

- c I should seem guilty of the very Fault I write against,  
 c I shall only intreat Mr. SPECTATOR to correct such  
 c Misdemeanors;

*For higher of the Genial Bed by far,  
 And with mysterious Reverence, I deem.*

I am, S I R,

Your humble Servant,

T

T. Meanwell.



N<sup>o</sup> 431. Tuesday, July 15.

*Quid Dulcius hominum generi à Natura datum est quàm  
 sui cuique liberi?* Tull.

**I** Have lately been casting in my Thoughts the several Unhappineses of Life, and comparing the Infelicitities of old Age to those of Infancy. The Calamities of Children are due to the Negligence and Misconduct of Parents, those of Age to the past Life which led to it. I have here the History of a Boy and Girl to their Wedding-Day, and think I cannot give the Reader a livelier Image of the insipid way which Time uncultivated passes, than by entertaining him with their authentick Epistles, expressing all that was remarkable in their Lives, 'till the Period of their Life above-mentioned. The Sentence at the Head of this Paper, which is only a warm Interrogation, *What is there in Nature so dear as a Man's own Children to him?* is all the Reflexion I shall at present make on those who are negligent or cruel in the Education of them.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

- c **I** Am now entring into my One and Twentieth Year,  
 c and do not know that I had one Day's thorough  
 c Satisfaction since I came to Years of any Reflexion,  
 c 'till the Time they say others lose their Liberty, the  
 c Day

' Day of my Marriage. I am Son to a Gentleman of a  
 ' very great Estate, who resolv'd to keep me out of  
 ' the Vices of the Age; and in order to it never let me  
 ' see any Thing that he thought could give me the least  
 ' Pleasure. At ten Years old I was put to a Grammar-  
 ' School, where my Master received Orders every Post to  
 ' use me very severely, and have no regard to my hav-  
 ' ing a great Estate. At Fifteen I was removed to the  
 ' University, where I liv'd, out of my Father's great Dis-  
 ' cretion, in scandalous Poverty and Want, 'till I was big  
 ' enough to be married, and I was sent for to see the  
 ' Lady who sends you the Underwritten. When we  
 ' were put together, we both considered that we could  
 ' not be worse than we were in taking one another, and  
 ' out of a Desire of Liberty entred into Wedlock. My  
 ' Father says I am now a Man, and may speak to him  
 ' like another Gentleman.

*I am, S I R,*

*Your most humble Servant,*

Richard Rentfree.

*Mr. SPEC,*

' I Grew tall and wild at my Mother's, who is a gay  
 ' Widow, and did not care for shewing me 'till a-  
 ' bout two Years and a half ago; at which time my  
 ' Guardian Uncle sent me to a Boarding-School, with  
 ' Orders to contradict me in nothing, for I had been  
 ' misused enough already. I had not been there above a  
 ' Month, when being in the Kitchen, I saw some Oat-  
 ' meal on the Dresser; I put two or three Corns in my  
 ' Mouth, liked it, stole a Handful, went into my Cham-  
 ' ber, chewed it, and for two Months after never failed  
 ' taking Toll of every Pennyworth of Oatmeal that  
 ' came into the House: But one Day playing with a  
 ' Tobacco-pipe between my Teeth, it happened to break  
 ' in my Mouth, and the spitting out the Pieces left such  
 ' a delicious Roughness on my Tongue, that I could not  
 ' be satisfied 'till I had champ'd up the remaining Part  
 ' of the Pipe. I forsook the Oatmeal, and stuck to the  
 ' Pipes three Months, in which Time I had dispensed  
 ' with thirty seven foul Pipes, all to the Boles; They be-  
 ' longed



‘longed to an old Gentleman, Father to my Governess  
‘—— He lock’d up the clean ones. I left off eating of  
‘Pipes, and fell to licking of Chalk. I was soon tired  
‘of this; I then nibbled all the red Wax of our last Ball-  
‘Tickets, and three Weeks after the black Wax from the  
‘Burying-Tickets of the old Gentleman. Two Months  
‘after this I liv’d upon Thunder-bolts, a certain long,  
‘round bluish Stone, which I found among the Gravel  
‘in our Garden. I was wonderfully delighted with this;  
‘but Thunder-bolts growing scarce, I fasten’d Tooth and  
‘Nail upon our Garden-Wall, which I stuck to almost a  
‘Twelvemonth, and had in that time peeled and de-  
‘voured half a Foot towards our Neighbour’s Yard. I  
‘now thought my self the happiest Creature in the  
‘World, and I believe in my Conscience, I had eaten  
‘quite through, had I had it in my Chamber; but now  
‘I became lazy, and unwilling to stir, and was obliged to  
‘seek Food nearer Home. I then took a strange Han-  
‘kering to Coals; I fell to scranching ’em, and had al-  
‘ready consumed, I am certain, as much as would have  
‘dressed my Wedding-Dinner, when my Uncle came for  
‘me Home. He was in the Parlour with my Governess  
‘when I was called down. I went in, fell on my Knees,  
‘for he made me call him Father; and when I expected  
‘the Blessing I asked, the good Gentleman, in a Sur-  
‘prise, turns himself to my Governess, and asks, Whe-  
‘ther this (pointing to me) was his Daughter? This  
‘(added he) is the very Picture of Death. My Child  
‘was a plump-fac’d, hale, fresh-colour’d Girl; but this  
‘looks as if she was half-starved, a meer Skeleton. My  
‘Governess, who is really a good Woman, assured my  
‘Father I had wanted for nothing; and withal told him  
‘I was continually eating some Trash or other, and that  
‘I was almost eaten up with the Green-sickness, her Or-  
‘ders being never to cross me. But this magnified but  
‘little with my Father, who presently in a kind of Pet,  
‘paying for my Board, took me home with him. I had  
‘not been long at home, but one Sunday at Church (I  
‘shall never forget it) I saw a young neighbouring Gen-  
‘tleman that pleas’d me hugely; I liked him of all Men  
‘I ever saw in my Life, and began to wish I could be  
‘as pleasing to him. The very next Day he came, with  
‘his