



N^o 114. *Wednesday, July 11.*

— *Paupertatis pudor & fuga* —

Hor.

OECONOMY in our Affairs, has the same Effect upon our Fortunes which Good-breeding has upon our Conversations. There is a pretending Behaviour in both Cases, which instead of making Men esteemed, renders them both miserable and contemptible. We had Yesterday at Sir ROGER's a Set of Country Gentlemen who dined with him : and after Dinner the Glafs was taken, by those who pleased, pretty plentifully. Among others I observed a Person of a tolerable good Aspect, who seemed to be more greedy of Liquor than any of the Company, and yet, methought, he did not taste it with Delight. As he grew warm, he was suspicious of every thing that was said ; and as he advanced towards being fuddled, his Humour grew worse. At the same time his Bitterness seemed to be rather an inward Dissatisfaction in his own Mind, than any Dislike he had taken to the Company. Upon hearing his Name, I knew him to be a Gentleman of a considerable Fortune in this County, but greatly in Debt. What gives the unhappy Man this Peevishness of Spirit, is, that his Estate is dipped, and is eating out with Usury ; and yet he has not the heart to sell any Part of it. His proud Stomach, at the Cost of restless Nights, constant Inquietudes, Danger of Affronts, and a thousand nameless Inconveniencies, preserves this Canker in his Fortune, rather than it shall be said he is a Man of fewer Hundreds a Year than he has been commonly reputed. Thus he endures the Torment of Poverty, to avoid the Name of being less rich. If you go to his House you see great Plenty ; but served in a Manner that shews it is all unnatural, and that the Master's Mind is not at home. There is a certain Waste and Carelessness in the Air of every thing, and the whole appears but a covered Indigence, a magnificent Poverty. That Neatness and Cheerfulness, which attends the Table of him who lives within Compass, is wanting, and exchanged for a libertine Way of Service in all about him.

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THIS Gentleman's Conduct, tho' a very common way of Management, is as ridiculous as that Officer's would be, who had but few Men under his Command, and should take the Charge of an Extent of Country rather than of a small Pass. To pay for, personate, and keep in a Man's Hands, a greater Estate than he really has, is of all others the most unpardonable Vanity, and must in the End reduce the Man who is guilty of it to Dishonour. Yet if we look round us in any County of *Great-Britain*, we shall see many in this fatal Error; if that may be called by so soft a Name, which proceeds from a false Shame of appearing what they really are, when the contrary Behaviour would in a short time advance them to the Condition which they pretend to.

LAERTES has fifteen hundred Pounds a Year; which is mortgaged for six thousand Pounds; but it is impossible to convince him that if he sold as much as would pay off that Debt, he would save four Shillings in the Pound, which he gives for the Vanity of being the reputed Master of it. Yet if *Laertes* did this, he would, perhaps, be easier in his own Fortune; but then *Irus*, a Fellow of Yesterday, who has but twelve hundred a Year, would be his Equal. Rather than this shall be, *Laertes* goes on to bring well-born Beggars into the World, and every Twelvemonth charges his Estate with at least one Year's Rent more by the Birth of a Child.

LAERTES and *Irus* are Neighbours, whose Way of living are an Abomination to each other. *Irus* is moved by the Fear of Poverty, and *Laertes* by the Shame of it. Tho' the Motive of Action is of so near Affinity in both, and may be resolved into this, "That to each of them Poverty is the greatest of all Evils," yet are their Manners very widely different. Shame of Poverty makes *Laertes* lanch into unnecessary Equipage, vain Expence, and lavish Entertainments; Fear of Poverty makes *Irus* allow himself only plain Necessaries, appear without a Servant, sell his own Corn, attend his Labourers, and be himself a Labourer. Shame of Poverty makes *Laertes* go every Day a Step nearer to it: and Fear of Poverty stirs up *Irus* to make every Day some further Progress from it.

THESE different Motives produce the Excesses which Men are guilty of in the Negligence of and Provision for them-

themselves. Usury, Stock-jobbing, Extortion and Oppression, have their Seed in the Dread of Want; and Vanity, Riot and Prodigality, from the Shame of it: But both these Excesses are infinitely below the Pursuit of a reasonable Creature. After we have taken care to command so much as is necessary for maintaining our selves in the Order of Men suitable to our Character, the Care of Superfluities is a Vice no less extravagant, than the Neglect of Necessaries would have been before.

CERTAIN it is, that they are both out of Nature, when she is follow'd with Reason and good Sense. It is from this Reflexion that I always read Mr. *Cowley* with the greatest Pleasure: His Magnanimity is as much above that of other considerable Men, as his Understanding; and it is a true distinguishing Spirit in the elegant Author who published his Works, to dwell so much upon the Temper of his Mind and the Moderation of his Desires: By this Means he has render'd his Friend as amiable as famous. That State of Life which bears the Face of Poverty with Mr. *Cowley's great Vulgar*, is admirably described; and it is no small Satisfaction to those of the same Turn of Desire, that he produces the Authority of the wisest Men of the best Age of the World, to strengthen his Opinion of the ordinary Pursuits of Mankind.

IT would methinks be no ill Maxim of Life, if according to that Ancestor of Sir ROGER, whom I lately mentioned, every Man would point to himself what Sum he would resolve not to exceed. He might by this means cheat himself into a Tranquillity on this Side of that Expectation, or convert what he should get above it to nobler Uses than his own Pleasures or Necessities. This Temper of Mind would exempt a Man from an ignorant Envy of restless Men above him, and a more inexcusable Contempt of happy Men below him. This would be failing by some Compass, living with some Design; but to be eternally bewildered in Prospects of future Gain, and putting on unnecessary Armour against improbable Blows of Fortune, is a Mechanick Being which has not good Sense for its Direction, but is carried on by a sort of acquired Instinct towards things below our Consideration and unworthy our Esteem. It is possible that the Tranquillity I now enjoy at Sir ROGER's may have created in me this way