

‘ Racket and Clutter, this is too dear, that is their Aver-
 ‘ sion ; another thing is charming, but not wanted : The
 ‘ Ladies are cured of the Spleen, but I am not a Shilling
 ‘ the better for it. Lord ! what signifies one poor pot of
 ‘ Tea, considering the Trouble they put me to ? Vapours,
 ‘ Mr. SPECTATOR, are terrible Things ; for though I
 ‘ am not possess’d by them my self, I suffer more from
 ‘ ’em than if I were. Now I must beg you to admonish
 ‘ all such Day-Goblins to make fewer Visits, or to be less
 ‘ troublefom when they come to one’s Shop ; and to con-
 ‘ vince them that we honest Shopkeepers have something
 ‘ better to do, than to cure Folks of the Vapours gratis.
 ‘ A young Son of mine, a School-Boy, is my Secretary,
 ‘ so I hope you’ll make Allowances.

I am, S I R,

Your constant Reader,

March the 22d.

and very humble Servant,

T

Rebecca the Distress’d.



N^o 337. *Thursday, March 27.*

*Fingit equum tenerâ docilem cervice Magister,
 Ire viam quam monstrat eques* ———

Hor.

I Have lately received a third Letter from the Gentle-
 man, who has already given the Publick two Essays
 upon Education. As his Thoughts seem to be very
 just and new upon this Subject, I shall communicate them
 to the Reader.

S I R,

‘ IF I had not been hindred by some extraordinary
 ‘ Business, I should have sent you sooner my further
 ‘ Thoughts upon Education. You may please to remem-
 ‘ ber that in my last Letter I endeavoured to give the
 ‘ best Reasons that could be urged in favour of a private
 ‘ or publick Education. Upon the whole it may perhaps
 ‘ be thought that I seem’d rather inclin’d to the latter,
 ‘ the

‘ tho’ at the same time I confess’d that Virtue, which
 ‘ ought to be our first and principal Care, was more
 ‘ usually acquired in the former.

‘ I intend therefore, in this Letter, to offer at Me-
 ‘ thods, by which I conceive Boys might be made to
 ‘ improve in Virtue, as they advance in Letters.

‘ I know that in most of our publick Schools Vice is
 ‘ punished and discouraged, whenever it is found out;
 ‘ but this is far from being sufficient, unless our Youth
 ‘ are at the same time taught to form a right Judgment
 ‘ of Things, and to know what is properly Virtue.

‘ TO this end, whenever they read the Lives and
 ‘ Actions of such Men as have been famous in their Ge-
 ‘ neration, it should not be thought enough to make
 ‘ them barely understand so many *Greek* or *Latin* Sen-
 ‘ tences, but they should be asked their Opinion of such
 ‘ an Action or Saying, and obliged to give their Rea-
 ‘ sons why they take it to be good or bad. By this means
 ‘ they would insensibly arrive at proper Notions of Cou-
 ‘ rage, Temperance, Honour and Justice.

‘ THERE must be great Care taken how the Ex-
 ‘ ample of any particular Person is recommended to them
 ‘ in gross; instead of which they ought to be taught
 ‘ wherein such a Man, tho’ great in some respects,
 ‘ was weak and faulty in others. For want of this
 ‘ Caution, a Boy is often so dazzled with the Lustre
 ‘ of a great Character, that he confounds its Beauties
 ‘ with its Blemishes, and looks even upon the faulty
 ‘ Parts of it with an Eye of Admiration.

‘ I have often wondered how *Alexander*, who was
 ‘ naturally of a generous and merciful Disposition, came
 ‘ to be guilty of so barbarous an Action as that of drag-
 ‘ ging the Governor of a Town after his Chariot. I
 ‘ know this is generally ascribed to his Passion for *Homer*;
 ‘ but I lately met with a Passage in *Plutarch*, which, if
 ‘ I am not very much mistaken, still gives us a clearer
 ‘ Light into the Motives of this Action. *Plutarch* tells us,
 ‘ that *Alexander* in his Youth had a Master named *Lyf-
 ‘ machus*, who, tho’ he was a Man destitute of all Po-
 ‘ liteness, ingratiated himself both with *Philip* and his
 ‘ Pupil, and became the second Man at Court, by calling
 ‘ the King *Peleus*, the Prince *Achilles*, and himself
 ‘ *Phœnix*.

‘ *Phoenix*. It is no wonder if *Alexander* having been
 ‘ thus used not only to admire, but to personate *Achil-*
 ‘ *les*, should think it glorious to imitate him in this
 ‘ piece of Cruelty and Extravagance.

‘ TO carry this Thought yet further, I shall submit it
 ‘ to your Consideration, whether instead of a Theme or
 ‘ Copy of Verses, which are the usual Exercises, as they
 ‘ are called in the School Phrase, it would not be more
 ‘ proper that a Boy should be tasked once or twice a
 ‘ Week to write down his Opinion of such Persons and
 ‘ Things as occur to him in his Reading; that he should
 ‘ descant upon the Actions of *Turnus* or *Aeneas*, shew
 ‘ wherein they excelled or were defective, censure or ap-
 ‘ prove any particular Action, observe how it might have
 ‘ been carried to a greater Degree of Perfection, and how
 ‘ it exceeded or fell short of another. He might at the
 ‘ same time mark what was moral in any Speech, and
 ‘ how far it agreed with the Character of the Person
 ‘ speaking. This Exercise would soon strengthen his
 ‘ Judgment in what is blameable or praise-worthy, and
 ‘ give him an early Seasoning of Morality.

‘ NEXT to those Examples which may be met with
 ‘ in Books, I very much approve *Horace*’s Way of setting
 ‘ before Youth the infamous or honourable Characters of
 ‘ their Contemporaries: That Poet tells us, this was the
 ‘ Method his Father made use of to incline him to any
 ‘ particular Virtue, or give him any Aversion to any par-
 ‘ ticular Vice. If, says *Horace*, my Father advised me to
 ‘ live within Bounds, and be contented with the Fortune
 ‘ he should leave me; Do not you see (says he) the mis-
 ‘ erable Condition of *Burrus*, and the Son of *Albus*? Let
 ‘ the Misfortunes of those two Wretches teach you to
 ‘ avoid Luxury and Extravagance. If he would inspire
 ‘ me with an Abhorrence to Debauchery, do not (says
 ‘ he) make your self like *Seftanus*, when you may be
 ‘ happy in the Enjoyment of lawful Pleasures. How
 ‘ scandalous (says he) is the Character of *Trebonius*, who
 ‘ was lately caught in Bed with another Man’s Wife?
 ‘ To illustrate the Force of this Method, the Poet adds,
 ‘ That as a headstrong Patient, who will not at first fol-
 ‘ low his Physician’s Prescriptions, grows orderly when
 ‘ he hears that his Neighbours die all about him; so
 ‘ Youth

‘ Youth is often frighted from Vice, by hearing the ill Report it brings upon others.

‘ *XENOPHON*’s Schools of Equity, in his Life of *Cyrus* the Great, are sufficiently famous; He tells us, that the *Persian* Children went to School, and employ’d their Time as diligently in learning the Principles of Justice and Sobriety, as the Youth in other Countries did, to acquire the most difficult Arts and Sciences: their Governors spent most part of the Day in hearing their mutual Accusations one against the other, whether for Violence, Cheating, Slander, or Ingratitude; and taught them how to give Judgment against those who were found to be any ways guilty of these Crimes. I omit the Story of the long and short Coat, for which *Cyrus* himself was punished, as a Case equally known with any in *Littleton*.

‘ *THE* Method, which *Apuleius* tells us the *Indian Gymnosophists* took to educate their Disciples, is still more curious and remarkable. His Words are as follow: When their Dinner is ready, before it is served up, the Masters inquire of every particular Scholar how he has employ’d his Time since Sun-rising; some of them answer, that having been chosen as Arbiters between two Persons they have compos’d their Differences, and made them Friends; some, that they have been executing the Orders of their Parents; and others that they have either found out something new by their own Application, or learnt it from the Instructions of their Fellows. But if there happens to be any one among them, who cannot make it appear that he has employ’d the Morning to advantage, he is immediately excluded from the Company, and obliged to work while the rest are at Dinner.

‘ *IT* is not impossible, that from these several Ways of producing Virtue in the Minds of Boys, some general Method might be invented. What I would endeavour to inculcate, is, that our Youth cannot be too soon taught the Principles of Virtue, seeing the first Impressions which are made on the Mind are always the strongest.

‘ *THE* Archbishop of *Cambray* makes *Telemachus* say, that tho’ he was young in Years, he was old in the Art of knowing how to keep both his own and his Friend’s Secrets. When my Father, says the Prince, went to the

‘ Siege

‘ Siege of *Troy*, he took me on his Knees, and after having embraced and blessed me, as he was surrounded by the Nobles of *Ithaca*, O my Friends, says he, into your Hands I commit the Education of my Son; if ever you lov’d his Father, shew it in your Care towards him: but above all, do not omit to form him just, sincere, and faithful in keeping a Secret. These Words of my Father, says *Telemachus*, were continually repeated to me by his Friends in his Absence; who made no Scruple of communicating to me their Uneasiness to see my Mother surrounded with Lovers, and the Measures they designed to take on that Occasion. He adds, that he was so ravished at being thus treated like a Man, and at the Confidence reposed in him, that he never once abused it; nor could all the Insinuations of his Father’s Rivals ever get him to betray what was committed to him under the Seal of Secrecy.

‘ THERE is hardly any Virtue which a Lad might not thus learn by Practice and Example.

‘ I have heard of a good Man, who used at certain times to give his Scholars Six-Pence apiece, that they might tell him the next day how they had employ’d it. The third part was always to be laid out in Charity, and every Boy was blamed or commended as he could make it appear he had chosen a fit Object.

‘ IN short, nothing is more wanting to our publick Schools, than that the Masters of them should use the same Care in fashioning the Manners of their Scholars, as in forming their Tongues to the learned Languages. Where-ever the former is omitted, I cannot help agreeing with Mr. *Locke*, That a Man must have a very strange Value for Words, when preferring the Languages of the *Greeks* and *Romans* to that which made them such brave Men, he can think it worth while to hazard the Innocence and Virtue of his Son for a little *Greek* and *Latin*.

‘ As the Subject of this Essay is of the highest Importance, and what I do not remember to have yet seen treated by any Author, I have sent you what occur’d to me on it from my own Observation or Reading, and which you may either suppress or publish as you think fit.

I am, S I R, Yours, &c.

Friday,

X