

‘ brings a Man under an everlasting Jealousy and Suspicion, so that he is not believed when he speaks Truth, nor trusted when perhaps he means honestly. When a Man hath once forfeited the Reputation of his Integrity, he is set fast, and nothing will then serve his Turn, neither Truth nor Falshood. R



N^o 104. Friday, June 29.

— *Qualis equos Threissa fatigat*
Harpalyce —

Virg.

IT would be a noble Improvement, or rather a Recovery of what we call Good-breeding, if nothing were to pass amongst us for agreeable which was the least Transgression against that Rule of Life called Decorum, or a Regard to Decency. This would command the Respect of Mankind, because it carries in it Deference to their good Opinion, as Humility lodged in a worthy Mind, is always attended with a certain Homage, which no haughty Soul, with all the Arts imaginable, will ever be able to purchase. *Tully* says, Virtue and Decency are so nearly related, that it is difficult to separate them from each other but in our Imagination. As the Beauty of the Body always accompanies the Health of it, so certainly is Decency concomitant to Virtue: As Beauty of Body, with an agreeable Carriage, pleases the Eye, and that Pleasure consists in that we observe all the Parts with a certain Elegance are proportioned to each other; so does Decency of Behaviour which appears in our Lives obtain the Approbation of all with whom we converse, from the Order, Consistency, and Moderation of our Words and Actions. This flows from the Reverence we bear towards every good Man, and to the World in general; for to be negligent of what any one thinks of you, does not only shew you arrogant but abandoned. In all these Considerations we are to distinguish how one Virtue differs from another: As it is the Part of Justice never to do Violence, it is of Modesty never to commit Offence.

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In this last Particular lies the whole Force of what is called Decency ; to this Purpose that excellent Moralist above-mentioned talks of Decency ; but this Quality is more easily comprehended by an ordinary Capacity, than expressed with all his Eloquence. This Decency of Behaviour is generally transgressed among all Orders of Men ; nay, the very Women, tho' themselves created it as it were for Ornament, are often very much mistaken in this ornamental Part of Life. It would methinks be a short Rule for Behaviour, if every young Lady in her Dress, Words, and Actions were only to recommend herself as a Sister, Daughter, or Wife, and make herself the more esteemed in one of those Characters. The Care of themselves, with regard to the Families in which Women are born, is the best Motive for their being courted to come into the Alliance of other Houses. Nothing can promote this End more than a strict Preservation of Decency. I should be glad if a certain Equestrian Order of Ladies, some of whom one meets in an Evening at every Outlet of the Town, would take this Subject into their serious Consideration : In order thereunto the following Letter may not be wholly unworthy their Perusal.

MR. SPECTATOR,

GOING lately to take the Air in one of the most beautiful Evenings this Season has produced ; as I was admiring the Serenity of the Sky, the lively Colours of the Fields, and the Variety of the Landskip every way around me, my Eyes were suddenly called off from these inanimate Objects by a little Party of Horsemen I saw passing the Road. The greater Part of them escaped my particular Observation, by reason that my whole Attention was fixed on a very fair Youth who rode in the midst of them, and seemed to have been dressed by some Description in a Romance. His Features, Complexion, and Habit had a remarkable Effeminacy, and a certain languishing Vanity appeared in his Air : His Hair, well curl'd and powder'd, hung to a considerable Length on his Shoulders, and was wantonly ty'd, as if by the Hands of his Mistress, in a Scarlet Ribbon, which played like a Streamer behind him : He had a Coat and Wastecoat of blue Camlet trimm'd and
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embroidered with Silver; a Cravat of the finest Lace; and wore, in a smart Cock, a little Beaver Hat edged with Silver, and made more sprightly by a Feather. His Horse too, which was a Pacer, was adorned after the same airy manner, and seemed to share in the Vanity of the Rider. As I was pitying the Luxury of this young Person, who appeared to me to have been educated only as an Object of Sight, I perceived on my nearer Approach, and as I turned my Eyes downward, a Part of the Equipage I had not observed before, which was a Petticoat of the same with the Coat and Wastecoat. After this Discovery, I looked again on the Face of the fair *Amazon* who had thus deceived me, and thought those Features which had before offended me by their Softness, were now strengthened into as improper a Boldness; and tho' her Eyes, Nose, and Mouth seemed to be formed with perfect Symmetry, I am not certain whether she, who in Appearance was a very handsome Youth, may not be in reality a very indifferent Woman.

THERE is an Objection which naturally presents it self against these occasional Perplexities and Mixtures of Dress, which is, that they seem to break in upon that Propriety and Distinction of Appearance in which the Beauty of different Characters is preserved; and if they should be more frequent than they are at present, would look like turning our publick Assemblies into a general Masquerade. The Model of this *Amazonian* Hunting Habit for Ladies, was, as I take it, first imported from *France*, and well enough expresses the Gaiety of a People who are taught to do any thing so it be with an Assurance; but I cannot help thinking it sits awkwardly yet on our *English* Modesty. The Petticoat is a kind of Incumbrance upon it, and if the *Amazons* should think fit to go on in this Plunder of our Sex's Ornaments, they ought to add to their Spoils, and complete their Triumph over us, by wearing the Breeches.

IF it be natural to contract insensibly the Manners of those we imitate, the Ladies who are pleased with assuming our Dresses will do us more Honour than we deserve, but they will do it at their own Expence.

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