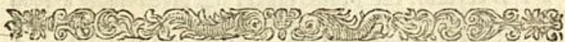


on him for Life, to be furnished with Bamboos for Operas, Crabtree-Cudgels for Comedies, and Oaken Plants for Tragedy, at the publick Expence. And to the End that this Place should be always disposed of according to Merit, I would have none preferred to it, who has not given convincing Proofs both of a sound Judgment and a strong Arm, and who could not, upon Occasion, either knock down an Ox, or write a Comment upon *Horace's* Art of Poetry. In short, I would have him a due Composition of *Hercules* and *Apollo*, and so rightly qualified for this important Office, that the *Trunk-maker* may not be missed by our Posterity. C.



N^o 236. Friday, November 30.

— Dare fura maritis.

Hor.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

YOU have not spoken in so direct a Manner upon the Subject of Marriage as that important Case deserves. It would not be improper to observe upon the Peculiarity in the Youth of *Great Britain*, of railing and laughing at that Institution; and when they fall into it, from a profligate Habit of Mind, being insensible of the Satisfaction in that Way of Life, and treating their Wives with the most barbarous Disrespect. PARTICULAR Circumstances and Cast of Temper, must teach a Man the Probability of mighty Uneasinesses in that State, (for unquestionably some there are whose very Dispositions are strangely averse to conjugal Friendship;) but no one, I believe, is by his own natural Complexion prompted to teaze and torment another for no Reason but being nearly allied to him: And can there be any thing more base, or serve to sink a Man so much below his own distinguishing Characteristic, (I mean Reason) than returning Evil for Good in so open a Manner, as that of treating an helpless Creature with Unkindness, who has had so good an Opinion of him as to believe what he said relating to one of the greatest Concerns of Life, by delivering her Happiness in

in this World to his Care and Protection? Must not that Man be abandoned even to all manner of Humanity, who can deceive a Woman with Appearances of Affection and Kindness, for no other End but to torment her with more Ease and Authority? Is any thing more unlike a Gentleman, that when his Honour is engaged for the performing his Promises, because nothing but that can oblige him to it, to become afterwards false to his Word, and be alone the Occasion of Misery to one whose Happiness he but lately pretended was dearer to him than his own? Ought such a one to be trusted in his common Affairs? or treated but as one whose Honesty consisted only in his Incapacity of being otherwise?

THERE is one Cause of this Usage no less absurd than common, which takes Place among the more unthinking Men; and that is the Desire to appear to their Friends free and at Liberty, and without those Trammels they have so much ridiculed. To avoid this they fly into the other Extreme, and grow Tyrants that they may seem Masters. Because an uncontrollable Command of their own Actions is a certain Sign of intire Dominion, they won't so much as recede from the Government even in one Muscle of their Faces. A kind Look they believe would be fawning, and a civil Answer yielding the Superiority. To this must we attribute an Austerity they betray in every Action: What but this can put a Man out of Humour in his Wife's Company, tho' he is so distinguishingly pleasant every where else? The Bitterness of his Replies, and the Severity of his Frowns to the tenderest of Wives, clearly demonstrate, that an ill-grounded Fear of being thought too submissive, is at the Bottom of this, as I am willing to call it, affected Moroseness; but if it be such only, put on to convince his Acquaintance of his intire Dominion, let him take care of the Consequence, which will be certain, and worse than the present Evil; his seeming Indifference will by Degrees grow into real Contempt, and if it doth not wholly alienate the Affections of his Wife for ever from him, make both him and her more miserable than if it really did so.

HOWEVER inconsistent it may appear, to be thought a well-bred Person has no small Share in this
 ˆ clownish

clownish Behaviour: A Discourse therefore relating to Good-breeding towards a loving and a tender Wife, would be of great Use to this Sort of Gentlemen. Could you but once convince them, that to be civil at least is not beneath the Character of a Gentleman, nor even tender Affection towards one who would make it reciprocal, betrays any Softness of Effeminacy that the most masculine Disposition need be ashamed of; could you satisfy them of the Generosity of voluntary Civility, and the Greatness of Soul that is conspicuous in Benevolence without immediate Obligations; could you recommend to People's Practice the Saying of the Gentleman quoted in one of your Speculations, *That he thought it incumbent upon him to make the Inclinations of a Woman of Merit go along with her Duty*: Could you, I say, persuade these Men of the Beauty and Reasonableness of this Sort of Behaviour, I have so much Charity for some of them at least, to believe you would convince them of a Thing they are only ashamed to allow: Besides, you would recommend that State in its truest, and consequently its most agreeable Colours; and the Gentlemen who have for any Time been such professed Enemies to it, when Occasion should serve, would return you their Thanks for assisting their Interest in prevailing over their Prejudices. Marriage in general would by this Means be a more easy and comfortable Condition; the Husband would be no where so well satisfied as in his own Parlour, nor the Wife so pleasant as in the Company of her Husband: A Desire of being agreeable in the Lover would be increased in the Husband, and the Mistress be more amiable by becoming the Wife. Besides all which, I am apt to believe we should find the Race of Men grow wiser as their Progenitors grew kinder, and the Affection of the Parents would be conspicuous in the Wisdom of their Children; in short, Men would in general be much better Humoured than they are, did not they so frequently exercise the worst Turns of their Temper where they ought to exert the best.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

I AM a Woman who left the Admiration of this whole Town, to throw my self (for Love of Wealth,