

not really be metamorphosed into that musical and melancholy Bird, is still a Doubt among the *Lesbians*.

ALCÆUS, the famous *Lyrick* Poet, who had for some time been passionately in Love with *Sappho*, arrived at the Promontory of *Leucate* that very Evening, in order to take the Leap upon her Account; but hearing that *Sappho* had been there before him, and that her Body could be no where found, he very generously lamented her Fall, and is said to have written his hundred and twenty-fifth Ode upon that Occasion.

Leaped in this Olympiad 250.

Males	124
Females	126
Cured	120
Males	51
Females	69



N^o 234. *Wednesday, November 28.*

Vellem in amicitia sic erraremus.

Hor.

YOU very often hear People, after a Story has been told with some entertaining Circumstances, tell it over again with Particulars that destroy the Jest, but give Light into the Truth of the Narration. This sort of Veracity, though it is impertinent, has something amiable in it, because it proceeds from the Love of Truth, even in frivolous Occasions. If such honest Amendments do not promise an agreeable Companion, they do a sincere Friend; for which Reason one should allow them so much of our Time, if we fall into their Company, as to set us right in Matters that can do us no manner of Harm, whether the Facts be one Way or the other. Lies which are told out of Arrogance and Ostentation a Man should detect in his own Defence, because he should not be triumphed over; Lies which are told out of Malice he should expose, both for his own sake and that of the rest of Mankind, because every Man should

rise.

rise against a common Enemy : But the officious Liar many have argued is to be excused, because it does some Man good, and no Man hurt. The Man who made more than ordinary speed from a Fight in which the *Athenians* were beaten, and told them they had obtained a complete Victory, and put the whole City into the utmost Joy and Exultation, was checked by the Magistrates for his Falshood ; but excused himself by saying, O *Athenians* ! am I your Enemy because I gave ye two happy Days ? This Fellow did to a whole People what an Acquaintance of mine does every Day he lives in some eminent Degree to particular Persons. He is ever lying People into good Humour, and, as *Plato* said, it was allowable in Physicians to lye to their Patients to keep up their Spirits, I am half doubtful whether my Friend's Behaviour is not as excusable. His Manner is to express himself surpris'd at the chearful Countenance of a Man whom he observes diffident of himself ; and generally by that means makes his Lye a Truth. He will, as if he did not know any thing of the Circumstance, ask one whom he knows at Variance with another, what is the Meaning that Mr. such a one, naming his Adversary, does not applaud him with that Heartiness which formerly he has heard him ? He said indeed, (continues he) I would rather have that Man for my Friend than any Man in *England* ; but for an Enemy ——— This melts the Person he talks to, who expected nothing but downright Rallery from that Side. According as he sees his Practices succeed, he goes to the opposite Party, and tells him, he cannot imagine how it happens that some People know one another so little ; you spoke with so much Coldness of a Gentleman who said more Good of you, than, let me tell you, any Man living deserves. The Success of one of these Incidents was, that the next Time that one of the Adversaries spied the other, he hems after him in the publick Street, and they must crack a Bottle at the next Tavern, that used to turn out of the other's Way to avoid one another's Eye-shot. He will tell one Beauty she was commended by another, nay, he will say she gave the Woman he speaks to, the Preference in a Particular for which she herself is admired. The pleasantest Confusion imaginable is made through the whole Town by my Friend's indirect Offices ;

fices; you shall have a Visit returned after half a Year's Absence, and mutual Railing at each other every Day of that Time. They meet with a thousand Lamentations for so long a Separation, each Party naming herself for the greatest Delinquent, if the other can possibly be so good as to forgive her, which she has no reason in the world, but from the Knowledge of her Goodness, to hope for. Very often a whole Train of Railers of each Side tire their Horses in setting Matters right which they have said during the War between the Parties; and a whole Circle of Acquaintance are put into a thousand pleasing Passions and Sentiments, instead of the Pangs of Anger, Envy, Detraction, and Malice.

THE worst Evil I ever observed this Man's Falshood occasion, has been that he turned Detraction into Flattery. He is well-skilled in the Manners of the World, and by over-looking what Men really are, he grounds his Artifices upon what they have a mind to be. Upon this Foundation, if two distant Friends are brought together, and the Cement seems to be weak, he never rests till he finds new Appearances to take off all Remains of Ill-will, and that by new Misunderstandings they are thoroughly reconciled.

To the SPECTATOR.

S I R,

Devonshire, Nov. 14. 1711.

THERE arrived in this Neighbourhood two Days ago one of your gay Gentlemen of the Town, who being attended at his Entry with a Servant of his own, besides a Countryman he had taken up for a Guide, excited the Curiosity of the Village to learn whence and what he might be. The Countryman (to whom they applied as most easy of Access) know little more than that the Gentleman came from *London* to travel and see Fashions, and was, as he heard say, a Free-thinker: What Religion that might be, he could not tell; and for his own Part, if they had not told him the Man was a Free-thinker, he should have guessed, by his way of talking, he was little better than a Heathen; excepting only that he had been a good Gentleman to him, and made him drunk twice in one Day, over and above what they had bargained for.

I do not look upon the Simplicity of this, and several

‘ ral odd Inquiries with which I shall trouble you, to be
‘ wondered at, much less can I think that our Youths of
‘ fine Wit, and enlarged Understandings, have any reason
‘ to laugh. There is no Necessity that every Squire in
‘ Great Britain should know what the Word Free-thinker
‘ stands for; but it were much to be wished, that they who
‘ value themselves upon that conceited Title were a little
‘ better instructed in what it ought to stand for; and that
‘ they would not persuade themselves a Man is really and
‘ truly a Free-thinker in any tolerable Sense, merely by
‘ virtue of his being an Atheist, or an Infidel of any other
‘ Distinction. It may be doubted with good Reason, whe-
‘ ther there ever was in Nature a more abject, slavish, and
‘ bigotted Generation than the Tribe of *Beaux Esprits*,
‘ at present so prevailing in this Island. Their Pretension
‘ to be Free-thinkers, is no other than Rakes have to be
‘ Free-livers, and Savages to be Free-men, that is, they
‘ can think whatever they have a mind to, and give them-
‘ selves up to whatever Conceit the Extravagancy of their
‘ Inclination, or their Fancy, shall suggest; they can
‘ think as wildly as they talk and act, and will not endure
‘ that their Wit should be controuled by such formal
‘ Things as Decency and common Sense: Deduction,
‘ Coherence, Consistency, and all the Rules of Reason
‘ they accordingly disdain, as too precise and mechan-
‘ cal for Men of a liberal Education.

‘ THIS, as far as I could ever learn from their Writings,
‘ or my own Observation, is a true Account of the *British*
‘ Free-thinker. Our Visitant here, who gave occasion to
‘ this Paper, has brought with him a new System of com-
‘ mon Sense, the Particulars of which I am not yet ac-
‘ quainted with, but will lose no Opportunity of informing
‘ myself whether it contain any thing worth Mr. SPEC-
‘ TATOR’s Notice. In the mean time, Sir, I cannot but
‘ think it would be for the good of Mankind, if you would
‘ take this Subject into your own Consideration, and con-
‘ vince the hopeful Youth of our Nation, that Licentious-
‘ ness is not Freedom; or, if such a Paradox will not be
‘ understood, that a Prejudice towards Atheism is not Im-
‘ partiality. I am, SIR, Your most humble Servant,

T

PHILONOUS.

Thursday,