



N^o 95. Tuesday, June 19.

Curæ Læves loquuntur, Ingentes stupent.

HAVING read the two following Letters with much Pleasure, I cannot but think the good Sense of them will be as agreeable to the Town as any thing I could say either on the Topicks they treat of, or any other. They both allude to former Papers of mine, and I do not question but the first, which is upon inward Mourning, will be thought the Production of a Man who is well acquainted with the generous Earnings of Distress in a manly Temper, which is above the Relief of Tears. A Speculation of my own on that Subject I shall defer till another Occasion.

THE second Letter is from a Lady of a Mind as great as her Understanding. There is perhaps something in the Beginning of it which I ought in Modesty to conceal; but I have so much Esteem for this Correspondent, that I will not alter a Tittle of what she writes, tho' I am thus scrupulous at the Price of being ridiculous.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

I Was very well pleased with your Discourse upon general Mourning, and should be obliged to you if you would enter into the Matter more deeply, and give us your Thoughts upon the common Sense the ordinary People have of the Demonstrations of Grief, who prescribe Rules and Fashions to the most solemn Affliction; such as the Loss of the nearest Relations and dearest Friends. You cannot go to visit a sick Friend, but some impertinent Waiter about him observes the Muscles of your Face, as strictly as if they were Prognosticks of his Death or Recovery. If he happens to be taken from you, you are immediately surrounded with Numbers of these Spectators, who expect a melancholy Shrug of your Shoulders, a pathological Shake of your Head, and an expressive Distortion of your Face, to measure

‘ measure your Affection and Value for the Deceased : But
‘ there is nothing, on these Occasions, so much in their
‘ Favour as immoderate Weeping. As all their Passions
‘ are superficial, they imagine the Seat of Love and Friend-
‘ ship to be placed visibly in the Eyes : They judge what
‘ Stock of Kindness you had for the Living, by the Quan-
‘ tity of Tears you pour out for the Dead ; so that if one
‘ Body wants that Quantity of Salt-water another abounds
‘ with, he is in great Danger of being thought insensible
‘ or ill-natured : They are Strangers to Friendship, whose
‘ Grief happens not to be moist enough to wet such a
‘ Parcel of Handkerchiefs. But Experience has told us
‘ nothing is so fallacious as this outward Sign of Sorrow ;
‘ and the natural History of our Bodies will teach us, that
‘ this Flux of the Eyes, this Faculty of Weeping, is pecu-
‘ liar only to some Constitutions. We observe in the ten-
‘ der Bodies of Children, when crossed in their little Wills
‘ and Expectations, how dissolvable they are into Tears :
‘ If this were what Grief is in Men, Nature would not
‘ be able to support them in the Excess of it for one Mo-
‘ ment. Add to this Observation, how quick is their
‘ Transition from this Passion to that of their Joy. I
‘ won’t say we see often, in the next tender Things to
‘ Children, Tears shed without much Grieving. Thus it is
‘ common to shed Tears without much Sorrow, and as
‘ common to suffer much Sorrow without shedding Tears..
‘ Grief and Weeping are indeed frequent Companions :
‘ But, I believe, never in their highest Excesses. As Laugh-
‘ ter does not proceed from profound Joy, so neither does
‘ Weeping from profound Sorrow. The Sorrow which
‘ appears so easily at the Eyes, cannot have pierced deep-
‘ ly into the Heart. The Heart, distended with Grief,
‘ stops all the Passages for Tears or Lamentations.

‘ NOW, Sir, what I would incline you to in all
‘ this, is, that you would inform the shallow Criticks
‘ and Observers upon Sorrow, that true Affliction labours
‘ to be invisible, that it is a Stranger to Ceremony,
‘ and that it bears in its own Nature a Dignity much
‘ above the little Circumstances which are affected
‘ under the Notion of Decency. You must know, Sir,
‘ I have lately lost a dear Friend, for whom I have

not

not yet shed a Tear, and for that Reason your Animadversions on that Subject would be the more acceptable to,

S I R,

Your most humble Servant,

B. D.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

June the 15th.

A S I hope there are but few that have so little Gratitude as not to acknowledge the Usefulness of your Pen, and to esteem it a publick Benefit; so I am sensible, be that as it will, you must nevertheless find the secret and incomparable Pleasure of doing Good, and be a great Sharer in the Entertainment you give. I acknowledge our Sex to be much obliged, and I hope improved by your Labours; and even your Intentions more particularly for our Service. If it be true, as 'tis sometimes said, that our Sex have an Influence on the other, your Paper may be a yet more general Good. Your directing us to Reading is certainly the best Means to our Instruction; but I think, with you, Caution in that Particular very useful, since the Improvement of our Understandings may, or may not, be of Service to us, according as it is managed. It has been thought we are not generally so ignorant as ill-taught, or that our Sex does so often want Wit, Judgment, or Knowledge, as the right Application of them: You are so well-bred, as to say your fair Readers are already deeper Scholars than the Beaus, and that you could name some of them that talk much better than several Gentlemen that make a Figure at *Will's*: This may possibly be, and no great Compliment, in my Opinion, even supposing your Comparison to reach *Tom's* and the *Grecian*: Sure you are too wise to think That a real Commendation of a Woman. Were it not rather to be wished we improved in our own Sphere, and approved our selves better Daughters, Wives, Mothers, and Friends?

I can't but agree with the Judicious Trader in *Cheapside* (though I am not at all prejudiced in his Favour) in recommending the Study of Arithmetick; and must dissent even from the Authority which you mention, when it advises the making our Sex Scholars. Indeed a little more