

Gesture and Motion represent all the decent Characters of Female Life. An amiable Modesty in one Aspect of a Dancer, an assumed Confidence in another, a sudden Joy in another, a falling off with an Impatience of being beheld, a Return towards the Audience with an unsteady Resolution to approach them, and a well-acted Solicitude to please, would revive in the Company all the fine Touches of Mind raised in observing all the Objects of Affection or Passion they had before beheld. Such elegant Entertainments as these, would polish the Town into Judgment in their Gratifications; and Delicacy in Pleasure is the first step People of Condition take in Reformation from Vice. Mrs. *Bicknell* has the only Capacity for this sort of Dancing of any on the Stage; and I dare say all who see her Performance to-morrow Night, when sure the Romp will do her best for her own Benefit, will be of my mind. T



N^o 371. Tuesday, May 6.

*Famne igitur laudas quod de sapientibus unus
Ridebas? ———*

Juv.

I Shall communicate to my Reader the following Letter for the Entertainment of this Day.

S I R,

YOU know very well that our Nation is more famous for that sort of Men who are called *Whims* and *Humourists*, than any other Country in the World; for which reason it is observed that our *English* Comedy excels that of all other Nations in the Novelty and Variety of its Characters.

AMONG those innumerable Sets of *Whims* which our Country produces, there are none whom I have regarded with more Curiosity than those who have invented any particular kind of Diversion for the Entertainment of themselves or their Friends. My Letter shall

‘ shall single out those who take delight in forming a
 ‘ Company that has something of Burlesque and Ridicule
 ‘ in its Appearance. I shall make my self understood
 ‘ by the following Example. One of the Wits of the last
 ‘ Age, who was a Man of a good Estate, thought he
 ‘ never laid out his Money better than in a Jest. As he
 ‘ was one Year at the *Bath*, observing that in the great
 ‘ Confluence of fine People, there were several among
 ‘ them with long Chins, a part of the Visage by which
 ‘ he himself was very much distinguished, he invited to
 ‘ dinner half a Score of these remarkable Persons who
 ‘ had their Mouths in the Middle of their Faces. They
 ‘ had no sooner placed themselves about the Table, but
 ‘ they began to stare upon one another, not being able
 ‘ to imagine what had brought them together. Our *Eng-
 ‘ lish* Proverb says,

*’Tis merry in the Hall,
 When Beards wag all.*

‘ It proved so in the Assembly I am now speaking of, who
 ‘ seeing so many Peaks of Faces agitated with Eating,
 ‘ Drinking and Discourse, and observing all the Chins
 ‘ that were present meeting together very often over the
 ‘ Centre of the Table, every one grew sensible of the
 ‘ Jest, and came into it with so much Good-humour, that
 ‘ they lived in strict Friendship and Alliance from that
 ‘ day forward.

‘ T H E same Gentleman some time after packed toge-
 ‘ ther a Set of Oglers, as he called them, consisting of
 ‘ such as had an unlucky Cast in their Eyes. His Diver-
 ‘ sion on this Occasion was to see the crofs Bows, mis-
 ‘ taken Signs, and wrong Connivances that passed amidst
 ‘ so many broken and refracted Rays of Sight.

‘ T H E third Feast which this merry Gentleman exhi-
 ‘ bited was to the Stammerers, whom he got together in a
 ‘ sufficient Body to fill his Table. He had ordered one of
 ‘ his Servants, who was placed behind a Screen, to write
 ‘ down their Table-Talk, which was very easy to be
 ‘ done without the help of Short-hand. It appears by
 ‘ the Notes which were taken, that tho’ their Conversa-
 ‘ tion never fell, there were not above twenty Words spo-
 ‘ ken during the first Course; that upon serving up the se-
 ‘ cond,

cond, one of the Company was a quarter of an Hour in telling them, that the Ducklings and Asparagus were very good; and that another took up the same time in declaring himself of the same Opinion. This Jest did not, however, go off so well as the former; for one of the Guests being a brave Man, and fuller of Resentment than he knew how to express, went out of the Room, and sent the facetious Inviter a Challenge in Writing, which, though it was afterwards dropp'd by the Interposition of Friends, put a stop to these ludicrous Entertainments.

NOW, Sir, I dare say you will agree with me, that as there is no Moral in these Jest, they ought to be discouraged, and looked upon rather as pieces of Unluckiness than Wit. However, as it is natural for one Man to refine upon the Thought of another, and impossible for any single Person, how great soever his Parts may be, to invent an Art, and bring it to its utmost Perfection; I shall here give you an Account of an honest Gentleman of my Acquaintance, who upon hearing the Character of the Wit above-mentioned, has himself assumed it, and endeavoured to convert it to the Benefit of Mankind. He invited half a dozen of his Friends one Day to Dinner, who were each of them famous for inserting several redundant Phrases in their Discourse, as, *d'y hear me, d'ye see, that is, and so Sir*. Each of the Guests making frequent use of his particular Elegance, appeared so ridiculous to his Neighbour, that he could not but reflect upon himself as appearing equally ridiculous to the rest of the Company: By this means, before they had sat long together, every one talking with the greatest Circumspection, and carefully avoiding his favourite Expletive, the Conversation was cleared of its Redundancies, and had a greater Quantity of Sense, tho' less of Sound in it.

THE same well-meaning Gentleman took occasion, at another time, to bring together such of his Friends as were addicted to a foolish habitual Custom of Swearing. In order to shew them the Absurdity of the Practice, he had recourse to the Invention above-mentioned, having placed an *Amanuensis* in a private Part of the Room. After the second Bottle, when Men open
their

' their Minds without Reserve, my honest Friend began
 ' to take notice of the many sonorous but unnecessary
 ' Words that had passed in his House since their sitting
 ' down at Table, and how much good Conversation they
 ' had lost by giving way to such superfluous Phrases.
 ' What a Tax, says he, would they have raised for the
 ' Poor, had we put the Laws in Execution upon one
 ' another? Every one of them took this gentle Reproof
 ' in good part. Upon which he told them, that know-
 ' ing their Conversation would have no Secrets in it,
 ' he had order'd it to be taken down in Writing, and
 ' for the Humour-sake would read it to them, if they
 ' pleased. There were ten Sheets of it, which might have
 ' been reduced to two, had there not been those abomi-
 ' nable Interpolations I have before mentioned. Upon
 ' the reading of it in cold Blood, it looked rather like a
 ' Conference of Fiends than of Men. In short, every one
 ' trembled at himself upon hearing calmly what he had
 ' pronounced amidst the Heat and Inadvertency of
 ' Discourse.

' I shall only mention another Occasion wherein he
 ' made use of the same Invention to cure a different kind
 ' of Men, who are the Pests of all polite Conversation,
 ' and murder Time as much as either of the two for-
 ' mer, though they do it more innocently; I mean that
 ' dull Generation of Story-tellers. My Friend got to-
 ' gether about half a dozen of his Acquaintance, who were
 ' infected with this strange Malady. The first Day one
 ' of them sitting down, entered upon the Siege of Na-
 ' mur, which lasted till four o'Clock, their time of part-
 ' ing. The second Day a *North-Briton* took possession
 ' of the Discourse, which it was impossible to get out of
 ' his hands so long as the Company staid together. The
 ' third Day was engrossed after the same manner by a
 ' Story of the same length. They at last began to re-
 ' flect upon this barbarous way of treating one another,
 ' and by this means awakened out of that Lethargy
 ' with which each of them had been seized for several
 ' Years.

' AS you have somewhere declared, that extraordi-
 ' nary and uncommon Characters of Mankind are the
 ' Game which you delight in, and as I look upon you to
 ' be