

When Empire in its childhood first appears,  
 A watchful fate o'ersees its tender years:  
 Till, grown more strong, it thrusts and stretches out,  
 And elbows all the kingdoms round about.  
 The place thus made for its first breathing free,  
 It moves again for ease and luxury:  
 Till swelling by degrees it has possess'd  
 The greater space, and now crouds up the rest.  
 When from behind there starts some petty state,  
 And pushes on its now unwieldy fate.  
 Then down the precipice of time it goes,  
 And sinks in minutes, which in ages rose.

N<sup>o</sup> 13. Tuesday, May 8, 1709.

S T E E L E.

*Quicquid agunt homines——*

*nostri est farrago libelli.*

Juv. Sat. i. 85, 86.

“Whate’er men do, or say, or think, or dream,  
 “Our medley Paper seizes for its theme.” P.

From my own Apartment, May 8.

MUCH hurry and business has to-day perplexed me into a mood too thoughtful for going into company; for which reason, instead of the tavern, I went into Lincoln’s Inn walks; and, having taken a round or two, I sat down,



down, according to the allowed familiarity of these places, on a bench; at the other end of which sat a venerable gentleman, who speaking with a very affable air, "Mr. BICKERSTAFF," said he, "I take it for a very great piece of good fortune that you have found me out." "Sir," said I, "I had never, that I know of, the honour of seeing you before." "That," replied he, "is what I have often lamented; but, I assure you, I have for many years done you good offices, without being observed by you; or else, when you had any little glimpse of my being concerned in an affair, you have fled from me, and shunned me like an enemy; but however, the part I am to act in the world is such, that I am to go on in doing good, though I meet with *never* so many repulses, even from those I oblige." This, thought I, shews a great good-nature, but little judgment in the persons upon whom he confers his favours. He immediately took notice to me, that he observed by my countenance I thought him indiscreet in his beneficence, and proceeded to tell me his quality in the following manner: "I know thee, ISAAC\*, to be so well versed in the occult sciences, that I need not much preface, or make long preparations to gain your faith that there are airy beings, who are employed in the care and attendance of

\* See TAT. N° 7. note; and N° 14.



“men, as nurses are to infants, until they  
“come to an age in which they can act of  
“themselves. These beings are usually called  
“amongst men, guardian angels; and, Mr.  
“BICKERSTAFF, I am to acquaint you, that  
“I am to be yours for some time to come; it  
“being our orders to vary our stations, and  
“sometimes to have one patient under our pro-  
“tection, and sometimes another, with a power  
“of assuming what shape we please, to en-  
“snare our wards into their own good. I have  
“of late been upon such hard duty, and know  
“you have so much work for me, that I think  
“fit to appear to you face to face, to desire  
“you will give me as little occasion for vigi-  
“lance as you can.” “Sir,” said I, “it will  
“be a great instruction to me in my behaviour,  
“if you please to give me some account of your  
“late employments, and what hardships or  
“satisfactions you have had in them, that I  
“may govern myself accordingly.” He an-  
“swered, “To give you an example of the  
“drudgery we go through, I will entertain you  
“only with my three last stations: I was on the  
“first of April last put to mortify a great beauty,  
“with whom I was a week; from her I went to  
“a common swearer, and have been last with a  
“gamester. When I first came to my lady, I  
“found my great work was to guard well her  
“eyes and ears; but her flatterers were so nu-  
“merous, and the house, after the modern way,  
“so full of looking-glasses, that I seldom had  
“her



“ her safe but in her sleep. Whenever we went  
 “ abroad, we were furrounded by an army of  
 “ enemies: when a well-made man appeared, he  
 “ was sure to have a side-glance of observation:  
 “ if a disagreeable fellow, he had a full face, out  
 “ of mere inclination to conquests. But at the  
 “ close of the evening, on the sixth of the last  
 “ month, my ward was sitting on a couch, read-  
 “ ing Ovid’s Epistles; and as she came to this  
 “ line of Helen to Paris,

“ She half consents who silently denies\*,

“ entered PHILANDER, who is the most skil-  
 “ ful of all men in an address to women. He is  
 “ arrived at the perfection of that art which  
 “ gains them, which is, ‘to talk like a very mi-  
 “ serable man, but look like a very happy one.’  
 “ I saw DICTINNA blush at his entrance,  
 “ which gave me the alarm; but he immedi-  
 “ ately said something so agreeably on her be-  
 “ ing at study, and the novelty of finding a  
 “ lady employed in so grave a manner, that he  
 “ on a sudden became very familiarly a man of  
 “ no consequence; and in an instant laid all her  
 “ suspicions of his skill asleep, as he had almost  
 “ done mine, until I observed him very dan-  
 “ gerously turn his discourse upon the elegance

\* This line occurs in a joint translation of “Helen’s Epistle to Paris,” by the Earl of MULGRAVE and DRYDEN, in the edition of “OVID’s Epistles, 1709.”

“ of



“ of her dress, and her judgement in the choice  
 “ of that very pretty mourning. Having had  
 “ women before under my care, I trembled at  
 “ the apprehension of a man of sense who could  
 “ talk upon trifles, and resolved to stick to my  
 “ post with all the circumspection imaginable.  
 “ In short, I prepossessed her against all he could  
 “ say to the advantage of her dress and person;  
 “ but he turned again the discourse, where I  
 “ found I had no power over her, on the abusing  
 “ her friends and acquaintance. He allowed in-  
 “ deed that Flora had a little beauty, and a great  
 “ deal of wit; but then she was so ungainly in  
 “ her behaviour, and such a laughing hoyden!—  
 “ Pastorella\* had with him the allowance of  
 “ being blameless: but what was that towards  
 “ being praise-worthy? To be only innocent,  
 “ is not to be virtuous†! He afterwards spoke  
 “ so much against Mrs. Dipple’s forehead, Mrs.  
 “ Prim’s mouth, Mrs. Dentifrice’s teeth, and  
 “ Mrs. Fidget’s‡ cheeks, that she grew down-  
 “ right

\* TAT. N<sup>o</sup> 9.

† See TAT. N<sup>o</sup> 10. note.

‡ In the Original Letters to the TAT. and SPEC. printed by CHARLES LILLY, there is a “ Table of the titles and distinctions of women,” from which what follows is extracted.

“ Let all country-gentlewomen, without regard to more  
 “ or less fortune, content themselves with being addressed  
 “ by the style of *Mrs.*

“ Let *Madam* govern independently in the city, &c.

“ Let no woman assume the title of *Lady*, without add-  
 “ ing her name, to prove her right to it. Titles flowing  
 “ from



“ right in love with him: for it is always to be  
 “ understood, that a lady takes all you detract  
 “ from the rest of her sex to be a gift to her.  
 “ In a word, things went so far, that I was  
 “ dismissed, and she will remember that even-  
 “ ing nine months, from the sixth of April,  
 “ by a very remarkable token. The next, as  
 “ I said, I went to, was a common SWEARER:  
 “ never was a creature so puzzled as myself,  
 “ when I came first to view his brain: half  
 “ of it was worn out, and filled up with mere  
 “ expletives, that had nothing to do with any  
 “ other parts of the texture; therefore, when he  
 “ called for his cloaths in a morning, he would  
 “ cry, ‘ John!’—John does not answer. ‘ What  
 “ a plague! nobody there? What the devil, and  
 “ rot me, John, for a lazy dog as you are!’ I  
 “ knew no way to cure him, but by writing  
 “ down all he said one morning as he was dres-  
 “ sing, and laying it before him on the toilet  
 “ when he came to pick his teeth. The last  
 “ recital I gave him of what he said for half  
 “ an hour before was, ‘ What, a pox rot me!  
 “ where is the wash-ball? call the chairmen:  
 “ damn them, I warrant they are at the ale-

“ from real honour support themselves. Let no woman  
 “ after the known age of 21, presume to admit of her being  
 “ called *Miss*, unless she can fairly prove she is not out of  
 “ her sampler. Let every common maid-servant be plain  
 “ *Jane, Doll* or *Sue*, and let the better-born and higher-  
 “ placed be distinguished by *Mrs. Patience, Mrs. Prue*, or  
 “ *Mrs. Abigail*.” Original Lett. to TAT. and SPEC. vol. I.  
 N° 86. p. 223. 8vo. 1725. *Ibidem*, vol. II. N° 62. p. 156.

“ house



“house already! zounds, and confound them!”  
“When he came to the glass, he takes up my  
“note—‘Ha! this fellow is worse than I:  
“what, does he swear with pen and ink!’ But,  
“reading on, he found them to be his own  
“words. The stratagem had so good an effect  
“upon him, that he grew immediately a new  
“man, and is learning to speak without an  
“oath, which makes him extremely short in  
“his phrases: for, as I observed before, a com-  
“mon swearer has a brain without any idea on  
“the swearing side; therefore my ward has yet  
“mighty little to say, and is forced to substi-  
“tute some other vehicle of nonsense, to sup-  
“ply the defect of his usual expletives. When  
“I left him, he made use of ‘Odsbodikins!  
“Oh me! and Never stir alive!’ and so forth;  
“which gave me hopes of his recovery. So I  
“went to the next I told you of, the gamester.  
“When we first take our place about a man,  
“the receptacles of the *pericranium* are imme-  
“diately searched. In his, I found no one or-  
“dinary trace of thinking; but strong passion,  
“violent desires, and a continued series of dif-  
“ferent changes, had torn it to pieces. There  
“appeared no middle condition; the triumph  
“of a prince, or the misery of a beggar, were  
“his alternate states. I was with him no longer  
“than one day, which was yesterday. In the  
“morning at twelve we were worth four thou-  
“sand pounds; at three, we were arrived at six  
“thousand; half an hour after, we were re-  
“duced



“duced to one thousand; at four of the clock,  
 “we were down to two hundred; at five, to  
 “fifty; at six, to five; at seven, to one guinea;  
 “the next bet, to nothing. This morning he  
 “borrowed half a crown of the maid who  
 “cleans his shoes; and is now gaming in  
 “Lincoln’s-Inn Fields among the boys for  
 “farthings and oranges, until he has made up  
 “three pieces, and then he returns to White’s  
 “into the best company in town.”

Thus ended our first discourse; and, it is hoped, you will forgive me that I have picked so little out of my companion at our first interview. In the next, it is possible, he may tell me more pleasing incidents; for though he is a familiar, he is not an evil spirit\*.

St. JAMES’S Coffee-house, May 9.

We hear from the Hague of the fourteenth instant, N. S. that Monsieur de Torcy hath had frequent conferences with the Grand Pensioner, and the other ministers who were heretofore commissioned to treat with Monsieur Rouille. The preliminaries of a peace are almost settled, and the proceedings wait only for the arrival of the Duke of Marlborough; after whose approbation of the articles proposed, it is not doubted but the methods of the treaty will be publicly known. In the mean time the States have declared an abhorrence of taking any step in this

\* See TAT. N<sup>o</sup> 15.



great affair, but in concert with the court of Great Britain, and other princes of the alliance. The posture of affairs in France does necessarily oblige that nation to be very much in earnest in their offers; and Monsieur de Torcy hath professed to the Grand Pensioner, that he will avoid all occasions of giving him the least jealousy, of his using any address in private conversation for accomplishing the ends of his embassy. It is said, that as soon as the preliminaries are adjusted, that minister is to return to the French court. The States of Holland have resolved to make it an instruction to all their men of war and privateers, to bring into their ports whatever neutral ships they shall meet with, laden with corn, and bound for France; and, to avoid all cause of complaint from the potentates to whom these ships shall belong, their full demand for their freight shall be paid them there. The French Protestants residing in that country have applied themselves to their respective magistrates, desiring that there may be an article in the treaty of peace, which may give liberty of conscience to the Protestants in France. Monsieur Bosnage, minister of the Walloon church at Rotterdam, has been at the Hague, and hath had some conferences with the deputies of the States on that subject. It is reported there, that all the French Refugees in those dominions are to be naturalized, that they may enjoy the same good effects of the treaty with the Hollanders themselves, in respect of France.

N<sup>o</sup> 14.