

relieved each other within my Hearing on the Subjects of Cards, Dice, Love, Learning and Politicks. The last Subject kept me till I heard the Streets in the Possession of the Bell-man, who had now the World to himself, and cry'd, *Past Two of Clock*. This rous'd me from my Seat, and I went to my Lodging, led by a Light, whom I put into the Discourse of his private Oeconomy, and made him give me an Account of the Charge, Hazard, Profit and Loss of a Family that depended upon a Link, with a Design to end my trivial Day with the Generosity of Six-pence, instead of a third Part of that Sum. When I came to my Chambers I writ down these Minutes; but was at a Loss what Instruction I should propose to my Reader from the Enumeration of so many Insignificant Matters and Occurrences; and I thought it of great Use, if they could learn with me to keep their Minds open to Gratification, and ready to receive it from any thing it meets with. This one Circumstance will make every Face you see give you the Satisfaction you now take in beholding that of a Friend; will make every Object a pleasing one; will make all the Good which arrives to any Man, an Increase of Happiness to your self. T



N^o 455. Tuesday, August 12.

————— *Ergo Apis Matinæ*
More modoque
Grata Carpentis thyma per laborem
Plurimum—————

Hor.

THE following Letters have in them Reflexions which will seem of Importance both to the Learned World and to Domestic Life. There is in the first an Allegory so well carry'd on, that it cannot but be very pleasing to those who have a Taste of good Writing; and the other Billets may have their Use in common Life.

Mr.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

AS I walked t'other Day in a fine Garden, and observed the great Variety of Improvements in Plants and Flowers beyond what they otherwise would have been, I was naturally led into a Reflexion upon the Advantages of Education, or Modern Culture; how many good Qualities in the Mind are lost, for want of the like due Care in nursing and skilfully managing them, how many Virtues are choked, by the Multitude of Weeds which are suffered to grow among them; how excellent Parts are often starved and useless, by being planted in a wrong Soil; and how very seldom do these moral Seeds produce the noble Fruits which might be expected from them, by a Neglect of proper Manuring, necessary Pruning, and an artful Management of our tender Inclinations and first Spring of Life: These obvious Speculations made me at length conclude, that there is a sort of vegetable Principle in the Mind of every Man when he comes into the World. In Infants the Seeds lie buried and undiscovered, 'till after a while they sprout forth in a kind of rational *Leaves*, which are *Words*; and in due Season the *Flowers* begin to appear in Variety of beautiful Colours, and all the gay Pictures of youthful Fancy and Imagination; at last the Fruit knits and is formed, which is green, perhaps, first, and sour, unpleasant to the Taste, and not fit to be gathered; till ripened by due Care and Application, it discovers it self in all the noble Productions of Philosophy, Mathematicks, close Reasoning, and handsom Argumentation: And these Fruits, when they arrive at just Maturity, and are of a good Kind, afford the most vigorous Nourishment to the Minds of Men. I reflected further on the intellectual Leaves before-mentioned, and found almost as great a Variety among them as in the vegetable World. I could easily observe the smooth shining *Italian Leaves*; the nimble *French Aspen* always in Motion; the *Greek and Latin Ever-greens*, the *Spanish Myrtle*, the *English Oak*, the *Scotch Thistle*, the *Irish Shambroque*, the prickly *German* and *Dutch Holly*, the *Polish and Russian Nettle*, besides a vast Number of Exoticks imported from *Asia*,

K 5

Africk,

Africk, and America. I saw several barren Plants, which bore only Leaves, without any Hopes of Flower or Fruit: The Leaves of some were fragrant and well-shaped, of others ill-scented and irregular. I wonder'd at a Set of old whimsical Botanists, who spent their whole Lives in the Contemplation of some withered Egyptian, Coptic, Armenian, or Chinese Leaves, while others made it their Business to collect in voluminous Herbals all the several Leaves of some one Tree. The Flowers afforded a most diverting Entertainment, in a wonderful Variety of Figures, Colours and Scents; however, most of them withered soon, or at best are but *Annals*. Some profess'd Florists make them their constant Study and Employment, and despise all Fruit; and now and then a few fanciful People spend all their Time in the Cultivation of a single Tulip, or a Carnation: But the most agreeable Amusement seems to be the well choosing, mixing, and binding together these Flowers, in pleasing Nosegays to present to Ladies. The Scent of *Italian* Flowers is observed, like their other Perfume, to be too strong, and to hurt the Brain; that of the *French* with glaring, gaudy Colours, yet faint and languid; *German* and *Northern* Flowers have little or no Smell, or sometimes an unpleasant one. The Antients had a Secret to give a lasting Beauty, Colour, and Sweetness to some of their choice Flowers, which flourish to this Day, and which few of the Moderns can effect. These are becoming enough and agreeable in their Season, and do often handsomely adorn an Entertainment, but an over-fondness of them seems to be a Disease. It rarely happens to find a Plant vigorous enough, to have (like an Orange-Tree) at once beautiful shining Leaves, fragrant Flowers, and delicious nourishing Fruit.

S I R, Yours, &c.

Dear SPEC,

August 6, 1712.

YOU have given us, in your *Spectator* of Saturday last, a very excellent Discourse upon the Force of Custom, and its wonderful Efficacy in making every thing pleasant to us. I cannot deny but that I received above Two pennyworth of Instruction from your Paper,

per, and in the general was very well pleased with it :
 but I am, without a Compliment, sincerely troubled
 that I cannot exactly be of your Opinion, That it
 makes every thing pleasing to us. In short, I have the
 Honour to be yok'd to a young Lady, who is, in plain
English, for her standing, a very eminent Scold. She
 began to break her Mind very freely both to me and to
 her Servants about two Months after our Nuptials; and
 tho' I have been accustomed to this Humour of hers
 this three Years, yet, I do not know what's the Mat-
 ter with me, but I am no more delighted with it than
 I was at the very first. I have advis'd with her Rela-
 tions about her, and they all tell me that her Mother
 and her Grandmother before her were both taken much
 after the same Manner; so that since it runs in the Blood,
 I have but small Hopes of her Recovery. I should be
 glad to have a little of your Advice in this Matter: I
 would not willingly trouble you to contrive how it may
 be a Pleasure to me; if you will but put me in a Way
 that I may bear it with Indifference, I shall rest satisfied.

Dear S P E C,

Your very humble Servant.

P.S. ' I must do the poor Girl the Justice to let you
 know, that this Match was none of her own choosing,
 (or indeed of mine either;) in Consideration of which I
 avoid giving her the least Provocation; and indeed we
 live better together than usually Folks do who hated one
 another when they were first joined: To evade the Sin
 against Parents, or at least to extenuate it, my Dear
 rails at my Father and Mother, and I curse hers for
 making the Match.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

I Like the Theme you lately gave out extremely, and
 I should be as glad to handle it as any Man living:
 But I find my self no better qualified to write about
 Money, than about my Wife; for, to tell you a Se-
 cret which I desire may go no further, I am Master of
 neither of those Subjects.

Yours,

Pill Garlick.

Mr.

Aug. 8, 1712.