

grieves me to observe and consider how many poor Children are daily ruin'd by careless Nurses ; and yet how tender ought they to be of a poor Infant, since the least Hurt or Blow, especially upon the Head, may make it senseless, stupid, or otherwise miserable for ever ?

BUT I cannot well leave this Subject as yet ; for it seems to me very unnatural, that a Woman that has fed a Child as part of her self for nine Months, should have no Desire to nurse it farther, when brought to Light and before her Eyes, and when by its Cry it implores her Assistance and the Office of a Mother. Do not the very cruellest of Brutes tend their young ones with all the Care and Delight imaginable ? For how can she be call'd a Mother that will not nurse its young ones. The Earth is call'd the Mother of all Things, not because she produces, but because she maintains and nurses what she produces ? The Generation of the Infant is the Effect of Desire, but the Care of it argues Virtue and Choice. I am not ignorant but that there are some Cases of Necessity where a Mother cannot give Suck, and then out of two Evils the least must be chosen ; but there are so very few, that I am sure in a Thousand there is hardly one real Instance ; for if a Woman does but know that her Husband can spare about three or six Shillings a Week extraordinary, (altho' this is but seldom considered) she certainly, with the Assistance of her Gossips, will soon persuade the good Man to send the Child to Nurse, and easily impose upon him by pretending Indisposition. This Cruelty is supported by Fashion, and Nature gives Place to Custom.

T

S I R, *Your humble Servant.*

N^o 247. *Thursday, December 13.*

Τῶν θ' ἀνδράτων πρὸς αὐτὴν
Ἐκ σομάτων ἡδύων

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WE are told by some ancient Authors, that *Socrates* was instructed in Eloquence by a Woman, whose Name, if I am not mistaken, was *Aspasia*. I have indeed

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very often looked upon that Art as the most proper for the Female Sex, and I think the Universities would do well to consider whether they should not fill the Rhetorick Chairs with She Professors.

IT has been said in the Praise of some Men, that they could talk whole Hours together upon any Thing; but it must be owned to the Honour of the other Sex, that there are many among them who can talk whole Hours together upon Nothing. I have known a Woman branch out into a long Extempore Dissertation upon the Edging of a Petticoat, and chide her Servant for breaking a China Cup, in all the Figures of Rhetorick.

WERE Women admitted to plead in Courts of Judicature, I am persuaded they would carry the Eloquence of the Bar to greater Heights than it has yet arrived at. If any one doubts this, let him but be present at those Debates which frequently arise among the Ladies of the *British* Fishery.

THE first Kind therefore of Female Orators which I shall take notice of, are those who are employed in stirring up the Passions, a Part of Rhetorick in which *Socrates* his Wife had perhaps made a greater Proficiency than his above-mentioned Teacher.

THE second Kind of Female Orators are those who deal in Invectives, and who are commonly known by the Name of the Cenforious. The Imagination and Elocution of this Set of Rhetoricians is wonderful. With what a Fluency of Invention, and Copiousness of Expression, will they enlarge upon every little Slip in the Behaviour of another? With how many different Circumstances, and with what Variety of Phrases, will they tell over the same Story? I have known an old Lady make an unhappy Marriage the Subject of a Month's Conversation. She blamed the Bride in one Place; pitied her in another; laughed at her in a third; wondered at her in a fourth; was angry with her in a fifth; and in short, wore out a Pair of Coach-Horses in expressing her Concern for her. At length, after having quite exhausted the Subject on this Side, she made a Visit to the new-married Pair, praised the Wife for the prudent Choice she had made, told her the unreasonable Reflexions which some malicious People had cast upon her, and desired that they might be better acquainted. The Censure and Approbation of this Kind of Women are there-

therefore only to be consider'd as Helps to Discourse.

A third Kind of Female Orators may be comprehended under the Word *Gossips*. Mrs. *Fiddle Faddle* is perfectly accomplished in this Sort of Eloquence; she lanches out into Descriptions of Christenings, runs Divisions upon an Head-dress, knows every Dish of Meat that is served up in her Neighbourhood, and entertains her Company a whole Afternoon together with the Wit of her little Boy, before he is able to speak.

THE Coquette may be looked upon as a fourth Kind of Female Orator. To give herself the larger Field for Discourse, she hates and loves in the same Breath, talks to her Lap-dog or Parrot, is uneasy in all kinds of Weather, and in every Part of the Room: She has false Quarrels and feigned Obligations to all the Men of her Acquaintance; sighs when she is not sad, and laughs when she is not merry. The Coquette is in particular a great Mistress of that Part of Oratory which is called Action, and indeed seems to speak for no other Purpose, but as it gives her an Opportunity of stirring a Limb, or varying a Feature, of glancing her Eyes, or playing with her Fan.

AS for News-mongers, Politicians, Mimicks, Story-tellers, with other Characters of that Nature, which give Birth to Loquacity, they are as commonly found among the Men as the Women; for which Reason I shall pass them over in Silence.

I have often been puzzled to assign a Cause why Women should have this Talent of a ready Utterance in so much greater Perfection than Men. I have sometimes fancied that they have not a retentive Power, or the Faculty of suppressing their Thoughts, as Men have, but that they are necessitated to speak every thing they think, and if so, it would perhaps furnish a very strong Argument to the *Cartesians*, for the supporting of their Doctrine, that the Soul always thinks. But as several are of Opinion that the Fair Sex are not altogether Strangers to the Art of Dissembling and concealing their Thoughts, I have been forced to relinquish that Opinion, and have therefore endeavoured to seek after some better Reason. In order to it, a Friend of mine, who is an excellent Anatomist, has promised me by the first Opportunity to dissect a Woman's Tongue, and to examine whether they may not be in it certain Juices which

render it so wonderfully voluble or flippant, or whether the Fibres of it may not be made up of a finer or more pliant Thread, or whether there are not in it some particular Muscles which dart it up and down by such sudden Glances and Vibrations; or whether in the last place, there may not be certain undiscovered Channels running from the Head and the Heart, to this little Instrument of Loquacity, and conveying into it a perpetual Affluence of animal Spirits. Nor must I omit the Reason which *Hudibras* has given, why those who can talk on Trifles speak with the greatest Fluency; namely, that the Tongue is like a Race-Horse, which runs the faster the lesser Weight it carries.

WHICH of these Reasons soever may be looked upon as the most probable, I think the *Irishman's* Thought was very natural, who after some Hours Conversation with a Female Orator, told her, that he believed her Tongue was very glad when she was asleep, for that it had not a Moment's Rest all the while she was awake.

THAT excellent old Ballad of the *Wanton Wife of Bath*, has the following remarkable Lines.

*I think, quoth Thomas, Womens Tongues
Of Aspen Leaves are made.*

AND *Ovid*, tho' in the Description of a very barbarous Circumstance, tells us, That when the Tongue of a beautiful Female was cut out, and thrown upon the Ground, it could not forbear muttering even in that Posture.

———— *Comprensam forcipe linguam
Abtulit ense fero. Radix micat ultima linguæ.
Ipsa jacet, terræque tremens immurmurat atræ;
Utque salire solet mutilatæ cauda colubræ
Pæpitat* ———

IF a Tongue would be talking without a Mouth, what could it have done when it had all its Organs of Speech, and Accomplices of Sound about it? I might here mention the Story of the Pippin Woman, had not I some Reason to look upon it as fabulous.

I must confess I am so wonderfully charmed with the Musick of this little Instrument, that I would by no means discourage it. All that I aim at by this Dissertation is, to cure it of several disagreeable Notes, and in particular of those little Jarrings and Dissonances which arise from Anger, Censoriousness, Gossiping and Coquetry. In short,