

I could not but approve so good a resolution, notwithstanding the loss I shall suffer by it. Sir Andrew has since explained himself to me more at large in the following letter, which is just come to my hands.

‘GOOD MR. SPECTATOR,—Notwithstanding my friends at the club have always rallied me, when I have talked of retiring from business, and repeated to me one of my own sayings, that “a merchant has never enough until he has got a little more;” I can now inform you, that there is one in the world who thinks he has enough, and is determined to pass the remainder of his life in the enjoyment of what he has. You know me so well, that I need not tell you I mean, by the enjoyment of my possessions, the making of them useful to the public. As the greatest part of my estate has been hitherto of an unsteady and volatile nature, either tost upon seas or fluctuating in funds, it is now fixed and settled in substantial acres and tenements. I have removed it from the uncertainty of stocks, winds, and waves, and disposed of it in a considerable purchase. This will give me great opportunity of being charitable in my way, that is, in setting my poor neighbours to work, and giving them a comfortable subsistence out of their own industry. My gardens, my fish-ponds, my arable and pasture grounds, shall be my several hospitals, or rather work-houses, in which I propose to maintain a great many indigent persons, who are now starving in my neighbourhood. I have got a fine spread of improvable lands, and in my own thoughts am already plowing up some of them, fencing others; planting woods, and draining marshes. In fine, as I have my share in the surface of this island, I am resolved to make it as beautiful a spot as any in her majesty’s dominions; at least there is not an inch of it which shall not be cultivated to the best advantage, and do its utmost for its owner. As in my mercantile employment I so disposed of my affairs, that, from whatever corner of the compass the wind blew, it was bringing home one or other of my ships; I hope as a husbandman to contrive it so, that not a shower of rain or a glimpse of sunshine shall fall upon my estate without bettering some part of it, and contributing to the products of the season. You know it has been hitherto my opinion of life, that it is thrown away when it is not some way useful to others. But when I am riding out by myself, in the fresh air, on the open heath that lies by my house, I find several other thoughts growing up in me. I am now of opinion, that a man of my age may find business enough on himself, by setting his mind in order, preparing it for another world, and reconciling it to the thoughts of death. I must therefore acquaint you, that besides those usual methods of charity, of which I have before spoken, I am at this very instant

finding out a convenient place where I may build an almshouse, which I intend to endow very handsomely for a dozen superannuated husbandmen. It will be a great pleasure to me to say my prayers twice a day with men of my own years, who all of them, as well as myself, may have their thoughts taken up how they shall die, rather than how they shall live. I remember an excellent saying that I learned at school, *Finis coronat opus*. You know best whether it be in Virgil or in Horace, it is my business to apply it. If your affairs will permit you to take the country air with me sometimes, you will find an apartment fitted up for you, and shall be every day entertained with beef or mutton of my own feeding; fish out of my own ponds; and fruit out of my own gardens. You shall have free egress and regress about my house, without having any questions asked you; and in a word, such a hearty welcome as you may expect from your most sincere friend and humble servant,

‘ANDREW FREEPORT.’

The club of which I am a member being entirely dispersed, I shall consult my reader next week upon a project relating to the institution of a new one. O.

No. 550.] Monday, December 1, 1712.

Quid dignum tanto feret hic promissor hiatu?

Hor. Ars Poet. ver. 138.

In what will all this ostentation end?—*Roscommon.*

SINCE the late dissolution of the club, whereof I have often declared myself a member, there are very many persons who by letters, petitions, and recommendations, put up for the next election. At the same time I must complain, that several indirect and underhand practices have been made use of upon this occasion. A certain country gentleman began to *tap* upon the first information he received of Sir Roger’s death; when he sent me up word that, if I would get him chosen in the place of the deceased, he would present me with a barrel of the best October I had ever tasted in my life. The ladies are in great pain to know whom I intend to elect in the room of Will Honeycomb. Some of them indeed are of opinion that Mr. Honeycomb did not take sufficient care of their interest in the club, and are therefore desirous of having in it hereafter a representative of their own sex. A citizen who subscribes himself Y. Z. tells me that he has one-and-twenty shares in the African company, and offers to bribe me with the odd one in case he may succeed Sir Andrew Freeport, which he thinks would raise the credit of that fund. I have several letters, dated from Jenny Man’s, by gentlemen who are candidates for captain Sentry’s place; and as many from a coffee-house in St. Paul’s

church-yard of such who would fill up the vacancy occasioned by the death of my worthy friend the clergyman, whom I can never mention but with a particular respect.

Having maturely weighed these several particulars, with the many remonstrances that have been made to me on this subject, and considering how invidious an office I shall take upon me if I make the whole election depend upon my single voice, and being unwilling to expose myself to those clamours, which on such an occasion will not fail to be raised against me for partiality, injustice, corruption, and other qualities, which my nature abhors, I have formed to myself the project of a club as follows.

I have thoughts of issuing out writs to all and every of the clubs that are established in the cities of London and Westminster, requiring them to choose out of their respective bodies a person of the greatest merit, and to return his name to me before Lady-day, at which time I intend to sit upon business.

By this means I may have reason to hope, that the club over which I shall preside will be the very flower and quintessence of all other clubs. I have communicated this my project to none but a particular friend of mine, whom I have celebrated twice or thrice for his happiness in that kind of wit which is commonly known by the name of a pun. The only objection he makes to it is, that I shall raise up enemies to myself if I act with so regal an air, and that my detractors, instead of giving me the usual title of Spectator, will be apt to call me the King of Clubs.

But to proceed on my intended project: it is very well known that I at first set forth in this work with the character of a silent man; and I think I have so well preserved my taciturnity, that I do not remember to have violated it with three sentences in the space of almost two years. As a monosyllable is my delight, I have made very few excursions, in conversations which I have related, beyond a Yes or a No. By this means my readers have lost many good things which I have had in my heart, though I did not care for uttering them.

Now in order to diversify my character, and to show the world how well I can talk if I have a mind, I have thoughts of being very loquacious in the club which I have now under consideration. But that I may proceed the more regularly in this affair, I design, upon the first meeting of the said club, to have my mouth opened in form; intending to regulate myself in this particular by a certain ritual which I have by me, that contains all the ceremonies which are practised at the opening of the mouth of a cardinal. I have likewise examined the forms which were used of old by Pythagoras, when any of his scholars, after an apprenticeship of silence, was made free of his speech. In the mean time, as I have

of late found my name in foreign gazettes upon less occasions, I question not but in their next articles from Great Britain they will inform the world, 'that the Spectator's mouth is to be opened on the twenty-fifth of March next.' I may perhaps publish a very useful paper at that time of the proceedings in that solemnity, and of the persons who shall assist at it. But of this more hereafter. O.

No. 551.] Tuesday, December 2, 1712.

Sic honor et nomen divinis vatibus atque,
Carminibus venit.

Hor. Ars Poet. ver. 400.

So ancient is the pedigree of verse,
And so divine a poet's function.—*Roscommon.*

'MR. SPECTATOR,—When men of worthy and excelling geniuses have obliged the world with beautiful and instructive writings, it is in the nature of gratitude that praise should be returned them; as one proper consequent reward of their performances. Nor has mankind ever been so degenerately sunk, but they have made this return, and even when they have not been wrought up by the generous endeavours so as to receive the advantages designed by it. This praise, which arises first in the mouth of particular persons, spreads and lasts according to the merit of authors; and, when it thus meets with a full success, changes its denomination, and is called fame. They, who have happily arrived at this, are, even while they live, inflamed by the acknowledgments of others, and spurred on to new undertakings for the benefit of mankind, notwithstanding the detraction which some abject tempers would cast upon them: but when they decease, their characters being free from the shadow which envy laid them under, begin to shine with the greater splendour; their spirits survive in their works; they are admitted into the highest companies, and they continue pleasing and instructing posterity from age to age. Some of the best gain a character, by being able to show that they are no strangers to them; and others obtain a new warmth to labour for the happiness and ease of mankind, from a reflection upon those honours which are paid to their memories.

'The thought of this took me up as I turned over those epigrams which are the remains of several of the wits of Greece, and perceived many dedicated to the fame of those who had excelled in beautiful poetic performances. Wherefore, in pursuance to my thought, I concluded to do something along with them to bring their praises into a new light and language, for the encouragement of those whose modest tempers may be deterred by the fear of envy or detraction from fair attempts, to which their parts might render them equal. You will perceive them as they follow to be conceived in the form of epi-

taphs, a sort of writing which is wholly set apart for a short-pointed method of praise.

ON ORPHEUS, WRITTEN BY ANTIPATER.

"No longer, Orpheus, shall thy sacred strains
Lead stones, and trees, and beasts along the plains;
No longer sooth the boisterous winds to sleep,
Or still the billows of the raging deep;
For thou art gone. The Muses mourn thy fall
In solemn strains, thy mother most of all.
Ye mortals, idly for your sons ye moan,
If thus a goddess could not save her own."

'Observe here, that if we take the fable for granted, as if it was believed to be in that age when the epigram was written, the turn appears to have piety to the gods, and a resigning spirit in its application. But if we consider the point with respect to our present knowledge, it will be less esteemed; though the author himself, because he believed it, may still be more valued than any one who should now write with a point of the same nature.

ON HOMER, BY ALPHEUS OF MYTILENE.

"Still in our ears Andromache complains,
And still in sight the fate of Troy remains;
Still Ajax fights, still Hector's dragg'd along:
Such strange enchantment dwells in Homer's song;
Whose birth could more than one poor realm adorn,
For all the world is proud that he was born."

'The thought in the first part of this is natural, and depending upon the force of poesy; in the latter part it looks as if it would aim at the history of seven towns contending for the honour of Homer's birth-place; but when you expect to meet with that common story, the poet slides by, and raises the whole world for a kind of arbiter, which is to end the contention amongst its several parts.

ON ANACREON, BY ANTIPATER.

"This tomb be thine, Anacreon! All around
Let ivy wreath, let flow'rets deck the ground;
And from its earth, enrich'd with such a prize,
Let wells of milk and streams of wine arise:
So will thine ashes yet a pleasure know,
If any pleasure reach the shades below."

'The poet here written upon is an easy gay author, and he who writes upon him has filled his own head with the character of his subject. He seems to love his theme so much, that he thinks of nothing but pleasing him as if he were still alive, by entering into his libertine spirit; so that the humour is easy and gay, resembling Anacreon in its air, raised by such images, and pointed with such a turn as he might have used. I give it a place here, because the author may have designed it for his honour; and I take an opportunity from it to advise others, that when they would praise they cautiously avoid every looser qualification, and fix only where there is a real foundation in merit.

ON EURIPIDES, BY ION.

"Divine Euripides, this tomb we see
So fair, is not a monument for thee,
So much as thou for it; since all will own
Thy name and lasting praise adorn the stone."

'The thought here is fine, but its fault is, that it is general, that it may belong to any great man, because it points out no

particular character. It would be better if, when we light upon such a turn, we join it with something that circumscribes and bounds it to the qualities of our subject. He who gives his praise in gross, will often appear either to have been a stranger to those he writes upon, or not to have found any thing in them which is praise-worthy.

ON SOPHOCLES, BY SIMONIDES.

"Winde, gentle ever-green, to form a shade
Around the tomb where Sophocles is laid:
Sweet ivy winde thy boughs, and intertwine
With blushing roses and the clust'ring vine:
Thus will thy lasting leaves, with beauties hung,
Prove grateful emblems of the lays he sung;
Whose soul, exalted like a god of wit,
Among the Muses and the Graces writ."

'This epigram I have opened more than any of the former: the thought towards the latter end seemed closer couched, so as to require an explanation. I fancied the poet aimed at the picture which is generally made of Apollo and the Muses, he sitting with his harp in the middle, and they around him. This looked beautiful to my thought, and because the image arose before me out of the words of the original as I was reading it, I ventured to explain them so.

ON MENANDER, THE AUTHOR UNNAMED.

"The very bees, O sweet Menander hung
To taste the Muses' spring upon thy tongue;
The very Graces made the scenes you writ
Their happy point of fine expression hit.
Thus still you live, you make your Athens shine,
And raise its glory to the skies in thine."

'This epigram has a respect to the character of its subject; for Menander writ remarkably with a justness and purity of language. It has also told the country he was born in, without either a set or a hidden manner, while it twists together the glory of the poet and his nation, so as to make the nation depend upon his for an increase of its own.

'I will offer no more instances at present to show that they who deserve praise have it returned them from different ages: let these which have been laid down show men that envy will not always prevail. And to the end that writers may more successfully enliven the endeavours of one another, let them consider, in some such manner as I have attempted, what may be the justest spirit and art of praise. It is indeed very hard to come up to it. Our praise is trifling when it depends upon fable; it is false when it depends upon wrong qualifications; it means nothing when it is general; it is extremely difficult to hit when we propose to raise characters high, while we keep to them justly. I shall end this with transcribing that excellent epitaph of Mr. Cowley, wherein, with a kind of grave and philosophic humour, he very beautifully speaks of himself (withdrawn from the world, and dead to all the interests of it,) as of a man really deceased. At the same time it is an instruction how to leave the public with a good grace.

EPITAPHIUM VIVI AUTHORIS.

"Hic, O viator, sub lare parvulo
 Couleus hic est conditus, hic jacet
 Defunctus humani laboris
 Sorte, supervacuaque vita;
 Non indecora pauperie nitens,
 Et non inerti nobilis otio,
 Vanoque dilectis popello
 Divitiis animosus hostis.
 Possis ut illum dicere mortuum,
 En terra jam nunc quantula sufficit!
 Exempta sit curis, viator,
 Terra sit illa levis, precare.
 Hic sparge flores, sparge breves rosas,
 Nam vita gaudet mortua floribus,
 Herbisque odoratis corona
 Vatis adhuc cinerem calentem."

THE LIVING AUTHOR'S EPITAPH.

"From life's superfluous cares enlarg'd,
 His debt of human toil discharg'd
 Here Cowley lies, beneath this shed,
 To ev'ry worldly interest dead:
 With descent poverty content:
 His hours of ease not idly spent;
 To fortune's goods a foe profess'd,
 And hating wealth, by all caress'd.
 'Tis sure, he's dead: for lo! how small
 A spot of earth is now his all!
 O! wish that earth may lightly lay,
 And ev'ry care be far away!
 Bring flow'rs, the short-liv'd roses bring,
 To life deceas'd fit offering!
 And sweets around the poet strow,
 Whilst yet with life his ashes glow."

The publication of these criticisms having procured me the following letter from a very ingenious gentleman, I cannot forbear inserting it in the volume,* though it did not come soon enough to have a place in any of my single papers.

'MR. SPECTATOR,—Having read over in your paper, No. 551, some of the epigrams made by the Grecian wits, in commendation of their celebrated poets, I could not forbear sending you another, out of the same collection; which I take to be as great a compliment to Homer as any that has yet been paid him.

Της ποιῆστος Ἐπιγρῆς πολλῶν, &c.

"Who first transcrib'd the famous Trojan war,
 And wise Ulysses' acts, O Jove, make known:
 For since, 'tis certain thine these poems are,
 No more let Homer boast they are his own."

'If you think it worthy of a place in your speculations, for aught I know, (by that means) it may in time be printed as often in English as it has already been in Greek. I am, (like the rest of the world,) sir, your great admirer,
 G. R.
 '4th Dec.'

The reader may observe, that the beauty of this epigram is different from that of the foregoing. An irony is looked upon as the finest palliative of praise; and very often conveys the noblest panegyric under the appearance of satire. Homer is here seemingly accused and treated as a plagiarist; but what is drawn up in the form of an accusation is certainly, as my correspondent observes, the greatest compliment that could have been paid to that divine poet.

* The translation of Cowley's epitaph, and all that follows except the concluding letter, signed Philonicus, was not printed in the Spectator in folio, but added in the 6vo. edition of 1712.

'DEAR MR. SPECTATOR,—I am a gentleman of a pretty good fortune, and of a temper impatient of any thing which I think an injury. However, I always quarrelled according to law, and instead of attacking my adversary by the dangerous method of sword and pistol, I made my assaults by that more secure one of writ or warrant. I cannot help telling you, that either by the justice of my causes, or the superiority of my counsel, I have been generally successful: and to my great satisfaction I can say it, that by three actions of slander, and half a dozen trespasses, I have for several years enjoyed a perfect tranquillity in my reputation and estate: by these means also I have been made known to the judges; the serjeants of our circuit are my intimate friends; and the ornamental counsel pay a very profound respect to one who has made so great a figure in the law. Affairs of consequence having brought me to town, I had the curiosity the other day to visit Westminster-hall; and having placed myself in one of the courts, expected to be most agreeably entertained. After the court and counsel were with due ceremony seated, up stands a learned gentleman, and began, When this matter was last "stirred" before your lordship; the next humbly moved to "quash" an indictment; another complained that his adversary had "snapped" a judgment; the next informed the court that his client was "stripped," of his possessions; another begged leave to acquaint his lordship they had been "saddled" with costs. At last up got a grave serjeant, and told us his client had been "hung up" a whole term by a writ of error. At this I could bear it no longer, but came hither, and resolved to apply myself to your honour to interpose with these gentlemen, that they would leave off such low and unnatural expressions: for surely though the lawyers subscribe to hideous French and false Latin, yet they should let their clients have a little decent and proper English for their money. What man that has a value for a good name would like to have it said in a public court, that Mr. Such-a-one was stripped, saddled, or hung up? This being what has escaped your spectatorial observation, be pleased to correct such an illiberal cant among professed speakers, and you will infinitely oblige your humble servant,

'PHILONICUS.

'Joe's Coffee-house, Nov. 28.'

No. 552.] Wednesday, December 3, 1712.

—Qui prægravat artes
 Infra se positas, extinctus amabitur ilem.
 Hor. Ep. i. Lib. 2. 13.

For those are hated that excel the rest,
 Although, when dead, they are belov'd and blest.
 Creech.

As I was tumbling about the town the other day in a hackney-coach, and delight-

ing myself with busy scenes in the shops of each side of me, it came into my head, with no small remorse, that I had not been frequent enough in the mention and recommendation of the industrious part of mankind. It very naturally, upon this occasion, touched my conscience in particular, that I had not acquitted myself to my friend Mr. Peter Motteux. That industrious man of trade, and formerly brother of the quill, has dedicated to me a poem upon tea. It would injure him, as a man of business, if I did not let the world know that the author of so good verses writ them before he was concerned in traffic. In order to expiate my negligence towards him, I immediately resolved to make him a visit. I found his spacious warehouses filled and adorned with tea, China and Indiaware. I could observe a beautiful ordonnance of the whole; and such different and considerable branches of trade carried on in the same house, I exulted in seeing disposed by a poetical head. In one place were exposed to view silks of various shades and colours, rich brocades, and the wealthiest products of foreign looms. Here you might see the finest laces held up by the fairest hands; and there, examined by the beauteous eyes of the buyers, the most delicate cambrics, muslins, and linens. I could not but congratulate my friend on the humble, but I hoped beneficial, use he had made of his talents, and wished I could be a patron to his trade, as he had been pleased to make me of his poetry. The honest man has, I know, the modest desire of gain which is peculiar to those who understand better things than riches; and, I dare say, he would be contented with much less than what is called wealth at that quarter of the town which he inhabits, and will oblige all his customers with demands agreeable to the moderation of his desires.

Among other omissions of which I have been also guilty, with relation to men of industry of a superior order, I must acknowledge my silence towards a proposal frequently enclosed to me by Mr. Renatus Harris, organ-builder. The ambition of this artificer is to erect an organ in St. Paul's cathedral, over the west door, at the entrance into the body of the church, which in art and magnificence shall transcend any work of that kind ever before invented. The proposal in perspicuous language sets forth the honour and advantage such a performance would be to the British name, as well as that it would apply the power of sounds in a manner more amazingly forcible than, perhaps, has yet been known, and I am sure to an end much more worthy. Had the vast sums which have been laid out upon operas, without skill or conduct, and to no other purpose but to suspend or vitiate our understandings, been disposed this way, we should now perhaps have an engine so formed as to strike the minds of half the people at once in a place of worship, with a forgetfulness of present care

and calamity, and a hope of endless rapture, joy, and hallelujah hereafter.

When I am doing this justice, I am not to forget the best mechanic of my acquaintance, that useful servant to science and knowledge, Mr. John Rowley; but I think I lay a great obligation on the public, by acquainting them with his proposals for a pair of new globes. After his preamble he promises in the said proposals that,

‘IN THE CELESTIAL GLOBE,

‘Care shall be taken that the fixed stars be placed according to their true longitude and latitude, from the many and correct observations of Hevelius, Cassini, Mr. Flamsteed, reg. astronomer; Dr. Halley, Savilian professor of geometry in Oxon; and from whatever else can be procured to render the globe more exact, instructive, and useful.

‘That all the constellations be drawn in a curious, new, and particular manner; each star in so just, distinct, and conspicuous a proportion, that its magnitude may be readily known by bare inspection, according to the different light and sizes of the stars. That the track or way of such comets as have been well observed, but not hitherto expressed in a globe, be carefully delineated in this.

‘IN THE TERRESTRIAL GLOBE,

‘That by reason the descriptions formerly made, both in the English and Dutch great globe, are erroneous, Asia, Africa, and America, be drawn in a manner wholly new; by which means it is to be noted that the undertakers will be obliged to alter the latitude of some places in ten degrees, the longitude of others in twenty degrees; besides which great and necessary alterations, there be many remarkable countries, cities, towns, rivers, and lakes, omitted in other globes, inserted here according to the best discoveries made by our late navigators. Lastly, that the course of the trade-winds, the monsoons, and other winds periodically shifting between the tropics, be visibly expressed.

‘Now, in regard that this undertaking is of so universal use, as the advancement of the most necessary parts of the mathematics, as well as tending to the honour of the British nation, and that the charge of carrying it on is very expensive, it is desired that all gentlemen who are willing to promote so great a work will be pleased to subscribe on the following conditions.

‘1. The undertakers engage to furnish each subscriber with a celestial and terrestrial globe, each of thirty inches diameter, in all respects curiously adorned, the stars gilded, the capital cities plainly distinguished, the frames, meridians, horizons, hour circles, and indexes, so exactly finished up, and accurately divided, that a pair of these globes will appear, in the judgment of any disinterested and intelligent person,

worth fifteen pounds more than will be demanded for them by the undertakers.

‘2. Whosoever will be pleased to subscribe, and pay twenty-five pounds in the manner following, for a pair of these globes, either for their own use, or to present them to any college in the universities, or any public library or schools, shall have his coat of arms, name, title, seat, or place of residence, &c. inserted in some convenient place of the globe.

‘3. That every subscriber do at first pay down the sum of ten pounds, and fifteen pounds more upon the delivery of each pair of globes perfectly fitted up. And that the said globes be delivered within twelve months after the number of thirty subscribers be completed; and that the subscribers be served with globes in the order which they subscribed.

‘4. That a pair of these globes shall not hereafter be sold to any person but the subscribers under thirty pounds.

‘5. That, if there be not thirty subscribers within four months after the first of December, 1712, the money paid shall be returned on demand, by Mr. John Warner, goldsmith, near Temple-bar, who shall receive and pay the same according to the above-mentioned articles.’

No. 553.] *Thursday, December 4, 1712.*

Nec lusisse pudet, sed non incidere ludum.

Hor. Ep. xiv. Lib. 1. 36.

Once to be wild is no such foul disgrace,
But 'tis so still to run the frantic race.—*Creech.*

THE project which I published on Monday last has brought me in several packets of letters. Among the rest, I have received one from a certain projector, wherein, after having represented, that in all probability the solemnity of opening my mouth will draw together a great confluence of beholders, he proposes to me the hiring of Stationer's-hall for the more convenient exhibiting of that public ceremony. He undertakes to be at the charge of it himself, provided he may have the erecting of galleries on every side, and the letting of them out upon that occasion. I have a letter also from a bookseller, petitioning me in a very humble manner, that he may have the printing of the speech which I shall make to the assembly upon the first opening of my mouth. I am informed from all parts that there are great canvassings in the several clubs about town, upon the choosing of a proper person to sit with me on those arduous affairs to which I have summoned them. Three clubs have already proceeded to election, whereof one has made a double return. If I find that my enemies shall take advantage of my silence to begin hostilities upon me, or if any other exigency of affairs may so require, since I see elections in so great forwardness, we may possibly meet before the day appointed; or, if mat-

ters go on to my satisfaction, I may perhaps put off the meeting to a farther day; but of this, public notice shall be given.

In the mean time, I must confess that I am not a little gratified and obliged by that concern which appears in this great city upon my present design of laying down this paper. It is likewise with much satisfaction, that I find some of the most outlying parts of the kingdom alarmed upon this occasion, having received letters to expostulate with me about it from several of my readers of the remotest boroughs of Great Britain.—Among these I am very well pleased with a letter dated from Berwick-upon-Tweed, wherein my correspondent compares the office, which I have for some time executed in these realms, to the weeding of a great garden; ‘which,’ says he, ‘it is not sufficient to weed once for all, and afterwards to give over, but that the work must be continued daily, or the same spots of ground which are cleared for a while will in a little time be overrun as much as ever.’ Another gentleman lays before me several enormities that are already sprouting, and which he believes will discover themselves in their growth immediately after my disappearance. ‘There is no doubt,’ says he, ‘but the ladies’ heads will shoot up as soon as they know they are no longer under the Spectator’s eye; and I have already seen such monstrous broad-brimmed hats under the arms of foreigners, that I question not but they will overshadow the island within a month or two after the dropping of your paper.’ But, among all the letters which are come to my hands, there is none so handsomely written as the following one, which I am the more pleased with as it is sent me from gentlemen who belong to a body which I shall always honour, and where (I cannot speak it without a secret pride) my speculations have met with a very kind reception. It is usual for poets, upon the publishing of their works, to print before them such copies of verses as have been made in their praise. Not that you must imagine they are pleased with their own commendation, but because the elegant compositions of their friends should not be lost. I must make the same apology for the publication of the ensuing letter, in which I have suppressed no part of those praises that are given my speculations with too lavish and good-natured a hand; though my correspondents can witness for me, that at other times I have generally blotted out those parts in the letters which I have received from them. O.

‘Oxford, Nov. 25.

‘MR. SPECTATOR,—In spite of your invincible silence you have found out the method of being the most agreeable companion in the world: that kind of conversation which you hold with the town, has the good fortune of being always pleasing

to the men of taste and leisure, and never offensive to those of hurry and business. You are never heard but at what Horace calls *dextro tempore*, and have the happiness to observe the politic rule, which the same discerning author gave his friend when he enjoined him to deliver his book to Augustus:

"Si validus, si letus erit, si denique poscet."
Ep. xiii. Lib. 1. 3.

"———When vexing cares are fled,
When well, when merry, when he asks to read."
Croech.

You never begin to talk but when people are desirous to hear you; and I defy any one to be out of humour until you leave off. But I am led unawares into reflections foreign to the original design of this epistle; which was to let you know, that some unfeigned admirers of your inimitable papers, who could without any flattery, greet you with the salutation used to the eastern monarchs, *viz.* "O Spec, live for ever," have lately been under the same apprehensions with Mr. Philo-Spec; that the haste you have made to despatch your best friends, portends no long duration to your own short visage. We could not, indeed, find any just grounds for complaint in the method you took to dissolve that venerable body; no, the world was not worthy of your Divine. Will Honeycomb could not, with any reputation, live single any longer. It was high time for the Templar to turn himself to Coke; and Sir Roger's dying was the wisest thing he ever did in his life. It was, however, matter of great grief to us, to think that we were in danger of losing so elegant and valuable an entertainment. And we could not, without sorrow, reflect that we were likely to have nothing to interrupt our sips in the morning, and to suspend our coffee in mid-air, between our lips and right ear, but the ordinary trash of newspapers. We resolved, therefore, not to part with you so. But since, to make use of your own allusion, the cherries began now to crowd the market, and their season was almost over, we consulted our future enjoyments, and endeavoured to make the exquisite pleasure that delicious fruit gave our taste as lasting as we could, and by drying them protract their stay beyond its natural date. We own that thus they have not a flavour equal to that of their juicy bloom; but yet, under this disadvantage, they pique the palate, and become a salver better than any other fruit at its first appearance. To speak plain, there are a number of us who have begun your works afresh, and meet two nights in the week in order to give you a re-hearing. We never come together without drinking your health, and as seldom part without general expressions of thanks to you for our night's improvement. This we conceive to be a more useful institution than any other club whatever, not excepting even that of Ugly Faces. We

have one manifest advantage over that renowned society, with respect to Mr. Spectator's company. For though they may brag that you sometimes make your personal appearance amongst them, it is impossible they should ever get a word from you, whereas you are with us the reverse of what Phædria would have his mistress be in his rival's company, "present in your absence." We make you talk as much and as long as we please; and, let me tell you, you seldom hold your tongue for the whole evening. I promise myself you will look with an eye of favour upon a meeting which owes its original to a mutual emulation among its members, who shall show the most profound respect for your paper; not but we have a very great value for your person: and I dare say you can no where find four more sincere admirers, and humble servants, than

'T. F. G. S. J. T. E. T.'

No. 554.] *Friday, December 5, 1712.*

—Tentanda via est, qua me quoque possim
Tollere humo, victorque virum volitare per ora.
Virg. Georg. iii. 9.

New ways I must attempt my grovelling name
To raise aloft, and wing my flight to fame.—*Dryden.*

I AM obliged for the following essay, as well as for that which lays down rules out of Tully for pronunciation and action, to the ingenious author of a poem just published, entitled, An Ode to the Creator of the World, occasioned by the Fragments of Orpheus.

'It is a remark made, as I remember, by a celebrated French author, that no man ever pushed his capacity as far as it was able to extend. I shall not inquire whether this assertion be strictly true. It may suffice to say, that men of the greatest application and acquirements can look back upon many vacant spaces, and neglected parts of time, which have slipped away from them unemployed; and there is hardly any one considering person in the world but is apt to fancy with himself, at some time or other, that if his life were to begin again he could fill it up better.

'The mind is most provoked to cast on itself this ingenuous reproach, when the examples of such men are presented to it as have far outshot the generality of their species in learning, arts, or any valuable improvements.

'One of the most extensive and improved geniuses we have had any instance of in our own nation, or in any other, was that of Sir Francis Bacon, lord Verulam. This great man, by an extraordinary force of nature, compass of thought, and indefatigable study, had amassed to himself such stores of knowledge as we cannot look upon without amazement. His capacity seemed to have grasped all that was revealed in books before his time; and, not satisfied with that,

he began to strike out new tracts of science, too many to be travelled over by any one man in the compass of the longest life. These, therefore, he could only mark down, like imperfect coastings on maps, or supposed points of land to be farther discovered and ascertained by the industry of after ages, who should proceed upon his notices or conjectures.

“The excellent Mr. Boyle was the person who seems to have been designed by nature to succeed to the labours and inquiries of that extraordinary genius I have just mentioned. By innumerable experiments, he in a great measure filled up those plans and outlines of science which his predecessor had sketched out. His life was spent in the pursuit of nature through a great variety of forms and changes, and in the most rational as well as devout adoration of its divine Author.

“It would be impossible to name many persons who have extended their capacities as far as these two, in the studies they pursued; but my learned readers on this occasion will naturally turn their thoughts to a third,* who is yet living, and is likewise the glory of our own nation. The improvements which others had made in natural and mathematical knowledge have so vastly increased in his hands, as to afford at once a wonderful instance how great the capacity is of a human soul, and inexhaustible the subject of its inquiries; so true is that remark in holy writ, that “though a wise man seek to find out the works of God from the beginning to the end, yet shall he not be able to do it.”

“I cannot help mentioning here one character more of a different kind indeed from these, yet such a one as may serve to show the wonderful force of nature and of application, and is the most singular instance of an universal genius I have ever met with. The person I mean is Leonardo da Vinci, an Italian painter, descended from a noble family in Tuscany, about the beginning of the sixteenth† century. In his profession of history-painting he was so great a master, that some have affirmed he excelled all who went before him. It is certain that he raised the envy of Michael Angelo, who was his contemporary, and that from the study of his works Raphael himself learned his best manner of designing. He was a master too in sculpture and architecture, and skilful in anatomy, mathematics, and mechanics. The aqueduct from the river Adda to Milan is mentioned as a work of his contrivance. He had learned several languages, and was acquainted with the studies of history, philosophy, poetry, and music. Though it is not necessary to my present purpose, I cannot but take notice, that all who have writ of him mention likewise his perfec-

tion of body. The instances of his strength are almost incredible. He is described to have been a well-formed person, and a master of all genteel exercises. And lastly, we are told that his moral qualities were agreeable to his natural and intellectual endowments, and that he was of an honest and generous mind, adorned with great sweetness of manners. I might break off the account of him here, but I imagine it will be an entertainment to the curiosity of my readers, to find so remarkable a character distinguished by as remarkable a circumstance at his death. The fame of his works having gained him an universal esteem, he was invited to the court of France, where, after some time, he fell sick; and Francis the First coming to see him, he raised himself in his bed to acknowledge the honour which was done him by that visit. The king embraced him, and Leonardo, fainting in the same moment, expired in the arms of that great monarch.

“It is impossible to attend to such instances as these without being raised into a contemplation on the wonderful nature of a human mind, which is capable of such progressions in knowledge, and can contain such a variety of ideas without perplexity or confusion. How reasonable is it from hence to infer its divine original! And whilst we find unthinking matter endued with a natural power to last for ever, unless annihilated by Omnipotence, how absurd would it be to imagine that a being so much superior to it should not have the same privilege!

“At the same time it is very surprising, when we remove our thoughts from such instances as I have mentioned, to consider those we so frequently meet with in the accounts of barbarous nations among the Indians; where we find numbers of people who scarce show the first glimmerings of reason, and seem to have few ideas above those of sense and appetite. These, methinks, appear like large wilds, or vast uncultivated tracts of human nature; and, when we compare them with men of the most exalted characters in arts and learning, we find it difficult to believe that they are creatures of the same species.

“Some are of opinion that the souls of men are all naturally equal, and that the great disparity we so often observe, arises from the different organization or structure of the bodies to which they are united. But, whatever constitutes this first disparity, the next great difference which we find between men in their several acquirements is owing to accidental differences in their education, fortunes, or course of life. The soul is a kind of rough diamond, which requires art, labour, and time to polish it. For want of which many a good-natured genius is lost, or lies unfashioned, like a jewel in the mine.

“One of the strongest incitements to excel in such arts and accomplishments as are in

* Sir Isaac Newton.

† He was born in 1445, and died in 1520.

the highest esteem among men, is the natural passion which the mind of man has for glory; which though it may be faulty in the excess of it, ought by no means to be discouraged. Perhaps some moralists are too severe in beating down this principle, which seems to be a spring implanted by nature to give motion to all the latent powers of the soul, and is always observed to exert itself with the greatest force in the most generous dispositions. The men whose characters have shown the brightest among the ancient Romans, appear to have been strongly animated by this passion. Cicero, whose learning and services to his country are so well known, was inflamed by it to an extravagant degree, and warmly presses Luceius, who was composing a history of those times, to be very particular and zealous in relating the story of his consulship; and to execute it speedily, that he might have the pleasure of enjoying in his lifetime some part of the honour which he foresaw would be paid to his memory. This was the ambition of a great mind; but he is faulty in the degree of it, and cannot refrain from soliciting the historian upon this occasion to neglect the strict laws of history; and, in praising him, even to exceed the bounds of truth. The younger Pliny appears to have had the same passion for fame, but accompanied with greater chasteness and modesty. His ingenious manner of owning it to a friend, who had prompted him to undertake some great work, is exquisitely beautiful, and raises him to a certain grandeur above the imputation of vanity. "I must confess," says he, "that nothing employs my thoughts more than the desire I have of perpetuating my name; which in my opinion is a design worthy of a man, at least of such a one, who, being conscious of no guilt, is not afraid to be remembered by posterity."

"I think I ought not to conclude without interesting all my readers in the subject of this discourse: I shall therefore lay it down as a maxim, that though all are not capable of shining in learning or the politer arts, yet every one is capable of excelling in something. The soul has in this respect a certain vegetative power which cannot lie wholly idle. If it is not laid out and cultivated into a regular and beautiful garden, it will of itself shoot up in weeds or flowers of a wilder growth."

No. 555.] *Saturday, December 6, 1712.*

Resque quod non es —————
Pers. Sat. iv. 51.

Lay the fictitious character aside.

ALL the members of the imaginary society, which were described in my first papers, having disappeared one after another, it is high time for the Spectator himself to go off the stage. But now I am to

take my leave, I am under much greater anxiety than I have known for the work of any day since I undertook this province. It is much more difficult to converse with the world in a real than a personated character. That might pass for humour in the Spectator, which would look like arrogance in a writer who sets his name to his work. The fictitious person might condemn those who disapproved him, and extol his own performances without giving offence. He might assume a mock authority, without being looked upon as vain and conceited. The praises or censures of himself fall only upon the creature of his imagination; and, if any one finds fault with him, the author may reply with the philosopher of old, 'Thou dost but beat the case of Anaxarchus.' When I speak in my own private sentiments, I cannot but address myself to my readers in a more submissive manner, and with a just gratitude for the kind reception which they have given to these daily papers, which have been published for almost the space of two years last past.

I hope the apology I have made, as to the license allowable to a feigned character, may excuse any thing which has been said in these discourses of the Spectator and his works; but the imputation of the grossest vanity would still dwell upon me, if I did not give some account by what means I was enabled to keep up the spirit of so long and approved a performance. All the papers marked with a C, an L, an I, or an O, that is to say, all the papers which I have distinguished by any letter in the name of the muse Clio, were given me by the gentleman of whose assistance I formerly boasted in the preface and concluding leaf of my *Tatlers*. I am indeed much more proud of his long continued friendship, than I should be of the fame of being thought the author of any writings which he himself is capable of producing. I remember, when I finished *The Tender Husband*, I told him there was nothing I so ardently wished, as that we might some time or other publish a work, written by us both, which should bear the name of *The Monument*, in memory of our friendship. I heartily wish what I have done here was as honorary to that sacred name, as learning, wit, and humanity, render those pieces which I have taught the reader how to distinguish for his. When the play above-mentioned was last acted, there were so many applauded strokes in it which I had from the same hand, that I thought very meanly of myself that I have never publicly acknowledged them. After I have put other friends upon importuning him to publish dramatic as well as other writings he has by him, I shall end what I think I am obliged to say on this head, by giving my reader this hint for the better judging of my productions—that the best comment upon them would be an account when the patron to *The Tender Husband* was in England or abroad.

The reader will also find some papers which are marked with the letter X, for which he is obliged to the ingenious gentleman who diverted the town with the epilogue to *The Distressed Mother*. I might have owned these several papers with the free consent of these gentlemen, who did not write them with a design of being known for the authors. But, as a candid and sincere behaviour ought to be preferred to all other considerations, I would not let my heart reproach me with a consciousness of having acquired a praise which is not my right.

The other assistances which I have had have been conveyed by letter, sometimes by whole papers, and other times by short hints from unknown hands. I have not been able to trace favours of this kind with any certainty, but to the following names, which I place in the order wherein I received the obligation, though the first I am going to name can hardly be mentioned in a list wherein he would not deserve the precedence. The persons to whom I am to make these acknowledgments are, Mr. Henry Martyn, Mr. Pope, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Carey of New-college in Oxford, Mr. Tickell of Queen's in the same university, Mr. Parnelle, and Mr. Eusden, of Trinity in Cambridge. Thus, to speak in the language of my late friend, Sir Andrew Freeport, I have balanced my accounts with all my creditors for wit and learning. But as these excellent performances would not have seen the light without the means of this paper, I may still arrogate to myself the merit of their being communicated to the public.

I have nothing more to add, but, having swelled this work to five hundred and fifty-five papers, they will be disposed into seven volumes, four of which are already published, and the three others in the press. It will not be demanded of me why I now leave off, though I must own myself obliged to give an account to the town of my time hereafter; since I retire when their partiality to me is so great, that an edition of the former volumes of *Spectators*, of above nine thousand each book, is already sold off, and the tax on each half-sheet has brought into the stamp-office, one week with another, above 20*l.* a week, arising from the single paper, notwithstanding it at first reduced it to less than half the number that was usually printed before the tax was laid.

I humbly beseech the continuance of this inclination to favour what I may hereafter produce, and hope I have in my occurrences of life tasted so deeply of pain and sorrow, that I am proof against much more prosperous circumstances than any advantages to which my own industry can possibly exalt me. I am, my good-natured reader, your most obedient, most obliged humble servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

Vos valete et plaudite. Ter.
VOL. II. 43

The following letter regards an ingenious set of gentlemen, who have done me the honour to make me one of their society.

'Dec. 4, 1712.

'MR. SPECTATOR,—The academy of painting, lately established in London, having done you and themselves the honour to choose you one of their directors; that noble and lively art, which before was entitled to your regard as a *Spectator*, has an additional claim to you, and you seem to be under a double obligation to take some care of her interests.

'The honour of our country is also concerned in the matter I am going to lay before you. We (and perhaps other nations as well as we) have a national false humanity as well as a national vain glory; and, though we boast ourselves to excel all the world in things wherein we are outdone abroad, in other things we attribute to others a superiority which we ourselves possess. This is what is done, particularly in the art of portrait or face-painting.

'Painting is an art of a vast extent, too great by much for any mortal man to be in full possession of in all its parts; it is enough if any one succeed in painting faces, history, battles, landscapes, sea-pieces, fruit, flowers, or drolls, &c. Nay, no man ever was excellent in all the branches (though many in number,) of these several arts, for a distinct art I take upon me to call every one of those several kinds of painting.

'And as one man may be a good landscape painter, but unable to paint a face or a history tolerably well, and so of the rest; one nation may excel in some kinds of painting, and other kinds may thrive better in other climates.

'Italy may have the preference of all other nations for history painting; Holland for drolls and a neat finished manner of working; France for gay, jaunty, fluttering pictures; and England for portraits; but to give the honour of every one of these kinds of painting to any one of those nations on account of their excellence in any of these parts of it, is like adjudging the prize of heroic, dramatic, lyric, or burlesque poetry to him who has done well in any one of them.

'Where there are the greatest geniuses, and most helps and encouragements, it is reasonable to suppose an art will arrive to the greatest perfection: by this rule let us consider our own country with respect to face-painting. No nation in the world delights so much in having their own, or friends' or relations' pictures; whether from their national good-nature, or having a love to painting, and not being encouraged in the great article of religious pictures, which the purity of our worship refuses the free use of, or from whatever other cause. Our helps are not inferior to those of any other people, but rather they

are greater; for what the antique statues and bas-reliefs which Italy enjoys are to the history-painters, the beautiful and noble faces with which England is confessed to abound, are to face-painters; and, besides, we have the greatest number of the works of the best masters in that kind of any people, not without a competent number of those of the most excellent in every other part of painting. And for encouragement, the wealth and generosity of the English nation affords that in such a degree as artists have no reason to complain.

And accordingly, in fact, face-painting is no where so well performed as in England: I know not whether it has lain in your way to observe it, but I have, and pretend to be a tolerable judge. I have seen what is done abroad; and can assure you, that the honour of that branch of painting is justly due to us. I appeal to the judicious observers for the truth of what I assert. If foreigners have oftentimes, or even for the most part excelled our natives, it ought to be imputed to the advantages they have met with here, joined to their own ingenuity and industry; nor has any one nation distinguished themselves so as to raise an argument in favour of their country: but it is to be observed that neither French nor Italians, nor any one of either nation, notwithstanding all our prejudices in their favour, have, or ever had, for any considerable time, any character among us as face-painters.

This honour is due to our own country, and has been so for near an age: so that, instead of going to Italy, or elsewhere, one that designs for portrait-painting ought to study in England. Hither such should come from Holland, France, Italy, Germany, &c. as he that intends to practise any other kinds of painting should go to those parts where it is in the greatest perfection. It is said the blessed Virgin descended from heaven to sit to St. Luke. I dare venture to affirm that, if she should desire another Madonna to be painted by the life, she would come to England; and am of opinion that your present president, Sir Godfrey Kneller, from his improvement since he arrived in this kingdom, would perform that office better than any foreigner living. I am, with all possible respect, sir, your most humble and most obedient servant, &c.*

** The ingenious letter signed the Weather Glass, with several others, were received, but came too late.

POSTSCRIPT.

It had not come to my knowledge, when I left off the Spectator, that I owe several excellent sentiments and agreeable pieces in this work to Mr. Ince, of Gray's-Inn.*

R. STEELE.

* This paper concluded the seventh volume of the Spectator, as originally published. The intermediate time was filled up by our authors in the production of the Guardian.

No. 556.] *Friday, June 18, 1714.*

Qualis ubi in lucem coluber mala gramina pastus
Frigida, sub terra tumidum quem bruma tegebat;
Nunc positus novus exuviis, nitidusque juvenat,
Lubrica convolvit sublato pectore terga
Arduus ad solem, et linguis micat ore trisulcis.

Virg. Æn. ii. 471

So shines, renew'd in youth, the crested snake,
Who slept the winter in a thorny brake:
And casting off his slough, when spring returns,
Now looks aloft, and with new glory burns:
Restor'd with pois'nous herbs, his ardent sides
Reflect the sun, and rais'd on spires he rides;
High o'er the grass hissing he rolls along,
And brandishes by fits his forky tongue.—*Dryden.*

UPON laying down the office of Spectator. I acquainted the world with my design of electing a new club, and of opening my mouth in it after a most solemn manner. Both the election and the ceremony are now past; but not finding it so easy, as I at first imagined, to break through a fifty years' silence, I would not venture into the world under the character of a man who pretends to talk like other people, until I had arrived at a full freedom of speech.

I shall reserve for another time the history of such club or clubs of which I am now a talkative but unworthy member; and shall here give an account of this surprising change which has been produced in me, and which I look upon to be as remarkable an accident as any recorded in history, since that which happened to the son of Cæsus, after having been many years as much tongue-tied as myself.

Upon the first opening of my mouth, I made a speech, consisting of about half a dozen well-turned periods; but grew so very hoarse upon it, that for three days together, instead of finding the use of my tongue, I was afraid that I had quite lost it. Besides, the unusual extension of my muscles on this occasion made my face ache on both sides to such a degree, that nothing but an invincible resolution and perseverance could have prevented me from falling back to my monosyllables.

I afterwards made several essays towards speaking; and that I might not be startled at my own voice, which has happened to me more than once, I used to read aloud in my chamber, and have often stood in the middle of the street to call a coach, when I knew there was none within hearing.

When I was thus grown pretty well acquainted with my own voice, I laid hold of all opportunities to exert it. Not caring however to speak much by myself, and to draw upon me the whole attention of those I conversed with, I used for some time to walk every morning in the Mall, and talk in chorus with a parcel of Frenchmen. I found my modesty greatly relieved by the communicative temper of this nation, who are so very sociable as to think they are never better company than when they are all opening at the same time.

I then fancied I might receive great benefit from female conversation, and that I should have a convenience of talking with