

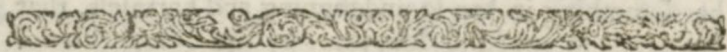
S I R,

THERE is no State of Life so Anxious as that of a Man who does not live according to the Dictates of his own Reason. It will seem odd to you, when I assure you that my Love of Retirement first of all brought me to Court; but this will be no Riddle, when I acquaint you that I placed my self here with a Design of getting so much Money as might enable me to purchase a handsom Retreat in the Country. At present my Circumstances enable me, and my Duty prompts me, to pass away the remaining Part of my Life in such a Retirement as I at first propos'd to my self; but to my great Misfortune I have intirely lost the Relish of it, and should now return to the Country with greater Reluctance than I at first came to Court. I am so unhappy, as to know that what I am fond of are Trifles, and that what I neglect is of the greatest Importance: In short, I find a Contest in my own Mind between Reason and Fashion. I remember you once told me, that I might live in the World, and out of it, at the same time. Let me beg of you to explain this Paradox more at large to me, that I may conform my Life, if possible, both to my Duty and my Inclination. I am

Your most humble Servant,

R.

R. B..



N^o 28. Monday, April 2.

— Neque semper arcum
Tendit Apollo.

Hor.

I Shall here present my Reader with a Letter from a Projector, concerning a new Office which he thinks may very much contribute to the Embellishment of the City, and to the driving Barbarity out of our Streets.

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I consider it is a Satyr upon Projectors in general, and a lively Picture of the whole Art of Modern Criticism.

S I R,

Observing that you have Thoughts of creating certain Officers under you, for the Inspection of several petty Enormities which you your self cannot attend to; and finding daily Absurdities hung out upon the Sign-Posts of this City, to the great Scandal of Foreigners, as well as those of our own Country, who are curious Spectators of the same: I do humbly propose, that you would be pleased to make me your Superintendant of all such Figures and Devices as are or shall be made use of on this Occasion; with full Powers to rectify or expunge whatever I shall find irregular or defective. For want of such an Officer, there is nothing like sound Literature and good Sense to be met with in those Objects, that are every where thrusting themselves out to the Eye, and endeavouring to become visible. Our Streets are filled with blue Boars, black Swans, and red Lions; not to mention flying Pigs, and Hogs in Armour, with many other Creatures more extraordinary than any in the Desarts of *Africk*. Strange! that one who has all the Birds and Beasts in Nature to choose out of, should live at the Sign of an *Eni Rationis*!

MY first Task therefore should be, like that of *Hercules*, to clear the City from Monsters. In the second Place I would forbid, that Creatures of jarring and incongruous Natures should be joined together in the same Sign; such as the Bell and the Neats-Tongue, the Dog and the Gridiron. The Fox and Goose may be supposed to have met, but what has the Fox and the Seven Stars to do together? And when did the Lamb and Dolphin ever meet, except upon a Sign-Post? As for the Cat and Fiddle, there is a Conceit in it; and therefore I do not intend that any thing I have here said should affect it. I must however observe to you upon this Subject, that it is usual for a young Tradesman, at his first setting up, to add to his own Sign that of the Master whom he served; as the Husband after Marriage, gives a Place to his Mistress's Arms in his own Coat. This I take to have given Rise to many of those Absurdities

‘ Absurdities which are committed over our Heads; and, as I am informed, first occasioned the three Nuns and a Hare, which we see so frequently joined together. I would therefore establish certain Rules, for the determining how far one Tradesman may *give* the Sign of another, and in what Cases he may be allowed to quarter it with his own.

‘ IN the third Place, I would enjoin every Shop to make use of a Sign which bears some Affinity to the Wares in which it deals. What can be more inconsistent, than to see a Bawd at the Sign of the Angel, or a Tailor at the Lion? A Cook should not live at the Boot, nor a Shoe-maker at the roasted Pig; and yet for want of this Regulation, I have seen a Goat set up before the Door of a Perfumer, and the *French King’s* Head at a Sword-Cutler’s.

‘ AN ingenious Foreigner observes, that several of those Gentlemen who value themselves upon their Families, and overlook such as are bred to Trade, bear the Tools of their Forefathers in their Coats of Arms. I will not examine how true this is in Fact: But though it may not be necessary for Posterity thus to set up the Sign of their Forefathers, I think it highly proper for those who actually profess the Trade, to shew some such Marks of it before their Doors.

‘ WHEN the Name gives an Occasion for an ingenious Sign-Post, I would likewise advise the Owner to take that Opportunity of letting the World know who he is. It would have been ridiculous for the Ingenious Mrs. *Salmon* to have lived at the Sign of the Trout; for which Reason she has erected before her House the Figure of the Fish that is her Name-sake. Mr. *Bell* has likewise distinguished himself by a Device of the same Nature: And here, Sir, I must beg leave to observe to you, that this particular Figure of a Bell has given Occasion to several Pieces of Wit in this kind. A Man of your Reading must know, that *Abel Dragger* gained great Applause by it in the Time of *Ben. Johnson*. Our Apocryphal Heathen God is also represented by this Figure; which, in Conjunction with the Dragon, makes a very handsome Picture in several of our Streets. As for the Bell-Savage, which is the Sign of a Savage

‘ Man

Man standing by a Bell, I was formerly very much puzzled upon the Conceit of it, till I accidentally fell into the reading of an old Romance translated out of the *French*; which gives an Account of a very beautiful Woman who was found in a Wilderness, and is called in the *French* *la belle Sauvage*; and is every where translated by our Countryman the Bell-Savage. This Piece of Philosophy will, I hope, convince you that I have made Sign-Posts my Study, and consequently qualified my self for the Employment which I solicit at your Hands. But before I conclude my Letter, I must communicate to you another Remark which I have made upon the Subject with which I am now entertaining you, namely, that I can give a shrewd Guess at the Humour of the Inhabitant by the Sign that hangs before his Door. A surly cholerick Fellow, generally makes choice of a Bear; as Men of milder Dispositions frequently live at the Lamb. Seeing a Punch-Bowl painted upon a Sign near *Charing-Cross*, and very curiously garnished, with a Couple of Angels hovering over it and squeezing a Limon into it, I had the Curiosity to ask after the Master of the House, and found upon Inquiry, as I had guessed by the little *Agrémens* upon his Sign, that he was a *Frenchman*. I know, Sir, it is not requisite for me to enlarge upon these Hints to a Gentleman of your great Abilities; so humbly recommending my self to your Favour and Patronage,

I remain, &c.

I shall add to the foregoing Letter, another which came to me by the same Penny-Post.

From my own Apartment near Charing-Cross.

Honoured Sir,

HAVING heard that this Nation is a great Encourager of Ingenuity, I have brought with me a Rope-Dancer that was caught in one of the Woods belonging to the Great *Mogul*. He is by Birth a Monkey; but swings upon a Rope, takes a Pipe of Tobacco, and drinks a Glass of Ale, like any reasonable Creature. He gives great Satisfaction to the Quality; and if

‘ if they will make a Subscription for him, I will send
 ‘ for a Brother of his out of *Holland* that is a very good
 ‘ Tumbler; and also for another of the same Family
 ‘ whom I design for my *Merry-Andrew*, as being an
 ‘ excellent Mimick, and the greatest Droll in the Coun-
 ‘ try where he now is. I hope to have this Entertain-
 ‘ ment in a Readiness for the next Winter; and doubt
 ‘ not but it will please more than the Opera or Puppet-
 ‘ Show. I will not say that a Monkey is a better Man
 ‘ than some of the Opera-Heroes; but certainly he is a
 ‘ better Representative of a Man, than the most artificial
 ‘ Composition of Wood and Wire. If you will be pleased
 ‘ to give me a good Word in your Paper, you shall be eve-
 ‘ ry Night a Spectator at my Show for nothing.

C

I am, &c.



N^o 29. Tuesday, April 3.

— *Sermo linguâ concinnus utraq; Suavior: ut Cbio nota si commissa Falerni est.* Hor.

THERE is nothing that has more startled our *Eng-
 lish* Audience, than the *Italian Recitativo* at its
 first Entrance upon the Stage. People were won-
 derfully surprized to hear Generals singing the Word of
 Command, and Ladies delivering Messages in Musick.
 Our Countrymen could not forbear laughing when they
 heard a Lover chanting out a Billet-doux, and even the
 Superscription of a Letter set to a Tune. The famous
 Blunder in an old Play of *Enter a King and two Fiddlers
 solus*, was now no longer an Absurdity; when it was im-
 possible for a Hero in a Desert, or a Princess in her Closet,
 to speak any thing unaccompanied with Musical Instru-
 ments.

BUT however this *Italian* Method of acting in *Reci-
 tativo* might appear at first hearing, I cannot but think
 it much more just than that which prevailed in our *Eng-
 lish* Opera before this Innovation: The Transition from

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