

possible, both to my duty and my inclination. I am yours, &c.

R. B.*

C.

No. 28.] Monday, April 2, 1711.]

—Neque semper arcum

Tendit Apollo.

Hor. Lib. 2. Od. x. 19.

Nor does Apollo always bend his bow.

I SHALL here present my reader with a letter from a projector, concerning a new office, which he thinks may very much contribute to the embellishment of the city, and to the driving barbarity out of our streets. I consider it as a satire upon projectors in general, and a lively picture of the whole art of modern criticism.

'SIR,—Observing that you have thoughts of creating certain officers under you, for the inspection of several petty enormities which you yourself cannot attend to; and finding daily absurdities hung out upon the sign-posts of this city, to the great scandal of foreigners, as well as those of our own country, who are curious spectators of the same; I do humbly propose that you will be pleased to make me your superintendent of all such figures and devices, as are or shall be made use of on this occasion; with full powers to rectify or expunge whatever I shall find irregular or defective. For want of such an officer, there is nothing like sound literature and good sense to be met with in those objects that are every where thrusting themselves out to the eye, and endeavouring to become visible. Our streets are filled with blue boars, black swans, and red lions; not to mention flying pigs, and hogs in armour, with many other creatures more extraordinary than any in the deserts of Africa. Strange! that one who has all the birds and beasts in nature to choose out of, should live at the sign of an *Ens Rationis*!

'My first task therefore should be, like that of Hercules, to clear the city from monsters. In the second place, I would forbid that creatures of jarring and incongruous natures should be joined together in the same sign; such as the bell and the neat's tongue, the dog and the gridiron. The fox and the goose may be supposed to have met, but what has the fox and the seven stars to do together? And when did the lamb and dolphin ever meet, except upon a sign post? As for the cat and fiddle, there is a conceit in it; and therefore I do not intend that any thing I have here said should affect it. I must however observe to you upon this subject, that it is usual for a young tradesman, at his first setting up, to add to his own sign that of the master whom he served; as the husband, after marriage, gives a place to his mistress's arms in his own coat. This I take to have given rise to many of those absurdities which are committed over our heads; and, as I am informed, first occasioned the three

nuns and a hare, which we see so frequently joined together. I would therefore establish certain rules, for the determining how far one tradesman may give the sign of another, and in what cases he may be allowed to quarter it with his own.

'In the third place, I would enjoin every shop to make use of a sign which bears some affinity to the wares in which it deals. What can be more inconsistent, than to see a bawd at the sign of the angel, or a tailor at the lion? A cook should not live at the boot, nor a shoemaker at the roasted pig; and yet, for want of this regulation, I have seen a goat set up before the door of a perfumer, and the French king's head at a sword-cutter's.

'An ingenious foreigner observes, that several of those gentlemen who value themselves upon their families, and overlook such as are bred to trade, bear the tools of their forefathers in their coats of arms. I will not examine how true this is in fact. But though it may not be necessary for posterity thus to set up the sign of their forefathers, I think it highly proper for those who actually profess the trade to show some such marks of it before their doors.

'When the name gives an occasion for an ingenious sign-post, I would likewise advise the owner to take that opportunity of letting the world know who he is. It would have been ridiculous for the ingenious Mrs. Salmon to have lived at the sign of the trout; for which reason she has erected before her house the figure of the fish that is her namesake. Mr. Bell has likewise distinguished himself by a device of the same nature: and here, sir, I must beg leave to observe to you, that this particular figure of a bell has given occasion to several pieces of wit in this kind. A man of your reading must know, that Abel Drugger gained great applause by it in the time of Ben Jonson. Our apocryphal heathen god* is also represented by this figure; which, in conjunction with the dragon, makes a very handsome picture in several of our streets. As for the bell-savage, which is the sign of a savage man standing by a bell, I was formerly very much puzzled upon the conceit of it, till I accidentally fell into the reading of an old romance translated out of the French; which gives an account of a very beautiful woman who was found in a wilderness, and is called in the French *La belle Sauvage*; and is every where translated by our countrymen the bell-savage. This piece of philosophy will, I hope, convince you that I have made sign-posts my study, and consequently qualified myself for the employment which I solicit at your hands. But before I conclude my letter, I must communicate to you another remark, which I have made upon the subject with which I am now entertaining you, namely, that I can give a shrewd guess at the hu-

* St. George.

mour of the inhabitant by the sign that hangs before his door. A surly choleric fellow generally makes choice of a bear; as men of milder dispositions frequently live at the lamb. Seeing a punch-bowl painted upon a sign near Charing-cross, and very curiously garnished, with a couple of angels, hovering over it, and squeezing a lemon into it, I had the curiosity to ask after the master of the house, and found, upon inquiry, as I had guessed by the little *agremens* upon his sign, that he was a Frenchman. I know, sir, it is not requisite for me to enlarge upon these hints to a gentleman of your great abilities; so humbly recommending myself to your favour and patronage,

‘I remain, &c.’

I shall add to the foregoing letter another, which came to me by the same penny-post.

From my own apartment

‘HONOURED SIR, near Charing-cross.

‘Having heard that this nation is a great encourager of ingenuity, I have brought with me a rope-dancer that was caught in one of the woods belonging to the great Mogul. He is by birth a monkey; but swings upon a rope, takes a pipe of tobacco, and drinks a glass of ale, like any reasonable creature. He gives great satisfaction to the quality; and if they will make a subscription for him, I will send for a brother of his out of Holland, that is a very good tumbler; and also for another of the same family whom I design for my merry-Andrew, as being an excellent mimic, and the greatest droll in the country where he now is. I hope to have this entertainment in readiness for the next winter; and doubt not but it will please more than the opera, or puppet-show. I will not say that a monkey is a better man than some of the opera heroes; but certainly he is a better representative of a man, than the most artificial composition of wood and wire. If you will be pleased to give me a good word in your paper, you shall be every night a spectator at my show for nothing.

C.

I am, &c.’

No. 29.] Tuesday, April 3, 1711.

—Sermo lingua concinnus utraque
Suauior: ut Chio nota si commista Falerni est.
Hor. Lib. 1. Sat. x. 23.

Both tongues united sweeter sounds produce,
Like Chian mix'd with the Falernian juice.

THERE is nothing that has more startled our English audience, than the Italian *recitativo* at its first entrance upon the stage. People were wonderfully surprised to hear generals singing the word of command, and ladies delivering messages in music. Our countrymen could not forbear laughing when they heard a lover chanting out a billet-doux, and even the superscription of a letter set to a tune. The famous blunder in an old play of ‘Enter a king and two fiddlers solus,’ was now no longer an ab-

surdity, when it was impossible for a hero in a desert, or a princess in her closet, to speak any thing unaccompanied with musical instruments.

But however this Italian method of acting in recitativo might appear at first hearing, I cannot but think it much more just than that which prevailed in our English opera before this innovation: the transition from an air to recitativo music being more natural, than the passing from a song to plain and ordinary speaking, which was the common method in Purcell’s operas.

The only fault I find in our present practice, is the making use of the Italian recitativo with English words.

To go to the bottom of this matter, I must observe, that the tone, or (as the French call it) the accent of every nation in their ordinary speech, is altogether different from that of any other people; as we may see even in the Welch and Scotch, who border so near upon us. By the tone or accent, I do not mean the pronunciation of each particular word, but the sound of the whole sentence. Thus it is very common for an English gentleman, when he hears a French tragedy, to complain that the actors all of them speak in a tone: and therefore he very wisely prefers his own countrymen, not considering that a foreigner complains of the same tone in an English actor.

For this reason, the recitativo music, in every language, should be as different as the tone or accent of each language; for otherwise, what may properly express a passion in one language will not do it in another. Every one who has been long in Italy knows very well, that the cadences in the *recitativo* bear a remote affinity to the tone of their voices in ordinary conversation, or, to speak more properly, are only the accents of their language made more musical and tuneful.

Thus the notes of interrogation, or admiration, in the Italian music (if one may so call them) which resemble their accents in discourse on such occasions, are not unlike the ordinary tones of an English voice when we are angry; insomuch that I have often seen our audiences extremely mistaken, as to what has been doing upon the stage, and expecting to see the hero knock down his messenger, when he has been asking him a question; or fancying that he quarrels with his friend, when he only bids him good-morrow.

For this reason the Italian artists cannot agree with our English musicians in admiring Purcell’s compositions, and thinking his tunes so wonderfully adapted to his words; because both nations do not always express the same passions by the same sounds.

I am therefore humbly of opinion, that an English composer should not follow the Italian recitativo too servilely, but make use of many gentle deviations from it, in compliance with his own native language. He may copy out of it all the lulling soft-

ness and 'dying falls' (as Shakspeare calls them,) but should still remember that he ought to accommodate himself to an English audience: and by humouring the tone of our voices in ordinary conversation, have the same regard to the accent of his own language, as those persons had to theirs whom he professes to imitate. It is observed, that several of the singing birds of our own country learn to sweeten their voices, and mellow the harshness of their natural notes, by practising under those that come from warmer climates. In the same manner, I would allow the Italian opera to lend our English music as much as may grace and soften it, but never entirely to annihilate and destroy it. Let the infusion be as strong as you please, but still let the subject-matter of it be English.

A composer should fit his music to the genius of the people, and consider that the delicacy of hearing, and taste of harmony, has been formed upon those sounds which every country abounds with. In short, that music is of a relative nature, and what is harmony to one ear, may be dissonance to another.

The same observation which I have made upon the recitative part of music may be applied to all our songs and airs in general.

Signior Baptist Lully acted like a man of sense in this particular. He found the French music extremely defective, and very often barbarous. However, knowing the genius of the people, the humour of their language, and the prejudiced ears he had to deal with, he did not pretend to extirpate the French music, and plant the Italian in its stead; but only to cultivate and civilize it with innumerable graces and modulations which he borrowed from the Italians. By this means the French music is now perfect in its kind; and when you say it is not so good as the Italian, you only mean that it does not please you so well; for there is scarce a Frenchman who would not wonder to hear you give the Italian such a preference. The music of the French is indeed very properly adapted to their pronunciation and accent, as their whole opera wonderfully favours the genius of such a gay airy people. The chorus in which that opera abounds, gives the parterre frequent opportunities of joining in concert with the stage. This inclination of the audience to sing along with the actors, so prevails with them, that I have sometimes known the performer on the stage to do no more in a celebrated song, than the clerk of a parish church, who serves only to raise the psalm, and is afterwards drowned in the music of the congregation. Every actor that comes on the stage is a beau. The queens and heroines are so painted, that they appear as ruddy and cherry-checked as milk-maids. The shepherds are all embroidered, and acquit themselves in a ball better than our English dancing-masters. I have seen a couple of rivers appear in red stockings;

and Alpheus, instead of having his head covered with sedge and bull-rushes, making love in a full-bottomed periwig and a plume of feathers; but with a voice so full of shakes and quavers, that I should have thought the murmurs of a country brook the much more agreeable music.

I remember the last opera I saw in that merry nation was the Rape of Proserpine, where Pluto, to make the more tempting figure, puts himself in a French equipage, and brings Ascalaphus along with him as his valet de chambre. This is what we call folly and impertinence: but what the French look upon as gay and polite.

I shall add no more to what I have here offered, than that music, architecture, and painting, as well as poetry and oratory, are to deduce their laws and rules from the general sense and taste of mankind, and not from the principles of those arts themselves; or, in other words, the taste is not to conform to the art, but the art to the taste. Music is not designed to please only chromatic ears, but all that is capable of distinguishing harsh from disagreeable notes. A man of an ordinary ear is a judge whether a passion is expressed in proper sounds, and whether the melody of those sounds be more or less pleasing. C.

No. 30.] Wednesday, April 4, 1711.

Si Minnermus uti censet, sine amore jocisque

Nil est jucundum; vivas in amore jocisque.

Hor. Lib. I. Ep. vi. 65.

If nothing, as Minnermus strives to prove,
Can e'er be pleasant without mirth and love,
Then live in mirth and love, thy sports pursue.

Creech.

ONE common calamity makes men extremely affect each other, though they differ in every other particular. The passion of love is the most general concern among men; and I am glad to hear by my last advices from Oxford, that there are a set of sighers in that university, who have erected themselves into a society in honour of that tender passion. These gentlemen are of that sort of inamoratos, who are not so very much lost to common sense, but that they understand the folly they are guilty of; and for that reason separate themselves from all other company, because they will enjoy the pleasure of talking incoherently, without being ridiculous to any but each other. When a man comes into the club, he is not obliged to make any introduction to his discourse, but at once, as he is seating himself in his chair, speaks in the thread of his own thoughts, 'She gave me a very obliging glance, she never looked so well in her life as this evening;' or the like reflection without regard to any other member of the society; for in this assembly they do not meet to talk to each other; but every man claims the full liberty of talking to himself. Instead of snuff-boxes and canes, which are the usual helps to dis-

course with other young fellows, these have each some piece of riband, a broken fan, or an old girdle, which they play with while they talk of the fair person remembered by each respective token. According to the representation of the matter from my letters, the company appear like so many players rehearsing behind the scenes; one is sighing and lamenting his destiny in beseeching terms, another declaiming he will break his chain, and another, in dumb-show, striving to express his passion by his gesture. It is very ordinary in the assembly for one of a sudden to rise and make a discourse concerning his passion in general, and describe the temper of his mind in such a manner, as that the whole company shall join in the description, and feel the force of it. In this case, if any man has declared the violence of his flame in more pathetic terms, he is made president for that night, out of respect to his superior passion.

We had some years ago in this town a set of people who met and dressed like lovers, and were distinguished by the name of the Fringe-glove club; but they were persons of such moderate intellects, even before they were impaired by their passion, that their irregularities could not furnish sufficient variety of folly to afford daily new impertinences; by which means that institution dropped. These fellows could express their passion in nothing but their dress; but the Oxonians are fantastical now they are lovers, in proportion to their learning and understanding before they became such. The thoughts of the ancient poets on this agreeable frenzy are translated in honour of some modern beauty; and Chloris is won to-day by the same compliment that was made to Lesbia a thousand years ago. But as far as I can learn, the patron of the club is the renowned Don Quixote. The adventures of that gentle knight are frequently mentioned in the society under the colour of laughing at the passion and themselves: but at the same time, though they are sensible of the extravagancies of that unhappy warrior, they do not observe, that to turn all the reading of the best and wisest writings into rhapsodies of love, is a frenzy no less diverting than that of the aforesaid accomplished Spaniard. A gentleman who, I hope, will continue his correspondence, is lately admitted into the fraternity, and sent me the following letter:

‘SIR—Since I find you take notice of clubs, I beg leave to give you an account of one in Oxford, which you have nowhere mentioned, and perhaps never heard of. We distinguish ourselves by the title of the Amorous Club, are all votaries of Cupid, and admirers of the fair sex. The reason that we are so little known in the world, is the secrecy which we are obliged to live under in the university. Our constitution

runs counter to that of the place wherein we live: for in love there are no doctors, and we all profess so high a passion, that we admit of no graduates in it. Our presidentship is bestowed according to the dignity of the passion; our number is unlimited; and our statutes are like those of the Druids, recorded in our own breasts only, and explained by the majority of the company. A mistress, and a poem in her praise, will introduce any candidate. Without the latter no one can be admitted; for he that is not in love enough to rhyme, is unqualified for our society. To speak disrespectfully of any woman is expulsion from our gentle society. As we are at present all of us gown-men, instead of duelling when we are rivals, we drink together the health of our mistress. The manner of doing this sometimes indeed creates debates; on such occasions we have recourse to the rules of love among the ancients.

“*Nevia sex cyathis, septem Justina bibatur.*”

Mart. Epig. l. 72.

“Six cups to Nevia, to Justina seven.”

This method of a glass to every letter of her name, occasioned the other night a dispute of some warmth. A young student who is in love with Mrs. Elizabeth Dimple, was so unreasonable as to begin her health under the name of *Elizabetha*; which so exasperated the club, that by common consent we retrenched it to Betty. We look upon a man as no company that does not sigh five times in a quarter of an hour; and look upon a member as very absurd, that is so much himself as to make a direct answer to a question. In fine, the whole assembly is made up of absent men, that is, of such persons as have lost their locality, and whose minds and bodies never keep company with one another. As I am an unfortunate member of this distracted society, you cannot expect a very regular account of it; for which reason I hope you will pardon me that I so abruptly subscribe myself, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

T. L.

‘I forgot to tell you, that Albina, who has six votaries in this club, is one of your readers.’

R.

No. 31.] Thursday, April 5, 1711.

Sit mihi fas audita loqui — Virg. Æn. vi. 266.

What I have heard, permit me to relate.

LAST night, upon my going into a coffee-house not far from the Haymarket theatre, I diverted myself for above half an hour with overhearing the discourse of one, who, by the shabbiness of his dress, the extravagance of his conceptions, and the hurry of his speech, I discovered to be of that species who are generally distinguished by the title of Projectors. This gentleman, for I found he was treated as such by his audience, was entertaining a whole table

of listeners with the project of an opera, which he told us had not cost him above two or three mornings in the contrivance, and which he was ready to put in execution, provided he might find his account in it. He said that he had observed the great trouble and inconvenience which ladies were at, in travelling up and down to the several shows that are exhibited in different quarters of the town. The dancing monkeys are in one place; the puppet-show in another; the opera in a third; not to mention the lions, that are almost a whole day's journey from the politer part of the town. By this means people of figure are forced to lose half the winter, after their coming to town, before they have seen all the strange sights about it. In order to remedy this great inconvenience, our projector drew out of his pocket the scheme of an opera, entitled 'The Expedition of Alexander the Great,' in which he had disposed all the remarkable shows about town, among the scenes and decorations of his piece. The thought, he confessed, was not originally his own, but that he had taken the hint of it from several performances which he had seen upon our stage: in one of which there was a raree-show; in another a ladder-dance; and in others a posture-man, a moving picture, with many curiosities of the like nature.

This Expedition of Alexander opens with his consulting the oracle at Delphos, in which the dumb conjuror, who has been visited by so many persons of quality of late years, is to be introduced as telling his fortune. At the same time Clinch of Barnet is represented in another corner of the temple, as ringing the bells of Delphos, for joy of his arrival. The tent of Darius is to be peopled by the ingenious Mrs. Salmon, where Alexander is to fall in love with a piece of wax-work that represents the beautiful Statira. When Alexander comes into that country, in which Quintus Curtius tells us the dogs were so exceeding fierce, that they would not loose their hold, though they were cut to pieces limb by limb, and that they would hang upon their prey by their teeth when they had nothing but a mouth left, there is to be a scene of Hockley-in-the-Hole, in which is to be represented all the diversions of that place, the bull-baiting only excepted, which cannot possibly be exhibited in the theatre, by reason of the lowness of the roof. The several woods in Asia, which Alexander must be supposed to pass through, will give the audience a sight of monkeys dancing upon-ropes, with many other pleasantries of that ludicrous species. At the same time, if there chance to be any strange animals in town, whether birds or beasts, they may be either let loose among the woods, or driven across the stage by some of the country people of Asia. In the last great battle, Pinkethman is to personate King Porus upon an

elephant, and is to be encountered by Powell, representing Alexander the Great, upon a dromedary, which nevertheless Mr. Powell is desired to call by the name of Bucephalus. Upon the close of this great decisive battle, when the two kings are thoroughly reconciled, to show the mutual friendship and good correspondence that reigns between them, they both of them go together to a puppet-show, in which the ingenious Mr. Powell, junior, may have an opportunity of displaying his whole art of machinery, for the diversion of the two monarchs. Some at the table urged, that a puppet-show was not a suitable entertainment for Alexander the Great; and that it might be introduced more properly, if we suppose the conqueror touched upon that part of India which is said to be inhabited by the pygmies. But this objection was looked upon as frivolous, and the proposal immediately overruled. Our projector further added, that after the reconciliation of these two kings, they might invite one another to dinner, and either of them entertain his guest with the German artist, Mr. Pinkethman's heathen gods, or any of the like diversions, which shall then chance to be in vogue.

This project was received with very great applause by the whole table. Upon which the undertaker told us, that he had not yet communicated to us above half his design; for that Alexander being a Greek, it was his intention that the whole opera should be acted in that language, which was a tongue he was sure would wonderfully please the ladies, especially when it was a little raised and rounded by the Ionic dialect; and could not but be acceptable to the whole audience, because there are fewer of them who understand Greek than Italian. The only difficulty that remained was how to get performers, unless we could persuade some gentlemen of the universities to learn to sing, in order to qualify themselves for the stage; but this objection soon vanished, when the projector informed us that the Greeks were at present the only musicians in the Turkish empire, and that it would be very easy for our factory at Smyrna to furnish us every year with a colony of musicians, by the opportunity of the Turkey fleet; besides, says he, if we want any single voice for any lower part in the opera, Lawrence can learn to speak Greek, as well as he does Italian, in a fortnight's time.

The projector having thus settled matters to the good-liking of all that heard him, he left his seat at the table, and planted himself before the fire, where I had unluckily taken my stand for the convenience of overhearing what he said. Whether he had observed me to be more attentive than ordinary, I cannot tell, but he had not stood by me above a quarter of a minute, but he turned short upon me on a sudden, and catching me by a button of

my coat, attacked me very abruptly after the following manner. 'Besides, Sir, I have heard of a very extraordinary genius for music that lives in Switzerland, who has so strong a spring in his fingers, that he can make the board of an organ sound like a drum, and if I could but procure a subscription of about ten thousand pounds every winter, I would undertake to fetch him over, and oblige him by articles to set every thing that should be sung upon the English stage.' After this he looked full in my face, expecting I would make an answer, when, by good luck, a gentleman that had entered the coffee-house since the projector applied himself to me, hearing him talk of his Swiss compositions, cried out in a kind of laugh, 'Is our music then to receive further improvements from Switzerland!' This alarmed the projector, who immediately let go my button, and turned about to answer him. I took the opportunity of the diversion which seemed to be made in favour of me, and laying down my penny upon the bar, retired with some precipitation.

C.

No. 32.] *Friday, April 6, 1711.*

Nili illi larva aut tragicis opus esse cothurnis.

Hor. Lib. 1. Sat. v. 64.

*He wants no tragic vizard to increase
His natural deformity of face.*

THE late discourse concerning the statutes of the Ugly club, having been so well received at Oxford, that contrary to the strict rules of the society, they have been so partial as to take my own testimonial, and admit me into that select body; I could not restrain the vanity of publishing to the world the honour which is done me. It is no small satisfaction that I have given occasion for the President's showing both his invention and reading to such advantage as my correspondent reports he did: but it is not to be doubted there were many very proper hums and pauses in his harangue, which lose their ugliness in the narration, and which my correspondent (begging his pardon) has no very good talent at representing. I very much approve of the contempt the society has of beauty. Nothing ought to be laudable in a man, in which his will is not concerned; therefore our society can follow nature, and where she has thought fit, as it were, to mock herself, we can do so too, and be merry upon the occasion.

'MR. SPECTATOR,—Your making public the late trouble I gave you, you will find to have been the occasion of this. Who should I meet at the coffee-house door the other night, but my old friend Mr. President! I saw somewhat had pleased him; and as soon as he had cast his eye upon me, "Oho, doctor, rare news from London," says he; "the Spectator has made honourable mention of the club (man,) and published to the

world his sincere desire to be a member, with a commendatory description of his phiz; and though our constitution has made no particular provision for short faces, yet his being an extraordinary case, I believe we shall find a hole for him to creep in at; for I assure you he is not against the canon; and if his sides are as compact as his joles, he need not disguise himself to make one of us." I presently called for the paper, to see how you looked in print; and after we had regaled ourselves awhile upon the pleasant image of our proselyte, Mr. President told me I should be his stranger at the next night's club; where we were no sooner come, and pipes brought, but Mr. President began a harangue upon your introduction to my epistle, setting forth with no less volubility of speech, than strength of reason, "That a speculation of this nature was what had been long and much wanted; and that he doubted not but it would be of inestimable value to the public, in reconciling even of bodies and souls; in composing and quieting the minds of men under all corporal redundancies, deficiencies, and irregularities whatsoever; and making every one sit down content in his own carcass, though it were not perhaps so mathematically put together as he could wish." And again, "How that for want of a due consideration of what you first advance, viz. That our faces are not of our own choosing, people had been transported beyond all good breeding, and hurried themselves into unaccountable and fatal extravagancies; as how many impartial looking-glasses had been censured and calumniated, nay, and sometimes shivered into ten thousand splinters, only for a fair representation of the truth? How many head-strings and garters had been made accessory, and actually forfeited, only because folks must needs quarrel with their own shadows? And who," continues he, "but is deeply sensible, that one great source of the uneasiness and misery of human life, especially amongst those of distinction, arises from nothing in the world else, but too severe a contemplation of an indefeasible contexture of our external parts, or certain natural and invincible dispositions to be fat or lean? when a little more of Mr. Spectator's philosophy would take off all this. In the mean time let them observe, that there is not one of their grievances of this sort, but perhaps, in some ages of the world, has been highly in vogue, and may be so again; nay, in some country or other, ten to one, is so at this day. My Lady Ample is the most miserable woman in the world, purely of her own making. She even grudges herself meat and drink, for fear she should thrive by them; and is constantly crying out, "In a quarter of a year more I shall be quite out of all manner of shape!" Now the lady's misfortune seems to be only this, that she is planted in a wrong soil; for go but to the other side of the water, it is a jest at Haer-

lem to talk of a shape under eighteen stone. These wise traders regulate their beauties as they do their butter, by the pound; and Miss Cross, when she first arrived in the Low Countries, was not computed to be so handsome as Madam Van Brisket by near half a ton. On the other hand, there is Squire Lath, a proper gentleman of fifteen hundred pounds per annum, as well as of an unblamable life and conversation; yet would I not be the squire for half his estate; for if it was as much more, he would freely part with it all for a pair of legs to his mind. Whereas in the reign of our first Edward, of glorious memory, nothing more modish than a brace of your fine taper supporters; and his majesty, without an inch of calf, managed affairs in peace or war as laudably as the bravest and most politic of his ancestors; and was as terrible to his neighbours under the royal name of Longshanks, as Cœur de Lion to the Saracens before him. If we look further back into history, we shall find that Alexander the Great wore his head a little over the left shoulder, and then not a soul stirred out till he had adjusted his neck-bone; the whole nobility addressed the prince and each other obliquely, and all matters of importance were concerted and carried on in the Macedonian court, with their polls on one side. For about the first century, nothing made more noise in the world than Roman noses, and then not a word of them till they revived again in eighty-eight.* Nor is it so very long since Richard the Third set up half the backs of the nation; and high shoulders, as well as high noses, were the top of the fashion. But to come to ourselves, gentlemen, though I find by my quinquennial observations, that we shall never get ladies enough to make a party in our own country, yet might we meet with better success among some of our allies. And what think you if our board sat for a Dutch piece? Truly I am of opinion, that as odd as we appear in flesh and blood, we should be no such strange things in mezzotinto. But this project may rest till our number is complete; and this being our election night, give me leave to propose Mr. Spectator. You see his inclinations, and perhaps we may not have his fellow."

"I found most of them (as is usual in all such cases) were prepared; but one of the seniors (whom by the by Mr. President had taken all this pains to bring over) sat still, and cocking his chin, which seemed only to be levelled at his nose, very gravely declared, "That in case he had had sufficient knowledge of you, no man should have been more willing to have served you; but that he, for his part, had always had regard to his own conscience, as well as other people's merit; and he did not know but that you might be a handsome fellow; for as for

your own certificate, it was every body's business to speak for themselves." Mr. President immediately retorted, "A handsome fellow! why he is a wit, Sir, and you know the proverb:" and to ease the old gentleman of his scruples, cried, "That for matter of merit it was all one, you might wear a mask." This threw him into a pause, and he looked desirous of three days to consider on it; but Mr. President improved the thought, and followed him up with an old story, "That wits were privileged to wear what masks they pleased in all ages; and that a vizard had been the constant crown of their labours, which was generally presented them by the hand of some satyr, and sometimes of Apollo himself:" for the truth of which he appealed to the frontispiece of several books, and particularly to the English Juvenal, to which he referred him; and only added, "That such authors were the *Larvati*, or *Larva donati* of the ancients." This cleared up all, and in the conclusion you were chose probationer; and Mr. President put round your health as such, protesting, "That though indeed he talked of a vizard, he did not believe all the while you had any more occasion for it than the cat-a-mountain;" so that all you have to do now is to pay your fees, which are here very reasonable, if you are not imposed upon; and you may style yourself *Informis Societatis Socius*; which I am desired to acquaint you with; and upon the same I beg you to accept of the congratulation of, Sir,

Your obliged humble servant,
 'Oxford, March 21.' 'A. C.'

R.

No. 33.] Saturday, April 7, 1711.

Fervidus tecum puer, et solutis
 Gratiae zonis, properentque nymphae
 Et parum comis sine te juvenitas,
 Mercuriusque. Hor. Lib. 1. Od. xxx. 5.

The graces with their zones unloos'd;
 The nymphs their beauties all expos'd;
 From every spring, and every plain;
 Thy pow'rful, hot, and winged boy;
 And youth, that's dull without thy joy;
 And Mercury compose thy train. Creech.

A FRIEND of mine has two daughters, whom I will call Lætitia and Daphne; the former is one of the greatest beauties of the age in which she lives, the latter no way remarkable for any charms in her person. Upon this one circumstance of their outward form, the good and ill of their life seems to turn. Lætitia has not, from her very childhood, heard any thing else but commendations of her features and complexion, by which means she is no other than nature made her, a very beautiful outside. The consciousness of her charms has rendered her insupportably vain and insolent towards all who have to do with her. Daphne, who was almost twenty before one civil thing had been said to her, found herself obliged to acquire some accomplish

* Dryden in his plates to his translation of Virgil, caused Aeneas to be represented with a Roman nose, in compliment to King William III

ments to make up for the want of those attractions which she saw in her sister. Poor Daphne was seldom submitted to in a debate wherein she was concerned; her discourse had nothing to recommend it but the good sense of it, and she was always under a necessity to have very well considered what she was to say before she uttered it; while Lætitia was listened to with partiality, and approbation sat in the countenances of those she conversed with, before she communicated what she had to say. These causes have produced suitable effects, and Lætitia is as insipid a companion as Daphne is an agreeable one. Lætitia, confidant of favour, has studied no arts to please; Daphne, despairing of any inclination towards her person, has depended wholly on her merit. Lætitia has always something in her air that is sullen, grave, and disconsolate. Daphne has a countenance that appears cheerful, open, and unconcerned. A young gentleman saw Lætitia this winter at a play, and became her captive. His fortune was such, that he wanted very little introduction to speak his sentiments to her father. The lover was admitted with the utmost freedom into the family, where a constrained behaviour, severe looks, and distant civilities, were the highest favours he could obtain of Lætitia; while Daphne used him with the good humour, familiarity, and innocence of a sister: insomuch that he would often say to her, 'Dear Daphne, wert thou but as handsome as Lætitia.'—She received such language with that ingenuous and pleasing mirth, which is natural to a woman without design. He still sighed in vain for Lætitia, but found certain relief in the agreeable conversation of Daphne. At length, heartily tired with the haughty impertinence of Lætitia, and charmed with the repeated instances of good-humour he had observed in Daphne, he one day told the latter, that he had something to say to her he hoped she would be pleased with—'Faith, Daphne,' continued he, 'I am in love with thee, and despise thy sister sincerely.' The manner of his declaring himself, gave his mistress occasion for a very hearty laughter. 'Nay,' says he, 'I knew you would laugh at me, but I will ask your father.' He did so; the father received his intelligence with no less joy than surprise, and was very glad he had now no care left but for his beauty, which he thought he could carry to market at his leisure. I do not know any thing that has pleased me so much a great while, as this conquest of my friend Daphne's. All her acquaintance congratulate her upon her chance-medley, and laugh at that premeditated murderer her sister. As it is an argument of a light mind, to think the worse of ourselves for the imperfections of our persons, it is equally below us to value ourselves upon the advantages of them. The female world seem to be almost incorrigibly gone astray in this particular; for

which reason I shall recommend the following extract out of a friend's letter to the professed beauties, who are a people almost as unsufferable as the professed wits.

'Monsieur St. Evremond has concluded one of his essays with affirming, that the last sighs of a handsome woman are not so much for the loss of her life, as of her beauty. Perhaps this raillery is pursued too far, yet it is turned upon a very obvious remark, that woman's strongest passion is for her own beauty, and that she values it as her favourite distinction. From hence it is that all arts, which pretend to improve or preserve it, meet with so general a reception among the sex. To say nothing of many false helps and contraband wares of beauty, which are daily vended in this great mart, there is not a maiden gentlewoman of a good family, in any county of South Britain, who has not heard of the virtues of May-dew, or is unfurnished with some receipt or other in favour of her complexion; and I have known a physician of learning and sense, after eight years study in the university, and a course of travels into most countries of Europe, owe the first raising of his fortune to a cosmetic wash.

'This has given me occasion to consider how so universal a disposition in woman-kind, which springs from a laudable motive, the desire of pleasing, and proceeds upon an opinion, not altogether groundless, that nature may be helped by art, may be turned to their advantage. And, methinks, it would be an acceptable service to take them out of the hands of quacks and pretenders, and to prevent their imposing upon themselves, by discovering to them the true secret and art of improving beauty.

'In order to do this, before I touch upon it directly, it will be necessary to lay down a few preliminary maxims, viz.

'That no woman can be handsome by the force of features alone, any more than she can be witty only by the help of speech.

'That pride destroys all symmetry and grace, and affectation is a more terrible enemy to fine faces than the small-pox.

'That no woman is capable of being beautiful, who is not incapable of being false.

'And, That what would be odious in a friend, is deformity in a mistress.

'From these few principles, thus laid down, it will be easy to prove, that the true art of assisting beauty consists in embellishing the whole person by the proper ornaments of virtuous and commendable qualities. By this help alone it is, that those who are the favourite work of nature, or, as Mr. Dryden expresses it, the porcelain clay of human kind, become animated, and are in a capacity of exerting their charms; and those who seem to have been neglected by her, like models wrought in haste, are capable in a great measure of finishing what she has left imperfect.

'It is, methinks, a low and degrading idea of that sex, which was created to refine the joys, and soften the cares of humanity, by the most agreeable participation, to consider them merely as objects of sight. This is abridging them of their natural extent of power, to put them upon a level with their pictures at Kneller's. How much nobler is the contemplation of beauty, heightened by virtue, and commanding our esteem and love, whilst it draws our observation! How faint and spiritless are the charms of a coquette, when compared with the real loveliness of Sophronia's innocence, piety, good-humour, and truth; virtues which add a new softness to her sex, and even beautify her beauty! That agreeableness which must otherwise have appeared no longer in the modest virgin, is now preserved in the tender mother, the prudent friend, and the faithful wife. Colours artfully spread upon canvass may entertain the eye, but not affect the heart; and she who takes no care to add to the natural graces of her person any excelling qualities, may be allowed still to amuse, as a picture, but not to triumph as a beauty.

'When Adam is introduced by Milton, describing Eve in Paradise, and relating to the angel the impressions he felt upon seeing her at her first creation, he does not represent her like a Grecian Venus, by her shape or features, but by the lustre of her mind which shone in them, and gave them their power of charming:

"Grace was in all her steps, heav'n in her eye,
In all her gestures dignity and love!"

'Without this irradiating power, the proudest fair-one ought to know, whatever her glass may tell her to the contrary, that her most perfect features are uninformed and dead.

'I cannot better close this moral, than by a short epitaph written by Ben Jonson with a spirit which nothing could inspire but such an object as I have been describing.

"Underneath this stone doth lie
As much virtue as could die;
Which when alive did vigour give
To as much beauty as could live."

'I am, Sir, your most humble servant,
R. R. B.'

No. 34.] *Monday, April 9, 1711.*

—parcit
Cognatis maculis similis fera
Juv. Sat. xv. 159.

From spotted skins the leopard does refrain. *Tate.*

THE club of which I am a member, is very luckily composed of such persons as are engaged in different ways of life, and deputed as it were out of the most conspicuous classes of mankind. By this means I am furnished with the greatest variety of hints and materials, and know every thing that passes in the different quarters and

divisions, not only of this great city, but of the whole kingdom. My readers too have the satisfaction to find that there is no rank or degrees among them who have not their representative in this club, and that there is always somebody present who will take care of their respective interests, that nothing may be written or published to the prejudice or infringement of their just rights and privileges.

I last night sat very late in company with this select body of friends, who entertained me with several remarks which they and others had made upon these my speculations, as also with the various success which they had met with among their several ranks and degrees of readers. Will Honeycomb told me, in the softest manner he could that there were some ladies (but for your comfort, says Will, they are not those of the most wit) that were offended at the liberties I had taken with the opera and the puppet-show; that some of them were likewise very much surprised, that I should think such serious points as the dress and equipage of persons of quality, proper subjects for railery.

He was going on when Sir Andrew Freeport took him up short, and told him that the papers he hinted at, had done great good in the city, and that all their wives and daughters were the better for them; and further added, that the whole city thought themselves very much obliged to me for declaring my generous intentions to scourge vice and folly as they appear in a multitude, without condescending to be a publisher of particular intrigues and cuckolds. 'In short,' says Sir Andrew, 'if you avoid that foolish beaten road of falling upon aldermen and citizens, and employ your pen upon the vanity and luxury of courts, your paper must needs be of general use.'

Upon this my friend the Templar told Sir Andrew, that he wondered to hear a man of his sense talk after that manner; that the city had always been the province for satire, and that the wits of King Charles's time jested upon nothing else during his whole reign. He then showed, by the example of Horace, Juvenal, Boileau, and the best writers of every age, that the follies of the stage and court had never been accounted too sacred for ridicule, how great soever the persons might be that patronized them. 'But after all,' says he, 'I think your railery has made too great an excursion, in attacking several persons of the inns of court; and I do not believe you can show me any precedent for your behaviour in that particular.'

My good friend, Sir Roger de Coverly, who had said nothing all this while, began his speech with a Pish! and told us, that he wondered to see so many men of sense, so very serious upon fooleries. 'Let our good friend,' says he, 'attack every one that deserves it; I would only advise you,

Mr. Spectator,' applying himself to me, 'to take care how you meddle with country squires. They are the ornaments of the English nation; men of good heads and sound bodies! and, let me tell you, some of them take it ill of you, that you mention fox-hunters with so little respect.'

Captain Sentry spoke very sparingly on this occasion. What he said was only to commend my prudence in not touching upon the army, and advised me to continue to act discreetly in that point.

But by this time I found every subject of my speculations was taken away from me, by one or other of the club: and began to think myself in the condition of the good man that had one wife who took a dislike to his grey hairs, and another to his black, till by their picking out what each of them had an aversion to, they left his head altogether bald and naked.

While I was thus musing with myself, my worthy friend the clergyman, who, very luckily for me, was at the club that night, undertook my cause. He told us, that he wondered any order of persons should think themselves too considerable to be advised. That it was not quality, but innocence, which exempted men from reproof. That vice and folly ought to be attacked wherever they could be met with, and especially when they were placed in high and conspicuous stations of life. He further added, that my paper would only serve to aggravate the pains of poverty, if it chiefly exposed those who are already depressed, and in some measure turned into ridicule, by the meanness of their conditions and circumstances. He afterwards proceeded to take notice of the great use this paper might be of to the public, by reprehending those vices which are too trivial for the chastisement of the law, and too fantastical for the cognizance of the pulpit. He then advised me to prosecute my undertaking with cheerfulness, and assured me, that whoever might be displeased with me, I should be approved by all those whose praises do honour to the persons on whom they are bestowed.

The whole club pay a particular deference to the discourse of this gentleman, and are drawn into what he says, as much by the candid ingenuous manner with which he delivers himself, as by the strength of argument and force of reason which he makes use of. Will Honeycomb immediately agreed that what he had said was right; and that, for his part, he would not insist upon the quarter which he had demanded for the ladies. Sir Andrew gave up the city with the same frankness. The Templar would not stand out, and was followed by Sir Roger and the Captain; who all agreed that I should be at liberty to carry the war into what quarter I pleased; provided I continued to combat with criminals in a body, and to assault the vice without hurting the person.

This debate, which was held for the good of mankind, put me in mind of that which the Roman triumvirate were formerly engaged in for their destruction. Every man at first stood hard for his friend, till they found that by this means they should spoil their proscription; and at length, making a sacrifice of all their acquaintance and relations, furnished out a very decent execution.

Having thus taken my resolution to march on boldly in the cause of virtue and good sense, and to annoy their adversaries in whatever degree or rank of men they may be found, I shall be deaf for the future to all the remonstrances that shall be made to me on this account. If Punch grows extravagant, I shall reprimand him very freely: if the stage becomes a nursery of folly and impertinence, I shall not be afraid to animadvert upon it. In short, if I meet with any thing in city, court or country, that shocks modesty or good manners, I shall use my utmost endeavours to make an example of it. I must, however, entreat every particular person who does me the honour to be a reader of this paper, never to think himself, or any one of his friends or enemies, aimed at in what is said; for I promise him, never to draw a faulty character which does not fit at least a thousand people, or to publish a single paper, that is not written in the spirit of benevolence, and with a love of mankind. C.

No. 35.] *Tuesday, April 10, 1711.*

Risu inepto res ineptior nulla est.

Mart.

Nothing so foolish as the laugh of fools.

AMONG all kinds of writing, there is none in which authors are more apt to miscarry than in works of humour, as there is none in which they are more ambitious to excel. It is not an imagination that teems with monsters, a head that is filled with extravagant conceptions, which is capable of furnishing the world with diversions of this nature; and yet, if we look into the productions of several writers, who set up for men of humour, what wild irregular fancies, what unnatural distortions of thought, do we meet with? If they speak nonsense, they believe they are talking humour, and when they have drawn together a scheme of absurd inconsistent ideas, they are not able to read it over to themselves without laughing. These poor gentlemen endeavour to gain themselves the reputation of wits and humourists, by such monstrous conceits as almost qualify them for Bedlam; not considering that humour should always lie under the check of reason, and that it requires the direction of the nicest judgment, by so much the more as it indulges itself in the most boundless freedoms. There is a kind of nature that is to be observed in this sort of compositions, as well as in all other; and a

certain regularity of thought which must discover the writer to be a man of sense, at the same time that he appears altogether given up to caprice. For my part, when I read the delirious mirth of an unskilful author, I cannot be so barbarous as to divert myself with it, but am rather apt to pity the man, than to laugh at any thing he writes.

The deceased Mr. Shadwell, who had himself a great deal of the talent which I am treating of, represents an empty rake, in one of his plays, as very much surprised to hear one say, that breaking of windows was not humour; and I question not but several English readers will be as much startled to hear me affirm, that many of those raving incoherent pieces, which are often spread among us under odd chimerical titles, are rather the offsprings of a distempered brain than works of humour.

It is indeed much easier to describe what is not humour, than what is; and very difficult to define it otherwise than as Cowley has done wit, by negatives. Were I to give my own notions of it, I would deliver them after Plato's manner, in a kind of allegory, and by supposing Humour to be a person, deduce to him all his qualifications, according to the following genealogy. Truth was the founder of the family, and the father of Good Sense. Good Sense was the father of Wit, who married a lady of collateral line called Mirth, by whom he had issue Humour. Humour therefore being the youngest of this illustrious family, and descended from parents of such different dispositions, is very various and unequal in his temper; sometimes you see him putting on grave looks and a solemn habit, sometimes airy in his behaviour and fantastic in his dress; insomuch that at different times he appears as serious as a judge, and as jocular as a Merry-Andrew. But as he has a great deal of the mother in his constitution, whatever mood he is in, he never fails to make his company laugh.

But since there is an impostor abroad, who takes upon him the name of this young gentleman, and would willingly pass for him in the world, to the end that well-meaning persons may not be imposed upon by cheats, I would desire my readers, when they meet with this pretender, to look into his parentage, and to examine him strictly, whether or no he be remotely allied to Truth, and lineally descended from Good Sense; if not, they may conclude him a counterfeiter. They may likewise distinguish him by a loud and excessive laughter, in which he seldom gets his company to join with him. For as True Humour generally looks serious, while every body laughs about him; False Humour is always laughing, whilst every body about him looks serious. I shall only add, if he has not in him a mixture of both parents, that is, if he would pass for the offspring of Wit without Mirth, or Mirth without Wit, you may

conclude him to be altogether spurious and a cheat.

The impostor of whom I am speaking, descends originally from Falsehood, who was the mother of Nonsense, who was brought to bed of a son called Frenzy, who married one of the daughters of Folly, commonly known by the name of Laughter, on whom he begot that monstrous infant of which I have been speaking. I shall set down at length the genealogical table of False Humour, and, at the same time, place under it the genealogy of True Humour, that the reader may at one view behold their different pedigrees and relations:

Falsehood.
Nonsense.
Frenzy.—Laughter.
False Humour.

Truth.
Good Sense.
Wit.—Mirth.
Humour.

I might extend the allegory, by mentioning several of the children of False Humour, who are more in number than the sands of the sea, and might in particular enumerate the many sons and daughters which he has begot in this island. But as this would be a very invidious task, I shall only observe in general, that False Humour differs from the True, as a monkey does from a man.

First of all, He is exceedingly given to little apish tricks and buffoneries.

Secondly, He so much delights in mimicry, that it is all one to him whether he exposes by it vice and folly, luxury and avarice; or on the contrary, virtue and wisdom, pain and poverty.

Thirdly, He is wonderfully unlucky, insomuch that he will bite the hand that feeds him, and endeavour to ridicule both friends and foes indifferently. For having but small talents, he must be merry where he can, not where he should.

Fourthly, Being entirely void of reason, he pursues no point, either of morality or instruction, but is ludicrous only for the sake of being so.

Fifthly, Being incapable of any thing but mock representations, his ridicule is always personal, and aimed at the vicious man, or the writer; not at the vice, or the writing.

I have here only pointed at the whole species of false humourists; but as one of my principal designs in this paper is to beat down that malignant spirit, which discovers itself in the writings of the present age, I shall not scruple, for the future, to single out any of the small wits, that infest the world with such compositions as are ill-natured, immoral, and absurd. This is the only exception which I shall make to the general rule I have prescribed myself, of attacking multitudes, since every honest man ought to look upon himself as in a natural state of war with the libeller

and lampooner, and to annoy them whenever they fall in his way. This is but retaliating upon them, and treating them as they treat others. C.

No. 36.] *Wednesday, April 11, 1711.*

—Immania monstra
Perferimus—*Virg. Æn. iii. 583.*
Things the most out of nature we endure.

I SHALL not put myself to any farther pains for this day's entertainment, than barely to publish the letters and titles of petitions from the playhouse, with the minutes I have made upon the latter for my conduct in relation to them.

'Drury-lane, April the 9th.

'Upon reading the project which is set forth in one of your late papers, of making an alliance between all the bulls, bears, elephants, and lions, which are separately exposed to public view in the cities of London and Westminster; together with the other wonders, shows, and monsters, whereof you made respective mention in the said speculation; we, the chief actors of this playhouse, met and sat upon the said design. It is with great delight that we expect the execution of this work; and in order to contribute to it we have given warning to all our ghosts to get their livelihoods where they can, and not to appear among us after day-break of the 16th instant. We are resolved to take this opportunity to part with every thing which does not contribute to the representation of human life; and shall make a free gift of all animated utensils to your projector. The hangings you formerly mentioned are run away; as are likewise a set of chairs, each of which was met upon two legs going through the Rose tavern at two this morning. We hope, sir, you will give proper notice to the town that we are endeavouring at these regulations; and that we intend for the future to show no monsters, but men who are converted into such by their own industry and affectation. If you will please to be at the house to-night, you will see me do my endeavour to show some unnatural appearances which are in vogue among the polite and well-bred. I am to represent, in the character of a fine lady dancing, all the distortions which are frequently taken for graces in mien and gesture. This, sir, is a specimen of the methods we shall take to expose the monsters which come within the notice of a regular theatre; and we desire nothing more gross may be admitted by you Spectators for the future. We have cashiered three companies of theatrical guards, and design our kings shall for the future make love, and sit in council, without an army; and wait only your direction, whether you will have them reinforce king Porus, or join the troops of Macedon. Mr. Pinkethman resolves to consult his pantheon of heathen gods in

opposition to the oracle of Delphos, and doubts not but he shall turn the fortune of Porus, when he personates him. I am desired by the company to inform you, that they submit to your censures, and shall have you in greater veneration than Hercules was of old, if you can drive monsters from the theatre; and think your merit will be as much greater than his, as to convince is more than to conquer. I am, sir, your most obedient servant, T. D.'

'SIR,—When I acquaint you with the great and unexpected vicissitudes of my fortune, I doubt not but I shall obtain your pity and favour. I have for many years past been Thunderer to the playhouse; and have not only made as much noise out of the clouds as any predecessor of mine in the theatre that ever bore that character, but also have descended and spoke on the stage as the bold Thunderer in 'The Rehearsal.' When they got me down thus low, they thought fit to degrade me further, and make me a ghost. I was contented with this for these two last winters; but they carry their tyranny still further, and not satisfied that I am banished from above ground, they have given me to understand that I am wholly to depart their dominions, and taken from me even my subterraneous employment. Now, sir, what I desire of you is, that if your undertaker thinks fit to use fire-arms (as other authors have done,) in the time of Alexander, I may be a cannon against Porus, or else provide for me in the burning of Persepolis, or what other method you shall think fit.

'SALMONEUS, of Covent Garden.'

The petition of all the Devils in the playhouse in behalf of themselves and families, setting forth their expulsion from thence, with certificates of their good life and conversation, and praying relief.

The merits of this petition referred to Mr. Chr. Rich, who made them devils.

The petition of the Grave-digger in Hamlet, to command the pioneers in the expedition of Alexander.—Granted.

The petition of William Bullock, to be Hephestion to Pinkethman the Great.—Granted.

ADVERTISEMENT.

A widow gentlewoman, well born both by father and mother's side, being the daughter of Thomas Prater, once an eminent practitioner in the law, and of Letitia Tattle, a family well known in all parts of this kingdom, having been reduced by misfortunes to wait on several great persons, and for some time to be a teacher at a boarding-school of young ladies, giveth notice to the public, that she hath lately taken a house near Bloomsbury-square, commodiously situated next the fields, in a good air; where she teaches all sorts of birds of the loquacious kind, as parrots, starlings, magpies, and others, to imitate human voices in greater perfection than ever was yet practised. They are not only instructed to pronounce words distinctly, and in a proper tone and accent, but to speak the language with great purity and volubility of tongue, together with all the fashionable phrases and compliments now in use, either at tea-tables or visiting-days. Those that have good voices may be taught to sing the newest operas, and if required, to speak either Italian or French, paying something extraordinary above the common

rates. They whose friends are not able to pay the full prices, may be taken as half boarders. She teaches such as are designed for the diversion of the public, and to act in enchanted woods on the theatres, by the great. As she has often observed with much concern how indecent an education is usually given these innocent creatures, which in some measure is owing to their being placed in rooms next the street, where, to the great offence of chaste and tender ears, they learn ribaldry, obscene songs, and immodest expressions from passengers, and idle people, as also to cry fish and card-matches, with other useless parts of learning to birds who have rich friends, she has fitted up proper and neat apartments for them in the back part of her said house; where she suffers none to approach them but herself, and a servant maid who is deaf and dumb, and whom she provided on purpose to prepare their food, and cleanse their cages; having found by long experience, how hard a thing it is for those to keep silence who have the use of speech, and the dangers her scholars are exposed to by the strong impressions that are made by harsh sounds, and vulgar dialects. In short, if they are birds of any parts or capacity, she will undertake to render them so accomplished in the compass of a twelve-month, that they shall be fit conversation for such ladies as love to choose their friends and companions out of this species.

R.

No. 57.] Thursday, April 12, 1711.

—Non illa colo calathivæ Minervæ

Fœmineas assueta manus—

Virg. *Æn.* vii. 805.

Unbred to spinning, in the loom unskill'd.

Dryden.

SOME months ago, my friend Sir Roger, being in the country, enclosed a letter to me, directed to a certain lady whom I shall here call by the name of Leonora, and as it contained matters of consequence, desired me to deliver it to her with my own hand. Accordingly I waited upon her ladyship pretty early in the morning, and was desired by her woman to walk into the lady's library, till such time as she was in readiness to receive me. The very sound of a lady's library gave me a great curiosity to see it; and as it was some time before the lady came to me, I had an opportunity of turning over a great many of her books, which were ranged together in a very beautiful order. At the end of the folios (which were finely bound and gilt) were great jars of china placed one above another in a very noble piece of architecture. The quartos were separated from the octavos by a pile of smaller vessels, which rose in a delightful pyramid. The octavos were bounded by tea-dishes of all shapes, colours, and sizes, which were so disposed on a wooden frame, that they looked like one continued pillar indented with the finest strokes of sculpture, and stained with the greatest variety of dyes. That part of the library which was designed for the reception of plays and pamphlets, and other loose papers, was enclosed in a kind of square, consisting of one of the prettiest grotesque works that I ever saw, and made up of scaramouches, lions, monkeys, mandarines, trees, shells, and a thousand other odd figures in china ware. In the midst of the room was a small japan table with a quire of gilt paper upon it, and on the paper a silver snuff-box made in the shape of

a little book. I found there were several other counterfeit books upon the upper shelves, which were carved in wood, and served only to fill up the numbers, like faggots in the muster of a regiment. I was wonderfully pleased with such a mixed kind of furniture, as seemed very suitable both to the lady and the scholar, and did not know at first whether I should fancy myself in a grotto or in a library.

Upon my looking into the books, I found there were some few which the lady had bought for her own use, but that most of them had been got together, either because she had heard them praised, or because she had seen the authors of them. Among several that I examined, I very well remember these that follow:

Ogleby's Virgil.

Dryden's Juvenal.

Cassandra.

Cleopatra.

Astræa.

Sir Isaac Newton's Works.

The Grand Cyrus; with a pin stuck in one of the middle leaves.

Pembroke's Arcadia.

Locke on Human Understanding; with a paper of patches in it.

A Spelling Book.

A Dictionary for the explanation of hard words.

Sherlock upon Death.

The fifteen comforts of Matrimony.

Sir William Temple's Essays.

Father Malebranche's Search after Truth, translated into English.

A Book of Novels.

The Academy of Compliments.

Culpepper's Midwifery.

The Ladies' Calling.

Tales in Verse, by Mr. Durfey; bound in red leather, gilt on the back, and doubled down in several places.

All the Classic Authors in wood.

A set of Elzevirs by the same hand.

Clelia: which opened of itself in the place that describes two lovers in a bower.

Baker's Chronicle.

Advice to a Daughter.

The New Atlantis, with a Key to it.

Mr. Steele's Christian Hero.

A Prayer-Book: with a bottle of Hungary water by the side of it.

Dr. Sacheverell's Speech.

Fielding's Trial.

Seneca's Morals.

Taylor's Holy Living and Dying.

La Ferte's Instructions for Country dances.

I was taking a catalogue in my pocket-book of these, and several other authors, when Leonora entered, and upon my presenting her with a letter from the knight, told me, with an unspeakable grace, that she hoped Sir Roger was in good health: I answered Yes, for I hate long speeches, and after a bow or two retired.

Leonora was formerly a celebrated beau-

ty, and is still a very lovely woman. She has been a widow for two or three years, and being unfortunate in her first marriage, has taken a resolution never to venture upon a second. She has no children to take care of, and leaves the management of her estate to my good friend Sir Roger. But as the mind naturally sinks into a kind of lethargy, and falls asleep, that is not agitated by some favourite pleasures and pursuits, Leonora has turned all the passions of her sex into a love of books and retirement. She converses chiefly with men (as she has often said herself) but it is only in their writings; and admits of very few male visitors, except my friend Sir Roger, whom she hears with great pleasure, and without scandal. As her reading has lain very much among romances, it has given her a very particular turn of thinking, and discovers itself even in her house, her gardens, and her furniture. Sir Roger has entertained me an hour together with a description of her country seat, which is situated in a kind of wilderness, about a hundred miles distant from London, and looks like a little enchanted palace. The rocks about her are shaped into artificial grottos covered with woodbines and jasmynes. The woods are cut into shady walks, twisted into bowers, and filled with cages of turtles. The springs are made to run among pebbles, and by that means taught to murmur very agreeably. They are likewise collected into a beautiful lake that is inhabited by a couple of swans, and empties itself by a little rivulet which runs through a green meadow, and is known in the family by the name of 'The Purling Stream.' The knight likewise tells me, that this lady preserves her game better than any of the gentlemen in the country, not (says Sir Roger) that she sets so great a value upon her partridges and pheasants, as upon her larks and nightingales. For she says that every bird which is killed in her ground, will spoil a concert, and that she shall certainly miss him the next year.

When I think how oddly this lady is improved by learning, I look upon her with a mixture of admiration and pity. Amidst these innocent entertainments which she has formed to herself, how much more valuable does she appear than those of her sex, who employ themselves in diversions that are less reasonable though more in fashion? What improvements would a woman have made, who is so susceptible of impressions from what she reads, had she been guided to such books as have a tendency to enlighten the understanding and rectify the passions, as well as to those which are of a little more use than to divert the imagination?

But the manner of a lady's employing herself usefully in reading, shall be the subject of another paper, in which I design to recommend such particular books as may be proper for the improvement of

the sex. And as this is a subject of a very nice nature, I shall desire my correspondents to give me their thoughts upon it. C.

No. 38.] *Friday, April 13, 1711.*

—Cupias non placuisse nimis.—*Mart.*

One would not please too much.

A LATE conversation which I fell into, gave me an opportunity of observing a great deal of beauty in a very handsome woman, and as much wit in an ingenious man, turned into deformity in the one, and absurdity in the other, by the mere force of affectation. The fair one had something in her person, upon which her thoughts were fixed, that she attempted to show to advantage in every look, word, and gesture. The gentleman was as diligent to do justice to his fine parts, as the lady to her beauteous form. You might see his imagination on the stretch to find out something uncommon, and what they call bright, to entertain her, while she writhed herself into as many different postures to engage him. When she laughed, her lips were to sever at a greater distance than ordinary, to show her teeth; her fan was to point to something at a distance, that in the reach she may discover the roundness of her arm; then she is utterly mistaken in what she saw, falls back, smiles at her own folly, and is so wholly discomposed, that her tucker is to be adjusted, her bosom exposed, and the whole woman put into new airs and graces. While she was doing all this, the gallant had time to think of something very pleasant to say next to her, or make some unkind observation on some other lady to feed her vanity. These unhappy effects of affectation, naturally led me to look into that strange state of mind which so generally discolours the behaviour of most people we meet with.

The learned Dr. Burnet, in his 'Theory of the Earth,' takes occasion to observe, that every thought is attended with a consciousness and representativeness; the mind has nothing presented to it but what is immediately followed by a reflection of conscience, which tells you whether that which was so presented is graceful or unbecoming. This act of the mind discovers itself in the gesture, by a proper behaviour in those whose consciousness goes no further than to direct them in the just progress of their present state or action; but betrays an interruption in every second thought, when the consciousness is employed in too fondly approving a man's own conceptions; which sort of consciousness is what we call affectation.

As the love of praise is implanted in our bosoms as a strong incentive to worthy actions, it is a very difficult task to get above a desire of it for things that should be wholly indifferent. Women whose hearts are

fixed upon the pleasure they have in the consciousness that they are the objects of love and admiration, are ever changing the air of their countenances, and altering the attitude of their bodies, to strike the hearts of their beholders with new sense of their beauty. The dressing part of our sex, whose minds are the same with the sillier part of the other, are exactly in the like uneasy condition to be regarded for a well-tied cravat, a hat cocked with an uncommon briskness, a very well-chosen coat, or other instances of merit, which they are impatient to see unobserved.

This apparent affectation, arising from an ill-governed consciousness, is not so much to be wondered at in such loose and trivial minds as these: but when we see it reign in characters of worth and distinction, it is what we cannot but lament, not without some indignation. It creeps into the heart of the wise man as well as that of the coxcomb. When you see a man of sense look about for applause, and discover an itching inclination to be commended; lay traps for a little incense, even from those whose opinion he values in nothing but his own favour; who is safe against this weakness? or who knows whether he is guilty of it or not? The best way to get clear of such a light fondness for applause, is to take all possible care to throw off the love of it upon occasions that are not in themselves laudable, but as it appears we hope for no praise from them. Of this nature are all graces in men's persons, dress, and bodily deportment, which will naturally be winning and attractive if we think not of them, but lose their force in proportion to our endeavour to make them such.

When our consciousness turns upon the main design of life, and our thoughts are employed upon the chief purpose either in business or pleasure, we shall never betray an affectation, for we cannot be guilty of it: but when we give the passion for praise an unbridled liberty, our pleasure in little perfections robs us of what is due to us for great virtues, and worthy qualities. How many excellent speeches and honest actions are lost, for want of being indifferent where we ought? Men are oppressed with regard to their way of speaking and acting, instead of having their thoughts bent upon what they should do or say; and by that means bury a capacity for great things, by their fear of failing in indifferent things. This, perhaps, cannot be called affectation; but it has some tincture of it, at least so far, as that their fear of erring in a thing of no consequence, argues they would be too much pleased in performing it.

It is only from a thorough disregard to himself in such particulars, that a man can act with a laudable sufficiency: his heart is fixed upon one point in view; and he commits no errors, because he thinks nothing an error but what deviates from that intention.

The wild havock affectation makes in that part of the world which should be most polite, is visible wherever we turn our eyes: it pushes men not only into imperfections in conversation, but also in their premeditated speeches. At the bar it torments the bench, whose business it is to cut off all superfluities in what is spoken before it by the practitioner, as well as several little pieces of injustice which arise from the law itself. I have seen it make a man run from the purpose before a judge, who was, when at the bar himself, so close and logical a pleader, that with all the pomp of eloquence in his power, he never spoke a word too much.*

It might be borne, even here; but it often ascends the pulpit itself; and the declaimer in that sacred place, is frequently so impertinently witty, speaks of the last day itself with so many quaint phrases, that there is no man who understands raillery but must resolve to sin no more. Nay, you may behold him sometimes in prayer, for a proper delivery of the great truths he is to utter, humble himself with so very-well turned phrases, and mention his own unworthiness in a way so very becoming, that the air of the pretty gentleman is preserved, under the lowliness of the preacher.

I shall end this with a short letter I write the other day to a very witty man, overrun with the fault I am speaking of:

‘DEAR SIR,—I spent some time with you the other day, and must take the liberty of a friend to tell you of the unsufferable affectation you are guilty of in all you say and do. When I gave you a hint of it, you asked me whether a man is to be cold to what his friends think of him? No, but praise is not to be the entertainment of every moment. He that hopes for it must be able to suspend the possession of it till proper periods of life, or death itself. If you would not rather be commended than be praise-worthy, condemn little merits; and allow no man to be so free with you, as to praise you to your face. Your vanity by this means will want its food. At the same time your passion for esteem will be more fully gratified; men will praise you in their actions: where you now receive one compliment, you will then receive twenty civilities. Till then you will never have of either, further than, Sir, your humble servant.
R.

No. 39.] *Saturday, April 14, 1711.*

Multa fero, ut placem genus irritabile vatum.
Cum scribo — *Hor. Lib. 2. Ep. ii. 102.*

IMITATED.

Much do I suffer, much, to keep in peace
This jealous, waspish, wrong-headed rhyming race.
Pope.

As a perfect tragedy is the noblest production of human nature, so it is capable

* This seems to be intended as a compliment to Chancellor Cowper.

of giving the mind one of the most delightful and most improving entertainments. A virtuous man (says Seneca) struggling with misfortunes, is such a spectacle as gods might look upon with pleasure; and such a pleasure it is which one meets with in the representation of a well-written tragedy. Diversions of this kind wear out of our thoughts every thing that is mean and little. They cherish and cultivate that humanity which is the ornament of our nature. They soften insolence, sooth affliction, and subdue the mind to the dispensations of Providence.

It is no wonder therefore that in all the polite nations of the world, this part of the drama has met with public encouragement.

The modern tragedy excels that of Greece and Rome, in the intricacy and disposition of the fable; but what a Christian writer would be ashamed to own, falls infinitely short of it in the moral part of the performance.

This I may show more at large hereafter: and in the mean time, that I may contribute something towards the improvement of the English tragedy, I shall take notice, in this and in other following papers, of some particular parts in it that seem liable to exception.

Aristotle observes, that the Iambic verse in the Greek tongue was the most proper for tragedy: because at the same time that it lifted up the discourse from prose, it was that which approached nearer to it than any other kind of verse. 'For,' says he, 'we may observe that men in ordinary discourse very often speak iambics, without taking notice of it.' We may make the same observation of our English blank verse, which often enters into our common discourse, though we do not attend to it, and is such a due medium between rhyme and prose, that it seems wonderfully adapted to tragedy. I am therefore very much offended when I see a play in rhyme; which is as absurd in English, as a tragedy of hexameters would have been in Greek or Latin. The solecism is, I think, still greater in those plays that have some scenes in rhyme and some in blank verse, which are to be looked upon as two several languages; or where we see some particular similes dignified with rhyme at the same time that every thing about them lies in blank verse. I would not however debar the poet from concluding his tragedy, or, if he pleases, every act of it, with two or three couplets, which may have the same effect as an air in the Italian opera after a long recitativo, and give the actor a graceful exit. Besides that, we see a diversity of numbers in some parts of the old tragedy, in order to hinder the ear from being tired with the same continued modulation of the voice. For the same reason I do not dislike the speeches in our English tragedy that close with an hemistich, or half verse, notwithstanding

the person who speaks after it begins a new verse, without filling up the preceding one: nor with abrupt pauses and breakings off in the middle of a verse, when they humour any passion that is expressed by it.

Since I am upon this subject, I must observe that our English poets have succeeded much better in the style, than in the sentiments of their tragedies. Their language is very often noble and sonorous, but the sense either very trifling, or very common. On the contrary, in the ancient tragedies, and indeed in those of Corneille and Racine, though the expressions are very great, it is the thought that bears them up and swells them. For my own part, I prefer a noble sentiment that is depressed with homely language, infinitely before a vulgar one that is blown up with all the sound and energy of expression. Whether this defect in our tragedies may arise from want of genius, knowledge, or experience in the writers, or from their compliance with the vicious taste of their readers, who are better judges of the language than of the sentiments, and consequently relish the one more than the other, I cannot determine. But I believe it might rectify the conduct both of the one and of the other, if the writer laid down the whole contexture of his dialogue in plain English, before he turned it into blank verse; and if the reader, after the perusal of a scene, would consider the naked thought of every speech in it, when divested of all its tragic ornaments. By this means, without being imposed upon by words, we may judge impartially of the thought, and consider whether it be natural or great enough for the person that utters it, whether it deserves to shine in such a blaze of eloquence, or show itself in such a variety of lights as are generally made use of by the writers of our English tragedy.

I must in the next place observe, that when our thoughts are great and just, they are often obscured by the sounding phrases, hard metaphors, and forced expressions in which they are clothed. Shakspeare is often very faulty in this particular. There is a fine observation in Aristotle to this purpose, which I have never seen quoted. The expression, says he, ought to be very much laboured in the unactive parts of the fable, as in descriptions, similitudes, narrations, and the like; in which the opinions, manners, and passions of men are not represented; for these (namely, the opinions, manners, and passions,) are apt to be obscured by pompous phrases and elaborate expressions. Horace, who copied most of his criticisms from Aristotle, seems to have had his eye on the foregoing rule, in the following verses:

*'Et tragicus plerumque dolet sermone pedestri:
Telephus et Peleus, cum pauper et exul uterque,
Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba,
Si curat cor spectantis tetigisse querela.'*

Hor. Ars Poet. ver 95.

'Tragedians too lay by their state to grieve:
Peless and Telephus, exil'd and poor,
Forget their swelling and gigantic words.'

Roscommon.

Among our modern English poets, there is none who has a better turn for tragedy than Lee; if instead of favouring the impetuosity of his genius he had restrained it, and kept it within its proper bounds. His thoughts are wonderfully suited to tragedy, but frequently lost in such a cloud of words, that it is hard to see the beauty of them. There is an infinite fire in his works, but so involved in smoke that it does not appear in half its lustre. He frequently succeeds in the passionate parts of the tragedy, but more particularly where he slackens his efforts, and eases the style of those epithets and metaphors, in which he so much abounds. What can be more natural, more soft, or more passionate, than that line in Statira's speech where she describes the charms of Alexander's conversation?

'Then he would talk—Good gods! how he would talk!'

That unexpected break in the line, and turning the description of his manner of talking into admiration of it, is inexpressibly beautiful, and wonderfully suited to the fond character of the person that speaks it. There is a simplicity in the words, that outshines the utmost pride of expression.

Otway has followed nature in the language of his tragedy, and therefore shines in the passionate parts, more than any of our English poets. As there is something familiar and domestic in the fable of his tragedy, more than in those of any other poet, he has little pomp, but great force in his expressions. For which reason, though he has admirably succeeded in the tender and melting part of his tragedies, he sometimes falls into too great familiarity of phrase in those parts, which by Aristotle's rule, ought to have been raised and supported by the dignity of expression.

It has been observed by others, that this poet has founded his tragedy of Venice Preserved on so wrong a plot, that the greatest characters in it are those of rebels and traitors. Had the hero of this play discovered the same good qualities in the defence of his country that he showed for its ruin and subversion, the audience could not enough pity and admire him: but as he is now represented, we can only say of him what the Roman historian says of Cataline, that his fall would have been glorious (*si pro patria sic concidisset*) had he so fallen in the service of his country. C.

No. 40.] Monday, April 16, 1711.

*Ac ne forte putes, me, quæ facere ipse recusem,
Cum recte tractent alii, laudare maligne;
Ille per extantum funem mihi posse videtur
Ire poeta, meum qui pectus inaniter angit,
Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,
Ut magus; et modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis.*
Hor. Lib. 2, Ep. i. 208.

IMITATED.

Yet lest you think I rally more than teach,
Or praise, malignant, arts I cannot reach,
Let me for once presume t' instruct the times,
To know the poet from the man of rhymes;
'Tis he, who gives my breast a thousand pains,
Can make me feel each passion that he feigns;
Enrage, compose, with more than magic art,
With pity, and with terror, tear my heart;
And snatch me o'er the earth, or through the air,
To Thebes, to Athens, when he will, and where.

Pope.

THE English writers of tragedy are possessed with a notion, that when they represent a virtuous or innocent person in distress, they ought not to leave him till they have delivered him out of his troubles, or made him triumph over his enemies. This error they have been led into by a ridiculous doctrine in modern criticism, that they are obliged to an equal distribution of rewards and punishments, and an impartial execution of poetical justice. Who were the first that established this rule I know not; but I am sure it has no foundation in nature, in reason, or in the practice of the ancients. We find that good and evil happen alike to all men on this side of the grave; and as the principal design of tragedy is to raise commiseration and terror in the minds of the audience, we shall defeat this great end, if we always make virtue and innocence happy and successful. Whatever crosses and disappointments a good man suffers in the body of the tragedy, they will make but a small impression on our minds, when we know that in the last act he is to arrive at the end of his wishes and desires. When we see him engaged in the depths of his afflictions, we are apt to comfort ourselves, because we are sure he will find his way out of them; and that his grief, how great soever it may be at present, will soon terminate in gladness. For this reason the ancient writers of tragedy treated men in their plays, as they are dealt with in the world, by making virtue sometimes happy and sometimes miserable, as they found it in the fable which they made choice of, or as it might affect their audience in the most agreeable manner. Aristotle considers the tragedies that were written in either of these kinds, and observes, that those which ended unhappily had always pleased the people, and carried away the prize in the public disputes of the stage, from those that ended happily. Terror and commiseration leave a pleasing anguish in the mind; and fix the audience in such a serious composure of thought, as is much more lasting and delightful than any little transient starts of joy and satisfaction. Accordingly we find, that more of our English tragedies have succeeded in which the favourites of the audience sink under their calamities, than those in which they recover themselves out of them. The best plays of this kind are *The Orphan*, *Venice Preserved*, *Alexander the Great*, *Theodosius*, *All for Love*, *Œdipus*, *Oroonoko*,

Othello, &c. King Lear is an admirable tragedy of the same kind, as Shakspeare wrote it; but as it is reformed, according to the chimerical notion of poetical justice, in my humble opinion it has lost half its beauty. At the same time I must allow, that there are very noble tragedies, which have been framed upon the other plan, and have ended happily; as indeed most of the good tragedies, which have been written since the starting of the above criticism, have taken this turn; as *The Mourning Bride*; *Tamerlane*, *Ulysses*, *Phædra* and *Hippolitus*, with most of Mr. Dryden's. I must also allow that many of Shakspeare's, and several of the celebrated tragedies of antiquity, are cast in the same form. I do not therefore dispute against this way of writing tragedies, but against the criticism that would establish this as the only method; and by that means would very much cramp the English tragedy, and perhaps give a wrong bent to the genius of our writers.

The tragi-comedy, which is the product of the English theatre, is one of the most monstrous inventions that ever entered into a poet's thoughts. An author might as well think of weaving the adventures of *Æneas* and *Hudibras* into one poem, as of writing such a motley piece of mirth and sorrow. But the absurdity of these performances is so very visible, that I shall not insist upon it.

The same objections which are made to tragi-comedy, may in some measure be applied to all tragedies that have a double plot in them; which are likewise more frequent upon the English stage, than upon any other; for though the grief of the audience, in such performances, be not changed into another passion, as in tragi-comedies; it is diverted upon another object, which weakens their concern for the principal action, and breaks the tide of sorrow, by throwing it into different channels. This inconvenience, however, may, in a great measure be cured, if not wholly removed, by the skilful choice of an under-plot, which may bear such a near relation to the principal design as to contribute towards the completion of it, and be concluded by the same catastrophe.

There is also another particular, which may be reckoned among the blemishes, or rather the false beauties of our English tragedy: I mean those particular speeches which are commonly known by the name of rants. The warm and passionate parts of a tragedy, are always the most taking with the audience; for which reason we often see the players pronouncing, in all the violence of action, several parts of the tragedy which the author writ with great temper, and designed that they should have been so acted. I have seen Powell*

* Mr. George Powell, though moving in the same sphere with Betterton, Booth, Wilkes, &c. maintained no inconsiderable rank in the public estimation: un-

very often raise himself a loud clap by this artifice. The poets that were acquainted with this secret, have given frequent occasion for such emotions in the actor, by adding vehemence to words where there was no passion, or inflaming a real passion into fustian. This hath filled the mouths of our heroes with bombast; and given them such sentiments, as proceed rather from a swelling than a greatness of mind. Unnatural exclamations, curses, vows, blasphemies, a defiance of mankind, and an outraging of the gods, frequently pass upon the audience for towering thoughts, and have accordingly met with infinite applause.

I shall here add a remark, which I am afraid our tragic writers may make an ill use of. As our heroes are generally lovers, their swelling and blustering upon the stage very much recommends them to the fair part of their audience. The ladies are wonderfully pleased to see a man insulting kings, or affronting the gods in one scene, and throwing himself at the feet of his mistress in another. Let him behave himself insolently towards the men, and abjectly towards the fair one, and it is ten to one but he proves a favourite with the boxes. Dryden and Lee, in several of their tragedies, have practised this secret with good success.

But to show how a rant pleases beyond the most just and natural thought that is not pronounced with vehemence, I would desire the reader when he sees the tragedy of *Ædipus*, to observe how quietly the hero is dismissed at the end of the third act, after having pronounced the following lines, in which the thought is very natural, and apt to move compassion:

'To you good gods, I make my last appeal.
Or clear my virtues, or my crimes reveal.
If in the maze of fate I blindly run,
And backward tread those paths I sought to shun;
Impute my errors to your own decree:
My hands are guilty, but my heart is free.'

Let us then observe with what thunder claps of applause he leaves the stage, after the impurities and execrations at the end of the fourth act; and you will wonder to see an audience so cursed and so pleased at the same time.

* O that, as oft I have at Athens seen,

[Where by the way, there was no stage till many years after *Ædipus*.]

The stage arise, and the big clouds descend;
So now in very deed, I might behold
This pond'rous globe, and all yon marble roof,
Meet, like the hands of Jove, and crush mankind:
For all the elements, &c.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Having spoken of Mr. Powell, as sometimes raising himself applause from the ill taste of an audience, I must do him the justice to own, that he is excellently

fortunately, however, in his latter days, the love of the bottle weaned him from his attachment to the stage, and he declined greatly from that reputation which he had acquired. He was author of five Plays, all of which he brought on the stage with good success. He died in 1714.

formed for a tragedian, and, when he pleases, deserves the admiration of the best judges; as I doubt not but he will in the Conquest of Mexico, which is acted for his own benefit, to-morrow night.

C.

No. 41.] *Tuesday, April 17, 1711.*

— Tu non inventa reperta es.

Ovid. Met. i. 654.

So found, is worse than lost.

Addison.

COMPASSION for the gentleman who writes the following letter, should not prevail upon me to fall upon the fair-sex, if it were not that I find they are frequently fairer than they ought to be. Such impostures are not to be tolerated in civil society, and I think his misfortune ought to be made public, as a warning for other men always to examine into what they admire.

'SIR,—Supposing you to be a person of general knowledge, I make my application to you on a very particular occasion. I have a great mind to be rid of my wife, and hope, when you consider my case, you will be of opinion I have very just pretensions to a divorce. I am a mere man of the town, and have very little improvement, but what I have got from plays. I remember in *The Silent Woman*,* the learned Dr. Cutberd, or Dr. Otter, (I forget which) makes one of the causes of separation to be *Error Personæ*, when a man marries a woman, and finds her not to be the same woman whom he intended to marry, but another. If that be law, it is, I presume, exactly my case. For you are to know, Mr. Spectator, that there are women who do not let their husbands see their faces till they are married.

'Not to keep you in suspense, I mean plainly that part of the sex who paint. They are some of them so exquisitely skilful this way, that give them but a tolerable pair of eyes to set up with, and they will make bosom, lips, cheeks, and eye-brows, by their own industry. As for my dear, never was a man so enamoured as I was of her fair forehead, neck, and arms, as well as the bright jet of her hair; but, to my great astonishment, I find they were all the effect of art. Her skin is so tarnished with this practice, that when she first wakes in a morning, she scarce seems young enough to be the mother of her whom I carried to bed the night before. I shall take the liberty to part with her by the first opportunity, unless her father will make her portion suitable to her real, not her assumed countenance. This I thought fit to let him and her know by your means. I am, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant.'

I cannot tell what the law, or the parents

of the lady will do for this injured gentleman, but must allow he has very much justice on his side. I have indeed very long observed this evil, and distinguished those of our women who wear their own, from those in borrowed complexions, by the Picts and the British. There does not need any great discernment to judge which are which. The British have a lively animated aspect; the Picts, though never so beautiful, have dead uninformed countenances. The muscles of a real face sometimes swell with soft passion, sudden surprise, and are flushed with agreeable confusions, according as the objects before them, or the ideas presented to them, affect their imagination. But the Picts behold all things with the same air, whether they are joyful or sad; the same fixed insensibility appears upon all occasions. A Pict, though she takes all that pains to invite the approach of lovers, is obliged to keep them at a certain distance; a sigh in a languishing lover, if fetched too near her, would dissolve a feature; and a kiss snatched by a forward one, might transfer the complexion of the mistress to the admirer. It is hard to speak of these false fair ones, without saying something uncomplaisant, but I would only recommend to them to consider how they like coming into a room new painted; they may assure themselves the near approach of a lady who uses this practice is much more offensive.

Will Honeycomb told us, one day, an adventure he once had with a Pict. This lady had wit, as well as beauty, at will; and made it her business to gain hearts, for no other reason but to rally the torments of her lovers. She would make great advances to ensnare men, but without any manner of scruple break off when there was no provocation. Her ill nature and vanity made my friend very easily proof against the charms of her wit and conversation; but her beauteous form, instead of being blemished by her falsehood and inconstancy, every day increased upon him, and she had new attractions every time he saw her. When she observed Will irrevocably her slave, she began to use him as such, and after many steps towards such a cruelty, she at last utterly banished him. The unhappy lover strove in vain, by servile epistles, to revoke his doom, till at length he was forced to the last refuge, a round sum of money to her maid. This corrupt attendant placed him early in the morning behind the hangings in her mistress's dressing-room. He stood very conveniently to observe, without being seen. The Pict begins the face she designed to wear that day, and I have heard him protest she had worked a full half hour before he knew her to be the same woman. As soon as he saw the dawn of that complexion for which he had so long languished, he thought fit to break from his concealment, repeating that verse of Cowley:

* *Epicene*, or *The Silent Woman*, a comedy by Ben Jonson.—It is much to be regretted that this fine comedy has for several years been totally neglected by the managers of our theatres. Unless the public taste has greatly declined from what it was, this excellent performance would certainly be more acceptable than the flippant vulgar nonsense with which we are so often annoyed from the pens of some of our modern dramatists.

'Th' adorning thee with so much art,
Is but a barbarous skill;
'Tis like the pois'ning of a dart,
Too apt before to kill.'

The Pict stood before him in the utmost confusion with the prettiest smirk imaginable on the finished side of her face, pale as ashes on the other. Honeycomb seized all her galley-pots and washes, and carried off his handkerchief full of brushes, scraps of Spanish wool, and phials of unguents. The lady went into the country: the lover was cured.

It is certain no faith ought to be kept with cheats, and an oath made to a Pict is of itself void. I would therefore exhort all the British ladies to single them out, nor do I know any but Lindamira who should be exempt from discovery; for her own complexion is so delicate that she ought to be allowed the covering it with paint, as a punishment for choosing to be the worst piece of art extant, instead of the masterpiece of nature. As for my part, who have no expectations from women, and consider them only as they are part of the species, I do not half so much fear offending a beauty as a woman of sense; I shall therefore produce several faces which have been in public these many years, and never appeared. It will be a very pretty entertainment in the playhouse, (when I have abolished this custom) to see so many ladies, when they first lay it down, incog, in their own faces.

In the mean time, as a pattern for improving their charms, let the sex study the agreeable Statira. Her features are enlivened with the cheerfulness of her mind, and good humour gives an alacrity to her eyes. She is graceful without affecting an air, and unconcerned without appearing careless. Her having no manner of art in her mind, makes her want none in her person.

How like is this lady, and how unlike is a Pict, to that description Dr. Donne gives of his mistress?

'—Her pure and eloquent blood
Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,
That one would almost say her body thought.'

ADVERTISEMENT.

A young gentlewoman of about nineteen years of age (bred in the family of a person of quality, lately deceased) who paints the finest flesh-colour, wants a place, and is to be heard of at the house of Mynheer Grotesque, a Dutch painter in Barbican.

N. B. She is also well skilled in the drapery part, and puts on hoods, and mixes ribands so as to suit the colours of the face with great art and success.

R.

No. 42.] *Wednesday, April 18, 1711.*

Garganum mugire putes nemus, aut mare Tuscum;
Tanto cum strepitu ludi spectantur, et artes,
Divitiæque peregrinæ; quibus oblitus actor
Cum stetit in scena, concurrat dextera lævæ.
Dixit adhuc aliquid? Nil sane. Quid placet ergo?
Lana Tarentino violas imitata veneno.

Hor. Lib. 2. Ep. i. 202.

IMITATED.

Loud as the wolves, on Orca's stormy steep,
Howl to the roarings of the northern deep:

Such is the shout, the long applauding note,
At Quin's high plume, or Oldfield's petticoat:
Or when from court a birth-day suit bestow'd
Sinks the lost actor in the tawdry load.

Booth enters—hark! the universal peal!—
But has he spoken—Not a syllable—

What shook the stage, and made the people stare?
Cato's long wig, flow'd gown, and lacker'd chair.

Pope.

ARISTOTLE has observed, that ordinary writers in tragedy endeavour to raise terror and pity in their audience, not by proper sentiments and expressions, but by the dresses and decorations of the stage. There is something of this kind very ridiculous in the English theatre. When the author has a mind to terrify us, it thunders; when he would make us melancholy, the stage is darkened. But among all our tragic artifices, I am the most offended at those which are made use of to inspire us with magnificent ideas of the persons that speak. The ordinary method of making a hero, is to clap a huge plume of feathers upon his head, which rises so very high, that there is often a greater length from his chin to the top of his head, than to the sole of his foot. One would believe, that we thought a great man and a tall man the same thing. This very much embarrasses the actor, who is forced to hold his neck extremely stiff and steady all the while he speaks; and notwithstanding any anxieties which he pretends for his mistress, his country, or his friends, one may see by his action, that his greatest care and concern is to keep the plume of feathers from falling off his head. For my own part, when I see a man uttering his complaints under such a mountain of feathers, I am apt to look upon him rather as an unfortunate lunatic than a distressed hero. As these superfluous ornaments upon the head make a great man, a princess generally receives her grandeur from those additional incumbrances that fall into her tail; I mean the broad sweeping train that follows her in all her motions, and finds constant employment for a boy who stands behind her to open and spread it to advantage. I do not know how others are affected at this sight, but I must confess, my eyes are wholly taken up with the page's part; and as for the queen, I am not so attentive to any thing she speaks, as to the right adjusting of her train, lest it should chance to trip up her heels, or incommode her, as she walks to and fro upon the stage. It is, in my opinion, a very odd spectacle, to see a queen venting her passion in a disordered motion, and a little boy taking care all the while that they do not ruffle the tail of her gown. The parts that the two persons act on the stage at the same time are very different. The princess is afraid lest she should incur the displeasure of the king her father, or lose the hero her lover, whilst her attendant is only concerned lest she should entangle her feet in her petticoat.

We are told, that an ancient tragic poet, to move the pity of his audience for his exiled kings and distressed heroes, used to

make the actors represent them in dresses and clothes that were thread-bare and decayed. This artifice for moving pity, seems as ill-contrived as that we have been speaking of, to inspire us with a great idea of the persons introduced upon the stage. In short, I would have our conceptions raised by the dignity of thought and sublimity of expression, rather than by a train of robes or a plume of feathers.

Another mechanical method of making great men, and adding dignity to kings and queens, is to accompany them with halberds and battle-axes. Two or three shifters of scenes, with the two candle-snuffers, make up a complete body of guards upon the English stage; and by the addition of a few porters dressed in red coats, can represent above a dozen legions. I have sometimes seen a couple of armies drawn up together upon the stage, when the poet has been disposed to do honour to his generals. It is impossible for the reader's imagination to multiply twenty men into such prodigious multitudes, or to fancy that two or three hundred thousand soldiers are fighting in a room of forty or fifty yards in compass. Incidents of such a nature should be told, not represented.

Non tamen intus
Digna geri promes in scenam: multa que tolles
Ex oculis, quæ mox narret facundia presens.
Hor. Ars Poet. ver. 182.

'Yet there are things improper for a scene,
Which men of judgment only will relate.'

Roscommon.

I should, therefore, in this particular, recommend to my countrymen the example of the French stage, where the kings and queens always appear unattended, and leave their guards behind the scenes. I should likewise be glad if we imitated the French in banishing from our stage the noise of drums, trumpets, and huzzas; which is sometimes so very great, that when there is a battle in the Haymarket theatre, one may hear it as far as Charing-cross.

I have here only touched upon those particulars which are made use of to raise and aggrandize the persons of a tragedy; and shall show, in another paper, the several expedients which are practised by authors of a vulgar genius to move terror, pity, or admiration, in their hearers.

The tailor and the painter often contribute to the success of a tragedy more than the poet. Scenes affect ordinary minds as much as speeches; and our actors are very sensible, that a well-dressed play has sometimes brought them as full audiences as a well-written one. The Italians have a very good phrase to express this art of imposing upon the spectators by appearances; they call it the '*Fourberia della scena*.' 'The knavery or trickish part of the drama.' But however the show and outside of the tragedy may work upon the vulgar, the more understanding part of the audience immediately see through it, and despise it.

A good poet will give the reader a more lively idea of an army or a battle in a description, than if he actually saw them drawn up in squadrons and battalions, or engaged in the confusion of a fight. Our minds should be opened to great conceptions, and inflamed with glorious sentiments by what the actor speaks more than by what he appears. Can all the trappings or equipage of a king or hero, give Brutus half that pomp and majesty which he receives from a few lines in Shakspeare?

C.

No. 43.] Thursday, April 19, 1711.

Hæ tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.
Virg. Æn. vi. 853.

Be these thy arts, to bid contention cease,
Chain up stern war, and give the nations peace;
O'er subject lands extend thy gentle sway,
And teach with iron rod the haughty to obey.

THERE are crowds of men whose great misfortune it is that they were not bound to mechanic arts or trades; it being absolutely necessary for them to be led by some continual task or employment. These are such as we commonly call dull fellows; persons, who for want of something to do, out of a certain vacancy of thought, rather than curiosity, are ever meddling with things for which they are unfit. I cannot give you a notion of them better, than by presenting you with a letter from a gentleman, who belongs to a society of this order of men, residing at Oxford.

'Oxford, April 13, 1711, 4 o'clock in the morning.

'SIR,—In some of your late speculations, I find some sketches towards a history of clubs; but you seem to me to show them in somewhat too ludicrous a light. I have well weighed that matter, and think, that the most important negotiations may best be carried on in such assemblies. I shall, therefore, for the good of mankind (which I trust you and I are equally concerned for) propose an institution of that nature for example sake.

'I must confess that the design and transactions of too many clubs are trifling, and manifestly of no consequence to the nation or public weal. Those I will give you up. But you must do me then the justice to own, that nothing can be more useful or laudable, than the scheme we go upon. To avoid nicknames and witticisms, we call ourselves the Hebdomadal Meeting. Our president continues for a year at least, and sometimes four or five; we are all grave, serious, designing men, in our way: we think it our duty, as far as in us lies, to take care the constitution receives no harm — *Ne quid detrimenti res capiat publica*.—To censure doctrines or facts, persons or things, which we do not like; to settle the nation at home, and carry on the war abroad, where and in what manner we see

fit. If other people are not of our opinion, we cannot help that. It were better they were. Moreover, we now and then condescend to direct, in some measure, the little affairs of our own university.

'Verily, Mr. Spectator, we are much offended at the act for importing French wines. A bottle or two of good solid edifying port at honest George's, made a night cheerful, and threw off reserve. But this plaguy French claret will not only cost us more money, but do us less good. Had we been aware of it before it had gone too far, I must tell you, we would have petitioned to be heard upon that subject. But let that pass.

'I must let you know likewise, good sir, that we look upon a certain northern prince's march, in conjunction with infidels, to be palpably against our good-will and liking; and, for all monsieur Palmquist, a most dangerous innovation: and we are by no means yet sure, that some people are not at the bottom of it. At least my own private letters leave room for a politician, well versed in matters of this nature, to suspect as much, as a penetrating friend of mine tells me.

'We think we have at least done the business with the malcontents in Hungary, and shall clap up a peace there.

'What the neutrality army is to do, or what the army in Flanders, and what two or three other princes, is not yet fully determined among us; and we wait impatiently for the coming in of the next Dyer, who you must know is our authentic intelligence, our Aristotle in politics. And, indeed, it is but fit there should be some dernier resort, the absolute decider of all controversies.

'We were lately informed that the gallant trained-bands had patrolled all night long about the streets of London. We indeed could not imagine any occasion for it, we guessed not a tittle on it beforehand, we were in nothing of the secret; and that city tradesmen, or their apprentices, should do duty or work through the holidays, we thought absolutely impossible. But Dyer being positive in it, and some letters from other people, who had talked with some who had it from those who should know, giving some countenance to it, the chairman reported from the committee appointed to examine into that affair, that it was possible there might be something in it. I have much more to say to you, but my two good friends and neighbours, Dominic and Slyboots, are just come in, and the coffee is ready. I am, in the meantime, Mr. Spectator, your admirer and humble servant,

'ABRAHAM FROTH.'

You may observe the turn of their minds tends only to novelty, and not satisfaction in any thing. It would be disappointment to them, to come to certainty in any thing, for that would gravel them, and put an end

to their inquiries, which dull fellows do not make for information, but for exercise. I do not know but this may be a very good way of accounting for what we frequently see, to wit, that dull fellows prove very good men of business. Business relieves them from their own natural heaviness, by furnishing them with what to do; whereas business to mercurial men, is an interruption from their real existence and happiness. Though the dull part of mankind are harmless in their amusements, it were to be wished they had no vacant time, because they usually undertake something that makes their wants conspicuous, by their manner of supplying them. You shall seldom find a dull fellow of good education, but if he happens to have any leisure upon his hands, will turn his head to one of those two amusements for all fools of eminence, politics or poetry. The former of these arts is the study of all dull people in general; but when dullness is lodged in a person of a quick animal life, it generally exerts itself in poetry. One might here mention a few military writers, who give great entertainment to the age, by reason that the stupidity of their heads is quickened by the alacrity of their hearts. This constitution in a dull fellow, gives vigour to nonsense, and makes the puddle boil, which would otherwise stagnate. The British Prince, that celebrated poem, which was written in the reign of King Charles the Second, and deservedly called by the wits of that age incomparable, was the effect of such a happy genius as we are speaking of. From among many other distichs no less to be quoted on this account, I cannot but recite the two following lines:

'A painted vest Prince Voltager had on,
Which from a naked Pict his grandsire won.'

Here, if the poet had not been vivacious, as well as stupid, he could not, in the warmth and hurry of nonsense, have been capable of forgetting that neither Prince Voltager, nor his grandfather, could strip a naked man of his doublet; but a fool of a colder constitution would have stayed to have flayed the Pict, and made buff of his skin, for the wearing of the conqueror.

To bring these observations to some use—

* Absurd as these lines are, they found an apologist in the late Edward King, esq. who, in his *Munimenta Antiqua*, after alluding to the practice of tattooing being prevalent amongst the Britons, Picts, and other northern nations, continues—"The figures thus marked, however, were as indelible as they were honourable; and they were even badges of their chieftains; inasmuch that it is not quite impossible to make sense of those lines, so elegantly censured in the *Spectator*, for their burlesque nonsense:—

'A painted vest Prince Voltager had on,
Which from a naked Pict his grandsire won.'

For amongst a people, such as the ancient Britons, who were so barbarous that, like the Scythians, they deemed the skulls of their enemies an ornament to their horse-trappings, it is not absolutely impossible to suppose that the skin of a poor painted Pict, as well as the skin of a Wolf, might be worn as a trophy!"

Munimenta Antiqua, vol. i. p. 186.

ful purpose of life, what I would propose should be, that we imitated those wise nations wherein every man learns some handicraft-work.—Would it not employ a beau, prettily enough, if, instead of eternally playing with a snuff-box, he spent some part of his time in making one? Such a method as this would very much conduce to the public emolument, by making every man living good for something; for there would then be no one member of human society, but would have some little pretension for some degree in it; like him who came to Will's coffee-house, upon the merit of having writ a posy of a ring. R.

No. 44.] *Friday, April 20, 1711.*

Tu quid ego, et populus mecum desideret, audi.

Hor. Ars Poet. ver. 153.

Now hear what every auditor expects.

Roscommon.

AMONG the several artifices which are put in practice by the poets to fill the minds of an audience with terror, the first place is due to thunder and lightning, which are often made use of at the descending of a god, or the rising of a ghost, at the vanishing of a devil, or at the death of a tyrant. I have known a bell introduced into several tragedies with good effect; and have seen the whole assembly in a very great alarm all the while it has been ringing. But there is nothing which delights and terrifies our English theatre so much as a ghost, especially when he appears in a bloody shirt. A spectre has very often saved a play, though he has done nothing but stalked across the stage, or rose through a cleft of it, and sunk again without speaking one word. There may be a proper season for these several terrors; and when they only come in as aids and assistances to the poet, they are not only to be excused, but to be applauded. Thus the sounding of the clock in *Venice Preserved*, makes the hearts of the whole audience quake; and conveys a stronger terror to the mind than it is possible for words to do. The appearance of the ghost in *Hamlet* is a master-piece in its kind, and wrought up with all the circumstances that can create either attention or horror. The mind of the reader is wonderfully prepared for his reception by the discourses that precede it. His dumb behaviour at his first entrance, strikes the imagination very strongly; but every time he enters, he is still more terrifying. Who can read the speech with which young *Hamlet* accosts him, without trembling.

* *Hor.* Look, my lord, it comes!

* *Ham.* Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd;

Bring with thee airs from heav'n, or blasts from hell;

Be thy intents wicked or charitable;

Thou com'st in such a questionable shape

That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee *Hamlet*,

King, Father, Royal Dane.—Oh! answer me.

Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell

Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their earments? Why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again? What may this mean?
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous?

I do not therefore find fault with the artifices above mentioned, when they are introduced with skill, and accompanied by proportionable sentiment and expressions in the writing.

For the moving of pity, our principle machine is the handkerchief: and indeed in our common tragedies, we should not know very often that the persons are in distress by any thing they say, if they did not from time to time apply their handkerchiefs to their eyes. Far be it from me to think of banishing this instrument of sorrow from the stage; I know a tragedy could not subsist without it: all that I would contend for, is to keep it from being misapplied. In a word, I would have the actor's tongue sympathize with his eyes.

A disconsolate mother, with a child in her hand, has frequently drawn compassion from the audience, and has therefore gained a place in several tragedies. A modern writer, that observed how this had took in other plays, being resolved to double the distress, and melt his audience twice as much as those before him had done, brought a princess upon the stage with a little boy in one hand, and a girl in the other. This too had a very good effect. A third poet being resolved to outwrite all his predecessors, a few years ago introduced three children with great success: and, as I am informed, a young gentleman, who is fully determined to break the most obdurate hearts, has a tragedy by him, where the first person that appears upon the stage is an afflicted widow in her mourning weeds, with half a dozen fatherless children attending her, like those that usually hang about the figure of *Charity*. Thus several incidents that are beautiful in a good writer, become ridiculous by falling into the hands of a bad one.

But among all our methods of moving pity or terror, there is none so absurd and barbarous, and what more exposes us to the contempt and ridicule of our neighbours, than that dreadful butchering of one another, which is very frequent upon the English stage. To delight in seeing men stabbed, poisoned, racked, or impaled, is certainly the sign of a cruel temper: and as this is often practised before the British audience, several French critics, who think these are grateful spectacles to us, take occasion from them to represent us a people that delight in blood. It is indeed very odd to see our stage strewed with carcasses in the last scenes of a tragedy; and to observe in the wardrobe of the playhouse several daggers, poniards, wheels, bowls for poison, and many other instruments of

death. Murders and executions are always transacted behind the scenes in the French theatre; which in general is very agreeable to the manners of a polite and civilized people: but as there are no exceptions to this rule on the French stage, it leads them into absurdities almost as ridiculous as that which falls under our present censure. I remember in the famous play of *Corneille*, written upon the subject of the *Horatii* and *Curiatii*; the fierce young hero who had overcome the *Curiatii* one after another, (instead of being congratulated by his sister for his victory, being upbraided by her for having slain her lover) in the height of his passion and resentment kills her. If any thing could extenuate so brutal an action, it would be the doing of it on a sudden, before the sentiments of nature, reason, or manhood could take place in him. However, to avoid public bloodshed, as soon as his passion is wrought to its height, he follows his sister to the whole length of the stage, and forbears killing her till they are both withdrawn behind the scenes. I must confess, had he murdered her before the audience, the indecency might have been greater; but as it is, it appears very unnatural, and looks like killing in cold blood. To give my opinion upon this case, the fact ought not to have been represented, but to have been told, if there was any occasion for it.

It may not be unacceptable to the reader to see how *Sophocles* has conducted a tragedy under the like delicate circumstances. *Orestes* was in the same condition with *Hamlet* in *Shakspeare*, his mother having murdered his father, and taken possession of his kingdom in conspiracy with her adulterer. That young prince, therefore, being determined to revenge his father's death upon those who filled his throne, conveys himself by a beautiful stratagem into his mother's apartment, with a resolution to kill her. But because such a spectacle would have been too shocking to the audience, this dreadful resolution is executed behind the scenes: the mother is heard calling out to her son for mercy; and the son answering her, that she showed no mercy to his father; after which she shrieks out she is wounded, and by what follows we find that she is slain. I do not remember that in any of our plays there are speeches made behind the scenes, though there are other instances of this nature to be met with in those of the ancients: and I believe my reader will agree with me, that there is something infinitely more affecting in this dreadful dialogue between the mother and her son behind the scenes, than could have been in any thing transacted before the audience. *Orestes* immediately after meets the usurper at the entrance of his palace; and by a very happy thought of the poet avoids killing him before the audience, by telling him that he should live some time in his present bitterness of soul

before he would despatch him, and by ordering him to retire into that part of the palace where he had slain his father, whose murder he would revenge in the very same place where it was committed. By this means the poet observes that decency, which *Horace* afterwards established by a rule, of forbearing to commit parricides or unnatural murders before the audience.

'Nec pueros coram populo Medea trucidet.'

Ars Poet. ver. 185.

'Let not Medea draw her murthering knife,
And spill her children's blood upon the stage.'

Roscommon.

The French have, therefore, refined too much upon *Horace's* rule, who never designed to banish all kinds of death from the stage: but only such as had too much horror in them, and which would have a better effect upon the audience when transacted behind the scenes. I would therefore recommend to my countrymen the practice of the ancient poets, who were very sparing of their public executions, and rather chose to perform them behind the scenes, if it could be done with as great an effect upon the audience. At the same time I must observe, that though the devoted persons of the tragedy were seldom slain before the audience, which has generally something ridiculous in it, their bodies were often produced after their death, which has always in it something melancholy or terrifying; so that the killing on the stage does not seem to have been avoided only as an indecency, but also as an improbability.

'Nec pueros coram populo Medea trucidet;
Aut humana palam coquat exta nefarius Atreus;
Ant in avem Progne vertatur, Cadmus in animum,
Quodeunque ostendis mihi sic, incredulis odi.'

Hor. Ars Poet.

'Medea must not draw her murthering knife,
Nor Atreus there his horrid feast prepare:
Cadmus and Progne's metamorphoses,
(She to a swallow turn'd, he to a snake;)
And whatsoever contradicts my sense,
I hate to see, and never can believe.'—*Roscommon.*

I have now gone through the several dramatic inventions which are made use of by the ignorant poets to supply the place of tragedy, and by the skilful to improve it; some of which I could wish entirely rejected, and the rest to be used with caution. It would be an endless task to consider comedy in the same light, and to mention the innumerable shifts that small wits put in practice to raise a laugh. *Bullock* in a short coat, and *Norris* in a long one, seldom fail of this effect. In ordinary comedies, a broad and a narrow brimmed hat are different characters. Sometimes the wit of the scene lies in a shoulder-belt, and sometimes in a pair of whiskers. A lover running about the stage, with his head peeping out of a barrel,* was thought a very good jest in *King Charles the Second's* time; and invented by one of the

* The comedy of *The Comical Revenge*, or *Love in a Tub*, by *Sir George Etherege*.

first wits of that age. But because ridicule is not so delicate as compassion, and because the objects that make us laugh are infinitely more numerous than those that make us weep, there is a much greater latitude for comic than tragic artifices, and by consequence a much greater indulgence to be allowed them. C.

No. 45.] *Saturday, April 21, 1711.*

Natio comoda est — Juv. Sat. iii. 100.
The nation is a company of players.

THERE is nothing which I desire more than a safe and honourable peace, though at the same time I am very apprehensive of many ill consequences that may attend it. I do not mean in regard to our politics, but to our manners. What an inundation of ribands and brocades will break in upon us? What peals of laughter and impertinence shall we be exposed to? For the prevention of those great evils, I could heartily wish that there was an act of parliament for prohibiting the importation of French fopperies.

The female inhabitants of our island have already received very strong impressions from this ludicrous nation, though by the length of the war (as there is no evil which has not some good attending it) they are pretty well worn out and forgotten. I remember the time when some of our well-bred country-women kept their valet de chambre; because, forsooth, a man was much more handy about them than one of their own sex. I myself have seen one of these male Abigails tripping about the room with a looking-glass in his hand, and combing his lady's hair a whole morning together. Whether or no there was any truth in the story of a lady's being got with child by one of these her hand-maids, I cannot tell; but I think at present the whole race of them is extinct in our own country.

About the time that several of our sex were taken into this kind of service, the ladies likewise brought up the fashion of receiving visits in their beds. It was then looked upon as a piece of ill-breeding for a woman to refuse to see a man because she was not stirring; and a porter would have been thought unfit for his place, that could have made so awkward an excuse. As I love to see every thing that is new, I once prevailed upon my friend Will Honeycomb to carry me along with him to one of these travelled ladies, desiring him at the same time to present me as a foreigner who could not speak English, that so I might not be obliged to bear a part in the discourse. The lady, though willing to appear undrest, had put on her best looks, and painted herself for our reception. Her hair appeared in a very nice disorder, as the night-gown which was thrown upon her shoulders was ruffled with great care. For my part, I am so shocked with every thing

which looks immodest in the fair sex, that I could not forbear taking off my eye from her when she moved in bed, and was in the greatest confusion imaginable every time she stirred a leg, or an arm. As the coquettes who introduced this custom grew old, they left it off by degrees; well knowing that a woman of threescore may kick and tumble her heart out, without making any impression.

Sempronia is at present the most professed admirer of the French nation, but is so modest as to admit her visitants no further than her toilet. It is a very odd sight that beautiful creature makes, when she is talking politics, with her tresses flowing about her shoulders, and examining that face in the glass, which does such execution upon all the male standers-by. How prettily does she divide her discourse between her women and her visitants! What sprightly transitions does she make from an opera or a sermon, to an ivory comb or a pin-cushion! How have I been pleased to see her interrupted in an account of her travels, by a message to her footman; and holding her tongue in the midst of a moral reflection, by applying the tip of it to a patch.

There is nothing which exposes a woman to greater dangers, than that gayety and airiness of temper, which are natural to most of the sex. It should be therefore the concern of every wise and virtuous woman to keep this sprightliness from degenerating into levity. On the contrary, the whole discourse and behaviour of the French is to make the sex more fantastical, or (as they are pleased to term it) more awakened, than is consistent either with virtue or discretion. To speak loud in public assemblies, to let every one hear you talk of things that should only be mentioned in private, or in whisper, are looked upon as parts of a refined education. At the same time, a blush is unfashionable, and silence more ill-bred than any thing that can be spoken. In short, discretion and modesty, which in all other ages and countries have been regarded as the greatest ornaments of the fair sex, are considered as the ingredients of narrow conversation, and family behaviour.

Some years ago I was at the tragedy of *Macbeth*, and unfortunately placed myself under a woman of quality that is since dead; who as I found by the noise she made was newly returned from France. A little before the rising of the curtain, she broke out into a loud soliloquy, 'When will the dear witches enter?' and immediately upon their first appearance, asked a lady that sat three boxes from her on her right hand, if those witches were not charming creatures. A little after, as Betterton was in one of the finest speeches of the play, she shook her fan at another lady, who sat as far on her left hand, and told her with a whisper that might be heard all over the pit, 'We must not expect to see Balloon to-night.' Not

long after, calling out to a young baronet by his name, who sat three seats before me, she asked him whether Macbeth's wife was still alive; and before he could give an answer, fell a talking of the ghost of Banquo. She had by this time formed a little audience to herself, and fixed the attention of all about her. But as I had a mind to hear the play, I got out of the sphere of her impertinence, and planted myself in one of the remotest corners of the pit.

This pretty childishness of behaviour is one of the most refined parts of coquetry, and is not to be attained in perfection by ladies that do not travel for their improvement. A natural and unconstrained behaviour has something in it so agreeable, that it is no wonder to see people endeavouring after it. But at the same time it is so very hard to hit, when it is not born with us, that people often make themselves ridiculous in attempting it.

A very ingenious French author tells us, that the ladies of the court of France, in his time, thought it ill-breeding, and a kind of female pedantry, to pronounce a hard word right: for which reason they took frequent occasion to use hard words, that they might show a politeness in murdering them. He further adds, that a lady of some quality at court having accidentally made use of a hard word in a proper place, and pronounced it right, the whole assembly was out of countenance for her.

I must however be so just as to own that there are many ladies who have travelled several thousands of miles without being the worse for it, and have brought home with them all the modesty, discretion, and good sense, that they went abroad with. As on the contrary, there are great numbers of travelled ladies who have lived all their days within the smoke of London. I have known a woman that never was out of the parish of St. James's betray as many foreign fopperies in her carriage, as she could have gleaned up in half the countries of Europe.

C.

No. 46.] Monday, April 23, 1711.

Non bene junctarum discordia semina rerum.

Ovid, Met. Lib. i. ver. 8.

The jarring seeds of ill-concerted things.

WHEN I want materials for this paper, it is my custom to go abroad in quest of game; and when I meet any proper subject, I take the first opportunity of setting down a hint upon paper. At the same time I look into the letters of my correspondents, and if I find any thing suggested in them that may afford matter of speculation, I likewise enter a minute of it in my collection of materials. By this means I frequently carry about me a whole sheetful of hints, that would look like a rhapsody of nonsense to any body but myself. There is nothing in them but obscurity and

confusion, raving and inconsistency. In short, they are my speculations in the first principles, that (like the world in its chaos) are void of all light, distinction, and order.

About a week since there happened to me a very odd accident, by reason of one of these my papers of minutes which I had accidentally dropped at Lloyd's coffee-house, where the auctions are usually kept. Before I missed it, there were a cluster of people who had found it, and were diverting themselves with it at one end of the coffee-house. It had raised so much laughter among them before I had observed what they were about, that I had not the courage to own it. The boy of the coffee-house, when they had done with it, carried it about in his hand, asking every body if they had dropped a written paper; but nobody challenging it, he was ordered by those merry gentlemen who had perused it, to get up into the auction pulpit, and read it to the whole room, that if any one would own it, they might. The boy accordingly mounted the pulpit, and with a very audible voice read as follows:

MINUTES.

Sir Roger de Coverley's country-seat—Yes, for I hate long speeches—Query, if a good Christian may be a conjurer—Childermas-day, salt-seller, house-dog, screech-owl, cricket—Mr. Thomas Inkle of London, in the good ship called the Achilles. Varico—*Agrescitque medendo*—Ghosts—The Lady's Library—Lion by trade a tailor—Dromedary called Bucephalus—Equipage the lady's *summum bonum*—Charles Lillie to be taken notice of—Short face a relief to envy—Redundancies in the three professions—King Latinus a recruit—Jew devouring a ham of bacon—Westminster-abbey—Grand Cairo—Procrastination—April fools—Blue boars, red lions, hogs in armour—Enter a King and two Fiddlers *solus*—Admission into the Ugly Club—Beauty how improveable—Families of true and false humour—The parrot's school-mistress—Face half Pict half British—No man to be a hero of a tragedy under six feet—Club of sighers—Letters from flower-pots, elbow-chairs, tapestry, figures, lion, thunder—The bell rings to the puppet-show—Old woman with a beard married to a smock-faced boy—My next coat to be turned up with blue—Fable of tongs and gridiron—Flower dyers—The Soldier's prayer—Thank ye for nothing, says the galley-pot—Pactolus in stockings with golden clocks to them—Bamboos, cudgels, drum-sticks—Slip of my lady's eldest daughter—The black mare with a star in her forehead—The barber's pole—Will Honeycomb's coat-pocket—Cæsar's behaviour and my own in parallel circumstances—Poem in patch-work—*Nulli gravis est percussus Achilles*—The female convent-cler—The ogle-master.

The reading of this paper made the whole coffee-house very merry; some of them concluded it was written by a madman; and others by somebody that had been taking notes out of the Spectator. One who had the appearance of a very substantial citizen, told us, with several political winks and nods, that he wished there was no more in the paper than was expressed in it: that for his part, he looked upon the dromedary, the gridiron, and the barber's pole to signify something more than what was usually meant by those words: and that he thought the coffee-man could not do better than to carry the paper to one of the secretaries of state. He further added, that he did not like the name of the outlandish man with the golden clock in his stockings. A young Oxford scholar, who chanced to be with his uncle at the coffee-house, discovered to us who this Pactolus was; and by that means turned the whole scheme of this worthy citizen into ridicule. While they were making their several conjectures upon this innocent paper, I reached out my arm to the boy as he was coming out of the pulpit, to give it me; which he did accordingly. This drew the eyes of the whole company upon me; but after having cast a cursory glance over it, and shook my head twice or thrice at the reading of it, I twisted it into a kind of match, and lighted my pipe with it. My profound silence, together with the steadiness of my countenance, and the gravity of my behaviour during this whole transaction, raised a very loud laugh on all sides of me; but as I had escaped all suspicion of being the author, I was very well satisfied, and applying myself to my pipe and the Postman, took no further notice of any thing that had passed about me.

My reader will find, that I have already made use of above half the contents of the foregoing paper: and will easily suppose, that those subjects which are yet untouched, were such provisions as I had made for his future entertainment. But as I have been unluckily prevented by this accident, I shall only give him the letters which related to the two last hints. The first of them I should not have published, were I not informed that there is many a husband who suffers very much in his private affairs by the indiscreet zeal of such a partner as is hereafter mentioned; to whom I may apply the barbarous inscription quoted by the Bishop of Salisbury in his travels; *'Dum nimis fida est facta est infida.'*—*'Through too much piety she became impious.'*

'SIR,--I am one of those unhappy men that are plagued with a gospel-gossip, so common among dissenters (especially friends.) Lectures in the morning, church-meetings at noon, and preparation sermons at night, take up so much of her time, it is very rare she knows what we have for din-

ner, unless when the preacher is to be at it. With him come a tribe, all brothers and sisters it seems; while others really such, are deemed no relations. If at any time I have her company alone, she is a mere sermon pop-gun, repeating and discharging texts, proofs, and applications, so perpetually, that however weary I may go to bed, the noise in my head will not let me sleep till towards morning. The misery of my case, and great numbers of such sufferers, plead your pity and speedy relief; otherwise must expect, in a little time, to be lectured, preached, and prayed into want, unless the happiness of being sooner talked to death prevent it. I am, &c.

'R. G.'

The second letter, relating to the ogling-master, runs thus:

'MR. SPECTATOR,--I am an Irish gentleman that have travelled many years for my improvement; during which time I have accomplished myself in the whole art of ogling, as it is at present practised in the polite nations of Europe. Being thus qualified, I intend, by the advice of my friends, to set up for an ogling-master. I teach the church-ogle in the morning, and the play-house ogle by candle-light. I have also brought over with me a new flying ogle fit for the ring; which I teach in the dusk of the evening, or in any hour of the day, by darkening one of my windows. I have a manuscript by me called The Complete Ogler, which I shall be ready to show you on any occasion. In the mean time I beg you will publish the substance of this letter in an advertisement, and you will very much oblige, Yours, &c.' C.

No. 47.] Tuesday, April 24, 1711.

Ride si sapias— Mart.

Laugh, if you are wise.

MR. HOBBS,* in his Discourse of Human Nature, which, in my humble opinion, is much the best of all his works, after some very curious observations upon laughter, concludes thus: *'The passion of laughter is nothing else but sudden glory arising from some sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly; for men laugh at the follies of themselves past, when they come suddenly to remembrance, except they bring with them any present dishonour.'*

According to this author, therefore, when we hear a man laugh excessively, instead of saying he is very merry, we ought to tell him he is very proud. And indeed, if we

* Thomas Hobbs of Malmsbury. "He is commonly represented," says Granger, "as a sceptic in religion, and a dogmatist in philosophy; but he was a dogmatist in both. The main principles of his Leviathan are as little founded in moral or evangelical truth, as the rules he has laid down for squaring the circle are in mathematical demonstration." He died in 1679, at the advanced age of 92.

look into the bottom of this matter, we shall meet with many observations to confirm us in this opinion. Every one laughs at somebody that is in an inferior state of folly to himself. It was formerly the custom for every great house in England to keep a tame fool dressed in petticoats, that the heir of the family might have an opportunity of joking upon him, and diverting himself with his absurdities. For the same reason, idiots are still in request in most of the courts of Germany, where there is not a prince of any great magnificence, who has not two or three dressed, distinguished, undisputed fools in his retinue, whom the rest of the courtiers are always breaking their jests upon.

The Dutch, who are more famous for their industry and application, than for wit and humour, hang up in several of their streets what they call the sign of the Gaper, that is, the head of an idiot dressed in a cap and bells, and gaping in a most immoderate manner. This is a standing jest at Amsterdam.

Thus every one diverts himself with some person or other that is below him in point of understanding, and triumphs in the superiority of his genius, whilst he has such objects of derision before his eyes. Mr. Dennis has very well expressed this in a couple of humorous lines, which are part of a translation of a satire in Monsieur Boileau:

'Thus one fool lolls his tongue out at another,
And shakes his empty noddle at his brother.'

Mr. Hobbs's reflection gives us the reason why the insignificant people above-mentioned are stirrers-up of laughter among men of a gross taste: but as the more understanding part of mankind do not find their risibility affected by such ordinary objects, it may be worth the while to examine into the several provocatives of laughter, in men of superior sense and knowledge.

In the first place I must observe, that there is a set of merry drolls, whom the common people of all countries admire, and seem to love so well, 'that they could eat them;' according to the old proverb: I mean those circumforaneous wits whom every nation calls by the name of that dish of meat which it loves best: in Holland they are termed Pickled Herrings; in France, Jean Pottage; in Italy, Macaronies; and in Great Britain, Jack Puddings. These merry wags, from whatsoever food they receive their titles, that they may make their audiences laugh, always appear in a fool's coat, and commit such blunders and mistakes in every step they take, and every word they utter, as those who listen to them would be ashamed of.

But this little triumph of the understanding under the disguise of laughter, is no where more visible than in that custom which prevails every where among us on the first day of the present month, when

every body takes it into his head to make as many fools as he can. In proportion as there are more follies discovered, so there is more laughter raised on this day than on any other in the whole year. A neighbour of mine, who is a haberdasher by trade, and a very shallow conceited fellow, makes his boast that for these ten years successively he has not made less than a hundred April fools. My landlady had a falling out with him about a fortnight ago, for sending every one of her children upon some sleeveless errand, as she terms it. Her eldest son went to buy a half-penny-worth of ink at a shoemaker's; the eldest daughter was despatched half a mile to see a monster, and, in short, the whole family of innocent children made April fools. Nay, my landlady herself did not escape him. This empty fellow has laughed upon these conceits ever since.

This art of wit is well enough, when confined to one day in a twelvemonth: but there is an ingenious tribe of men sprung up of late years, who are for making April fools every day in the year. These gentlemen are commonly distinguished by the name of Biters: a race of men that are perpetually employed in laughing at those mistakes which are of their own production.

Thus we see, in proportion as one man is more refined than another, he chooses his fool out of a lower or higher class of mankind, or to speak in a more philosophical language, that secret elation or pride of heart, which is generally called laughter, arises in him, from his comparing himself with an object below him, whether it so happens that it be a natural or an artificial fool. It is, indeed, very possible, that the persons we laugh at may in the main of their characters be much wiser men than ourselves; but if they would have us laugh at them, they must fall short of us in those respects which stir up this passion.

I am afraid I shall appear too abstracted in my speculations, if I show, that when a man of wit makes us laugh, it is by betraying some oddness or infirmity in his own character, or in the representation which he makes of others; and that when we laugh at a brute, or even at an inanimate thing, it is at some action or incident that bears a remote analogy to any blunder or absurdity in reasonable creatures.

But to come into common life: I shall pass by the consideration of those stage coxcombs that are able to shake a whole audience, and take notice of a particular sort of men who are such provokers of mirth in conversation, that it is impossible for a club or merry meeting to subsist without them; I mean those honest gentlemen that are always exposed to the wit and railery of their well-wishers and companions; that are pelted by men, women, and children, friends and foes, and, in a word, stand as butts in conversation, for every

one to shoot at that pleases. I know several of these butts who are men of wit and sense, though by some odd turn of humour, some unlucky cast in their person or behaviour, they have always the misfortune to make the company merry. The truth of it is, a man is not qualified for a butt, who has not a good deal of wit and vivacity, even in the ridiculous side of his character. A stupid butt is only fit for the conversation of ordinary people: men of wit require one that will give them play, and bestir himself in the absurd part of his behaviour. A butt with these accomplishments frequently gets the laugh of his side, and turns the ridicule upon him that attacks him. Sir John Falstaff was a hero of this species, and gives a good description of himself in his capacity of a butt, after the following manner: 'Men of all sorts,' says that merry knight, 'take a pride to gird at me. The brain of man is not able to invent any thing that tends to laughter more than I invent, or is invented on me. I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men.'

C.

No. 48.] *Wednesday, April 25, 1711.*

—Per multas aditum, sibi sæpe figuræ
Repperit—*Ovid, Met. xiv. 652.*
Through various shapes he often finds access.

My correspondents take it ill if I do not, from time to time, let them know I have received their letters. The most effectual way will be to publish some of them that are upon important subjects; which I shall introduce with a letter of my own that I writ a fortnight ago to a fraternity who thought fit to make me an honorary member.

'To the President and Fellows of the Ugly Club.'

'MAY IT PLEASE YOUR DEFORMITIES,

'I have received the notification of the honour you have done me, in admitting me into your society. I acknowledge my want of merit, and for that reason shall endeavour at all times to make up my own failures, by introducing and recommending to the club persons of more undoubted qualifications than I can pretend to. I shall next week come down in the stage-coach, in order to take my seat at the board; and shall bring with me a candidate of each sex. The persons I shall present to you, are an old beau and a modern Pict. If they are not so eminently gifted by nature as our assembly expects, give me leave to say their acquired ugliness is greater than any that has ever appeared before you. The beau has varied his dress every day of his life for these thirty years past, and still added to the deformity he was born with. The Pict has still greater merit towards us, and has, ever since she came to years of discretion, deserted the handsome party, and

taken all possible pains to acquire the face in which I shall present her to your consideration and favour. I am, gentlemen, your most obliged humble servant,

'THE SPECTATOR.

'P. S. I desire to know whether you admit people of quality.'

'April 17.

'MR. SPECTATOR,—To show you there are among us of the vain weak sex, some that have honesty and fortitude enough to dare to be ugly, and willing to be thought so, I apply myself to you, to beg your interest and recommendation to the Ugly Club. If my own word will not be taken (though in this case a woman's may) I can bring credible witnesses of my qualifications for their company, whether they insist upon hair, forehead, eyes, cheeks, or chin; to which I must add, that I find it easier to lean to my left side, than to my right. I hope I am in all respects agreeable, and for humour and mirth, I will keep up to the president himself. All the favour I will pretend to is, that as I am the first woman who has appeared desirous of good company and agreeable conversation, I may take and keep the upper end of the table. And indeed I think they want a carver, which I can be, after as ugly a manner as they could wish. I desire your thoughts of my claim as soon as you can. Add to my features the length of my face, which is full half-yard; though I never knew the reason of it till you gave one for the shortness of yours. If I knew a name ugly enough to belong to the above described face, I would feign one; but, to my unspeakable misfortune, my name is the only disagreeable prettiness about me; so prythee make one for me that signifies all the deformity in the world. You understand Latin, but be sure bring it in with my being, in the sincerity of my heart, your most frightful admirer, and servant,

'HECATISSA.'

'MR. SPECTATOR,—I read your discourse upon affectation, and from the remarks made in it, examined my own heart so strictly, that I thought I had found out its most secret avenues, with a resolution to be aware of them for the future. But, alas! to my sorrow I now understand that I have several follies which I do not know the root of. I am an old fellow, and extremely troubled with the gout; but having always a strong vanity towards being pleasing in the eyes of women, I never have a moment's ease, but I am mounted in high-heeled shoes, with a glazed wax-leather instep. Two days after a severe fit, I was invited to a friend's house in the city, where I believed I should see ladies; and with my usual complaisance, crippled myself to wait upon them. A very sumptuous table, agreeable company, and kind reception, were but so many importunate additions to the torments I was in. A gentleman of the family observed my condition; and soon after the

queen's health, he in the presence of the whole company, with his own hands, degraded me into an old pair of his own shoes. This operation before fine ladies, to me (who am by nature a cockcomb) was suffered with the same reluctance as they admit the help of men in their greatest extremity. The return of ease made me forgive the rough obligation laid on me, which at that time relieved my body from a distemper, and will my mind for ever from a folly. For the charity received, I return my thanks this way. Your most humble servant.'

'Epping, April 18.

'SIR,—We have your papers here the morning they come out, and we have been very well entertained with your last, upon the false ornaments of persons who represent heroes in a tragedy. What made your speculation come very seasonably among us, that we have now at this place a company of strollers, who are far from offending in the impertinent splendour of the drama. They are so far from falling into these false gallantries, that the stage is here in its original situation of a cart. Alexander the Great was acted by a fellow in a paper cravat. The next day the Earl of Essex seemed to have no distress but his poverty; and my Lord Foppington the same morning wanted any better means to show himself a fop, than by wearing stockings of different colours. In a word, though they have had a full barn for many days together, our itinerants are so wretchedly poor, that without you can prevail to send us the furniture you forbid at the play-house, the heroes appear only like sturdy beggars, and the heroines gypsies. We have had but one part which was performed and dressed with propriety, and that was justice Clodpate. This was so well done, that it offended Mr. Justice Overdo, who in the midst of our whole audience, was (like Quixote in the puppet-show) so highly provoked, that he told them, if they would move compassion, it should be in their own persons, and not in the characters of distressed princes and potentates. He told them if they were so good at finding the way to people's hearts, they should do it at the end of bridges or church porches, in their proper vocation of beggars. This, the justice says, they must expect, since they could not be contented to act heathen warriors, and such fellows as Alexander, but must presume to make a mockery of one of the quorum. Your servant.'

R.

No. 49.] *Thursday, April 26, 1711.*

—Hominem pagina nostra sapit.—*Mart.*
Men and their manners I describe.

It is very natural for a man who is not turned for mirthful meetings of men, or assemblies of the fair sex, to delight in that sort of conversation which we find in cof-

fee-houses. Here a man of my temper is in his element; for if he cannot talk, he can still be more agreeable to his company, as well as pleased in himself, in being only a hearer. It is a secret known but to few, yet of no small use in the conduct of life, that when you fall into a man's conversation, the first thing you should consider is, whether he has a greater inclination to hear you, or that you should hear him. The latter is the more general desire, and I know very able flatterers that never speak a word in praise of the persons from whom they obtain daily favours, but still practise a skilful attention to whatever is uttered by those with whom they converse. We are very curious to observe the behaviour of great men and their clients: but the same passions and interests move men in lower spheres; and I (that have nothing else to do but make observations) see in every parish, street, lane, and alley of this populous city, a little potentate that has his court and his flatterers, who lay snares for his affection and favour, by the same arts that are practised upon men in higher stations.

In the place I most usually frequent, men differ rather in the time of day in which they make a figure, than in any real greatness above one another. I, who am at the coffee-house at six in the morning, know that my friend Beaver, the haberdasher, has a levee of more undissembled friends and admirers, than most of the courtiers or generals of Great Britain. Every man about him has, perhaps, a newspaper in his hand; but none can pretend to guess what step will be taken in any one court of Europe, till Mr. Beaver has thrown down his pipe, and declares what measures the allies must enter into upon this new posture of affairs. Our coffee-house is near one of the inns of court, and Beaver has the audience and admiration of his neighbours from six till within a quarter of eight, at which time he is interrupted by the students of the house; some of whom are ready dressed for Westminster at eight in the morning, with faces as busy as if they were retained in every cause there; and others come in their night-gowns to saunter away their time, as if they never designed to go thither. I do not know that I meet in any of my walks, objects which move both my spleen and laughter so effectually, as those young fellows at the Grecian, Squire's, Searle's, and all other coffee-houses adjacent to the law, who rise early for no other purpose but to publish their laziness. One would think these young virtuosos take a gay cap and slippers, with a scarf and party-coloured gown, to be ensigns of dignity; for the vain things approach each other with an air, which shows they regard one another for their vestments. I have observed that the superiority among these proceeds from an opinion of gallantry and fashion. The gentleman in the strawberry sash, who presides so much over the rest, has, it seems, subscribed to every opera

this last winter, and is supposed to receive favours from one of the actresses.

When the day grows too busy for these gentlemen to enjoy any longer the pleasures of their dishabille, with any manner of confidence, they give place to men who have business or good sense in their faces, and come to the coffee-house either to transact affairs, or enjoy conversation. The persons to whose behaviour and discourse I have most regard, are such as are between these two sorts of men; such as have not spirits too active to be happy and well pleased in a private condition, nor complexions too warm to make them neglect the duties and relations of life. Of these sort of men consist the worthier part of mankind; of these are all good fathers, generous brothers, sincere friends, and faithful subjects. Their entertainments are derived rather from reason than imagination; which is the cause that there is no impatience or instability in their speech or action. You see in their countenances they are at home, and in quiet possession of the present instant as it passes, without desiring to quicken it by gratifying any passion, or prosecuting any new design. These are the men formed for society, and those little communities which we express by the word neighbourhood.

The coffee-house is the place of rendezvous to all that live near it, who are thus turned to relish calm and ordinary life. Eubulus presides over the middle hours of the day, when this assembly of men meet together. He enjoys a great fortune handsomely, without launching into expense; and exerts many noble and useful qualities, without appearing in any public employment. His wisdom and knowledge are serviceable to all that think fit to make use of them; and he does the office of a counsel, a judge, an executor, and a friend to all his acquaintance, not only without the profits which attend such offices, but also without the deference and homage which are usually paid to them. The giving of thanks is displeasing to him. The greatest gratitude you can show him, is to let him see you are a better man for his services; and that you are as ready to oblige others, as he is to oblige you.

In the private exigencies of his friends, he lends at legal value considerable sums which he might highly increase by rolling in the public stocks. He does not consider in whose hands his money will improve most, but where it will do most good.

Eubulus has so great an authority in his little diurnal audience, that when he shakes his head at any piece of public news, they all of them appear dejected; and on the contrary, go home to their dinners with a good stomach and cheerful aspect when Eubulus seems to intimate that things go well. Nay, their veneration towards him is so great, that when they are in other company they speak and act after him: are

wise in his sentences, and are no sooner sat down at their own tables, but they hope or fear, rejoice or despond, as they saw him do at the coffee-house. In a word, every man is Eubulus as soon as his back is turned.

Having here given an account of the several reigns that succeed each other from day-break till dinner-time, I shall mention the monarchs of the afternoon on another occasion, and shut up the whole series of them with the history of Tom the Tyrant;* who, as the first minister of the coffee-house, takes the government upon him between the hours of eleven and twelve at night, and gives his orders in the most arbitrary manner to the servants below him, as to the disposition of liquors, coals, and cinders.

R.

No. 50.] *Friday, April 27, 1711.*

Nunquam aliud natura, aliud sapientia dixit.
Juv. Sat. xiv. 321.

Good taste and nature always speak the same.

WHEN the four Indian kings were in this country, about a twelvemonth ago, I often mixed with the rabble and followed them a whole day together, being wonderfully struck with the sight of every thing that is new or uncommon. I have, since their departure, employed a friend to make many inquiries of their landlord the upholsterer, relating to their manners and conversation, as also concerning the remarks which they made in this country: for, next to the forming a right notion of such strangers, I should be desirous of learning what ideas they have conceived of us.

The upholsterer finding my friend very inquisitive about these his lodgers, brought him some time since a little bundle of papers, which he assured him were written by king Sa Ga Yean Qua Rash Tow, and, as he supposes, left behind by some mistake. These papers are now translated, and contain abundance of very odd observations, which I find this little fraternity of kings made during their stay in the isle of Great Britain. I shall present my reader with a short specimen of them in this paper, and may perhaps communicate more to him hereafter. In the article of London are the following words, which without doubt are meant of the church of St. Paul:

‘On the most rising part of the town there stands a huge house, big enough to contain the whole nation of which I am king. Our good brother E Tow O Koam, king of the Rivers, is of opinion it was made by the hands of that great God to whom it is consecrated. The kings of Granajah and of the Six Nations believe that it was created with the earth, and produced on the same day with the sun and moon. But for my own part, by the best information that I could get of this matter, I am apt to

* The waiter of that coffee-house, frequently nicknamed Sir Thomas.

think that this prodigious pile was fashioned into the shape it now bears by several tools and instruments, of which they have a wonderful variety in this country. It was probably at first a huge misshapen rock, that grew upon the top of the hill, which the natives of the country (after having cut it into a kind of regular figure) bored and hollowed with incredible pains and industry, till they had wrought in it all those beautiful vaults and caverns into which it is divided at this day. As soon as this rock was thus curiously scooped to their liking, a prodigious number of hands must have been employed in chipping the outside of it, which is now as smooth as the surface of a pebble; and is in several places hewn out into pillars that stand like the trunks of so many trees bound about the top with garlands of leaves. It is probable that when this great work was begun, which must have been many hundred years ago, there was some religion among this people; for they give it the name of a temple, and have a tradition that it was designed for men to pay their devotions in. And indeed there are several reasons which make us think that the natives of this country had formerly among them some sort of worship; for they set apart every seventh day as sacred: but upon my going into one of these holy houses on that day, I could not observe any circumstance of devotion in their behaviour. There was indeed a man in black, who was mounted above the rest, and seemed to utter something with a great deal of vehemence; but as for those underneath him, instead of paying their worship to the deity of the place, they were most of them bowing and curtsying to one another, and a considerable number of them fast asleep.

'The queen of the country appointed two men to attend us, that had enough of our language to make themselves understood in some few particulars. But we soon perceived these two were great enemies to one another, and did not always agree in the same story. We could make shift to gather out of one of them, that this island was very much infested with a monstrous kind of animals, in the shape of men, called whigs, and he often told us, that he hoped we should meet with none of them in our way, for that if we did, they would be apt to knock us down for being kings.

'Our other interpreter used to talk very much of a kind of animal called a tory, that was as great a monster as the whig, and would treat us as ill for being foreigners. These two creatures, it seems are born with a secret antipathy to one another, and engage when they meet as naturally as the elephant and the rhinoceros. But as we saw none of either of these species, we are apt to think that our guides deceived us with misrepresentations and fictions, and amused us with an account of such monsters as are not really in their country.

'These particulars we made a shift to

pick out from the discourse of our interpreters; which we put together as well as we could, being able to understand but here and there a word of what they said, and afterwards making up the meaning of it among ourselves. The men of the country are very cunning and ingenious in handicraft works, but withal so very idle, that we often saw young, lusty, rawboned fellows, carried up and down the streets in little covered rooms, by a couple of porters, who are hired for that service. Their dress is likewise very barbarous, for they almost strangle themselves about the neck, and bind their bodies with several ligatures, that we are apt to think are the occasion of several distempers among them, which our country is entirely free from. Instead of those beautiful feathers with which we adorn our heads, they often buy up a monstrous bush of hair, which covers their heads, and falls down in a large fleece below the middle of their backs; and with which they walk up and down the streets, and are as proud of it as if it was of their own growth.

'We were invited to one of their public diversions, where we hoped to have seen the great men of their country running down a stag, or pitching a bar, that we might have discovered who were the persons of the greatest abilities among them; but instead of that, they conveyed us into a huge room lighted up with abundance of candles, where this lazy people sat still above three hours to see several feats of ingenuity performed by others, who it seems were paid for it.

'As for the women of the country, not being able to talk with them, we could only make our remarks upon them at a distance. They let the hair of their heads grow to a great length; but as the men make a great show with heads of hair that are none of their own, the women, who they say have very fine heads of hair, tie it up in a knot, and cover it from being seen. The women look like angels, and would be more beautiful than the sun, were it not for little black spots that are apt to break out in their faces, and sometimes rise in very odd figures. I have observed that those little blemishes wear off very soon; but when they disappear in one part of the face, they are very apt to break out in another, inasmuch that I have seen a spot upon the forehead in the afternoon, which was upon the chin in the morning.'

The author then proceeds to show the absurdity of breeches and petticoats, with many other curious observations, which I shall reserve for another occasion. I cannot however conclude this paper without taking notice, that amidst these wild remarks there now and then appears something very reasonable. I cannot likewise forbear observing, that we are all guilty in some measure of the same narrow way of thinking which we meet with in this abstract of the

Indian journal, when we fancy the customs, dresses, and manners of other countries are ridiculous and extravagant, if they do not resemble those of our own. C.

No. 51.] *Saturday, April 28, 1711.*

Torquet ab obscœnis jam nunc sermonibus aures.

Hor. Lib. 2. Ep. 1. 127.

He from the taste obscene reclaims our youth.—*Pope.*

‘MR. SPECTATOR,—My fortune, quality, and person, are such as render me as conspicuous as any young woman in town. It is in my power to enjoy it in all its vanities, but I have from a very careful education, contracted a great aversion to the forward air and fashion which is practised in all public places and assemblies. I attribute this very much to the style and manner of our plays. I was last night at the Funeral,* where a confident lover in the play speaking of his mistress, cries out—“Oh that Harriet! to fold these arms about the waist of that beauteous, struggling, and at last yielding fair!” Such an image as this ought by no means to be presented to a chaste and regular audience. I expect your opinion of this sentence, and recommend to your consideration, as a Spectator, the conduct of the stage at present with relation to chastity and modesty. I am, Sir, your constant reader and well-wisher.’

The complaint of this young lady is so just, that the offence is gross enough to have displeased persons who cannot pretend to that delicacy and modesty, of which she is mistress. But there is a great deal to be said in behalf of an author. If the audience would but consider the difficulty of keeping up a sprightly dialogue for five acts together, they would allow a writer, when he wants wit, and cannot please any otherwise, to help it out with a little smuttiness. I will answer for the poets, that no one ever writ bawdry, for any other reason but dearth of invention. When the author cannot strike out of himself any more of that which he has superior to those who make up the bulk of his audience, his natural resource is to that which he has in common with them; and a description which gratifies a sensual appetite will please, when the author has nothing about him to delight a refined imagination. It is to such a poverty we must impute this and all other sentences in plays, which are of this kind, and which are commonly termed luscious expressions.

This expedient to supply the deficiencies of wit, has been used more or less by most of the authors who have succeeded on the stage; though I know but one who has professedly writ a play upon the basis of the

desire of multiplying our species, and that is the polite Sir George Etheridge; if I understand what the lady would be at, in the play called *She would if She could*. Other poets have here and there given an intimation that there is this design, under all the disguises and affectations which a lady may put on; but no author, except this, has made sure work of it, and put the imaginations of the audience upon this one purpose from the beginning to the end of the comedy. It has always fared accordingly; for whether it be that all who go to this piece would if they could, or that the innocents go to it, to guess only what she would if she could, the play has always been well received.

It lifts a heavy empty sentence, when there is added to it a lascivious gesture of body; and when it is too low to be raised even by that, a flat meaning is enlivened by making it a double one. Writers who want genius, never fail of keeping this secret in reserve, to create a laugh or raise a clap. I, who know nothing of women but from seeing plays, can give great guesses at the whole structure of the fair sex, by being innocently placed in the pit, and insulted by the petticoats of their dancers; the advantages of whose pretty persons are a great help to a dull play. When a poet flags in writing lusciously, a pretty girl can move lasciviously, and have the same good consequence for the author. Dull poets in this case use their audiences, as dull parasites do their patrons; when they cannot longer divert them with their wit or humour, they bait their ears with something which is agreeable to their temper, though below their understanding. Apicius cannot resist being pleased, if you give him an account of a delicious meal; or Clodius, if you describe a wanton beauty; though at the same time, if you do not awake those inclinations in them, no men are better judges of what is just and delicate in conversation. But as I have before observed, it is easier to talk to the man than to the man of sense.

It is remarkable that the writers of least learning are best skilled in the luscious way. The poetesses of the age have done wonders in this kind; and we are obliged to the lady who writ Ibrahim,† for introducing a preparatory scene to the very action, when the emperor throws his handkerchief as a signal for his mistress to follow him into the most retired part of the seraglio. It must be confessed his Turkish majesty went off with a good air, but methought we made but a sad figure who waited without. This ingenious gentlewoman, in this piece of bawdry, refined upon an author of the same sex;‡ who, in the *Rover*, makes a country squire strip to his Holland drawers. For Blunt is disappointed, and the emperor is understood to go on to the utmost. The pleasantries of stripping

* The Funeral, or Grief Alamode, a comedy by Sir Richard Steele.—Much to the honour of Sir Richard, he attended to the letter of his fair correspondent, and in a subsequent edition of his comedy, expunged all the obnoxious passages.

† Mrs. Mary Pix.

‡ Mrs. Aphara Behn.

almost naked has been since practised (where indeed it should have been begun) very successfully at Bartholomew fair.*

It is not to be here omitted, that in one of the above-mentioned female compositions, the Rover is very frequently sent on the same errand; as I take it, above once every act. This is not wholly unnatural; for, they say, the men authors draw themselves in their chief characters, and the women writers may be allowed the same liberty. Thus, as the male wit gives his hero a great fortune, the female gives her heroine a good gallant at the end of the play. But, indeed, there is hardly a play one can go to, but the hero or fine gentleman of it struts off upon the same account, and leaves us to consider what good office he has put us to, or to employ ourselves as we please. To be plain, a man who frequents plays would have a very respectful notion of himself, were he to recollect how often he has been used as a pimp to ravishing tyrants, or successful rakes. When the actors make their exit on this good occasion, the ladies are sure to have an examining glance from the pit, to see how they relish what passes; and a few lewd fools are very ready to employ their talents upon the composure or freedom of their looks. Such incidents as these make some ladies wholly absent themselves from the playhouse; and others never miss the first day of a play, lest it should prove too luscious to admit their going with any countenance to it on the second.

If men of wit, who think fit to write for the stage, instead of this pitiful way of giving delight, would turn their thoughts upon raising it from such good natural impulses as are in the audience, but are choked up by vice and luxury, they would not only please, but befriend us at the same time. If a man had a mind to be new in his way of writing, might not he who is represented as a fine gentleman, though he betrays the honour and bed of his neighbour and friend, and lies with half the women in the play, and is at last rewarded with her of the best character in it; I say, upon giving the comedy another cast, might not such a one divert the audience quite as well, if at the catastrophe he were found out for a traitor, and met with contempt accordingly? There is seldom a person devoted to above one darling vice at a time, so that there is room enough to catch at men's hearts to their good and advantage, if the poets will attempt it with the honesty which becomes their character.

There is no man who loves his bottle or his mistress, in a manner so very abandoned, as not to be capable of relishing an agreeable character, that is in no way a slave to either of those pursuits. A man that is temperate, generous, valiant, chaste,

faithful, and honest, may, at the same time, have wit, humour, mirth, good breeding, and gallantry. While he exerts these latter qualities, twenty occasions might be invented to show he is master of the other noble virtues. Such characters would smite and reprove the heart of a man of sense, when he is given up to his pleasures. He would see he has been mistaken all this while, and be convinced that a sound constitution and an innocent mind, are the true ingredients for becoming and enjoying life. All men of true taste would call a man of wit, who should turn his ambition this way, a friend and benefactor to his country; but I am at a loss what name they would give him, who makes use of his capacity for contrary purposes. R.

No. 52.] Monday, April 30, 1711.

Omnes ut tecum meritis pro talibus annos
Exigat, et pulchra faciat te prole parentem.

Virg. Æn. l. 78.

To crown thy worth, she shall be ever thine,
And make thee father of a beauteous line.

AN ingenious correspondent, like a sprightly wife, will always have the last word. I did not think my last letter to the deformed fraternity would have occasioned any answer, especially since I had promised them so sudden a visit; but as they think they cannot show too great a veneration for my person, they have already sent me up an answer. As to the proposal of a marriage between myself and the matchless Hecatissa, I have but one objection to it; which is, that all the society will expect to be acquainted with her; and who can be sure of keeping a woman's heart long, where she may have so much choice? I am the more alarmed at this, because the lady seems particularly smitten with men of their make.

I believe I shall set my heart upon her; and think never the worse of my mistress for an epigram a smart fellow writ, as he thought, against her; it does but the more recommend her to me. At the same time I cannot but discover that his malice is stolen from Martial:

'Tacta places, audita places, si non videare,
Tota places; neutro, si videare, places.'

'Whilst in the dark on thy soft hand I hung,
And heard the tempting Syren in thy tongue,
What flames, what darts, what anguish, I endur'd!
But when the candle enter'd, I was cur'd.'

* Your letter to us we have received, as a signal mark of your favour and brotherly affection. We shall be heartily glad to see your short face in Oxford: and since the wisdom of our legislature has been immortalized in your speculations, and our personal deformities in some sort by you recorded to all posterity; we hold ourselves in gratitude bound to receive, with the highest respect, all such persons as for their extraordinary merit you shall think fit, from time to time, to recommend unto the board. As

* The appearance of Lady Mary, a rope-dancer at Bartholomew fair, gave occasion to this proper animadversion.

for the Pictish damsel, we have an easy chair prepared at the upper end of the table; which we doubt not but she will grace with a very hideous aspect, and much better become the seat in the native and unaffected uncomeliness of her person, than with all the superficial airs of the pencil, which (as you have very ingeniously observed) vanish with a breath, and the most innocent adorer may deface the shrine with a salutation, and in the literal sense of our poets, snatch and imprint his balmy kisses, and devour her melting lips. In short, the only faces of the Pictish kind that will endure the weather, must be of Dr. Carbuncle's die; though his, in truth, has cost him a world the painting; but then he boasts with Zeuxes, in *æternitatem pingo*; and oft jocosely tells the fair ones, would they acquire colours that would stand kissing, they must no longer paint, but drink for a complexion: a maxim that in this our age has been pursued with no ill success; and has been as admirable in its effects, as the famous cosmetic mentioned in the Postman, and invented by the renowned British Hippocrates of the pestle and mortar; making the party, after a due course, rosy, hale, and airy; and the best and most approved receipt now extant, for the fever of the spirits. But to return to our female candidate, who, I understand is returned to herself, and will no longer hang out false colours; as she is the first of her sex that has done us so great an honour, she will certainly in a very short time, both in prose and verse, be a lady of the most celebrated deformity now living, and meet with many admirers here as frightful as herself. But being a long-headed gentlewoman, I am apt to imagine she has some further design than you have yet penetrated; and perhaps has more mind to the Spectator than any of his fraternity, as the person of all the world she could like for a paramour. And if so, really I cannot but applaud her choice, and should be glad, if it might lie in my power, to effect an amicable accommodation betwixt two faces of such different extremes, as the only possible expedient to mend the breed, and rectify the physiognomy of the family on both sides. And again, as she is a lady of a very fluent elocution, you need not fear that your first child will be born dumb, which otherwise you might have reason to be apprehensive of. To be plain with you, I can see nothing shocking in it; for though she has not a face like a john-apple, yet as a late friend of mine, who at sixty-five ventured on a lass of fifteen, very frequently in the remaining five years of his life gave me to understand, that as old as he then seemed, when they were first married he and his spouse could make but fourscore; so may madam Hecatissa very justly allege hereafter, that as long-visaged as she may then be thought, upon their wedding-day Mr. Spectator and she had but half an ell of

face betwixt them; and this my worthy predecessor, Mr. Sergeant Chin, always maintained to be no more than the true oval proportion between man and wife. But as this may be a new thing to you, who have hitherto had no expectations from women, I shall allow you what time you think fit to consider on it; not without some hope of seeing at last your thoughts here-upon subjoined to mine, and which is an honour much desired by, sir, your assured friend, and most humble servant,

‘HUGH GOBLIN, *Præses*.’

The following letter has not much in it, but as it is written in my own praise, I cannot from my heart suppress it.

‘SIR,—You proposed in your Spectator of last Tuesday, Mr. Hobbs's hypothesis for solving that very odd phenomenon of laughter. You have made the hypothesis valuable by espousing it yourself; for had it continued Mr. Hobbs's, nobody would have minded it. Now here this perplexed case arises. A certain company laughed very heartily upon the reading of that very paper of yours; and the truth of it is, he must be a man of more than ordinary constancy that could stand out against so much comedy, and not do as we did. Now there are few men in the world so far lost to all good sense, as to look upon you to be a man in a state of folly “inferior to himself.”—Pray then how do you justify your hypothesis of laughter?

‘Your most humble,

Q. R.’

Thursday, the 26th of the month of fools.

‘SIR,—In answer to your letter, I must desire you to recollect yourself; and you will find, that when you did me the honour to be so merry over my paper, you laughed at the idiot, the German courtier, the gaper, the merry-andrew, the haberdasher, the biter, the butt, and not at

R. ‘Your humble servant,

‘THE SPECTATOR.’

No. 53.] Tuesday, May 1, 1711.

—Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus,
Hor. Ars Poet. ver. 359.
Homer himself hath been observ'd to nod.
Roscommon.

My correspondents grow so numerous, that I cannot avoid frequently inserting their applications to me.

‘MR. SPECTATOR,—I am glad I can inform you, that your endeavours to adorn that sex, which is the fairest part of the visible creation, are well received, and like to prove not unsuccessful. The triumph of Daphne over her sister Lætia has been the subject of conversation at several tea-tables where I have been present; and I have observed the fair circle not a little pleased to find you considering them as reasonable creatures, and endeavouring to