
N^o 31. Tuesday, June 21, 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 it’s theme.” P.

GRECIAN Coffee-house, June 18.

IN my dissertation against the Custom of single Combat*, it has been objected, that there is not learning, or much reading, shewn therein, which is the very life and soul of all treatises; for which reason, being always easy to receive admonitions and reform my errors, I thought fit to consult this learned board on the subject. Upon proposing some doubts, and desiring their assistance, a very hopeful young gentleman, my relation, who is to be called to the bar within a year and a half at farthest, told me, that he had ever since I first mentioned Duelling turned his head that way; and that he was principally moved thereto, because he designed

* See TATLER, N^o 25, and notes; N^o 26. N^o 28. N^o 29. N^o 38. and N^o 39.

to follow the circuits in the north of England and south of Scotland, and to reside mostly at his own estate at Landbadernawz* in Cardiganshire. The northern Britons and the southern Scots are a warm people, and the Welsh “a nation of gentlemen;” so that it behoved him to understand well the science of quarrelling. The young gentleman proceeded admirably well, and gave the board an account that he had read “Fitzherbert’s† Grand Abridgment,” and had found that Duelling is a very ancient part of the law‡; for when a man is sued, be it for his life or his land, the person that joins the issue, whether plaintiff or defendant, may put the trial upon the Duel. Further he argued, under favour of the court, that when the issue is joined by the Duel, in treason or other capital crimes, the parties accused and accuser must fight in their own proper persons: but if the dispute be for lands, you may hire a champion at Hockley in the Hole||, or any where else. This part of the law we had from the Saxons; and they had it, as also the trial by ordeal§, from the Laplanders. It is indeed agreed, said he, the southern and eastern nations

* There is no such place. Probably *Llandbadern Vawr* in Cardiganshire is intended.

† A book published under this title in 1516 by ANTHONY FITZHERBERT, one of the judges in the reign of Henry VIII. who died in 1538.

‡ See N^o 1; N^o 25.

|| See N^o 28, and *Note*.

§ On the several kinds of trial by ordeal, see VERSTEGAN’S “Decayed Intelligence revived.” *passim*.

never knew any thing of it; for though the ancient Romans would scold and call names filthily, yet there is not an example of a Challenge that ever passed among them.

His quoting the eastern nations put another gentleman in mind of an account he had from a boatswain of an East-Indiaman; which was, that a Chinese had tricked and bubbled him, and that when he came to demand satisfaction the next morning, and like a true tar of honour called him a son of a whore, lyar, dog, and other rough appellatives used by persons conversant with winds and waves; the Chinese, with great tranquility, desired him “not to
“come abroad fasting, nor put himself into a
“heat, for it would prejudice his health.” Thus the East knows nothing of this gallantry.

There sat at the left of the table a person of a venerable aspect, who asserted, that “half the
“impositions which are put upon these ages
“have been transmitted by writers who have
“given too great pomp and magnificence to
“the exploits of the ancient bear-garden, and
“made their gladiators, by fabulous tradition,
“greater than GORMAN* and others of Great-

* GORMAN, a noted bruiser and prize-fighter, mentioned in Lansdowne’s epilogue to the “Jew of Venice.”

“’Tis Shakespear’s play, and if these scenes miscarry,
“Let GORMAN take the stage, or *Lady Mary*.”

N. B. *Lady Mary* was a rope-dancer at May-Fair, much admired for her beauty, shape, and agility.

“Britain.”

“ Britain.” He informed the company, that
 “ he had searched authorities for what he said,
 “ and that a learned antiquary, *Humphrey*
 “ *Scarecrow*, Esquire, of Hockley in the Hole,
 “ recorder to the bear-garden, was then writing
 “ a discourse on the subject. It appears by
 “ the best accounts,” says this gentleman,
 “ that the high names which are used among
 “ us with so great veneration, were no other
 “ than stage-fighters, and worthies of the an-
 “ cient bear-garden. The renowned *HERCULES*
 “ always carried a quarterstaff, and was from
 “ thence called *Claviger**. A learned chronolo-
 “ gist is about proving what wood this staff was
 “ made of, whether oak, ash, or crab-tree†.
 “ The first trial of skill he ever performed was
 “ with one *Cacus*, a deer-stealer; the next was
 “ with *Typhonus*, a giant of forty feet four
 “ inches. Indeed it was unhappily recorded,
 “ that meeting at last with a sailor’s wife, she
 “ made his staff of prowess serve her own use,
 “ and dwindle away to a distaff: she clapped him
 “ on an old tar jacket of her husband; so that
 “ this great hero drooped like a scabbed sheep.
 “ Him his contemporary *THESEUS* succeeded
 “ in the bear-garden, which honour he held for
 “ many years. This grand Duellist went to hell,
 “ and was the only one of the sort that ever

* “ Club bearer.”

† “ It is to be noted, that when any part of this PAPER
 “ appears dull,” or contrary to the best authorities of history,
 “ there is always a design in it.” See N^o 38. *ad finem*.

“ came

“ came back again. As for ACHILLES and
“ HECTOR (as the ballads of those times men-
“ tion), they were pretty smart fellows; they
“ fought at sword and buckler; but the former
“ had much the better of it; his mother, who
“ was an oyster-woman, having got a black-
“ smith of Lemnos to make her son’s weapons.
“ There is a pair of trusty Trojans in a song
“ of VIRGIL that were famous for handling
“ their gauntlets, DARES and ENTELLUS; and
“ indeed it does appear, they fought no sham-
“ prize.”

The Roman bear-garden was abundantly more magnificent than any thing Greece could boast of; it flourished most under those delights of mankind, NERO and DOMITIAN*. At one time it is recorded, four hundred senators entered the list, and thought it an honour to be cudgelled and quarterstaffed. I observe the *Lanistæ* were the people chiefly employed, which makes me imagine our Bear-garden copied much after this, the butchers being the greatest men in it.

Thus far the glory and honour of the bear-garden stood secure, until fate, that irresistible ruler of sublunary things, in that universal ruin of arts, and politer learning, by those savage people the Goths and Vandals, destroyed and levelled it to the ground. Then fell the gran-

* SÜETONIUS mentions this in the life of NERO, ch. 12. See “*Script. Hist. Rom.*” tom. III. p. 13. ed. folio, Heidelberg. 1748.

deur and bravery of the Roman state, until at last the warlike genius (but accompanied with more courtesy) revived in the Christian world under those puissant champions, Saint GEORGE, Saint DENNIS, and other dignified heroes: one killed his dragon, another his lion, and were all afterwards canonized for it, having red letters * before them to illustrate their martial temper. The Spanish nation, it must be owned, were devoted to gallantry and chivalry above the rest of the world. What a great figure does that great name, Don QUIXOTE, make in history! How shines this glorious star in the western world! O renowned hero! O mirror of knighthood!

Thy brandish'd whinyard all the world defies,
And kills as sure as DEL TOBOSA's eyes.

I am forced to break off abruptly, being sent for in haste with my rule, to measure the degree of an affront, before the two gentlemen (who are now in their breeches and pumps † ready to engage behind Montague-house) have made a pass.

From my own Apartment, June 18.

It is an unreasonable objection, I find, against my labours, that my stock is not all my own, and, therefore, the kind reception I have met

* An allusion to the *rubrics* in the Roman missals.

† See N^o 25, *Note*.

with, is not so deserved as it ought to be. But I hope, though it be *never* so true that I am obliged to my friends for laying their cash in my hands, since I give it them again when they please; and leave them at their liberty to call it home, it will not hurt me with my gentle readers. Ask all the merchants who act upon consignments, where is the necessity (if they answer readily what their correspondents draw) of their being wealthy themselves? Ask the greatest bankers, if all the men they deal with were to draw at once, what would be the consequence*? But indeed a country friend has *writ* me a letter which gives me great mortification; wherein I find I am so far from expecting a supply from thence, that some have not heard of me, and the rest do not understand me: his epistle is as follows:

“DEAR COUSIN,

“I thought, when I left the town, to have
“raised your fame here, and helped you to

* Mr. Tickell, who was not very friendly to STEELE, makes the following acknowledgment, in his preface to his ed. of ADDISON's Works. “The public owes “ADDISON to STEELE.” To say nothing of the multitude of Papers of which STEELE was the *author*, many of which will very well bear a comparison with any other, either in respect of design, or execution; on Mr. Tickell's principle, the public owes to STEELE all the entertaining and instructive pieces of which he was the *editor*. The real authors of many of them are now unknown to us; and with the names of others, certainly STEELE himself was unacquainted. See a proof of this, in THEATRE, N^o 26; and TAT. N^o 205.

X 2

“support

“ support it by intelligence from hence ; but,
 “ alas ! they had never heard of the TATLER
 “ until I brought down a *Set* *. I lent them from
 “ house to house, but they asked me what they
 “ meant. I began to enlighten them, by tell-
 “ ing who and who were supposed to be in-
 “ tended by the characters drawn. I said, for
 “ instance, CHLOE † and CLARISSA are two
 “ eminent toasts. A gentleman, who keeps his
 “ greyhound and gun, and one would think
 “ might know better, told me, he supposed
 “ they were *Papishes*, for their names were not
 “ English. ‘ Then, said he, why do you call
 “ live people toasts ‡ ?’ I answered, ‘ That was a
 “ new name found out by the wits, to make a
 “ lady have the same effect, as burridge in the
 “ glass when a man is drinking. But, says I,
 “ Sir, I perceive this is to you all *bamboozling* ;
 “ why, you look as if you were || *Don Diego*’ d
 “ to the tune of a thousand pounds.’ All this
 “ good language was lost upon him : he only
 “ stared, though he is as good a scholar as any
 “ layman in the town, except the barber.
 “ Thus, cousin, you must be content with
 “ London for the center of your wealth and
 “ fame ; we have no relish for you. Wit

* See *Note* at the end of this letter, p. 310.

† See TAT. N^o 4. It appears from this passage, that the characters drawn in these Papers were supposed, at the time of their publication, to have been intended for persons then living.

‡ See TAT. N^o 24, and N^o 29.

|| See TAT. N^o 21, and *Notes*.

“ must describe its proper circumference, and
 “ not go beyond it, lest, like little boys when
 “ they straggle out of their own parish, it
 “ may wander to places where it is not known,
 “ and be lost. Since it is so, you must excuse
 “ me, that I am forced at a visit to sit silent,
 “ and only lay up what excellent things pass
 “ at such conversations.

“ This evening I was with a couple of young
 “ ladies; one of them has the character of the
 “ prettiest company, yet really I thought her
 “ but silly; the other, who talked a great deal
 “ less, I observed to have understanding. The
 “ lady, who is reckoned such a companion
 “ among her acquaintance, has only, with a
 “ very brisk air, a knack of saying the com-
 “ monest things: the other, with a sly serious
 “ one, says home things enough. The first,
 “ mistress Giddy, is very quick; but the se-
 “ cond, mistress Slim, fell into Giddy's own
 “ style, and was as good company as she. Giddy
 “ happens to drop her glove; Slim reaches it
 “ to her. ‘ Madam, says Giddy, I hope you
 “ will have a better office.’ Upon which Slim
 “ immediately repartees, and sits in her lap,
 “ and cries, ‘ Are you not sorry for my heavi-
 “ ness?’ The sly wench pleased me, to see how
 “ she hit her height of understanding so well.
 “ We sat down to dinner. Says Giddy,
 “ mighty prettily, ‘ Two hands in a dish,
 “ and one in a purse.’ Says Slim, ‘ Ay,
 “ madam, the more the merrier; but the

“fewer the better chear.’ I quickly took
 “the hint, and was as witty and talkative as
 “they. Says I,

“He that will not when he may,
 “When he will, he shall have nay.

“and so helped myself. Giddy turns about;
 “‘What, have you found your tongue?’ ‘Yes,
 “says I, it is manners to speak when I am
 “spoken to; but your greatest talkers are the
 “least doers, and the still sow eats up all the
 “broth.’ ‘Ha! ha! says Giddy, one would
 “think he had nothing in him, and do you
 “hear how he talks, when he pleases!’ I grew
 “immediately roguish and pleasant to a degree,
 “in the same strain. Slim, who knew how
 “good company we had been, cries, you will
 “certainly print this bright conversation*.”

It is so; and hereby you may see how small
 an appearance the prettiest things said in com-
 pany make, when in print.

“Whosoever can discover a surgeon’s appren-
 “tice who fell upon Mr. BICKERSTAFF’S mes-
 “senger, or (as the printers call him) *Devil*,
 “going to the press, and tore out of his hand
 “part of his essay against Duels, in the frag-

* If this letter is not by SWIFT, it is very much in the
 manner of his “Polite Conversation.” N.

The *Set* of the TATLER mentioned by the author of this
 letter, could hardly consist of thirty numbers, and seems
 only to have included twenty-four.

“ments

“ments of which were the words ‘you lie,’
 “and ‘man of honour,’ taken up at the
 “Temple-gate, and the words, ‘perhaps’—
 “‘may be not,’—‘by your leave, Sir,’—and
 “other terms of provocation, taken up at the
 “door of Young Man’s Coffee-house, shall
 “receive *Satisfaction* from Mr. MORPHEW,
 “besides a set of arguments to be spoken to
 “any man in a passion, which if the said
 “enraged man listens to, will prevent quar-
 “relling.

* * “Mr. BICKERSTAFF does hereby give
 “notice, that he has taken the two famous
 “Universities of this land under his imme-
 “diate care, and does hereby promise all
 “tutors and pupils, that he will hear what
 “can be said of each side between them, and
 “to correct them impartially, by placing them
 “in orders and classes in the learned world,
 “according to their merit.”

§†§ “Mr. BICKERSTAFF has received the
 “advices from Clay-Hill, which, with all in-
 “telligence from honest Mr. STURDY* and
 “others, shall have their place in our future
 “story.”

* See the following Paper Nº 32, Let. signed C. STURDY, which seems here to be mentioned as distinct from the Clay-Hill communication.