

‘ this World, the Commendation of the most deserving  
 ‘ Person in it T

N<sup>o</sup> 189. Saturday, October 6.

— Patriæ pietatis imago.

Virg.

THE following Letter being written to my Book-  
 seller, upon a Subject of which I treated some  
 time since, I shall publish it in this Paper, toge-  
 ther with the Letter that was inclosed in it.

Mr. Buckley,

‘ M R. SPECTATOR having of late discanted upon  
 ‘ the Cruelty of Parents to their Children, I have  
 ‘ been induced (at the Request of several of Mr. SPEC-  
 ‘ TATOR’s Admirers) to inclose this Letter, which I as-  
 ‘ sure you is the Original from a Father to his own Son,  
 ‘ notwithstanding the latter gave but little or no Provoca-  
 ‘ tion. It would be wonderfully obliging to the World, if  
 ‘ Mr. SPECTATOR would give his Opinion of it in  
 ‘ some of his Speculations, and particularly to

(Mr. Buckley)

Your humble Servant.

SIRRAH,

‘ Y OU are a saucy audacious Rascal, and both Fool  
 ‘ and mad, and I care not a Farthing whether you  
 ‘ comply or no; that does not raze out my Impressions  
 ‘ of your Insolence, going about railing at me, and the  
 ‘ next Day to solicit my Favour: These are Inconsis-  
 ‘ tences, such as discover thy Reason depraved. To be  
 ‘ brief, I never desire to see your Face; and, Sirrah, if  
 ‘ you go to the Work-house, it is no Disgrace to me for  
 ‘ you to be supported there; and if you starve in the  
 ‘ Streets, I’ll never give any thing underhand in your Be-  
 ‘ half. If I have any more of your scribbling Nonsense

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‘ I’ll

‘ I’ll break your Head the first Time I set Sight on you.  
 ‘ You are a stubborn Beast; is this your Gratitude for  
 ‘ my giving you Money? You Rogue, I’ll better your  
 ‘ Judgment, and give you a greater Sense of your Duty  
 ‘ to (I regret to say) your Father, &c.

‘ P. S. It’s Prudence for you to keep out of my Sight;  
 ‘ for to reproach me, that Might overcomes Right, on  
 ‘ the Outside of your Letter, I shall give you a great  
 ‘ Knock on the Skull for it.

WAS there ever such an Image of Paternal Tender-  
 ness! It was usual among some of the *Greeks* to make  
 their Slaves drink to Excess, and then expose them to  
 their Children, who by that Means conceived an early  
 Aversion to a Vice which makes Men appear so mon-  
 strous and irrational. I have exposed this Picture of an  
 unnatural Father with the same Intention, that its De-  
 formity may deter others from its Resemblance. If the  
 Reader has a mind to see a Father of the same Stamp re-  
 presented in the most exquisite Strokes of Humour, he  
 may meet with it in one of the finest Comedies that ever  
 appeared upon the *English* Stage: I mean the Part of  
 Sir Sampson in *Love for Love*.

I must not however engage my self blindly on the Side  
 of the Son, to whom the fond Letter above-written was  
 directed. His Father calls him a *saucy and audacious*  
*Rascal* in the first Line, and I am afraid upon Examination  
 he will prove but an ungracious Youth. To go about rail-  
 ing at his Father, and to find no other Place but the Out-  
 side of his Letter to tell him that *Might overcomes Right*,  
 if it does not discover his Reason to be depraved, and  
 that he is either Fool or Mad, as the Cholerick old Gen-  
 tleman tells him, we may at least allow that the Father  
 will do very well in endeavouring to better his Judgment,  
 and give him a greater Sense of his Duty. But whether  
 this may be brought about by breaking his Head, or giving  
 him a great Knock on the Skull, ought, I think, to be well  
 considered. Upon the whole, I wish the Father has not  
 met with his Match, and that he may not be as equally  
 paired with a Son, as the Mother in *Virgil*.

— Cruelis.



— *Crudelis tu quoque mater :*

*Crudelis mater magis, an puer Improbis ille ?*

*Improbis ille puer, crudelis tu quoque mater.*

Or like the Crow and her Egg, in the Greek Proverb,

Κακὴ-κόρακ' ὅτι κακὸν ᾠδν.

I must here take notice of a Letter which I have received from an unknown Correspondent, upon the Subject of my Paper, upon which the foregoing Letter is likewise founded. The Writer of it seems very much concerned lest that Paper should seem to give Encouragement to the Disobedience of Children towards their Parents; but if the Writer of it will take the Pains to read it over again attentively, I dare say his Apprehensions will vanish. Pardon and Reconciliation are all the penitent Daughter requests, and all that I contend for in her Behalf; and in this Case I may use the Saying of an eminent Wit, who upon some great Mens pressing him to forgive his Daughter who had married against his Consent, told them he could refuse nothing to their Instances, but that he would have them remember there was Difference between *Giving* and *Forgiving*.

I must confess, in all Controversies between Parents and their Children, I am naturally prejudiced in Favour of the former. The Obligations on that Side can never be acquitted, and I think it is one of the greatest Reflexions upon Human Nature that Paternal Instinct should be a stronger Motive to love than Filial Gratitude; that the receiving of Favours should be a less Inducement to Goodwill, Tenderness and Commiseration, than the conferring of them; and that the taking Care of any Person should endear the Child or Dependant more to the Parent or Benefactor, than the Parent or Benefactor to the Child or Dependant; yet so it happens, that for one cruel Parent we meet with a Thousand undutiful Children. This is indeed wonderfully contrived (as I have formerly observed) for the Support of every living Species; but at the same Time that it shews the Wisdom of the Creator, it discovers the Imperfection and Degeneracy of the Creature.

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