

N^o 397. *Thursday, June 5.*

————— *Dolor ipse Disertum*
Fecerat —————

Ovid.

AS the *Stoick* Philosophers discard all Passions in general, they will not allow a Wife Man so much as to pity the Afflictions of another. If thou seest thy Friend in Trouble, says *Epietetus*, thou may'st put on a Look of Sorrow, and condole with him, but take care that thy Sorrow be not real. The more rigid of this Sect would not comply so far as to shew even such an outward Appearance of Grief, but when one told them of any Calamity that had befallen even the nearest of their Acquaintance, would immediately reply, What is that to me? If you aggravated the Circumstances of the Affliction, and shewed how one Misfortune was followed by another, the Answer was still, All this may be true, but what is it to me?

FOR my own part, I am of Opinion, Compassion does not only refine and civilize Human Nature, but has something in it more pleasing and agreeable than what can be met with in such an indolent Happiness, such an Indifference to Mankind as that in which the *Stoicks* placed their Wisdom. As Love is the most delightful Passion, Pity is nothing else but Love softened by a degree of Sorrow: In short, it is a kind of pleasing Anguish, as well as generous Sympathy, that knits Mankind together, and blends them in the same common Lot.

THOSE who have laid down Rules for Rhetorick or Poetry, advise the Writer to work himself up, if possible, to the Pitch of Sorrow which he endeavours to produce in others. There are none therefore who stir up Pity so much as those who indite their own Sufferings. Grief has a natural Eloquence belonging to it, and breaks out in more moving Sentiments than can be supplied

plied by the finest Imagination. Nature on this Occasion dictates a thousand passionate things which cannot be supplied by Art.

IT is for this Reason that the short Speeches or Sentences which we often meet with in Histories, make a deeper Impression on the Mind of the Reader, than the most laboured Strokes in a well-written Tragedy. Truth and Matter of Fact sets the Person actually before us in the one, whom Faction places at a greater Distance from us in the other. I do not remember to have seen any Ancient or Modern Story more affecting than a Letter of *Ann of Bologne*, Wife to King *Henry* the Eighth, and Mother to *Queen Elizabeth*, which is still extant in the *Cotton Library*, as written by her own Hand.

SHAKESPEAR himself could not have made her talk in a Strain so suitable to her Condition and Character. One sees in it the Expostulations of a slighted Lover, the Repentments of an injur'd Woman, and the Sorrows of an imprisoned Queen. I need not acquaint my Reader that this Princess was then under Prosecution for Disloyalty to the King's Bed, and that she was afterwards publicly beheaded upon the same Account, tho' this Prosecution was believed by many to proceed, as she herself intimates, rather from the King's Love to *Jane Seymour*, than from any actual Crime in *Ann of Bologne*.

Queen Ann Boleyn's last Letter to King Henry.

S I R,

Cotton Lib. 'YOUR Grace's Displeasure, and my
Orho C. 10. ' Imprisonment are Things so strange
' unto me, as what to write, or what to excuse, I am
' altogether ignorant. Whereas you send unto me (wil-
' ling me to confess a Truth, and so obtain your Favour)
' by such an one, whom you know to be mine ancient
' professed Enemy, I no sooner received this Message by
' him, than I rightly conceived your Meaning; and if,
' as you say, confessing a Truth indeed may procure my
' Safety, I shall with all Willingness and Duty perform
' your Command.
' BUT let not your Grace ever imagine, that your
' poor Wife will ever be brought to acknowledge a Fault,
' where

‘ where not so much as a Thought thereof preceded.
‘ And to speak a Truth, never Prince had Wife more Loyal in all Duty, and in all true Affection, than you have
‘ ever found in *Ann Boleyn*: with which Name and
‘ Place I could willingly have contented my self, if God
‘ and your Grace’s Pleasure had been so pleased. Neither did I at any time so far forget my self in my Exaltation or received Queenship, but that I always
‘ looked for such an Alteration as I now find; for the
‘ Ground of my Preferment being on no surer Foundation than your Grace’s Fancy, the least Alteration I
‘ knew was fit and sufficient to draw that Fancy to some
‘ other Object. You have chosen me, from a low
‘ Estate, to be your Queen and Companion, far beyond
‘ my Desert or Desire. If then you found me worthy
‘ of such Honour, good your Grace let not any light
‘ Fancy, or bad Counsel of mine Enemies, withdraw
‘ your Princely Favour from me; neither let that Stain,
‘ that unworthy Stain, of a Disloyal Heart towards your
‘ good Grace, ever cast so foul a Blot on your most Dutiful Wife, and the Infant-Princess your Daughter.
‘ Try me, good King, but let me have a lawful Trial,
‘ and let not my sworn Enemies sit as my Accusers
‘ and Judges; Yea let me receive an open Trial, for
‘ my Truth shall fear no open Shame; then shall you
‘ see either mine Innocence cleared, your Suspicion and
‘ Conscience satisfied, the Ignominy and Slander of the
‘ World stopped, or my Guilt openly declared. So that
‘ whatsoever God or you may determine of me, your
‘ Grace may be freed from an open Censure, and mine
‘ Offence being so lawfully proved, your Grace is at liberty, both before God and Man, not only to execute
‘ worthy Punishment on me as an unlawful Wife, but
‘ to follow your Affection, already settled on that Party,
‘ for whose sake I am now as I am, whose Name I
‘ could some good while since have pointed unto, your
‘ Grace being not ignorant of my Suspicion therein.

‘ BUT if you have already determined of me, and
‘ that not only my Death, but an infamous Slander
‘ must bring you the enjoying of your desired Happiness; then I desire of God, that he will pardon your
‘ great Sin therein, and likewise mine Enemies, the Instruments