

Sentiments, by what the Actor speaks, more than by what he appears. Can all the Trappings or Equipage of a King or Hero, give *Brutus* half that Pomp and Majesty which he receives from a few Lines in *Shakespeare*? C



N^o 43. Thursday, April 19.

*Hæ tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere Subjectis, & debellare Superbos.* Virg.

THERE are Crowds of Men, whose great Misfortune it is that they were not bound to Mechanick Arts or Trades; it being absolutely necessary for them to be led by some continual Task or Employment. These are such as we commonly call dull Fellows; Persons, who for want of something to do, out of a certain Vacancy of Thought, rather than Curiosity, are ever meddling with things for which they are unfit. I cannot give you a Notion of them better than by presenting you with a Letter from a Gentleman, who belongs to a Society of this Order of Men, residing at *Oxford*.

Oxford, April 13, 1711.

S I R,

Four o' Clock in the Morning.

IN some of your late Speculations, I find some Sketches towards an History of Clubs: But you seem to me to shew them in somewhat too ludicrous a Light. I have well weighed that Matter, and think, that the most important Negotiations may best be carried on in such Assemblies. I shall, therefore, for the good of Mankind (which, I trust, you and I are equally concerned for) purpose an Institution of that Nature for Example sake. I must confess the Design and Transactions of too many Clubs are trifling, and manifestly of no Consequence to the Nation or Publick Weal: Those I'll give you up. But you must do me then the Justice to own, that nothing can be more useful or laudable, than the Scheme we go upon. To avoid Nicknames and Witticisms, we call our selves *The Hebdomadal Meeting*: Our President

‘ President continues for a Year at least, and sometimes four or five: We are all Grave, Serious, Designing Men, in our Way: We think it our Duty, as far as in us lies, to take care the Constitution receives no Harm, — *Ne quid detrimenti Res capiat publica* — To censure Doctrines or Facts, Persons or Things, which we don’t like; To settle the Nation at home, and to carry on the War abroad, where and in what manner we see fit. If other People are not of our Opinion, we can’t help that. ’Twere better they were. Moreover, we now and then condescend to direct, in some measure, the little Affairs of our own University.

‘ VERILY, Mr. SPECTATOR, we are much offended at the Act for Importing *French* Wines: A Bottle or two of good solid Edifying Port at honest *George’s*, made a Night chearful, and threw off Reserve. But this plaguy *French* Claret will not only cost us more Money but do us less Good: Had we been aware of it, before it had gone too far, I must tell you, we would have petitioned to be heard upon that Subject. But let that pass.

‘ I must let you know likewise, good Sir, that we look upon a certain Northern Prince’s March, in Conjunction with Infidels, to be palpably against our Goodwill and Liking; and, for all Monsieur *Palmquist*, a most dangerous Innovation; and we are by no means yet sure, that some People are not at the Bottom on’t. At least, my own private Letters leave Room for a Politician, well vers’d in Matters of this Nature, to suspect as much, as a penetrating Friend of mine tells me.

‘ WE think we have at last done the Business with the Malecontents in *Hungary*, and shall clap up a Peace there.

‘ WHAT the Neutrality Army is to do, or what the Army in *Flanders*, and what two or three other Princes, is not yet fully determined among us; and we wait impatiently for the coming in of the next *Dyer’s*, who, you must know, is our Authentick Intelligence, our *Aristotle* in Politicks. And ’tis indeed but fit there should be some Dernier Resort, the absolute Decider of all Controversies.

‘ WE were lately informed, that the Gallant Train’d-Bands had patroll’d all Night long about the Streets of *London*: We indeed could not imagine any Occasion for it,

‘ it, we gueſſed not a Tittle on’t aforehand, we were in
 ‘ nothing of the Secret; and that City-Tradeſmen, or
 ‘ their Apprentices ſhould do Duty, or work, during the
 ‘ Holidays, we thought abſolutely impoſſible. But *Dyer*
 ‘ being poſitive in it, and ſome Letters from other Peo-
 ‘ ple, who had talked with ſome who had it from thoſe
 ‘ who ſhould know, giving ſome Countenance to it, the
 ‘ Chairman reported from the Committee, appointed to
 ‘ examine into that Affair, That ’twas Poſſible there
 ‘ might be ſomething in’t. I have much more to ſay to
 ‘ you, but my two good Friends and Neighbours, *Do-*
 ‘ *minick* and *Slyboots*, are juſt come in, and the Coffee’s
 ‘ ready. I am, in the mean time,

Mr. SPECTATOR,

Your Admirer, and Humble Servant,

Abraham Froth.

YOU may obſerve the Turn of their Minds tends
 only to Novelty, and not Satisfaction in any thing. It
 would be Diſappointment to them, to come to Cer-
 tainty in any thing, for that would gravel them, and
 put an end to their Inquiries, which dull Fellows do
 not make for Information, but for Exerciſe. I do not
 know but this may be a very good way of accounting
 for what we frequently ſee, to wit, that dull Fellows
 prove very good Men of Buſineſs. Buſineſs relieves
 them from their own natural Heavineſs, by furniſhing
 them with what to do; whereas Buſineſs to Mercurial
 Men, is an Interruption from their real Exiſtence and
 Happineſs. Tho’ the dull Part of Mankind are harmleſs
 in their Amuſements, it were to be wiſhed they had no
 vacant Time, becauſe they uſually undertake ſomething
 that makes their Wants conſpicuous, by their manner of
 ſupplying them. You ſhall ſeldom find a dull Fellow of
 good Education, but (if he happens to have any Leiſure
 upon his Hands) will turn his Head to one of thoſe two
 Amuſements, for all Fools of Eminence, Politicks or
 Poetry. The former of theſe Arts, is the Study of all
 dull People in general; but when Dulneſs is lodged in
 a Perſon of a quick Animal Life, it generally exerts it

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self in Poetry. One might here mention a few Military Writers, who give great Entertainment to the Age, by reason that the Stupidity of their Heads is quickned by the Alacrity of their Hearts. This Constitution in a dull Fellow, gives Vigour to Nonsense, and makes the Puddle boil, which would otherwise stagnate. The *British Prince*, that Celebrated Poem, which was written in the Reign of King *Charles* the Second, and deservedly called by the Wits of that Age *Incomparable*, was the Effect of such an happy Genius as we are speaking of. From among many other Distichs no less to be quoted on this Account, I cannot but recite the two following Lines ;

*A painted Vest Prince Voltager had on,
Which from a Naked Pi& his Grandfire won.*

HERE if the Poet had not been Vivacious, as well as Stupid, he could not, in the Warmth and Hurry of Nonsense, have been capable of forgetting that neither Prince *Voltager*, nor his Grandfather, could strip a Naked Man of his Doublet ; but a Fool of a colder Constitution would have stayed to have Flea'd the *Pi&*, and made Buff of his Skin, for the Wearing of the Conqueror.

TO bring these Observations to some useful Purpose of Life, what I would propose should be, that we imitated those wise Nations, wherein every Man learns some Handicraft Work. Would it not employ a Beau prettily enough, if instead of eternally playing with a Snuff-Box, he spent some part of his Time in making one ? Such a Method as this would very much conduce to the publick Emolument, by making every Man living good for something ; for there would then be no one Member of Humane Society, but would have some little Pretension for some Degree in it ; like him who came to *Will's* Coffee-house, upon the Merit of having writ a Posy of a Ring.

R



Friday,