

‘ AS to his Conceit of tacking a *Tragick Head* with a
 ‘ *Comic Tail*, in order to *refresh the Audience*, it is such a
 ‘ piece of *Jargon*, that I don’t know what to make of it.

‘ THE elegant Writer makes a very sudden Transi-
 ‘ tion from the Play-house to the Church, and from
 ‘ thence to the Gallows.

‘ AS for what relates to the Church, he is of opinion,
 ‘ that these Epilogues have given occasion to those merry
 ‘ *Figs from the Organ-Loft*, which have dissipated those
 ‘ good Thoughts and Dispositions he has found in himself,
 ‘ and the rest of the Pew, upon the singing of two Staves
 ‘ cull’d out by the judicious and diligent Clerk.

‘ HE fetches his next Thought from *Tyburn*; and
 ‘ seems very apprehensive lest there should happen any In-
 ‘ novations in the Tragedies of his Friend *Paul Lorrain*.

‘ IN the mean time, Sir, this gloomy Writer, who is
 ‘ so mightily scandaliz’d at a gay Epilogue after a serious
 ‘ Play, speaking of the Fate of those unhappy Wretches
 ‘ who are condemned to suffer an ignominious Death by
 ‘ the Justice of our Laws, endeavours to make the Rea-
 ‘ der merry on so improper an Occasion, by those poor
 ‘ Burlesque Expressions of *Tragical Dramas*, and *Monthly*
 ‘ *Performances*.

I am, Sir, with great Respect,

Your most obedient, most humble Servant,

X

Philomeides.

N^o 342. *Wednesday, April 2.*

*Justitiæ partes sunt non violare homines: Vesecundiæ non
 offendere.*

Tull.

A S Regard to Decency is a great Rule of Life in ge-
 neral, but more especially to be consulted by the
 Female World, I cannot overlook the following
 Letter which describes an egregious Offender.

Mr.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

I Was this Day looking over your Papers, and reading in that of *December* the 6th with great delight, the amiable Grief of *Asteria* for the Absence of her Husband, it threw me into a great deal of Reflection. I cannot say but this arose very much from the Circumstances of my own Life, who am a Soldier, and expect every day to receive Orders; which will oblige me to leave behind me a Wife that is very dear to me, and that very deservedly. She is, at present, I am sure, no way below your *Asteria* for Conjugal Affection: But I see the Behaviour of some Women so little suited to the Circumstances wherein my Wife and I shall soon be, that it is with a Reluctance I never knew before, I am going to my Duty. What puts me to present Pain, is the Example of a young Lady, whose Story you shall have as well as I can give it you. *Hortensius*, an Officer of good Rank in her Majesty's Service, happen'd in a certain Part of *England* to be brought to a Country-Gentleman's House, where he was receiv'd with that more than ordinary Welcome, with which Men of domestic Lives entertain such few Soldiers whom a military Life, from the variety of Adventures, has not render'd over-bearing, but humane, easy, and agreeable: *Hortensius* staid here some time, and had easy Access at all Hours, as well as unavoidable Conversation at some parts of the Day with the beautiful *Sylvana*, the Gentleman's Daughter. People who live in Cities are wonderfully struck with every little Country Abode they see when they take the Air; and 'tis natural to fancy they could live in every neat Cottage (by which they pass) much happier than in their present Circumstances. The turbulent way of Life which *Hortensius* was used to, made him reflect with much Satisfaction on all the Advantages of a sweet Retreat one day; and among the rest, you'll think it not improbable, it might enter into his Thought, that such a Woman as *Sylvana* would consummate the Happiness. The World is so debauched with mean Considerations, that *Hortensius* knew it would be receiv'd as an Act of Generosity, if he asked for a Woman of the highest Merit, without further Questions,

ons, of a Parent who had nothing to add to her personal Qualifications. The Wedding was celebrated at her Father's House: When that was over, the generous Husband did not proportion his Provision for her to the Circumstances of her Fortune, but considered his Wife as his Darling, his Pride, and his Vanity, or rather that it was in the Woman he had chosen that a Man of Sense could shew Pride or Vanity with an Excuse, and therefore adorned her with rich Habits and valuable Jewels. He did not however omit to admonish her that he did his very utmost in this; that it was an Ostentation he could not but be guilty of to a Woman he had so much pleasure in, desiring her to consider it as such; and begged of her also to take these Matters rightly, and believe the Gems, the Gowns, the Laces would still become her better, if her Air and Behaviour was such, that it might appear she dressed thus rather in compliance to his Humour that way, than out of any Value she herself had for the Trifles. To this Lesson, too hard for a Woman, *Hortensius* added, that she must be sure to stay with her Friends in the Country till his Return. As soon as *Hortensius* departed, *Sylvana* saw in her Looking-glass that the Love he conceiv'd for her was wholly owing to the Accident of seeing her: and she is convinced it was only her Misfortune the rest of Mankind had not beheld her, or Men of much greater Quality and Merit had contended for one so genteel, tho' bred in Obscurity; so very witty, tho' never acquainted with Court or Town. She therefore resolved not to hide so much Excellence from the World, but without any Regard to the Absence of the most generous Man alive, she is now the gayest Lady about this Town, and has shut out the Thoughts of her Husband by a constant Retinue of the vainest young Fellows this Age has produced; to entertain whom, she squanders away all *Hortensius* is able to supply her with, tho' that Supply is purchased with no less Difficulty than the Hazard of his Life.

Now, *Mr. SPECTATOR*, would it not be a Work becoming your Office to treat this Criminal as she deserves? You should give it the severest Reflexions you can: You should tell Women, that they are more accountable for Behaviour in Absence than after Death.

The

‘ The dead are not dishonour’d by their Levities; the
 ‘ Living may return, and be laugh’d at by empty Fops,
 ‘ who will not fail to turn into ridicule the good Man who
 ‘ is so unseasonable as to be still alive; and come and
 ‘ spoil good Company.

I am, Sir, your most obedient humble Servant.

ALL Strictness of Behaviour is so unmercifully laugh’d at in our Age, that the other much worse Extreme is the more common Folly. But let any Woman consider which of the two Offences an Husband would the more easily forgive, that of being less entertaining than she could to please Company, or raising the Desires of the whole Room to his disadvantage; and she will easily be able to form her Conduct. We have indeed carry’d Womens Characters too much into publick Life, and you shall see them now-a-days affect a sort of Fame: but I cannot help venturing to disoblige them for their Service, by telling them, that the utmost of a Woman’s Character is contain’d in domestick Life; she is blameable or praise-worthy according as her Carriage affects the House of her Father or her Husband. All she has to do in this World, is contain’d within the Duties of a Daughter, a Sister, a Wife, and a Mother: All these may be well performed, tho’ a Lady should not be the very finest Woman at an Opera or an Assembly. They are likewise consistent with a moderate share of Wit, a plain Dress, and a modest Air. But when the very Brains of the Sex are turned, and they place their Ambition on Circumstances, wherein to excel is no Addition to what is truly commendable, where can this end, but, as it frequently does, in their placing all their Industry, Pleasure and Ambition on things, which will naturally make the Gratifications of Life last, at best no longer than Youth and good Fortune? And when we consider the least ill Consequence, it can be no less than looking on their own Condition as Years advance, with a disrelisht of Life, and falling into Contempt of their own Persons, or being the Derision of others. But when they consider themselves as they ought, no other than an additional Part of the Species, (for their own Happiness and Comfort, as well as that of those for whom they were born)