

gined how the polite Rabble of this Town, who are acquainted with these Objects, ridicule his Rusticity. I have known a Fellow with a Burden on his Head steal a Hand down from his Load, and slyly twirl the Cock of a Squire's Hat behind him; while the Offended Person is swearing, or out of Countenance, all the Wag-Wits in the High-way are grinning in applause of the ingenious Rogue that gave him the tip, and the Folly of him who had not Eyes all round his Head to prevent receiving it. These things arise from a general Affectation of Smartness, Wit, and Courage. *Wycherly* somewhere rallies the Pretensions this Way, by making a Fellow say, Red Breeches are a certain Sign of Valour; and *Otway* makes a Man to boast his Agility, trip up a Beggar on Crutches. From such Hints I beg a Speculation on this Subject; in the mean time I shall do all in the Power of a weak old Fellow in my own defence: for as *Diogenes*, being in quest of an honest Man, sought for him when it was broad Day-light with a Lanthorn and Candle, so I intend for the future to walk the Streets with a dark Lanthorn, which has a convex Crystal in it; and if any Man stares at me, I give fair Warning that I'll direct the Light full into his Eyes. Thus despairing to find Men Modest, I hope by this Means to evade their Impudence.

I am, SIR,

Your most humble Servant,

T

Sophrosunius.



N<sup>o</sup> 355. Thursday, April 17.

*Non ego mordaci distrinxi carmine quenquam.* Ovid.

I HAVE been very often tempted to write Invectives upon those who have detracted from my Works, or spoken in derogation of my Person; but I look upon it as a particular Happiness, that I have always hindred my Resentments from proceeding to this Extremity. I

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once had gone thro' half a Satire, but found so many Motions of Humanity rising in me towards the Persons whom I had severely treated, that I threw it into the Fire without ever finishing it. I have been angry enough to make several little Epigrams and Lampoons; and after having admired them a Day or two, have likewise committed them to the Flames. These I look upon as so many Sacrifices to Humanity, and have receiv'd much greater Satisfaction from the suppressing such Performances, than I could have done from any Reputation they might have procur'd me, or from any Mortification they might have given my Enemies, in case I had made them publick. If a Man has any Talent in writing, it shews a good Mind to forbear answering Calumnies and Reproaches in the same Spirit of Bitterness with which they are offered: But when a Man has been at some Pains in making suitable Returns to an Enemy, and has the Instruments of Revenge in his Hands, to let drop his Wrath, and stifle his Resentments, seems to have something in it great and heroical. There is a particular Merit in such a way of forgiving an Enemy; and the more violent and unprovok'd the Offence has been, the greater still is the Merit of him who thus forgives it.

I never met with a Consideration that is more finely spun, and what has better pleased me, than one in *Epictetus*, which places an Enemy in a new Light, and gives us a View of him altogether different from that in which we are used to regard him. The Sense of it is as follows: Does a Man reproach thee for being proud or ill-natur'd, envious or conceited, ignorant or detracting? Consider with thy self whether his Reproaches are true; if they are not, consider that thou art not the Person whom he reproaches, but that he reviles an imaginary Being, and perhaps loves what thou really art, tho' he hates what thou appearest to be. If his Reproaches are true, if thou art the envious ill-natur'd Man he takes thee for, give thy self another Turn, become mild, affable and obliging, and his Reproaches of thee naturally cease: His Reproaches may indeed continue, but thou art no longer the Person whom he reproaches.

I often apply this Rule to my self; and when I hear of a satirical Speech or Writing that is aim'd at me, I  
examine



examine my own Heart, whether I deserve it or not. If I bring in a Verdict against my self, I endeavour to rectify my Conduct for the future in those Particulars which have drawn the Censure upon me; but if the whole Invektive be grounded upon a Falshood, I trouble my self no further about it, and look upon my Name at the Head of it to signify no more than one of those fictitious Names made use of by an Author to introduce an imaginary Character. Why should a Man be sensible of the Sting of a Reproach, who is a Stranger to the Guilt that is implied in it? or subject himself to the Penalty, when he knows he has never committed the Crime? This is a Piece of Fortitude, which every one owes to his own Innocence, and without which it is impossible for a Man of any Merit or Figure to live at Peace with himself in a Country that abounds with Wit and Liberty.

THE famous Monsieur *Balzac*, in a Letter to the Chancellor of *France*, who had prevented the Publication of a Book against him, has the following Words, which are a lively Picture of the Greatness of Mind so visible in the Works of that Author. *If it was a new thing, it may be I should not be displeased with the Suppression of the first Libel that should abuse me; but since there are enough of 'em to make a small Library, I am secretly pleased to see the Number increased, and take delight in raising a heap of Stones that Envy has cast at me without doing me any harm.*

THE Author here alludes to those Monuments of the Eastern Nations, which were Mountains of Stones raised upon the dead Body by Travellers, that used to cast every one his Stone upon it as they passed by. It is certain that no Monument is so glorious as one which is thus raised by the Hands of Envy. For my part, I admire an Author for such a Temper of Mind as enables him to bear an undeserved Reproach without Resentment, more than for all the Wit of any the finest satirical Reply.

THUS far I thought necessary to explain my self in relation to those who have animadverted on this Paper, and to shew the Reasons why I have not thought fit to return them any formal Answer. I must further add, that the Work would have been of very little use to the Publick, had it been filled with personal Reflexions and De-

bates;