

of bed, to prevent, if it had been attempted, the discovery of that amour.

'I have formerly made use of all those artifices which our sex daily practise over yours, to draw, as it were, undesignedly, the eyes of a whole congregation to my pew; I have taken a pride in the number of admirers at my afternoon levee; but am now quite another creature. I think, could I regain the attractive influence I once had, if I had a legion of suitors, I should never be ambitious of entertaining more than one. I have almost contracted an antipathy to the trifling discourses of impertinent lovers; though I must needs own I have thought it very odd of late to hear gentlemen, instead of their usual complaisances, fall into disputes before me of politics, or else weary me with the tedious repetition of how thankful I ought to be, and satisfied with my recovery out of so dangerous a distemper: this, though I am very sensible of the blessing, yet I cannot but dislike, because such advice from them rather seems to insult than comfort me, and reminds me too much of what I was: which melancholy consideration I cannot yet perfectly surmount, but hope your sentiments on this head will make it supportable.

'To show you what a value I have for your dictates, these are to certify the persons concerned, that unless one of them returns to his colours, if I may so call them now, before the winter is over, I will voluntarily confine myself to a retirement, where I will punish them all with my needle. I will be revenged on them by decyphering them on a carpet, humbly begging admittance, myself scornfully refusing it. If you disapprove of this, as savouring too much of malice, be pleased to acquaint me with a draught you like better, and it shall be faithfully performed, by the unfortunate

'MONIMIA.'

No. 614.] *Monday, November 1, 1714.*

Si mihi non animo fixum immotumque sederet,
Ne cui me vincolo vellem sociare jugali,
Postquam primus amor deceptam morte fefellit;
Si non pertaesum thalami, tædæque fuisset;
Huic uni forsân potui succumbere culpæ.

Virg. Æn. iv. 15.

—Were I not resolved against the yoke
Of hapless marriage; never to be curst'd
With second love, so fatal was the first,
To this one error I might yield again.—*Dryden.*

The following account hath been transmitted to me by the love casuist.

'MR. SPECTATOR,—Having in some former papers taken care of the two states of virginity and marriage, and being willing that all people should be served in their turn, I this day draw out my drawer of widows, where I met with several cases, to each whereof I have returned satisfactory answers by the post. The cases are as follow:

'Q. Whether Amoret be bound by a

promise of marriage to Philander, made during her husband's life?

'Q. Whether Sempronia, having faithfully given a promise to two several persons during the last sickness of her husband, is not thereby left at liberty to choose which of them she pleases, or to reject them both for the sake of a new lover?

'Cleora asks me, whether she be obliged to continue single according to a vow made to her husband at the time of his presenting her with a diamond necklace; she being informed by a very pretty young fellow, of a good conscience, that such vows are in their nature sinful?

'Another inquires, whether she hath not the right of widowhood, to dispose of herself to a gentleman of great merit, who presses very hard; her husband being irrecoverably gone in a consumption?

'An unreasonable creature hath the confidence to ask, whether it be proper for her to marry a man who is younger than her eldest son?

'A scrupulous well-spoken matron, who gives me a great many good words, only doubts whether she is not obliged, in conscience, to shut up her two marriageable daughters, until such time as she hath comfortably disposed of herself?

'Sophronia, who seems by her phrase and spelling to be a person of condition, sets forth, that whereas she hath a great estate, and is but a woman, she desires to be informed whether she would not do prudently to marry Camillus, a very idle tall young fellow, who hath no fortune of his own, and consequently hath nothing else to do but to manage hers?

Before I speak of widows, I cannot but observe one thing, which I do not know how to account for; a widow is always more sought after than an old maid of the same age. It is common enough among ordinary people, for a stale virgin to set up a shop in a place where she is not known; where the large thumb-ring, supposed to be given by her husband, quickly recommends her to some wealthy neighbour, who takes a liking to the jolly widow, that would have overlooked the venerable spinster.

The truth of it is, if we look into this set of women, we find, according to the different characters or circumstances wherein they are left, that widows may be divided into those who raise love and those who raise compassion.

But, not to ramble from this subject, there are two things in which consists chiefly the glory of a widow—the love of her deceased husband, and the care of her children; to which may be added a third, arising out of the former, such a prudent conduct as may do honour to both.

A widow possessed of all these three qualities makes not only a virtuous but a sublime character.

There is something so great and so generous in this state of life, when it is accom-

panied with all its virtues, that it is the subject of one of the finest among our modern tragedies in the person of Andromache, and has met with a universal and deserved applause, when introduced upon our English stage by Mr. Philips.*

The most memorable widow in history is queen Artemisia, who not only erected the famous mausoleum, but drank up the ashes of her dead lord; thereby enclosing them in a nobler monument than that which she had built, though deservedly esteemed one of the wonders of architecture.

This last lady seems to have had a better title to a second husband than any I have read of, since not one dust of her first was remaining. Our modern heroines might think a husband a very bitter draught, and would have good reason to complain, if they might not accept of a second partner until they had taken such a troublesome method of losing the memory of the first.

I shall add to these illustrious examples out of ancient story, a remarkable instance of the delicacy of our ancestors in relation to the state of widowhood, as I find it recorded in Cowell's Interpreter. 'At East and West Enborne, in the county of Berks, if a customary tenant die, the widow shall have what the law calls her free-bench in all his copyhold lands, *dum sola et casta fuerit*, that is, while she lives single and chaste; but if she commits incontinency she forfeits her estate; yet if she will come into the court riding backward upon a black ram, with his tail in her hand, and say the words following, the steward is bound by the custom to re-admit her to her free-bench. †

* Here I am
Riding upon a black ram,
Like a whore as I am;
And for my *crincum crancum*,
Have lost my *hincum hancum*,
And for my tail's game,
Have done this worldly shame;
Therefore I pray you, Mr. Steward, let me have
my land again. †

The like custom there is in the manor of Torre, in Devonshire, and other parts of the west.

It is not impossible but I may in a little time present you with a register of Berkshire ladies, and other western dames, who rode publicly upon this occasion; and I hope the town will be entertained with a cavalcade of widows. ‡

* See Nos. 290 and 335.

† See Jacob's Law Dictionary, art. Free-bench.—Frank Bank, or Free-bench. [*Sedes Libera*, or, in Law-Latin, *Francus Bancus*] is that estate in copyhold lands, which the wife, being married, a virgin hath after the decease of her husband for a dower. Fitzherbert calls this a custom by which, in some cities, the wife shall have all the lands of her husband for dower.—*Les Termes de la Ley*, edit. 1667, p. 575.

‡ See No. 823. The custom in the manors of East and West Enborne, of Torre, and other parts in the West of England, is a kind of penance among jocular tenures to purge the offence, and has there, it seems, the force and validity of statute law. Jacob's Dict. *ut supra*, edit. 1735, in folio.

No. 615.] Wednesday, November 3, 1714.

—Qui Deorum—

Muneribus sapienter uti,
Duramque callet pauperiem pati,
Pejusque letho flagitium timet;
Non ille pro caris amicis
Aut patria timidus perire.

Hor. Od. ix. Lib. 4. 47.

Who spend their treasure freely as 'twas giv'n
By the large bounty of indulgent heav'n;
Who in a fix'd unalterable state
Smile at the doubtful tide of fate,
And scorn alike her friendship and her hate:
Who poison less than falsehood fear,
Loath to purchase life so dear;
But kindly for their friend embrace cold death,
And seal their country's love with their departing
breath.—Stepney.

It must be owned that fear is a very powerful passion, since it is esteemed one of the greatest virtues to subdue it. It being implanted in us for our preservation, it is no wonder that it sticks close to us as long as we have any thing we are willing to preserve. But as life, and all its enjoyments, would be scarce worth the keeping if we were under a perpetual dread of losing them, it is the business of religion and philosophy to free us from all unnecessary anxieties, and direct our fear to its proper object.

If we consider the painfulness of this passion, and the violent effects it produces, we shall see how dangerous it is to give way to it upon slight occasions. Some have frightened themselves into madness, others have given up their lives to these apprehensions. The story of a man who grew gray in the space of one night's anxiety is very famous.

* O nox, quam longa es, quæ facis una senem!

† A tedious night indeed, that makes a young man old!

These apprehensions if they proceed from a consciousness of guilt, are the sad warnings of reason; and may excite our pity, but admit of no remedy. When the hand of the Almighty is visibly lifted against the impious, the heart of mortal man cannot withstand him. We have this passion sublimely represented in the punishment of the Egyptians, tormented with the plague of darkness in the apocryphal book of Wisdom ascribed to Solomon.

‡ For when unrighteous men thought to oppress the holy nation; they being shut up in their houses, the prisoners of darkness, and fettered with the bonds of a long night, lay there exiled from the eternal Providence. For while they supposed to lie hid in their secret sins, they were scattered under a dark veil of forgetfulness, being horribly astonished and troubled with strange apparitions—For wickedness, condemned by her own witness, is very timorous, and, being oppressed with conscience, always forecasteth grievous things. For fear is nothing else but a betraying of the succours which reason offereth—For the whole world shined with clear light, and none were hindered in their labour. Over them only was spread a heavy night, an image

of that darkness which should afterwards receive them; but yet were they unto themselves, more grievous than the darkness.*

To fear, so justly ground, no remedy can be proposed; but a man (who hath no great guilt hanging upon his mind, who walks in the plain path of justice and integrity, and yet, either by natural complexion, or confirmed prejudices, or neglect of serious reflection, suffers himself to be moved by this abject and unmanly passion) would do well to consider, that there is nothing which deserves his fear, but that beneficent Being who is his friend, his protector, his father. Were this one thought strongly fixed in the mind, what calamity would be dreadful? What load can infamy lay upon us when we are sure of the approbation of him who will repay the disgrace of a moment with the glory of eternity? What sharpness is there in pain and diseases, when they only hasten us on to the pleasures that will never fade? What sting is in death, when we are assured that it is only the beginning of life? A man who lives so as not to fear to die, is inconsistent with himself, if he delivers himself up to any incidental anxiety.

The intrepidity of a just good man is so nobly set forth by Horace, that it cannot be too often repeated:

'The man resolv'd and steady to his trust,
Inflexible to ill, and obstinately just,
May the rude rabble's insolence despise,
Their senseless clamours, and tumultuous cries:
The tyrant's fierceness he beguiles,
And the stern brow, and the harsh voice defies,
And with superior greatness smiles.

'Not the rough whirlwind, that deforms
Adria's black gulf, and vexes it with storms,
The stubborn virtue of his soul remove:
Not the red arm of angry Jove,
That flings the thunder from the sky,
And gives it rage to roar, and strength to fly.

'Should the whole frame of nature round him break,
In ruin and confusion hurl'd,
He, unconcern'd, would hear this mighty crack,
And stand secure amidst a falling world.'

The vanity of fear may be yet farther illustrated if we reflect,

First, what we fear may not come to pass. No human scheme can be so accurately projected, but some little circumstance intervening may spoil it. He who directs the heart of man at his pleasure, and understands the thoughts long before, may, by ten thousand accidents, or an immediate change in the inclinations of men, disconcert the most subtle project, and turn it to the benefit of his own servants.

In the next place we should consider, though the evil we imagine should come to pass, it may be much more supportable than it appeared to be. As there is no prosperous state of life without its calamities, so there is no adversity without its benefits. Ask the great and powerful, if they do not feel the pangs of envy and ambition. Inquire of the poor and needy, if they have not tasted the sweets of quiet

and contentment. Even under the pains of body, the infidelity of friends, or the misconstructions put upon our laudable actions; our minds, when for some time accustomed to these pressures, are sensible of secret flowings of comfort, the present reward of a pious resignation. The evils of this life appear like rocks and precipices, rugged and barren at a distance; but at our nearer approach we find little fruitful spots, and refreshing springs, mixed with the harshness and deformities of nature.

In the last place, we may comfort ourselves with this consideration, that, as the thing feared may not reach us, so we may not reach what we fear. Our lives may not extend to that dreadful point which we have in view. He who knows all our failings, and will not suffer us to be tempted beyond our strength, is often pleased, in his tender severity, to separate the soul from its body and miseries together.

If we look forward to him for help, we shall never be in danger of falling down those precipices which our imagination is apt to create. Like those who walk upon a line, if we keep our eye fixed upon one point, we may step forward securely; whereas an imprudent or cowardly glance on either side will infallibly destroy us.

No. 616.] Friday, November 5, 1714.

Qui bellus homo est, Cotta, pusillus homo est.

Mart. Epig. x. 1.

A pretty fellow is but half a man.

CICERO hath observed, that a jest is never uttered with a better grace than when it is accompanied with a serious countenance. When a pleasant thought plays in the features before it discovers itself in words, it raises too great an expectation, and loses the advantage of giving surprise. Wit and humour are no less poorly recommended by a levity of phrase, and that kind of language which may be distinguished by the name of cant. Ridicule is never more strong than when it is concealed in gravity. True humour lies in the thought, and arises from the representation of images in odd circumstances and uncommon lights. A pleasant thought strikes us by the force of its natural beauty; and the mirth of it is generally rather palled than heightened, by that ridiculous phraseology which is so much in fashion among the pretenders to humour and pleasantry. This tribe of men are like our mountebanks; they make a man a wit by putting him in a fantastic habit.

Our little burlesque authors, who are the delight of ordinary readers, generally abound in these pert phrases, which have in them more vivacity than wit.

I lately saw an instance of this kind of writing, which gave me so lively an idea of it, that I could not forbear begging a copy of the letter from the gentleman who

*Wisdom. xvii. passim.

showed it to me. It is written by a country wit, upon the occasion of the rejoicings on the day of the king's coronation.

'Past two o'clock, and a frosty morning.

'DEAR JACK,—I have just left the right worshipful and his myrmidons about a sneaker of five gallons. The whole magistracy was pretty well disguised before I gave them the slip. Our friend the alderman was half-seas over before the bonfire was out. We had with us the attorney, and two or three other bright fellows. The doctor plays least in sight.

'At nine o'clock in the evening we set fire to the whore of Babylon. The devil acted his part to a miracle. He has made his fortune by it. We equipped the young dog with a tester a piece. Honest old Brown of England was very drunk, and showed his loyalty to the tune of a hundred rockets. The mob drank the king's health, on their marrow bones, in mother Day's double. They whipped us half a dozen hogsheads. Poor Tom Tyler had like to have been demolished with the end of a sky-rocket, that fell upon the bridge of his nose as he was drinking the king's health, and spoiled his tip. The mob was very loyal till about midnight, when they grew a little mutinous for more liquor. They had like to have dumbfounded the justice; but his clerk came in to his assistance, and took them all down in black and white.

'When I had been huzzaed out of my seven senses, I made a visit to the women, who were guzzling very comfortably. Mrs. Mayoress clipped the king's English. Clack was the word.

'I forgot to tell thee, that every one of the posse had his hat cocked with a distich; the senators sent us down a cargo of riband and metre for the occasion.

'Sir Richard, to show his zeal for the Protestant religion, is at the expense of a tar-barrel and a ball. I peeped into the knight's great hall, and saw a very pretty bevy of spinsters. My dear relict was amongst them, and ambled in a country dance as notably as the best of them.

'May all his majesty's liege subjects love him as well as his good people of this his ancient borough! Adieu.'

No. 617.] *Monday, November 8, 1714.*

Torva Mimalloneis imperunt cornua bombis,
Et raptum vitulo caput ablatura superbo
Bassaris, et lyncem Menas flexura corymbis,
Eviön ingeminat: reparabilis adsonat echo.

Pers. Sat. i. 99.

Their crooked horns the Mimallonian crew
With blasts inspir'd; and Bassaris, who slew
The scornful calf, with sword advanc'd on high,
Made from his neck his haughty head to fly.
And Menas, when, with ivy-bridles bound,
She led the spotted lynx, then Eviön rung around,
Eviön from woods and floods repairing echo's sound.

Dryden.

THERE are two extremes in the style of humour, one of which consists in the use

of that little pert phraseology which I took notice of in my last paper; the other in the affectation of strained and pompous expressions, fetched from the learned languages. The first savours too much of the town; the other of the college.

As nothing illustrates better than example, I shall here present my reader with a letter of pedantic humour, which was written by a young gentleman of the university to his friend, on the same occasion, and from the same place, as the lively epistle published in my last Spectator:

'DEAR CHUM,—It is now the third watch of the night, the greatest part of which I have spent round a capacious bowl of China, filled with the choicest products of both the Indies. I was placed at a quadrangular table, diametrically opposite to the mace-bearer. The visage of that venerable herald was, according to custom, most gloriously illuminated on this joyful occasion. The mayor and aldermen, those pillars of our constitution, began to totter; and if any one at the board could have so far articulated, as to have demanded intelligibly a re-inforcement of liquor, the whole assembly had been by this time extended under the table.

'The celebration of this night's solemnity was opened by the obstreperous joy of drummers, who, with their parchment thunder, gave a signal for the appearance of the mob under their several classes and denominations. They were quickly joined by the melodious clank of marrow-bones and cleavers, while a chorus of bells filled up the concert. A pyramid of stack-fagots cheered the hearts of the populace with the promise of a blaze: the guns had no sooner uttered the prologue, but the heavens were brightened with artificial meteors and stars of our own making: and all the High-street lighted up from one end to another with a galaxy of candles. We collected a largess for the multitude, who tippled eleemosynary until they grew exceeding vociferous. There was a pasteboard pontiff, with a little swarthy demon at his elbow, who, by his diabolical whispers and insinuations, tempted his holiness into the fire, and then left him to shift for himself. The mobile were very sarcastic with their clubs, and gave the old gentleman several thumps upon his triple head-piece.* Tom Tyler's phiz is something damaged by the fall of a rocket, which hath almost spoiled the gnomon of his countenance. The mirth of the commons grew so very outrageous, that it found work for our friend of the quorum, who, by the help of his amanuensis, took down all their names and their crimes, with a design to produce his manuscript at the next quarter sessions, &c. &c.'

I shall subjoin to the foregoing piece of a letter the following copy of verses translated from an Italian poet, who was the

* The Pope's tiara, or triple mitre.

Cleveland of his age, and had multitudes of admirers. The subject is an accident that happened under the reign of Pope Leo, when a fire-work, that had been prepared upon the castle of St. Angelo, began to play before its time, being kindled by a flash of lightning. The author has written a poem in the same kind of style as that I have already exemplified in prose. Every line in it is a riddle, and the reader must be forced to consider twice or thrice, before he will know that the Cynic's tenement is a tub, and Bacchus's cast-coat a hogshead, &c.

* 'Twas night, and heaven, a Cyclops all the day,
An Argus now, did countless eyes display;
In every window Rome her joy declares,
All bright and studded with terrestrial stars.
A blazing chain of lights her roof entwines,
And round her neck the mingled lustre shines:
The Cynic's rolling tenement conspires
With Bacchus his cast-coat to feed the fires.

'The pile, still big with undiscover'd shows,
The Tuscan pile did last its freight disclose,
Where the proud tops of Rome's new *Ætna* rise,
Whence giants sally and invade the skies.

'Whilst now the multitude expect the time,
And their tir'd eyes the lofty mountain climb,
As thousand iron mouths their voices try,
And thunder out a dreadful harmony;
In treble notes the small artillery plays,
The deep-mouth'd cannon bellows in the bass;
The lab'ring pile now heaves, and having given
Proofs of its travail, sighs in flames to heaven.

'The clouds envelop'd heaven from human sight;
Quench'd ev'ry star, and put out ev'ry light;
Now real thunder grumbles in the skies,
And in disdainful murmurs Rome defies;
Nor doth its answer'd challenge Rome decline;
But, whilst both parties in full concert join,
While heav'n and earth in rival peals resound,
The doubtful cracks the hearers sense confound;
Whether the claps of thunderbolts they hear,
Or else the burst of cannon wounds their ear:
Whether clouds rag'd by struggling metals rent,
Or struggling clouds in Roman metals spent:
But, O my Muse, the whole adventure tell,
As ev'ry accident in order fell.

' Tall groves of trees the Hadrian tower surround,
Fictitious trees with paper garlands crown'd.
These know no spring, but when their bodies sprout
In fire, and shoot their gilded blossoms out;
When blazing leaves appear above their head,
And into branching flames their bodies spread.
Whilst real thunder splits the firmament,
And heav'n's whole roof in one vast cleft is rent,
The three-fork'd tongue amidst the rupture lolls,
Then drops, and on the airy turret falls.
The trees now kindle, and the garland burns,
And thousand thunderbolts for one returns:
Brigades of burning archers upward fly,
Bright spears and shining spearmen mount on high,
Flash in the clouds, and glitter in the sky.
A seven-fold shield of spheres doth heav'n defend,
And back again the blunted weapons send;
Unwillingly they fall, and, dropping down,
Pour out their souls, their sulph'rous souls, and groan.

' With joy, great sir, we view'd this pompous show,
While Heav'n, that sat spectator still till now,
Itself turn'd actor, proud to pleasure you:
And so, 'tis fit, when Leo's fires appear,
That Heav'n itself should turn an engineer;
That Heav'n itself should all its wonder's show,
And orbs above consent with orbs below.'

* These verses are translated from the Latin in Strada's *Prolusiones Academicae*, &c. and are an imitation originally of the style and manner of Camello Querno, surnamed the Arch-poet. His character and his writings were equally singular; he was poet and buffoon to Leo X. and the common butt of that facetious pontiff and his courtiers. See Strada's *Prolusiones*, Oxon. 1745, Bayle's Dictionary, art. Leo X. and Seward's Anecdotes, vol. iii.

No. 618.] *Wednesday, November 10, 1714.*

Neque enim concludere versum
Dixeris esse satis: neque siquis scribat, uti nos,
Sermoni propria, putes hunc esse poetam.
Hor. Sat. iv. Lib. 1. 40.

'Tis not enough the measur'd feet to close;
Nor will you give a poet's name to those
Whose humble verse, like mine, approaches prose.

'MR. SPECTATOR,—You have in your two last Spectators given the town a couple of remarkable letters in different styles: I take this opportunity to offer to you some remarks upon the epistolary way of writing in verse. This is a species of poetry by itself; and has not so much as been hinted at in any of the Arts of Poetry that have ever fallen into my hands: neither has it in any age, or in any nation, been so much cultivated as the other several kinds of poesy. A man of genius may, if he pleases, write letters in verse upon all manner of subjects that are capable of being embellish'd with wit and language, and may render them new and agreeable by giving the proper turn to them. But in speaking at present of epistolary poetry, I would be understood to mean only such writings in this kind as have been in use among the ancients, and have been copied from them by some moderns. These may be reduced into two classes: in the one I shall range love-letters, letters of friendship, and letters upon mournful occasions; in the other I shall place such epistles in verse as may properly be called familiar, critical, and moral; to which may be added letters of mirth and humour. Ovid for the first, and Horace for the latter, are the best originals we have left.

'He that is ambitious of succeeding in the Ovidian way, should first examine his heart well, and feel whether his passions (especially those of the gentle kind,) play easy; since it is not his wit, but the delicacy and tenderness of his sentiments, that will affect his readers. His versification likewise should be soft, and all his numbers flowing and querulous.

'The qualifications requisite for writing epistles, after the model given us by Horace, are of a quite different nature. He that would excel in this kind must have a good fund of strong masculine sense: to this there must be joined a thorough knowledge of mankind, together with an insight into the business and the prevailing humours of the age. Our author must have his mind well seasoned with the finest precepts of morality, and be filled with nice reflections upon the bright and dark sides of human life; he must be a master of refined raillery, and understand the delicacies as well as the absurdities of conversation. He must have a lively turn of wit, with an easy and concise manner of expression: every thing he says must be in a free and disengaged manner. He must be guilty of nothing that betrays the air of a recluse, but appear a man of the world throughout. His illus-

trations, his comparisons, and the greatest part of his images, must be drawn from common life. Strokes of satire and criticism, as well as panegyric, judiciously thrown in, (and as it were by the by,) give a wonderful life and ornament to compositions of this kind. But let our poet, while he writes epistles, though never so familiar, still remember that he writes in verse, and must for that reason have a more than ordinary care not to fall into prose, and a vulgar diction, excepting where the nature and humour of the thing does necessarily require it. In this point, Horace has been thought by some critics to be sometimes careless, as well as too negligent of his versification; of which he seems to have been sensible himself.

‘All I have to add is, that both these manners of writing may be made as entertaining, in their way, as any other species of poetry, if undertaken by persons duly qualified; and the latter sort may be managed so as to become in a peculiar manner instructive. I am, &c.’

I shall add an observation or two to the remarks of my ingenious correspondent; and, in the first place, take notice, that subjects of the most sublime nature are often treated in the epistolary way with advantage, as in the famous epistle of Horace to Augustus. The poet surprises us with his pomp, and seems rather betrayed into his subject than to have aimed at it by design. He appears like the visit of a king incognito, with a mixture of familiarity and grandeur. In works of this kind, when the dignity of the subject hurries the poet into descriptions and sentiments, seemingly unpremeditated, by a sort of inspiration, it is usual for him to recollect himself, and fall back gracefully into the natural style of a letter.

I might here mention an epistolary poem, just published by Mr. Eusden,* on the king's accession to the throne; wherein, among many other noble and beautiful strokes of poetry, his reader may see this rule very happily observed.

No. 619.] *Friday, November 12, 1714.*

—dura
Exerce imperia, et ramos compece fluentes.
Virg. Georg. ii. 369.
—Exert a rigorous sway,
And lop the two luxuriant boughs away.

I HAVE often thought that if the several letters which are written to me under the character of Spectator, and which I have not made use of, were published in a volume, they would not be an unentertaining collection.† The variety of the subjects,

* A letter to Mr. Addison on the king's accession to the throne.

† They were published in 1725, by Charles Lillie, in 2 vols. 8vo.

styles, sentiments, and informations, which are transmitted to me, would lead a very curious, or very idle reader, insensibly along through a great many pages.

I know some authors who would pick up a secret history out of such materials, and make a bookseller an alderman by the copy. I shall therefore carefully preserve the original papers in a room set apart for that purpose, to the end that they may be of service to posterity; but shall at present content myself with owning the receipt of several letters, lately come to my hands, the authors whereof are impatient for an answer.

Charissa, whose letter is dated from Cornhill, desires to be eased in some scruples relating to the skill of astrologers.—Referred to the dumb man for an answer.

J. C. who proposes a love case, as he calls it, to the love casuist, is hereby desired to speak of it to the minister of the parish; it being a case of conscience.

The poor young lady, whose letter is dated October 26, who complains of a harsh guardian and an unkind brother, can only have my good wishes, unless she pleases to be more particular.

The petition of a certain gentleman, whose name I have forgot, famous for renewing the curls of decayed periwigs, is referred to the censor of small wares.

The remonstrance of T. C. against the profanation of the sabbath by barbers, shoe-cleaners, &c. had better be offered to the society of reformers.

A learned and laborious treatise upon the art of fencing, returned to the author.

To the gentleman of Oxford, who desires me to insert a copy of Latin verses, which were denied a place in the university books. Answer: *Nonum frematur in annum.*

To my learned correspondent, who writes against master's gowns, and poke sleeves, with a word in defence of large scarfs. Answer: I resolve not to raise animosities amongst the clergy.

To the lady who writes with rage against one of her own sex, upon the account of party warmth. Answer: Is not the lady she writes against reckoned handsome?

I desire Tom Truelove (who sends me a sonnet upon his mistress, with a desire to print it immediately,) to consider, that it is long since I was in love

I shall answer a very profound letter from my old friend the upholsterer, who is still inquisitive whether the king of Sweden be living or dead, by whispering him in the ear, that I believe he is alive.

Let Mr. Dapperwit consider, What is that long story of the cuckoldom to me?

At the earnest desire of Monimia's lover, who declares himself very penitent, he is recorded in my paper by the name of the faithful Castalio.

The petition of Charles Cocksure, which the petitioner styles 'very reasonable,' rejected.

The memorial of Philander, which he desires may be despatched out of hand, postponed.

I desire S. R. not to repeat the expression 'under the sun,' so often in his next letter.

The letter of P. S. who desires either to have it printed entire, or committed to the flames. Not to be printed entire.

No. 620.] *Monday, November 15, 1714.*

Hic vir, hic est, tibi quem promitti sæpius audis.

Virg. Æn. vi. 791.

Behold the promis'd chief!

HAVING lately presented my reader with a copy of verses full of the false sublime, I shall here communicate to him an excellent specimen of the true: though it hath not been yet published, the judicious reader will readily discern it to be the work of a master; and if he hath read that noble poem on the prospect of peace, he will not be at a loss to guess at the author.

THE ROYAL PROGRESS.

'When Brunswick first appear'd, each honest heart,
Intent on verse, disdain'd the rules of art;
For him the songsters, in unmeasur'd odes,
Debas'd Alcides, and dethron'd the gods;
In golden chains the kings of India led,
Or rent the turban from the sultan's head.
One, in old fables, and the pagan strain,
With nymphs and tritons, wafts him o'er the main;
Another draws fierce Lucifer in arms,
And fills th' infernal region with alarms:
A third awakes some druid, to foretell
Each future triumph from his dreary cell.
Exploded fancies! that in vain deceive,
While the mind nauseates what she can't believe.
My muse th' expected hero shall pursue
From clime to clime, and keep him still in view:
His shining march describe in faithful lays,
Content to paint him, nor presume to praise:
Their charms, if charms they have, the truth supplies,
And from the theme unlabour'd beauties rise.

'By longing nations for the throne design'd,
And call'd to guard the rights of human-kind;
With secret grief his godlike soul repines,
And Britain's crown with joyless lustre shines,
While pray'rs and tears his destin'd progress stay,
And crowds of mourners choke their sovereign's way.
Not so he march'd when hostile squadrons stood
In scenes of death, and fr'd his generous blood;
When his hot courser paw'd th' Hungarian plain,
And adverse legions stood the shock in vain.
His frontiers past, the Belgian bounds he views,
And cross the level fields his march pursues.
Here pleas'd th' land of freedom to survey,
He greatly scorns the thirst of boundless sway.
O'er the thin soil, with silent joy, he spies
Transplanted woods and borrow'd verdure rise;
Where ev'ry meadow, won with toil and blood
From haughty tyrants and the raging flood,
With fruits and flowers the careful hand supplies,
And clothes the marshes in a rich disguise.
Such wealth for frugal hands doth Heaven decree,
And such thy gifts, celestial Liberty!

'Through stately towns, and many a fertile plain,
The pomp advances to the neighbouring main.
Whole nations crowd around with joyful cries,
And view the hero with insatiate eyes.

'In Haga's towers he waits till eastern gales
Propitious rise to swell the British sails.
Hither the fame of England's monarch brings
The vows and friendships of the neighbouring kings;
Mature in wisdom, his extensive mind
Takes in the blended interests of mankind,
The world's great patriot. Calm thy anxious breast,
Secure in him, O Europe, take thy rest;

Henceforth thy kingdoms shall remain confin'd
By rocks and streams, the mounds which Heav'n design'd;

The Alps their new-made monarch shall restrain,
Nor shall thy hills, Pyrene, rise in vain.

'But see, to Britain's isle the squadron stand,
And leave the sinking towers and less'ning land.
The royal bark bounds o'er the floating plain,
Breaks through the billows, and divides the main.
O'er the vast deep, great monarch, dart thine eyes,
A wat'ry prospect bounded by the skies;
Ten thousand vessels, from ten thousand shores,
Bring gums and gold, and either India's stores,
Behold the tributes hast'ning to thy throne,
And see the wide horizon all thy own.

'Still is it thine; though now the cheerful crew
Hail Albion's cliffs just whitening to the view,
Before the wind with swelling sails they ride,
Till Thames receives them in his opening tide.
The monarch hears the thund'ring peals around
From trembling woods and echoing hills rebound.
Nor misses yet, amid the deaf'ning train,
The roarings of the hoarse resounding main.

'As in the flood he sails, from either side
He views his kingdom in its rural pride;
A various scene the wide-spread landscape yields,
O'er rich inclosures and luxuriant fields:
A lowing herd each fertile pasture fills,
And distant flocks stray o'er a thousand hills.
Fair Greenwich hid in woods, with new delight,
(Shade above shade) now rises to the sight;
His woods ordain'd to visit every shore,
And guard the island which they grac'd before.

'The sun now rolling down the western way,
A blaze of fires, renews the fading day;
Unnumber'd barks the regal barge enfold,
Bright'ning the twilight with its beamy gold;
Less thick the finny shoals, a countless fry,
Before the whale or kingly dolphin fly;
In one vast shout he seeks the crowded strand,
And in a peal of thunder gains the land.

'Welcome, great stranger! to our longing eyes,
Oh! king desir'd, adopted Albion cries.
For thee the East breath'd out a prosp'rous breeze,
Bright were the suns, and gently swell'd the seas.
Thy presence did each doubtful heart compose,
And factions wonder'd that they once were foes;
That joyful day they lost each hostile name,
The same their aspect, and their voice the same.

'So two fair twins, whose features were design'd
At one soft moment in the mother's mind,
Show each the other with reflected grace,
And the same beauties bloom in either face;
The puzzled strangers which is which inquire;
Delusion grateful to the smiling sire.

'From that fair hill,* where hoary seas boast
To name the stars, and count the heavenly host,
By the next dawn doth great Augusta rise,
Proud town! the noblest scene beneath the skies.
O'er Thames her thousand spires their lustre shed,
And a vast navy hides his ample bed—
A floating forest! From the distant strand
A line of golden cars strikes o'er the land;
Britannia's peers in pomp and rich array,
Before their king, triumphant, led the way.
Far as the eye can reach, the gaudy train,
A bright procession, shines along the plain.

'So haply thro' the heav'n's wide pathless ways
A comet draws a long-extended blaze;
From east to west burns through th' ethereal frame,
And half heav'n's convex glitters with the flame.

'Now to the regal towers securely brought,
He plans Britannia's glories in his thought,
Resumes the delegated power he gave,
Rewards the faithful, and restores the brave.
Whom shall the Muse from out the shining throng
Select, to heighten and adorn her song?
Thee, Halifax! To thy capacious mind,
O man approv'd, is Britain's wealth consign'd.
Her coin (while Nassau fought) debas'd and rude,
By thee in beauty and in truth renew'd.
An arduous work! again thy charge we see,
And thy own care once more returns to thee.
O! form'd in every scene to awe and please,
Mix wit with pomp, and dignity with ease:

* Flamstead House.

Though call'd to shine aloft, thou wilt not scorn
To smile on arts thyself did once adorn;
For this thy name succeeding time shall praise,
And envy less thy garter than thy baits.

'The Muse, if fir'd with thy enlivening beams,
Perhaps shall aim at more exalted themes;
Record our monarch in a nobler strain,
And sing the op'ning wonders of his reign;
Bright Carolina's heavenly beauties trace,
Her valiant consort, and his blooming race.
A train of kings their fruitful love supplies,
A glorious scene to Albion's ravish'd eyes:
Who sees by Brunswick's hand her sceptre sway'd,
And through his line from age to age convey'd.'

No. 621.] *Wednesday, November 17, 1714.*

—Postquam se lumine puro
Implevit, stellasque vagas miratur, et astra
Fixa polis, vidit quanta sub nocte jaceret
Nostra dies, risitque sui ludibria

Lucan. Lib. 9. 11.

Now to the blest abode, with wonder fill'd,
The sun and moving planets he beheld;
Then, looking down on the sun's feeble ray,
Survey'd our dusky, faint, imperfect day,
And under what a cloud of night we lay.—*Rouse.*

THE following letter having in it some observations out of the common road, I shall make it the entertainment of this day.

'MR. SPECTATOR,—The common topics against the pride of man, which are labour'd by florid and declamatory writers, are taken from the baseness of his original, the imperfections of his nature, or the short duration of those goods in which he makes his boast. Though it be true that we can have nothing in us that ought to raise our vanity, yet a consciousness of our own merit may be sometimes laudable. The folly therefore lies here: we are apt to pride ourselves in worthless, or, perhaps, shameful things; and on the other hand count that disgraceful which is our truest glory.

'Hence it is, that the lovers of praise take wrong measures to attain it. Would a vain man consult his own heart, he would find that if others knew his weakness as well as he himself doth, he could not have the impudence to expect the public esteem. Pride therefore flows from want of reflection, and ignorance of ourselves. Knowledge and humility come upon us together.

'The proper way to make an estimate of ourselves is to consider seriously what it is we value or despise in others. A man who boasts of the goods of fortune, a gay dress, or a new title, is generally the mark of ridicule. We ought therefore not to admire in ourselves what we are so ready to laugh at in other men.

'Much less can we with reason pride ourselves in those things, which at some time of our life we shall certainly despise. And yet, if we will give ourselves the trouble of looking backward and forward on the several changes which we have already undergone, and hereafter must try, we shall find that the greater degrees of our knowledge and wisdom serve only to show us our own imperfections.

'As we rise from childhood to youth, we

look with contempt on the toys and trifles which our hearts have hitherto been set upon. When we advance to manhood, we are held wise, in proportion to our shame and regret for the rashness and extravagance of youth. Old age fills us with mortifying reflections upon a life mis-spent in the pursuit of anxious wealth, or uncertain honour. Agreeable to this gradation of thought in this life, it may be reasonably supposed that, in a future state, the wisdom, the experience, and the maxims of old age, will be looked upon by a separate spirit in much the same light as an ancient man now sees the little follies and toyings of infants. The pomps, the honours, the policies, and arts of mortal men, will be thought as trifling as hobby-horses, mock-battles, or any other sports that now employ all the cunning and strength, and ambition of rational beings, from four years old to nine or ten.

'If the notion of a gradual rise in beings, from the meanest to the Most High, be not a vain imagination, it is not improbable that an angel looks down upon a man as a man doth upon a creature which approaches nearest to the rational nature. By the same rule, if I may indulge my fancy in this particular, a superior brute looks with a kind of pride on one of an inferior species. If they could reflect, we might imagine, from the gestures of some of them, that they think themselves the sovereigns of the world, and that all things were made for them. Such a thought would not be more absurd in brute creatures than one which men are apt to entertain, namely, that all the stars in the firmament were created only to please their eyes and amuse their imaginations. Mr. Dryden, in his fable of the Cock and the Fox, makes a speech for his hero the cock, which is a pretty instance for this purpose.

"Then turning, said to Partlet, 'See, my dear,
How lavish nature hath adorn'd the year;
How the pale primrose and the violets spring,
And birds essay their throats, disus'd to sing:
All these are ours, and I with pleasure see
Man strutting on two legs, and aping me."

'What I would observe from the whole is this, that we ought to value ourselves upon those things only which superior beings think valuable, since that is the only way for us not to sink in our own esteem hereafter.'

No. 622.] *Friday, November 19, 1714.*

—Fallentis semita vite.—*Hor. Ep. xviii Lib. 1. 103.*

—A safe private quiet, which betrays
Itself to ease, and cheats away the days.—*Pooley.*

'MR. SPECTATOR,—In a former speculation you have observed that true greatness doth not consist in that pomp and noise wherein the generality of mankind are apt to place it. You have there taken notice that virtue in obscurity often appears more

illustrious in the eye of superior beings, than all that passes for grandeur and magnificence among men.

“When we look back upon the history of those who have borne the parts of kings, statesmen, or commanders, they appear to us stripped of those outside ornaments that dazzle their contemporaries; and we regard their persons as great or little, in proportion to the eminence of their virtues or vices. The wise sayings, generous sentiments, or disinterested conduct of a philosopher under mean circumstances of life, set him higher in our esteem than the mighty potentates of the earth, when we view them both through the long prospect of many ages. Were the memoirs of an obscure man, who lived up to the dignity of his nature, and according to the rules of virtue, to be laid before us, we should find nothing in such a character which might not set him on a level with men of the highest stations. The following extract out of the private papers of an honest country gentleman, will set this matter in a clear light. Your reader will, perhaps, conceive a greater idea of him from these actions done in secret, and without a witness, than of those which have drawn upon them the admiration of multitudes.

MEMOIRS.

“In my twenty-second year I found a violent affection for my cousin Charles’s wife growing upon me, wherein I was in danger of succeeding, if I had not upon that account begun my travels into foreign countries.

“A little after my return to England, at a private meeting with my uncle Francis, I refused the offer of his estate, and prevailed upon him not to disinherit his son Ned.

“Mem. Never to tell this to Ned, lest he should think hardly of his deceased father; though he continues to speak ill of me for this very reason.

“Prevented a scandalous lawsuit betwixt my nephew Harry and his mother, by allowing her under-hand, out of my own pocket, so much money yearly as the dispute was about.

“Procured a benefice for a young divine, who is sister’s son to the good man who was my tutor, and hath been dead twenty years.

“Gave ten pounds to poor Mrs. _____, my friend H_____’s widow.

“Mem. To retrench one dish at my table, until I have fetched it up again.

“Mem. To repair my house and finish my gardens, in order to employ poor people after harvest-time.

“Ordered John to let out goodman D_____’s sheep that were pounded, by night; but not to let his fellow-servants know it.

“Prevailed upon M. T. esq. not to take the law of the farmer’s son for shooting a partridge, and to give him his gun again.

“Paid the apothecary for curing an old woman that confessed herself a witch.

“Gave away my favourite dog for biting a beggar.

“Made the minister of the parish and a whig justice of one mind, by putting them to explain their notions to one another.

“Mem. To turn off Peter for shooting a doe while she was eating acorns out of his hand.

“When my neighbour John, who hath often injured me, comes to make his request to-morrow:

“Mem. I have forgiven him.

“Laid up my chariot, and sold my horses, to relieve the poor in a scarcity of corn.

“In the same year remitted to my tenants a fifth part of their rents.

“As I was airing to-day I fell into a thought that warmed my heart, and shall, I hope, be the better for it as long as I live.

“Mem. To charge my son in private to erect no monument for me; but not to put this in my last will.”

No. 623.] *Monday, November 22, 1714.*

*Sed mihi vel tellus optem prius ima dehiscat,
Vel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras,
Pallentes umbras Erebi noctemque profundam,
Ante, pudor, quam te violem, aut tua jura resolvam,
Ille meos, primus qui me sibi junxit, amores
Abstulit: ille habeat secum servetque sepulchro.
Virg. Æn. iv. 24.*

But first let yawning earth a passage rend,
And let me through the dark abyss descend;
First let avenging Jove, with flames from high,
Drive down this body to the nether sky,
Condemn’d with ghosts in endless night to lie;
Before I break the pledged faith I gave:
No: he who had my vows, shall ever have;
For whom I lov’d on earth, I worship in the grave.
Dryden.

I AM obliged to my friend, the love assuist, for the following curious piece of antiquity, which I shall communicate to the public in his own words.

“MR. SPECTATOR,—You may remember, that I lately transmitted to you an account of an ancient custom in the manors of East and West Enborne, in the county of Berks, and elsewhere. “If a customary tenant die, the widow shall have what the law calls her free-bench, in all his copyhold lands, *dum sola et casta fuerit*; that is, while she lives single and chaste; but if she commits incontinency, she forfeits her estate; yet if she will come into the court riding backward upon a black ram, with his tail in her hand, and say the words following, the steward is bound by the custom to re-admit her to her free-bench.

‘Here I am
Riding on a black ram,
Like a whore as I am;
And for my crincum crancum,
Have lost my bincum bancum,
And for my tail’s game,
Have done this worldly shame
Therefore I pray you, Mr. Steward, let me have
my land again.’

After having informed you that my lord Coke observes, that this is the most frail

and slippery tenure in England, I shall tell you, since the writing of that letter, I have, according to my promise, been at great pains in searching out the records of the black ram; and have at last met with the proceedings of the court-baron, held in that behalf, for the space of a whole day. The record saith, that a strict inquisition having been made into the right of the tenants to their several estates, by the crafty old steward, he found that many of the lands of the manor were, by default of the several widows, forfeited to the lord, and accordingly would have entered on the premises: upon which the good women demanded the "benefit of the ram." The steward, after having perused their several pleas, adjourned the court to Barnaby-bright,* that they might have day enough before them.

The court being set, and filled with a great concourse of people, who came from all parts to see the solemnity; the first who entered was the widow Frontly, who had made her appearance in the last year's cavalcade. The register observes, that finding it an easy pad-ram, and foreseeing she might have farther occasion for it, she purchased it of the steward.

Mrs. Sarah Dainty, relict of Mr. John Dainty, who was the greatest prude of the parish, came next in the procession. She at first made some difficulty of taking the tail in her hand; and was observed, in pronouncing the form of penance, to soften the two most emphatical words into *clincum clancum*: but the steward took care to make her speak plain English before he would let her have her land again.

The third widow that was brought to this worldly shame, being mounted upon a vicious ram, had the misfortune to be thrown by him: upon which she hoped to be excused from going through the rest of the ceremony; but the steward, being well versed in the law, observed very wisely upon this occasion, that breaking of the rope does not hinder the execution of the criminal.

The fourth lady upon record was the widow Ogle, a famous coquette, who had kept half a score of young fellows off and on for the space of two years; but having been more kind to her carter John, she was introduced with the huzzas of all her lovers about her.

Mrs. Sable appearing in her weeds, which were very new and fresh, and of the same colour with her whimsical palfrey, made a very decent figure in the solemnity.

Another, who had been summoned to make her appearance, was excused by the steward, as well knowing in his heart that the good squire himself had qualified her for the ram.

Mrs. Quick, having nothing to object against the indictment, pleaded her belly.

* Then the eleventh, now the twenty-second of June, being the longest day in the year.

But it was remembered that she made the same excuse the year before. Upon which the steward observed, that she might so contrive it, as never to do the service of the manor.

The widow Fidget being cited into court, insisted that she had done no more since the death of her husband than what she used to do in his life time; and withal desired Mr. Steward to consider his own wife's case if he should chance to die before her.

The next in order was a dowager of a very corpulent make, who would have been excused, as not finding any ram that was able to carry her: upon which the steward commuted her punishment, and ordered her to make her entry upon a black ox.

The widow Maskwell, a woman who had long lived with a most unblemished character, having turned off her old chamber-maid in a pet, was by that revengeful creature brought in upon the black ram nine times the same day.

Several widows of the neighbourhood, being brought upon their trial, showed that they did not hold of the manor, and were discharged accordingly.

A pretty young creature, who closed the procession, came ambling in with so bewitching an air, that the steward was observed to cast a sheep's eye upon her, and married her within a month after the death of his wife.

N. B. Mrs. Touchwood appeared according to summons, but had nothing laid to her charge; having lived irreproachably since the decease of her husband, who left her a widow in the sixty-ninth year of her age. I am, sir, &c.'

No. 624.] *Wednesday, November 24, 1714.*

Audire, atque togam jubeo componere, quisquis
Ambitione mala, aut argenti pallet amore,
Quisquis luxuria

Hor. Sat. iii. Lib. 2. 77.

Sit still, and hear, those whom proud thoughts do swell,
Those that look pale by loving coin too well;
Whom luxury corrupts.—*Creech.*

MANKIND is divided into two parts, the busy and the idle. The busy world may be divided into the virtuous and the vicious. The vicious again into the covetous, the ambitious, and the sensual. The idle part of mankind are in a state inferior to any one of these. All the other are engaged in the pursuit of happiness, though often misplaced, and are therefore more likely to be attentive to such means as shall be proposed to them for that end. The idle, who are neither wise for this world nor the next, are emphatically called by Dr. Tillotson, 'fools at large.' They propose to themselves no end, but run adrift with every wind. Advice, therefore, would be but thrown away upon them, since they would scarce take the pains to read it. I shall not fatigue any of this worthless tribe with

a long harangue; but will leave them with this short saying of Plato, that 'labour is preferable to idleness, as brightness to rust.'

The pursuits of the active part of mankind are either in the paths of religion and virtue; or, on the other hand, in the roads to wealth, honours, or pleasure. I shall, therefore, compare the pursuits of avarice, ambition, and sensual delight with their opposite virtues; and shall consider which of these principles engages men in a course of the greatest labour, suffering, and assiduity. Most men, in their cool reasonings, are willing to allow that a course of virtue will in the end be rewarded the most amply; but represent the way to it as rugged and narrow. If, therefore, it can be made appear, that men struggle through as many troubles to be miserable, as they do to be happy, my readers may, perhaps, be persuaded to be good, when they find they shall lose nothing by it.

First, for avarice. The miser is more industrious than the saint: the pains of getting, the fears of losing, and the inability of enjoying his wealth, have been the mark of satire in all ages. Were his repentance upon his neglect of a good bargain, his sorrow for being over-reached, his hope of improving a sum, and his fear of falling into want, directed to their proper objects, they would make so many different Christian graces and virtue. He may apply to himself a great part of saint Paul's catalogue of sufferings. 'In journeying often: in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often. --- At how much less expense might he 'lay up to himself treasures in heaven!' Or, if I may in this place be allowed to add the saying of a great philosopher, he may 'provide such possessions as fear neither arms, nor men, nor Jove himself.'

In the second place, if we look upon the toils of ambition in the same light as we have considered those of avarice, we shall readily own that far less trouble is requisite to gain lasting glory, than the power and reputation of a few years; or, in other words, we may with more ease deserve honour than obtain it. The ambitious man should remember cardinal Wolsey's complaint, 'Had I served God with the same application wherewith I served my king, he would not have forsaken me in my old age.' The cardinal here softens his ambition by the specious pretence of 'serving his king;' whereas his words, in the proper construction, imply, that, if instead of being acted* by ambition, he had been acted by religion, he should now have felt the comforts of it, when the whole world turned its back upon him.

Thirdly, let us compare the pains of the sensual with those of the virtuous, and see

which are heavier in the balance. It may seem strange, at the first view, that the men of pleasure should be advised to change their course, because they lead a painful life. Yet when we see them so active and vigilant in quest of delight; under so many disquiets, and the sport of such various passions; let them answer, as they can, if the pains they undergo do not outweigh their enjoyments. The infidelities on the one part between the two sexes, and the caprices on the other, the debasement of reason, the pangs of expectation, the disappointments in possession, the stings of remorse, the vanities and vexations attending even the most refined delights that make up this business of life, render it so silly and uncomfortable, that no man is thought wise until he hath got over it, or happy, but in proportion as he hath cleared himself from it.

The sum of all is this. Man is made an active being. Whether he walks in the paths of virtue or vice, he is sure to meet with many difficulties to prove his patience and excite his industry. The same, if not greater labour, is required in the service of vice and folly as of virtue and wisdom: and he hath this easy choice left him—whether, with the strength he is master of, he will purchase happiness or repentance.

No. 625.] Friday, November 26, 1714.

—amores

De tenero meditatur ungui.

Hor. Od. vi. Lib. 3. 23.

Love, from her tender years, her thoughts employ'd.

THE love casuist hath referred to me the following letter of queries with his answer to each question, for my approbation. I have accordingly considered the several matters therein contained, and hereby confirm and ratify his answers, and require the gentle querist to conform herself thereunto.

'SIR,---I was thirteen the 9th of November last, and must now begin to think of settling myself in the world; and so I would humbly beg your advice, what I must do with Mr. Fondle, who makes his addresses to me. He is a very pretty man, and hath the blackest eyes and whitest teeth you ever saw. Though he is but a younger brother, he dresses like a man of quality, and nobody comes into a room like him. I know he hath refused great offers, and if he cannot marry me, he will never have any body else. But my father hath forbid him the house, because he sent me a copy of verses; for he is one of the greatest wits in town. My eldest sister, who, with her good will, would call me miss as long as I live, must be married before me, they say. She tells them that Mr. Fondle makes a fool of me, and will spoil the child, as she calls me, like a confident thing as she is. In short, I am resolved to marry Mr. Fondle, if it be but to spite her. But because I would do nothing that is imprudent, I beg of you to

* Actuated.

give me your answers to some questions I will write down, and desire you to get them printed in the Spectator, and I do not doubt but you will give such advice as, I am sure, I shall follow.

‘When Mr. Fondle looks upon me for half an hour together, and calls me Angel, is he not in love?’

Answer. No.

‘May not I be certain he will be a kind husband, that has promised me half my portion in pin-money, and to keep me a coach and six in the bargain?’

No.

‘Whether I, who have been acquainted with him this whole year almost, am not a better judge of his merit than my father and mother, who never heard him talk but at table?’

No.

‘Whether I am not old enough to choose for myself?’

No.

‘Whether it would not have been rude in me to refuse a lock of his hair?’

No.

‘Should not I be a very barbarous creature, if I did not pity a man who is always sighing for my sake?’

No.

‘Whether you would not advise me to run away with the poor man?’

No.

‘Whether you do not think, that if I will not have him, he will drown himself?’

No.

‘What shall I say to him the next time he asks me if I will marry him?’

No.

The following letter requires neither introduction nor answer.

‘MR. SPECTATOR,—I wonder that, in the present situation of affairs, you can take pleasure in writing any thing but news; for, in a word, who minds any thing else? The pleasure of increasing in knowledge, and learning something new every hour of life, is the noblest entertainment of a rational creature. I have a very good ear for a secret, and am naturally of a communicative temper; by which means I am capable of doing you great services in this way. In order to make myself useful, I am early in the anti-chamber, where I thrust my head into the thick of the press, and catch the news at the opening of the door, while it is warm. Sometimes I stand by the beef-eaters, and take the buzz as it passes by me. At other times I lay my ear close to the wall, and suck in many a valuable whisper, as it runs in a straight line from corner to corner. When I am weary with standing, I repair to one of the neighbouring coffee-houses, where I sit sometimes for a whole day, and have the news as it comes from court fresh and fresh. In short, sir, I spare no pains to know how the world goes. A piece of news loses its flavour when it hath

been an hour in the air. I love, if I may so speak, to have it fresh from the tree; and to convey it to my friends before it is faded. Accordingly my expenses in coach-hire make no small article: which you may believe when I assure you, that I post away from coffee-house to coffee-house, and forestall the Evening Post by two hours. There is a certain gentleman, who hath given me the slip twice or thrice, and hath been beforehand with me at Child’s. But I have played him a trick. I have purchased a pair of the best coach-horses I could buy for money, and now let him out-strip me if he can. Once more, Mr. Spectator, let me advise you to deal in news. You may depend upon my assistance. But I must break off abruptly, for I have twenty letters to write. Your’s in haste,
‘THO. QUID NUNC.’

No. 626.] Monday, November 29, 1714.

—Dulcique animos novitate tenebo.

Ovid, Met. Lib. 4. 284.

With sweet novelty your taste I’ll please.—Eusden.

I HAVE seen a little work of a learned man, consisting of extemporary speculations, which owed their birth to the most trifling occurrences of life. His usual method, was to write down any sudden start of thought which arose in his mind upon the sight of any odd gesticulation in a man, any whimsical mimicry of reason in a beast, or whatever appeared remarkable in any object of the visible creation. He was able to moralize upon a snuff-box, would flourish eloquently upon a tucker or a pair of ruffles, and draw practical inferences from a full-bottomed perriwig. This I thought fit to mention, by way of excuse, for my ingenious correspondent, who hath introduced the following letter by an image which, I will beg leave to tell him, is too ridiculous in so serious and noble a speculation.

‘MR. SPECTATOR,—When I have seen young puss playing her wanton gambols, and with a thousand antic shapes express her own gayety at the same time that she moved mine, while the old grannum hath sat by with the most exemplary gravity, unmoved at all that passed; it hath made me reflect what should be the occasion of humours so opposite in two creatures, between whom there was no visible difference but that of age; and I have been able to resolve it into nothing else but the force of novelty.

‘In every species of creatures, those who have been least time in the world appear best pleased with their condition; for, besides that to a new comer the world hath a freshness on it that strikes the sense after a most agreeable manner, being itself unattended with any great variety of enjoyments, excites a sensation of pleasure: but, as age advances, every thing seems to wither, the senses are disgusted with their old en

tertainments, and existence turns flat and insipid. We may see this exemplified in mankind. The child, let him be free from pain, and gratified in his change of toys, is diverted with the smallest trifle. Nothing disturbs the mirth of the boy but a little punishment or confinement. The youth must have more violent pleasures to employ his time. The man loves the hurry of an active life, devoted to the pursuits of wealth or ambition. And, lastly, old age, having lost its capacity for these avocations, becomes its own unsupportable burden. This variety may in part be accounted for by the vivacity and decay of the faculties; but I believe is chiefly owing to this, that the longer we have been in possession of being, the less sensible is the gust we have of it; and the more it requires of adventitious amusements to relieve us from the satiety and weariness it brings along with it.

And as novelty is of a very powerful, so it is of a most extensive influence. Moralists have long since observed it to be the source of admiration, which lessens in proportion to our familiarity with objects, and upon a thorough acquaintance is utterly extinguished. But I think it hath not been so commonly remarked, that all the other passions depend considerably on the same circumstance. What is it but novelty that awakens desire, enhances delight, kindles anger, provokes envy, inspires horror? To this cause we must ascribe it, that love languishes with fruition, and friendship itself is recommended by intervals of absence: hence, monsters, by use, are beheld without loathing, and the most enchanting beauty without rapture. That emotion of the spirits, in which passion consists, is usually the effect of surprise, and, as long as it continues, heightens the agreeable or disagreeable qualities of its object; but as this emotion ceases, (and it ceases with the novelty) things appear in another light, and affect us even less than might be expected from their proper energy, for having moved us too much before.

It may not be a useless inquiry, how far the love of novelty is the unavoidable growth of nature, and in what respects it is peculiarly adapted to the present state. To me it seems impossible, that a reasonable creature should rest absolutely satisfied in any acquisitions whatever, without endeavouring farther; for, after its highest improvements, the mind hath an idea of an infinity of things still behind, worth knowing, to the knowledge of which therefore it cannot be indifferent; as by climbing up a hill in the midst of a wide plain, a man hath his prospect enlarged, and together with that, the bounds of his desires. Upon this account, I cannot think he detracts from the state of the blessed, who conceives them to be perpetually employed in fresh searches into nature, and to eternity advancing into the fathomless depths of the divine perfections. In this thought there is nothing but

what doth honour to these glorified spirits; provided still it be remembered, that their desire of more proceeds not from their disrelishing what they possess; and the pleasure of a new enjoyment is not with them measured by its novelty, (which is a thing merely foreign and accidental) but by its real intrinsic value. After an acquaintance of many thousand years with the works of God, the beauty and magnificence of the creation fills them with the same pleasing wonder and profound awe, which Adam felt himself seized with as he first opened his eyes upon this glorious scene. Truth captivates with unborrowed charms, and whatever hath once given satisfaction will always do it. In all which they have manifestly the advantage of us, who are so much governed by sickly and changeable appetites, that we can with the greatest coldness behold the stupendous displays of Omnipotence, and be in transports at the puny essays of human skill; throw aside speculations of the sublimest nature and vastest importance into some obscure corner of the mind, to make room for new notions of no consequence at all; are even tired of health, because not enlivened with alternate pain; and prefer the first reading of an indifferent author to the second or third perusal of one whose merit and reputation are established.

Our being thus formed serves many useful purposes in the present state. It contributes not a little to the advancement of learning; for, as Cicero takes notice, that which makes men willing to undergo the fatigues of philosophical disquisitions, is not so much the greatness of objects as their novelty. It is not enough that there is field and game for the chase, and that the understanding is prompted with a restless thirst of knowledge, effectually to rouse the soul, sunk into a state of sloth and indolence; it is also necessary that there be an uncommon pleasure annexed to the first appearance of truth in the mind. This pleasure being exquisite for the time it lasts, but transient, it hereby comes to pass that the mind grows into an indifference to its former notions, and passes on after new discoveries, in hope of repeating the delight. It is with knowledge as with wealth, the pleasure of which lies more in making endless additions than in taking a review of our old store. There are some inconveniences that follow this temper, if not guarded against, particularly this, that through too great an eagerness of something new, we are many times impatient of staying long enough upon a question that requires some time to resolve it; or, which is worse, persuade ourselves that we are masters of the subject before we are so, only to be at the liberty of going upon a fresh scent: in Mr. Locke's words, "We see a little, presume a great deal, and so jump to the conclusion."

A farther advantage of our inclination for novelty, as at present circumstantiated, is, that it annihilates all the boasted distinc-

tions among mankind. Look not up with envy to those above thee! Sounding titles, stately buildings, fine gardens, gilded chariots, rich equipages, what are they? They dazzle every one but the possessor: to him that is accustomed to them they are cheap and regardless things; they supply him not with brighter images, or more sublime satisfactions, than the plain man may have, whose small estate will just enable him to support the charge of a simple unencumbered life. He enters heedless into his rooms of state, as you or I do under our poor sheds. The noble paintings and costly furniture are lost on him; he sees them not; as how can it be otherwise, when by custom a fabric infinitely more grand and finished, that of the universe, stands unobserved by the inhabitants, and the everlasting lamps of heaven are lighted up in vain, for any notice that mortals take of them? Thanks to indulgent nature, which not only placed her children originally upon a level, but still, by the strength of this principle, in a great measure preserves it, in spite of all the care of man to introduce artificial distinctions.

“To add no more—is not this fondness for novelty, which makes us out of conceit with all we already have, a convincing proof of a future state? Either man was made in vain, or this is not the only world he was made for: for there cannot be a greater instance of vanity than that to which man is liable, to be deluded from the cradle to the grave with fleeting shadows of happiness. His pleasures, and those not considerable neither, die in the possession, and fresh enjoyments do not rise fast enough to fill up half his life with satisfaction. When I see persons sick of themselves any longer than they are called away by something that is of force to chain down the present thought; when I see them hurry from country to town, and then from the town back again into the country, continually shifting postures, and placing life in all the different lights they can think of; “Surely,” say I to myself, “life is vain, and the man beyond expression stupid, or prejudiced, who from the vanity of life cannot gather that he is designed for immortality.”

No. 627.] *Wednesday, December 1, 1714.*

*Tantum inter densas umbrosa cacumina fagos
Assidue veniebat; ibi hæc incondita solus
Montibus et sylvis studio jactabat inani.*

Virg. Ecl. ii. 3.

He, underneath the beaten shade, alone,
Thus to the woods and mountains made his moan.
Dryden.

THE following account, which came to my hands some time ago, may be no disagreeable entertainment to such of my readers as have tender hearts, and nothing to do.

‘MR. SPECTATOR,—A friend of mine died of a fever last week, which he caught

by walking too late in a dewy evening amongst his reapers. I must inform you that his greatest pleasure was in husbandry and gardening. He had some humours which seemed inconsistent with that good sense he was otherwise master of. His uneasiness in the company of women was very remarkable in a man of such perfect good-breeding; and his avoiding one particular walk in his garden, where he had used to pass the greatest part of his time, raised abundance of idle conjectures in the village where he lived. Upon looking over his papers we found out the reason, which he never intimated to his nearest friends. He was, it seems, a passionate lover in his youth, of which a large parcel of letters he left behind him are a witness. I send you a copy of the last he ever wrote upon that subject, by which you will find that he concealed the true name of his mistress under that of Zelinda.

“A long month’s absence would be insupportable to me, if the business I am employed in were not for the service of my Zelinda, and of such a nature as to place her every moment in my mind. I have furnished the house exactly according to your fancy, or, if you please, my own; for I have long since learned to like nothing but what you do. The apartment designed for your use is so exact a copy of that which you live in, that I often think myself in your house when I step into it, but sigh when I find it without its proper inhabitant. You will have the most delicious prospect from your closet window that England affords: I am sure I should think it so, if the landscape that shows such variety did not at the same time suggest to me the greatness of the space that lies between us.

“The gardens are laid out very beautifully; I have dressed up every hedge in woodbines, sprinkled bowers and arbours in every corner, and made a little paradise around me: yet I am still like the first man in his solitude, but half blessed without a partner in my happiness. I have directed one walk to be made for two persons, where I promise ten thousand satisfactions to myself in your conversation. I already take my evening’s turn in it, and have worn a path upon the edge of this little alley, while I soothed myself with the thought of your walking by my side. I have held many imaginary discourses with you in this retirement; and when I have been weary, have sat down with you in the midst of a row of jessamines. The many expressions of joy and rapture I use in these silent conversations have made me, for some time, the talk of the parish; but a neighbouring young fellow, who makes love to the farmer’s daughter, hath found me out, and made my case known to the whole neighbourhood.

“In planting of the fruit trees, I have not forgot the peach you are so fond of. I have made a walk of elms along the river