

each side to be amiable in Imperfection, and arrive at the Characters of the Dear Deceiver and the Perjured Fair. T



N<sup>o</sup> 157. *Thursday, August 30.*

— *Genius, natale comes qui temperat astrum,  
Naturæ Deus humanæ, Mortalis in unum-  
quodque caput* —

Hor.

I Am very much at a Loss to express by any Word that occurs to me in our Language that which is understood by *Indoles* in Latin. The natural Disposition to any particular Art, Science, Profession, or Trade, is very much to be consulted in the Care of Youth, and studied by Men for their own Conduct when they form to themselves any Scheme of Life. It is wonderfully hard indeed for a Man to judge of his own Capacity impartially; that may look great to me which may appear little to another, and I may be carried by Fondness towards my self so far, as to attempt Things too high for my Talents and Accomplishments: But it is not methinks so very difficult a Matter to make a Judgment of the Abilities of others, especially of those who are in their Infancy. My Common-place Book directs me on this Occasion to mention the Dawning of Greatness in *Alexander*, who being asked in his Youth to contend for a Prize in the Olympick Games, answer'd he would, if he had Kings to run against him. *Cassius* who was one of the Conspirators against *Cæsar*, gave as great a Proof of his Temper, when in his Childhood he struck a Play-fellow, the Son of *Sylla*, for saying his Father was Master of the Roman People. *Scipio* is reported to have answered, (when some Flatterers at Supper were asking him what the Romans should do for a General after his Death) Take *Marius*. *Marius* was then a very Boy, and had given no Instances of his Valour; but it was visible to *Scipio* from the Manners of the Youth, that he had a Soul formed for the Attempt and Execution of great Undertakings. I must

confess

confess I have very often with much Sorrow bewail'd the Misfortune of the Children of *Great-Britain*, when I consider the Ignorance and Undiscerning of the Generality of Schoolmasters. The boasted Liberty we talk of is but a mean Reward for the long Servitude, the many Heart-aches and Terrors, to which our Childhood is expos'd in going through a Grammar-School: Many of these stupid Tyrants exercise their Cruelty without any manner of Distinction of the Capacities of Children, or the Intention of Parents in their Behalf. There are many excellent Tempers which are worthy to be nourished and cultivated with all possible Diligence and Care, that were never designed to be acquainted with *Aristotle*, *Tully*, or *Virgil*; and there are as many who have Capacities for understanding every Word those great Persons have writ, and yet were not born to have any Relish of their Writings. For want of this common and obvious discerning in those who have the Care of Youth, we have so many hundred unaccountable Creatures every Age whipped up into great Scholars, that are for ever near a right Understanding, and will never arrive at it. These are the Scandal of Letters, and these are generally the Men who are to teach others. The Sense of Shame and Honour is enough to keep the World it self in Order without Corporal Punishment, much more to train the Minds of uncorrupted and innocent Children. It happens, I doubt not, more than once in a Year, that a Lad is chastised for a Blockhead, when it is good Apprehension that makes him incapable of knowing what his Teacher means: A brisk Imagination very often may suggest an Error, which a Lad could not have fallen into, if he had been as heavy in conjecturing as his Master in explaining: But there is no Mercy even towards a wrong Interpretation of his Meaning, the Sufferings of the Scholar's Body are to rectify the Mistakes of his Mind.

I am confident that no Boy who will not be allured to Letters without Blows, will ever be brought to any thing with them. A great or good Mind must necessarily be the worse for such Indignities; and it is a sad Change to lose of its Virtue for the Improvement of its Knowledge. No one who has gone through what they call



call a great School, but must remember to have seen Children of excellent and ingenuous Natures, (as has afterwards appeared in their Manhood) I say no Man has pass'd through this Way of Education, but must have seen an ingenious Creature expiring with Shame, with pale Looks, beseeching Sorrow, and silent Tears, throw up its honest Eyes, and kneel on its tender Knees to an inexorable Blockhead, to be forgiven the false Quantity of a Word in making a Latin Verse: The Child is punished, and the next Day he commits a like Crime, and so a third with the same Consequence. I would fain ask any reasonable Man whether this Lad, in the Simplicity of his native Innocence, full of Shame, and capable of any Impression from that Grace of Soul, was not fitter for any Purpose in this Life, than after that Spark of Virtue is extinguished in him, tho' he is able to write twenty Verses in an Evening?

Seneca says, after his exalted way of Talking, *As the immortal Gods never learnt any Virtue, tho' they are endued with all that is good; so there are some Men who have so natural a Propensity to what they should follow, that they learn it almost as soon as they hear it.* Plants and Vegetables are cultivated into the Production of finer Fruit than they would yield without that Care; and yet we cannot entertain Hopes of producing a tender conscious Spirit into Acts of Virtue, without the same Methods as is used to cut Timber, or give new Shape to a Piece of Stone.

IT is wholly to this dreadful Practice that we may attribute a certain Hardness and Ferocity which some Men, tho' liberally educated, carry about them in all their Behaviour. To be bred like a Gentleman, and punished like a Malefactor, must, as we see it does, produce that illiberal Sauciness which we see sometimes in Men of Letters.

THE Spartan Boy who suffered the Fox (which he had stoln and hid under his Coat) to eat into his Bowels, I dare say had not half the Wit or Petulance which we learn at great Schools among us: But the glorious Sense of Honour, or rather Fear of Shame, which he demonstrated in that Action, was worth all the Learning in the World without it.

IT

IT is methinks a very melancholy Consideration, that a little Negligence can spoil us, but great Industry is necessary to improve us; the most excellent Natures are soon depreciated, but evil Tempers are long before they are exalted into good Habits. To help this by Punishments, is the same thing as killing a Man to cure him of a Distemper; when he comes to suffer Punishment in that one Circumstance, he is brought below the Existence of a rational Creature, and is in the State of a Brute that moves only by the Admonition of Stripes. But since this Custom of educating by the Lash is suffered by the Gentry of *Great Britain*, I would prevail only that honest heavy Lads may be dismissed from Slavery sooner than they are at present, and not whipped on to their fourteenth or fifteenth Year, whether they expect any Progress from them or not. Let the Child's Capacity be forthwith examined, and he sent to some Mechanick Way of Life, without Respect to his Birth, if Nature designed him for nothing higher: let him go before he has innocently suffered, and is debased into a Dereliction of Mind for being what it is no Guilt to be, a plain Man. I would not here be supposed to have said, that our learned Men of either Robe who have been whipped at School, are not still Men of noble and liberal Minds; but I am sure they had been much more so than they are, had they never suffered that Infamy.

BUT tho' there is so little Care, as I have observed, taken, or Observation made of the natural Strain of Men, it is no small Comfort to me, as a SPECTATOR, that there is any right Value set upon the *bona Indoles* of other Animals; as appears by the following Advertisement handed about the County of *Lincoln*, and subscribed by *Enos Thomas*, a Person whom I have not the Honour to know, but suppose to be profoundly learned in Horse-flesh.

*A Chestnut Horse called Cæsar, bred by James Darcy, Esq; at Sedbury, near Richmond in the County of York; his Grandam was his old royal Mare, and got by Blunderbuss, which was got by Hemslly-Turk, and he got Mr. Courant's Arabian, which got Mr. Minshul's Jewstrump. Mr. Cæsar sold him to a Nobleman (coming five Years old, when he had but one Sweat) for three hundred*