

than all the rest, a Country Wench whom he had wooed in vain for above five Years before, was so charmed with his Grinns, and the Applauses which he received on all Sides, that she married him the Week following, and to this Day wears the Prize upon her Finger, the Cöbler having made use of it as his Wedding-ring.

THIS Paper might perhaps seem very impertinent, if it grew serious in the Conclusion. I would nevertheless leave it to the Consideration of those who are the Patrons of this monstrous Trial of Skill, whether or no they are not guilty, in some measure, of an Affront to their Species, in treating after this manner the *Human Face Divine*, and turning that Part of us, which has so great an Image impressed upon it, into the Image of a Monkey; whether the raising such silly Competitions among the Ignorant, proposing Prizes for such useless Accomplishments, filling the common Peoples Heads with such senseless Ambitions, and inspiring them with such absurd Ideas of Superiority and Preheminence, has not in it something immoral as well as ridiculous. L



N^o 174. Wednesday, September 19.

Hæc memini & victum frustra contendere Thyrsin. Virg.

THERE is scarce any thing more common than Animosities between Parties that cannot subsist but by their Agreement: this was well represented in the Sedition of the Members of the human Body in the old *Roman Fable*. It is often the Case of lesser confederate States against a superior Power, which are hardly held together, though their Unanimity is necessary for their common Safety: And this is always the Case of the landed and trading Interest of *Great Britain*, the Trader is fed by the Product of the Land, and the landed Man cannot be clothed but by the Skill of the Trader; and yet those Interests are ever jarring.

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WE had last Winter an Instance of this at our Club, in Sir ROGER DE COVERLEY and Sir ANDREW FREEPORT, between whom there is generally a constant, though friendly, Opposition of Opinions. It happened that one of the Company, in an historical Discourse, was observing, that *Carthaginian* Faith was a proverbial Phrase to intimate Breach of Leagues. Sir ROGER said it could hardly be otherwise: That the *Carthaginians* were the greatest Traders in the World; and as Gain is the chief End of such a People, they never pursue any other: The Means to it are never regarded; they will, if it comes easily, get Money honestly; but if not, they will not scruple to attain it by Fraud or Cozenage: And indeed, what is the whole Business of the Trader's Account, but to over-reach him who trusts to his Memory? But were that not so, what can there great and noble be expected from him whose Attention is for ever fixed upon balancing his Books, and watching over his Expences? And at best, let Frugality and Parsimony be the Virtues of the Merchant, how much is his punctual Dealing below a Gentleman's Charity to the Poor, or Hospitality among his Neighbours?

CAPTAIN SENTRY observed Sir ANDREW very diligent in hearing Sir ROGER, and had a mind to turn the Discourse, by taking notice in general, from the highest to the lowest Parts of human Society, there was a secret, tho' unjust, Way among Men of indulging the Seeds of Ill-nature and Envy, by comparing their own State of Life to that of another, and grudging the Approach of their Neighbour to their own Happiness; and on the other Side, he who is the less at his Ease, repines at the other, who, he thinks, has unjustly the Advantage over him. Thus the Civil and Military Lifts look upon each other with much Ill-nature, the Soldier repines at the Courtier's Power, and the Courtier rallies the Soldier's Honour, or to come to lower Instances, the private Men in the Horse and Foot of an Army, the Carmen and Coachmen in the City Streets, mutually look upon each other with Ill-will, when they are in Competition for Quarters or the Way, in their respective Motions.

IT is very well, good Captain, interrupted Sir ANDREW: You may attempt to turn the Discourse if you think

think fit ; but I must however have a Word or two with Sir ROGER, who, I see, thinks he has paid me off, and been very severe upon the Merchant. I shall not, continued he, at this Time remind Sir ROGER of the great and noble Monuments of Charity and publick Spirit, which have been erected by Merchants since the Reformation, but at present content my self with what he allows us, Parsimony and Frugality. If it were consistent with the Quality of so ancient a Baronet as Sir ROGER, to keep an Accompt, or measure Things by the most infallible Way, that of Numbers, he would prefer our Parsimony to his Hospitality. If to drink so many Hogshheads is to be Hospitable, we do not contend for the Fame of that Virtue ; but it would be worth while to consider, whether so many Artificers at Work ten Days together by my Appointment, or so many Peasants made merry on Sir ROGER's Charge, are the Men more obliged ? I believe the Families of the Artificers will thank me, more than the Household of the Peasants shall Sir ROGER. Sir ROGER gives to his Men, but I place mine above the Necessity or Obligation of my Bounty. I am in very little Pain for the *Roman* Proverb upon the *Carthaginian* Traders ; the *Romans* were their professed Enemies : I am only sorry no *Carthaginian* Histories have come to our Hands ; we might have been taught perhaps by them some Proverbs against the *Roman* Generosity, in fighting for and bestowing other People's Goods. But since Sir ROGER has taken Occasion from an old Proverb to be out of Humour with Merchants, it should be no Offence to offer one not quite so old in their Defence. When a Man happens to break in *Holland*, they say of him that *he has not kept true Accounts*. This Phrase, perhaps, among us, would appear a soft or humorous way of speaking, but with that exact Nation it bears the highest Reproach ; for a Man to be mistaken in the Calculation of his Expence, in his Ability to answer future Demands, or to be impertinently sanguine in putting his Credit to too great Adventure, are all Instances of as much Infamy as with gayer Nations to be failing in Courage or common Honesty.

NUMBERS are so much the Measure of every thing that is valuable, that it is not possible to demonstrate

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the Success of any Action, or the Prudence of any Undertaking without them. I say this in Answer to what Sir ROGER is pleased to say, That little that is truly noble, can be expected from one who is ever poring on his Cash-book, or balancing his Accompts. When I have my Returns from abroad, I can tell to a Shilling, by the Help of Numbers, the Profit or Loss by my Adventure; but I ought also to be able to shew that I had Reason for making it, either from my own Experience or that of other People, or from a reasonable Presumption that my Returns will be sufficient to answer my Expence and Hazard; and this is never to be done without the Skill of Numbers. For Instance, if I am to trade to *Turkey*, I ought beforehand to know the Demand of our Manufactures there as well as of their Silks in *England*, and the Customary Prices that are given for both in each Country. I ought to have a clear Knowledge of these Matters beforehand, that I may presume upon sufficient Returns to answer the Charge of the Cargo I have fitted out, the Freight and Assurance out and home, the Customs to the Queen, and the Interest of my own Money, and besides all these Expences a reasonable Profit to myself. Now what is there of Scandal in this Skill? What has the Merchant done, that he should be so little in the good Graces of Sir ROGER? He throws down no Man's Inclosures, and tramples upon no Man's Corn; he takes nothing from the industrious Labourer; he pays the poor Man for his Work; he communicates his Profit with Mankind; by the Preparation of his Cargo and the Manufacture of his Returns he furnishes Employment and Subsistence to greater Numbers than the richest Nobleman; and even the Nobleman is obliged to him for finding out foreign Markets for the Produce of his Estate, and for making a great Addition to his Rents; and yet 'tis certain, that none of all these Things could be done by him without the Exercise of his Skill in Numbers.

THIS is the Oeconomy of the Merchant; and the Conduct of the Gentleman must be the same, unless by scorning to be the Steward, he resolves the Steward shall be the Gentleman. The Gentleman, no more than the Merchant, is able, without the Help of Numbers,