

deavoured to make nothing ridiculous that is not in some measure criminal. I have set up the immoral man as the object of derision. In short, if I have not formed a new weapon against vice and irreligion, I have at least shown how that weapon may be put to a right use, which has so often fought the battles of impiety and profaneness. C.

No. 446.] *Friday, August 1, 1712.*

Quid deceat, quid non; quo virtus, quo ferat error.

Hor. Ars Poet. v. 303.

What fit, what not: what excellent, or ill.

Roscommon.

SINCE two or three writers of comedy, who are living, have taken their farewell of the stage, those who succeed them, finding themselves incapable of rising up to their wit, humour, and good sense, have only imitated them in some of those loose unguarded strokes, in which they complied with the corrupt taste of the more vicious part of their audience. When persons of a low genius attempt this kind of writing, they know no difference between being merry and being lewd. It is with an eye to some of these degenerate compositions that I have written the following discourse.

Were our English stage but half so virtuous as that of the Greeks and Romans, we should quickly see the influence of it in the behaviour of all the politer part of mankind. It would not be fashionable to ridicule religion; or its professors; the man of pleasure would not be the complete gentleman; vanity would be out of countenance; and every quality which is ornamental to human nature would meet with that esteem which is due to it.

If the English stage were under the same regulations the Athenian was formerly, it would have the same effect that had, in recommending the religion, the government, and public worship of its country. Were our plays subject to proper inspections and imitations, we might not only pass away several of our vacant hours in the highest entertainments, but should always rise from them wiser and better than we sat down to them.

It is one of the most unaccountable things in our age, that the lewdness of our theatre should be so much complained of, so well exposed, and so little redressed. It is to be hoped, that some time or other we may be at leisure to restrain the licentiousness of the theatre, and make it contribute its assistance to the advancement of morality, and to the reformation of the age. As matters stand at present, multitudes are shut out from this noble diversion, by reason of those abuses and corruptions that accompany it. A father is often afraid that his daughter should be ruined by those entertainments, which were invented for the accomplishment and refining of human nature. The Athenian and Roman plays were written with such a regard to morality,

that Socrates used to frequent the one, and Cicero the other.

It happened once, indeed, that Cato dropped into the Roman theatre when the Floralia were to be represented; and as, in that performance, which was a kind of religious ceremony, there were several indecent parts to be acted, the people refused to see them whilst Cato was present. Martial, on this hint, made the following epigram, which we must suppose was applied to some grave friend of his, that had been accidentally present at some such entertainment:

** Nosses jocosa dulce cum sacrum Floræ,
Festosque lusus, et licentium vulgi,
Cur in theatrum, Cato severe, venisti?*

An ideo tantum veneras, ut exires? Epig. 3. 1.

*Why dost thou come, great censor of thy age,
To see the loose diversions of the stage?
With awful countenance, and brow severe,
What in the name of goodness dost thou here?
See the mixt crowd! how giddy, lewd, and vain!
Didst thou come in but to go out again?*

An accident of this nature might happen once in an age among the Greeks and Romans; but they were too wise and good to let the constant nightly entertainment be of such a nature, that people of the most sense and virtue could not be at it. Whatever vices are represented upon the stage, they ought to be so marked and branded by the poet, as not to appear either laudable or amiable in the person who is tainted with them. But if we look into the English comedies above-mentioned, we would think they were formed upon a quite contrary maxim, and that this rule, though it held good upon the heathen stage, was not to be regarded in christian theatres. There is another rule likewise, which was observed by authors of antiquity; and which these modern geniuses have no regard to, and that was, never to choose an improper subject for ridicule. Now a subject is improper for ridicule, if it is apt to stir up horror and commiseration rather than laughter. For this reason, we do not find any comedy, in so polite an author as Terence, raised upon the violations of the marriage-bed. The falsehood of the wife or husband has given occasion to noble tragedies; but a Scipio and Lelius would have looked upon incest or murder to have been as proper subjects for comedy. On the contrary, cuckoldom is the basis of most of our modern plays. If an alderman appears upon the stage, you may be sure it is in order to be cuckolded. A husband that is a little grave or elderly, generally meets with the same fate. Knights and baronets, country 'squires, and justices of the quorum, come up to town for no other purpose. I have seen poor Dogget cuckolded in all these capacities. In short, our English writers are as frequently severe upon this innocent unhappy creature, commonly known by the name of a cuckold, as the ancient comic writers were upon an eating parasite, or a vain-glorious soldier.

At the same time the poet so contrives

matters, that the two criminals are the favourites of the audience. We sit still, and wish well to them through the whole play, are pleased when they meet with proper opportunities, and out of humour when they are disappointed. The truth of it is, the accomplished gentleman upon the English stage, is the person that is familiar with other men's wives, and indifferent to his own; as the fine woman is generally a composition of sprightliness and falsehood. I do not know whether it proceeds from barrenness of invention, depravation of manners, or ignorance of mankind, but I have often wondered that our ordinary poets cannot frame to themselves the idea of a fine man who is not a whore-master, or a fine woman that is not a jilt.

I have sometimes thought of compiling a system of ethicks out of the writings of those corrupt poets under the title of Stage Morality. But I have been diverted from this thought by a project which has been executed by an ingenious gentleman of my acquaintance. He has composed, it seems, the history of a young fellow who has taken all his notions of the world from the stage, and who has directed himself in every circumstance of his life and conversation, by the maxims and examples of the fine gentleman in English comedies. If I can prevail upon him to give me a copy of this new-fashioned novel, I will bestow on it a place in my works, and question not but it may have as good an effect upon the drama as Don Quixote had upon romance.

C.

No. 447.] *Saturday, August 2, 1712.*

Φέρει πολυχρονίαν μελέτην εμίνκι, φίλε; καὶ δὴ
τῆσιν ἀνθρώποις τελευτῶσαν φύσιν εἶναι.

Long exercise, my friend, inures the mind;
And what we once dislike'd we pleasing find.

THERE is not a common saying which has a better turn of sense in it, than what we often hear in the mouths of the vulgar, that 'custom is a second nature.' It is indeed able to form the man anew, and to give him inclinations and capacities altogether different from those he was born with. Dr. Plot, in his History of Staffordshire, tells us of an idiot that, chancing to live within the sound of a clock, and always amusing himself with counting the hour of the day whenever the clock struck, the clock being spoiled by accident, the idiot continued to strike and count the hour without the help of it, in the same manner as he had done when it was entire. Though I dare not vouch for the truth of this story, it is very certain that custom has a mechanical effect upon the body at the same time that it has a very extraordinary influence upon the mind.

I shall in this paper consider one very remarkable effect which custom has upon human nature, and which, if rightly ob-

served, may lead us into very useful rules of life. What I shall here take notice of in custom, is its wonderful efficacy in making every thing pleasant to us. A person who is addicted to play or gaming, though he took but little delight in it at first, by degrees contracts so strong an inclination towards it, and gives himself up so entirely to it, that it seems the only end of his being. The love of a retired or busy life will grow upon a man insensibly, as he is conversant in the one or the other, till he is utterly unqualified for relishing that to which he has been for some time disused. Nay, a man may smoke, or drink, or take snuff, till he is unable to pass away his time without it; not to mention how our delight in any particular study, art, or science, rises and improves, in proportion to the application which we bestow upon it. Thus, what was at first an exercise becomes at length an entertainment. Our employments are changed into our diversions. The mind grows fond of those actions she is accustomed to, and is drawn with reluctance from those paths in which she has been used to walk.

Not only such actions as were at first indifferent to us, but even such as are painful, will by custom and practice become pleasant. Sir Francis Bacon observes, in his Natural Philosophy, that our taste is never pleased better than with those things which at first created disgust in it. He gives particular instances, of claret, coffee, and other liquors, which the palate seldom approves upon the first taste; but, when it has once got a relish of them, generally retains it for life. The mind is constituted after the same manner, and after having habituated herself to any particular exercise or employment, not only loses her first aversion towards it, but conceives a certain fondness and affection for it. I have heard one of the greatest geniuses this age has produced,* who had been trained up in all the polite studies of antiquity, assure me, upon his being obliged to search into several rolls and records, that notwithstanding such an employment was at first very dry and irksome to him, he at last took an incredible pleasure in it, and preferred it even to the reading of Virgil or Cicero. The reader will observe, that I have not here considered custom as it makes things easy, but as it renders them delightful; and though others have often made the same reflections, it is possible they may not have drawn those uses from it, with which I intend to fill the remaining part of this paper.

If we consider attentively this property of human nature, it may instruct us in very fine moralities. In the first place, I would have no man discouraged with that kind of life, or series of action, in which the choice of others or his own necessities may have engaged him. It may, perhaps, be very

* Dr. Atterbury.

disagreeable to him at first; but use and application will certainly render it not only less painful, but pleasing and satisfactory.

In the second place, I would recommend to every one that admirable precept which Pythagoras is said to have given to his disciples, and which that philosopher must have drawn from the observation I have enlarged upon, *Optimum vitæ genus eligito, nam consuetudo faciet jucundissimum*: 'Pitch upon that course of life which is the most excellent, and custom will render it the most delightful.' Men, whose circumstances will permit them to choose their own way of life, are inexcusable if they do not pursue that which their judgment tells them is the most laudable. The voice of reason is more to be regarded than the bent of any present inclination, since, by the rule above-mentioned, inclination will at length come over to reason, though we can never force reason to comply with inclination.

In the third place, this observation may teach the most sensual and irreligious man to overlook those hardships and difficulties which are apt to discourage him from the prosecution of a virtuous life. 'The gods,' said Hesiod, 'have placed labour before virtue: the way to her is at first rough and difficult, but grows more smooth and easy the farther you advance in it.' The man who proceeds in it with steadiness and resolution, will in a little time find that 'her ways are ways of pleasantness, and that all her paths are peace.'

To enforce this consideration, we may farther observe, that the practice of religion will not only be attended with that pleasure which naturally accompanies those actions to which we are habituated, but with those supernumerary joys of heart that rise from the consciousness of such a pleasure, from the satisfaction of acting up to the dictates of reason, and from the prospect of a happy immortality.

In the fourth place, we may learn from this observation, which we have made on the mind of man, to take particular care, when we are once settled in a regular course of life, how we too frequently indulge ourselves in any the most innocent diversions and entertainments; since the mind may insensibly fall off from the relish of virtuous actions, and, by degrees, exchange that pleasure which it takes in the performance of its duty, for delights of a much more inferior and unprofitable nature.

The last use which I shall make of this remarkable property in human nature, of being delighted with those actions to which it is accustomed, is to show how absolutely necessary it is for us to gain habits of virtue in this life, if we would enjoy the pleasures of the next. The state of bliss we call heaven will not be capable of affecting those minds which are not thus qualified for it; we must, in this world, gain a relish of truth and virtue, if we would be able to taste that knowledge and perfection, which

are to make us happy in the next. The seeds of those spiritual joys and raptures, which are to rise up and flourish in the soul to all eternity, must be planted in her during this her present state of probation. In short, heaven is not to be looked upon only as the reward, but as the natural effect of a religious life.

On the other hand, those evil spirits, who, by long custom, have contracted in the body habits of lust and sensuality, malice and revenge, and aversion to every thing that is good, just, or laudable, are naturally seasoned and prepared for pain and misery. Their torments have already taken root in them; they cannot be happy when divested of the body, unless we may suppose, that Providence will in a manner create them anew, and work a miracle in the rectification of their faculties. They may, indeed, taste a kind of malignant pleasure in those actions to which they are accustomed, whilst in this life; but when they are removed from all those objects which are here apt to gratify them, they will naturally become their own tormentors, and cherish in themselves those painful habits of mind which are called, in scripture phrase, 'the worm which never dies.' This notion of heaven and hell is so very conformable to the light of nature, that it was discovered by several of the most exalted heathens. It has been finely improved by many eminent divines of the last age, as in particular by archbishop Tillotson and Dr. Sherlock; but there is none who has raised such noble speculations upon it as Dr. Scot, in the first book of his *Christian Life*, which is one of the finest and most rational schemes of divinity that is written in our tongue, or in any other. That excellent author has shown how every particular custom and habit of virtue will, in its own nature, produce the heaven, or a state of happiness, in him who shall hereafter practise it: as on the contrary, how every custom or habit of vice will be the natural hell of him in whom it subsists. C.

No. 448.] Monday, August 4, 1712.

Fœdus hoc aliquid quandoque audebis.

Juv. Sat. ii. 82.

In time to greater baseness you'll proceed,

THE first steps towards ill are very carefully to be avoided, for men insensibly go on when they are once entered, and do not keep up a lively abhorrence of the least unworthiness. There is a certain frivolous falsehood that people indulge themselves in, which ought to be had in greater detestation than it commonly meets with. What I mean is a neglect of promises made on small and indifferent occasions, such as parties of pleasure, entertainments, and sometimes meetings out of curiosity, in men of like faculties, to be in each other's company. There are many causes to which one

may assign this light infidelity. Jack Sippet never keeps the hour he has appointed to come to a friend's to dinner; but he is an insignificant fellow, who does it out of vanity. He could never, he knows, make any figure in company, but by giving a little disturbance at his entry, and therefore takes care to drop in when he thinks you are just seated. He takes his place after having discomposed every body, and desires there may be no ceremony; then does he begin to call himself the saddest fellow, in disappointing so many places as he was invited to elsewhere. It is the fop's vanity to name houses of better cheer, and to acquaint you that he chose yours out of ten dinners which he was obliged to be at that day. The last time I had the fortune to eat with him, he was imagining how very fat he should have been had he eaten all he had ever been invited to. But it is impertinent to dwell upon the manners of such a wretch as obliges all whom he disappoints, though his circumstances constrain them to be civil to him. But there are those that every one would be glad to see, who fall into the same detestable habit. It is a merciless thing that any one can be at ease, and suppose a set of people who have a kindness for him, at that moment waiting out of respect to him, and refusing to taste their food or conversation, with the utmost impatience. One of these promisers sometimes shall make his excuses for not coming at all, so late that half the company have only to lament, that they have neglected matters of moment to meet him whom they find a trifle. They immediately repent of the value they had for him; and such treatment repeated, makes company never depend upon his promises any more; so that he often comes at the middle of a meal, where he is secretly slighted by the persons with whom he eats, and cursed by the servants, whose dinner is delayed by his prolonging their master's entertainment. It is wonderful that men guilty this way could never have observed, that the whiling time, and gathering together, and waiting a little before dinner, is the most awkwardly passed away of any part in the four-and-twenty hours. If they did think at all, they would reflect upon their guilt, in lengthening such a suspension of agreeable life. The constant offending this way has, in a degree, an effect upon the honesty of his mind who is guilty of it, as common swearing is a kind of habitual perjury: it makes the soul unattentive to what an oath is, even while it utters it at the lips. Phocion beholding a wordy orator, while he was making a magnificent speech to the people, full of vain promises; 'Me-thinks,' said he, 'I am now fixing my eyes upon a cypress tree; it has all the pomp and beauty imaginable in its branches, leaves, and height: but alas! it bears no fruit.'

Though the expectation which is raised by impertinent promises is thus barren, their confidence, even after failures, is so

great, that they subsist by still promising on. I have heretofore discoursed of the insignificant liar, the boaster, and the castle-builder, and treated them as no ill-designing men (though they are to be placed among the frivolous false ones,) but persons who fall into that way purely to recommend themselves by their vivacities; but indeed I cannot let heedless promisers, though in the most minute circumstances, pass with so slight a censure. If a man should take a resolution to pay only sums above a hundred pounds, and yet contract with different people debts of five and ten, how long can we suppose he will keep his credit? This man will as long support his good name in business, as he will in conversation, who without difficulty makes assignments which he is indifferent whether he keeps or not.

I am the more severe upon this vice, because I have been so unfortunate as to be a very great criminal myself. Sir Andrew Freeport, and all my other friends who are scrupulous to promises of the meanest consideration imaginable, from a habit of virtue that way, have often upbraided me with it. I take shame upon myself for this crime, and more particularly for the greatest I ever committed of the sort, that when as agreeable a company of gentlemen and ladies as ever were got together, and I forsooth, Mr. Spectator, to be of the party with women of merit, like a booby as I was, mistook the time of meeting, and came the night following. I wish every fool who is negligent in this kind, may have as great a loss as I had in this; for the same company will never meet more, but are dispersed into various parts of the world, and I am left under the compunction that I deserve, in so many different places to be called a trifle.

This fault is sometimes to be accounted for, when desirable people are fearful of appearing precise and reserved by denials; but they will find the apprehension of that imputation will betray them into a childish impotence of mind, and make them promise all who are so kind to ask it of them. This leads such soft creatures into the misfortune of seeming to return overtures of good-will with ingratitude. The first steps in the breach of a man's integrity are much more important than men are aware of. The man who scruples not breaking his word in little things, would not suffer in his own conscience so great pain for failures of consequence, as he who thinks every little offence against truth and justice a disparagement. We should not make any thing we ourselves disapprove habitual to us, if we would be sure of our integrity.

I remember a falsehood of the trivial sort, though not in relation to assignments, that exposed a man to a very uneasy adventure. Will Trap and Jack Stint were chamber-fellows in the Inner-Temple about twenty-five years ago. They one night sat

in the pit together at a comedy, where they both observed and liked the same young woman in the boxes. Their kindness for her entered both hearts deeper than they imagined. Stint had a good faculty in writing letters of love, and made his address privately that way; while Trap proceeded in the ordinary course, by money and her waiting-maid. The lady gave them both encouragement, received Trap into the utmost favour, answering at the same time Stint's letters, and giving him appointments at third places. Trap began to suspect the epistolary correspondence of his friend, and discovered also that Stint opened all his letters which came to their common lodgings, in order to form his own assignments. After much anxiety and restlessness, Trap came to a resolution, which he thought would break off their commerce with one another without any hazardous explanation. He therefore writ a letter in a feigned hand to Mr. Trap at his chambers in the Temple. Stint, according to custom, seized and opened it, and was not a little surprised to find the inside directed to himself, when, with great perturbation of spirit, he read as follows:

‘MR. STINT,—You have gained a slight satisfaction at the expense of doing a very heinous crime. At the price of a faithful friend you have obtained an inconstant mistress. I rejoice in this expedient I have thought of to break my mind to you, and tell you, you are a base fellow, by a means which does not expose you to the affront except you deserve it. I know, sir, as criminal as you are, you have still shame enough to avenge yourself against the hardness of any one that should publicly tell you of it. I therefore, who have received so many secret hurts from you, shall take satisfaction with safety to myself. I call you base, and you must bear it, or acknowledge it; I triumph over you that you cannot come at me; nor do I think it dishonourable to come in armour to assault him, who was in ambuscade when he wounded me.

‘What need more be said to convince you of being guilty of the basest practice imaginable, than that it is such as has made you liable to be treated after this manner, while you yourself cannot in your own conscience but allow the justice of the upbraidings of your injured friend.

T.

‘RALPH TRAP.’

No. 449.] Tuesday, August 5, 1712.

—Tibi scriptus, matrona, libellus.

Mart. iii. 68.

A book the chastest matron may peruse.

WHEN I reflect upon my labours for the public, I cannot but observe, that part of the species, of which I profess myself a friend and guardian, is sometimes treated with severity; that is, there are in my writ-

ings many descriptions given of ill persons, and not any direct encomium made of those who are good. When I was convinced of this error, I could not but immediately call to mind several of the fair sex of my acquaintance, whose characters deserve to be transmitted to posterity in writings which will long outlive mine. But I do not think that a reason why I should not give them their place in my diurnal as long as it will last. For the service thereof of my female readers, I shall single out some characters of maids, wives, and widows which deserve the imitation of the sex. She who shall lead this small illustrious number of heroines shall be the amiable Fidelia.

Before I enter upon the particular parts of her character, it is necessary to preface, that she is the only child of a decrepid father, whose life is bound up in hers. This gentleman has used Fidelia from her cradle with all the tenderness imaginable, and has viewed her growing perfections with the partiality of a parent, that soon thought her accomplished above the children of all other men, but never thought she was come to the utmost improvement of which she herself was capable. This fondness has had very happy effects upon his own happiness; for she reads, she dances, she sings, uses her spinet and lute to the utmost perfection; and the lady's use of all these excellences is to divert the old man in his easy chair, when he is out of the pangs of a chronic distemper. Fidelia is now in the twenty-third year of her age; but the application of many lovers, her vigorous time of life, her quick sense of all that is truly gallant and elegant in the enjoyment of a plentiful fortune, are not able to draw her from the side of her good old father. Certain it is, that there is no kind of affection so pure and angelic as that of a father to a daughter. He beholds her both with and without regard to her sex. In love to our wives there is desire, to our sons there is ambition; but in that to our daughters, there is something which there are no words to express. Her life is designed wholly domestic, and she is so ready a friend and companion, that every thing that passes about a man is accompanied with the idea of her presence. Her sex also is naturally so much exposed to hazard, both as to fortune and innocence, that there is perhaps a new cause of fondness arising from that consideration also. None but fathers can have a true sense of these sort of pleasures and sensations; but my familiarity with the father of Fidelia, makes me let drop the words which I have heard him speak, and observe upon his tenderness towards her.

Fidelia, on her part, as I was going to say, as accomplished as she is, with her beauty, wit, air, and mien, employs her whole time in care and attendance upon her father. How have I been charmed to see one of the most beautiful women the age has produced, on her knees, helping on an old

man's slipper! Her filial regard to him is what she makes her diversion, her business, and her glory. When she was asked by a friend of her deceased mother to admit of the courtship of her son, she answered that she had a great respect and gratitude to her for the overture in behalf of one so dear to her, but that during her father's life she would admit into her heart no value for any thing that should interfere with her endeavour to make his remains of life as happy and easy as could be expected in his circumstances. The lady admonished her of the prime of life with a smile; which Fidelia answered with a frankness that always attends unfeigned virtue: 'It is true, madam, there are to be sure very great satisfactions to be expected in the commerce of a man of honour whom one tenderly loves; but I find so much satisfaction, in the reflection, how much I mitigate a good man's pains, whose welfare depends upon my assiduity about him, that I willingly exclude the loose gratifications of passion for the solid reflections of duty. I know not whether any man's wife would be allowed, and (what I still more fear) I know not whether I, a wife, should be willing to be so officious as I am at present about my parent.' The happy father has her declaration that she will not marry during his life, and the pleasure of seeing that resolution not uneasy to her. Were one to paint filial affection in its utmost beauty, he could not have a more lively idea of it than in beholding Fidelia serving her father at his hours of rising, meals, and rest.

When the general crowd of female youth are consulting their glasses, preparing for balls, assemblies, or plays; for a young lady, who could be regarded among the foremost in those places, either for her person, wit, fortune, or conversation, and yet condemn all these entertainments, to sweeten the heavy hours of a decrepid parent, is a resignation truly heroic. Fidelia performs the duty of a nurse with all the beauty of a bride; nor does she neglect her person, because of her attendance on him, when he is too ill to receive company, to whom she may make an appearance.

Fidelia, who gives him up her youth, does not think it any great sacrifice to add to it the spoiling of her dress. Her care and exactness in her habit convince her father of the alacrity of her mind; and she has of all women the best foundation for affecting the praise of a seeming negligence. What adds to the entertainment of the good old man is, that Fidelia, where merit and fortune cannot be overlooked by epistolary lovers, reads over the accounts of her conquests, plays on her spinet the gayest airs (and while she is doing so you would think her formed only for gallantry) to intimate to him the pleasures she despises for his sake.

Those who think themselves the pattern of good-breeding and gallantry would be

astonished to hear that, in those intervals when the old gentleman is at ease, and can bear company, there are at his house, in the most regular order, assemblies of people of the highest merit; where there is conversation without mention of the faults of the absent, benevolence between men and women without passion, and the highest subjects of morality treated of as natural and accidental discourse; all which is owing to the genius of Fidelia; who at once makes her father's way to another world easy, and herself capable of being an honour to his name in this.

'MR. SPECTATOR,—I was the other day at the Bear-garden, in hopes to have seen your short face: but not being so fortunate, I must tell you, by way of letter, that there is a mystery among the gladiators which has escaped your spectatorial penetration. For, being in a box at an ale-house near that renowned seat of honour above-mentioned, I overheard two masters of the science agreeing to quarrel on the next opportunity. This was to happen in a company of a set of the fraternity of basket-hilts, who were to meet that evening. When this was settled, one asked the other, "Will you give cuts or receive?" The other answered, "Receive." It was replied, "Are you a passionate man?" "No, provided you cut no more nor no deeper than we agree." I thought it my duty to acquaint you with this, that the people may not pay their money for fighting, and be cheated. Your humble servant,

SCABBARD RUSTY.'

T.

No. 450.] *Wednesday, August 6, 1712.*

Quærenda pecunia primum,
Virtus post nummos. *Hor. Ep. l. Lib. 1. 53.*
Get money, money still;
And then let virtue follow, if she will.—*Pope.*

'MR. SPECTATOR,—All men through different paths, make at the same common thing, money: and it is to her we owe the politician, the merchant, and the lawyer; nay, to be free with you, I believe to that also we are beholden for our Spectator. I am apt to think, that could we look into our own hearts, we should see money engraved in them in more lively and moving characters than self-preservation; for who can reflect upon the merchant hoisting sail in a doubtful pursuit of her, and all mankind sacrificing their quiet to her, but must perceive that the characters of self-preservation (which were doubtless originally the brightest) are sullied, if not wholly defaced; and that those of money (which at first was only valuable as a mean to security) are of late so brightened, that the characters of self-preservation, like a less light set by a greater, are become almost imperceptible? Thus has money got the upper-hand of what all mankind formerly thought most dear, viz. security: and I wish I could

say she had here put a stop to her victories; but, alas! common honesty fell a sacrifice to her. This is the way scholastic men talk of the greatest good in the world: but I, a tradesman, shall give you another account of this matter in the plain narrative of my own life. I think it proper, in the first place, to acquaint my readers, that since my setting out in the world, which was in the year 1660, I never wanted money, having begun with an indifferent good stock in the tobacco-trade, to which I was bred; and by the continual successes it has pleased Providence to bless my endeavours with, I am at last arrived at what they call a plum. To uphold my discourse in the manner of your wits or philosophers, by speaking fine things, or drawing inferences, as they pretend, from the nature of the subject, I account it vain; having never found any thing in the writings of such men, that did not savour more of the invention of the brain, or what is styled speculation, than of sound judgment or profitable observation. I will readily grant indeed, that there is what the wits call natural in their talk; which is the utmost those curious authors can assume to themselves, and is indeed all they endeavour at, for they are but lamentable teachers. And what, I pray, is natural? That which is pleasing and easy.—And what are pleasing and easy? Forsooth, a new thought, or conceit dressed up in smooth quaint language, to make you smile and wag your head, as being what you never imagined before, and yet wonder why you had not; mere frothy amusements, fit only for boys or silly women to be caught with.

‘It is not my present intention to instruct my readers in the method of acquiring riches; that may be the work of another essay; but to exhibit the real and solid advantages I have found by them in my long and manifold experience; nor yet all the advantages of so worthy and valuable a blessing, (for who does not know or imagine the comforts of being warm or living at ease, and that power and pre-eminence are their inseparable attendants?) but only to instance the great supports they afford us under the severest calamities and misfortune; to show that the love of them is a special antidote against immorality and vice; and that the same does likewise naturally dispose men to actions of piety and devotion. All which I can make out by my own experience, who think myself no ways particular from the rest of mankind, nor better nor worse by nature than generally other men are.

‘In the year 1665, when the sickness was, I lost by it my wife and two children, which were all my stock. Probably I might have had more, considering I was married between four and five years; but finding her to be a teeming woman, I was careful, as having then little above a brace of thousand pounds to carry on my trade and maintain a family with. I loved them as usually

men do their wives and children, and therefore could not resist the first impulses of nature on so wounding a loss; but I quickly roused myself, and found means to alleviate, and at last conquer, my affliction, by reflecting how that she and her children having been no great expense to me, the best part of her fortune was still left; that my charge being reduced to myself, a journeyman, and a maid, I might live far cheaper than before; and that being now a childless widower, I might perhaps marry a no less deserving woman, and with a much better fortune than she brought, which was but 800*l*. And, to convince my readers that such considerations as these were proper and apt to produce such an affect, I remember it was the constant observation at that deplorable time, when so many hundreds were swept away daily, that the rich ever bore the loss of their families and relations far better than the poor; the latter having little or nothing beforehand, and living from hand to mouth, placed the whole comfort and satisfaction of their lives in their wives and children, and were therefore inconsolable.

‘The following year happened the fire: at which time, by good providence, it was my fortune to have converted the greatest part of my effects into ready money, on the prospect of an extraordinary advantage which I was preparing to lay hold on. This calamity was very terrible and astonishing, the fury of the flames being such, that whole streets, at several distant places, were destroyed at one and the same time, so that (as it is well known) almost all our citizens were burnt out of what they had. But what did I then do? I did not stand gazing on the ruins of our noble metropolis; I did not shake my head, wring my hands, sigh and shed tears; I considered with myself what could this avail; I fell a plodding what advantages might be made of the ready cash I had; and immediately bethought myself that wonderful pennyworths might be bought of the goods that were saved out of the fire. In short, with about 2000*l*. and a little credit, I bought as much tobacco as raised my estate to the value of 10,000*l*. I then “looked on the ashes of our city, and the misery of its late inhabitants, as an effect of the just wrath and indignation of heaven towards a sinful and perverse people.”

‘After this I married again; and that wife dying, I took another; but both proved to be idle baggages: the first gave me a great deal of plague and vexation by her extravagances, and I became one of the by-words of the city. I knew it would be to no manner of purpose to go about to curb the fancies and inclinations of women, which fly out the more for being restrained; but what I could I did; I watched her narrowly, and by good luck found her in the embraces (for which I had two witnesses with me) of a wealthy spark of the court-

end of the town; of whom I recovered 15,000*l.* which made me amends for what she had idly squandered, and put a silence to all my neighbours, taking off my reproach by the gain they saw I had by it. The last died about two years after I married her, in labour of three children. I conjecture they were begot by a country kinsman of hers, whom, at her recommendation, I took into my family, and gave wages to as a journeyman. What this creature expended in delicacies and high diet with her kinsman (as well as I could compute by the poulterer's, fishmonger's, and grocer's bills,) amounted in the said two years to one hundred eighty-six pounds four shillings and five-pence half-penny. The fine apparel, bracelets, lockets, and treats, &c. of the other, according to the best calculation, came, in three years and about three quarters, to seven hundred forty pounds seven shillings and nine pence. After this I resolved never to marry more, and found I had been a gainer by my marriages, and the damages granted me for the abuses of my bed (all charges deducted) eight thousand three hundred pounds, within a trifle.

'I come now to show the good effects of the love of money on the lives of men, towards rendering them honest, sober, and religious. When I was a young man, I had a mind to make the best of my wits, and over-reached a country chap in a parcel of unsound goods; to whom, upon his upbraiding, and threatening to expose me for it, I returned the equivalent of his loss; and upon his good advice, wherein he clearly demonstrated the folly of such artifices, which can never end but in shame, and the ruin of all correspondence, I never after transgressed. Can your courtiers, who take bribes, or your lawyers or physicians in their practice, or even the divines who intermeddle in worldly affairs, boast of making but one slip in their lives, and of such a thorough and lasting reformation? Since my coming into the world I do not remember I was ever overtaken in drink, save nine times, once at the christening of my first child, thrice at our city feasts, and five times at driving of bargains. My reformation I can attribute to nothing so much as the love and esteem of money, for I found myself to be extravagant in my drink, and apt to turn projector, and make rash bargains. As for women, I never knew any except my wives: for my reader must know, and it is what he may confide in as an excellent recipe, that the love of business and money is the greatest mortifier of inordinate desires imaginable, as employing the mind continually in the careful oversight of what one has in the eager quest after more, in looking after the negligences and deceits of servants, in the due entering and stating of accounts, in hunting after chaps, and in the exact knowledge of the state of markets; which things whoever thoroughly attends to, will find enough and

enough to employ his thoughts on every moment of the day; so that I cannot call to mind, that in all the time I was a husband, which, off and on, was above twelve years, I ever once thought of my wives but in bed. And, lastly, for religion, I have ever been a constant churchman, both forenoons and afternoons on Sundays, never forgetting to be thankful for any gain or advantage I had had that day; and on Saturday nights, upon casting up my accounts, I always was grateful for the sum of my week's profits, and at Christmas for that of the whole year. It is true, perhaps, that my devotion has not been the most fervent; which, I think, ought to be imputed to the evenness and sedateness of my temper, which never would admit of any impetuosities of any sort: and I can remember, that in my youth and prime of manhood, when my blood ran brisker, I took greater pleasure in religious exercises than at present, or many years past, and that my devotion sensibly declined as age, which is dull and unwieldy, came upon me.

'I have, I hope, here proved, that the love of money prevents all immorality and vice; which if you will not allow, you must, that the pursuit of it obliges men to the same kind of life as they would follow if they were really virtuous; which is all I have to say at present, only recommending to you, that you would think of it, and turn ready wit into ready money as fast as you can. I conclude, your servant,

T. 'EPHRAIM WEED.'

No. 451.] *Thursday, August 7, 1712.*

—Jam sœvus apertam
In rabiam cœpit verti jocus, et per honestas
Ire minax impune domos—

Hor. Ep. i. Lib. 2. 143.

—Times corrupt, and nature ill inclin'd,
Produc'd the point that left the sting behind;
Till, friend with friend, and families at strife,
Triumphant malice rag'd through private life.—*Pope*

THERE is nothing so scandalous to a government, and detestable in the eyes of all good men, as defamatory papers and pamphlets; but at the same time there is nothing so difficult to tame as a satirical author. An angry writer who cannot appear in print, naturally vents his spleen in libels and lampoons. A gay old woman, says the fable, seeing all her wrinkles represented in a large looking-glass, threw it upon the ground in a passion, and broke it in a thousand pieces; but as she was afterwards surveying the fragments with a spiteful kind of pleasure, she could not forbear uttering herself in the following soliloquy: 'What have I got by this revengeful blow of mine? I have only multiplied my deformity, and see a hundred ugly faces, where before I saw but one.'

It has been proposed, to oblige every person that writes a book, or a paper, to swear himself the author of it, and enter

down in a public register his name and place of abode.

This indeed would have effectually suppressed all printed scandal, which generally appears under borrowed names, or under none at all. But it is to be feared that such an expedient would not only destroy scandal, but learning. It would operate promiscuously, and root up the corn and tares together. Not to mention some of the most celebrated works of piety, which have proceeded from anonymous authors, who have made it their merit to convey to us so great a charity in secret; there are few works of genius that come out at first with the author's name. The writer generally makes a trial of them in the world before he owns them; and, I believe, very few, who are capable of writing, would set pen to paper, if they knew beforehand that they must not publish their productions but on such conditions. For my own part, I must declare, the papers I present the public are like fairy favours, which shall last no longer than while the author is concealed.

That which makes it particularly difficult to restrain these sons of calumny and defamation is, that all sides are equally guilty of it, and that every dirty scribbler is countenanced by great names, whose interests he propagates by such vile and infamous methods. I have never yet heard of a ministry who have inflicted an exemplary punishment on an author that has supported their cause with falsehood and scandal, and treated, in a most cruel manner, the names of those who have been looked upon as their rivals and antagonists. Would a government set an everlasting mark of their displeasure upon one of those infamous writers, who makes his court to them by tearing to pieces the reputation of a competitor, we should quickly see an end put to this race of vermin, that are a scandal to government, and a reproach to human nature. Such a proceeding would make a minister of state shine in history, and would fill all mankind with a just abhorrence of persons who should treat him unworthily, and employ against him those arms which he scorned to make use of against his enemies.

I cannot think that any one will be so unjust as to imagine, what I have here said is spoken with respect to any party or faction. Every one who has in him the sentiments either of a Christian or a gentleman, cannot but be highly offended at this wicked and ungenerous practice, which is so much in use among us at present, that it is become a kind of national crime, and distinguishes us from all the governments that lie about us. I cannot but look upon the finest strokes of satire which are aimed at particular persons, and which are supported even with the appearances of truth, to be the marks of an evil mind, and highly criminal in themselves. Infamy, like other

punishments, is under the direction and distribution of the magistrate, and not of any private person. Accordingly we learn, from a fragment of Cicero, that though there were very few capital punishments in the twelve tables, a libel or lampoon, which took away the good name of another, was to be punished by death. But this is far from being our case. Our satire is nothing but ribaldry and billingsgate. Scurrility passes for wit; and he who can call names in the greatest variety of phrases, is looked upon to have the shrewdest pen. By this means the honour of families is ruined; the highest posts and the greatest titles are rendered cheap and vile in the sight of the people; the noblest virtues and most exalted parts exposed to the contempt of the vicious and the ignorant. Should a foreigner, who knows nothing of our private factions, or one who is to act his part in the world when our present heats and animosities are forgot—should, I say, such a one form to himself a notion of the greatest men of all sides in the British nation, who are now living, from the characters which are given them in some or other of those abominable writings which are daily published among us, what a nation of monsters must we appear!

As this cruel practice tends to the utter subversion of all truth and humanity among us, it deserves the utmost detestation and discouragement of all who have either the love of their country, or the honour of their religion at heart. I would therefore earnestly recommend it to the consideration of those who deal in these pernicious arts of writing, and of those who take pleasure in the reading of them. As for the first, I have spoken of them in former papers, and have not stuck to rank them with the murderer and assassin. Every honest man sets as high a value upon a good name, as upon life itself: and I cannot but think that those who privily assault the one, would destroy the other, might they do it with the same security and impunity.

As for persons who take pleasure in the reading and dispersing such detestable libels, I am afraid they fall very little short of the guilt of the first composers. By a law of the emperors Valentinian and Valens, it was made death for any person not only to write a libel, but, if he met with one by chance, not to tear or burn it. But because I would not be thought singular in my opinion of this matter, I shall conclude my paper with the words of Monsieur Bayle, who was a man of great freedom of thought, as well as of exquisite learning and judgment.

‘I cannot imagine that a man who disperses a libel, is less desirous of doing mischief than the author himself. But what shall we say of the pleasure which a man takes in the reading of a defamatory libel? Is it not a heinous sin in the sight of God? We must distinguish in this point.

This pleasure is either an agreeable sensation we are affected with, when we meet with a witty thought which is well expressed, or it is a joy which we conceive from the dishonour of the person who is defamed. I will say nothing to the first of these cases; for perhaps some would think that my morality is not severe enough, if I should affirm that a man is not master of those agreeable sensations, any more than of those occasioned by sugar or honey, when they touch his tongue; but as to the second, every one will own that pleasure to be a heinous sin. The pleasure in the first case is of no continuance; it prevents our reason and reflection, and may be immediately followed by a secret grief, to see our neighbour's honour blasted. If it does not cease immediately, it is a sign that we are not displeased with the ill nature of the satirist, but are glad to see him defame his enemy by all kinds of stories; and then we deserve the punishment to which the writer of the libel is subject. I shall here add the words of a modern author. St. Gregory, upon excommunicating those writers who had dishonoured Castorius, does not except those who read their works; because, says he, if calumnies have always been the delight of their hearers, and a gratification of those persons who have no other advantage over honest men, is not he who takes pleasure in reading them as guilty as he who composed them? It is an uncontested maxim, that they who approve an action, would certainly do it if they could; that is, if some reason of self-love did not hinder them. There is no difference, says Cicero, between advising a crime, and approving it when committed. The Roman law confirmed this maxim, having subjected the approvers and authors of this evil to the same penalty. We may therefore conclude, that those who are pleased with reading defamatory libels, so far as to approve the authors and dispersers of them, are as guilty as if they had composed them; for, if they do not write such libels themselves, it is because they have not the talent of writing, or because they will run no hazard.

The author produces other authorities to confirm his judgment in this particular.

C.

No. 452.] *Friday, August 8, 1712.*

Est natura hominum novitatis avida.
Plin. apud Liliun.
Human nature is fond of novelty.

THERE is no humour in my countrymen, which I am more inclined to wonder at, than their general thirst after news. There are about half a dozen ingenious men, who live very plentifully upon this curiosity of their fellow-subjects. They all of them receive the same advices from abroad, and very often in the same words; but their way

of cooking it is so very different, that there is no citizen, who has an eye to the public good, that can leave the coffee-house with a peace of mind, before he has given every one of them a reading. These several dishes of news are so very agreeable to the palate of my countrymen, that they are not only pleased with them when they are served up hot, but when they are again set cold before them, by those penetrating politicians who oblige the public with their reflections and observations upon every piece of intelligence that is sent us from abroad. This text is given us by one set of writers, and the comment by another.

But notwithstanding we have the same tale told us in so many different papers, and if occasion requires, in so many articles of the same paper; notwithstanding, in a scarcity of foreign posts, we hear the same story repeated by different advices from Paris, Brussels, the Hague, and from every great town in Europe; notwithstanding the multitude of annotations, explanations, reflections, and various readings which it passes through, our time lies heavy on our hands till the arrival of a fresh mail: we long to receive farther particulars, to hear what will be the next step, or what will be the consequences of that which we have already taken. A westerly wind keeps the whole town in suspense, and puts a stop to conversation.

This general curiosity has been raised and inflamed by our late wars, and if rightly directed, might be of good use to a person who has such a thirst awakened in him. Why should not a man, who takes delight in reading every thing that is new, apply himself to history, travels, and other writings of the same kind, where he will find perpetual fuel for his curiosity, and meet with much more pleasure and improvement than in these papers of the week? An honest tradesman, who languishes a whole summer in expectation of a battle, and perhaps is balked at last, may here meet with half a dozen in a day. He may read the news of a whole campaign in less time than he now bestows upon the products of a single post. Fights, conquests, and revolutions, lie thick together. The reader's curiosity is raised and satisfied every moment, and his passions disappointed or gratified, without being detained in a state of uncertainty from day to day, or lying at the mercy of the sea and wind; in short, the mind is not here kept in a perpetual gape after knowledge, nor punished with that eternal thirst, which is the portion of all our modern newsmongers and coffee-house politicians.

All matters of fact, which a man did not know before, are news to him; and I do not see how any haberdasher in Cheapside is more concerned in the present quarrel of the Cantons, than he was in that of the League. At least, I believe, every one will allow me, it is of more importance to an

Englishman to know the history of his ancestors, than that of his contemporaries who live upon the banks of the Danube or the Borysthenes. As for those who are of another mind, I shall recommend to them the following letter from a projector, who is willing to turn a penny by this remarkable curiosity of his countrymen.

‘MR. SPECTATOR,—You must have observed that men who frequent coffee-houses, and delight in news, are pleased with every thing that is matter of fact, so it be what they have not heard before. A victory or a defeat are equally agreeable to them. The shutting of a cardinal’s mouth pleases them one post, and the opening of it another. They are glad to hear the French court is removed to Marli, and are afterwards as much delighted with its return to Versailles. They read the advertisements with the same curiosity as the articles of public news; and are as pleased to hear of a pie-bald horse that is strayed out of a field near Islington, as of a whole troop that have been engaged in any foreign adventure. In short, they have a relish for every thing that is news, let the matter of it be what it will; or, to speak more properly, they are men of a voracious appetite, but no taste. Now, sir, since the great fountain of news, I mean the war, is very near being dried up; and since these gentlemen have contracted such an inextinguishable thirst after it, I have taken their case and my own into consideration, and have thought of a project which may turn to the advantage of us both. I have thoughts of publishing a daily paper, which shall comprehend in it all the most remarkable occurrences in every little town, village, and hamlet, that lie within ten miles of London, or, in other words, within the verge of the penny-post. I have pitched upon this scene of intelligence for two reasons; first, because the carriage of letters will be very cheap; and, secondly, because I may receive them every day. By this means my readers will have their news fresh and fresh, and many worthy citizens, who cannot sleep with any satisfaction at present, for want of being informed how the world goes, may go to bed contentedly, it being my design to put out my paper every night at nine o’clock precisely. I have already established correspondences in these several places, and received very good intelligence.

‘By my last advices from Knightsbridge, I hear that a horse was clapped into the pound on the third instant, and that he was not released when the letters came away.

‘We are informed from Pankridge,* that a dozen weddings were lately celebrated in the mother-church of that place, but are referred to their next letters for the names of the parties concerned.

* St. Pancras, then a fashionable place for weddings.

‘Letters from Brumpton advise, that the widow Blight had received several visits from John Mildew; which affords great matter of speculation in those parts.

‘By a fisherman who lately touched at Hammersmith, there is advice from Putney, that a certain person well known in that place, is like to lose his election for churchwarden; but this being boat-news, we cannot give entire credit to it.

‘Letters from Paddington bring little more than that William Squeak, the sow-gelder, passed through that place the fifth instant.

‘They advise from Fulham that things remained there in the same state they were. They had intelligence, just as the letters came away, of a tub of excellent ale just set abroad at Parson’s Green; but this wanted confirmation.

‘I have here, sir, given you a specimen of the news with which I intend to entertain the town, and which, when drawn up regularly in the form of a newspaper, will, I doubt not, be very acceptable to many of those public-spirited readers who take more delight in acquainting themselves with other people’s business than their own. I hope a paper of this kind, which lets us know what is done near home, may be more useful to us than those which are filled with advices from Zug and Bender, and make some amends for that dearth of intelligence which we may justly apprehend from times of peace. If I find that you receive this project favourably, I will shortly trouble you with one or two more; and in the mean time am, most worthy sir, with all due respect, your most obedient and humble servant. C.

No. 453.] *Saturday, August 9, 1712.*

Non usitata nec tenui ferar

Penna—

Hor. Od. xx. Lib. 2 l.

No weak, no common wing shall bear

My rising body through the air.—*Creech.*

THERE is not a more pleasing exercise of the mind than gratitude. It is accompanied with such an inward satisfaction, that the duty is sufficiently rewarded by the performance. It is not like the practice of many other virtues, difficult and painful, but attended with so much pleasure, that were there no positive command which enjoined it, nor any recompence laid up for it hereafter, a generous mind would indulge in it, for the natural gratification that accompanies it.

If gratitude is due from man to man, how much more from man to his Maker! The Supreme Being does not only confer upon us those bounties, which proceed more immediately from his hand, but even those benefits which are conveyed to us by others. Every blessing we enjoy, by what means soever it may be derived upon us, is the

gift of Him who is the great Author of good, and Father of mercies.

If gratitude, when exerted towards one another, naturally produces a very pleasing sensation in the mind of a grateful man, it exalts the soul into rapture, when it is employed on this great object of gratitude, on this beneficent Being, who has given us every thing we already possess, and from whom we expect every thing we yet hope for.

Most of the works of the pagan poets were either direct hymns to their deities, or tended indirectly to the celebration of their respective attributes and perfections. Those who are acquainted with the works of the Greek and Latin poets which are still extant, will, upon reflection, find this observation so true that I shall not enlarge upon it. One would wonder that more of our Christian poets have not turned their thoughts this way, especially if we consider that our idea of the Supreme Being is not only infinitely more great and noble than what could possibly enter into the heart of a heathen, but filled with every thing that can raise the imagination, and give an opportunity for the sublimest thoughts and conceptions.

Plutarch tells us of a heathen who was singing a hymn to Diana, in which he celebrated her for her delight in human sacrifices, and other instances of cruelty and revenge; upon which, a poet who was present at this piece of devotion, and seems to have had a truer idea of the divine nature, told the votary, by way of reproof, that, in recompense for his hymn, he heartily wished he might have a daughter of the same temper with the goddess he celebrated. It was impossible to write the praises of one of those false deities, according to the pagan creed, without a mixture of impertinence and absurdity.

The Jews, who before the time of Christianity were the only people who had the knowledge of the true God, have set the Christian world an example how they ought to employ this divine talent of which I am speaking. As that nation produced men of great genius, without considering them as inspired writers, they have transmitted to us many hymns and divine odes, which excel those that are delivered down to us by the ancient Greeks and Romans, in the poetry, as much as in the subject to which it was consecrated. This I think might easily be shown if there were occasion for it.

I have already communicated to the public some pieces of divine poetry; and, as they have met with a very favourable reception, I shall from time to time publish any work of the same nature, which has not yet appeared in print, and may be acceptable to my readers.

I.

When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys;
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise:

II.

O how shall words with equal warmth
The gratitude declare,
That glows within my ravish'd heart?
But thou canst read it there.

III.

Thy providence my life sustain'd,
And all my wants redrest,
When in the silent womb I lay,
And hung upon the breast.

IV.

To all my weak complaints and cries
Thy mercy lent an ear.
Ere yet my feeble thoughts had learn'd
To form themselves in pray'r.

V.

Unnumber'd comforts to my soul
Thy tender care bestow'd,
Before my infant heart conceiv'd
From whom those comforts flow'd.

VI.

When in the slippery paths of youth,
With heedless steps I ran,
Thine arm unseen convey'd me safe,
And led me up to man.

VII.

Through hidden dangers, toils, and deaths,
It gently clear'd my way,
And through the pleasing snares of vice,
More to be fear'd than they.

VIII.

When worn with sickness oft hast Thou
With health renew'd my face,
And when in sins and sorrows sunk,
Reviv'd my soul with grace.

IX.

Thy bounteous hand with worldly bliss
Has made my cup run o'er.
And in a kind and faithful friend
Has doubled all my store.

X.

Ten thousand thousand precious gifts
My daily thanks employ;
Nor is the least a cheerful heart,
That tastes those gifts with joy.

XI.

Through every period of my life
Thy goodness I'll pursue;
And after death, in distant worlds
The glorious theme renew.

XII.

When nature fails and day and night
Divide thy works no more,
My ever grateful heart, O Lord,
Thy mercy shall adore.

XIII.

Through all eternity to Thee
A joyful song I'll raise;
For oh! eternity's too short
To utter all thy praise.

C.

No. 454.] Monday, August, 11, 1712.

Sine me, vacuum tempus ne quod dem mihi
Laboris. Ter. Heaut. Act. i. Sc. i.
Give me leave to allow myself no respite from labour.

It is an inexpressible pleasure to know a little of the world, and be of no character or significance in it.

To be ever unconcerned, and ever looking on new objects with an endless curiosity, is a delight known only to those who are turned for speculation: nay, they who enjoy it, must value things only as they are the objects of speculation, without drawing any worldly advantage to themselves from them, but just as they are what contribute

to their amusement, or the improvement of the mind. I lay one night last week at Richmond; and being restless, not out of dissatisfaction, but a certain busy inclination one sometimes has, I rose at four in the morning, and took boat for London, with a resolution to rove by boat and coach for the next four-and-twenty hours, till the many different objects I must needs meet with should tire my imagination, and give me an inclination to a repose more profound than I was at that time capable of. I beg people's pardon for an odd humour I am guilty of, and was often that day, which is saluting any person whom I like, whether I know him or not. This is a particularity would be tolerated in me, if they considered that the greatest pleasure I know I receive at my eyes, and that I am obliged to an agreeable person for coming a broad into my view, as another is for a visit of conversation at their own houses.

The hours of the day and night are taken tip in the cities of London and Westminster, by people as different from each other as those who are born in different centuries. Men of six o'clock give way to those of nine, they of nine, to the generation of twelve; and they of twelve disappear, and make room for the fashionable world, who have made two o'clock the noon of the day.

When we first put off from shore, we soon fell in with a fleet of gardeners, bound for the several market-ports of London; and it was the most pleasing scene imaginable to see the cheerfulness with which those industrious people plyed their way to a certain sale of their goods. The banks on each side are as well peopled, and beautified with as agreeable plantations as any spot on the earth; but the Thames itself, loaded with the product of each shore, added very much to the landscape. It was very easy to observe by their sailing, and the countenances of the ruddy virgins, who were supercargoes, the part of the town to which they were bound. Their was an air in the purveyors for Covent-garden, who frequently converse with morning rakes, very unlike the seeming sobriety of those bound for Stocks-market.

Nothing remarkable happened in our voyage; but I landed with ten sail of apricot boats, at Strand-bridge, after having put in at Nine-Elms, and taken in melons, consigned by Mr. Cuffee, of that place, to Sarah Sewell and company, at their stall in Covent-garden. We arrived at Strand-bridge at six of the clock, and were unloading, when the hackney-coachmen of the foregoing night took their leave of each other at the Dark-House, to go to bed before the day was too far spent. Chimney-sweepers passed by us as we made up to the market, and some railleury happened between one of the fruit-wenchers and those black men, about the Devil and Eve, with allusion to their several professions. I could not be-

lieve any place more entertaining than Covent-garden; where I strolled from one fruit-shop to another, with crowds of agreeable young women around me, who were purchasing fruit for their respective families. It was almost eight of the clock before I could leave that variety of objects. I took coach and followed a young lady, who tripped into another just before me, attended by her maid. I saw immediately she was of the family of the Vain-likes. There are a set of these, who of all things, effect the play of Blindman's-buff, and leading men into love for they know not whom, who are fled they know not where. This sort of woman is usually a janty slattern; she hangs on her clothes, plays her head, varies her posture, and changes place incessantly, and all with an appearance of striving at the same time to hide herself, and yet give you to understand she is in humour to laugh at you. You must have often seen the coachmen make signs with their fingers, as they drive by each other, to intimate how much they have got that day. They can carry on that language to give intelligence where they are driving. In an instant my coachman took the wink to pursue; and the lady's driver gave the hint that he was going through Long-acre towards St. James's: while he whipped up James-street, we drove for King-street, to save the pass at St. Martin's-lane. The coachman took care to meet, jostle, and threaten each other for way, and be entangled at the end of Newport-street and Long-acre. The fright, you must believe, brought down the lady's coach door, and obliged her, with her mask off, to inquire into the bustle,—when she sees the man she would avoid. The tackle of the coach-window is so bad she cannot draw it up again, and she drives on sometimes wholly discovered and sometimes half escaped, according to the accident of carriages in her way. One of these ladies keeps her seat in a hackney-coach, as well as the best rider does on a managed horse. The laced shoe on her left foot, with a careless gesture just appearing on the opposite cushion, held her both firm, and in proper attitude to receive the next jolt.

As she was an excellent coach-woman, many were the glances at each other which we had for an hour and a half, in all parts of the town, by the skill of our drivers; till at last my lady was conveniently lost, with notice from her coachman to ours to make off, and he should hear where she went. This chase was now at an end; and the fellow who drove her came to us, and discovered that he was ordered to come again in an hour, for that she was a Silk-worm. I was surprised with this phrase, but found it was a cant among the hackney fraternity for their best customers, women who ramble twice or thrice a week from shop to shop, to turn over all the goods in town without buying any thing. The silk-worms

are, it seems, indulged by the tradesmen; for, though they never buy, they are ever talking of new silks, laces and ribands, and serve the owners in getting them customers as their common dunnors do in making them pay.

The day of people of fashion began now to break, and carts and hacks were mingled with equipages of show and vanity; when I resolved to walk it, out of cheapness; but my unhappy curiosity is such, that I find it always my interest to take coach; for some odd adventure among beggars, ballad singers, or the like, detains and throws me into expense. It happened so immediately; for at the corner of Warwick-street, as I was listening to a new ballad, a ragged rascal, a beggar who knew me, came up to me, and began to turn the eyes of the good company upon me, by telling me he was extremely poor, and should die in the street for want of drink, except I immediately would have the charity to give him sixpence go into the next ale-house and save his life. He urged with a melancholy face, that all his family had died of thirst. All the mob have humour, and two or three began to take the jest; by which Mr. Sturdy carried his point, and let me sneak off to a coach. As I drove along, it was a pleasing reflection to see the world so prettily checkered since I left Richmond, and the scene still filling with children of a new hour. This satisfaction increased as I moved towards the city; and gay signs, well-disposed streets, magnificent public structures, and wealthy shops, adorned with contented faces, made the joy still rising till we came into the centre of the city, and centre of the world of trade, the Exchange of London. As other men in the crowds about me were pleased with their hopes and bargains, I found my account in observing them, in attention to their several interests. I indeed, looked upon myself as the richest man that walked the Exchange that day; for my benevolence made me share the gains of every bargain that was made. It was not the least of my satisfaction in my survey, to go up stairs, and pass the shops of agreeable females; to observe so many pretty hands busy in the folding of ribands, and the utmost eagerness of agreeable faces in the sale of patches, pins, and wires, on each side of the counters, was an amusement in which I could longer have indulged myself, had not the dear creatures called to me, to ask what I wanted, when I could not answer, only 'To look at you.' I went to one of the windows which opened to the area below, where all the several voices lost their distinction, and rose up in a confused humming; which created in me a reflection that could not come into the mind of any but one a little too studious; for I said to myself with a kind of pun in thought, 'What nonsense is all the hurry of this world to those who are above it?' In these, or not much

wiser thoughts, I had liked to have lost my place at the chop-house, where every man, according to the natural bashfulness or sullenness of our nation, eats in a public room a mess of broth, or chop of meat, in dumb silence, as if they had no pretence to speak to each other on the foot of being men, except they were of each other's acquaintance.

I went afterwards to Robin's, and saw people who had dined with me at the five-penny ordinary just before, give bills for the value of large estates; and could not but behold with great pleasure, property lodged in, and transferred in a moment from, such as would never be masters of half as much as is seemingly in them, and given from them, every day they live. But before five in the afternoon I left the city, came to my common scene of Covent-garden, and passed the evening at Will's, in attending the discourses of several sets of people, who relieved each other, within my hearing, on the subjects of cards, dice, love, learning, and politics. The last subject kept me till I heard the streets in the possession of the bell-man, who had now the world to himself, and cried 'Past two o'clock.' This roused me from my seat; and I went to my lodgings, led by a light, whom I put into the discourse of his private economy, and made him give me an account of the charge, hazard, profit, and loss of a family that depended upon a link, with a design to end my trivial day with the generosity of sixpence, instead of a third part of that sum. When I came to my chambers, I writ down these minutes: but was at a loss what instruction I should propose to my reader from the enumeration of so many insignificant matters and occurrences: and I thought it of great use, if they could learn with me to keep their minds open to gratification, and ready to receive it from any thing it meets with. This one circumstance will make every face you see give you the satisfaction you now take in beholding that of a friend; will make every object a pleasing one; will make all the good which arrives to any man, an increase of happiness to yourself.

T.

No. 455.] Tuesday, August 12, 1712.

Ego apis matina
More modoque,
Grata carpentis thyma per laborem
Plurimum

Hor. Od. ii. Lib. 4. 27

My timorous muse
Unambitious tracts pursues:
Does with weak unballast wings,
About the mossy brooks and springs,
Like the laborious bee,
For little drops of honey fly,
And there with humble sweets contents her industry.

Cowley.

THE following letters have in them reflections which will seem of importance both to the learned world and to domestic

life. There is in the first, an allegory so well carried on, that it cannot but be very pleasing to those who have a taste of good writing; and the other billets may have their use in common life.

‘MR. SPECTATOR,—As I walked the other day in a fine garden, and observed the great variety of improvements in plants and flowers, beyond what they otherwise would have been, I was naturally led into a reflection upon the advantages of education, or modern culture: how many good qualities in the mind are lost for want of the like due care in nursing and skilfully managing them; how many virtues are choked by the multitude of weeds which are suffered to grow among them; how excellent parts are often starved and useless, by being planted in a wrong soil; and how very seldom do these moral seeds produce the noble fruits which might be expected from them, by a neglect of proper manuring, necessary pruning, and an artful management of our tender inclinations and first spring of life. These obvious speculations made me at length conclude, that there is a sort of vegetable principle in the mind of every man when he comes into the world. In infants, the seeds lie buried and undiscovered, till after a while they sprout forth in a kind of rational leaves, which are words; and in due season the flowers begin to appear in a variety of beautiful colours, and all the gay pictures of youthful fancy and imagination; at last the fruit knits and is formed, which is green perhaps at first, sour and unpleasant to the taste, and not fit to be gathered: till, ripened by due care and application, it discovers itself in all the noble productions of philosophy, mathematics, close reasoning, and handsome argumentation. These fruits, when they arrive at just maturity, and are of a good kind, afford the most vigorous nourishment to the minds of men. I reflected farther on the intellectual leaves before mentioned, and found almost as great a variety among them as in the vegetable world. I could easily observe the smooth shining Italian leaves, the nimble French aspen, always in motion, the Greek and Latin ever-greens, the Spanish myrtle, the English oak, the Scotch thistle, the Irish shambrague, the prickly German and Dutch holly, the Polish and Russian nettle, besides a vast number of exotics imported from Asia, Africa, and America. I saw several barren plants, which bore only leaves, without any hopes of flower or fruit. The leaves of some were fragrant and well-shaped, and others ill-scented and irregular. I wondered at a set of old whimsical botanists, who spent their whole lives in the contemplation of some withered Egyptian, Coptic, Armenian, or Chinese leaves; while others made it their business to collect, in voluminous herbals, all the several leaves of some one tree. The flowers afford a most diverting entertain-

ment, in a wonderful variety of figures, colours, and scents; however, most of them withered soon, or at best are but annuals. Some professed florists make them their constant study and employment, and despise all fruit; and now and then a few fanciful people spend all their time in the cultivation of a single tulip, or a carnation. But the most agreeable amusement seems to be the well-choosing, mixing, and binding together these flowers in pleasing nose-gays, to present to ladies. The scent of Italian flowers is observed, like their other perfumes, to be too strong, and to hurt the brain; that of the French with glaring gaudy colours, yet faint and languid: German and northern flowers have little or no smell, or sometimes an unpleasant one. The ancients had a secret to give a lasting beauty, colour, and sweetness, to some of their choice flowers, which flourish to this day, and which few of the moderns can effect. These are becoming enough and agreeable in their seasons, and do often handsomely adorn an entertainment: but an over-fondness of them seems to be a disease. It rarely happens, to find a plant vigorous enough to have (like an orange-tree,) at once beautiful and shining leaves, fragrant flowers, and delicious, nourishing fruit. Sir, yours, &c.’

‘August 6, 1712.

‘DEAR SPEC,—You have given us, in your Spectator of Saturday last, a very excellent discourse upon the force of custom, and its wonderful efficacy in making every thing pleasant to us. I cannot deny but that I received above two-pennyworth of instruction from your paper, and in the general was very well pleased with it; but I am, without a compliment, sincerely troubled that I cannot exactly be of your opinion, that it makes every thing pleasing to us. In short, I have the honour to be yoked to a young lady, who is, in plain English, for her standing, a very eminent scold. She began to break her mind very freely, both to me and to her servants, about two months after our nuptials; and, though I have been accustomed to this humour of hers these three years, yet I do not know what’s the matter with me, but I am no more delighted with it than I was at the very first. I have advised with her relations about her, and they all tell me that her mother and her grandmother before her were both taken much after the same manner; so that, since it runs in the blood, I have but small hopes of her recovery. I should be glad to have a little of your advice in this matter. I would not willingly trouble you to contrive how it may be a pleasure to me; if you will but put me in a way that I may bear it with indifference, I shall rest satisfied.

‘Dear Spec, your very humble servant.

‘P. S. I must do the poor girl the justice to let you know, that this match was none of her own choosing, (or indeed of mine

either;) in consideration of which I avoid giving her the least provocation; and, indeed, we live better together than usually folks do who hated one another when they were first joined. To evade the sin against parents, or at least to extenuate it, my dear rails at my father and mother, and I curse hers for making the match.'

'August 8, 1712.

'MR. SPECTATOR,—I like the theme you lately gave out extremely, and should be as glad to handle it as any man living: but I find myself no better qualified to write about money than about my wife; for, to tell you a secret, which I desire may go no farther, I am master of neither of those subjects. Yours, PILL GARLICK.'

'MR. SPECTATOR,—I desire you will print this in italic, so as it may be generally taken notice of. It is designed only to admonish all persons, who speak either at the bar, pulpit, or any public assembly whatsoever, how they discover their ignorance in the use of similies. There are, in the pulpit itself, as well as in other places, such gross abuses in this kind, that I give this warning to all I know. I shall bring them for the future before your spectatorial authority. On Sunday last, one, who shall be nameless, reproving several of his congregation for standing at prayers, was pleased to say, "One would think, like the elephant, you had no knees." Now I myself saw an elephant, in Bartholomew fair, kneel down to take on his back the ingenious Mr. William Penkethman. Your most humble servant.' T.

No. 456.] Wednesday, August 13, 1712.

De quo libelli in celeberrimis locis proponuntur, huic ne perire quidem tacite conceditur.—*Full.*

The man whose conduct is publicly arraigned, is not suffered even to be undone quietly.

OTWAY, in his tragedy of Venice Preserved, has described the misery of a man whose effects are in the hands of the law, with great spirit. The bitterness of being the scorn and laughter of base minds, the anguish of being insulted by men hardened beyond the sense of shame or pity, and the injury of a man's fortune being wasted, under pretence of justice, are excellently aggravated in the following speech of Pierre to Jaffier:

'I pass'd this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guard'd by a troop of villains;
The sons of public rapine were destroying.
They told me by the sentence of the law,
They had commission to seize all thy fortune;
Nay, more, Priuli's cruel hand had sign'd it.
Here stood a ruffian with a horrid face,
Lording it o'er a pile of massy plate,
Tumbled into a heap for public sale.
There was another making villanous jests
At thy undoing. He had ta'en possession
Of all thy ancient most domestic ornaments,
Rich hangings intermix'd and wrought with gold;
The very bed, which on thy wedding-night
Receiv'd thee to the arms of Belvidera.
The scene of all thy joys, was violated

By the coarse hands of filthy dungeon villains,
And thrown amongst the common lumber.'

Nothing indeed can be more unhappy than the condition of bankruptcy. The calamity which happens to us by ill-fortune, or by the injury of others, has in it some consolation; but what arises from our own misbehaviour, or error, is the state of the most exquisite sorrow. When a man considers not only an ample fortune, but even the very necessities of life, his pretence to food itself, at the mercy of his creditors, he cannot but look upon himself in the state of the dead, with his case thus much worse, that the last office is performed by his adversaries instead of his friends. From this hour the cruel world does not only take possession of his whole fortune, but even of every thing else which had no relation to it. All his indifferent actions have new interpretations put upon them; and those whom he has favoured in his former life, discharge themselves of their obligations to him, by joining in the reproaches of his enemies. It is almost incredible that it should be so; but it is too often seen that there is a pride mixed with the impatience of the creditor; and there are who would rather recover their own by the downfall of a prosperous man, than be discharged to the common satisfaction of themselves and their creditors. The wretched man, who was lately master of abundance, is now under the direction of others; and the wisdom, economy, good sense, and skill in human life before, by reason of his present misfortune, are of no use to him in the disposition of any thing. The incapacity of an infant or a lunatic is designed for his provision and accommodation; but that of a bankrupt, without any mitigation in respect of the accidents by which it arrived, is calculated for his utter ruin, except there be a remainder ample enough, after the discharge of his creditors, to bear also the expense of rewarding those by whose means the effect of all this labour was transferred from him. This man is to look on and see others giving directions upon what terms and conditions his goods are to be purchased; and all this usually done, not with an air of trustees to dispose of his effects, but destroyers to divide and tear them to pieces.

There is something sacred in misery to great and good minds; for this reason all wise lawgivers have been extremely tender how they let loose even the man who has right on his side, to act with any mixture of resentment against the defendant. Virtuous and modest men, though they be used with some artifice, and have it in their power to avenge themselves, are slow in the application of that power, and are ever constrained to go into rigorous measures. They are careful to demonstrate themselves not only persons injured, but also that to bear it longer would be a means to make the offender injure others,

before they proceed. Such men clap their hands upon their hearts, and consider what it is to have at their mercy the life of a citizen. Such would have it to say to their own souls, if possible, that they were merciful when they could have destroyed, rather than when it was in their power to have spared a man, they destroyed. This is a due to the common calamity of human life, due in some measure to our very enemies. They who scruple in doing the least injury are cautious of exacting the utmost justice.

Let any one who is conversant in the variety of human life reflect upon it, and he will find the man who wants mercy has a taste of no enjoyment of any kind. There is a natural disrelish of every thing which is good in his very nature, and he is born an enemy to the world. He is ever extremely partial to himself in all his actions, and has no sense of iniquity but from the punishment which shall attend it. The law of the land is his gospel, and all his cases of conscience are determined by his attorney. Such men know not what it is to gladden the heart of a miserable man; that riches are the instruments of serving the purposes of heaven or hell, according to the disposition of the possessor. The wealthy can torment or gratify all who are in their power, and choose to do one or other, as they are affected with love or hatred to mankind. As for such who are insensible of the concerns of others, but merely as they affect themselves, these men are to be valued only for their mortality, and as we hope better things from their heirs. I could not but read with great delight, a letter from an eminent citizen, who has failed, to one who was intimate with him in his better fortune, and able by his countenance to retrieve his lost condition.

'SIR,—It is in vain to multiply words and make apologies for what is never to be defended by the best advocate in the world, the guilt of being unfortunate. All that a man in my condition can do or say, will be received with prejudice by the generality of mankind, but I hope not with you; you have been a great instrument in helping me to get what I have lost; and I know (for that reason, as well as kindness to me) you cannot but be in pain to see me undone. To show you I am not a man incapable of bearing calamity, I will, though a poor man, lay aside the distinction between us, and talk with the frankness we did when we were nearer to an equality: as all I do will be received with prejudice, all you do will be looked upon with partiality. What I desire of you is, that you, who are courted by all, would smile upon me, who am shunned by all. Let that grace and favour which your fortune throws upon you, be turned to make up the coldness and indifference that is used towards me. All good and generous men will have an eye of kindness for me for my own sake, and the

rest of the world will regard me for yours. There is a happy contagion in riches, as well as a destructive one in poverty: the rich can make rich without parting with any of their store; and the conversation of the poor makes men poor, though they borrow nothing of them. How this is to be accounted for I know not; but men's estimation follows us according to the company we keep. If you are what you were to me, you can go a great way towards my recovery; if you are not, my good fortune, if ever it returns, will return by slower approaches. I am, sir, your affectionate friend, and humble servant.'

This was answered by a condescension that did not, by long impertinent professions of kindness, insult his distress, but was as follows:

'DEAR TOM,—I am very glad to hear that you have heart enough to begin the world a second time. I assure you, I do not think your numerous family at all diminished (in the gifts of nature, for which I have ever so much admired them,) by what has so lately happened to you. I shall not only countenance your affairs with my appearance for you, but shall accommodate you with a considerable sum at common interest for three years. You know I could make more of it; but I have so great a love for you, that I can waive opportunities of gain to help you; for I do not care whether they say of me after I am dead, that I had a hundred or fifty thousand pounds more than I wanted when I was living. Your obliged humble servant.'

T.

No. 457.] Thursday, August 14, 1712.

— Multa et præclara minantis.

Hor. Sat. iii. Lib. 2. 9.

Seeming to promise something wondrous great.

I SHALL this day lay before my readers a letter, written by the same hand with that of last Friday, which contained proposals for a printed newspaper that should take in the whole circle of the penny-post.

'SIR,—The kind reception you gave my last Friday's letter, in which I broached my project of a newspaper, encourages me to lay before you two or three more; for, you must know, sir, that we look upon you to be the Lowndes* of the learned world, and cannot think any scheme practicable or rational before you have approved of it, though all the money we raise by it is in our own funds, and for our private use.

'I have often thought that a news-letter of whispers, written every post, and sent about the kingdom, after the same manner as that of Mr. Dyer, Mr. Dawkes, or any other epistolary historian, might be highly gratifying to the public, as well as bene-

* Secretary at this time of the treasury, and director of the mint.

ficial to the author. By whispers I mean those pieces of news which are communicated as secrets, and which bring a double pleasure to the hearer: first, as they are private history; and, in the next place, as they have always in them a dash of scandal. These are the two chief qualifications in an article of news, which recommend it in a more than ordinary manner, to the ears of the curious. Sickness of persons in high posts, twilight visits paid and received by ministers of state, clandestine courtships and marriages, secret amours, losses at play, applications for places, with their respective successes and repulses, are the materials in which I chiefly intend to deal. I have two persons, that are each of them the representative of a species, who are to furnish me with those whispers which I intend to convey to my correspondents. The first of these is Peter Hush, descended from the ancient family of the Hushes. The other is the old lady Blast, who has a very numerous tribe of daughters in the two great cities of London and Westminster. Peter Hush has a whispering-hole in most of the great coffee-houses about town. If you are alone with him in a wide room, he carries you up into a corner of it, and speaks in your ear. I have seen Peter seat himself in a company of seven or eight persons whom he never saw before in his life; and, after having looked about to see there was no one that overheard him, has communicated to them in a low voice, and under the seal of secrecy, the death of a great man in the country, who was, perhaps, a fox-hunting the very moment this account was given of him. If upon your entering into a coffee-house you see a circle of heads bending over the table, and lying close to one another, it is ten to one but my friend Peter is among them. I have known Peter publishing the whisper of the day by eight o'clock in the morning at Garraway's, by twelve at Will's, and before two at the Smyrna. When Peter has thus effectually launched a secret, I have been very well pleased to hear people whispering it to one another at second-hand, and spreading it about as their own; for you must know, sir, the great incentive to whispering is the ambition which every one has of being thought in the secret, and being looked upon as a man who has access to greater people than one would imagine. After having given you this account of Peter Hush, I proceed to that virtuous lady, the old lady Blast, who is to communicate to me the private transactions of the crimp-table, with all the arcana of the fair-sex. The lady Blast, you must understand, has such a particular malignity in her whisper, that it blights like an easterly wind, and withers every reputation that it breathes upon. She has a particular knack at making private weddings, and last winter married above five women of quality to their footmen. Her whisper can make an

innocent young woman big with child, or fill a healthy young fellow with distempers that are not to be named. She can turn a visit into an intrigue, and a distant salute into an assignation. She can beggar the wealthy, and degrade the noble. In short, she can whisper men base or foolish, jealous or ill-natured: or, if occasion requires, can tell you the slips of their great grandmothers, and traduce the memory of honest coachmen, that have been in their graves above these hundred years. By these and the like helps, I question not but I shall furnish out a very handsome newsletter. If you approve my project, I shall begin to whisper by the very next post, and question not but every one of my customers will be very well pleased with me, when he considers that every piece of news I send him is a word in his ear, and lets him into a secret.

‘Having given you a sketch of this project, I shall, in the next place, suggest to you another for a monthly pamphlet, which I shall likewise submit to your spectatorial wisdom. I need not tell you, sir, that there are several authors in France, Germany, and Holland, as well as in our own country,* who publish every month what they call *An Account of the Works of the Learned*, in which they give us an abstract of all such books as are printed in any part of Europe. Now, sir, it is my design to publish every month, *An Account of the Works of the Unlearned*. Several late productions of my own countrymen, who, many of them make a very eminent figure in the illiterate world; encourage me in this undertaking. I may, in this work, possibly make a review of several pieces which have appeared in the foreign accounts above mentioned, though they ought not to have been taken notice of in works which bear such a title. I may likewise take into consideration such pieces as appear, from time to time, under the names of those gentlemen who compliment one another in public assemblies, by the title of “*The Learned Gentlemen*.” Our party-authors will also afford me a great variety of subjects, not to mention the editors, commentators, and others, who are often men of no learning, or, what is as bad, of no knowledge. I shall not enlarge upon this hint; but if you think any thing can be made of it, I shall set about it with all the pains and application that so useful a work deserves. I am ever, most worthy sir, &c.’ C.

No. 458.] *Friday, August 15, 1712.*

Αἰδώς καὶ ἀγάρην—

Hes.

—Pudor malus—

Hor.

False modesty.

I COULD not but smile at the account that was yesterday given me of a modest young

* Mr. Michael de la Roche, 38 vols. 8vo. in Engl. under different titles; and in Fr. 8 tomes, 24mo.

gentleman, who, being invited to an entertainment, though he was not used to drink, had not the confidence to refuse his glass in his turn, when on a sudden he grew so flustered, that he took all the talk of the table into his own hands, abused every one of the company, and flung a bottle at the gentleman's head who treated him. This has given me occasion to reflect upon the ill effects of a vicious modesty, and to remember the saying of Brutus, as it is quoted by Plutarch, that 'the person has had but an ill education, who has not been taught to deny any thing.' This false kind of modesty has, perhaps, betrayed both sexes into as many vices as the most abandoned impudence; and is the more inexcusable to reason, because it acts to gratify others rather than itself, and is punished with a kind of remorse, not only like other vicious habits when the crime is over, but even at the very time that it is committed.

Nothing is more amiable than true modesty, and nothing is more contemptible than the false. The one guards virtue, the other betrays it. True modesty is ashamed to do any thing that is repugnant to the rules of right reason; false modesty is ashamed to do any thing that is opposite to the humour of the company. True modesty avoids every thing that is criminal, false modesty every thing that is unfashionable. The latter is only a general undetermined instinct; the former is that instinct, limited and circumscribed by the rules of prudence and religion.

We may conclude that modesty to be false and vicious which engages a man to do any thing that is ill or indiscreet, or which restrains him from doing any thing that is of a contrary nature. How many men, in the common concerns of life, lend sums of money which they are not able to spare, are bound for persons whom they have but little friendship for, give commendatory characters of men whom they are not acquainted with, bestow places on those whom they do not esteem, live in such a manner as they themselves do not approve, and all this merely because they have not the confidence to resist solicitation, importunity, or example!

Nor does this false modesty expose us only to such actions as are indiscreet, but very often to such as are highly criminal. When Xenophanes was called timorous, because he would not venture his money in a game of dice: 'I confess,' said he, 'that I am exceeding timorous, for I dare not do an ill thing.' On the contrary, a man of vicious modesty complies with every thing, and is only fearful of doing what may look singular in the company where he is engaged. He falls in with the torrent, and lets himself go to every action or discourse, however unjustifiable in itself, so it be in vogue among the present party. This, though one of the most common, is one of the most ridiculous dispositions in human

nature, that men should not be ashamed of speaking or acting in a dissolute or irrational manner, but that one who is in their company should be ashamed of governing himself by the principles of reason and virtue.

In the second place, we are to consider false modesty as it restrains a man from doing what is good and laudable. My reader's own thoughts will suggest to him many instances and examples under this head. I shall only dwell upon one reflection, which I cannot make without a secret concern. We have in England a particular bashfulness in every thing that regards religion. A well-bred man is obliged to conceal any serious sentiment of this nature, and very often to appear a greater libertine than he is, that he may keep himself in countenance among the men of mode. Our excess of modesty makes us shame-faced in all the exercises of piety and devotion. This humour prevails upon us daily; insomuch that, at many well-bred tables, the master of the house is so very modest a man, that he has not the confidence to say grace at his own table: a custom which is not only practised by all the nations about us, but was never omitted by the heathens themselves. English gentlemen, who travel into Roman-catholic countries, are not a little surprised to meet with people of the best quality kneeling in their churches, and engaged in their private devotions, though it be not at the hours of public worship. An officer of the army, or a man of wit and pleasure, in those countries, would be afraid of passing not only for an irreligious, but an ill-bred man, should he be seen to go to bed, or sit down at table, without offering up his devotions on such occasions. The same show of religion appears in all the foreign reformed churches, and enters so much in their ordinary conversation, that an Englishman is apt to term them hypocritical and precise.

This little appearance of a religious deportment in our nation, may proceed in some measure from that modesty which is natural to us; but the great occasion of it is certainly this. Those swarms of sectaries that overran the nation in the time of the great rebellion, carried their hypocrisy so high, that they had converted our whole language into a jargon of enthusiasm: insomuch, that upon the restoration, men thought they could not recede too far from the behaviour and practice of those persons who had made religion a cloak to so many villanies. This led them into the other extreme; every appearance of devotion was looked upon as puritanical, and falling into the hands of the 'ridiculers' who flourished in that reign, and attacked every thing that was serious, it has ever since been out of countenance among us. By this means we are gradually fallen into that vicious modesty, which has in some measure worn out from among us the ap-

pearance of Christianity in ordinary life and conversation, and which distinguishes us from all our neighbours.

Hypocrisy cannot indeed be too much detested, but at the same time it is to be preferred to open impiety. They are both equally destructive to the person who is possessed with them; but, in regard to others, hypocrisy is not so pernicious as bare-faced irreligion. The due mean to be observed is, 'to be sincerely virtuous, and at the same time to let the world see we are so.' I do not know a more dreadful menace in the holy writings, than that which is pronounced against those who have this perverted modesty to be ashamed before men in a particular of such unspeakable importance.

No. 459.] *Saturday, August 16, 1712.*

—Quicquid dignum sapiente bonoque est.

Hor. Ep. iv. Lib. 1. 5.

—Whate'er befits the wise and good.—*Creech.*

RELIGION may be considered under two general heads. The first comprehends what we are to believe, the other what we are to practise. By those things which we are to believe, I mean whatever is revealed to us in the holy writings, and which we could not have obtained the knowledge of by the light of nature; by the things which we are to practise, I mean all those duties to which we are directed by reason or natural religion. The first of these I shall distinguish by the name of faith, the second by that of morality.

If we look into the more serious part of mankind, we find many who lay so great a stress upon faith, that they neglect morality; and many who build so much upon morality, that they do not pay a due regard to faith. The perfect man should be defective in neither of these particulars, as will be very evident to those who consider the benefits which arise from each of them, and which I shall make the subject of this day's paper.

Notwithstanding this general division of Christian duty into morality and faith, and that they have both their peculiar excellencies, the first has the pre-eminence in several respects.

First, Because the greatest part of morality (as I have stated the notion of it,) is of a fixed eternal nature, and will endure when faith shall fail, and be lost in conviction.

Secondly, Because a person may be qualified to do greater good to mankind, and become more beneficial to the world, by morality without faith, than by faith without morality.

Thirdly, Because morality gives a greater perfection to human nature, by quieting the mind, moderating the passions, and advancing the happiness of every man in his private capacity.

Fourthly, Because the rule of morality is much more certain than that of faith, all the civilized nations of the world agreeing in the great points of morality, as much as they differ in those of faith.

Fifthly, Because infidelity is not of so malignant a nature as immorality; or, to put the same reason in another light, because it is generally owned, there may be salvation for a virtuous infidel, (particularly in the case of invincible ignorance,) but none for a vicious believer.

Sixthly, Because faith seems to draw its principal, if not all its excellency, from the influence it has upon morality; as we shall see more at large, if we consider wherein consists the excellency of faith, or the belief of revealed religion; and this I think is,

First, In explaining, and carrying to greater height, several points of morality.

Secondly, In furnishing new and stronger motives to enforce the practice of morality.

Thirdly, In giving us more amiable ideas of the Supreme Being, more endearing notions of one another, and a truer state of ourselves, both in regard to the grandeur and vileness of our natures.

Fourthly, By showing us the blackness and deformity of vice, which in the Christian system is so very great, that he who is possessed of all perfection, and the sovereign judge of it, is represented by several of our divines as hating sin to the same degree that he loves the sacred person who was made the propitiation of it.

Fifthly, In being the ordinary and prescribed method of making morality effectual to salvation.

I have only touched on these several heads, which every one who is conversant in discourses of this nature will easily enlarge upon in his own thoughts, and draw conclusions from them which may be useful to him in the conduct of his life. One I am sure is so obvious that he cannot miss it, namely, that a man cannot be perfect in his scheme of morality, who does not strengthen and support it with that of the Christian faith.

Besides this, I shall lay down two or three other maxims, which I think we may deduce from what has been said.

First, That we should be particularly cautious of making any thing an article of faith, which does not contribute to the confirmation or improvement of morality.

Secondly, That no article of faith can be true and authentic, which weakens or subverts the practical part of religion, or what I have hitherto called morality.

Thirdly, That the greatest friend of morality and natural religion cannot possibly apprehend any danger from embracing Christianity, as it is preserved pure and uncorrupt in the doctrines of our national church.*

There is likewise another maxim which

* The Gospel.

I think may be drawn from the foregoing considerations, which is this, that we should, in all dubious points, consider any ill consequences that may arise from them, supposing they should be erroneous, before we give up our assent to them.

For example, In that disputable point of persecuting men for conscience sake, besides the embittering their minds with hatred, indignation, and all the vehemence of resentment, and ensnaring them to profess what they do not believe, we cut them off from the pleasures and advantages of society, afflict their bodies, distress their fortunes, hurt their reputations, ruin their families, make their lives painful, or put an end to them. Sure when I see such dreadful consequences rising from a principle, I would be as fully convinced of the truth of it, as of a mathematical demonstration, before I would venture to act upon it, or make it a part of my religion.

In this case the injury done our neighbour is plain and evident; the principle that puts us upon doing it, of a dubious and disputable nature. Morality seems highly violated by the one; and whether or no a zeal for what a man thinks the true system of faith may justify it, is very uncertain. I cannot but think, if our religion produces charity as well as zeal, it will not be for showing itself by such cruel instances. But to conclude with the words of an excellent author, 'We have just enough of religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another.'

No. 460.] Monday, August 18, 1712.

Decipimur specie recti—*Hor. Ars Poet. v. 25.*
Deceived by a seeming excellence.—*Roscommon.*

Our defects and follies are too often unknown to us; nay, they are so far from being known to us, that they pass for demonstrations of our worth. This makes us easy in the midst of them, fond to show them, fond to improve them, and to be esteemed for them. Then it is that a thousand unaccountable conceits, gay inventions, and extravagant actions, must afford us pleasures, and display us to others in the colours which we ourselves take a fancy to glory in. Indeed there is something so amusing for the time in this state of vanity and ill-grounded satisfaction, that even the wiser world has chosen an exalted word to describe its enchantments and called it, 'The Paradise of Fools.'

Perhaps the latter part of this reflection may seem a false thought to some, and bear another turn than what I have given; but it is at present none of my business to look after it, who am going to confess that I have been lately amongst them in a vision.

Methought I was transported to a hill, green, flowery, and of an easy ascent. Upon the broad top of it resided squint-eyed Error, and Popular Opinion with many

heads; two that dwelt in sorcery, and were famous for bewitching people with the love of themselves. To these repaired a multitude from every side, by two different paths which lead towards each of them. Some who had the most assuming air went directly of themselves to Error, without expecting a conductor; others of a softer nature went first to Popular Opinion, from whence, as she influenced and engaged them with their own praises, she delivered them over to his government.

When we had ascended to an open part of the summit where Opinion abode, we found her entertaining several who had arrived before us. Her voice was pleasing; she breathed odours as she spoke. She seemed to have a tongue for every one; every one thought he heard of something that was valuable in himself, and expected a paradise which she promised as the reward of his merit. Thus were we drawn to follow her, till she should bring us where it was to be bestowed; and it was observable that, all the way we went, the company was either praising themselves in their qualifications, or one another for those qualifications which they took to be conspicuous in their own characters, or dispraising others for wanting theirs, or vying in the degrees of them.

At last we approached a bower, at the entrance of which Error was seated. The trees were thick woven, and the place where he sat artfully contrived to darken him a little. He was disguised in a whitish robe, which he had put on, that he might appear to us with a nearer resemblance to Truth; and as she has a light whereby she manifests the beauties of nature to the eyes of her adorers, so he had provided himself with a magical wand, that he might do something in imitation of it, and please with delusions. This he lifted solemnly, and, muttering to himself, bid the glories which he kept under enchantment to appear before us. Immediately we cast our eyes on that part of the sky to which he pointed, and observed a thin blue prospect, which cleared as mountains in a summer morning when the mist goes off, and the palace of Vanity appeared to sight.

The foundation seemed hardly a foundation, but a set of curling clouds, which it stood upon by magical contrivance. The way by which we ascended was painted like a rainbow; and as we went, the breeze that played about us bewitched the senses. The walls were gilded all for show; the lowest set of pillars were of the slight fine Corinthian order, and the top of the building being rounded, bore so far the resemblance of a bubble.

At the gate the travellers neither met with a porter, nor waited till one should appear; every one thought his merits a sufficient passport, and pressed forward. In the hall we met with several phantoms, that roved amongst us, and ranged the

company according to their sentiments. There was decreasing Honour, that had nothing to show but an old coat of his ancestor's achievements. There was Ostentation, that made himself his own constant subject; and Gallantry strutting upon his tiptoes. At the upper end of the hall stood a throne, whose canopy glittered with all the riches that gayety could contrive to lavish on it; and between the gilded arms sat Vanity, decked in the peacock's feathers, and acknowledged for another Venus by her votaries. The boy who stood beside her for a Cupid, and who made the world to bow before her, was called Self-Conceit. His eyes had every now and then a cast inwards, to the neglect of all objects about him; and the arms which he made use of for conquest, were borrowed from those against whom he had a design. The arrow which he shot at the soldier, was flegged from his own plume of feathers; the dart he directed against the man of wit, was winged from the quills he writ with; and that which he sent against those who presumed upon their riches, was headed with gold out of their treasures. He made nets for statesmen from their own contrivances; he took fire from the eyes of the ladies, with which he melted their hearts; and lightning from the tongues of the eloquent, to inflame them with their own glories. At the foot of the throne sat three false Graces; Flattery with a shell of paint, Affectation with a mirror to practise at, and Fashion ever changing the posture of her clothes. These applied themselves to secure the conquests which Self-Conceit had gotten, and had each of them their particular polities. Flattery gave new colours and complexions to all things; Affectation new airs and appearances, which, as she said, were not vulgar; and Fashion both concealed some home defects, and added some foreign external beauties.

As I was reflecting upon what I saw, I heard a voice in the crowd bemoaning the condition of mankind, which is thus managed by the breath of Opinion, deluded by Error, fired by Self-Conceit, and given up to be trained in all the courses of Vanity, till Scorn or Poverty come upon us. These expressions were no sooner handed about, but I immediately saw a general disorder, till at last there was a parting in one place, and a grave old man, decent and resolute, was led forward to be punished for the words he had uttered. He appeared inclined to have spoken in his own defence, but I could not observe that any one was willing to hear him. Vanity cast a scornful smile at him; Self-Conceit was angry; Flattery, who knew him for Plain-Dealing, put on a vizard, and turned away; Affectation tossed her fan, made mouths, and called him Envy or Slander: and Fashion would have it, that at least he must be ill-manners. Thus slighted and despised by all, he was driven out for abusing people of merit and figure;

and I heard it firmly resolved, that he should be used no better wherever they met with him hereafter.

I had already seen the meaning of most part of that warning which he had given, and was considering how the latter words should be fulfilled, when a mighty noise was heard without, and the door was blackened by a numerous train of harpies crowding in upon us. Folly and Broken-Credit were seen in the house before they entered. Trouble, Shame, Infamy, Scorn, and Poverty, brought up the rear. Vanity, with her Cupid and Graces, disappeared; her subjects ran into holes and corners; but many of them were found and carried off (as I was told by one who stood near me) either to prisons or cellars, solitude, or little company, the mean arts or the viler crafts of life. 'But these,' added he, with a disdainful air, 'are such who would fondly live here, when their merits neither matched the lustre of the place, nor their riches its expenses. We have seen such scenes as these before now; the glory you saw will all return when the hurry is over.' I thanked him for his information; and believing him so incorrigible as that he would stay till it was his turn to be taken, I made off to the door, and overtook some few, who, though they would not hearken to Plain-Dealing, were now terrified to good purpose by the example of others. But when they had touched the threshold, it was a strange shock to them to find that the delusion of Error was gone, and they plainly discerned the building to hang a little up in the air without any real foundation. At first we saw nothing but a desperate leap remained for us, and I a thousand times blamed my unmeaning curiosity that had brought me into so much danger. But as they began to sink lower in their own minds, methought the palace sunk along with us, till they were arrived at the due point of esteem which they ought to have for themselves, then the part of the building in which they stood touched the earth, and we departing out, it retired from our eyes. Now, whether they who stayed in the palace were sensible of this descent, I cannot tell: it was then my opinion that they were not. However it be, my dream broke up at it, and has given me occasion all my life to reflect upon the fatal consequences of following the suggestions of Vanity.

'MR. SPECTATOR,—I write to you to desire that you would again touch upon a certain enormity, which is chiefly in use among the politer and better-bred part of mankind; I mean the ceremonies, bows, courtesies, whisperings, smiles, winks, nods, with other familiar arts of salutation, which take up in our churches so much time that might be better employed, and which seem so utterly inconsistent with the duty and true intent of our entering into those religious assemblies. The resemblance which this

bears to our indeed proper behaviour in theatres, may be some instance of its incongruity in the above-mentioned places. In Roman-catholic churches and chapels abroad, I myself have observed, more than once, persons of the first quality, of the nearest relation, and intimatest acquaintance, passing by one another unknowing as it were, and unknown, and with so little notice of each other, that it looked like having their minds more suitably and more solemnly engaged; at least it was an acknowledgment that they ought to have been so. I have been told the same even of Mahometans, with relation to the propriety of their demeanour in the conventions of their erroneous worship; and I cannot but think either of them sufficient laudable patterns for our imitation in this particular.

'I cannot help, upon this occasion, remarking on the excellent memories of those devotionists, who upon returning from church shall give a particular account how two or three hundred people were dressed: a thing, by reason of its variety, so difficult to be digested and fixed in the head, that it is a miracle to me how two poor hours of divine service can be time sufficient for so elaborate an undertaking, the duty of the place too being jointly, and no doubt oft pathetically, performed along with it. Where it is said in sacred writ, that "the woman ought to have a covering on her head because of the angels," the last word is by some thought to be metaphorically used, and to signify young men. Allowing this interpretation to be right, the text may not appear to be wholly foreign to our present purpose.

'When you are in a disposition proper for writing on such a subject, I earnestly recommend this to you; and am, sir, your humble servant.'

T.

No. 461.] Tuesday, August 19, 1712.

—Sed non ego credulis illus. *Virg. Ecl. ix. 34.*

But I discern their flatt'ry from their praise.

Dryden.

FOR want of time to substitute something else in the room of them, I am at present obliged to publish compliments above my desert in the following letters. It is no small satisfaction to have given occasion to ingenious men to employ their thoughts upon sacred subjects from the approbation of such pieces of poetry as they have seen in my Saturday's papers. I shall never publish verse on that day but what is written by the same hand;* yet I shall not accompany those writings with eulogiums, but leave them to speak for themselves.

For the Spectator.

'MR. SPECTATOR,—You very much promote the interests of virtue, while you

reform the taste of a profane age; and persuade us to be entertained with divine poems, whilst we are distinguished by so many thousand humours, and split into so many different sects and parties; yet persons of every party, sect, and humour, are fond of conforming their taste to yours. You can transfuse your own relish of a poem into all your readers, according to their capacity to receive; and when you recommend the pious passion that reigns in the verse, we seem to feel the devotion, and grow proud and pleased inwardly, that we have souls capable of relishing what the Spectator approves.

'Upon reading the hymns that you have published in some late papers, I had a mind to try yesterday whether I could write one. The cxivth psalm appears to me an admirable ode, and I began to turn it into our language. As I was describing the journey of Israel from Egypt, and added the Divine Presence amongst them, I perceived a beauty in this psalm which was entirely new to me, and which I was going to lose; and that is that the poet utterly conceals the presence of God in the beginning of it, and rather lets a possessive pronoun go without a substantive, than he will so much as mention any thing of divinity there. "Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion or kingdom." The reason now seems evident, and this conduct necessary: for, if God had appeared before, there could be no wonder why the mountains should leap and the sea retire: therefore, that this convulsion of nature may be brought in with due surprise, his name is not mentioned till afterward; and then, with a very agreeable turn of thought, God is introduced at once in all his majesty. This is what I have attempted to imitate in a translation without paraphrase, and to preserve what I could of the spirit of the sacred author.

'If the following essay be not too incorrigible, bestow upon it a few brightenings from your genius, that I may learn how to write better, or to write no more. Your daily admirer and humble servant, * &c.'

PSALM CXIV.

I.

"When Israel, freed from Pharaoh's hand,
Left the proud tyrant and his land,
The tribes with cheerful homage own
Their king, and Judah was his throne.

II.

"Across the deep their journey lay,
The deep divides to make them way:
The streams of Jordan saw, and fled;
With backward current to their head.

III.

"The mountains shook like frightened sheep,
Like lambs the little hillocks leap;
Not Sinai on her base could stand,
Conscious of sov'reign power at hand.

IV.

"What power could make the deep divide?
Make Jordan backward roll his tide?

* Dr. Isaac Watts.

† Jordan beheld their march, and fled
With backward current to his head.—Watts's Ps.

* Addison.

Why did ye leap, ye little hills?
And whence the fright that Sinai feels?

V.

"Let every mountain, every flood,
Retire, and know th' approaching God,
The King of Israel. See him here;
Tremble, thou earth, adore and fear."

VI.

"He thunders—and all nature mourns;
The rock to standing pools he turns.
Flints spring with fountains at his word,
And fires and seas confess their Lord."

"MR. SPECTATOR,—There are those who take the advantage of your putting a halfpenny value upon yourself, above the rest of our daily writers, to defame you in public conversation, and strive to make you unpopular upon the account of this said halfpenny. But, if I were you, I would insist upon that small acknowledgment for the superior merit of yours, as being a work of invention. Give me leave, therefore, to do you justice, and say in your behalf, what you cannot yourself, which is, that your writings have made learning a more necessary part of good-breeding than it was before you appeared; that modesty is become fashionable, and impudence stands in need of some wit, since you have put them both in their proper lights. Profaneness, lewdness, and debauchery, are not now qualifications; and a man may be a very fine gentleman, though he is neither a keeper nor an infidel.

"I would have you tell the town the story of the Sibyls, if they deny giving you two pence. Let them know, that those sacred papers were valued at the same rate after two thirds of them were destroyed, as when there was the whole set. There are so many of us who will give you your own price, that you may acquaint your non-conformist readers, that they shall not have it, except they come in within such a day, under three pence. I do not know but you might bring in the Date Obolus Belisario with a good grace. The wittings come in clusters to two or three coffee-houses which have left you off; and I hope you will make us, who fine to your wit, merry with their characters who stand out against it. I am your most humble servant.

"P. S. I have lately got the ingenious authors of blacking for shoes, powder for colouring the hair, pomatum for the hands, cosmetic for the face, to be your constant customers; so that your advertisements will as much adorn the outward man, as your paper does the inward."

T.

No. 462.] *Wednesday, August 20, 1712.*

Nil ego prætulerim jocundo sanus amico.

Hor. Sat. v. Lib. I. 44.

Nothing so grateful as a pleasant friend.

PEOPLE are not aware of the very great force which pleasantry in company has upon all those with whom a man of that talent converses. His faults are generally overlooked by all his acquaintance; and a

certain carelessness, that constantly attends all his actions, carries him on with greater success than diligence and assiduity does others who have no share in this endowment. Dacincthus breaks his word upon all occasions, both trivial and important; and, when he is sufficiently railed at for that abominable quality, they who talk of him end with, 'After all, he is a very pleasant fellow.' Dacincthus is an ill-natured husband, and yet the very women end their freedom of discourse upon this subject, 'But, after all, he is very pleasant company.' Dacincthus is neither, in point of honour, civility, good-breeding, or good-nature, unexceptionable; and yet all is answered, 'For he is a very pleasant fellow.' When this quality is conspicuous in a man who has, to accompany it, manly and virtuous sentiments, there cannot certainly be any thing which can give so pleasing a gratification as the gayety of such a person; but when it is alone, and serves only to gild a crowd of ill qualities, there is no man so much to be avoided as your pleasant fellow. A very pleasant fellow shall turn your good name to a jest, make your character contemptible, debauch your wife or daughter, and yet be received by the rest of the world with welcome wherever he appears. It is very ordinary with those of this character to be attentive only to their own satisfactions, and have very little bowels for the concerns or sorrows of other men; nay, they are capable of purchasing their own pleasures at the expense of giving pain to others. But they who do not consider this sort of men thus carefully, are irresistibly exposed to their insinuations. The author of the following letter carries the matter so high, as to intimate that the liberties of England have been at the mercy of a prince, merely as he was of this pleasant character.

"MR. SPECTATOR,—There is no one passion which all mankind so naturally give into as pride, or any other passion which appears in such different disguises: it is to be found in all habits and complexions. It is not a question, whether it does more harm or good in the world; and if there be not such a thing as what we may call a virtuous and laudable pride?

"It is this passion alone, when misapplied, that lays us so open to flatterers; and he who can agreeably condescend to soothe our humour or temper, finds always an open avenue to our soul; especially if the flatterer happen to be our superior.

"One might give many instances of this in a late English monarch, under the title of 'The gayeties of king Charles II.' This prince was by nature extremely familiar, of very easy access, and much delighted to see and be seen; and this happy temper, which in the highest degree gratified his people's vanity, did him more service with his loving subjects than all

his other virtues, though it must be confessed he had many. He delighted, though a mighty king, to give and take a jest, as they say: and a prince of this fortunate disposition, who were inclined to make an ill use of his power, may have any thing of his people, be it never so much to their prejudice. But this good king made generally a very innocent use, as to the public of this ensnaring temper; for, it is well known he pursued pleasure more than ambition. He seemed to glory in being the first man at cock-matches, horse-races, balls, and plays; he appeared highly delighted on those occasions, and never failed to warm and gladden the heart of every spectator. He more than once dined with his good citizens of London on their lord-mayor's day, and did so the year that Sir Robert Viner was mayor. Sir Robert was a very loyal man, and, if you will allow the expression, very fond of his sovereign; but, what with the joy he felt at heart for the honour done him by his prince, and through the warmth he was in with continual toasting healths to the royal family, his lordship grew a little fond of his majesty, and entered into a familiarity not altogether so graceful in so public a place. The king understood very well how to extricate himself in all kinds of difficulties, and, with a hint to the company to avoid ceremony, stole off and made towards his coach, which stood ready for him in Guildhall-yard. But the mayor liked his company so well, and was grown so intimate, that he pursued him hastily, and catching him fast by the hand, cried out with a vehement oath and accent, "Sir, you shall stay and take t'other bottle." The airy monarch looked kindly at him over his shoulder, and with a smile and graceful air (for I saw him at the time, and do now) repeated this line of the old song:

"He that is drunk is as great as a king:"

and immediately turned back and complied with his landlord.

"I give you this story, Mr. Spectator, because, as I said, I saw the passage; and I assure you it is very true, and yet no common one; and when I tell you the sequel, you will say I have a better reason for it. This very mayor, afterwards erected a statue of his merry monarch in Stocks-market.*

* "The Mansion-house and many adjacent buildings, stand on the site of Stocks-market; which took its name from a pair of stocks for the punishment of offenders, erected in an open place near this spot, as early as the year 1231. This was the great market of the city during many centuries. In it stood the famous equestrian statue erected in honour of Charles II. by his most loyal subject sir Robert Viner, lord-mayor. Fortunately his lordship discovered one (made at Leghorn) of John Sobieski, King of Poland, trampling on a Turk. The good knight caused some alterations to be made, and christened the Polish Monarch by the name of Charles, and bestowed on the turbaned Turk that of Oliver Cromwell; and thus, new named, it arose on this spot in honour of his convivial monarch. The statue was removed in 1738, to make room for the Mansion-house. It remained many years afterwards in an inn-yard; and in 1779 it was bestowed, by the

and did the crown many and great services; and it was owing to this humour of the king that his family had so great a fortune shut up in the exchequer of their pleasant sovereign. The many good-natured concessions of this prince are vulgarly known; and it is excellently said of him, by a great hand† which writ his character, "That he was not a king a quarter of an hour together in his whole reign." He would receive visits even from fools and half madmen, and at times I have met with people who have boxed, fought at back-sword, and taken poison before king Charles II. In a word, he was so pleasant a man, that no one could be sorrowful under his government. This made him capable of baffling, with the greatest ease imaginable, all suggestions of jealousy; and the people could not entertain notions of any thing terrible in him, whom they saw every way agreeable. This scrap of the familiar part of that prince's history I thought fit to send you, in compliance to the request you lately made to your correspondents. I am, sir, your most humble servant."

T.

No. 463.] Thursday, August 21, 1712.

Omnia quæ sensu voluntur vota diurno,
Pectore sopito reddit amica quies.

Venator defessa toro cum membra reponit,
Mens tamen ad sylvas et sua lustra redit:

Judicibus lites, aurigæ somnia currus.

Vanaque nocturnis meta cavetur equis.

Me quoque Musarum studium sob nocte silenti

Artibus assuetis sollicitare solet. Claud.

In sleep when fancy is let loose to play,

Our dreams repeat the wishes of the day.

Though farther toils his tired limbs refuse,

The dreaming hunter still the chase pursues.

The judge a-bed dispenses still the laws

And sleeps again o'er the unfinished cause.

The dozing racer hears his chariot roll,

Smacks the vain whip, and shuns the fancy'd goal.

Me too the Muses, in the silent night,

With wonted chimes of jingling verse delight.

I was lately entertaining myself with comparing Homer's balance, in which Jupiter is represented as weighing the fates of Hector and Achilles, with a passage of Virgil, wherein that deity is introduced as weighing the fates of Turnus and Æneas. I then considered how the same way of thinking prevailed in the eastern parts of the world, as in those noble passages of Scripture, wherein we are told, that the great king of Babylon, the day before his death, had been 'weighed in the balance, and been found wanting.' In other places of the holy writings, the Almighty is described as weighing the mountains in scales, making the weight for the winds, knowing the balancings of the clouds; and in others, as weighing the actions of men, and laying their calamities together in a balance.

common-council, on Robert Viner, Esq. who removed it to grace his country-seat.—*Pennant's London*, p. 368.

† Sheffield duke of Buckingham, who said, that, on a premeditation, Charles II. could not act the part of a king for a moment.

Milton, as I have observed in a former paper, had an eye to several of these foregoing instances in that beautiful description, wherein he represents the archangel and the evil spirit as addressing themselves for the combat, but parted by the balance which appeared in the heavens, and weighed the consequences of such a battle.

'Th' Eternal to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in heav'n his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign:
Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
The pendulous round earth, with balance'd air,
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
Battles and realms; in these he put two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of fight,
The latter quick uplew and kick'd the beam;
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend:
"Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine,
Neither our own, but giv'n. What folly then
To boast what arms can do, since thine no more
Than heav'n permits; nor mine, though doubled now
To trample thee as mire! For proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign. [weak,
Where thou art weigh'd and shown how light, how
If thou resist." The fiend look'd up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft; nor more but fled
Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night.'

These several amusing thoughts having taken possession of my mind some time before I went to sleep, and mingling themselves with my ordinary ideas, raised in my imagination a very odd kind of vision. I was, methought, replaced in my study, and seated in my elbow-chair, where I had indulged the foregoing speculations with my lamp burning by me as usual. Whilst I was here meditating on several subjects of morality, and considering the nature of many virtues and vices, as materials for those discourses with which I daily entertain the public, I saw, methought a pair of golden scales hanging by a chain of the same metal, over the table that stood before me; when, on a sudden, there were great heaps of weights thrown down on each side of them. I found, upon examining these weights, they showed the value of every thing that is in esteem among men. I made an essay of them, by putting the weight of wisdom in one scale, and that of riches in another; upon which the latter, to show its comparative lightness, immediately flew up and kicked the beam.

But, before I proceed, I must inform my reader, that these weights did not exert their natural gravity till they were laid in the golden balance, insomuch that I could not guess which was light or heavy whilst I held them in my hand. This I found by several instances; for upon my laying a weight in one of the scales, which was inscribed by the word 'Eternity,' though I threw in that of Time, Prosperity, Affliction, Wealth, Poverty, Interest, Success, with many other weights, which in my hand seemed very ponderous, they were not able to stir the opposite balance; nor could they have prevailed, though assisted with the weight of the Sun, the Stars, and the Earth.

Upon emptying the scales, I laid several titles and honours, with Pomp, Triumphs,

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and many weights of the like nature, in one of them; and seeing a little glittering weight lie by me, I threw it accidentally into the other scale, when, to my great surprise, it proved so exact a counterpoise, that it kept the balance in an equilibrium. This little glittering weight was inscribed upon the edges of it with the word 'Vanity.' I found there were several other weights which were equally heavy, and exact counterpoises to one another; a few of them I tried, as Avarice and Poverty, Riches and Content, with some others.

There were likewise several weights that were of the same figure, and seemed to correspond with each other, but were entirely different when thrown into the scales; as Religion and Hypocrisy, Pedantry and Learning, Wit and Vivacity, Superstition and Devotion, Gravity and Wisdom, with many others.

I observed one particular weight lettered on both sides; and upon applying myself to the reading of it, I found on one side written, 'In the dialect of men,' and underneath it, 'Calamities;' on the other side was written, 'In the language of the gods,' and underneath 'Blessings.' I found the intrinsic value of this weight to be much greater than I imagined, for it overpowered Health, Wealth, Good-fortune, and many other weights, which were much more ponderous in my hand than the other.

There is a saying among the Scotch, that an ounce of mother-wit is worth a pound of clergy: I was sensible of the truth of this saying, when I saw the difference between the weight of Natural Parts and that of Learning. The observations which I made upon these two weights opened to me a new field of discoveries; for notwithstanding the weight of Natural Parts was much heavier than that of Learning, I observed that it weighed a hundred times heavier than it did before, when I put Learning into the same scale with it. I made the same observation upon Faith and Morality; for, notwithstanding the latter outweighed the former separately, it received a thousand times more additional weight from its conjunction with the former, than what it had by itself. This odd phenomenon showed itself in other particulars, as in Wit and Judgment, Philosophy and Religion, Justice and Humanity, Zeal and Charity, depth of Sense and perspicuity of Style, with innumerable other particulars too long to be mentioned in this paper.

As a dream seldom fails of dashing seriousness with impertinence, mirth with gravity, methought I made several other experiments of a more ludicrous nature, by one of which I found that an English octavo was very often heavier than a French folio; and, by another, that an old Greek or Latin author weighed down a whole library of moderns. Seeing one of my Spectators lying by me, I laid it into one of the scales, and flung a two-penny piece into

the other. The reader will not inquire into the event, if he remembers the first trial which I have recorded in this paper. I afterwards threw both the sexes into the balance; but as it is not for my interest to disoblige either of them, I shall desire to be excused from telling the result of this experiment. Having an opportunity of this nature in my hands, I could not forbear throwing into one scale the principles of a Tory, and into the other those of a Whig; but, as I have all along declared this to be a neutral paper, I shall likewise desire to be silent under this head also, though upon examining one of the weights, I saw the word 'TEKEL' engraven on it in capital letters.

I made many other experiments; and though I have not room for them all in this day's speculation, I may perhaps reserve them for another. I shall only add, that upon my awaking, I was sorry to find my golden scales vanished; but resolved for the future to learn this lesson from them, not to despise or value any thing for their appearances, but to regulate my esteem and passions towards them according to their real and intrinsic value.

C.

No. 464.] *Friday, August 22, 1712.*

Auream quisquis mediocritatem
Diligit, tutus caret obsoleto
Sordibus tecti, caret invidenda
Sobrius aula.

Hor. Od. x. Lib. 2. 5.

The golden mean, as she's too nice to dwell
Among the ruins of a filthy cell,
So is her modesty withal as great,
To balk the envy of a princely seat.—*Norris.*

I AM wonderfully pleased when I meet with any passage in an old Greek or Latin author that is not blown upon, and which I have never met with in a quotation. Of this kind is a beautiful saying in Theognis: 'Vice is covered by wealth, and virtue by poverty;' or to give it in the verbal translation, 'Among men there are some who have their vices concealed by wealth, and others who have their virtues concealed by poverty.' Every man's observation will supply him with instances of rich men, who have several faults and defects that are overlooked, if not entirely hidden, by means of their riches; and I think, we cannot find a more natural description of a poor man, whose merits are lost in his poverty, than that in the words of the wise man: 'There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it. Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he, by his wisdom, delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then, said I, wisdom is better than strength; nevertheless, the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.'

The middle condition seems to be the most advantageously situated for the gain-

ing of wisdom. Poverty turns our thoughts too much upon the supplying of our wants, and riches, upon enjoying our superfluities; and, as Cowley has said in another case, 'It is hard for a man to keep a steady eye upon truth, who is always in a battle or a triumph.'

If we regard poverty and wealth, as they are apt to produce virtues or vices in the mind of man, one may observe that there is a set of each of these growing out of poverty, quite different from that which rises out of wealth. Humility and patience, industry and temperance, are very often the good qualities of a poor man. Humanity, and good-nature, magnanimity and a sense of honour, are as often the qualifications of the rich. On the contrary, poverty is apt to betray a man into envy, riches into arrogance; poverty is too often attended with fraud, vicious compliance, repining, murmur and discontent. Riches expose a man to pride and luxury, a foolish elation of heart, and too great a fondness for the present world. In short, the middle condition is most eligible to the man who would improve himself in virtue; as I have before shown it is the most advantageous for the gaining of knowledge. It was upon this consideration that Agur founded his prayer, which, for the wisdom of it, is recorded in holy writ. 'Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die. Remove far from me vanity and lies, give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.'

I shall fill the remaining part of my paper with a very pretty allegory, which is wrought into a play by Aristophanes the Greek comedian. It seems originally designed as a satire upon the rich, though, in some parts of it, it is like the foregoing discourse, a kind of comparison between wealth and poverty.

Chremylus, who was an old and a good man, and withal exceeding poor, being desirous to leave some riches to his son, consults the oracle of Apollo upon the subject. The oracle bids him follow the first man he should see upon his going out of the temple. The person he chanced to see was to appearance an old sordid blind man, but, upon his following him from place to place, he at last found, by his own confession, that he was Plutus the god of riches, and that he was just come out of the house of a miser. Plutus farther told him, that when he was a boy, he used to declare, that as soon as he came to age he would distribute wealth to none but virtuous and just men; upon which Jupiter considering the pernicious consequences of such a resolution, took his sight away from him, and left him to stroll about the world in the blind condition wherein Chremylus beheld him. With much ado Chremylus prevailed upon him to go to his

house, where he met an old woman in a tattered raiment, who had been his guest for many years, and whose name was Poverty. The old woman refusing to turn out so easily as he would have her, he threatened to banish her, not only from his own house, but out of all Greece, if she made any more words upon the matter. Poverty on this occasion pleads her cause very notably, and represents to her old landlord, that should she be driven out of the country, all their trades, arts, and sciences, would be driven out with her; and that, if every one was rich, they would never be supplied with those pomps, ornaments, and conveniences of life which made riches desirable. She likewise represented to him the several advantages which she bestowed upon her votaries in regard to their shape, their health, and their activity, by preserving them from gout, dropsies, unwieldiness, and intemperance. But whatever she had to say for herself, she was at last forced to troop off. Chremylus immediately considered how he might restore Plutus to his sight; and, in order to it, conveyed him to the temple of Æsculapius, who was famous for cures and miracles of this nature. By this means the deity recovered his eyes, and began to make a right use of them, by enriching every one that was distinguished by piety towards the gods and justice towards men: and at the same time by taking away his gifts from the impious and undeserving. This produces several merry incidents, till in the last act Mercury descends with great complaints from the gods, that since the good men were grown rich, they had received no sacrifices; which is confirmed by a priest of Jupiter, who enters with a remonstrance, that since the late innovation he was reduced to a starving condition, and could not live upon his office. Chremylus, who in the beginning of the play was religious in his poverty, concludes it with a proposal, which was relished by all the good men who had now grown rich as well as himself, that they should carry Plutus in a solemn procession to the temple, and install him in the place of Jupiter. This allegory instructed the Athenians in two points: first as it vindicted the conduct of Providence in its ordinary distributions of wealth; and, in the next place, as it showed the great tendency of riches to corrupt the morals of those who possessed them.

C.

No. 465.] *Saturday, August 23, 1712.*

*Qua ratione queas traducere leniter ævum;
Ne te semper inops agitet vexetque cupido;
Ne pavor et rerum mediocriter utilium spes.*
Hor. Ep. xviii. Lib. 1. 97.

How you may glide with gentle ease
Adown the current of your days;
Nor vex'd by mean and low desires,
Nor warm'd by wild ambitious fires;
By hope alarm'd, depress'd by fear,
For things but little worth your care.—*Francis.*

HAVING endeavoured in my last Saturday's paper to show the great excellency of faith, I shall here consider what are the proper means of strengthening and confirming it in the mind of man. Those who delight in reading books of controversy which are written on both sides of the question on points of faith, do very seldom arrive at a fixed and settled habit of it. They are one day entirely convinced of its important truths, and the next meet with something that shakes and disturbs them. The doubt which was laid revives again, and shows itself in new difficulties, and that generally for this reason, because the mind, which is perpetually tost in controversies and disputes, is apt to forget the reasons which had once set it at rest, and to be disquieted with any former perplexity, when it appears in a new shape, or is started by a different hand. As nothing is more laudable than an inquiry after truth, so nothing is more irrational than to pass away our whole lives, without determining ourselves, one way or other, in those points which are of the last importance to us. There are indeed many things from which we may withhold our assent; but in cases by which we are to regulate our lives, it is the greatest absurdity to be wavering and unsettled, without closing with that side which appears the most safe and the most probable. The first rule, therefore, which I shall lay down is this; that when by reading or discourse we find ourselves thoroughly convinced of the truth of any article, and of the reasonableness of our belief in it, we should never after suffer ourselves to call it in question. We may perhaps forget the arguments which occasioned our conviction, but we ought to remember the strength they had with us, and therefore still to retain the conviction which they once produced. This is no more than what we do in every common art or science; nor is it possible to act otherwise, considering the weakness and limitation of our intellectual faculties. It was thus that Latimer, one of the glorious army of martyrs, who introduced the reformation in England, behaved himself in that great conference which was managed between the most learned among the protestants and papists in the reign of Queen Mary. This venerable old man, knowing his abilities were impaired by age, and that it was impossible for him to recollect all those reasons which had directed him in the choice of his religion, left his companions, who were in the full possession of their parts and learning, to baffle and confound their antagonists by the force of reason. As for himself, he only repeated to his adversaries the articles in which he firmly believed, and in the profession of which he was determined to die. It is in this manner that the mathematician proceeds upon propositions which he has once demonstrated: and though the demonstration may have slipped out of his me-

mory, he builds upon the truth, because he knows it was demonstrated. This rule is absolutely necessary for weaker minds, and in some measure for men of the greatest abilities; but to these last I would propose, in the second place, that they should lay up in their memories, and always keep by them in readiness, those arguments which appear to them of the greatest strength, and which cannot be got over by all the doubts and cavils of infidelity.

But, in the third place, there is nothing which strengthens faith more than morality. Faith and morality naturally produce each other. A man is quickly convinced of the truth of religion, who finds it is not against his interest that it should be true. The pleasure he receives at present, and the happiness which he promises himself from it hereafter, will both dispose him very powerfully to give credit to it, according to the ordinary observation, that 'we are easy to believe what we wish.' It is very certain, that a man of sound reason cannot forbear closing with religion upon an impartial examination of it; but at the same time it is certain, that faith is kept alive in us, and gathers strength from practice more than from speculation.

There is still another method, which is more persuasive than any of the former; and that is an habitual adoration of the Supreme Being, as well in constant acts of mental worship, as in outward forms. The devout man does not only believe, but feels there is a deity. He has actual sensations of him; his experience concurs with his reason; he sees him more and more in all his intercourses with him, and even in this life almost loses his faith in conviction.

The last method which I shall mention for the giving life to a man's faith, is frequent retirement from the world; accompanied with religious meditation. When a man thinks of any thing in the darkness of the night, whatever deep impressions it may make in his mind, they are apt to vanish as soon as the day breaks upon him. The light and noise of the day, which are perpetually soliciting his senses, and calling off his attention, wear out of his mind the thoughts that imprinted themselves in it, with so much strength, during the silence and darkness of the night. A man finds the same difference as to himself in a crowd and in a solitude: the mind is stunned and dazzled amidst that variety of objects which press upon her in a great city. She cannot apply herself to the consideration of those things which are of the utmost concern to her. The cares or pleasures of the world strike in with every thought, and a multitude of vicious examples give a kind of justification to our folly. In our retirements, every thing disposes us to be serious. In courts and cities we are entertained with the works of men; in the country with those of God. One is the province of art, the other of nature. Faith and devotion natu-

rally grow in the mind of every reasonable man, who sees the impressions of divine power and wisdom in every object on which he casts his eye. The Supreme Being has made the best arguments for his own existence, in the formation of the heavens and the earth; and these are arguments which a man of sense cannot forbear attending to, who is out of the noise and hurry of human affairs. Aristotle says, that should a man live under ground, and there converse with the works of art and mechanism, and should afterward be brought up into the open day, and see the several glories of the heaven and earth, he would immediately pronounce them the works of such a being as we define God to be. The psalmist has very beautiful strokes of poetry to this purpose, in that exalted strain: 'The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy work. One day telleth another; and one night certifieth another. There is neither speech nor language; but their voices are heard among them. Their sound is gone out into all lands; and their words into the ends of the world.' As such a bold and sublime manner of thinking furnishes very noble matter for an ode, the reader may see it wrought into the following one.

I.

"The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim:
Th' unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land
The work of an almighty hand.

II.

"Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And nightly to the list'ning earth
Repeats the story of her birth:
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

III.

"What though, in solemn silence, all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball?
What though no real voice nor sound
Amid their radiant orbs be found?
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
For ever singing, as they shine,
The hand that made us is divine."

No. 466.] *Monday, August 25, 1712.*

—Vera incessu patuit dea.—*Virg. Æn. i. 400.*

And by her graceful walk the queen of love is known
Dryden.

WHEN Æneas, the hero of Virgil, is lost in the wood, and a perfect stranger in the place on which he is landed, he is accosted by a lady in a habit for the chase. She inquires of him, whether he has seen pass by that way any young woman dressed as she was? whether she were following the sport in the wood, or any other way employed, according to the custom of huntresses? The hero answers with the respect due to the

beautiful appearance she made; tells her, he saw no such person as she inquired for; but intimates that he knows her to be one of the deities, and desires she would conduct a stranger. Her form, from her first appearance, manifested she was more than mortal; but, though she was certainly a goddess, the poet does not make her known to be the goddess of beauty till she moved. All the charms of an agreeable person are then in their highest exertion, every limb and feature appears with its respective grace. It is from this observation that I cannot help being so passionate an admirer as I am of good dancing. As all art is an imitation of nature, this is an imitation of nature in its highest excellence, and at a time when she is most agreeable. The business of dancing is to display beauty; and for that reason all distortions and mimickries, as such, are what raise aversion instead of pleasure; but things that are in themselves excellent, are ever attended with imposture and false imitation. Thus, as in poetry there are labouring fools who write anagrams and acrosticks, there are pretenders in dancing, who think merely to do what others cannot, is to excel. Such creatures should be rewarded like him who has acquired a knack of throwing a grain of corn through the eye of a needle, with a bushel to keep his hand in use. The dancers on our stage are very faulty in this kind; and what they mean by writhing themselves into such postures, as it would be a pain for any of the spectators to stand in, and yet hope to please those spectators, is unintelligible. Mr. Prince has a genius, if he were encouraged, would prompt him to better things. In all the dances he invents, you see he keeps close to the characters he represents. He does not hope to please by making his performers move in a manner in which no one else ever did but by motions proper to the characters he represents. He gives to clowns and lubbards clumsy graces: that is, he makes them practise what they would think graces; and I have seen dances of his, which might give hints that would be useful to a comic writer. These performances have pleased the taste of such as have not reflection enough to know their excellence, because they are in nature; and the distorted motions of others have offended those who could not form reasons to themselves for their displeasure, from their being a contradiction to nature.

When one considers the inexpressible advantage there is in arriving at some excellence in this art, it is monstrous to behold it so much neglected. The following letter has in it something very natural on this subject.

‘MR. SPECTATOR,—I am a widower with but one daughter: she was by nature much inclined to be a romp; and I had no way of educating her, but commanding a young

woman, whom I entertained to take care of her, to be very watchful in her care and attendance about her. I am a man of business, and obliged to be much abroad. The neighbours have told me, that in my absence our maid has let in the spruce servants in the neighbourhood to junketings, while my girl played and romped even in the street. To tell you the plain truth, I caught her once, at eleven years old, at chuck-farthing among the boys. This put me upon new thoughts about my child, and I determined to place her at a boarding-school; and at the same time gave a very discreet young gentlewoman her maintenance at the same place and rate, to be her companion. I took little notice of my girl from time to time, but saw her now and then in good health, out of harm’s way, and was satisfied. But, by much importunity, I was lately prevailed with to go to one of their balls. I cannot express to you the anxiety my silly heart was in, when I saw my romp, now fifteen, taken out: I never felt the pangs of a father upon me so strongly in my whole life before; and I could not have suffered more had my whole fortune been at stake. My girl came on with the most becoming modesty I had ever seen, and casting a respectful eye, as if she feared me more than all the audience, I gave a nod, which I think gave her all the spirit she assumed upon it: but she rose properly to that dignity of aspect. My romp, now the most graceful person of her sex, assumed a majesty which commanded the highest respect; and when she turned to me, and saw my face in rapture, she fell into the prettiest smile, and I saw in all her motions that she exulted in her father’s satisfaction. You, Mr. Spectator, will, better than I can tell you, imagine to yourself all the different beauties and changes of aspect in an accomplished young woman setting forth all her beauties with a design to please no one so much as her father. My girl’s lover can never know half the satisfaction that I did in her that day. I could not possibly have imagined that so great improvement could have been wrought by an art that I always held in itself ridiculous and contemptible. There is, I am convinced, no method like this, to give young women a sense of their own value and dignity: and I am sure there can be none so expeditious to communicate that value to others. As for the flippant insipidly gay, and wantonly forward, whom you behold among dancers, that carriage is more to be attributed to the perverse genius of the performers, than imputed to the art itself. For my part, my child has danced herself into my esteem; and I have as great an honour for her as ever I had for her mother, from whom she derived those latent good qualities which appeared in her countenance when she was dancing; for my girl, though I say it myself, showed in one quarter of an hour the innate principles of a modest vir-

gin, a tender wife, a generous friend, a kind mother, and an indulgent mistress. I'll strain hard but I will purchase for her a husband suitable to her merit. I am your convert in the admiration of what I thought you jested when you recommended; and if you please to be at my house on Thursday next, I make a ball for my daughter, and you shall see her dance, or, if you will do her that honour dance with her. I am, sir, your humble servant,

'PHILIPATER.'

I have some time ago spoken of a treatise written by Mr. Weaver on this subject, which is now, I understand, ready to be published. This work sets this matter in a very plain and advantageous light; and I am convinced from it, that if the art was under proper regulations, it would be a mechanic way of implanting insensibly, in minds not capable of receiving it so well by any other rules, a sense of good-breeding and virtue.

Were any one to see Mariamne* dance, let him be never so sensual a brute, I defy him to entertain any thoughts but of the highest respect and esteem towards her. I was showed last week a picture in a lady's closet, for which she had a hundred different dresses, that she could clap on round the face on purpose to demonstrate the force of habits in the diversity of the same countenance. Motion, and change of posture and aspect, has an effect no less surprising on the person of Mariamne when she dances.

Chloe is extremely pretty, and as silly as she is pretty. This idiot has a very good ear, and a most agreeable shape; but the folly of the thing is such, that it smiles so impertinently, and affects to please so sillily, that while she dances you see the simpleton from head to foot. For you must know (as trivial as this art is thought to be,) no one was ever a good dancer that had not a good understanding. If this be a truth, I shall leave the reader to judge, from that maxim, what esteem they ought to have for such impertinents as fly, hop, caper, tumble, twirl, turn round, and jump over their heads; and, in a word, play a thousand pranks which many animals can do better than a man, instead of performing to perfection what the human figure only is capable of performing.

It may perhaps appear odd, that I, who set up for a mighty lover, at least of virtue, should take so much pains to recommend what the soberer part of mankind look upon to be a trifle; but, under favour of the soberer part of mankind, I think they have not enough considered this matter, and for that reason only disesteem it. I must also, in my own justification, say, that I attempt to bring into the service of honour and virtue every thing in nature that can pretend

to give elegant delight. It may possibly be proved, that vice is in itself destructive of pleasure, and virtue in itself conducive to it. If the delights of a free fortune were under proper regulations, this truth would not want much argument to support it; but it would be obvious to every man, that there is a strict affinity between all things that are truly laudable and beautiful, from the highest sentiment of the soul to the most indifferent gesture of the body. T.

No. 467.] Tuesday, August 26, 1712.

—Quodcumque mea poterunt audere Camæna,
Seu tibi par poterunt; seu, quod spes abnuat, ultra;
Sive minus; certeque canent minus: omne vovimus
Hoc tibi: ne tanto careat mihi nomine charta.

Tibull. ad Messalem, Eleg. iv. Lib. 1. 24.

Whate'er my muse adventurous dares indite,
Whether the niceness of thy piercing sight
Applaud my lays, or censure what I write:
To thee I sing, and hope to borrow fame,
By adding to my page Messala's name.

THE love of praise is a passion deeply fixed in the mind of every extraordinary person; and those who are most affected with it, seem most to partake of that particle of the divinity which distinguishes mankind from the inferior creation. The Supreme Being himself is most pleased with praise and thanksgiving: the other part of our duty is but an acknowledgment of our faults, whilst this is the immediate adoration of his perfections. 'Twas an excellent observation, that we then only despise commendation when we cease to deserve it; and we have still extant two orations of Tully and Pliny, spoken to the greatest and best princes of all the Roman emperors, who, no doubt, heard with the greatest satisfaction, what even the most disinterested persons, and at so large a distance of time, cannot read without admiration. Cæsar thought his life consisted in the breath of praise, when he professed he had lived long enough for himself, when he had for his glory. Others have sacrificed themselves for a name which was not to begin till they were dead, giving away themselves to purchase a sound which was not to commence till they were out of hearing. But by merit and superior excellencies, not only to gain, but, whilst living, to enjoy a great and universal reputation, is the last degree of happiness which we can hope for here. Bad characters are dispersed abroad with profusion; I hope for example's sake, and (as punishments are designed by the civil power) more for the deterring the innocent than the chastising the guilty. The good are less frequent, whether it be that there are indeed fewer originals of this kind to copy after, or that, through the malignity of our nature, we rather delight in the ridicule than the virtues we find in others. However, it is but just, as well as pleasing, even for variety, sometimes to give the world a representation of the bright side of human nature, as well as the dark and

* Probably Mrs. Bicknell.

gloomy. The desire of imitation may, perhaps, be a greater incentive to the practice of what is good, than the aversion we may conceive at what is blameable: the one immediately directs you what you should do, whilst the other only shows what you should avoid; and I cannot at present do this with more satisfaction than by endeavouring to do some justice to the character of Manilius.

It would far exceed my present design, to give a particular description of Manilius through all the parts of his excellent life. I shall now only draw him in his retirement, and pass over in silence the various arts, the courtly manners, and the undesigning honesty by which he attained the honours he has enjoyed, and which now give a dignity and veneration to the ease he does enjoy. 'Tis here that he looks back with pleasure on the waves and billows through which he has steered to so fair a haven: he is now intent upon the practice of every virtue, which a great knowledge and use of mankind has discovered to be the most useful to them. Thus in his private domestic employments he is no less glorious than in his public; for it is in reality a more difficult task to be conspicuous in a sedentary inactive life, than in one that is spent in hurry and business: persons engaged in the latter, like bodies violently agitated, from the swiftness of their motion, have a brightness added to them, which often vanishes when they are at rest; but if it then still remain, it must be the seeds of intrinsic worth that thus shine out without any foreign aid or assistance.

His liberality in another might almost bear the name of profusion: he seems to think it laudable even in the excess, like that river which most enriches when it overflows. But Manilius has too perfect a taste of the pleasure of doing good, ever to let it be out of his power; and for that reason he will have a just economy and a splendid frugality at home, the fountain from whence those streams should flow which he disperses abroad. He looks with disdain on those who propose their death as the time when they are to begin their munificence: he will both see and enjoy (which he then does in the highest degree,) what he bestows himself; he will be the living executor of his own bounty, whilst they who have the happiness to be within his care and patronage, at once pray for the continuation of his life and their own good fortune. No one is out of the reach of his obligations; he knows how, by proper and becoming methods, to raise himself to a level with those of the highest rank; and his good-nature is a sufficient warrant against the want of those who are so unhappy as to be in the very lowest. One may say of him, as Pindar bids his muse say of Theron,

Swear, that Theron sure has sworn,
No one near him should be poor.

Swear, that none e'er had such a graceful art,
Fortune's free gifts as freely to impart,
With an unenvious hand, and an unbounded heart.

Never did Atticus succeed better in gaining the universal love and esteem of all men; nor steer with more success between the extremes of two contending parties. 'Tis his peculiar happiness that, while he espouses neither with an intemperate zeal, he is not only admired, but, what is a more rare and unusual felicity, he is beloved and caressed by both; and I never yet saw any person, of whatever age or sex, but was immediately struck with the merit of Manilius. There are many who are acceptable to some particular persons, whilst the rest of mankind look upon them with coldness and indifference; but he is the first whose entire good fortune it is ever to please and to be pleased, wherever he comes to be admired, and wherever he is absent to be lamented. His merit fares like the pictures of Raphael, which are either seen with admiration by all, or at least no one dare own he has no taste for a composition which has received so universal an applause. Envy and malice find it against their interest to indulge slander and obloquy. 'Tis as hard for an enemy to detract from, as for a friend to add to, his praise. An attempt upon his reputation is a sure lessening of one's own; and there is but one way to injure him, which is to refuse him his just commendations, and be obstinately silent.

It is below him to catch the sight with any care of dress; his outward garb is but the emblem of his mind. It is genteel, plain and unaffected; he knows that gold and embroidery can add nothing to the opinion which all have of his merit, and that he gives a lustre to the plainest dress, whilst 'tis impossible the richest should communicate any to him. He is still the principal figure in the room. He first engages your eye, as if there were some point of light which shone stronger upon him than on any other person.

He puts me in mind of a story of the famous Bussy d'Amboise, who, at an assembly at court, where every one appeared with the utmost magnificence, relying upon his own superior behaviour, instead of adorning himself like the rest, put on that day a plain suit of clothes, and dressed all his servants in the most costly gay habits he could procure. The event was, that the eyes of the whole court were fixed upon him; all the rest looked like his attendants, while he alone had the air of a person of quality and distinction.

Like Aristippus, whatever shape or condition he appears in, it still sits free and easy upon him; but in some part of his character, 'tis true, he differs from him; for as he is altogether equal to the largeness of his present circumstances, the rectitude of his judgment has so far corrected the inclinations of his ambition, that he will

not trouble himself with either the desires or pursuits of any thing beyond his present enjoyments.

A thousand obliging things flow from him upon every occasion; and they are always so just and natural, that it is impossible to think he was at the least pains to look for them. One would think it was the demon of good thoughts that discovered to him those treasures, which he must have blinded others from seeing, they lay so directly in their way. Nothing can equal the pleasure that is taken in hearing him speak, but the satisfaction one receives in the civility and attention he pays to the discourse of others. His looks are a silent commendation of what is good and praiseworthy, and a secret reproof of what is licentious and extravagant. He knows how to appear free and open without danger of intrusion, and to be cautious without seeming reserved. The gravity of his conversation is always enlivened with his wit and humour, and the gayety of it is tempered with something that is instructive, as well as barely agreeable. Thus, with him you are sure not to be merry at the expense of your reason, nor serious with the loss of your good-humour; but by a happy mixture of his temper, they either go together, or perpetually succeed each other. In fine, his whole behaviour is equally distant from constraint and negligence, and he commands your respect while he gains your heart.

There is in his whole carriage such an engaging softness, that one cannot persuade one's self he is ever actuated by those rougher passions, which, wherever they find place, seldom fail of showing themselves in the outward demeanour of the persons they belong to; but his constitution is a just temperature between indolence on one hand, and violence on the other. He is mild and gentle, wherever his affairs will give him leave to follow his own inclinations; but yet never failing to exert himself with vigour and resolution in the service of his prince, his country, or his friend.

Z.

No. 468.] *Wednesday, August 27, 1712.*

Erat homo ingeniosus, acutus, acer, et qui plurimum et salis, haberet et fellis, nec candoris minus.

Pæn. Epist.

He was an ingenious, pleasant fellow, and one who had a great deal of wit and satire, with an equal share of good-humour.

My paper is, in a kind, a letter of news, but it regards rather what passes in the world of conversation than that of business. I am very sorry that I have at present a circumstance before me, which is of very great importance to all who have a relish for gayety, wit, mirth, or humour; I mean the death of poor Dick Eastcourt. I have been obliged to him for so many hours of jollity, that it is but a small recompence,

though all I can give him, to pass a moment or two in sadness for the loss of so agreeable a man. Poor Eastcourt! the last time I saw him, we were plotting to show the town his great capacity for acting in its full light, by introducing him as dictating to a set of young players, in what manner to speak this sentence and utter t'other passion. He had so exquisite a discerning of what was defective in any object before him, that in an instant he could show you the ridiculous side of what would pass for beautiful and just, even to men of no ill judgment, before he had pointed at the failure. He was no less skilful in the knowledge of beauty; and I dare say, there is no one who knew him well, but can repeat more well-turned compliments, as well as smart repartees of Mr. Eastcourt's, than of any other man in England. This was easily to be observed in his inimitable faculty of telling a story, in which he would throw in natural and unexpected incidents to make his court to one part, and rally the other part of the company. Then he would vary the usage he gave them, according as he saw them bear kind or sharp language. He had the knack to raise up a pensive temper, and mortify an impertinently gay one, with the most agreeable skill imaginable. There are a thousand things which crowd into my memory, which make me too much concerned to tell on about him. Hamlet, holding up the skull which the grave-digger threw at him, with an account that it was the head of the king's jester, falls into very pleasing reflection, and cries out to his companion,

'Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy; he hath borne me on his back a thousand times: and now how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now, your gambols, your songs, your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come. Make her laugh at that.'

It is an insolence natural to the wealthy, to affix, as much as in them lies, the character of a man to his circumstances. Thus it is ordinary with them to praise faintly the good qualities of those below them, and say it is very extraordinary in such a man as he is, or the like, when they are forced to acknowledge the value of him whose lowliness upbraids their exaltation. It is to this humour only, that it is to be ascribed, that a quick wit in conversation, a nice judgment upon any emergency that could arise, and a most blameless inoffensive behaviour, could not raise this man above being received only upon the foot of contributing to mirth and diversion. But he was as easy under that condition, as a

man of so excellent talents was capable; and since they would have it, that to divert was his business, he did it with all the seeming alacrity imaginable, though it stung him to the heart that it was his business. Men of sense, who could taste his excellencies, were well satisfied to let him lead the way in conversation, and play after his own manner; but fools, who provoked him to mimicry, found he had the indignation to let it be at their expense who called for it, and he would show the form of conceited heavy fellows as jests to the company at their own request, in revenge for interrupting him from being a companion to put on the character of a jester.

What was peculiarly excellent in this memorable companion, was, that in the accounts he gave of persons and sentiments, he did not only hit the figure of their faces, and manner of their gestures, but he would in his narration fall into their very way of thinking, and this, when he recounted passages wherein men of the best wits were concerned, as well as such wherein were represented men of the lowest rank of understanding. It is certainly as great an instance of self-love to a weakness, to be impatient of being mimicked, as any can be imagined. There were none but the vain, the formal, the proud, or those who were incapable of amending their faults, that dreaded him; to others he was in the highest degree pleasing: and I do not know any satisfaction of any indifferent kind I ever tasted so much, as having got over an impatience of my seeing myself in the air he could put me in when I have displeased him. It is indeed to his exquisite talent this way, more than any philosophy I could read on the subject, that my person is very little of my care, and it is indifferent to me what is said of my shape, my air, my manner, my speech, or my address. It is to poor Eastcourt I chiefly owe that I am arrived at the happiness of thinking nothing a diminution to me, but what argues a depravity of my will.

It has as much surprised me as any thing in nature, to have it frequently said, that he was not a good player: but that must be owing to a partiality for former actors in the parts in which he succeeded them, and judging by comparison of what was liked before, rather than by the nature of the thing. When a man of his wit and smartness could put on an utter absence of common sense in his face, as he did in the character of Bullfinch, in the Northern Lass, and an air of insipid cunning and vivacity in the character of Pounce in The Tender Husband, it is folly to dispute his capacity and success, as he was an actor.

Poor Eastcourt! let the vain and proud be at rest, thou wilt no more disturb their admiration of their dear selves; and thou art no longer to drudge in raising the mirth of stupid, who know nothing of thy merit, for thy maintenance.

It is natural for the generality of man kind to run into reflections upon our mortality, when disturbers of the world are laid at rest, but to take no notice when they who can please and divert are pulled from us. But for my part, I cannot but think the loss of such talents as the man of whom I am speaking was master of, a more melancholy instance of mortality than the dissolution of persons of never so high characters in the world, whose pretensions were that they were noisy and mischievous.

But I must grow more succinct, and as a Spectator, give an account of this extraordinary man, who, in his way, never had an equal in any age before him, or in that wherein he lived. I speak of him as a companion, and a man qualified for conversation. His fortune exposed him to an obsequiousness towards the worst sort of company, but his excellent qualities rendered him capable of making the best figure in the most refined. I have been present with him among men of the most delicate taste a whole night, and have known him (for he saw it was desired) keep the discourse to himself the most part of it, and maintain his good-humour with a countenance, in a language so delightful, without offence to any person or thing upon earth, still preserving the distance his circumstances obliged him to; I say, I have seen him do all this in such a charming manner, that I am sure none of those I hint at will read this without giving him some sorrow for their abundant mirth, and one gush of tears for so many bursts of laughter. I wish it were any honour to the pleasant creature's memory, that my eyes are too much suffused to let me go on—T.

* * * The following severe passage in this number of the Spectator in folio, apparently levelled at Dr. Radcliffe, was suppressed in all the subsequent editions:

'It is a felicity his friends may rejoice in, that he had his senses, and used them as he ought to do, in his last moments. It is remarkable that his judgment was in its calm perfection to the utmost article; for when his wife out of her fondness, desired she might send for a certain illiterate humourist (whom he had accompanied in a thousand mirthful moments, and whose insolence makes fools think he assumes firm conscious merit,) he answered, "Do what you please, but he won't come near me." Let poor Eastcourt's negligence about this message convince the unwary of a triumphant empiric's ignorance and inhumanity.'

No. 469.] Thursday, August 28, 1712.

Detrahare aliquid alteri, et hominem hominis incommodo suum augere commodum, magis est contra naturam, quam mors, quam paupertas, quam dolor, quam cetera quæ possunt aut corpori accidere, aut rebus externis. *Tull.*

To detract any thing from another, and for one man to multiply his own conveniences by the inconveniences of another, is more against nature than death, than poverty, than pain, and the other things which can befall the body or external circumstances.

I AM persuaded there are few men, of generous principles, who would seek after great places were it not rather to have an opportunity in their hands of obliging their particular friends, or those whom they

look upon as men of worth, than to procure wealth and honour for themselves. To an honest mind, the best perquisites of a place are the advantages it gives a man of doing good.

Those who are under the great officers of state, and are the instruments by which they act, have more frequent opportunities for the exercise of compassion and benevolence, than their superiors themselves. These men know every little case that is to come before the great man, and, if they are possessed with honest minds, will consider poverty as a recommendation in the person who applies himself to them, and make the justice of his cause the most powerful solicitor in his behalf. A man of this temper, when he is in a post of business, becomes a blessing to the public. He patronises the orphan and the widow, assists the friendless, and guides the ignorant. He does not reject the person's pretensions, who does not know how to explain them, or refuse doing a good office for a man because he cannot pay the fee of it. In short, though he regulates himself in all his proceedings by justice and equity, he finds a thousand occasions for all the good-natured offices of generosity and compassion.

A man is unfit for such a place of trust, who is of a sour untractable nature, or has any other passion that makes him uneasy to those who approach him. Roughness of temper is apt to discountenance the timorous or modest. The proud man discourages those from approaching him, who are of a mean condition, and who most want his assistance. The impatient man will not give himself time to be informed of the matter that lies before him. An officer, with one or more of these unbecoming qualities, is sometimes looked upon as a proper person to keep off impertinence and solicitation from his superior; but this is a kind of merit that can never atone for the injustice which may very often arise from it.

There are two other vicious qualities, which render a man very unfit for such a place of trust. The first of these is a dilatory temper, which commits innumerable cruelties without design. The maxim which several have laid down for a man's conduct in ordinary life, should be inviolable with a man in office, never to think of doing that to-morrow which may be done to-day. A man who defers doing what ought to be done, is guilty of injustice so long as he defers it. The despatch of a good office is very often as beneficial to the solicitor as the good office itself. In short, if a man compared the inconveniencies which another suffers by his delays, with the trifling motives and advantages which he himself may reap by them, he would never be guilty of a fault which very often does an irreparable prejudice to the person who depends upon him, and which might be remedied with little trouble to himself.

But in the last place, there is no man so improper to be employed in business, as he who is in any degree capable of corruption and such a one is the man who, upon any pretence whatsoever, receives more than what is the stated and unquestioned fee of his office. Gratifications, tokens of thankfulness, despatch money, and the like specious terms, are the pretences under which corruption very frequently shelters itself. An honest man will however look on all these methods as unjustifiable, and will enjoy himself better in a moderate fortune, that is gained with honour and reputation, than in an overgrown estate that is cankered with the acquisitions of rapine and extortion. Were all our offices discharged with such an inflexible integrity, we should not see men in all ages, who grow up to exorbitant wealth, with the abilities which are to be met with in an ordinary mechanic. I cannot but think that such a corruption proceeds chiefly from men's employing the first that offer themselves, or those who have the character of shrewd worldly men, instead of searching out such as have had a liberal education, and have been trained up in the studies of knowledge and virtue.

It has been observed, that men of learning who take to business, discharge it generally with greater honesty than men of the world. The chief reason for it I take to be as follows. A man that has spent his youth in reading, has been used to find virtue extolled, and vice stigmatized. A man that has passed his time in the world, has often seen vice triumphant, and virtue discountenanced. Extortion, rapine, and injustice, which are branded with infamy in books, often give a man a figure in the world; while several qualities, which are celebrated in authors, as generosity, ingenuity, and good-nature, impoverish and ruin him. This cannot but have a proportionable effect on men whose tempers and principles are equally good and vicious.

There would be at least this advantage in employing men of learning and parts in business; that their prosperity would sit more gracefully on them, and that we should not see many worthless persons shot up into the greatest figures of life. O.

No. 470.] Friday, August 29, 1712.

*Turpe est difficiles habere nugas,
Et stultus labor est ineptiarum.*

Mart. Epig. lxxxvi. Lib. 2. 9.

*'Tis folly only, and defect of sense,
Turns trifles into things of consequence.*

I HAVE been very often disappointed of late years, when, upon examining the new edition of a classic author, I have found above half the volume taken up with various readings. When I have expected to meet with a learned note upon a doubtful passage in a Latin poet, I have only been informed, that such or such ancient manuscripts or an et write an ac, or of some

other notable discovery of the like importance. Indeed, when a different reading gives us a different sense or a new elegance in an author, the editor does very well in taking notice of it; but when he only entertains us with the several ways of spelling the same word, and gathers together the various blunders and mistakes of twenty or thirty different transcribers, they only take up the time of the learned readers, and puzzle the minds of the ignorant. I have often fancied with myself how enraged an old Latin author would be, should he see the several absurdities, in sense and grammar, which are imputed to him by some or other of these various readings. In one he speaks nonsense; in another makes use of a word that was never heard of; and indeed there is scarce a solecism in writing which the best author is not guilty of, if we may be at liberty to read him in the words of some manuscript which the laborious editor has thought fit to examine in the prosecution of his work.

I question not but the ladies and pretty fellows will be very curious to understand what it is that I have been hitherto talking of. I shall therefore give them a notion of this practice, by endeavouring to write after the manner of several persons who make an eminent figure in the republic of letters. To this end we will suppose that the following song is an old ode, which I present to the public in a new edition, with the several various readings which I find of it in former editions, and in ancient manuscripts. Those who cannot relish the various readings, will perhaps find their account in the song, which never before appeared in print.

'My love was fickle once and changing,
Nor e'er would settle in my heart;
From beauty still to beauty ranging,
In every face I found a dart.

'Twas first a charming shape enslav'd me;
An eye then gave the fatal stroke:
Till by her wit Corinna sav'd me,
And all my former fetters broke.

'But now a long and lasting anguish
For Belvidera I endure;
Hourly I sigh, and hourly languish,
Nor hope to find the wonted cure.

'For here the false unconstant lover,
After a thousand beauties shown,
Does new surprising charms discover,
And finds variety in one.'

Various Readings.

Stanza the first, verse the first. *And changing.*] The *and* in some manuscripts is written thus, &; but that in the Cotton library writes it in three distinct letters.

Verse the second. *Nor e'er would.*] Aldus reads it *ever would*; but as this would hurt the metre, we have restored it to the genuine reading, by observing that synæresis which had been neglected by ignorant transcribers.

Ibid. In my heart.] Scaliger and others, on *my heart*.

Verse the fourth. *I found a dart.*] The

Vatican manuscript for *I reads it*; but this must have been the hallucination of the transcriber, who probably mistook the dash of the *I* for a *T*.

Stanza the second, verse the second. *The fatal stroke.*] Scioppius, Salmasius, and many others, for the read *a*; but I have stuck to the usual reading.

Verse the third. *Till by her wit.*] Some manuscripts have it *his wit*, others *your*, others *their wit*. But as I find Corinna to be the name of a woman in other authors, I cannot doubt but it should be *her*.

Stanza the third, verse the first. *A long and lasting anguish.*] The German manuscript reads a *lasting passion*, but the rhyme will not admit it.

Verse the second. *For Belvidera I endure.*] Did not all the manuscripts reclaim, I should change *Belvidera* into *Pelvidera*; *Pelvis* being used by several of the ancient comic writers for a looking-glass, by which means the etymology of the word is very visible, and *Pelvidera* will signify a lady who often looks in her glass; as indeed she had very good reason, if she had all those beauties which our poet here ascribes to her.

Verse the third. *Hourly I sigh and hourly languish.*] Some for the word *hourly* read *daily*, and others *nightly*; the last has great authorities of its side.

Verse the fourth. *The wonted cure.*] The elder Stevens reads *wanted cure*.

Stanza the fourth, verse the second. *After a thousand beauties.*] In several copies we meet with a *hundred beauties*, by the usual error of the transcribers, who probably omitted a cypher, and had not taste enough to know that the word *thousand* was ten times a greater compliment to the poet's mistress than a *hundred*.

Verse the fourth. *And finds variety in one.*] Most of the ancient manuscripts have it in *two*. Indeed so many of them concur in this last reading, that I am very much in doubt whether it ought not to take place. There are but two reasons which incline me to the reading as I have published it: first, because the rhyme; and, secondly, because the sense is preserved by it. It might likewise proceed from the oscitancy of transcribers, who, to despatch their work the sooner, used to write all numbers in cypher, and seeing the figure 1 followed by a little dash of the pen, as is customary in old manuscripts, they perhaps mistook the dash for a second figure, and, by casting up both together, composed out of them the figure 2. But this I shall leave to the learned, without determining any thing in a matter of so great uncertainty. C.

No. 471.] *Saturday, August 30, 1712.*

Ἐν ἁπλῶν καὶ τοῦ σπουδαίου βίου. Euripid.
The wise with hope support the pains of life.

THE time present seldom affords sufficient employment in the mind of man.

Objects of pain or pleasure, love or admiration, do not lie thick enough together in life to keep the soul in constant action, and supply an immediate exercise to its faculties. In order, therefore, to remedy this defect, that the mind may not want business, but always have materials for thinking, she is endowed with certain powers, that can recall what is passed, and anticipate what is to come.

That wonderful faculty, which we call the memory, is perpetually looking back, when we have nothing present to entertain us. It is like those repositories in several animals that are filled with stores of their former food, on which they may ruminate when their present pasture fails.

As the memory relieves the mind in her vacant moments, and prevents any chasms of thought by ideas of what is passed, we have other faculties that agitate and employ her for what is to come. These are the passions of hope and fear.

By these two passions we reach forward into futurity, and bring up to our present thoughts objects that lie hid in the remotest depths of time. We suffer misery and enjoy happiness, before they are in being; we can set the sun and stars forward, or lose sight of them by wandering into those retired parts of eternity, when the heavens and earth shall be no more. By the way, who can imagine that the existence of a creature is to be circumscribed by time, whose thoughts are not? But I shall, in this paper, confine myself to that particular passion which goes by the name of hope.

Our actual enjoyments are so few and transient, that man would be a very miserable being, were he not endowed with this passion, which gives him a taste of those good things that may possibly come into his possession. 'We should hope for every thing that is good,' says the old poet Linus, 'because there is nothing which may not be hoped for, and nothing but what the gods are able to give us.' Hope quickens all the still parts of life, and keeps the mind awake in her most remiss and indolent hours. It gives habitual serenity and good humour. It is a kind of vital heat in the soul, that cheers and gladdens her, when she does not attend to it. It makes pain easy, and labour pleasant.

Besides these several advantages which rise from hope, there is another which is none of the least, and that is, its great efficacy in preserving us from setting too high a value on present enjoyments. The saying of Cæsar is very well known. When he had given away all his estate in gratuities among his friends, one of them asked what he had left for himself; to which that great man replied, 'Hope.' His natural magnanimity hindered him from prizing what he was certainly possessed of, and turned all his thoughts upon something more valuable that he had in view. I question not

but every reader will draw a moral from this story, and apply it to himself without my direction.

The old story of Pandora's box (which many of the learned believe was formed among the heathens upon the tradition of the fall of man) shows us how deplorable a state they thought the present life, without hope. To set forth the utmost condition of misery, they tell us, that our forefather, according to the pagan theology, had a great vessel presented him by Pandora. Upon his lifting up the lid of it, says the fable, there flew out all the calamities and distempers incident to men, from which, till that time, they had been altogether exempt. Hope, who had been enclosed in the cup with so much bad company, instead of flying off with the rest, stuck so close to the lid of it, that it was shut down upon her.

I shall make but two reflections upon what I have hitherto said. First, that no kind of life is so happy as that which is full of hope, especially when the hope is well grounded, and when the object of it is of an exalted kind, and in its nature proper to make the person happy who enjoys it. This proposition must be very evident to those who consider how few are the present enjoyments of the most happy man, and how insufficient to give him an entire satisfaction and acquiescence in them.

My next observation is this, that a religious life is that which most abounds in a well-grounded hope, and such a one as is fixed on objects that are capable of making us entirely happy. This hope in a religious man is much more sure and certain than the hope of any temporal blessing, as it is strengthened not only by reason, but by faith. It has at the same time its eye perpetually fixed on that state, which implies in the very notion of it the most full and complete happiness.

I have before shown how the influence of hope in general sweetens life, and makes our present condition supportable, if not pleasing; but a religious hope has still greater advantages. It does not only bear up the mind under her sufferings, but makes her rejoice in them, as they may be the instruments of procuring her the great and ultimate end of all her hope.

Religious hope has likewise this advantage above any other kind of hope, that it is able to revive the dying man, and to fill his mind not only with secret comfort and refreshment, but sometimes with rapture and transport. He triumphs in his agonies, whilst the soul springs forward with delight to the great object which she has always had in view, and leaves the body with an expectation of being reunited to her in a glorious and joyful resurrection.

I shall conclude this essay with those emphatical expressions of a lively hope, which the psalmist made use of in the midst of those dangers and adversities which sur-

ounded him; for the following passage had its present and personal, as well as its future and prophetic sense. 'I have set the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth. My flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life. In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.' C.

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—Voluptas
Solamenque malis — *Virg. Æn. iii. 660.*
This only solace his hard fortune sends.—*Dryden.*

I RECEIVED some time ago a proposal, which had a preface to it, wherein the author discoursed at large of the innumerable objects of charity in a nation, and admonished the rich, who were afflicted with any distemper of body, particularly to regard the poor in the same species of affliction, and confine their tenderness to them, since it is impossible to assist all who are presented to them. The proposer had been relieved from a malady in his eyes by an operation performed by Sir William Read, and, being a man of condition, had taken a resolution to maintain three poor blind men during their lives, in gratitude for that great blessing. This misfortune is so very great and unfrequent, that one would think an establishment for all the poor under it, might be easily accomplished, with the addition of a very few others to those wealthy who are in the same calamity. However, the thought of the proposer arose from a very good motive; and the parcelling of ourselves out, as called to particular acts of beneficence, would be a pretty cement of society and virtue. It is the ordinary foundation for men's holding a commerce with each other, and becoming familiar, that they agree in the same sort of pleasure; and sure it may also be some reason for amity, that they are under one common distress. If all the rich who are lame with the gout, from a life of ease, pleasure, and luxury, would help those few who have it without a previous life of pleasure, and add a few of such laborious men, who are become lame from unhappy blows, falls, or other accidents of age or sickness; I say, would such gouty persons administer to the necessities of men disabled like themselves, the consciousness of such a behaviour would be the best julep, cordial, and anodyne, in the feverish, faint, and tormenting vicissitudes of that miserable distemper. The same may be said of all other, both bodily and intellectual evils. These classes of charity would certainly bring down blessings upon an age and people; and if men

were not petrified with the love of this world, against all sense of the commerce which ought to be among them, it would not be an unreasonable bill for a poor man in the agony of pain, aggravated by want and poverty, to draw upon a sick alderman after this form:

'MR. BASIL PLENTY,—Sir, you have the gout and stone, with sixty thousand pounds sterling; I have the gout and stone, not worth one farthing; I shall pray for you, and desire you would pay the bearer twenty shillings, for value received from, sir, your humble servant,

'LAZARUS HOPEFUL.
'Cripplegate, August 29, 1712.'

The reader's own imagination will suggest to him the reasonableness of such correspondences, and diversify them into a thousand forms; but I shall close this as I began upon the subject of blindness. The following letter seems to be written by a man of learning, who is returned to his study, after a suspense of ability to do so. The benefit he reports himself to have received, may well claim the handsomest encomium he can give the operator.

'MR. SPECTATOR,—Ruminating lately on your admirable discourses on the Pleasures of the Imagination, I began to consider to which of our senses we are obliged for the greatest and most important share of those pleasures; and I soon concluded that it was to the sight. That is the sovereignty of the senses, and mother of all the arts and sciences, that have refined the rudeness of the uncultivated mind to a politeness that distinguishes the fine spirits from the barbarous *gout* of the great vulgar and the small. The sight is the obliging benefactress that bestows on us the most transporting sensations that we have from the various and wonderful products of nature. To the sight we owe the amazing discoveries of the height, magnitude, and motion of the planets, their several revolutions about their common centre of light, heat and motion, the sun. The sight travels yet farther to the fixed stars, and furnishes the understanding with solid reasons to prove, that each of them is a sun, moving on its own axis, in the centre of its own vortex, or turbillion, and performing the same offices to its dependant planets that our glorious sun does to this. But the inquiries of the sight will not be stopped here, but make their progress through the immense expanse to the Milky Way, and there divide the blended fires of the galaxy into infinite and different worlds, made up of distinct suns, and their peculiar equipage of planets, till, unable to pursue this track any farther, it deposes the imagination to go on to new discoveries, till it fill the unboundless space with endless worlds.

'The sight informs the statuary's chisel