

N^o 382. *Monday, May 19.**Habes confitentem reum.*

Tull.

I Ought not to have neglected a Request of one of my Correspondents so long as I have; but I dare say I have given him time to add Practice to Profession. He sent me some time ago a Bottle or two of excellent Wine to drink the Health of a Gentleman who had by the Penny-Post advertised him of an egregious Error in his Conduct. My Correspondent received the Obligation from an unknown Hand with the Candour which is natural to an ingenuous Mind; and promises a contrary Behaviour in that Point for the future: He will offend his Monitor with no more Errors of that kind, but thanks him for his Benevolence. This frank Carriage makes me reflect upon the amiable Atonement a Man makes in an ingenuous Acknowledgment of a Fault: All such Miscarriages as flow from Inadvertency are more than repaid by it; for Reason, though not concerned in the Injury, employs all its Force in the Atonement. He that says, he did not design to disoblige you in such an Action, does as much as if he should tell you, that tho' the Circumstance which displeased was never in his Thoughts, he has that Respect for you, that he is unsatisfied till it is wholly out of yours. It must be confessed, that when an Acknowledgment of an Offence is made out of Poorness of Spirit, and not Conviction of Heart, the Circumstance is quite different: But in the Case of my Correspondent, where both the Notice is taken and the Return made in private, the Affair begins and ends with the highest Grace on each Side. To make the Acknowledgment of a Fault in the highest manner graceful, it is lucky when the Circumstances of the Offender place him above any ill Consequences from the Resentment of the Person offended. A Dauphin of France, upon a Review of the Army, and a Command of the

the King to alter the Posture of it by a March of one of the Wings, gave an improper Order to an Officer at the Head of a Brigade, who told his Highness, he presumed he had not received the last Orders, which were to move a contrary Way. The Prince, instead of taking the Admonition which was delivered in a manner that accounted for his Error with Safety to his Understanding, shaked a Cane at the Officer; and with the return of opprobrious Language persisted in his own Orders. The whole Matter came necessarily before the King, who commanded his Son, on foot, to lay his right Hand on the Gentleman's Stirrup as he sat on Horseback in sight of the whole Army, and ask his Pardon. When the Prince touched his Stirrup, and was going to speak, the Officer, with an incredible Agility, threw himself on the Earth, and kissed his Feet.

THE Body is very little concerned in the Pleasures or Sufferings of Souls truly great; and the Reparation, when an Honour was designed this Soldier, appeared as much too great to be borne by his Gratitude, as the Injury was intolerable to his Resentment.

WHEN we turn our Thoughts from these extraordinary Occurrences into common Life, we see an ingenuous kind of Behaviour not only make up for Faults committed, but in a manner expiate them in the very Commission. Thus many things wherein a Man has pressed too far, he implicitly excuses, by owning, *This is a Trespass; you'll pardon my Confidence: I am sensible I have no Pretension to this Favour*, and the like. But commend me to those gay Fellows about Town who are directly impudent, and make up for it no otherwise than by calling themselves such, and exulting in it. But this sort of Carriage which prompts a Man against Rules to urge what he has a mind to, is pardonable only when you sue for another. When you are confident in preference of your self to others of equal Merit, every Man that loves Virtue and Modesty ought, in defence of those Qualities, to oppose you: But without considering the Morality of the thing, let us at this time behold only the natural Consequence of Candour when we speak of ourselves.

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THE SPECTATOR writes often in an Elegant, often in an Argumentative, and often in a Sublime Stile, with equal Success ; but how would it hurt the reputed Author of that Paper to own, that of the most beautiful Pieces under his Title, he is barely the Publisher ? There is nothing but what a Man really performs, can be an Honour to him ; what he takes more than he ought in the Eye of the World, he loses in the Conviction of his own Heart, and a Man must lose his Consciousness, that is, his very Self, before he can rejoice in any Falshood without inward Mortification.

W H O has not seen a very Criminal at the Bar, when his Counsel and Friends have done all that they could for him in vain, prevail upon the whole Assembly to pity him, and his Judge to recommend his Case to the Mercy of the Throne, without offering any thing new in his Defence, but that he, whom before we wished convicted, became so out of his own Mouth, and took upon himself all the Shame and Sorrow we were just before preparing for him ? The great Opposition to this kind of Candour, arises from the unjust Idea People ordinarily have of what we call a high Spirit. It is far from Greatness of Spirit to persist in the wrong in any thing, nor is it a Diminution of Greatness of Spirit to have been in the wrong : Perfection is not the Attribute of Man, therefore he is not degraded by the Acknowledgment of an Imperfection : But it is the Work of little Minds to imitate the Fortitude of great Spirits on worthy Occasions, by Obstinacy in the wrong. This Obstinacy prevails so far upon them, that they make it extend to the Defence of Faults in their very Servants. It would swell this Paper to too great a length, should I insert all the Quarrels and Debates which are now on foot in this Town ; where one Party, and in some Cases both, is sensible of being on the faulty side, and have not Spirit enough to acknowledge it. Among the Ladies the Case is very common, for there are very few of them who know that it is to maintain a true and high Spirit, to throw away from it all which it self disapproves, and to scorn so pitiful a Shame, as that which disables the Heart from acquiring a Liberality of Affections and Sentiments. The candid Mind, by acknowledging and discarding its Faults, has