many to whom my Person is as well known as that of their nearest Relations, who give themselves no farther Trouble about calling me by my Name or Quality, but speak of me very currently by *Mr. What d'ye call him.*

TO make up for these trivial Disadvantages, I have the high Satisfaction of beholding all Nature with an unprejudiced Eye; and having nothing to do with Mens Passions or Interests, I can with the greater Sagacity consider their Talents, Manners, Failings, and Merits.

IT is remarkable, that those who want any one Sense, possess the others with greater Force and Vivacity. Thus my Want of, or rather Resignation of Speech, gives me all the Advantages of a dumb Man. I have, methinks, a more than ordinary Penetration in Seeing; and flatter my self that I have looked into the Highest and Lowest of Mankind, and make shrewd Guesses, without being admitted to their Conversation, at the inmost Thoughts and Reflexions of all whom I behold.

hold. It is from hence that good or ill Fortune has no manner of Force towards affecting my Judgment. I see Men flourishing in Courts, and languishing in Jails, without being prejudiced from their Circumstances to their Favour or Disadvantage; but from their inward Manner of bearing their Condition, often pity the Prosperous, and admire the Unhappy.

THOSE who converse with the Dumb, know from the Turn of their Eyes, and the Changes of their Countenance, their Sentiments of the Objects before them. I have indulged my Silence to such an Extravagance, that the few who are intimate with me, answer my Smiles with concurrent Sentences, and argue to the very Point I shook my Head at, without my speaking. WILL. HONEYCOMB was very entertaining the other Night at a Play, to a Gentleman who sat on his right Hand, while I was at his Left. The Gentleman believed WILL. was talking to himself, when upon my looking with great Approbation at a young thing in a Box before us, he said, 'I am quite of another Opinion. She has, I will allow, a very pleasing Aspect, but methinks that Simplicity in her Countenance is rather childish than innocent. When I observed her a second time, he said, 'I grant her Dress is very becoming, but perhaps the Merit of that Choice is owing to her Mother; for though, continued he, I allow a Beauty to be as much to be commended for the Elegance of her Dress, as a Wit for that of his Language; yet if she has stolen the Colour of her Ribbands from another, or had Advice about her Trimmings, I shall not allow her the Praise of Dress, any more than I would call a Plagiary an Author.' When I threw my Eye towards the next Woman to her, WILL. spoke what I looked, according to his Romantick Imagination, in the following manner.

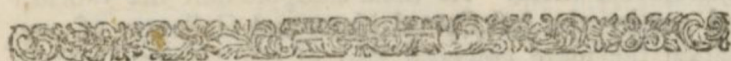
'BEHOLD, you who dare, that charming Virgin; Behold the Beauty of her Person chastised by the Innocence of her Thoughts. Chastity, Good-nature, and Affability, are the Graces that play in her Countenance; she knows she is handsome, but she knows she is good. Conscious Beauty adorned with conscious Virtue! what a Spirit is there in those Eyes! What a Bloom in
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‘ that Person! How is the whole Woman expressed in
‘ her Appearance: Her Air has the Beauty of Motion,
‘ and her Look the Force of Language.

IT was Prudence to turn away my Eyes from this Object, and therefore I turned them to the thoughtless Creatures who make up the Lump of that Sex, and move a knowing Eye no more than the Portraits of insignificant People by ordinary Painters, which are but Pictures of Pictures.

THUS the Working of my own Mind is the general Entertainment of my Life; I never enter into the Commerce of Discourse with any but my particular Friends, and not in Publick even with them. Such an Habit has perhaps raised in me uncommon Reflexions; but this Effect I cannot communicate but by my Writings. As my Pleasures are almost wholly confined to those of the Sight, I take it for a peculiar Happiness that I have always had an easy and familiar Admittance to the fair Sex. If I never praised or flattered, I never belyed or contradicted them. As these compose half the World, and are by the just Complaisance and Gallantry of our Nation the more powerful Part of our People, I shall dedicate a considerable Share of these my Speculations to their Service, and shall lead the Young through all the becoming Duties of Virginity, Marriage, and Widowhood. When it is a Woman’s Day, in my Works, I shall endeavour at a Stile and Air suitable to their Understanding. When I say this, I must be understood to mean, that I shall not lower but exalt the Subjects I treat upon. Discourse for their Entertainment, is not to be debased but refined. A Man may appear learned, without talking Sentences, as in his ordinary Gesture he discovers he can Dance, though he does not cut Capers. In a word, I shall take it for the greatest Glory of my Work, if among reasonable Women this Paper may furnish *Tea-Table Talk*. In order to it, I shall treat on Matters which relate to Females, as they are concerned to approach or fly from the other Sex, or as they are tied to them by Blood, Interest, or Affection. Upon this Occasion I think it but reasonable to declare, that whatever Skill I may have in Speculation, I shall never betray what the Eyes of Lovers say to each other in my Pre-

fence. At the same time I shall not think my self obliged, by this Promise, to conceal any false Protestations which I observe made by Glances in publick Assemblies; but endeavour to make both Sexes appear in their Conduct what they are in their Hearts. By this means, Love, during the Time of my Speculations, shall be carried on with the same Sincerity as any other Affairs of less Consideration. As this is the greatest Concern, Men shall be from henceforth liable to the greatest Reproach for Misbehaviour in it. Falshood in Love shall hereafter bear a blacker Aspect, than Infidelity in Friendship, or Villany in Business. For this great and good End, all Breaches against that noble Passion, the Cement of Society, shall be severely examined. But this, and all other Matters loosely hinted at now, and in my former Papers, shall have their proper Place in my following Discourses: The present Writing is only to admonish the World, that they shall not find me an idle but a busy Spectator. R



N^o 5. Tuesday, March 6.

Spectatum admissi risum teneatis? — Hor.

AN Opera may be allowed to be extravagantly lavish in its Decorations, as its only Design is to gratify the Senses, and keep up an indolent Attention in the Audience. Common Sense however requires, that there should be nothing in the Scenes and Machines which may appear Childish and Absurd. How would the Wits of King Charles's Time have laughed to have seen Nicolini exposed to a Tempest in Robes of Ermin, and sailing in an open Boat upon a Sea of Paste-board? What a Field of Raillery would they have been let into, had they been entertained with painted Dragons spitting Wild-fire, enchanted Chariots drawn by Flanders Mares, and real Cascades in artificial Land-skips? A little Skill in Criticism would inform us, that
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