

N° 29. Thursday, June 14, 1709.

STEELE*.

*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.

WHITE’S Chocolate-house, June 14.

HAVING a very solid respect for Human NATURE, however it is distorted from its natural make, by affectation, humour, custom, misfortune, or vice, I do apply myself to my friends to help me in raising arguments for preserving it in all its individuals, as long as it is permitted. To one of my letters on this subject, I have received the following answer :

“S I R,
“IN answer to your question, why men of
“sense, virtue, and experience, are seen still to
“comply with that ridiculous Custom of Duel-

* See N° 25; N° 26; N° 28; N° 31; N° 38; N° 39,
and Notes.

T 4

“ling?

“ ling? I must desire you to reflect, that Custom
“ has dished up in ruffs the wisest heads of our
“ ancestors, and put the best of the present
“ age into huge falbala periwigs*. Men of sense
“ would not impose such incumbrances on
“ themselves, but be glad they might shew
“ their faces decently in public upon easier
“ terms. If then such men appear reasonably
“ slaves to the Fashion, in what regards the
“ figure of their persons, we ought not to
“ wonder, that they are at least so in what
“ seems to touch their reputations. Besides,
“ you cannot be ignorant, that dress and chi-
“ valry have been always encouraged by the
“ ladies, as the two principal branches of gal-
“ lantry. It is to avoid being sneered at for
“ his singularity, and from a desire to appear
“ more agreeable to his mistress, that a wise,
“ experienced, and polite man, complies with
“ the dress commonly received; and is pre-
“ vailed upon to violate his reason and princi-
“ ples, in hazarding his life and estate by a tilt,
“ as well as suffering his pleasures to be con-
“ strained and soured by the constant appre-
“ hension of a quarrel. This is the more sur-
“ prising, because men of the most delicate
“ sense and principles have naturally in other
“ cases a particular repugnance in accommo-
“ dating themselves to the maxims of the
“ world: but one may easily distinguish the

* See N° 26. *Note*, and N° 30. *ad finem*.

“ man

“ man that is affected with beauty, and the re-
 “ putation of a tilt, from him who complies
 “ with both, merely as they are imposed upon
 “ him by Custom; for in the former you will
 “ remark an air of vanity and triumph;
 “ whereas when the latter appears in a long
 “ *Duvillier* full of powder, or has decided a
 “ quarrel by the sword, you may perceive in
 “ his face, that he appeals to custom for an ex-
 “ cuse. I think it may not be improper to
 “ enquire into the genealogy of this chimerical
 “ monster called a DUEL, which I take to be
 “ an illegitimate species of the ancient knight-
 “ errantry. By the laws of this whim, the he-
 “ roic person, or man of gallantry, was indis-
 “ pensably obliged to starve in armour a certain
 “ number of years in the chace of monsters,
 “ encounter them at the peril of his life,
 “ and suffer great hardships, in order to gain
 “ the affection of the fair lady, and qualify
 “ himself for assuming the *belle air*; that is,
 “ of a Pretty Fellow, or Man of Honour, ac-
 “ cording to the fashion: but, since the pub-
 “ lishing of Don Quixote, and extinction of the
 “ race of dragons, which Suetonius says hap-
 “ pened in that of Wantley *, the gallant and
 “ heroic spirits of these latter times have been

* In humorous writings one may be led to search for
 quotations no where to be found in the authors referred to,
 as appears from this passage. See “ The Dragon of
 “ Wantley,” printed in the “ Reliques of English Poetry,”
 vol. III. P.

“ under

“ under the necessity of creating new chimerical
“ monsters to entertain themselves with, by
“ way of single combat, as the only proofs
“ they are able to give their own sex, and the
“ ladies, that they are in all points men of nice
“ honour. But, to do justice to the ancient and
“ real monsters, I must observe, that they never
“ molested those who were not of a humour
“ to hunt for them in woods and desarts;
“ whereas, on the contrary, our modern mon-
“ sters are so familiarly admitted and enter-
“ tained in all the courts and cities of Europe
“ (except France) that one can scarce be in
“ the most humanized society without risking
“ one’s life; the people of the best sort, and
“ the fine gentlemen of the age, being so
“ fond of them, that they seldom appear in
“ any public place without one. I have some
“ further considerations upon this subject,
“ which, as you encourage me, shall be com-
“ municated to you by, Sir, a cousin but one
“ remove from the best family of the STAFFS,
“ namely, Sir, your humble servant, kinsman,
“ and friend, TIM SWITCH.”

It is certain that Mr. SWITCH has hit upon the true source of this evil; and that it proceeds only from the force of Custom, that we contradict ourselves in half the particulars and occurrences of life. But such a tyranny in Love, which the fair impose upon us, is a little too severe; that we must demonstrate our af-
fection

fection for them by no certain proof but hatred to one another, or come at them (only as one does at an estate) by survivorship. This way of application to gain a lady's heart is taking her as we do towns and castles, by distressing the place, and letting none come near them without our pass. Were such a Lover once to write the truth of his heart, and let her know his whole thoughts, he would appear indeed to have a passion for her; but it would hardly be called Love. The billet-doux would run to this purpose:

“MADAM,

“I HAVE so tender a regard for you, and
 “your interests, that I will knock any man on
 “the head whom I observe to be of my mind,
 “and like you. Mr. Truman, the other day,
 “looked at you in so languishing a manner,
 “that I am resolved to run him through to-
 “morrow morning. This, I think, he de-
 “serves for his guilt in admiring you: than
 “which I cannot have a greater reason for
 “murdering him, except it be that you also
 “approve him. Whoever says he dies for
 “you, I will make his words good, for I will
 “kill him. I am, Madam, your most obe-
 “dient humble servant.”

From my own Apartment, June 14.

I am just come hither at ten at night, and
 have, ever since six, been in the most celebrated,
 though

though most nauseous, company in town: the two leaders of the society were a Critic and a Wit. These two gentlemen are great opponents on all occasions, not discerning that they are the nearest each other, in temper and talents, of any two classes of men in the world; for to profess judgment, and to profess wit, both arise from the same failure, which is want of judgment. The poverty of the Critic this way proceeds from the abuse of his faculty; that of the Wit, from the neglect of it. It is a particular observation I have always made, that of all mortals a Critic is the silliest; for, by enuring himself to examine all things, whether they are of consequence or not, he never looks upon any thing but with a design of passing sentence upon it; by which means he is never a companion, but always a censor. This makes him earnest upon trifles, and dispute on the most indifferent occasions with vehemence. If he offers to speak or write, that talent, which should approve the work of the other faculties, prevents their operation. He comes upon action in armour, but without weapons; he stands in safety, but can gain no glory. The Wit, on the other hand, has been hurried so long away by imagination only, that judgment seems not to have ever been one of his natural faculties. This gentleman takes himself to be as much obliged to be merry, as the other to be grave. A thorough Critic is a sort of Puritan in the polite world. As an enthusiast in religion stumbles at

at the ordinary occurrences of life, if he cannot quote scripture examples on the occasion; so the Critic is never safe in his speech or writing, without he has, among the celebrated writers, an authority for the truth of his sentence. You will believe we had a very good time with these brethren, who were so far out of the dress of their native country, and so lost in its dialect, that they were as much strangers to themselves, as to their relation to each other. They took up the whole discourse; sometimes the Critic grew passionate, and when reprimanded by the Wit for any trip or hesitation in his voice, he would answer, "Mr. DRYDEN makes such a character, on such an occasion, break off in the same manner; so that the stop was according to nature, and as a man in a passion should do." The Wit, who is as far gone in letters as himself, seems to be at a loss to answer such an apology; and concludes only, that though his anger is justly vented, it wants fire in the utterance. If wit is to be measured by the circumstances of time and place, there is no man has generally so little of that talent as he who is a Wit by profession. What he says, instead of arising from the occasion, has an occasion invented to bring it in. Thus he is new for no other reason, but that he talks like nobody else; but has taken up a method of his own, without commerce of dialogue with other people. The lively JASPER DACTYLE* is one

* See Nº 3. and Nº 63.

of

of this character. He seems to have made a vow to be witty to his life's end. When you meet him, "What do you think," says he, "I have been entertaining myself with?" Then out comes a premeditated turn; to which it is to no purpose to answer, for he goes on in the same strain of thought he designed without your speaking. Therefore I have a general answer to all he can say; as, "Sure there never was any creature had so much fire!" SPONDEE, who is a Critic, is seldom out of this fine man's company. They have no manner of affection for each other, but keep together, like Novel and Oldfox in the PLAIN DEALER, because they shew each other. I know several men of sense who can be diverted with this couple; but I see no curiosity in the thing, except it be, that SPONDEE is dull, and seems dull; but DACTYLE is heavy with a brisk face. It must be owned also, that DACTYLE has almost vigour enough to be a coxcomb; but SPONDEE, by the lowness of his constitution, is only a blockhead.

St. JAMES's Coffee-house, June 15.

We have no particulars of moment since our last, except it be, that the copy of the following original letter came by the way of Ostend. It is said to have been found in the closet of Monsieur CHAMILLARD, the late secretary of state of France, since his disgrace. It was signed by
two

two brothers of the famous CAVALLIER*, who led the *Cevennois* †, and had a personal interview

* JAMES CAVALLIER was the celebrated leader of the French Protestants in the *Cevennes*, when these warlike but enthusiastic mountaineers opposed the tyranny of LEWIS XIV. and made a vigorous stand against the whole power of France, which for a long time laboured in vain to subdue them. It was in the heat of this gallant struggle to preserve themselves from religious slavery, that the first seeds of that wild fanaticism were sown, which afterwards grew up to such an amazing extravagance, and distinguished them by the name of FRENCH PROPHEETS, among the most extraordinary enthusiasts that are to be found in the history of human folly. P. See TAT. N^o II. and *note*.

CAVALLIER, who found in his latter days an hospitable asylum in Ireland, published, in 1726, "Memoirs" of the "wars of the Cevennes, under Col. CAVALLIER, in defence of the Protestants persecuted in that country, and of the peace concluded between him and the mareschal duke of VILLARS; of his conference with the king of France, after the conclusion of the peace; with letters relating thereto, from mareschal VILLARS, and CHAMILLARD, secretary of state." These "Memoirs," the author tells lord CARTERET, at that time lord-lieutenant of Ireland, "contain a melancholy and doleful relation of the sad effects arising from the ambition of tyrants, and the cruelty of bigots:

"——Quæque ipse miserrima vidi,
"Et quorum——"

"It was not my ambition," he adds, "to become an author. In regard to my own character, and to do justice to my fellow-sufferers, I have been obliged to draw up this short account of our common adventures and misfortunes." N.

† "The people of the Cevennes, who have long struggled with bigotry, superstition, and persecution, are part of the descendants of the Albigenes and Waldenses," so

view with the king, as well as a capitulation to lay down his arms, and leave the dominions of France. There are many other names to it; among whom is the chief of the family of the Marquis GUISCARD*. It is not yet known whether Monsieur CHAMILLARD had any real design to favour the Protestant interest, or only thought to place himself at the head of that people, to make himself considerable enough to oppose his enemies at court, and re-instate himself in power there.

“ so famous for their opposition to the errors and corruption
 “ of Popery, long before the reformation of LUTHER and
 “ CALVIN. They boast to have never been reformed, but
 “ to have held the same doctrine and worship since the time
 “ of the Apostles; and there are many circumstances that
 “ render this exceeding probable.” CAVALLIER, *Memoirs*,
 &c. Pref. p. xi. N.

* STEELE, or whoever was the author of this fictitious letter, to give the person it is ascribed to more dignity, violates the truth of history, and mentions the *chief* of the family, instead of a *cadet*, or younger brother, who was an Abbé, and, quitting France, used his pen and his sword against LEWIS XIV. He was employed in England, had preferment in the army, and a pension; but, being found an useless villain, he was soon discarded. He then endeavoured to make his peace with France, by acting here as a spy; but being detected, he was brought before the cabinet-council, to be examined, March 8, 1711. In the course of his examination he took an opportunity to stab Mr. HARLEY. Of the wounds given to this assassin on that occasion, he died in Newgate soon after. See the “Narrative of GUISCARD’s Examination,” by Mrs. MANLEY, from facts communicated to her by Dr. SWIFT, in the “*Supplement to Dr. SWIFT’s Works*,” vol. I. See also, “EXAMINER,” N^o 32.

“SIR,

“WE have read your majesty’s* letter to
 “the governors of your provinces, with in-
 “structions what sentiments to insinuate into
 “the minds of your people: but as you have
 “always acted upon the maxim, that we were
 “made for you, and not you for us; we must
 “take leave to assure your majesty, that we
 “are exactly of the contrary opinion; and
 “must desire you to send for your grandson
 “home, and acquaint him, that you now know,
 “by experience, absolute power is only a ver-
 “tigo in the brain of princes, which for a time
 “may quicken their motion, and double in
 “their diseased sight the instances of power
 “above them; but must end at last in their
 “fall and destruction. Your memorial speaks
 “you a good father of your family, but a very
 “ill one of your people. Your majesty is re-
 “duced to hear truth, when you are obliged
 “to speak it. There is no governing any but
 “savages by other methods than their own
 “consent, which you seem to acknowledge in
 “appealing to us for our opinion of your con-
 “duct in treating of peace. Had your people
 “been always of your council, the king of
 “France had never been reduced so low as to

“* Soon after the breaking off of the late treaty of peace,
 “the French king dispersed a letter throughout his domi-
 “nions, wherein he shews the reasons why he could not ra-
 “tify the preliminaries.” See TAT. N^o 28, *ad finem*.

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“acknow-

“ acknowledge his arms were fallen into con-
“ tempt. But since it is thus, we must ask,
“ how is any man of France, but they of the
“ house of Bourbon, the better, that Philip is
“ king of Spain? We have outgrown that
“ folly of placing our happiness in your majesty’s
“ being called, THE GREAT. Therefore
“ you and we are all alike* bankrupts, and
“ undone, let us not deceive ourselves; but
“ compound with our adversaries, and not talk
“ like their equals. Your majesty must for-
“ give us, that we cannot wish you success, or
“ lend you help; for, if you lose one battle
“ more, we may have a hand in the peace you
“ make; and doubt not but your majesty’s
“ faith in treaties will require the ratification
“ of the states of your kingdom. So we bid
“ you heartily farewell, until we have the ho-
“ nour to meet you assembled in parliament.
“ This happy expectation makes us willing to
“ wait the event of another campaign, from
“ whence we hope to be raised from the misery
“ of slaves to the privileges of subjects. We
“ are your majesty’s truly faithful and loyal
“ subjects, &c.”

* “ N. B. Monsieur Bernard and the chief bankers of
“ France became bankrupts about this time.” See N^o 3.
N^o 5. and N^o 9.

* * A new set of cuts for the Common Prayer, 55 in
number, far exceeding any done in Great Britain before.
Engraven by J. Sturt, price 3s.

N^o 30.