

N^o 47. Thursday, July 28, 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.

WHITE’S Chocolate-house, July 18:

MY friend Sir Thomas † has communicated to me his letters from Epfom of the twenty-fifth instant, which give, in general, a very good account of the present posture of affairs in that place; but that the tranquility and correspondence of the company begins to be interrupted by the arrival of Sir TAFFETY TRIPPET ‡, a fortune-hunter, whose follies are too gross to give diversion; and whose vanity

* This Paper is ascribed to STEELE, but its *pleasantries* and *oblique strokes* are *Addisonian*, and it might be one of the many publications for which STEELE patiently suffered himself to be *traduced* and *calumniated*.

† The waiter See N^o 16; N^o 26; and N^o 36.

‡ HENRY CROMWELL, Esq. who died in 1728, was the original of the character here delineated under the name of Sir TAFFETY TRIPPET.

is

is too stupid to let him be sensible that he is a public offence. If people will indulge a sple-
netic humour, it is impossible to be at ease,
when such creatures as are the scandal of our
species set up for gallantry and adventures.
It will be much more easy, therefore, to laugh
Sir TAFFETY into reason, than convert him
from his foppery by any serious contempt. I
knew a gentleman that made it a maxim to
open his doors, and ever run into the way of
bullies, to avoid their insolence. The rule
will hold as well with coxcombs: they are
never mortified, but when they see you receive
and despise them; otherwise they rest assured,
that it is your ignorance makes them out of
your good graces; or, that it is only want of
admittance prevents their being amiable where
they are shunned and avoided. But Sir TAFFETY is a fop of so sanguine a complexion, that
I fear it will be very hard for the fair-one he at
present pursues, to get rid of the chace, without
being so tired, as for her own ease, to fall into
the mouth of the mongrel she runs from. But
the history of Sir TAFFETY is as pleasant as his
character.

It happened that, when he first set up for a
fortune-hunter, he chose Tunbridge for the
scene of action, where were at that time two
sisters upon the same design. The knight be-
lieved of course the elder must be the better
prize; and consequently makes all his sail that
way.

way. People that want sense do always in an egregious manner want modesty, which made our hero triumph in making his amour as public as was possible. The adored lady was no less vain of his public addresses. An attorney with one cause is not half so restless as a woman with one Lover. Wherever they met, they talked to each other aloud, chose each other partner at balls, saluted at the most conspicuous parts of the service of the church, and practised in honour of each other, all the remarkable particularities which are usual for persons who admire one another, and are contemptible to the rest of the world. These two Lovers seemed as much made for each other as Adam and Eve, and all pronounced it a match of nature's own making; but the night before the nuptials, so universally approved, the younger sister envious of the good fortune even of her sister, who had been present at most of their interviews, and had an equal taste for the charms of a fop, as there are a set of women made for that order of men; the younger I say, unable to see so rich a prize pass by her, discovered to Sir TAFFETY, that a coquet air, much tongue, and three suits, was all the portion of his mistress. His love vanished that moment, *himself* and equipage the next morning. It is uncertain where the Lover has been ever since engaged; but certain it is, he has not appeared in his character as a follower of Love and Fortune until he arrived at

VOL. I.

H h

Epsom,

Epſom, where there is at preſent a young lady of youth, beauty, and fortune, who has alarmed all the vain and the impertinent to infeſt that quarter. At the head of this aſſembly, Sir TAFFETY ſhines in the brighteſt manner, with all the accompliſhments which uſually enſnare the heart of a woman; with this particular merit, which often is of great ſervice, that he is laughed at for her ſake. The friends of the fair-one are in much pain for the ſufferings ſhe goes through from the perfeverance of this hero; but they may be much more ſo from the danger of his ſucceeding, toward which they give a helping hand, if they diſſuade her with bitterneſs; for there is a fantaſtical generoſity in the ſex to approve creatures of the leaſt merit imaginable, when they ſee the imperfections of their admirers are become marks of deriſion for their ſakes; and there is nothing ſo frequent, as that he who was contemptible to a woman in her own judgment, has won her by being too violently oppoſed by others.

GRECIAN Coffee-houſe, July 27.

In the ſeveral capacities I bear, of Aſtrologer, Civilian, and Phyſician, I have with great application ſtudied the public emolument: to this end ſerve all my Lucubrations, Speculations, and whatever other labours I undertake, whether nocturnal or diurnal. On this motive am I induced to publiſh a never-failing medicine
for

for the spleen : my experience in this distemper came from a very remarkable cure on my ever worthy friend Tom Spindle, who, through excessive gaiety, had exhausted that natural stock of wit and spirits he had long been blessed with : he was sunk and flattened to the lowest degree imaginable, sitting whole hours over the "Book of Martyrs" and "Pilgrim's Progress;" his other contemplations never rising higher than the colour of his urine, or the regularity of his pulse. In this condition I found him, accompanied by the learned Dr. Drachm, and a good old nurse. Drachm had prescribed magazines of herbs, and mines of steel. I soon discovered the malady, and descanted on the nature of it, until I convinced both the patient and his nurse, that the spleen is not to be cured by medicine, but by poetry. APOLLO, the author of physic, shone with diffusive rays, the best of poets as well as of physicians ; and it is in this double capacity that I have made my way ; and have found sweet, easy, flowing numbers are oft superior to our noblest medicines. When the spirits are low, and nature sunk, the Muse, with sprightly and harmonious notes, gives an unexpected turn with a grain of poetry ; which I prepare without the use of Mercury. I have done wonders in this kind ; for the spleen is like the TARANTULA, the effects of whose malignant poison are to be prevented by no other remedy but the charms of

H h 2

Music :

Musick*: for you are to understand, that as some noxious animals carry antidotes for their own poisons, so there is something equally unaccountable in poetry; for though it is sometimes a disease, it is to be cured only by itself. Now I, knowing Tom Spindle's constitution, and that he is not only a pretty gentleman, but also a pretty poet, found the true cause of his distemper was a violent grief, that moved his affections too strongly: for during the late treaty of peace, he had writ a most excellent poem on that subject; and when he wanted but two lines in the last stanza for finishing the whole piece, there comes news that the French tyrant would not sign. Spindle in a few days took his bed, and had lain there still, had not I been sent for. I immediately told him, there was great probability the French would now sue to us for peace†. I saw immediately a new life in his eyes; and I knew that nothing could help him forward so well, as hearing verses which he would believe worse than his own.

* This is now acknowledged to be a vulgar error even in Apulia, where vagabond impostors earn still a wretched livelihood by practising on credulity. LIN. *Inf. ORD. VII. APTERA* Gen. 264. *Aranea* Sp. 35. *Tarantula*. *Tarentism* is just as harmless in *Apulia*, as at Rome, or any where else.

† This allusion to a Poem on the Peace, plainly shews that Mr. Thomas Tickell was the person here spoken of under the fictitious name of Tom Spindle, which indicates that he was at this time of a slender make. See an account of his Poem, SPECT. N° 523.

I read

I read him therefore, the Bruffels Postscript: after which I recited some heroic lines of my own, which operated so strongly on the *tympanum* of his ear, that I doubt not but I have kept out all other sounds for a fortnight; and have reason to hope, we shall see him abroad the day before his Poem.

This, you see, is a particular secret I have found out, *viz.* that you are not to chuse your Physician for his knowledge in your distemper, but for having it himself. Therefore, I am at hand for all maladies arising from poetical vapours, beyond which I never pretend. For being called the other day to one in love, I took indeed their three guineas, and gave them my advice, which was to send for ÆSCULAPIUS*. ÆSCULAPIUS, as soon as he saw the patient, cries out, "It is Love! it is Love! "Oh! the unequal pulse! These are the "symptoms a Lover feels; such sighs, such "pangs, attend the uneasy mind; nor can our "art, or all our boasted skill, avail.—Yet, O "fair! for thee"—Thus the sage ran on, and owned the passion which he pitied, as well as that he felt a greater pain than ever he cured: after which he concluded, "All I can advise, "is Marriage: charms and beauty will give "new life and vigour, and turn the course of "nature to its better prospect." This is the new way; and thus ÆSCULAPIUS has left his

* DR. RADCLIFFE. See TATLER, N^o 44, and Notes.

beloved powders, and writes a *recipe* for a wife at sixty. In short, my friend followed the prescription, and married youth and beauty in its perfect bloom.

“Supine in Sylvia’s snowy arms he lies,
“And all the busy cares of life defies:
“Each happy hour is fill’d with fresh delight,
“While peace the day, and pleasure crowns the
“night.”

From my own Apartment, July 27.

Tragical passion was the subject of the discourse where I last visited this evening: and a gentleman who knows that I am at present writing a very deep tragedy, directed his discourse in a particular manner to me. “It is
“the common fault,” said he, “of you gentlemen who write in the buskin style, that you
“give us rather the sentiments of such who
“behold tragical events, than of such who bear
“a part in them themselves. I would advise all
“who pretend this way, to read SHAKSPEARE
“with care; and they will soon be deterred
“from putting forth what is usually called
“tragedy. The way of common writers in
“this kind is rather the description than the
“expression of sorrow. There is no medium
“in these attempts, and you must go to the
“very bottom of the heart, or it is all mere
“language; and the writer of such lines is no
“more a poet, than a man is a physician for
“knowing the names of distempers, without
“the

“ the causes of them *. Men of sense are professed enemies to all such empty labours ;
 “ for he who pretends to be sorrowful, and is
 “ not, is a wretch yet more contemptible than
 “ he who pretends to be merry, and is not.
 “ Such a tragedian is only maudlin drunk.”

The gentleman went on with much warmth ;
 but all he could say had little effect upon me :
 but when I came hither, I so far observed his
 counsel, that I looked into SHAKSPEARE.
 The tragedy I dipped into was “ Henry the
 “ Fourth.” In the scene where Morton is
 preparing to tell Northumberland of his son’s
 death, the old man does not give him time to
 speak, but says,

“ The whiteness of thy cheeks
 “ Is apter than thy tongue to tell thy errand ;
 “ Even such a man, so faint, so spiritless,
 “ So dull, so dead in look, so woe-be-gone,
 “ Drew Priam’s curtain at the dead of night,
 “ And would have told him half his Troy was
 “ burnt ;
 “ But Priam found the fire, ere he his tongue,
 “ And I my Percy’s death, ere thou report’st it.”

The image in this place is wonderfully
 noble and great ; yet this man in all this is
 but rising towards his great affliction, and
 is still enough himself, as you see, to make a

* An allusion to Dr. RADCLIFFE, who, though very
 successful in his practice, despised and ridiculed the *theory*
 of PHYSIC.

simile. But when he is certain of his son's death, he is lost to all patience, and gives up all the regards of this life; and since the last of evils is fallen upon him, he calls for it upon all the world.

“ Now let not Nature's hand
 “ Keep the wild flood confin'd; let Order die,
 “ And let the World no longer be a Stage,
 “ To feed contention in a ling'ring Act;
 “ But let one Spirit of the first-born CAIN
 “ Reign in all bosoms, that each heart being set
 “ On bloody courses, the wide Scene may end,
 “ And Darkness be the burier of the dead.”

Reading but this one scene has convinced me, that he, who describes the concern of great men, must have a soul as noble, and as susceptible of high thoughts, as they whom he represents: I shall therefore lay by my drama for some time, and turn my thoughts to cares and griefs, somewhat below that of heroes, but no less moving. A misfortune, proper for me to take notice of, has too lately happened: the disconsolate Maria* has three days kept her chamber for the loss of the beauteous Fidelia, her lap-dog. Lesbia herself did not shed more tears for her sparrow. What makes her the more concerned, is, that we know not whether Fidelia was killed or stolen; but she was seen

* The author's condolence probably on a melancholy accident of this kind in his own family. His wife's name was Mary.

in the parlour-window when the train-bands went by, and never since. Whoever gives notice of her, dead or alive, shall be rewarded with a kifs of her lady.

N^o 48. Saturday, July 30, 1709.

S T E E L E.

— *Virtutem verba putant, ut
Lucum ligna* —

HOR. Ep. vi. 31.

“ They look on virtue as an empty name.”

From my own Apartment, July 29.

THIS day I obliged PACOLET to entertain me with matters which regarded persons of his own character and occupation. We chose to take our walk on Tower-hill; and as we were coming from thence, in order to stroll as far as Garraway's *, I observed two men, who had but just landed, coming from the water-side. I thought there was something uncommon in their mien and aspect; but

* GARRAWAY kept a coffee-house at that time, opposite to the Royal Exchange, probably in the place where there is now a coffee-house well known by the same name.

though