

that is placed in a Corner of my Room, and pleases me the more because it does every thing I require of it in the most profound Silence. My Landlady and her Daughters are so well acquainted with my Hours of Exercise, that they never come into my Room to disturb me whilst I am ringing.

WHEN I was some Years younger than I am at present, I used to employ my self in a more laborious Diversion, which I learned from a *Latin* Treatise of Exercises, that is written with great Erudition: It is there called the *σκιόμαχία*, or the fighting with a Man's own Shadow, and consists in the brandishing of two short Sticks grasped in each Hand, and loaden with Plugs of Lead at either end. This opens the Chest, exercises the Limbs, and gives a Man all the Pleasure of Boxing, without the Blows. I could wish that several learned Men would lay out that Time which they employ in Controversies and Disputes about nothing, in *this Method* of fighting with their own Shadows. It might conduce very much to evaporate the Spleen, which makes them uneasy to the Publick as well as to themselves.

TO conclude, As I am a Compound of Soul and Body, I consider my self as obliged to a double Scheme of Duties; and think I have not fulfilled the Business of the Day when I do not thus employ the one in Labour and Exercise, as well as the other in Study and Contemplation. L



N^o 116. Friday, July 13.

——— *Vocat ingenti clamore Cithæron,*
Taygetique canes ———

Virg.

THOSE who have searched into human Nature observe that nothing so much shews the Nobleness of the Soul, as that its Felicity consists in Action. Every Man has such an active Principle in him, that he will find out something to employ himself upon, in whatever Place or State of Life he is posted. I have heard of a Gentleman who was under close Confinement in the *Bastile* seven Years; during which time he amused himself

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in scattering a few small Pins about his Chamber, gathering them up again, and placing them in different Figures on the Arm of a great Chair. He often told his Friends afterwards, that unless he had found out this Piece of Exercise, he verily believed he should have lost his Senses.

AFTER what has been said, I need not inform my Readers, that Sir ROGER, with whose Character I hope they are at present pretty well acquainted, has in his Youth gone through the whole Course of those rural Diversions which the Country abounds in; and which seem to be extremely well suited to that laborious Industry a Man may observe here in a far greater degree than in Towns and Cities. I have before hinted at some of my Friend's Exploits: He has in his youthful Days taken forty Coveys of Partridges in a Season; and tired many a Salmon with a Line consisting but of a single Hair. The constant Thanks and good Wishes of the Neighbourhood always attended him, on account of his remarkable Enmity towards Foxes; having destroyed more of those Vermin in one Year, than it was thought the whole Country could have produced. Indeed the Knight does not scruple to own among his most intimate Friends, that in order to establish his Reputation this Way, he has secretly sent for great Numbers of them out of other Counties, which he used to turn loose about the Country by Night, that he might the better signalize himself in their Destruction the next Day. His Hunting-Horses were the finest and best managed in all these Parts: His Tenants are still full of the Praises of a gray Stone-horse that unhappily staked himself several Years since, and was buried with great Solemnity in the Orchard.

SIR ROGER, being at present too old for Fox-hunting, to keep himself in Action, has disposed of his Beagles and got a Pack of *Stop-Hounds*. What these want in Speed, he endeavours to make amends for by the Deepness of their Mouths and the Variety of their Notes, which are suited in such manner to each other, that the whole Cry makes up a complete Comfort. He is so nice in this Particular, that a Gentleman having made him a Present of a very fine Hound the other Day, the Knight returned it by the Servant with a great many Expressions of Civility; but desired him to tell his Master, that the Dog he had sent was indeed a most excellent *Base*, but that at present he only

wanted a *Counter Tenor*. Could I believe my Friend had ever read *Shakespeare*, I should certainly conclude he had taken the Hint from *Theseus* in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

*My Hounds are bred of the Spartan Kind,
So flu'd, so sanded; and their Heads are hung
With Ears that sweep away the Morning Dew.
Crook-knee'd and dew-lap'd like Thessalian Bulls,
Slow in Pursuit, but match'd in Mouths like Bells,
Each under each: A Cry more tuneable
Was never hallow'd to, nor cheer'd with Horn.*

SIR ROGER is so keen at this Sport, that he has been out almost every Day since I came down; and upon the Chaplain's offering to lend me his easy Pad, I was prevail'd on Yesterday Morning to make one of the Company. I was extremely pleas'd, as we rid along, to observe the general Benevolence of all the Neighbourhood towards my Friend. The Farmers Sons thought themselves happy if they could open a Gate for the good old Knight as he pass'd by; which he generally requited with a Nod or a Smile, and a kind Inquiry after their Fathers or Uncles.

AFTER we had rid about a Mile from Home, we came upon a large Heath, and the Sportsmen began to beat. They had done so for some time, when, as I was at a little Distance from the rest of the Company, I saw a Hare pop out from a small Furze-brake almost under my Horse's Feet. I mark'd the Way she took, which I endeavour'd to make the Company sensible of by extending my Arm; but to no purpose, till Sir ROGER, who knows that none of my extraordinary Motions are insignificant, rode up to me, and asked me *if Puss was gone that Way?* Upon my answering *Yes*, he immediately call'd in the Dogs, and put them upon the Scent. As they were going off, I heard one of the Country-Fellows muttering to his Companion, *That 'twas a Wonder they had not lost all their Sport, for want of the silent Gentleman's crying STOLE AWAY.*

THIS, with my Aversion to leaping Hedges, made me withdraw to a rising Ground, from whence I could have the Pleasure of the whole Chace, without the Fatigue of keeping in with the Hounds. The Hare immediately threw them above a Mile behind her; but I was pleas'd to find, that instead of running straight forwards, or in Hunter's Language,

guage, *Flying the Country*, as I was afraid she might have done, she wheel'd about, and described a sort of Circle round the Hill where I had taken my Station, in such manner as gave me a very distinct View of the Sport. I could see her first pass by, and the Dogs some time afterwards unravelling the whole Track she had made, and following her thro' all her Doubles. I was at the same time delighted in observing that Deference which the rest of the Pack paid to each particular Hound, according to the Character he had acquired amongst them: If they were at a Fault, and an old Hound of good Reputation opened but once, he was immediately followed by the whole Cry; while a raw Dog, or one who was a noted *Liar*, might have yelp'd his Heart out, without being taken notice of.

THE Hare now, after having squatted two or three times, and been put up again as often, came still nearer to the Place where she was at first started. The Dogs pursued her, and these were followed by the jolly Knight, who rode upon a white Gelding, encompassed by his Tenants and Servants, and chearing his Hounds with all the Gaiety of Five and Twenty. One of the Sportsmen rode up to me, and told me, that he was sure the Chace was almost at an end, because the old Dogs, which had hitherto lain behind, now headed the Pack. The Fellow was in the right. Our Hare took a large Field just under us, followed by the full Cry *in view*. I must confess the Brightness of the Weather, the Chearfulness of every thing around me, the *Chiding* of the Hounds, which was returned upon us in a double Echo from two neighbouring Hills, with the Hollowing of the Sportsmen, and the Sounding of the Horn, lifted my Spirits into a most lively Pleasure, which I freely indulged because I was sure it was *innocent*. If I was under any Concern, it was on the account of the poor Hare, that was now quite spent, and almost within the reach of her Enemies; when the Huntsmen getting forward, threw down his Pole before the Dogs. They were now within eight Yards of that Game which they had been pursuing for almost as many Hours; yet on the Signal before-mentioned they all made a sudden Stand, and tho' they continued opening as much as before, durst not once attempt to pass beyond the Pole. At the same time Sir ROGER rode forward, and alighting, took up the Hare

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in his Arms; which he soon delivered up to one of his Servants with an Order, if she could be kept alive, to let her go in his great Orchard; where, it seems, he has several of these Prisoners of War, who live together in a very comfortable Captivity. I was highly pleased to see the Discipline of the Pack, and the Good-nature of the Knight, who could not find in his heart to murder a Creature that had given him so much Diversion.

AS we were returning home, I remembered that Monsieur *Paschal* in his most excellent Discourse on the *Misery of Man*, tells us, That all our Endeavours after Greatness proceed from nothing but a Desire of being surrounded by a Multitude of Persons and Affairs that may hinder us from looking into our selves, which is a View we cannot bear. He afterwards goes on to shew that our Love of Sports comes from the same Reason, and is particularly severe upon HUNTING. What, says he, unless it be to drown Thought, can make Men throw away so much Time and Pains upon a silly Animal, which they might buy cheaper in the Market? The foregoing Reflexion is certainly just, when a Man suffers his whole Mind to be drawn into his Sports, and altogether loses himself in the Woods; but does not affect those who propose a far more laudable End from this Exercise, I mean, *The Preservation of Health, and keeping all the Organs of the Soul in a Condition to execute her Orders*. Had that incomparable Person whom I last quoted been a little more indulgent to himself in this Point, the World might probably have enjoyed him much longer; whereas thro' too great an Application to his Studies in his Youth, he contracted that ill Habit of Body, which, after a tedious Sickness, carried him off in the fortieth Year of his Age; and the whole History we have of his Life till that Time, is but one continued Account of the Behaviour of a noble Soul struggling under innumerable Pains and Distempers.

FOR my own part, I intend to hunt twice a Week during my Stay with Sir ROGER; and shall prescribe the moderate Use of this Exercise to all my Country Friends, as the best kind of Physick for mending a bad Constitution, and preserving a good one.

I cannot do this better, than in the following Lines out of Mr. Dryden.

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