



*At Venus obscuro gradientes aëre sepfit,
Et multo Nebulæ circum Dea fudit amictu,
Cernere ne quis eos ———*

Virg.

I Shall here communicate to the World a couple of Letters, which I believe will give the Reader as good an Entertainment as any that I am able to furnish him with, and therefore shall make no Apology for them.

To the SPECTATOR, &c.

S I R,

I Am one of the Directors of the Society for the Reformation of Manners, and therefore think myself a proper Person for your Correspondence. I have thoroughly examined the present State of Religion in Great-Britain, and am able to acquaint you with the predominant Vice of every Market-Town in the whole Island. I can tell you the Progress that Virtue has made in all our Cities, Boroughs, and Corporations; and know as well the evil Practices that are committed in Berwick or Exeter, as what is done in my own Family. In a word, Sir, I have my Correspondents in the remotest Parts of the Nation, who send me up punctual Accounts from time to time of all the little Irregularities that fall under their Notice in their several Districts and Divisions.

I am no less acquainted with the particular Quarters and Regions of this great Town, than with the different Parts and Distributions of the whole Nation. I can describe every Parish by its Impieties, and can tell you in which of our Streets Lewdness prevails, which Gaming has taken the Possession of, and where Drunkenness has got the better of them both. When I am disposed

‘ disposed to raise a Fine for the Poor, I know the Lanes
 ‘ and Allies that are inhabited by common Swearers.
 ‘ When I would encourage the Hospital of *Bridewell*,
 ‘ and improve the Hempen Manufacture, I am very
 ‘ well acquainted with all the Haunts and Resorts of
 ‘ Female Night-walkers.

‘ A F T E R this short Account of my self, I must let
 ‘ you know, that the Design of this Paper is to give you
 ‘ Information of a certain irregular Assembly, which I
 ‘ think falls very properly under your Observation, espe-
 ‘ cially since the Persons it is composed of are Criminals
 ‘ too considerable for the Animadversions of our Society.
 ‘ I mean, Sir, the Midnight Mask, which has of late
 ‘ been very frequently held in one of the most conspicu-
 ‘ ous Parts of the Town, and which I hear will be con-
 ‘ tinued with Additions and Improvements. As all the
 ‘ Persons who compose this lawless Assembly are mas-
 ‘ ked, we dare not attack any of them in *our Way*, lest
 ‘ we should send a Woman of Quality to *Bridewell*, or a
 ‘ Peer of *Great-Britain* to the Counter: Besides that, their
 ‘ Numbers are so very great, that I am afraid they would
 ‘ be able to rout our whole Fraternity, though we were
 ‘ accompanied with all our Guard of Constables. Both
 ‘ these Reasons, which secure them from our Authority,
 ‘ make them obnoxious to yours; As both their Disguise
 ‘ and their Numbers will give no particular Person Rea-
 ‘ son to think himself affronted by you.

‘ I F we are rightly informed, the Rules that are ob-
 ‘ served by this new Society are wonderfully contrived
 ‘ for the Advancement of Cuckoldom. The Women ei-
 ‘ ther come by themselves, or are introduced by Friends,
 ‘ who are obliged to quit them, upon their first Entrance,
 ‘ to the Conversation of any Body that addresses himself
 ‘ to them. There are several Rooms where the Parties
 ‘ may retire, and, if they please, shew their Faces by Con-
 ‘ sent. Whispers, Squeezes, Nods, and Embraces, are
 ‘ the innocent Freedoms of the Place. In short, the
 ‘ whole Design of this libidinous Assembly, seems to ter-
 ‘ minate in Assignations and Intrigues; and I hope you
 ‘ will take effectual Methods by your publick Advice
 ‘ and Admonitions, to prevent such a promiscuous Mul-
 ‘ titude

‘titude of both Sexes from meeting together in so clandestine a Manner. I am

*Your humble Servant,
and Fellow-Labourer,*

T. B.

Not long after the Perusal of this Letter, I received another upon the same Subject; which by the Date and Stile of it, I take to be written by some young Templer.

S I R,

Middle-Temple, 1710-11.

‘W H E N a Man has been guilty of any Vice or Folly, I think the best Atonement he can make for it, is to warn others not to fall into the like. In order to this I must acquaint you, that some time in *February* last I went to the *Tuesday’s* Masquerade. Upon my first going in I was attacked by half a Dozen female Quakers, who seemed willing to adopt me for a Brother; but upon a nearer Examination I found they were a Sisterhood of Coquettes disguised in that precise Habit. I was soon after taken out to dance, and, as I fancied, by a Woman of the first Quality, for she was very tall, and moved gracefully. As soon as the Minuet was over, we ogled one another through our Masques; and as I am very well read in *Waller*, I repeated to her the four following Verses out of his Poem to *Vandike*.

*The heedless Lover does not know
Whose Eyes they are that wound him so;
But confounded with thy Art,
Inquires her Name that has his Heart.*

‘I pronounced these Words with such a languishing Air that I had some Reason to conclude I had made a Conquest. She told me that she hoped my Face was not akin to my Tongue, and looking upon her Watch, I accidentally discovered the Figure of a Coronet on the back Part of it. I was so transported with the Thought of such an Amour, that I plied her from one Room to another with all the Gallantries I could invent; and at length brought things to so happy an Issue, that she

‘gave

‘gave me a private Meeting the next Day, without Page
 ‘or Footman, Coach or Equipage. My Heart danced in
 ‘Raptures; but I had not lived in this golden Dream a-
 ‘bove three Days, before I found good Reason to wish
 ‘that I had continued true to my Landrefs. I have
 ‘since heard, by a very great Accident, that this Fine
 ‘Lady does not live far from *Covent-Garden*, and that I
 ‘am not the first Cully whom she has passed her self
 ‘upon for a Countess.

‘THU’S, Sir, you see how I have mistaken a *Cloud*
 ‘for a *Juno*; and if you can make any use of this Ad-
 ‘venture, for the Benefit of those who may possibly be
 ‘as vain young Coxcombs as my self, I do most heartily
 ‘give you Leave. I am, SIR,

Your most humble Admirer,

B. L.

I design to visit the next Masquerade my self, in the same
 Habit I wore at *Grand Cairo*; and till then shall suspend
 my Judgment of this Midnight Entertainment. C



Nº 9. Saturday, March 10.

——— *Tigris agit rabidâ cum tigride pacem
 Perpetuam, sævis inter se convenit urfis.*

Juv.

M A N is said to be a Sociable Animal, and, as an In-
 stance of it, we may observe, that we take all
 Occasions and Pretences of forming our selves in-
 to those little Nocturnal Assemblies, which are common-
 ly known by the Name of *Clubs*. When a Set of Men
 find themselves agree in any Particular, tho’ never so trivial,
 they establish themselves into a kind of Fraternity, and
 meet once or twice a Week, upon the Account of such
 a Fantastick Resemblance. I know a considerable Market-
 Town, in which there was a Club of fat Men, that did
 not come together (as you may well suppose) to enter-
 tain one another with Sprightliness and Wit, but to keep
 one