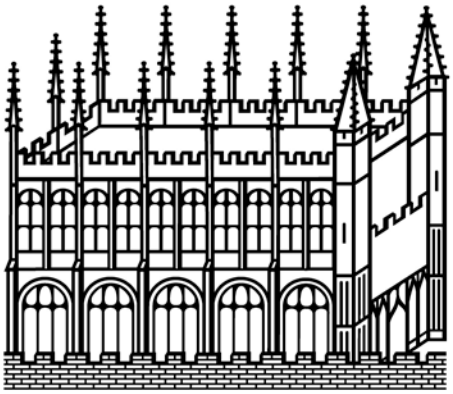

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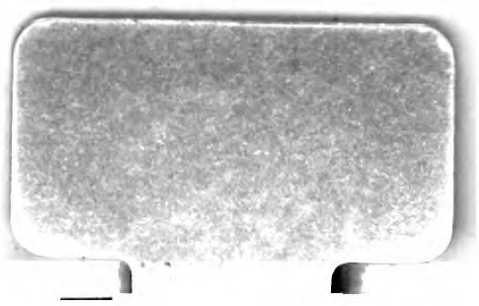

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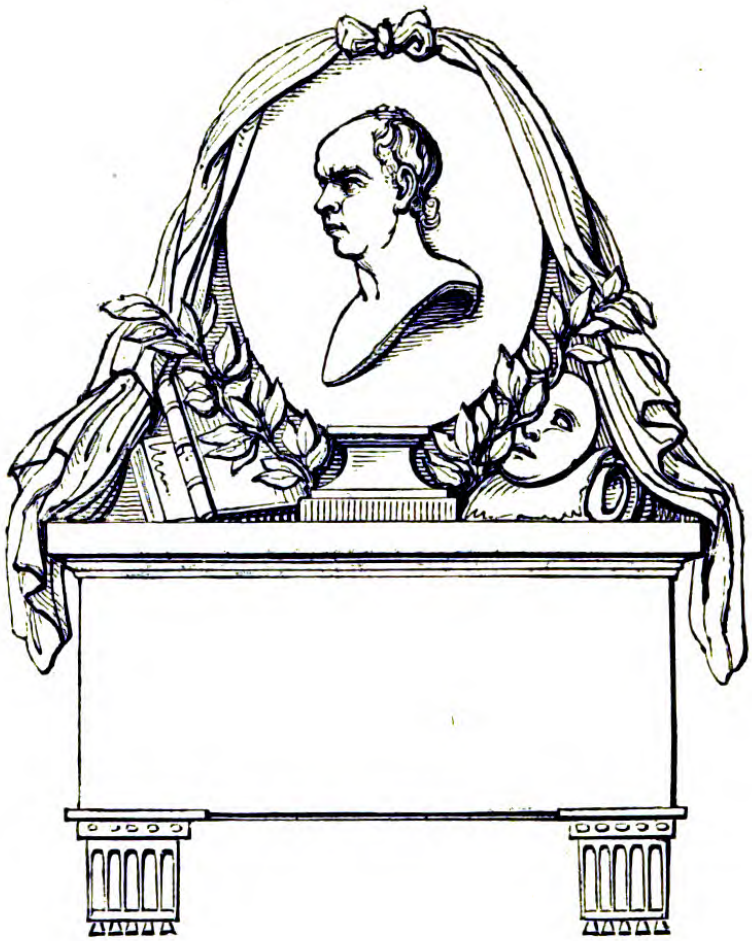

GOLDSMITH'S TOMB, WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

# THE WORKS

OF

# OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M.B.

WITH

A LIFE AND NOTES.

SIVE RISUS ESSENT MOVENDI, SIVE LACRYMÆ AFFECTUM POTENS,
AT LENIS DOMINATOR.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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# AN INQUIRY INTO THE PRESENT STATE

OF

# POLITE LEARNING.

# AN INQUIRY INTO THE PRESENT STATE

OF

# POLITE LEARNING.

[First printed in 1759.]

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*Εμοι τρος φιλοσοφους εστι φιλια· φρος μεν σοφιστας ἢ γραμματιστας, ὀυτε νυν εστι φιλια μητε ὑστερον ποτε γενοιτο.**

Tolerabile si Ædificia nostra diruerent ædificandi capaces.†

## INTRODUCTION.

It has been so long the practice to represent literature as declining, that every renewal of this complaint now comes with diminished influence. The public has been so often excited by a false alarm, that at present the nearer we approach the threatened period of decay, the more our security increases.

It will now probably be said, that, taking the decay of genius for granted, as I do, argues either resentment or partiality. The writer possessed of fame, it may be asserted, is willing to enjoy it without a rival, by lessening every competitor; or, if unsuccessful, he is desirous to turn upon others the contempt which is levelled at himself; and being convicted at the bar of literary justice, hopes for pardon by accusing every brother of the same profession.

* "I have a regard for philosophers; but I neither have, nor ever can have, any respect for sophists or pedantic grammarians."

† "It might be borne, if our public buildings were pulled down only by persons who have sufficient skill to restore them."

Sensible of this, I am at a loss where to find an apology for persisting to arraign the merit of the age; for joining in a cry which the judicious have long since left to be kept up by the vulgar; and for adopting the sentiments of the multitude, in a performance that at best can please only a few.

Complaints of our degeneracy in literature, as well as in morals, I own, have been frequently exhibited of late, but seem to be enforced more with the ardour of devious declamation than the calmness of deliberate inquiry. The dullest critic, who strives at a reputation for delicacy by shewing he cannot be pleased, may pathetically assure us, that our taste is upon the decline; may consign every modern performance to oblivion, and bequeath nothing to posterity, except the labours of our ancestors, or his own. Such general invective, however, conveys no instruction: all it teaches is, that the writer dislikes an age by which he is probably disregarded. The manner of being useful on the subject would be, to point out the symptoms, to investigate the causes and direct to the remedies, of the approaching decay. This is a subject hitherto unattempted in criticism,—perhaps it is the only subject in which criticism can be useful.

How far the writer is equal to such an undertaking, the reader must determine; yet perhaps his observations may be just, though his manner of expressing them should only serve as an example of the errors he undertakes to reprove.

Novelty, however, is not permitted to usurp the place of reason; it may attend, but shall not conduct the inquiry. But it should be observed, that the more original any performance is, the more it is liable to deviate; for cautious stupidity is always in the right.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE CAUSES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE DECLINE OF LEARNING.

If we consider the revolutions which have happened in the commonwealth of letters, survey the rapid progress of learning in one period of antiquity, or its amazing decline in another, we shall be almost induced to accuse nature of partiality; as if she had exhausted all her efforts in adorning one age, while she left the succeeding entirely neglected.

It is not to nature, however, but to ourselves alone, that this partiality must be ascribed; the seeds of excellence are sown in every age, and it is wholly owing to a wrong direction in the passions or pursuits of mankind, that they have not received the proper cultivation.

As, in the best regulated societies, the very laws which at first give the government solidity, may in the end contribute to its dissolution, so the efforts which might have promoted learning in its feeble commencement, may, if continued, retard its progress. The paths of science, which were at first intricate, because untrodden, may at last grow toilsome, because too much frequented. As learning advances, the candidates for its honours become more numerous, and the acquisition of fame more uncertain: the modest may despair of attaining it, and the opulent think it too precarious to pursue. Thus the task of supporting the honour of the times may at last devolve on indigence and effrontery, while learning must partake of the contempt of its professors.

To illustrate these assertions, it may be proper to take a slight review of the decline of ancient learning; to consider how far its depravation was owing to the impossibility of supporting continued perfection; in what respects it proceeded from voluntary corruption; and how far it was hastened on by accident. If modern learning be compared with ancient, in these different lights, a parallel between both, which has hitherto produced only vain dispute, may contribute to amusement, perhaps to instruction. We shall thus be enabled to perceive what period of antiquity the present age most resembles; whether we are making advances towards excellence, or retiring again to primeval obscurity: we shall thus be taught to acquiesce in those defects which it is impossible to prevent, and reject all faulty innovations, though offered under the specious titles of improvement.

Learning, when planted in any country, is transient and fading, nor does it flourish till slow gradations of improvement have naturalized it to the soil. It makes feeble advances, begins among the vulgar, and rises into reputation among the great. It cannot be established in a state at once, by introducing the learned of other countries; these may grace a court, but seldom enlighten a kingdom. Ptolemy Philadelphus, Constantine Porphyrogeneta, Alfred, or Charlemagne, might have invited learned foreigners into their dominions, but could not establish learning. While in

the radiance of royal favour, every art and science seemed to flourish; but when that was withdrawn, they quickly felt the rigours of a strange climate, and with exotic constitutions perished by neglect.

As the arts and sciences are slow in coming to maturity, it is requisite, in order to their perfection, that the state should be permanent which gives them reception. There are numberless attempts without success, and experiments without conclusion, between the first rudiments of an art, and its utmost perfection; between the outlines of a shadow, and the picture of an Apelles. Leisure is required to go through the tedious interval, to join the experience of predecessors to our own, or enlarge our views by building on the ruined attempts of former adventurers. All this may be performed in a society of long continuance, but if the kingdom be but of short duration, as was the case of Arabia, learning seems coeval, sympathizes with its political struggles, and is annihilated in its dissolution.

But permanence in a state is not alone sufficient; it is requisite, also, for this end, that it should be free. Naturalists assure us, that all animals are sagacious, in proportion as they are removed from the tyranny of others. In native liberty, the elephant is a citizen, and the beaver an architect; but whenever the tyrant man intrudes upon their community, their spirit is broken, they seem anxious only for safety, and their intellects suffer an equal diminution with their prosperity. The parallel will hold with regard to mankind. Fear naturally represses invention — benevolence, ambition; for, in a nation of slaves, as in the despotic governments of the East, to labour after fame is to be a candidate for danger.

To attain literary excellence also, it is requisite that the soil and climate should, as much as possible, conduce to happiness. The earth must supply man with the necessaries of life, before he has leisure or inclination to pursue more refined enjoyments. The climate, also, must be equally indulgent; for, in too warm a region, the mind is relaxed into languor, and, by the opposite excess, is chilled into torpid inactivity.

These are the principal advantages which tend to the improvement of learning; and all these were united in the states of Greece and Rome.

We must now examine what hastens, or prevents its decline.

Those who behold the phenomena of nature, and content themselves with the view, without inquiring into their causes, are perhaps wiser than is generally imagined. In this manner, our rude ancestors were acquainted with facts; and poetry, which helped the imagination and the memory, was thought the most proper vehicle for conveying their knowledge to posterity. It was the poet who harmonized the ungrateful accents of his native dialect, who lifted it above common conversation, and shaped its rude combinations into order. From him the orator formed a style; and, though poetry first rose out of prose, in turn it gave birth to every prosaic excellence. Musical period, concise expression, and delicacy of sentiment, were all excellencies derived from the poet; in short, he not only preceded, but formed the orator, philosopher, and historian.

When the observations of past ages were collected, philosophy next began to examine their causes. She had numberless facts from which to draw proper inferences, and poetry had taught her the strongest expression to enforce them. Thus, the Greek philosophers, for instance, exerted all their happy talents in the investigation of truth, and the production of beauty. They saw, that there was more excellence in captivating the judgment, than in raising a momentary astonishment. In their arts, they imitated only such parts of nature as might please in the representation; in the sciences, they cultivated such parts of knowledge as it was every man's duty to know. Thus, learning was encouraged, protected, honoured, and, in its turn, adorned, strengthened, and harmonized the community.

But, as the mind is vigorous and active, and experiment is dilatory and painful, the spirit of philosophy being excited, the reasoner, when destitute of experiment, had recourse to theory, and gave up what was useful for refinement.

Critics, sophists, grammarians, rhetoricians, and commentators, now began to figure in the literary commonwealth. In the dawn of science such are generally modest, and not entirely useless. Their performances serve to mark the progress of learning, though they seldom contribute to its improvement. But as nothing but speculation was required in making proficients in their respective departments, so neither the satire nor the contempt of the wise, though Socrates was of the number, nor the laws levelled at them by the state, though Cato was in the legislature, could pre-

vent their approaches.* Possessed of all the advantages of unfeeling dulness, laborious, insensible, and persevering, they still proceeded mending and mending every work of genius, or, to speak without irony, undermining all that was polite and useful. Libraries were loaded, but not enriched, with their labours, while the fatigues of reading their explanatory comments was tenfold that which might suffice for understanding the original; and their works effectually increased our application, by professing to remove it.

Against so obstinate and irrefragable an enemy, what could avail the unsupported sallies of genius, or the opposition of transitory resentment? In short, they conquered by persevering, claimed the right of dictating upon every work of taste, sentiment, or genius, and, at last, when destitute of other employment, like the supernumerary domestics of the great, made work for each other.

They now took upon them to teach poetry to those who wanted genius; and the power of disputing, to those who knew nothing of the subject in debate. It was observed how some of the most admired poets had copied nature. From these they collected dry rules, dignified with long names, and such were obtruded upon the public for their improvement. Common sense would be apt to suggest, that the art might be studied to more advantage, rather by imitation than precept. It might suggest that those rules were collected, not from nature, but a copy of nature, and would consequently give us still fainter resemblances of original beauty. It might still suggest, that explained wit makes but a feeble impression; that the observations of others are soon forgotten, those made by ourselves are permanent and useful. But it seems, understandings of every size were to be mechanically instructed in poetry. If the reader was too dull to relish the beauties of Virgil, the comment of Servius was ready to brighten his imagination; if Terence could not raise him to a smile, Evantius was at hand, with a long-winded scholium, to increase his titillation. Such rules are calculated to make blockheads talk, but all the lemmata of the Lyceum are unable to give him feeling.

But it would be endless to recount all the absurdities which were hatched in the schools of those specious idlers;

* Vide Sueton. Hist. Gram.

be it sufficient to say, that they increased as learning improved, but swarmed on its decline. It was then that every work of taste was buried in long comments, every useful subject in morals was distinguished away into casuistry, and doubt and subtlety characterized the learning of the age. Metrodorus, Valerius Probus, Aulus Gellius, Pedianus, Boethius, and an hundred others, to be acquainted with whom might shew much reading, and but little judgment; these, I say, made choice each of an author, and delivered all their load of learning on his back. Shame to our ancestors! many of their works have reached our times entire, while Tacitus himself has suffered mutilation.

In a word, the commonwealth of literature was at last wholly overrun by these studious triflers. Men of real genius were lost in the multitude, or, as in a world of fools it were folly to aim at being an only exception, obliged to conform to every prevailing absurdity of the times. Original productions seldom appeared, and learning, as if grown superannuated, bestowed all its panegyric upon the vigour of its youth, and turned encomiast upon its former achievements.

It is to these, then, that the depravation of anicent polite learning is principally to be ascribed. By them it was separated from common sense, and made the proper employment of speculative idlers. Men bred up among books, and seeing nature only by reflection, could do little, except hunt after perplexity and confusion. The public, therefore, with reason rejected learning, when thus rendered barren, though voluminous; for we may be assured, that the generality of mankind never lose a passion for letters, while they continue to be either amusing or useful.

It was such writers as these, that rendered learning unfit for uniting and strengthening civil society, or for promoting the views of ambition. True philosophy had kept the Grecian states cemented into one effective body, more than any law for that purpose; and the Etrurian philosophy, which prevailed in the first ages of Rome, inspired those patriot virtues which paved the way to universal empire. But by the labours of commentators, when philosophy became abstruse, or triflingly minute — when doubt was presented instead of knowledge — when the orator was taught to charm the multitude with the music of his periods, and

pronounced a declamation that might be sung as well as spoken, and often upon subjects wholly fictitious,—in such circumstances, learning was entirely unsuited to all the purposes of government, or the designs of the ambitious. As long as the sciences could influence the state, and its politics were strengthened by them, so long did the community give them countenance and protection. But the wiser part of mankind would not be imposed upon by unintelligible jargon, nor, like the knight in Pantagruel, swallow a chimera for a breakfast, though even cooked by Aristotle. As the philosopher grew useless in the state, he also became contemptible. In the times of Lucian, he was chiefly remarkable for his avarice, his impudence, and his beard.

Under the auspicious influence of genius, arts and sciences grew up together, and mutually illustrated each other. But when once pedants became lawgivers, the sciences began to want grace, and the polite arts solidity; these grew crabbed and sour, those meretricious and gaudy; the philosopher became disgustingly precise, and the poet, ever straining after grace, caught only finery.

These men also contributed to obstruct the progress of wisdom, by addicting their readers to one particular sect, or some favourite science. They generally carried on a petty traffic in some little creek: within that they busily plied about, and drove an insignificant trade; but never ventured out into the great ocean of knowledge, nor went beyond the bounds that chance, conceit, or laziness, had first prescribed their inquiries. Their disciples, instead of aiming at being originals themselves, became imitators of that merit alone which was constantly proposed for their admiration. In exercises of this kind, the most stupid are generally most successful; for there is not in nature a more imitative animal than a dunce.

Hence ancient learning may be distinguished into three periods. Its commencement, or the age of poets; its maturity, or the age of philosophers; and its decline, or the age of critics. In the poetical age, commentators were very few, but might have in some respects been useful. In its philosophical, their assistance must necessarily become obnoxious; yet, as if the nearer we approached perfection, the more we stood in need of their directions, in this period they began to grow numerous. But when polite learning was no more, then it was those literary lawgivers made the most

formidable appearance. *Corruptissima republica, plurimæ leges.* — TACIT.

But let us take a more distinct view of those ages of ignorance in which false refinement had involved mankind, and see how far they resemble our own.

## CHAPTER II.

### A VIEW OF THE OBSCURE AGES.

WHATEVER the skill of any country may be in sciences, it is from its excellence in polite learning alone, that it must expect a character from posterity. The poet and the historian are they who diffuse a lustre upon the age, and the philosopher scarcely acquires any applause, unless his character be introduced to the vulgar by their mediation.

The obscure ages, which succeeded the decline of the Roman empire, are a striking instance of the truth of this assertion. Whatever period of those ill-fated times we happen to turn to, we shall perceive more skill in the sciences among the professors of them, more abstruse and deeper inquiry into every philosophical subject, and a greater shew of subtlety and close reasoning, than in the most enlightened ages of all antiquity. But their writings were mere speculative amusements, and all their researches exhausted upon trifles. Unskilled in the arts of adorning their knowledge, or adapting it to common sense, their voluminous productions rest peacefully in our libraries, or, at best, are inquired after from motives of curiosity, not by the scholar, but the virtuoso.

I am not insensible, that several late French historians have exhibited the obscure ages in a very different light. They have represented them as utterly ignorant both of arts and sciences, buried in the profoundest darkness, or only illuminated with a feeble gleam, which, like an expiring taper, rose and sunk by intervals. Such assertions, however, though they serve to help out the declaimer, should be cautiously admitted by the historian. For instance, the tenth century is particularly distinguished by posterity with the appellation of obscure. Yet even in this, the reader's

memory may possibly suggest the names of some, whose works, still preserved, discover a most extensive erudition, though rendered almost useless by affectation and obscurity. A few of their names and writings may be mentioned, which will serve at once to confirm what I assert, and give the reader an idea of what kind of learning an age declining into obscurity chiefly chooses to cultivate.

About the tenth century flourished Leo the philosopher. We have seven volumes folio of his collections of laws, published at Paris, 1647. He wrote upon the art military, and understood also astronomy and judicial astrology. He was seven times more voluminous than Plato.

Solomon, the German, wrote a most elegant dictionary of the Latin tongue, still preserved in the university of Louvain; Pantaleon, in the lives of his illustrious countrymen, speaks of it in the warmest strains of rapture. Dictionary writing was at that time much in fashion.

Constantine Porphyrogeneta was a man universally skilled in the sciences. His tracts on the administration of an empire, on tactics, and on laws, were published some years since at Leyden. His court — for he was emperor of the East — was resorted to by the learned from all parts of the world.

Luitprandus was a most voluminous historian, and particularly famous for the history of his own times. The compliments paid him as a writer are said to exceed even his own voluminous productions. I cannot pass over one of a later date made him by a German divine: "Luitprandus nunquam Luitprando dissimilis."

Alfric composed several grammars and dictionaries still preserved among the curious.

Pope Sylvester the Second, wrote a treatise on the sphere, on arithmetic and geometry, published some years since at Paris.

Michael Psellus lived in this age, whose books in the sciences, I will not scruple to assert, contain more learning than those of any one of the earlier ages. His erudition was indeed amazing; and he was as voluminous as he was learned. The character given him by Allatius has, perhaps, more truth in it than will be granted by those who have seen none of his productions. There was, says he, no science with which he was unacquainted, none which he did not write something upon, and none which he did not leave

better than he found it. To mention his works would be endless. His commentaries on Aristotle alone amount to three folios.

Bertholdus Teutonicus, a very voluminous historian, was a politician, and wrote against the government under which he lived : but most of his writings, though not all, are lost.

Constantius Afer was a philosopher and physician. We have remaining but two volumes folio of his philological performances. However, the historian who prefixes the life of the author to his work, says, that he wrote many more, as he kept on writing during the course of a long life.

Lambertus published a universal history about this time, which has been printed at Frankfort in folio. A universal history in one folio! If he had consulted with his bookseller, he would have spun it out to ten at least; but Lambertus might have had too much modesty.

By this time the reader perceives the spirit of learning which at that time prevailed. The ignorance of the age was not owing to a dislike of knowledge, but a false standard of taste was erected, and a wrong direction given to philosophical inquiry. It was the fashion of the day to write dictionaries, commentaries, and compilations, and to evaporate in a folio the spirit that could scarcely have sufficed for an epigram. The most barbarous times had men of learning, if commentators, compilers, polemic divines, and intricate metaphysicians deserved the title.

I have mentioned but a very inconsiderable number of the writers in this age of obscurity. The multiplicity of their publications will at least equal those of any similar period of the most polite antiquity. As, therefore, the writers of those times are almost entirely forgotten, we may infer, that the number of publications alone will never secure any age whatsoever from oblivion. Nor can printing, contrary to what Mr Baumelle has remarked, prevent literary decline for the future, since it only increases the number of books without advancing their intrinsic merit.

## CHAPTER III.

### OF THE PRESENT STATE OF POLITE LEARNING IN ITALY.

FROM ancient, we are now come to modern times, and, in running over Europe, we shall find, that wherever learning has been cultivated, it has flourished by the same advantages as in Greece and Rome; and that, wherever it has declined, it sinks by the same causes of decay.

Dante, the poet of Italy, who wrote in the thirteenth century, was the first who attempted to bring learning from the cloister into the community, and paint human nature in a language adapted to modern manners. He addressed a barbarous people in a method suited to their apprehensions; united purgatory and the river Styx, St Peter and Virgil, heaven and hell, together, and shews a strange mixture of good sense and absurdity. The truth is, he owes most of his reputation to the obscurity of the times in which he lived. As in the land of Benin a man may pass for a prodigy of parts who can read, so in an age of barbarity, a small degree of excellence ensures success. But it was great merit in him to have lifted up the standard of nature, in spite of all the opposition and the persecution he received from contemporary criticism. To this standard every succeeding genius resorted; the germ of every art and science began to unfold; and to imitate nature was found to be the surest way of imitating antiquity. In a century or two after, modern Italy might justly boast of rivalling ancient Rome; equal in some branches of polite learning, and not far surpassed in others.

They soon, however, fell from emulating the wonders of antiquity into simple admiration. As if the word had been given, when Vida and Tasso wrote on the arts of poetry, the whole swarm of critics was up. The Speronis of the age attempted to be awkwardly merry; and the Virtuosi and the Nascotti sat upon the merits of every contemporary performance. After the age of Clement VII. the Italians seemed to think that there was more merit in praising or censuring well, than in writing well; almost every subsequent performance since their time being designed rather to shew the excellence of the critic's taste than his genius. One or

two poets, indeed, seem at present born to redeem the honour of their country. Metastasio has restored nature in all her simplicity, and Maffei is the first that has introduced a tragedy among his countrymen without a love plot. Perhaps the Samson of Milton, and the Athalia of Racine, might have been his guides in such an attempt. But two poets in an age are not sufficient to revive the splendour of decaying genius; nor should we consider them as the standard by which to characterize a nation. Our measures of literary reputation must be taken rather from that numerous class of men, who, placed above the vulgar, are yet beneath the great, and who confer fame on others without receiving any portion of it themselves.

In Italy, then, we shall nowhere find a stronger passion for the arts of taste, yet no country making more feeble efforts to promote either. The Virtuosi and Filosofi seem to have divided the Encyclopedia between each other. Both inviolably attached to their respective pursuits; and, from an opposition of character, each holding the other in the most sovereign contempt. The Virtuosi, professed critics of beauty in the works of art, judge of medals by the smell, and pictures by feeling: in statuary, hang over a fragment with the most ardent gaze of admiration: though wanting the head and the other extremities, if dug from a ruin, the *Torse* becomes inestimable. An unintelligible monument of Etruscan barbarity cannot be sufficiently prized; and any thing from Herculaneum excites rapture. When the intellectual taste is thus decayed, its relishes become false, and, like that of sense, nothing will satisfy but what is best suited to feed the disease.

Poetry is no longer among them an imitation of what we see, but of what a visionary might wish. The zephyr breathes the most exquisite perfume, the trees wear eternal verdure; fawns, and dryads, and hamadryads, stand ready to fan the sultry shepherdess, who has forgot, indeed, the prettiness with which Guarini's shepherdesses have been reproached, but is so simple and innocent as often to have no meaning. Happy country, where the pastoral age begins to revive!—where the wits even of Rome, are united into a rural group of nymphs and swains, under the appellation of modern Arcadians!—where, in the midst of porticos, processions, and cavalcades, abbés turned shepherds, and

shepherdesses without sheep, indulge their innocent *divertimenti!**

The Filosofi are entirely different from the former. As those pretend to have got their knowledge from conversing with the living and polite, so these boast of having theirs from books and study. Bred up all their lives in colleges, they have there learned to think in track, servilely to follow the leader of their sect, and only to adopt such opinions as their universities, or the inquisition, are pleased to allow. By these means, they are behind the rest of Europe in several modern improvements; afraid to think for themselves; and their universities seldom admit opinions as true, till universally received among the rest of mankind. In short, were I to personize my ideas of learning in this country, I would represent it in the tawdry habits of the stage, or else in the more homely guise of bearded school philosophy.

## CHAPTER IV.

### OF POLITE LEARNING IN GERMANY.

If we examine the state of learning in Germany, we shall find that the Germans early discovered a passion for polite literature; but unhappily, like conquerors, who, invading the dominions of others, leave their own to desolation, instead of studying the German tongue, they continue to write in Latin. Thus, while they cultivated an obsolete language, and vainly laboured to apply it to modern manners, they neglected their own.

At the same time also, they began at the wrong end, I mean by being commentators; and though they have given many instances of their industry, they have scarcely afforded any of genius. If criticism could have improved the taste of a people, the Germans would have been the most polite nation alive. We shall nowhere behold the learned wear a more important appearance than here; nowhere more dignified

* See an account of this academy in the Monthly Review, vol. xviii. p. 249, in a criticism on M. de la Baume Desdossat's *L'Arcadie Moderne, ou les Bergeries Savantes*, Pastorale Heroïque.—B.

with professorships, or dressed out in the fopperies of scholastic finery. However, they seem to earn all the honour of this kind which they enjoy. Their assiduity is unparalleled, and did they employ half those hours on study which they bestow on reading, we might be induced to pity as well as praise their painful pre-eminence. But guilty of a fault too common to great readers, they write through volumes, while they do not think through a page. Never fatigued themselves, they think the reader can never be weary; so they drone on, saying all that can be said on the subject, not selecting what may be advanced to the purpose. Were angels to write books, they would never write folios.

But let the Germans have their due: if they are dull, no nation alive assumes a more laudable solemnity, or better understands all the decorums of stupidity. Let the discourse of a professor run on ever so heavily, it cannot be irksome to his dozing pupils, who frequently lend him sympathetic nods of approbation. I have sometimes attended their disputes at graduation. On this occasion they often dispense with their gravity, and seem really all alive. The disputes are managed between the followers of Cartesius, whose exploded system they continue to call the new philosophy, and those of Aristotle. Though both parties are in the wrong, they argue with an obstinacy worthy the cause of truth; Nego, Probo, and Distinguo, grow loud; the disputants become warm, the moderator cannot be heard, the audience take part in the debate, till at last the whole hall buzzes with sophistry and error.

There are, it is true, several societies in this country, which are chiefly calculated to promote knowledge. His late majesty, as elector of Hanover, has established one at Gottingen, at an expense of not less than a hundred thousand pounds. This university has already pickled monsters, and dissected live puppies without number. Their transactions have been published in the learned world, at proper intervals, since their institution, and will, it is hoped, one day give them just reputation. But had the fourth part of the immense sum above-mentioned been given in proper rewards to genius, in some neighbouring countries, it would have rendered the name of the donor immortal, and added to the real interests of society.

Yet it ought to be observed, that, of late, learning has been patronized here by a prince, who, in the humblest

station, would have been the first of mankind. The society established by the King of Prussia at Berlin, is one of the finest literary institutions that any age or nation has produced. This academy comprehends all the sciences under four different classes; and although the object of each is different, and admits of being separately treated, yet these classes mutually influence the progress of each other, and concur in the same general design. Experimental philosophy, mathematics, metaphysics, and polite literature, are here carried on together. The members are not collected from among the students of some obscure seminary, or the wits of a metropolis, but chosen from all the literati of Europe, supported by the bounty, and ornamented by the productions, of their royal founder. We can easily discern, how much such an institution excels any other now subsisting. One fundamental error among societies of this kind, is their addicting themselves to one branch of science, or some particular part of polite learning. Thus, in Germany, there are nowhere so many establishments of this nature; but as they generally profess the promotion of natural or medical knowledge, he who reads their Acta will only find an obscure farago of experiment, most frequently terminated by no resulting phenomena. To make experiments, is, I own, the only way to promote natural knowledge; but to treasure up every unsuccessful inquiry into nature, or to communicate every experiment without conclusion, is not to promote science, but to oppress it. Had the members of these societies enlarged their plans, and taken in art as well as science, one part of knowledge would have repressed any faulty luxuriance in the other, and all would have materially assisted each other's promotion. Besides, the society which, with a contempt of all collateral assistance, admits of members skilled in one science only, whatever their diligence or labour may be, will lose much time in the discovery of such truths as are well known already to the learned in a different line; consequently, their progress must be slow in gaining a proper eminence from which to view their subject, and their strength will be exhausted in attaining the station whence they should have set out. With regard to the Royal Society of London, the greatest, and perhaps the oldest institution of the kind, had it widened the basis of its institution, though they might not have propagated more discoveries, they would probably have delivered them in a more pleasing and compendious form.

They would have been free from the contempt of the ill-natured, and the raillery of the wit, for which, even candour must allow, there is but too much foundation. But the Berlin academy is subject to none of all these inconveniences ; but every one of its individuals is in a capacity of deriving more from the common stock than he contributes to it, while each academician serves as a check upon the rest of his fellows.

Yet, very probably, even this fine institution will soon decay. As it rose, so it will decline with its great encourager. The society, if I may so speak, is artificially supported. The introduction of foreigners of learning was right ; but in adopting a foreign language also, I mean the French, in which all the transactions are to be published, and questions debated, in this there was an error. As I have already hinted, the language of the natives of every country should be also the language of its polite learning. To figure in polite learning, every country should make their own language from their own manners ; nor will they ever succeed by introducing that of another, which has been formed from manners which are different. Besides, any academy composed of foreigners must still be recruited from abroad, unless all the natives of the country to which it belongs, are in a capacity of becoming candidates for its honours or rewards. While France, therefore, continues to supply Berlin, polite learning will flourish : but when royal favour is withdrawn, learning will return to its natural country.

## CHAPTER VI.

### OF POLITE LEARNING IN HOLLAND, AND SOME OTHER COUNTRIES OF EUROPE.

Holland, at first view, appears to have some pretensions to polite learning. It may be regarded as the great emporium, not less of literature than of every other commodity. Here, though destitute of what may be properly called a language of their own, all the languages are understood, cultivated, and spoken. All useful inventions in arts, and new discoveries in science, are published here almost as soon as at the places which first produced them. Its individuals have the same faults, however, with the Germans,

of making more use of their memory than their judgment. The chief employment of their literati is to criticize, or answer the new performances which appear elsewhere.

A dearth of wit in France or England naturally produces a scarcity in Holland. What Ovid says of Echo may be applied here: "Nec loqui prius ipsa didicit nec reticere loquenti." They wait till something new comes out from others; examine its merits, and reject it, or make it reverberate through the rest of Europe.

After all, I know not whether they should be allowed any national character for polite learning. All their taste is derived to them from neighbouring nations, and that in a language not their own. They somewhat resemble their brokers, who trade for immense sums without having any capital.

The other countries of Europe may be considered as immersed in ignorance, or making but feeble efforts to rise. Spain has long fallen from amazing Europe with her wit, to amusing them with the greatness of her catholic credulity. Rome considers her as the most favourite of all her children, and school divinity still reigns there in triumph. In spite of all attempts of the Marquis D'Ensanada, who saw with regret the barbarity of his countrymen, and bravely offered to oppose it by introducing new systems of learning, and suppressing the seminaries of monastic ignorance—in spite of the ingenuity of Padré Feio, whose book of vulgar errors so finely exposes the monkish stupidity of the times,—the religious have prevailed. Ensanada has been banished, and now lives in exile. Feio has incurred the hatred and contempt of every bigot whose errors he has attempted to oppose, and feels, no doubt, the unremitting displeasure of the priesthood. Persecution is a tribute the great must ever pay for pre-eminence.

It is a little extraordinary, however, how Spain, whose genius is naturally fine, should be so much behind the rest of Europe in this particular; or why school divinity should hold its ground there for nearly six hundred years. The reason must be, that philosophical opinions, which are otherwise transient, acquire stability in proportion as they are connected with the laws of the country; and philosophy and law have nowhere been so closely united as here.

Sweden has of late made some attempts in polite learning in its own language. Count Tessin's instructions to the prince, his pupil, are no bad beginning. If the Muses can

fix their residence so far northward, perhaps no country bids so fair for their reception. They have, I am told, a language rude but energetic; if so, it will bear a polish. They have also a jealous sense of liberty, and that strength of thinking peculiar to northern climates, without its attendant ferocity. They will certainly in time produce somewhat great, if their intestine divisions do not unhappily prevent them.

The history of polite learning in Denmark may be comprised in the life of one single man: it rose and fell with the late famous Baron Holberg. This was, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary personages that has done honour to the present century. His being the son of a private sentinel did not abate the ardour of his ambition, for he learned to read though without a master. Upon the death of his father, being left entirely destitute, he was involved in all that distress which is common among the poor, and of which the great have scarcely any idea. However, though only a boy of nine years old, he still persisted in pursuing his studies, travelled about from school to school, and begged his learning and his bread. When at the age of seventeen, instead of applying himself to any of the lower occupations, which seem best adapted to such circumstances, he was resolved to travel for improvement from Norway, the place of his birth, to Copenhagen, the capital city of Denmark. He lived there by teaching French, at the same time avoiding no opportunity of improvement that his scanty funds could permit. But his ambition was not to be restrained, or his thirst of knowledge satisfied, until he had seen the world. Without money, recommendations, or friends, he undertook to set out upon his travels, and make the tour of Europe on foot. A good voice, and a trifling skill in music, were the only finances he had to support an undertaking so extensive; so he travelled by day, and at night sung at the doors of peasants' houses to get himself a lodging. In this manner, while yet very young, Holberg passed through France, Germany, and Holland; and coming over to England, took up his residence for two years in the university of Oxford. Here he subsisted by teaching French and music, and wrote his universal history, his earliest, but worst performance. Furnished with all the learning of Europe, he at last thought proper to return to Copenhagen, where his ingenious productions quickly gained him that favour he deserved. He composed not less than eighteen

comedies. Those in his own language are said to excel, and those which are translated into French have peculiar merit. He was honoured with nobility, and enriched by the bounty of the king; so that a life begun in contempt and penury, ended in opulence and esteem.

Thus we see in what a low state polite learning is in the countries I have mentioned,—either past its prime, or not yet arrived at maturity. And though the sketch I have drawn be general, yet it was for the most part taken on the spot. I am sensible, however, of the impropriety of national reflection: and did not truth bias me more than inclination in this particular, I should, instead of the account already given, have presented the reader with a panegyric on many of the individuals of every country, whose merits deserve the warmest strains of praise. Apostol Zeno, Algarotti, Goldoni, Muratori, and Stay, in Italy—Haller, Klopstock, and Rabner, in Germany—Muschenbrook, and Gaubius,* in Holland,—all deserve the highest applause. Men like these, united by one bond, pursuing one design, spend their labour and their lives in making their fellow-creatures happy, and in repairing the breaches caused by ambition. In this light, the meanest philosopher, though all his possessions are his lamp or his cell, is more truly valuable than he whose name echoes to the shout of the million, and who stands in all the glare of admiration. In this light, though poverty and contemptuous neglect are all the wages of his good will from mankind, yet the rectitude of his intention is an ample recompense; and self-applause for the present, and the alluring prospect of fame for futurity, reward his labours. The perspective of life brightens upon us, when terminated by an object so charming. Every intermediate image of want, banishment, or sorrow, receives a lustre from its distant influence. With this in view, the patriot, philosopher, and poet, have often looked with calmness on disgrace and famine, and rested on their straw with cheerful serenity. Even the last terrors of departing nature abate of their severity, and look kindly on him who considers his sufferings as a passport to immortality, and lays his sorrows on the bed of fame.

* It was under him that Goldsmith studied chemistry.—B.

## CHAPTER VI.

### OF POLITE LEARNING IN FRANCE.

We have hitherto seen, that wherever the poet was permitted to begin by improving his native language, polite learning flourished: but where the critic undertook the same task, it has never risen to any degree of perfection. Let us now examine the merits of modern learning in France and England; where, though it may be on the decline, yet it is still capable of retrieving much of its former splendour. In other places learning has not yet been planted, or has suffered a total decay. To attempt amendment there, would be only like the application of remedies to an insensible or a mortified part; but here there is still life, and there is hope. And indeed the French themselves are so far from giving into any despondence of this kind, that, on the contrary, they admire the progress they are daily making in every science. That levity, for which we are apt to despise this nation, is probably the principal source of their happiness. An agreeable oblivion of past pleasures, a freedom from solicitude about future ones, and a poignant zest of every present enjoyment, if they be not philosophy, are at least excellent substitutes. By this they are taught to regard the period in which they live with admiration. The present manners, and the present conversation, surpass all that preceded. A similar enthusiasm as strongly tinctures their learning and their taste. While we, with a despondence characteristic of our nature, are for removing back British excellence to the reign of Queen Elizabeth, our most happy rivals of the Continent cry up the writers of the present times with rapture, and regard the age of Louis XV. as the true Augustan age of France.

The truth is, their present writers have not fallen so far short of the merits of their ancestors as ours have done. That self-sufficiency now mentioned, may have been of service to them in this particular. By fancying themselves superior to their ancestors, they have been encouraged to enter the lists with confidence; and by not being dazzled at

the splendour of another's reputation, have sometimes had sagacity to mark out an unbeaten path to fame for themselves.

Other causes also may be assigned, that their second growth of genius is still more vigorous than ours. Their encouragements to merit are more skilfully directed; the link of patronage and learning still continues unbroken. The French nobility have certainly a most pleasing way of satisfying the vanity of an author, without indulging his avarice. A man of literary merit is sure of being caressed by the great, though seldom enriched. His pension from the crown just supplies half a competence, and the sale of his labours makes some small addition to his circumstances. Thus the author leads a life of splendid poverty, and seldom becomes wealthy or indolent enough to discontinue an exertion of those abilities by which he rose. With the English it is different. Our writers of rising merit are generally neglected, while the few of an established reputation are overpaid by luxurious affluence. The young encounter every hardship which generally attends upon aspiring indigence; the old enjoy the vulgar, and perhaps the more prudent satisfaction, of putting riches in competition with fame. Those are often seen to spend their youth in want and obscurity; these are sometimes found to lead an old age of indolence and avarice. But such treatment must naturally be expected from Englishmen, whose national character it is to be slow and cautious in making friends, but violent in friendships once contracted. The English nobility, in short, are often known to give greater rewards to genius than the French, who, however, are much more judicious in the application of their empty favours.

The fair sex in France have also not a little contributed to prevent the decline of taste and literature, by expecting such qualifications in their admirers. A man of fashion at Paris, however contemptible we may think him here, must be acquainted with the reigning modes of philosophy as well as of dress, to be able to entertain his mistress agreeably. The sprightly pedants are not to be caught by dumb show, by the squeeze of the hand, or the ogling of a broad eye; but must be pursued at once through all the labyrinths of the Newtonian system, or the metaphysics of Locke. I have seen as bright a circle of beauty at the chemical

lectures of Rouelle as gracing the court of Versailles. And indeed wisdom never appears so charming, as when graced and protected by beauty.

To these advantages may be added the reception of their language in the different courts of Europe. An author who excels is sure of having all the polite for admirers, and is encouraged to write, by the pleasing expectation of universal fame. Add to this, that those countries who can make nothing good from their own language, have lately begun to write in this, some of whose productions contribute to support the present literary reputation of France.

There are, therefore, many among the French who do honour to the present age, and whose writings will be transmitted to posterity with an ample share of fame. Some of the most celebrated are as follow :—

Voltaire, whose voluminous yet spirited productions are too well known to require an eulogy. Does he not resemble the champion mentioned by Xenophon, of great reputation in all the gymnastic exercises united, but inferior to each champion singly, who excels only in one ?

Montesquieu, a name equally deserving fame with the former. The Spirit of Laws is an instance how much genius is able to lead learning. His system has been adopted by the literati ; and yet, is it not possible for opinions equally plausible to be formed upon opposite principles, if a genius like his could be found to attempt such an undertaking ? * He seems more a poet than a philosopher.

Rousseau of Geneva, a professed man-hater, or, more properly speaking, a philosopher enraged with one half of mankind, because they unavoidably make the other half unhappy. Such sentiments are generally the result of much good-nature and little experience.

Pyron, an author possessed of as much wit as any man alive, yet with as little prudence to turn it to his own advantage. A comedy of his, called La Metromanie, is the best theatrical production that has appeared of late in Europe. But I know not whether I should most commend his genius or censure his obscenity. His ode à Priape, has justly excluded him from a place in the academy of Belles Lettres. However, the good-natured Montesquieu, by his interest,

* M. Linguet, a writer of some talent, has in fact attempted this in his *Theory of Civil Laws*, but not very successfully. — B.

procured the starving bard a trifling pension. His own epitaph was all the revenge he took upon the academy for being repulsed.

> Cy git Pyron ; qui ne fut jamais rien,
> Pas même Academicien.

Crebillon, junior, a writer of real merit, but guilty of the same indelicate faults with the former. Wit employed in dressing up obscenity, is like the art used in painting a corpse ; it may be thus rendered tolerable to one sense, but fails not quickly to offend some other.

Gresset is agreeable and easy. His comedy called the Mechant, and a humorous poem entitled Vert-Vert, have original merit. He was bred a Jesuit ; but his wit procured his dismission from the society. This last work particularly could expect no pardon from the Convent, being a satire against nunneries !

D'Alembert has united an extensive skill in scientifical learning with the most refined taste for the polite arts. His excellence in both has procured him a seat in each academy.

Diderot is an elegant writer and subtile reasoner. He is the supposed author of the famous Thesis which the Abbé Prade sustained before the doctors of the Sorbonne. It was levelled against Christianity, and the Sorbonne too hastily gave it their sanction. They perceived its purport, however, when it was too late. The college was brought into some contempt, and the Abbé obliged to take refuge at the court of Berlin.

The Marquis D'Argens attempts to add the character of a philosopher to the vices of a debauchee.

The catalogue might be increased with several other authors of merit, such as Marivaux, Le Franc, Saint Foix, Destouches, and Modonville ; but let it suffice to say, that by these the character of the present age is tolerably supported. Though their poets seldom rise to fine enthusiasm, they never sink into absurdity ; though they fail to astonish, they are generally possessed of talents to please.

The age of Louis XIV, notwithstanding these respectable names, is still vastly superior. For, beside the general tendency of critical corruption, which shall be spoken of by and by, there are other symptoms which indicate a decline.

There is, for instance, a fondness of scepticism, which runs through the works of some of their most applauded writers, and which the numerous class of their imitators have contributed to diffuse. Nothing can be a more certain sign that genius is in the wane, than its being obliged to fly to paradox for support, and attempting to be erroneously agreeable. A man who, with all the impotence of wit, and all the eager desires of infidelity, writes against the religion of his country, may raise doubts, but will never give conviction; all he can do is to render society less happy than he found it. It was a good manner which the father of the late poet Saint Foix, took to reclaim his son from this juvenile error. The young poet had shut himself up for some time in his study; and his father, willing to know what had engaged his attention so closely, upon entering, found him busied in drawing up a new system of religion, and endeavouring to shew the absurdity of that already established. The old man knew by experience, that it was useless to endeavour to convince a vain young man by right reason, so only desired his company up stairs. When come into the father's apartment, he takes his son by the hand, and, drawing back a curtain at one end of the room, discovered a crucifix exquisitely painted. "My son," says he, "you desire to change the religion of your country,—behold the fate of a reformer." The truth is, vanity is more apt to misguide men than false reasoning. As some would rather be conspicuous in a mob, than unnoticed even in a privy-council, so others choose rather to be foremost in the retinue of error, than follow in the train of truth. What influence the conduct of such writers may have on the morals of a people, is not my business here to determine. Certain I am, that it has a manifest tendency to subvert the literary merits of the country in view. The change of religion in every nation has hitherto produced barbarism and ignorance; and such will be probably its consequences in every future period. For when the laws and opinions of society are made to clash, harmony is dissolved, and all the parts of peace unavoidably crushed in the encounter.

The writers of this country have also of late fallen into a method of considering every part of art and science as arising from simple principles. The success of Montesquieu, and one or two more, has induced all the subordinate ranks

of genius into vicious imitation. To this end they turn to our view that side of the subject which contributes to support their hypothesis, while the objections are generally passed over in silence. Thus an universal system rises from a partial representation of the question, a whole is concluded from a part, a book appears entirely new, and the fancy-built fabric is styled for a short time very ingenious. In this manner, we have seen of late almost every subject in morals, natural history, politics, economy, and commerce treated. Subjects naturally proceeding on many principles, and some even opposite to each other, are all taught to proceed along the line of systematic simplicity, and continue, like other agreeable falsehoods, extremely pleasing till they are detected.

I must still add another fault, of a nature somewhat similar to the former. As those above mentioned are for contracting a single science into system, so those I am going to speak of, are for drawing up a system of all the sciences united. Such undertakings as these are carried on by different writers cemented into one body, and concurring in the same design by the mediation of a bookseller. From these inauspicious combinations proceed those monsters of learning, the Trevoux, Encyclopédies, and Bibliotheques of the age. In making these, men of every rank in literature are employed, wits and dunces contribute their share, and Diderot, as well as Desmaretz, are candidates for oblivion. The genius of the first supplies the gale of favour, and the latter adds the useful ballast of stupidity. By such means, the enormous mass heavily makes its way among the public, and, to borrow a bookseller's phrase, the whole impression moves off. These great collections of learning may serve to make us inwardly repine at our own ignorance; may serve, when gilt and lettered, to adorn the lower shelves of a regular library; but wo to the reader who, not daunted at the immense distance between one great pasteboard and the other, opens the volume, and explores his way through a region so extensive, but barren of entertainment. No unexpected landscape there to delight the imagination; no diversity of prospect to cheat the painful journey. He sees the wide extended desert lie before him: what is past only increases his terror of what is to come. His course is not half finished; he looks behind him with affright, and forward

with despair. Perseverance is at last overcome, and a night of oblivion lends its friendly aid to terminate the perplexity.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### OF LEARNING IN GREAT BRITAIN.

To acquire a character for learning among the English at present it is necessary to know much more than is either important or useful. It seems the spirit of the times for men here to exhaust their natural sagacity in exploring the intricacies of another man's thought, and thus never to have leisure to think for themselves. Others have carried on learning from that stage, where the good sense of our ancestors have thought it too minute, or too speculative, to instruct or amuse. By the industry of such, the sciences, which in themselves are easy of access, affright the learner with the severity of their appearance. He sees them surrounded with speculation and subtlety, placed there by their professors as if with a view of deterring his approach. Hence it happens, that the generality of readers fly from the scholar to the compiler, who offers them a more safe and speedy conveyance.

From this fault, also, arises that mutual contempt between the scholar and the man of the world, of which every day's experience furnisheth instances.

The man of taste, however, stands neutral in this controversy. He seems placed in a middle station, between the world and the cell, between learning and common sense. He teaches the vulgar on what part of a character to lay the emphasis of praise, and the scholar where to point his application so as to deserve it. By his means, even the philosopher acquires popular applause, and all that are truly great the admiration of posterity. By means of polite learning alone, the patriot and the hero, the man who praiseth virtue and he who practises it, who fights successfully for his country or who dies in its defence, becomes immortal. But this taste now seems cultivated with less ardour than formerly, and consequently the public must one day expect to see the advantages arising from it, and the exquisite pleasures it affords our leisure, entirely annihilated.

For if, as it should seem, the rewards of genius are improperly directed; if those who are capable of supporting the honour of the times by their writings prefer opulence to fame; if the stage should be shut to writers of merit, and open only to interest or intrigue; if such should happen to be the vile complexion of the times, (and that it is nearly so we shall shortly see;) the very virtue of the age will be forgotten by posterity, and nothing remembered, except our filling a chasm in the registers of time, or having served to continue the species.

## CHAPTER IX.

### OF REWARDING GENIUS IN ENGLAND.

THERE is nothing authors are more apt to lament, than want of encouragement from the age. Whatever their differences in other respects, they are all ready to unite in this complaint, and each indirectly offers himself as an instance of the truth of his assertion.

The beneficed divine, whose wants are only imaginary, expostulates as bitterly as the poorest author. Should interest or good fortune advance the divine to a bishopric, or the poor son of Parnassus into that place which the other has resigned, both are authors no longer: the one goes to prayers once a-day, kneels upon cushions of velvet, and thanks gracious Heaven for having made the circumstances of all mankind so extremely happy; the other battens on all the delicacies of life, enjoys his wife and his easy chair, and sometimes, for the sake of conversation, deplores the luxury of these degenerate days.

All encouragements to merit are therefore misapplied, which make the author too rich to continue his profession. There can be nothing more just than the old observation, that authors, like running horses, should be fed, but not fattened. If we would continue them in our service, we should reward them with a little money and a great deal of praise, still keeping their avarice subservient to their ambition. Not that I think a writer incapable of filling an employment with dignity: I would only insinuate, that when made a bishop or statesman, he will continue to please

us as a writer no longer; as, to resume a former allusion, the running horse, when fattened, will still be fit for very useful purposes, though unqualified for a courser.

No nation gives greater encouragements to learning than we do; yet, at the same time, none are so injudicious in the application. We seem to confer them with the same view that statesmen have been known to grant employments at court, rather as bribes to silence than incentives to emulation.

Upon this principle, all our magnificent endowments of colleges are erroneous; and, at best, more frequently enrich the prudent than reward the ingenious. A lad, whose passions are not strong enough in youth to mislead him from that path of science which his tutors, and not his inclinations, have chalked out, by four or five years' perseverance, may probably obtain every advantage and honour his college can bestow. I forget whether the simile has been used before, but I would compare the man, whose youth has been thus passed in the tranquillity of dispassionate prudence, to liquors which never ferment, and consquently, continue always muddy. Passions may raise a commotion in the youthful breast, but they disturb only to refine it. However this be, mean talents are often rewarded in colleges with an easy subsistence. The candidates for preferments of this kind, often regard their admission as a patent for future indolence; so that a life begun in studious labour, is often continued in luxurious indolence.

Among the universities abroad, I have ever observed their riches and their learning in a reciprocal proportion, their stupidity and pride increasing with their opulence. Happening once, in conversation with Gaubius of Leyden, to mention the college of Edinburgh, he began by complaining, that all the English students which formerly came to his university, now went entirely there; and the fact surprised him more, as Leyden was now as well as ever furnished with masters, excellent in their respective professions. He concluded by asking, if the professors of Edinburgh were rich? I replied, that the salary of a professor there seldom amounted to more than thirty pounds a-year. "Poor men," says he, "I heartily wish they were better provided for; until they become rich, we can have no expectation of English students at Leyden."

Premiums, also, proposed for literary excellence, when

given as encouragements to boys, may be useful; but when designed as rewards to men, are certainly misapplied. We have seldom seen a performance of any great merit, in consequence of rewards proposed in this manner. Who has ever observed a writer of any eminence, a candidate in so precarious a contest? The man who knows the real value of his own genius, will no more venture it upon an uncertainty, than he, who knows the true use of a guinea, will stake it with a sharper.

Every encouragement given to stupidity, when known to be such, is also a negative insult upon genius. This appears in nothing more evident, than the undistinguished success of those who solicit subscriptions. When first brought into fashion, subscriptions were conferred upon the ingenious alone, or those who were reputed such. But at present, we see them made a resource of indigence, and requested, not as rewards of merit, but as a relief of distress. If tradesmen happen to want skill in conducting their own business, yet they are able to write a book; if mechanics want money, or ladies shame, they write books and solicit subscriptions. Scarcely a morning passes, that proposals of this nature are not thrust into the half-opening doors of the rich, with, perhaps, a paltry petition, shewing the author's wants, but not his merits. I would not willingly prevent that pity which is due to indigence; but while the streams of liberality are thus diffused, they must, in the end, become proportionably shallow.

What, then, are the proper encouragements of genius? I answer, subsistence and respect; for these are rewards congenial to its nature. Every animal has an aliment peculiarly suited to its constitution. The heavy ox seeks nourishment from earth; the light chameleon has been supposed to exist on air; a sparer diet even than this will satisfy the man of true genius, for he makes a luxurious banquet upon empty applause. It is this alone which has inspired all that ever was truly great and noble among us. It is, as Cicero finely calls it, the echo of virtue. Avarice is the passion of inferior natures — money the pay of the common herd. The author who draws his quill merely to take a purse, no more deserves success than he who presents a pistol.

When the link between patronage and learning was entire, then all who deserved fame were in a capacity of

attaining it. When the great Somers was at the helm, patronage was fashionable among our nobility. The middle ranks of mankind, who generally imitate the great, then followed their example, and applauded from fashion, if not from feeling. I have heard an old poet* of that glorious age say, that a dinner with his lordship has procured him invitations for the whole week following—that an airing in his patron's chariot has supplied him with a citizen's coach on every future occasion. For who would not be proud to entertain a man who kept so much good company?

But this link now seems entirely broken. Since the days of a certain prime minister, of inglorious memory, the learned have been kept pretty much at a distance. A jockey, or a laced player, supplies the place of the scholar, poet, or the man of virtue. Those conversations, once the result of wisdom, wit, and innocence, are now turned to humbler topics, little more being expected from a companion than a laced coat, a pliant bow, and an immoderate friendship for —— a well served table.

Wit, when neglected by the great, is generally despised by the vulgar. Those who are unacquainted with the world, are apt to fancy the man of wit as leading a very agreeable life. They conclude, perhaps, that he is attended to with silent admiration, and dictates to the rest of mankind with all the eloquence of conscious superiority. Very different is his present situation. He is called an author, and all know that an author is a thing only to be laughed at. His person, not his jest, becomes the mirth of the company. At his approach, the most fat unthinking face brightens into malicious meaning. Even aldermen laugh, and revenge on him the ridicule which was lavished on their forefathers:

> Etiam victis redit in præcordia virtus,
> Victoresque cadunt.

It is, indeed, a reflection somewhat mortifying to the author, who breaks his ranks, and singles out for public favour, to think that he must combat contempt before he can arrive at glory—that he must expect to have all the fools of society united against him, before he can hope for the applause of the judicious. For this, however, he must

* Dr Young.

prepare beforehand; as those who have no idea of the difficulty of his employment, will be apt to regard his inactivity as idleness—and not having a notion of the pangs of uncomplying thought in themselves, it is not to be expected they should have any desire of rewarding it in others.

Voltaire has finely described the hardships a man must encounter, who writes for the public. I need make no apology for the length of the quotation:

"Your fate, my dear Le Fevre, is too strongly marked to permit your retiring. The bee must toil in making honey, the silk-worm must spin, the philosopher must dissect them, and you are born to sing of their labours. You must be a poet and a scholar, even though your inclinations should resist: nature is too strong for inclination. But hope not, my friend, to find tranquillity in the employment you are going to pursue. The route of genius is not less obstructed with disappointment than that of ambition.

"If you have the misfortune not to excel in your profession as a poet, repentance must tincture all your future enjoyments: if you succeed, you make enemies. You tread a narrow path: contempt on one side, and hatred on the other, are ready to seize you upon the slightest deviation.

"But why must I be hated? you will perhaps reply; why must I be persecuted for having written a pleasing poem, for having produced an applauded tragedy, or for otherwise instructing or amusing mankind or myself?

"My dear friend, these very successes shall render you miserable for life. Let me suppose your performance has merit—let me suppose you have surmounted the teazing employments of printing and publishing,—how will you be able to lull the critics, who, like Cerberus, are posted at all the avenues of literature, and who settle the merits of every new performance? How, I say, will you be able to make them open in your favour? There are always three or four literary journals in France, as many in Holland, each supporting opposite interests. The booksellers who guide these periodical compilations, find their account in being severe; the authors employed by them have wretchedness to add to their natural malignity. The majority may be in your favour, but you may depend on being torn by the rest. Loaded with unmerited scurrility, perhaps you reply; they

rejoin; both plead at the bar of the public, and both are condemned to ridicule.

"But if you write for the stage, your case is still more worthy of compassion. You are there to be judged by men whom the custom of the times has rendered contemptible. Irritated by their own inferiority, they exert all their little tyranny upon you, revenging upon the author the insults they receive from the public. From such men, then, you are to expect your sentence. Suppose your piece admitted, acted: one single ill-natured jest from the pit is sufficient to cancel all your labours. But allowing that it succeeds, there are an hundred squibs flying all abroad to prove that it should not have succeeded. You shall find your brightest scenes burlesqued by the ignorant; and the learned, who know a little Greek, and nothing of their native language, affect to despise you.

"But, perhaps, with a panting heart you carry your piece before a woman of quality. She gives the labours of your brain to her maid to be cut into shreds for curling her hair; while the laced footman, who carries the gaudy livery of luxury, insults your appearance, who bear the livery of indigence.

"But granting your excellence has at last forced envy to confess that your works have some merit; this, then, is all the reward you can expect while living. However, for this tribute of applause, you must expect persecution. You will be reputed the author of scandal which you have never seen, of verses you despise, and of sentiments directly contrary to your own. In short, you must embark in some one party, or all parties will be against you.

"There are among us a number of learned societies, where a lady presides, whose wit begins to twinkle when the splendour of her beauty begins to decline. One or two men of learning compose her ministers of state. These must be flattered, or made enemies by being neglected. Thus, though you had the merit of all antiquity united in your person, you grow old in misery and disgrace. Every place designed for men of letters, is filled up by men of intrigue. Some nobleman's private tutor, some court flatterer, shall bear away the prize, and leave you to anguish and to disappointment."

Yet it were well if none but the dunces of society were combined to render the profession of an author ridiculous or

unhappy. Men of the first eminence are often found to indulge this illiberal vein of raillery. Two contending writers often, by the opposition of their wit, render their profession contemptible in the eyes of ignorant persons, who should have been taught to admire. And yet, whatever the reader may think of himself, it is at least two to one but he is a greater blockhead than the most scribbling dunce he affects to despise.

The poet's poverty is a standing topic of contempt. His writing for bread is an unpardonable offence. Perhaps of all mankind an author in these times is used most hardly. We keep him poor, and yet revile his poverty. Like angry parents who correct their children till they cry, and then correct them for crying, we reproach him for living by his wit, and yet allow him no other means to live.

His taking refuge in garrets and cellars, has of late been violently objected to him, and that by men who, I dare hope, are more apt to pity than insult his distress. Is poverty the writer's fault? No doubt he knows how to prefer a bottle of champaign to the nectar of the neighbouring alehouse, or a venison pasty to a plate of potatoes. Want of delicacy is not in him, but in us, who deny him the opportunity of making an elegant choice.

Wit certainly is the property of those who have it, nor should we be displeased if it is the only property a man sometimes has. We must not underrate him who uses it for subsistence, and flies from the ingratitude of the age even to a bookseller for redress. If the profession of an author is to be laughed at by the stupid, it is certainly better to be contemptibly rich, than contemptibly poor. For all the wit that ever adorned the human mind, will at present no more shield the author's poverty from ridicule, than his high-topped gloves conceal the unavoidable omissions of his laundress.

To be more serious: new fashions, follies, and vices, make new monitors necessary in every age. An author may be considered as a merciful substitute to the legislature. He acts, not by punishing crimes, but preventing them. However virtuous the present age, there may be still growing employment for ridicule or reproof, for persuasion or satire. If the author be therefore still so necessary among us, let us treat him with proper consideration as a child of the public, not a rent-charge on the community. And indeed

a *child* of the public he is in all respects; for while so well able to direct others, how incapable is he frequently found of guiding himself! His simplicity exposes him to all the insidious approaches of cunning; his sensibility, to the slightest invasions of contempt. Though possessed of fortitude to stand unmoved the expected bursts of an earthquake, yet of feelings so exquisitely poignant as to agonize under the slightest disappointment. Broken rest, tasteless meals, and causeless anxiety, shorten his life, or render it unfit for active employment; prolonged vigils and intense application still farther contract his span, and make his time glide insensibly away. Let us not, then, aggravate those natural inconveniences by neglect; we have had sufficient instances of this kind already. Sale and Moore will suffice for one age at least. But they are dead, and their sorrows are over. The neglected author of the Persian Eclogues, which, however inaccurate, excel any in our language, is still alive. Happy, if *insensible* of our neglect, not *raging* at our ingratitude.* It is enough that the age has already produced instances of men pressing foremost in the lists of fame, and worthy of better times; schooled by continued adversity into an hatred of their kind, flying from thought to drunkenness, yielding to the united pressure of labour, penury, and sorrow, sinking unheeded, without one friend to drop a tear on their unattended obsequies, and indebted to charity for a grave.

The author, when unpatronized by the great, has naturally recourse to the bookseller. There cannot be perhaps imagined a combination more prejudicial to taste than this. It is the interest of the one to allow as little for writing, and of the other to write as much, as possible. Accordingly, tedious compilations and periodical magazines are the result of their joint endeavours. In these circumstances, the author bids adieu to fame, writes for bread, and for that only imagination is seldom called in. He sits down to address the venal muse with the most phlegmatic apathy; and as we are told of the Russian, courts his mistress by falling asleep in her lap. His reputation never spreads in a wider circle than that of the trade, who generally value him, not for the fineness of his compositions, but the quantity he works off in a given time.

* Our author here alludes to the insanity of Collins.

A long habit of writing for bread thus turns the ambition of every author at last into avarice. He finds that he has written many years, that the public are scarcely acquainted even with his name; he despairs of applause, and turns to profit which invites him. He finds that money procures all those advantages, that respect, and that ease, which he vainly expected from fame. Thus the man who, under the protection of the great, might have done honour to humanity, when only patronized by the bookseller, becomes a thing little superior to the fellow who works at the press.

## CHAPTER XI.

### OF THE MARKS OF LITERARY DECAY IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

THE faults already mentioned are such as learning is often found to flourish under; but there is one of a much more dangerous nature, which has begun to fix itself among us,—I mean criticism, which may properly be called the natural destroyer of polite learning. We have seen that critics, or those whose only business is to write books upon other books, are always more numerous, as learning is more diffused; and experience has shewn, that instead of promoting its interest, which they profess to do, they generally injure it. This decay which criticism produces may be deplored, but can scarcely be remedied, as the man who writes against the critics is obliged to add himself to the number. Other depravations in the republic of letters, such as affectation in some popular writer, leading others into vicious imitation; political struggles in the state; a depravity of morals among the people; ill-directed encouragement, or no encouragement, from the great,—these have been often found to co-operate in the decline of literature; and it has sometimes declined, as in modern Italy, without them; but an increase of criticism has always portended a decay. Of all misfortunes, therefore, in the commonwealth of letters, this of judging from rule, and not from feeling, is the most severe. At such a tribunal no work of original merit can please. Sublimity, if carried to an exalted height, approaches burlesque, and humour sinks into vulgarity. The person who cannot feel may ridicule both as such, and bring rules to corroborate his assertion. There is, in short, no excellence

in writing that such judges may not place among the neighbouring defects. Rules render the reader more difficult to be pleased, and abridge the author's power of pleasing.

If we turn to either country, we shall perceive evident symptoms of this natural decay beginning to appear. Upon a moderate calculation, there seems to be as many volumes of criticism published in those countries, as of all other kinds of polite erudition united. Paris sends forth not less than four literary journals every month, the Année-literaire, and the Feuille, by Freron; the Journal Etranger, by the Chevalier d'Arc; and Le Mercure, by Marmontel. We have two literary reviews* in London, with critical newspapers and magazines without number. The compilers of these resemble the commoners of Rome; they are all for levelling property, not by increasing their own, but by diminishing that of others. The man who has any good nature in his disposition must, however, be somewhat displeased to see distinguished reputations often the sport of ignorance,—to see, by one false pleasantry, the future peace of a worthy man's life disturbed, and this only, because he has unsuccessfully attempted to instruct or amuse us. Though ill-nature is far from being wit, yet it is generally laughed at as such. The critic enjoys the triumph, and ascribes to his parts what is only due to his effrontery. I fire with indignation, when I see persons wholly destitute of education and genius indent to the press, and thus turn book-makers, adding to the sin of criticism the sin of ignorance also; whose trade is a bad one, and who are bad workmen in the trade.

When I consider those industrious men as indebted to the works of others for a precarious subsistence, when I see them coming down at stated intervals, to rummage the bookseller's counter for materials to work upon, it raises a smile, though mixed with pity. It reminds me of an animal called by naturalists the soldier. "This little creature," says the historian, "is passionately fond of a shell, but not being supplied with one by nature, has recourse to the deserted shell of some other. I have seen these harmless reptiles," continues he, "come down once a-year from the mountains, rank and file, cover the whole shore, and ply busily about, each in request of a shell to please it. Nothing can

* The MONTHLY and the CRITICAL: Goldsmith himself was a contributor to both.—B.

be more amusing than their industry upon this occasion. One shell is too big, another too little: they enter and keep possession sometimes for a good while, until one is, at last, found entirely to please. When all are thus properly equipped, they march up again to the mountains, and live in their new acquisition till under a necessity of changing."

There is indeed scarcely an error of which our present writers are guilty, that does not arise from their opposing systems; there is scarcely an error that criticism cannot be brought to excuse. From this proceeds the affected security of our odes, the tuneless flow of our blank verse, the pompous epithet, laboured diction, and every other deviation from common sense, which procures the poet the applause of the month: he is praised by all, read by a few, and soon forgotten.

There never was an unbeaten path trodden by the poet that the critic did not endeavour to reclaim him, by calling his attempt innovation. This might be instanced in Dante, who first followed nature, and was persecuted by the critics as long as he lived. Thus novelty, one of the greatest beauties in poetry, must be avoided, or the connoisseur be displeased. It is one of the chief privileges, however, of genius, to fly from the herd of imitators by some happy singularity; for, should he stand still, his heavy pursuers will at length certainly come up, and fairly dispute the victory.

The ingenious Mr Hogarth used to assert, that every one except the connoisseur was a judge of painting. The same may be asserted of writing. The public, in general, set the whole piece in the proper point of view; the critic lays his eye close to all its minuteness, and condemns or approves in detail. And this may be the reason why so many writers at present are apt to appeal from the tribunal of criticism to that of the people.

From a desire in the critic, of grafting the spirit of ancient languages upon the English, have proceeded of late several disagreeable instances of pedantry. Among the number, I think we may reckon blank verse. Nothing but the greatest sublimity of subject can render such a measure pleasing; however, we now see it used upon the most trivial occasions. It has particularly found its way into our didactic poetry, and is likely to bring that species of composition into disrepute, for which the English are deservedly famous.

Those who are acquainted with writing, know that our language runs almost naturally into blank verse. The writers of our novels, romances, and all of this class who have no notion of style, naturally hobble into this unharmonious measure. If rhymes, therefore, be more difficult, for that very reason I would have our poets write in rhyme. Such a restriction upon the thought of a good poet, often lifts and increases the vehemence of every sentiment; for fancy, like a fountain, plays highest by diminishing the aperture. But rhymes, it will be said, are a remnant of monkish stupidity, an innovation upon the poetry of the ancients. They are but indifferently acquainted with antiquity who make the assertion. Rhymes are probably of older date than either the Greek or Latin dactyl and spondee. The Celtic, which is allowed to be the first language spoken in Europe, has ever preserved them, as we may find in the Edda of Iceland, and the Irish carols, still sung among the original inhabitants of that island. Olaus Wormius gives us some of the Teutonic poetry in this way; and Pantoppidan, bishop of Bergen, some of the Norwegian. In short, this jingle of sounds is almost natural to mankind; at least it is so to our language, if we may judge from many unsuccessful attempts to throw it off.

I should not have employed so much time in opposing this erroneous innovation, if it were not apt to introduce another in its train,—I mean, a disgusting solemnity of manner into our poetry; and, as the prose writer has been ever found to follow the poet, it must consequently banish in both all that agreeable trifling, which, if I may so express it, often deceives us into instruction. The finest sentiment and the most weighty truth may put on a pleasant face, and it is even virtuous to jest when serious advice must be disgusting. But, instead of this, the most trifling performance among us now assumes all the didactic stiffness of wisdom. The most diminutive son of fame or of famine has his *we* and his *us*, his *firstlies* and his *secondlies*, as methodical as if bound in cow-hide and closed with clasps of brass. Were these Monthly Reviews and Magazines frothy, pert, or absurd, they might find some pardon; but to be dull and dronish is an encroachment on the prerogative of a folio. These things should be considered as pills to purge melancholy; they should be made up in our splenetic climate to be taken as physic, and not so as to be used when we take it.

However, by the power of one single monosyllable, our critics have almost got the victory over humour amongst us. Does the poet paint the absurdities of the vulgar, then he is *low;* does he exaggerate the features of folly to render it more thoroughly ridiculous, he is then very *low.* In short, they have proscribed the comic or satirical muse from every walk but high life, which, though abounding in fools as well as the humblest station, is by no means so fruitful in absurdity. Among well-bred fools we may despise much, but have little to laugh at; nature seems to present us with a universal blank of silk, ribbons, smiles, and whispers. Absurdity is the poet's game, and good-breeding is the nice concealment of absurdities. The truth is, the critic generally mistakes humour for wit, which is a very different excellence. Wit raises human nature above its level; humour acts a contrary part, and equally depresses it. To expect exalted humour is a contradiction in terms; and the critic, by demanding an impossibility from the comic poet, has, in effect, banished new comedy from the stage. But, to put the same thought in a different light, when an unexpected similitude in two objects strikes the imagination — in other words, when a thing is wittily expressed — all our pleasure turns into admiration of the artist, who had fancy enough to draw the picture. When a thing is humorously described, our burst of laughter proceeds from a very different cause: we compare the absurdity of the character represented with our own, and triumph in our conscious superiority. No natural defect can be a cause of laughter, because it is a misfortune to which ourselves are liable. A defect of this kind changes the passion into pity or horror. We only laugh at those instances of moral absurdity, to which we are conscious we ourselves are not liable. For instance, should I describe a man as wanting his nose, there is no humour in this, as it is an accident to which human nature is subject, and may be any man's case; but, should I represent this man without his nose as extremely curious in the choice of his snuff-box, we here see him guilty of an absurdity of which we imagine it impossible for ourselves to be guilty, and therefore applaud our own good sense on the comparison. Thus then, the pleasure we receive from wit turns on the admiration of another; that which we feel from humour, centres in the admiration of ourselves. The poet, therefore, must place the object he would have the subject of humour

in a state of inferiority; in other words, the subject of humour must be *low*.

The solemnity worn by many of our modern writers, is, I fear, often the mask of dulness; for certain it is, it seems to fit every author who pleases to put it on. By the complexion of many of our late publications, one might be apt to cry out with Cicero, *Civem mehercule non puto esse qui his temporibus ridere possit.*—"On my conscience, I believe we have all forgot to laugh in these days." Such writers probably make no distinction between what is praised and what is pleasing; between those commendations which the reader pays his own discernment, and those which are the genuine result of his sensations. It were to be wished, therefore, that we no longer found pleasure with the inflated style that has for some years been looked upon as fine writing, and which every young writer is now obliged to adopt, if he chooses to be read. We should now dispense with loaded epithet and dressing up trifles with dignity. For, to use an obvious instance, it is not those who make the greatest noise with their wares in the streets that have most to sell. Let us, instead of writing finely, try to write naturally; not hunt after lofty expressions to deliver mean ideas, nor be for ever gaping, when we only mean to deliver a whisper.

## CHAPTER XI.

### OF THE STAGE.

Our theatre has been generally confessed to share in this general decline, though partaking of the show and decoration of the Italian opera, with the propriety and declamation of French performance. The stage also is more magnificent with us than any other in Europe, and the people in general fonder of theatrical entertainment. Yet still as our pleasures, as well as more important concerns, are generally managed by party, the stage has felt its influence. The managers, and all who espouse their side, are for decoration and ornament; the critic, and all who have studied French decorum, are for regularity and declamation. Thus it is almost impossible to please both parties: and the poet, by

attempting it, finds himself often incapable of pleasing either. If he introduces stage pomp, the critic consigns his performance to the vulgar; if he indulges in recital and simplicity, it is accused of insipidity, or dry affectation.

From the nature, therefore, of our theatre, and the genius of our country, it is extremely difficult for a dramatic poet to please his audience. But happy would he be, were these the only difficulties he had to encounter; there are many other more dangerous combinations against the little wit of the age. Our poet's performance must undergo a process truly chemical, before it is presented to the public. It must be tried in the manager's fire, strained through a licenser, suffer from repeated corrections, till it may be a mere *caput mortuum* when it arrives before the public.

The success, however, of pieces upon the stage would be of little moment, did it not influence the success of the same piece in the closet. Nay, I think it would be more for the interests of virtue, if stage performances were read, not acted; made rather our companions in the cabinet than on the theatre. While we are readers, every moral sentiment strikes us in all its beauty, but the love scenes are frigid, tawdry, and disgusting. When we are spectators, all the persuasives to vice receive an additional lustre. The love scene is aggravated, the obscenity heightened, the best actors figure in the most debauched characters, while the parts of morality, as they are called, are thrown to some mouthing machine, who puts even virtue out of countenance by his wretched imitation.

But whatever be the incentives to vice which are found at the theatre, public pleasures are generally less guilty than solitary ones. To make our solitary satisfaction truly innocent, the actor is useful, as by his means the poet's work makes its way from the stage to the closet; for all must allow, that the reader receives more benefit by perusing a well written play, than by seeing it acted.

But how is this rule inverted on our theatres at present! Old pieces are revived, and scarcely any new ones admitted. The actor is ever in our eye, and the poet seldom permitted to appear; the public are again obliged to ruminate over those hashes of absurdity, which were disgusting to our ancestors even in an age of ignorance; and the stage, instead of serving the people, is made subservient to the interests of avarice.

We seem to be pretty much in the situation of travellers at a Scotch inn: Vile entertainment is served up, complained of, and sent down, up comes worse, and that also is changed; and every change makes our wretched cheer more unsavoury. What must be done? only sit down contented, cry up all that comes before us, and admire even the absurdities of Shakespeare.

Let the reader suspend his censure. I admire the beauties of this great father of our stage as much as they deserve, but could wish, for the honour of our country, and for his honour too, that many of his scenes were forgotten. A man blind of one eye should always be painted in profile. Let the spectator, who assists at any of these new revived pieces, only ask himself whether he would approve such a performance if written by a modern poet? I fear he will find that much of his applause proceeds merely from the sound of a name, and an empty veneration for antiquity. In fact, the revival of those pieces of forced humour, far-fetched conceit, and unnatural hyperbole, which have been ascribed to Shakespeare, is rather gibbetting than raising a statue to his memory; it is rather a trick of the actor, who thinks it safest acting in exaggerated characters, and who, by outstepping nature, chooses to exhibit the ridiculous *outré* of a harlequin under the sanction of that venerable name.

What strange vamped comedies, farcical tragedies, or what shall I call them, speaking pantomimes, have we not of late seen! No matter what the play may be, it is the actor who draws an audience. He throws life into all; all are in spirits and merry, in at one door and out at another; the spectator, in a fool's paradise, knows not what all this means, till the last act concludes in matrimony. The piece pleases our critics, because it talks old English; and it pleases the galleries, because it has ribaldry. True taste, or even common sense, are out of the question.

But great art must be sometimes used before they can thus impose upon the public. To this purpose, a prologue written with some spirit generally precedes the piece, to inform us that it was composed by Shakespeare, or old Ben, or somebody else who took them for his model. A face of iron could not have the assurance to avow dislike; the theatre has its partisans who understand the force of combinations, trained up to vociferation, clapping of hands and

clattering of sticks: and though a man might have strength sufficient to overcome a lion in single combat, he may run the risk of being devoured by an army of ants.

I am not insensible, that third nights are disagreeable drawbacks upon the annual profits of the stage. I am confident it is much more to the manager's advantage to furbish up all the lumber which the good sense of our ancestors, but for his care, had consigned to oblivion. It is not with him, therefore, but with the public I would expostulate; they have a right to demand respect, and surely those newly revived plays are no instances of the manager's deference.

I have been informed that no new play can be admitted upon our theatres unless the author chooses to wait some years, or, to use the phrase in fashion, till it comes to be played in turn. A poet thus can never expect to contract a familiarity with the stage, by which alone he can hope to succeed; nor can the most signal success relieve immediate want. Our Saxon ancestors had but one name for a wit and a witch. I will not dispute the propriety of uniting those characters then; but the man who, under the present discouragements, ventures to write for the stage, whatever claim he may have to the appellation of a wit, at least he has no right to be called a conjuror.

From all that has been said upon the state of our theatre, we may easily foresee whether it is likely to improve or decline; and whether the freeborn muse can bear to submit to those restrictions which avarice or power would impose. For the future, it is somewhat unlikely, that he whose labours are valuable, or who knows their value, will turn to the stage for either fame or subsistence, when he must at once flatter an actor and please an audience.

## CHAPTER XII.

### ON UNIVERSITIES.

Instead of losing myself in a subject of such extent, I shall only offer a few thoughts as they occur, and leave their connection to the reader.

We seem divided, whether an education formed by travelling or by a sedentary life be preferable. We see more

of the world by travel, but more of human nature by remaining at home; as in an infirmary, the student, who only attends to the disorders of a few patients, is more likely to understand his profession, than he who indiscriminately examines them all.

A youth just landed at the Brille resembles a clown at a puppet-show; carries his amazement from one miracle to another; from this cabinet of curiosities to that collection of pictures: but wondering is not the way to grow wise.

Whatever resolutions we set ourselves not to keep company with our countrymen abroad, we shall find them broken when once we leave home. Among strangers we consider ourselves as in a solitude, and it is but natural to desire society.

In all the great towns of Europe there are to be found Englishmen residing either from interest or choice. These generally lead a life of continued debauchery. Such are the countrymen a traveller is likely to meet with.

This may be the reason why Englishmen are all thought to be mad or melancholy by the vulgar abroad. Their money is giddily and merrily spent among sharpers of their own country; and when that is gone, of all nations the English bear worst that disorder called the *maladie du poche*.

Countries wear very different appearances to travellers of different circumstances. A man who is whirled through Europe in a post-chaise, and the pilgrim who walks the grand tour on foot, will form very different conclusions.*

To see Europe with advantage, a man should appear in various circumstances of fortune; but the experiment would be too dangerous for young men.

There are many things relative to other countries which can be learned to more advantage at home; their laws and policies are among the number.

The greatest advantages which result to youth from travel, are an easy address, the shaking off national prejudices, and the finding nothing ridiculous in national peculiarities.

The time spent in these acquisitions could have been more usefully employed at home. An education in a college seems therefore preferable.

* In the first edition our author added, *Haud inexpertus loquor*; for he travelled through France, &c. on foot.

We attribute to universities either too much or too little. Some assert that they are the only proper places to advance learning; while others deny even their utility in forming an education. Both are erroneous.

Learning is most advanced in populous cities, where chance often conspires with industry to promote it; where the members of this large university, if I may so call it, catch manners as they rise; study life, not logic, and have the world for correspondents.

The greatest number of universities have ever been founded in times of the greatest ignorance.

New improvements in learning are seldom adopted in colleges until admitted everywhere else. And this is right: we should always be cautious of teaching the rising generation uncertainties for truth. Thus, though the professors in universities have been too frequently found to oppose the advancement of learning, yet, when once established, they are the properest persons to diffuse it.

There is more knowledge to be acquired from one page of the volume of mankind, if the scholar only knows how to read, than in volumes of antiquity. We grow learned, not wise, by too long continuance at college.

This points out the time in which we should leave the university. Perhaps the age of twenty-one, when at our universities the first degree is generally taken, is the proper period.

The universities of Europe may be divided into three classes. Those upon the old scholastic establishment, where the pupils are immured, talk nothing but Latin, and support every day syllogistical disputations in school philosophy. Would not one be apt to imagine this was the proper education to make a man a fool? Such are the universities of Prague, Louvain, and Padua. The second is, where the pupils are under few restrictions, where all scholastic jargon is banished, where they take a degree when they think proper, and live not in the college, but the city. Such are Edinburgh, Leyden, Gottingen, Geneva. The third is a mixture of the two former, where the pupils are restrained, but not confined; where many, though not all, the absurdities of scholastic philosophy are suppressed, and where the first degree is taken after four years' matriculation. Such are Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin.

As for the first class, their absurdities are too apparent to admit of a parallel. It is disputed which of the two last are more conducive to national improvement.

Skill in the professions is acquired more by practice than study; two or three years may be sufficient for learning their rudiments. The universities of Edinburgh, &c. grant a licence for practising them when the student thinks proper, which our universities refuse till after a residence of several years.

The dignity of the professions may be supported by this dilatory proceeding; but many men of learning are thus too long excluded from the lucrative advantages, which superior skill has a right to expect.

Those universities must certainly be most frequented, which promise to give in two years, the advantages which others will not under twelve.

The man who has studied a profession for three years, and practised it for nine more, will certainly know more of his business than he who has only studied it for twelve.

The universities of Edinburgh, &c. must certainly be most proper for the study of those professions in which men choose to turn their learning to profit as soon as possible.

The universities of Oxford, &c. are improper for this, since they keep the student from the world, which, after a certain time, is the only true school of improvement.

When a degree in the professions can be taken only by men of independent fortunes, the number of candidates in learning is lessened, and, consequently the advancement of learning retarded.

This slowness of conferring degrees is a remnant of scholastic barbarity. Paris, Louvain, and those universities which still retain their ancient institutions, confer the doctor's degree slower even than we.

The statutes of every university should be considered as adapted to the laws of its respective government. Those should alter as these happen to fluctuate.

Four years spent in the arts, (as they are called in colleges,) is perhaps laying too laborious a foundation. Entering a profession without any previous acquisitions of this kind, is building too bold a superstructure.

Teaching by lecture, as at Edinburgh, may make men scholars, if they think proper; but instructing by exami-



ENGLISH
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nation, as at Oxford, will make them so often against their inclination.

Edinburgh only disposes the student to receive learning; Oxford often makes him actually learned.

In a word, were I poor, I should send my son to Leyden or Edinburgh, though the annual expense in each, particularly in the first, is very great. Were I rich, I would send him to one of our own universities. By an education received in the first, he has the best likelihood of living; by that received in the latter, he has the best chance of becoming great.

We have of late heard much of the necessity of studying oratory. Vespasian was the first who paid professors of rhetoric for publicly instructing youth at Rome. However, those pedants never made an orator.

The best orations that ever were spoken were pronounced in the parliaments of King Charles the First. These men never studied the rules of oratory.

Mathematics are, perhaps, too much studied at our universities. This seems a science to which the meanest intellects are equal.* I forget who it is that says, "All men might understand mathematics, if they would."

The most methodical manner of lecturing, whether on morals or nature, is, first rationally to explain, and then produce the experiment. The most instructive method is to shew the experiment first; curiosity is then excited, and attention awakened to every subsequent deduction. Hence it is evident, that in a well formed education a course of history should ever precede a course of ethics.

The sons of our nobility are permitted to enjoy greater liberties in our universities than those of private men. I should blush to ask the men of learning and virtue who preside in our seminaries, the reason of such a prejudicial

* This is partly true, but not to the extent which is implied in our author's general assertion. The elements of the science may certainly be acquired without any extraordinary share of intellect; but surely distinguished proficiency in the higher branches of mathematics implies something more than the industrious efforts of the "meanest intellects." Goldsmith himself was a very indifferent mathematician; and this will perhaps account sufficiently for his attempt to underrate the importance of the science, and his wish to consider its acquisition as the despicable triumph of plodding mediocrity. — B.

distinction. Our youth should there be inspired with a love of philosophy; and the first maxim among philosophers is, That merit only makes distinction.

Whence has proceeded the vain magnificence of expensive architecture in our colleges? Is it that men study to more advantage in a palace than in a cell? One single performance of taste or genius confers more real honours on its parent university, than all the labours of the chisel.

Surely pride itself has dictated to the fellows of our colleges the absurd passion of being attended at meals, and on other public occasions, by those poor men who, willing to be scholars, come in upon some charitable foundation. It implies a contradiction, for men to be at once learning the *liberal* arts, and at the same time treated as *slaves;* at once studying freedom, and practising servitude.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE CONCLUSION.

Every subject acquires an adventitious importance to him who considers it with application. He finds it more closely connected with human happiness than the rest of mankind are apt to allow; he sees consequences resulting from it which do not strike others with equal conviction; and still pursuing speculation beyond the bounds of reason, too frequently becomes ridiculously earnest in trifles or absurdity.

It will perhaps be incurring this imputation, to deduce a universal degeneracy of manners from so slight an origin as the depravation of taste; to assert that, as a nation grows dull, it sinks into debauchery. Yet such, probably, may be the consequence of literary decay; or, not to stretch the thought beyond what it will bear, vice and stupidity are always mutually productive of each other.

Life, at the greatest and best, has been compared to a froward child, that must be humoured and played with till it falls asleep, and then all the care is over. Our few years are laboured away in varying its pleasures; new amusements are pursued with studious attention; the most childish vanities are dignified with titles of importance; and the

proudest boast of the most aspiring philosopher is no more, than that he provides his little playfellows the greatest pastime with the greatest innocence.

Thus the mind, ever wandering after amusement, when abridged of happiness on one part, endeavours to find it on another; when intellectual pleasures are disagreeable, those of sense will take the lead. The man who in this age is enamoured of the tranquil joys of study and retirement, may in the next, should learning be fashionable no longer, feel an ambition of being foremost at a horse course; or, if such could be the absurdity of the times, of being himself a jockey. Reason and appetite are therefore masters of our revels in turn; and as we incline to the one, or pursue the other, we rival angels, or imitate the brutes. In the pursuit of intellectual pleasure lies every virtue; of sensual, every vice.

It is this difference of pursuit which marks the morals and characters of mankind; which lays the line between the enlightened philosopher and the half-taught citizen; between the civil citizen and illiterate peasant; between the law-obeying peasant and the wandering savage of Africa, an animal less mischievous, indeed, than the tiger, because endued with fewer powers of doing mischief. The man, the nation, must therefore be good, whose chiefest luxuries consist in the refinement of reason; and reason can never be universally cultivated, unless guided by taste, which may be considered as the link between science and common sense, the medium through which learning should ever be seen by society.

Taste will therefore often be a proper standard, when others fail, to judge of a nation's improvement or degeneracy in morals. We have often no permanent characteristics, by which to compare the virtues or the vices of our ancestors with our own. A generation may rise and pass away without leaving any traces of what it really was; and all complaints of our deterioration may be only topics of declamation, or the cavillings of disappointment: but in taste we have standing evidence; we can with precision compare the literary performances of our fathers with our own, and from their excellence or defects determine the moral, as well as the literary, merits of either.

If, then, there ever comes a time when taste is so far depraved among us that critics shall load every work of

genius with unnecessary comment, and quarter their empty performances with the substantial merits of an author, both for subsistence and applause; if there comes a time when censure shall speak in storms, but praise be whispered in the breeze, while real excellence often finds shipwreck in either; if there be a time when the Muse shall seldom be heard, except in plaintive elegy, as if she wept her own decline, while lazy compilations supply the place of original thinking; should there ever be such a time, may succeeding critics, both for the honour of our morals, as well as our learning, say, that such a period bears no resemblance to the present age!

# THE BEE;

A SELECT

## COLLECTION OF ESSAYS

ON THE

MOST INTERESTING AND ENTERTAINING SUBJECTS.

[The Bee originally appeared as a weekly periodical, but met with so little encouragement, that it was discontinued after the eighth number. Many of the pieces contained in it are admirable, and were reprinted in the author's volume of Essays, published in 1765. —B ]

# THE BEE.

## No. I. — SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1759.

THERE is not, perhaps, a more whimsically dismal figure in nature, than a man of real modesty, who assumes an air of impudence — who, while his heart beats with anxiety, studies ease, and affects good-humour. In this situation, however, a periodical writer often finds himself, upon his first attempt to address the public in form. All his power of pleasing is damped by solicitude, and his cheerfulness dashed with apprehension. Impressed with the terrors of the tribunal before which he is going to appear, his natural humour turns to pertness, and for real wit he is obliged to substitute vivacity. His first publication draws a crowd; they part dissatisfied; and the author, never more to be indulged with a favourable hearing, is left to condemn the indelicacy of his own address, or their want of discernment.

For my part, as I was never distinguished for address, and have often even blundered in making my bow, such bodings as these had like to have totally repressed my ambition. I was at a loss whether to give the public specious promises, or give none; whether to be merry or sad on this solemn occasion. If I should decline all merit, it was too probable the hasty reader might have taken me at my word. If, on the other hand, like labourers in the magazine trade, I had, with modest impudence, humbly

presumed to promise an epitome of all the good things that ever were said or written, this might have disgusted those readers I most desire to please. Had I been merry, I might have been censured as vastly low; and had I been sorrowful, I might have been left to mourn in solitude and silence: in short, whichever way I turned, nothing presented but prospects of terror, despair, chandlers' shops, and waste paper.

In this debate between fear and ambition, my publisher, happening to arrive, interrupted for a while my anxiety. Perceiving my embarrassment about making my first appearance, he instantly offered his assistance and advice. "You must know, sir," says he, "that the republic of letters is at present divided into three classes. One writer, for instance, excels at a plan or a title-page, another works away the body of the book, and a third is a dab at an index. Thus a magazine is not the result of any single man's industry, but goes through as many hands as a new pin, before it is fit for the public. I fancy, sir," continues he, "I can provide an eminent hand, and upon moderate terms, to draw up a promising plan to smooth up our readers a little, and pay them as Colonel Charteris* paid his

* The notorious and profligate Colonel Francis Charteris, the subject of the following severe satire by Dr Arbuthnot. — B.

EPITAPH.

Here continueth to rot
The body of FRA——S CH——IS,
Who, with an inflexible constancy and inimitable
Uniformity of life, persisted,
In spite of age and infirmities,
In the practice of every human vice;
Excepting prodigality and hypocrisy.
His insatiable avarice exempted him from the first,
His matchless impudence from the second.
Nor was he more singular in the undeviating pravity of his manners,
Than successful in accumulating wealth.
For, without trade or profession,
Without trust of public money,
And without bribe-worthy service,
He acquired, or more properly created,
A ministerial estate.
He was the only person of his time
Who could cheat without the mask of honesty,
Retain his primeval meanness when possessed of

seraglio, at the rate of three halfpence in hand, and three shillings more in promises."

He was proceeding in his advice, which, however, I thought proper to decline, by assuring him, that as I intended to pursue no fixed method, so it was impossible to form any regular plan; determined never to be tedious in order to be logical, wherever pleasure presented, I was resolved to follow. Like the Bee, which I had taken for the title of my paper, I would rove from flower to flower, with seeming inattention, but concealed choice, expatiate over all the beauties of the season, and make my industry my amusement.

This reply may also serve as an apology to the reader, who expects, before he sits down, a bill of his future entertainment. It would be improper to pall his curiosity by lessening his surprise, or anticipate any pleasure I am able to procure him, by saying what shall come next. Thus much, however, he may be assured of, that neither war nor scandal shall make any part of it. Homer finely imagines his deity turning away with horror from the prospect of a field of battle, and seeking tranquillity among a nation noted for peace and simplicity. Happy, could any effort of mine, but for a moment, repress that savage pleasure some men find in the daily accounts of human misery! How gladly would I lead them from scenes of blood and altercation, to prospects of innocence and ease, where every breeze breathes health, and every sound is but the echo of tranquillity.

But whatever the merit of his intentions may be, every writer is now convinced, that he must be chiefly indebted to good fortune for finding readers willing to allow him any degree of reputation. It has been remarked, that almost

Ten thousand a-year;
And, having daily deserved the gibbet for what he did,
Was at last condemned to it for what he could not do.*
O indignant reader!
Think not his life useless to mankind!
Providence connived at his execrable designs,
To give to after ages a conspicuous proof and example
Of how small estimation is exorbitant wealth in the sight of God,
By his bestowing it on the most unworthy of all mortals.

* He was tried and condemned for a rape. — B.

every character which has excited either attention or praise, has owed part of its success to merit, and part to a happy concurrence of circumstances in its favour. Had Cæsar or Cromwell exchanged countries, the one might have been a sergeant, and the other an exciseman. So it is with wit, which generally succeeds more from being happily addressed, than from its native poignancy. A *bon mot*, for instance, that might be relished at White's, may lose all its flavour when delivered at the Cat and Bagpipes in St Giles's. A jest, calculated to spread at a gaming table, may be received with a perfect neutrality of face, should it happen to drop in a mackerel boat. We have all seen dunces triumph in such companies, when men of real humour were disregarded, by a general combination in favour of stupidity. To drive the observation as far as it will go, should the labours of a writer who designs his performances for readers of a more refined appetite, fall into the hands of a devourer of compilations, what can he expect but contempt and confusion? If his merits are to be determined by judges, who estimate the value of a book from its bulk, or its frontispiece, every rival must acquire an easy superiority, who, with persuasive eloquence, promises four extraordinary pages of letter-press, or three beautiful prints, curiously coloured from nature.

But to proceed: Though I cannot promise as much entertainment, or as much elegance, as others have done, yet the reader may be assured, he shall have as much of both as I can. He shall, at least, find me alive while I study his entertainment; for I solemnly assure him, I was never yet possessed of the secret at once of writing and sleeping.

During the course of this paper, therefore, all the wit and learning I have are heartily at his service; which if, after so candid a confession, he should, notwithstanding, still find intolerably dull, low, or sad stuff, this, I protest, is more than I know. I have a clear conscience, and am entirely out of the secret.

Yet I would not have him, upon the perusal of a single paper, pronounce me incorrigible; he may try a second, which, as there is a studied difference in subject and style, may be more suited to his taste; if this also fails, I must refer him to a third, or even to a fourth, in case of extremity. If he should still continue to be refractory, and find me dull to the last, I must inform him, with Bayes, in the

Rehearsal, that I think him a very odd kind of a fellow, and desire no more of his acquaintance.

It is with such reflections as these I endeavour to fortify myself against the future contempt or neglect of some readers, and am prepared for their dislike by mutual recrimination. If such should impute dealing neither in battles nor scandal to me as a fault, instead of acquiescing in their censure, I must beg leave to tell them a story.

"A traveller, in his way to Italy, happening to pass at the foot of the Alps, found himself at last in a country where the inhabitants had each a large excrescence depending from the chin, like the pouch of a monkey. This deformity, as it was endemic, and the people little used to strangers, it had been the custom, time immemorial, to look upon as the greatest ornament of the human visage. Ladies grew toasts from the size of their chins, and none were regarded as pretty fellows, but such whose faces were broadest at the bottom.— It was Sunday; a country church was at hand, and our traveller was willing to perform the duties of the day. Upon his first appearance at the church door, the eyes of all were naturally fixed upon the stranger; but what was their amazement, when they found that he actually wanted that emblem of beauty, a pursed chin! This was a defect that not a single creature had sufficient gravity (though they were noted for being grave) to withstand. Stifled bursts of laughter, winks, and whispers, circulated from visage to visage, and the prismatic figure of the stranger's face was a fund of infinite gaiety; even the parson, equally remarkable for his gravity and chin, could hardly refrain joining in the good humour. Our traveller could no longer patiently continue an object for deformity to point at. 'Good folks,' said he, 'I perceive that I am the unfortunate cause of all this good humour. It is true, I may have faults in abundance; but I shall never be induced to reckon my want of a swelled face among the number.'" *

* Goldsmith inserted this introduction, with a few trifling alterations, in the volume of Essays he published in the year 1765.

### ON A BEAUTIFUL YOUTH STRUCK BLIND WITH LIGHTNING.*

IMITATED FROM THE SPANISH.

Lumine Acon dextro capta est Leonida sinistro,
Et poterat forma vincere uterque Deos.
Parve puer, lumen quod habes concede puellæ;
Sic tu cæcus amor sic erit illa Venus.

### REMARKS ON OUR THEATRES.

Our theatres are now opened, and all Grub Street is preparing its advice to the managers. We shall undoubtedly hear learned disquisitions on the structure of one actor's legs, and another's eyebrows. We shall be told much of enunciations, tones, and attitudes; and shall have our lightest pleasures commented upon by didactic dullness. We shall, it is feared, be told that Garrick is a fine actor; but then as a manager, so avaricious! That Palmer is a most surprising genius, and Holland likely to do well in a particular cast of character. We shall have them giving Shuter instructions to amuse us by rule, and deploring over the ruins of desolated majesty at Covent Garden. As I love to be advising too—for advice is easily given, and bears a show of wisdom and superiority—I must be permitted to offer a few observations upon our theatres and actors, without, on this trivial occasion, throwing my thoughts into the formality of method.

There is something in the deportment of all our players, infinitely more stiff and formal than among the actors of other nations. Their action sits uneasy upon them; for as the English use very little gesture in ordinary conversation, our English bred actors are obliged to supply stage gestures by their imagination alone. A French comedian finds proper models of action in every company, and in every coffeehouse he enters. An Englishman is obliged to take his models from the stage itself; he is obliged to

* See another Epigram on the same subject, Vol. ii. p. 137.

imitate nature from an imitation of nature. I know of no set of men more likely to be improved by travelling than those of the theatrical profession. The inhabitants of the Continent are less reserved than here; they may be seen through upon a first acquaintance: such are the proper models to draw from; they are at once striking, and are found in great abundance.

Though it would be inexcusable in a comedian to add any thing of his own to the poet's dialogue, yet, as to action, he is entirely at liberty. By this he may shew the fertility of his genius, the poignancy of his humour, and the exactness of his judgment; we scarcely see a coxcomb or a fool in common life, that has not some peculiar oddity in his action. These peculiarities it is not in the power of words to represent, and depend solely upon the actor. They give a relish to the humour of the poet, and make the appearance of nature more illusive. The Italians, it is true, mask some characters, and endeavour to preserve the peculiar humour by the make of the mask; but I have seen others still preserve a great fund of humour in the face without a mask; one actor, particularly by a squint which he threw into some characters of low life, assumed a look of infinite solidity. This, though upon reflection we might condemn, yet immediately upon representation, we could not avoid being pleased with. To illustrate what I have been saying by the plays which I have of late gone to see: in the Miser, which was played a few nights ago at Covent Garden, Lovegold appears through the whole in circumstances of exaggerated avarice; all the player's action, therefore, should conspire with the poet's design, and represent him as an epitome of penury. The French comedian in this character, in the midst of one of his most violent passions, while he appears in an ungovernable rage, feels the demon of avarice still upon him, and stoops down to pick up a pin, which he quilts into the flap of his coat pocket with great assiduity. Two candles are lighted up for his wedding; he flies and turns one of them into the socket: it is, however, lighted up again; he then steals to it, and privately crams it into his pocket. The Mock Doctor was lately played at the other house. Here again the comedian had an opportunity of heightening the ridicule by action. The French player sits in a chair with a high back, and then begins to shew away by talking nonsense, which he would have

thought Latin by those he knows do not understand a syllable of the matter. At last he grows enthusiastic, enjoys the admiration of the company, tosses his legs and arms about, and, in the midst of his raptures and vociferation, he and the chair fall back together. All this appears dull enough in the recital, but the gravity of Cato could not stand it in the representation. In short, there is hardly a character in comedy to which a player of any real humour might not add strokes of vivacity that could not fail of applause. But, instead of this, we too often see our fine gentlemen do nothing, through a whole part, but strut and open their snuff-box; our pretty fellows sit indecently with their legs across, and our clowns pull up their breeches. These, if once, or even twice, repeated, might do well enough; but to see them served up in every scene, argues the actor almost as barren as the character he would expose.

The magnificence of our theatres is far superior to any others in Europe, where plays only are acted. The great care our performers take in painting for a part, their exactness in all the minutiæ of dress, and other little scenical proprieties, have been taken notice of by Ricoboni, a gentleman of Italy, who travelled Europe with no other design but to remark upon the stage; but there are several improprieties still continued, or lately come into fashion. As, for instance, spreading a carpet punctually at the beginning of the death scene, in order to prevent our actors from spoiling their clothes; this immediately apprises us of the tragedy to follow; for laying the cloth is not a more sure indication of dinner, than laying the carpet of bloody work at Drury Lane. Our little pages, also, with unmeaning faces, that bear up the train of a weeping princess, and our awkward lords in waiting, take off much from her distress. Mutes of every kind divide our attention, and lessen our sensibility; but here it is entirely ridiculous, as we see them seriously employed in doing nothing. If we must have dirty-shirted guards upon the theatres, they should be taught to keep their eyes fixed on the actors, and not roll them round upon the audience, as if they were ogling the boxes.

Beauty, methinks, seems a requisite qualification in an actress. This seems scrupulously observed elsewhere, and, for my part, I could wish to see it observed at home. I

can never conceive a hero dying for love of a lady totally destitute of beauty. I must think the part unnatural; for I cannot bear to hear him call that face angelic, where even paint cannot hide its wrinkles. I must condemn him of stupidity; and the person whom I can accuse for want of taste, will seldom become the object of my affections or admiration. But if this be a defect, what must be the entire perversion of scenical decorum, when, for instance, we see an actress that might act the Wapping landlady without a bolster, pining in the character of Jane Shore, and, while unwieldy with fat, endeavouring to convince the audience that she is dying with hunger!

For the future, then, I could wish that the parts of the young or beautiful were given to performers of suitable figures; for I must own, I could rather see the stage filled with agreeable objects, though they might sometimes bungle a little, than see it crowded with withered or misshapen figures, be their emphasis, as I think it is called, ever so proper. The first may have the awkward appearance of new raised troops; but in viewing the last, I cannot avoid the mortification of fancying myself placed in an hospital of invalids.

## THE STORY OF ALCANDER AND SEPTIMIUS.

### TRANSLATED FROM A BYZANTINE HISTORIAN.

ATHENS, even long after the decline of the Roman empire, still continued the seat of learning, politeness, and wisdom. The emperors and generals, who in these periods of approaching ignorance, still felt a passion for science, from time to time added to its buildings, or increased its professorships. Theodoric, the Ostrogoth, was of the number: he repaired those schools which barbarity was suffering to fall into decay, and continued those pensions to men of learning, which avaricious governors had monopolized to themselves.

In this city, and about this period, Alcander and Septimius were fellow students together. The one the most subtile reasoner of all the Lyceum;* the other the most eloquent

* Where Aristotle taught dialectics. —B.

speaker in the Academic grove.* Mutual admiration soon begot an acquaintance, and a similitude of disposition made them perfect friends. Their fortunes were nearly equal, their studies the same, and they were natives of the two most celebrated cities in the world; for Alcander was of Athens, Septimius came from Rome.

In this mutual harmony they lived for some time together, when Alcander, after passing the first part of his youth in the indolence of philosophy, thought at length of entering into the busy world, and as a step previous to this, placed his affections on Hypatia, a lady of exquisite beauty. Hypatia shewed no dislike to his addresses. The day of their intended nuptials was fixed, the previous ceremonies were performed, and nothing now remained but her being conducted in triumph to the apartment of the intended bridegroom.

An exultation in his own happiness, or his being unable to enjoy any satisfaction without making his friend Septimius a partner, prevailed upon him to introduce his mistress to his fellow student, which he did with all the gaiety of a man who found himself equally happy in friendship and love. But this was an interview fatal to the peace of both; for Septimius no sooner saw her, but he was smit with an involuntary passion. He used every effort, but in vain, to suppress desires at once so imprudent and unjust. He retired to his apartment in inexpressible agony; and the emotions of his mind in a short time became so strong, that they brought on a fever, which the physicians judged incurable.

During this illness, Alcander watched him with all the anxiety of fondness, and brought his mistress to join in those amiable offices of friendship. The sagacity of the physicians, by this means, soon discovered the cause of their patient's disorder; and Alcander, being apprized of their discovery, at length extorted a confession from the reluctant dying lover.

It would but delay the narrative to describe the conflict between love and friendship in the breast of Alcander on this occasion; it is enough to say, that the Athenians were at this time arrived at such refinement in morals, that every virtue was carried to excess. In short, forgetful of his own

* Where Plato taught, and from which his school of philosophy received its name of *The Academy*. — B.

felicity, he gave up his intended bride, in all her charms, to the young Roman. They were married privately by his connivance; and this unlooked-for change of fortune wrought as unexpected a change in the constitution of the now happy Septimius. In a few days he was perfectly recovered, and set out with his fair partner for Rome. Here, by an exertion of those talents of which he was so eminently possessed, he in a few years arrived at the highest dignities of the state, and was constituted the city judge, or prætor.

Meanwhile, Alcander not only felt the pain of being separated from his friend and mistress, but a prosecution was also commenced against him by the relations of Hypatia, for his having basely given her up, as was suggested, for money. Neither his innocence of the crime laid to his charge, nor his eloquence in his own defence, was able to withstand the influence of a powerful party. He was cast, and condemned to pay an enormous fine. Unable to raise so large a sum at the time appointed, his possessions were confiscated, himself stripped of the habit of freedom, exposed in the market-place, and sold as a slave to the highest bidder.

A merchant of Thrace becoming his purchaser, Alcander, with some other companions of distress, was carried into that region of desolation and sterility. His stated employment was to follow the herds of an imperious master; and his skill in hunting was all that was allowed him to supply a precarious subsistence. Condemned to hopeless servitude, every morning waked him to a renewal of famine or toil, and every change of season served but to aggravate his unsheltered distress. Nothing but death or flight was left him, and almost certain death was the consequence of his attempting to fly. After some years of bondage, however, an opportunity of escaping offered; he embraced it with ardour, and travelling by night, and lodging in caverns by day, to shorten a long story, he at last arrived in Rome. The day of Alcander's arrival, Septimius sat in the forum administering justice; and hither our wanderer came, expecting to be instantly known, and publicly acknowledged. Here he stood the whole day among the crowd, watching the eyes of the judge, and expecting to be taken notice of; but so much was he altered by a long succession of hardships, that he passed entirely without notice; and, in the evening, when he was going up to the prætor's chair, he was brutally repulsed by the attending lictors. The attention of the poor is generally driven from one ungrateful object to

another ; night coming on, he now found himself under a necessity of seeking a place to lie in, and yet knew not where to apply. All emaciated and in rags as he was, none of the citizens would harbour so much wretchedness, and sleeping in the streets might be attended with interruption or danger : in short, he was obliged to take up his lodging in one of the tombs without the city, the usual retreat of guilt, poverty, or despair.

In this mansion of horror, laying his head upon an inverted urn, he forgot his miseries for a while in sleep ; and virtue found, on this flinty couch more ease than down can supply to the guilty.

It was midnight when two robbers came to make this cave their retreat, but happening to disagree about the division of their plunder, one of them stabbed the other to the heart, and left him weltering in blood at the entrance. In these circumstances he was found next morning, and this naturally induced a farther inquiry. The alarm was spread, the cave was examined, Alcander was found sleeping, and immediately apprehended and accused of robbery and murder. The circumstances against him were strong, and the wretchedness of his appearance confirmed suspicion. Misfortune and he were now so long acquainted, that he at last became regardless of life. He detested a world where he had found only ingratitude, falsehood, and cruelty, and was determined to make no defence. Thus, lowering with resolution, he was dragged, bound with cords, before the tribunal of Septimius. The proofs were positive against him, and he offered nothing in his own vindication ; the judge, therefore, was proceeding to doom him to a most cruel and ignominious death, when, as if illumined by a ray from Heaven, he discovered, through all his misery, the features, though dim with sorrow, of his long lost, loved Alcander. It is impossible to describe his joy and his pain on this strange occasion ; happy in once more seeing the person he most loved on earth, distressed at finding him in such circumstances. Thus agitated by contending passions, he flew from his tribunal, and, falling on the neck of his dear benefactor, burst into an agony of distress. The attention of the multitude was soon, however, divided by another object. The robber who had been really guilty, was apprehended selling his plunder, and, struck with a panic, confessed his crime. He was brought bound to the same tribunal, and acquitted every other person of any partnership in his guilt. Need the sequel be related ?

Alcander was acquitted, shared the friendship and the honours of his friend Septimius, lived afterwards in happiness and ease, and left it to be engraved on his tomb, that "no circumstances are so desperate which Providence may not relieve."

## A LETTER FROM A TRAVELLER.

CRACOW, *August* 2, 1758.

MY DEAR WILL,— You see, by the date of my letter, that I am arrived in Poland. When will my wanderings be at an end? When will my restless disposition give me leave to enjoy the present hour? When at Lyons, I thought all happiness lay beyond the Alps; when in Italy, I found myself still in want of something, and expected to leave solicitude behind me by going into Romelia; and now you find me turning back, still expecting ease every where but where I am. It is now seven years since I saw the face of a single creature who cared a farthing whether I was dead or alive. Secluded from all the comforts of confidence, friendship, or society, I feel the solitude of a hermit, but not his ease.

The Prince of —— has taken me in his train, so that I am in no danger of starving for this bout. The prince's governor is a rude ignorant pedant, and his tutor a battered rake; thus, between two such characters, you may imagine he is finely instructed. I made some attempts to display all the little knowledge I had acquired by reading or observation; but I find myself regarded as an ignorant intruder. The truth is, I shall never be able to acquire a power of expressing myself with ease in any language but my own; and, out of my own country, the highest character I can ever acquire, is that of being a philosophic vagabond.

When I consider myself in the country which was once so formidable in war, and spread terror and desolation over the whole Roman empire, I can hardly account for the present wretchedness and pusillanimity of its inhabitants: a prey to every invader; their cities plundered without an enemy; their magistrates seeking redress by complaints, and not by vigour. Every thing conspires to raise my compassion for their miseries, were not my thoughts too busily engaged by my own. The whole kingdom is in a strange disorder: when our equipage, which consists of the

prince and thirteen attendants, had arrived at some towns, there were no conveniences to be found, and we were obliged to have girls to conduct us to the next. I have seen a woman travel thus on horseback before us for thirty miles, and think herself highly paid, and make twenty reverences, upon receiving, with ecstasy, about twopence for her trouble. In general, we were better served by the women than the men, on these occasions. The men seemed directed by a low sordid interest alone: they seemed mere machines, and all their thoughts were employed in the care of their horses. If we gently desired them to make more speed, they took not the least notice: kind language was what they had by no means been used to. It was proper to speak to them in the tones of anger, and sometimes it was even necessary to use blows, to excite them to their duty. How different these from the common people of England, whom a blow might induce to return the affront sevenfold! These poor people, however, from being brought up to vile usage, lose all the respect which they should have for themselves. They have contracted a habit of regarding constraint as the great rule of their duty. When they were treated with mildness, they no longer continued to perceive a superiority. They fancied themselves our equals, and a continuance of our humanity might probably have rendered them insolent: but the imperious tone, menaces, and blows, at once changed their sensations and their ideas; their ears and shoulders taught their souls to shrink back into servitude, from which they had for some moments fancied themselves disengaged.

The enthusiasm of liberty an Englishman feels is never so strong, as when presented by such prospects as these. I must own, in all my indigence, it is one of my comforts, (perhaps, indeed, it is my only boast,) that I am of that happy country; though I scorn to starve there; though I do not choose to lead a life of wretched dependence, or be an object for my former acquaintance to point at. While you enjoy all the ease and elegance of prudence and virtue, your old friend wanders over the world, without a single anchor to hold by, or a friend, except you, to confide in.*

Yours, &c.

* The sequel of this correspondence to be continued occasionally. I shall alter nothing either in the style or substance of these letters, and the reader may depend on their being genuine.—[*Note by the Author.*]

## A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE LATE MR MAUPERTUIS.

Mr Maupertuis, lately deceased,* was the first to whom the English philosophers owed their being particularly admired by the rest of Europe. The romantic system of Des Cartes was adapted to the taste of the superficial and the indolent; the foreign universities had embraced it with ardour, and such are seldom convinced of their errors till all others give up such false opinions as untenable. The philosophy of Newton and the metaphysics of Locke appeared; but, like all new truths, they were at once received with opposition and contempt. The English, it is true, studied, understood, and, consequently, admired them; it was very different on the Continent. Fontenelle, who seemed to preside over the republic of letters, unwilling to acknowledge that all his life had been spent in erroneous philosophy, joined in the universal disapprobation, and the English philosophers seemed entirely unknown.

Maupertuis, however, made them his study; he thought he might oppose the physics of his country, and yet still be a good citizen; he defended our countrymen, wrote in their favour, and, at last, as he had truth on his side, carried his cause. Almost all the learning of the English, till very lately, was conveyed in the language of France. The writings of Maupertuis spread the reputation of his master, Newton, and, by a happy fortune, have united his fame with that of our human prodigy.

The first of his performances, openly, in vindication of the Newtonian system, is his treatise, entitled, "Sur la figure des Astres," if I remember right; a work at once expressive of a deep geometrical knowledge, and the most happy manner of delivering abstruse science with ease. This met with violent opposition from a people, though fond of novelty in every thing else, yet, however, in matters of science, attached to ancient opinions with bigotry. As the old and obstinate fell away, the youth of France embraced the new opinions, and now seem more eager to defend Newton than even his countrymen.

* Pierre Louis Morceau de Maupertuis died at Basil in 1759. — B.

The oddity of character which great men are sometimes remarkable for, Maupertuis was not entirely free from. If we can believe Voltaire, he once attempted to castrate himself; but whether this be true or no, it is certain he was extremely whimsical. Though born to a large fortune, when employed in mathematical inquiries, he disregarded his person to such a degree, and loved retirement so much, that he has been more than once put on the list of modest beggars by the curates of Paris, when he retired to some private quarter of the town, in order to enjoy his meditations without interruption. The character given of him by one of Voltaire's antagonists, if it can be depended upon, is much to his honour. "You," says this writer to Mr Voltaire, "were entertained by the King of Prussia as a buffoon, but Maupertuis as a philosopher." It is certain, that the preference which this royal scholar gave to Maupertuis was the cause of Voltaire's disagreement with him.* Voltaire could not bear to see a man, whose talents he had no great opinion of, preferred before him as president of the Royal Academy. His "Micromegas" was designed to ridicule Maupertuis; and, probably, it has brought more disgrace on the author than the subject. Whatever absurdities men of letters have indulged, and how fantastical soever the modes of science have been, their anger is still more subject to ridicule.

* Voltaire commenced hostilities, by openly espousing the cause of Koenig, professor of philosophy at Franeker, against Maupertuis, on his publishing his Discourse on the Laws of Motion. Voltaire had, till then, lived on terms of the most intimate friendship with Maupertuis. — B.

# THE BEE.

No. II.—SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1759.

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## ON DRESS.

FOREIGNERS observe, that there are no ladies in the world more beautiful, or more ill dressed, than those of England. Our countrywomen have been compared to those pictures, where the face is the work of a Raphael, but the draperies thrown out by some empty pretender, destitute of taste, and entirely unacquainted with design.

If I were a poet, I might observe on this occasion, that so much beauty, set off with all the advantages of dress, would be too powerful an antagonist for the opposite sex; and, therefore, it was wisely ordered that our ladies should want taste, lest their admirers should entirely want reason.

But to confess a truth, I do not find they have a greater aversion to fine clothes than the women of any other country whatsoever. I cannot fancy, that a shop-keeper's wife in Cheapside has a greater tenderness for the fortune of her husband than a citizen's wife in Paris; or, that Miss in a boarding-school is more an economist in dress than Mademoiselle in a nunnery.

Although Paris may be accounted the soil in which almost every fashion takes its rise, its influence is never so general there as with us. They study there the happy method of uniting grace and fashion, and never excuse a woman for being awkwardly dressed, by saying her clothes are made in the mode. A French woman is a perfect architect in dress: she never, with Gothic ignorance, mixes the order; she never tricks out a squabby Doric shape

with Corinthian finery; or, to speak without metaphor, she conforms to general fashion, only when it happens not to be repugnant to private beauty.

Our ladies, on the contrary, seem to have no other standard for grace but the run of the town. If fashion gives the word, every distinction of beauty, complexion, or stature, ceases. Sweeping trains, Prussian bonnets, and trollopees, as like each other as if cut from the same piece, level all to one standard. The Mall, the gardens, and the playhouses, are filled with ladies in uniform, and their whole appearance shews as little variety or taste, as if their clothes were bespoke by the colonel of a marching regiment, or fancied by the same artist who dresses the three battalions of guards.

But not only ladies of every shape and complexion, but of every age too, are possessed of this unaccountable passion of dressing in the same manner. A lady of no quality can be distinguished from a lady of some quality, only by the redness of her hands; and a woman of sixty, masked, might easily pass for her grandaughter. I remember, a few days ago, to have walked behind a damsel, tossed out in all the gaiety of fifteen; her dress was loose, unstudied, and seemed the result of conscious beauty. I called up all my poetry on this occasion, and fancied twenty Cupids prepared for execution in every folding of her white negligee. I had prepared my imagination for an angel's face; but what was my mortification to find that the imaginary goddess was no other than my cousin Hannah, four years older than myself, and I shall be sixty-two the twelfth of next November.

After the transports of our first salute were over, I could not avoid running my eye over her whole appearance. Her gown was of cambric, cut short before, in order to discover a high-heeled shoe, which was buckled almost at the toe. Her cap, if cap it might be called that cap was none, consisted of a few bits of cambric, and flowers of painted paper stuck on one side of her head. Her bosom, that had felt no hand, but the hand of time, these twenty years, rose suing, but in vain, to be pressed. I could, indeed, have wished her more than a handkerchief of Paris net to shade her beauties; for, as Tasso says of the rosebud, "Quanto si mostra men tanto e piu bella," I should think hers most pleasing when least discovered.

As my cousin had not put on all this finery for nothing,

she was at that time sallying out to the Park, when I had overtaken her. Perceiving, however, that I had on my best wig, she offered, if I would squire her there, to send home the footman. Though I trembled for our reception in public, yet I could not with any civility refuse; so, to be as gallant as possible, I took her hand in my arm, and thus we marched on together.

When we made our entry at the Park, two antiquated figures, so polite and so tender as we seemed to be, soon attracted the eyes of the company. As we made our way among crowds who were out to shew their finery as well as we, wherever we came I perceived we brought good-humour in our train. The polite could not forbear smiling, and the vulgar burst out into a horse-laugh at our grotesque figures. Cousin Hannah, who was perfectly conscious of the rectitude of her own appearance, attributed all this mirth to the oddity of mine, while I as cordially placed the whole to her account. Thus, from being two of the best-natured creatures alive, before we got half way up the Mall, we both began to grow peevish, and, like two mice on a string, endeavoured to revenge the impertinence of others upon ourselves. "I am amazed, cousin Jeffrey," says Miss, "that I can never get you to dress like a Christian. I knew we should have the eyes of the Park upon us, with your great wig so frizzed, and yet so beggarly, and your monstrous muff. I hate those odious muffs." I could have patiently borne a criticism on all the rest of my equipage; but as I had always a peculiar veneration for my muff, I could not forbear being piqued a little; and, throwing my eyes with a spiteful air on her bosom, "I could heartily wish, madam," replied I, "that for your sake my muff was cut into a tippet."

As my cousin, by this time, was grown heartily ashamed of her gentleman usher, and as I was never very fond of any kind of exhibition myself, it was mutually agreed to retire for a while to one of the seats, and from that retreat remark on others as freely as they had remarked on us.

When seated, we continued silent for some time, employed in very different speculations. I regarded the whole company, now passing in review before me, as drawn out merely for my amusement. For my entertainment the beauty had all that morning been improving her charms; the beau had put on lace, and the young doctor a big wig, merely to please me. But quite different were the sentiments of

cousin Hannah: she regarded every well-dressed woman as a victorious rival, hated every face that seemed dressed in good-humour, or wore the appearance of greater happiness than her own. I perceived her uneasiness, and attempted to lessen it, by observing that there was no company in the Park to-day. To this she readily assented; "and yet," says she, "it is full enough of scrubs of one kind or another." My smiling at this observation gave her spirits to pursue the bent of her inclination, and now she began to exhibit her skill in secret history, as she found me disposed to listen. "Observe," says she to me, "that old woman in tawdry silk, and dressed out even beyond the fashion. That is Miss Biddy Evergreen. Miss Biddy, it seems, has money, and as she considers that money was never so scarce as it is now, she seems resolved to keep what she has to herself. She is ugly enough you see; yet I assure you she has refused several offers to my own knowledge within this twelvemonth. Let me see, three gentlemen from Ireland who study the law, two waiting captains, a doctor, and a Scotch preacher, who had like to have carried her off. All her time is passed between sickness and finery. Thus, she spends the whole week in a close chamber, with no other company but her monkey, her apothecary, and cat; and comes dressed out to the Park every Sunday, to shew her airs, to get new lovers, to catch a new cold, and to make new work for the doctor.

"There goes Mrs Roundabout,—I mean the fat lady in the lutestring trollopee. Between you and I, she is but a cutler's wife. See how she's dressed, as fine as hands and pins can make her, while her two marriageable daughters, like bunters in stiff gowns, are now taking sixpenny worth of tea at the White Conduit House. Odious puss! how she waddles along, with her train two yards behind her! She puts me in mind of my Lord Bantam's Indian sheep, which are obliged to have their monstrous tails trundled along in a go-cart. For all her airs, it goes to her husband's heart to see four yards of good lutestring wearing against the ground, like one of his knives on a grindstone. To speak my mind, cousin Jeffrey, I never liked tails; for suppose a young fellow should be rude, and the lady should offer to step back in a fright, instead of retiring, she treads upon her train, and falls fairly on her back; and then, you know, cousin—her clothes may be spoiled.

"Ah, Miss Mazzard! I knew we should not miss her in the Park; she in the monstrous Prussian bonnet. Miss, though so very fine, was bred a milliner, and might have had some custom if she had minded her business; but the girl was fond of finery, and instead of dressing her customers, laid out all her goods in adorning herself. Every new gown she put on impaired her credit: she still, however, went on improving her appearance, and lessening her little fortune, and is now, you see, become a belle and a bankrupt."

My cousin was proceeding in her remarks, which were interrupted by the approach of the very lady she had been so freely describing. Miss had perceived her at a distance, and approached to salute her. I found, by the warmth of the two ladies' protestations, that they had been long intimate esteemed friends and acquaintance. Both were so pleased at this happy rencounter, that they were resolved not to part for the day. So we all crossed the Park together, and I saw them into a hackney coach at the gate of St James's. I could not, however, help observing, That they are generally most ridiculous themselves, who are apt to see most ridicule in others.

## SOME PARTICULARS RELATIVE TO CHARLES XII.

### NOT COMMONLY KNOWN.

STOCKHOLM.

SIR,—I cannot resist your solicitations, though it is possible I shall be unable to satisfy your curiosity. The polite of every country seem to have but one character. A gentleman of Sweden differs but little, except in trifles, from one of any other country. It is among the vulgar we are to find those distinctions which characterize a people, and from them it is that I take my picture of the Swedes.

Though the Swedes, in general, appear to languish under oppression, which often renders others wicked, or of malignant dispositions, it has not, however, the same influence upon them, as they are faithful, civil, and incapable of atrocious crimes. Would you believe that, in Sweden, highway robberies are not so much as heard of? For my part, I have not in the whole country seen a gibbet or a

gallows. They pay an infinite respect to their ecclesiastics, whom they suppose to be the privy-councillors of Providence, who, on their part, turn this credulity to their own advantage, and manage their parishioners as they please. In general, however, they seldom abuse their sovereign authority. Hearkened to as oracles, regarded as the dispensers of eternal rewards and punishments, they readily influence their hearers into justice, and make them practical philosophers without the pains of study.

As to their persons, they are perfectly well made, and the men particularly have a very engaging air. The greatest part of the boys which I saw in the country had very white hair. They were as beautiful as Cupids, and there was something open and entirely happy in their little chubby faces. The girls, on the contrary, have neither such fair nor such even complexions, and their features are much less delicate, which is a circumstance different from that of almost every other country. Besides this, it is observed, that the women are generally afflicted with the itch, for which Scania is particularly remarkable. I had an instance of this in one of the inns on the road. The hostess was one of the most beautiful women I have ever seen : she had so fine a complexion, that I could not avoid admiring it. But what was my surprise, when she opened her bosom in order to suckle her child, to perceive that seat of delight all covered with this disagreeable distemper. The careless manner in which she exposed to our eyes so disgusting an object, sufficiently testifies that they regard it as no very extraordinary malady, and seem to take no pains to conceal it. Such are the remarks, which probably you may think trifling enough, I have made in my journey to Stockholm, which, to take it all together, is a large, beautiful, and even a populous city.

The arsenal appears to me one of its greatest curiosities : it is a handsome, spacious building, but, however, scantily supplied with the implements of war. To recompense this defect, they have almost filled it with trophies, and other marks of their former military glory. I saw there several chambers filled with Danish, Saxon, Polish, and Russian standards. There was at least enough to suffice half-a-dozen armies ; but new standards are more easily made than new armies can be enlisted. I saw, besides, some very rich furniture, and some of the crown jewels, of great value ; but what principally engaged my attention, and touched me

with passing melancholy, were the bloody, yet precious, spoils of the two greatest heroes the North ever produced. What I mean are the clothes in which the great Gustavus Adolphus, and the intrepid Charles XII. died by a fate not unusual to kings. The first, if I remember, is a sort of a buff waistcoat, made antique fashion, very plain, and without the least ornaments; the second, which was even more remarkable, consisted only of a coarse blue cloth coat, a large hat of less value, a shirt of coarse linen, large boots, and buff gloves made to cover a great part of the arm. His saddle, his pistols, and his sword, have nothing in them remarkable: the meanest soldier was in this respect no way inferior to his gallant monarch. I shall use this opportunity to give you some particulars of the life of a man already so well known, which I had from persons who knew him when a child, and who now, by a fate not unusual to courtiers, spend a life of poverty and retirement, and talk over in raptures all the actions of their old victorious king, companion, and master.

Courage and inflexible constancy formed the basis of this monarch's character. In his tenderest years he gave instances of both. When he was yet scarcely seven years old, being at dinner with the queen his mother, intending to give a bit of bread to a great dog he was fond of, this hungry animal snapt too greedily at the morsel, and bit his hand in a terrible manner. The wound bled copiously, but our young hero, without offering to cry, or taking the least notice of his misfortune, endeavoured to conceal what had happened, lest his dog should be brought into trouble, and wrapped his bloody hand in the napkin. The queen, perceiving that he did not eat, asked him the reason. He contented himself with replying, that he thanked her, he was not hungry. They thought he was taken ill, and so repeated their solicitations: but all was in vain, though the poor child was already grown pale with the loss of blood. An officer who attended at table at last perceived it; for Charles would sooner have died than betrayed his dog, who, he knew, intended no injury.

At another time, when in the small pox, and his case appeared dangerous, he grew one day very uneasy in his bed, and a gentleman who watched him, desirous of covering him up close, received from the patient a violent box on his ear. Some hours after, observing the prince more calm, he

entreated to know how he had incurred his displeasure, or what he had done to have merited a blow. "A blow?" replied Charles, "I don't remember any thing of it: I remember, indeed, that I thought myself in the battle of Arbela, fighting for Darius, where I gave Alexander a blow which brought him to the ground."

What great effects might not these two qualities of courage and constancy have produced, had they at first received a just direction! Charles, with proper instructions, thus naturally disposed, would have been the delight and the glory of his age. Happy those princes, who are educated by men who are at once virtuous and wise, and have been for some time in the school of affliction; who weigh happiness against glory, and teach their royal pupils the real value of fame; who are ever shewing the superior dignity of man to that of royalty—that a peasant who does his duty is a nobler character than a king of even middling reputation! Happy, I say, were princes, could such men be found to instruct them; but those to whom such an education is generally intrusted, are men who themselves have acted in a sphere too high to know mankind. Puffed up themselves with the ideas of false grandeur, and measuring merit by adventitious circumstances of greatness, they generally communicate those fatal prejudices to their pupils, confirm their pride by adulation, or increase their ignorance by teaching them to despise that wisdom which is found among the poor.

But not to moralize when I only intend a story,—what is related of the journeys of this prince is no less astonishing. He has sometimes been on horseback for four-and-twenty hours successively, and thus traversed the greatest part of his kingdom. At last none of his officers were found capable of following him; he thus consequently rode the greatest part of his journeys quite alone, without taking a moment's repose, and without any other subsistence but a bit of bread. In one of these rapid courses he underwent an adventure singular enough. Riding thus post one day, all alone, he had the misfortune to have his horse fall dead under him. This might have embarrassed an ordinary man, but it gave Charles no sort of uneasiness. Sure of finding another horse, but not equally so of meeting with a good saddle and pistols, he ungirths his horse, claps the whole equipage on his own back, and, thus accoutred, marches on to the next inn, which by

good fortune was not far off. Entering the stable, he here found a horse entirely to his mind; so, without farther ceremony, he clapped on his saddle and housing with great composure, and was just going to mount, when the gentleman who owned the horse was apprized of a stranger's going to steal his property out of the stable. Upon asking the king, whom he had never seen, bluntly, how he presumed to meddle with his horse, Charles coolly replied, squeezing in his lips, which was his usual custom, that he took the horse because he wanted one; "for you see," continued he, "if I have none, I shall be obliged to carry the saddle myself." This answer did not seem at all satisfactory to the gentleman, who instantly drew his sword. In this the king was not much behind-hand with him, and to it they were going, when the guards by this time came up, and testified that surprise which was natural to see arms in the hand of a subject against his king. Imagine whether the gentleman was less surprised than they at his unpremeditated disobedience. His astonishment, however, was soon dissipated by the king, who, taking him by the hand, assured him he was a brave fellow, and himself would take care he should be provided for. This promise was afterwards fulfilled, and I have been assured the king made him a captain.

## HAPPINESS, IN A GREAT MEASURE, DEPENDENT ON CONSTITUTION.

When I reflect on the unambitious retirement in which I passed the earlier part of my life in the country, I cannot avoid feeling some pain in thinking that those happy days are never to return. In that retreat all nature seemed capable of affording pleasure: I then made no refinements on happiness, but could be pleased with the most awkward efforts of rustic mirth; thought cross purposes the highest stretch of human wit, and questions and commands the most rational amusement for spending the evening. Happy could so charming an illusion still continue. I find age and knowledge only contribute to sour our dispositions. My present enjoyments may be more refined, but they are

infinitely less pleasing. The pleasure Garrick gives can no way compare to that I have received from a country wag, who imitated a quaker's sermon. The music of Matei is dissonance to what I felt when our old dairymaid sang me into tears with Johnny Armstrong's Last Good Night, or the cruelty of Barbara Allan.

Writers of every age have endeavoured to shew that pleasure is in us, and not in the objects offered for our amusement. If the soul be happily disposed, every thing becomes a subject of entertainment, and distress will almost want a name. Every occurrence passes in review like the figures of a procession: some may be awkward, others ill dressed, but none but a fool is for this enraged with the master of the ceremonies.

I remember to have once seen a slave in a fortification in Flanders, who appeared no way touched with his situation. He was maimed, deformed, and chained; obliged to toil from the appearance of day till nightfall, and condemned to this for life; yet with all these circumstances of apparent wretchedness, he sang, would have danced, but that he wanted a leg, and appeared the merriest, happiest man of all the garrison. What a practical philosopher was here! a happy constitution supplied philosophy, and though seemingly destitute of wisdom, he was really wise. No reading or study had contributed to disenchant the fairy land around him. Every thing furnished him with an opportunity of mirth; and though some thought him, from his insensibility, a fool, he was such an idiot as philosophers might wish in vain to imitate.

They who like him can place themselves on that side of the world, in which every thing appears in a ridiculous or pleasing light, will find something in every occurrence to excite their good humour. The most calamitous events, either to themselves or others, can bring no new affliction: the whole world is to them a theatre, on which comedies only are acted. All the bustle of heroism, or the rants of ambition, serve only to heighten the absurdity of the scene, and make the humour more poignant. They feel, in short, as little anguish at their own distress, or the complaints of others, as the undertaker, though dressed in black, feels sorrow at a funeral.

Of all the men I ever read of, the famous Cardinal de

Retz* possessed this happiness of temper in the highest degree. As he was a man of gallantry, and despised all that wore the pedantic appearance of philosophy, wherever pleasure was to be sold, he was generally foremost to raise the auction. Being an universal admirer of the fair sex, when he found one lady cruel, he generally fell in love with another, from whom he expected a more favourable reception; if she too rejected his addresses, he never thought of retiring into deserts, or pining in hopeless distress: he persuaded himself, that instead of loving the lady, he only fancied he had loved her, and so all was well again. When fortune wore her angriest look, when he at last fell into the power of his most deadly enemy, Cardinal Mazarine, and was confined a close prisoner in the Castle of Valenciennes, he never attempted to support his distress by wisdom or philosophy, for he pretended to neither. He laughed at himself and his persecutor, and seemed infinitely pleased at his new situation. In this mansion of distress, though secluded from his friends, though denied all the amusements, and even the conveniencies of life, teased every hour by the impertinence of wretches who were employed to guard him, he still retained his good humour, laughed at all their little spite, and carried the jest so far as to be revenged, by writing the life of his jailer.

All that philosophy can teach, is to be stubborn or sullen under misfortunes. The Cardinal's example will instruct us to be merry in circumstances of the highest affliction. It matters not whether our good humour be construed by others into insensibility, or even idiotism: it is happiness to ourselves, and none but a fool would measure his satisfaction by what the world thinks of it.

Dick Wildgoose was one of the happiest silly fellows I ever knew. He was of the number of those good-natured creatures that are said to do no harm to any but themselves. Whenever Dick fell into any misery, he usually called it "seeing life." If his head was broke by a chairman, or his pocket picked by a sharper, he comforted himself by imitating the Hibernian dialect of the one, or the more fashionable cant of the other. Nothing came amiss to Dick.

* Jean Francis Paul Gondi, Cardinal de Retz, after a life of turbulence, in the course of which he experienced many changes of fortune, died in retirement in 1679. Voltaire said of him, that in his youth he lived like Catiline, and like Atticus in his old age. — B.

His inattention to money matters had incensed his father to such a degree, that all the intercession of friends in his favour was fruitless. The old gentleman was on his death-bed. The whole family, and Dick among the number, gathered round him. "I leave my second son Andrew," said the expiring miser, "my whole estate, and desire him to be frugal." Andrew, in a sorrowful tone, as is usual on these occasions, "prayed Heaven to prolong his life and health to enjoy it himself."—"I recommend Simon, my third son, to the care of his elder brother, and leave him beside four thousand pounds."—"Ah, father!" cried Simon, (in great affliction to be sure,) "may Heaven give you life and health to enjoy it yourself!" At last, turning to poor Dick, "As for you, you have always been a sad dog—you'll never come to good, you'll never be rich; I'll leave you a shilling to buy a halter."—"Ah, father!" cries Dick, without any emotion, "may Heaven give you life and health to enjoy it yourself!" This was all the trouble the loss of fortune gave this thoughtless imprudent creature. However, the tenderness of an uncle recompensed the neglect of a father; and Dick is not only excessively good humoured, but competently rich.

The world, in short, may cry out at a bankrupt who appears at a ball; at an author, who laughs at the public which pronounces him a dunce; at a general, who smiles at the reproach of the vulgar; or the lady, who keeps her good humour in spite of scandal: but such is the wisest behaviour they can possibly assume. It is certainly a better way to oppose calamity by dissipation, than to take up the arms of reason or resolution to oppose it: by the first method we forget our miseries, by the last we only conceal them from others. By struggling with misfortunes, we are sure to receive some wounds in the conflict: the only method to come off victorious, is by running away.

## ON OUR THEATRES.

Mademoiselle Clairon,* a celebrated actress at Paris, seems to me the most perfect female figure I have ever seen

* Garrick, whose authority in stage criticism ought to carry some weight, professed the highest admiration of the professional talents of

upon any stage. Not perhaps that nature has been more liberal of personal beauty to her, than some to be seen upon our theatres at home. There are actresses here who have as much of what connoisseurs call statuary grace, by which is meant elegance unconnected with motion, as she; but they all fall infinitely short of her, when the soul comes to give expression to the limbs, and animates every feature.

Her first appearance is excessively engaging: she never comes in staring round upon the company, as if she intended to count the benefits of the house, or at least to see, as well as be seen. Her eyes are always, at first, intently fixed upon the persons of the drama, and she lifts them, by degrees, with enchanting diffidence, upon the spectators. Her first speech, or at least the first part of it, is delivered with scarcely any motion of the arm; her hands and her tongue never set out together; but the one prepares us for the other. She sometimes begins with a mute eloquent attitude; but never goes forward all at once with hands, eyes, head, and voice. This observation, though it may appear of no importance, should certainly be adverted to; nor do I see any one performer (Garrick only excepted) among us, that is not in this particular apt to offend. By this simple beginning she gives herself a power of rising in the passion of the scene. As she proceeds, every gesture, every look, acquires new violence, till at last, transported, she fills the whole vehemence of the part, and all the idea of the poet.

Her hands are not alternately stretched out, and then drawn in again, as with the singing women at Sadler's Wells: they are employed with graceful variety, and every moment please with new and unexpected eloquence. Add to this, that their motion is generally from the shoulder;

this accomplished actress, the Siddons of the French stage. Voltaire also has celebrated her in a poetical epistle addressed to her in 1765, from which we extract the following lines: —

Toi que forma Venus, et que Minerve anime,
Toi qui ressuscitas sous mes rustiques toits,
L'Electre de Sophocle aux accents de ta voix,
* * * * * *
Toi qui peins la nature en osant l'embellir,
Souveraine d'un art que tu sus ennoblir,
Toi dont un geste, un mot m'attendrit et m'enflamme,
Si j'aime tes talents, je respecte ton ame.
L'amitie, la grandeur, la fermete, la foi,
Les vertus que tu peins, je les retrouve en toi;
* * * * * *
Corneille, des Romains peintre majestueux,
T'aurait vue aussi noble, aussi romaine qu'eux. — B

she never flourishes her hands while the upper part of her arm is motionless, nor has she the ridiculous appearance as if her elbows were pinned to her hips.

But of all the cautions to be given to our rising actresses, I would particularly recommend it to them never to take notice of the audience upon any occasion whatsoever; let the spectators applaud never so loudly, their praises should pass, except at the end of the epilogue, with seeming inattention. I can never pardon a lady on the stage, who, when she draws the admiration of the whole audience, turns about to make them a low curtsy for their applause. Such a figure no longer continues Belvidera, but at once drops into Mrs Cibber. Suppose a sober tradesman, who once a-year takes his shilling's worth at Drury Lane, in order to be delighted with the figure of a queen — the queen of Sheba, for instance, or any other queen — this honest man has no other idea of the great but from their superior pride and impertinence: suppose such a man placed among the spectators, the first figure that appears on the stage is the queen herself, curtsying and cringing to all the company, how can he fancy her the haughty favourite of King Solomon the wise, who appears actually more submissive than the wife of his bosom? We are all tradesmen of a nicer relish in this respect, and such conduct must disgust every spectator, who loves to have the illusion of nature strong upon him.

Yet, while I recommend to our actresses a skilful attention to gesture, I would not have them study it in the looking-glass. This, without some precaution, will render their action formal; by too great an intimacy with this, they become stiff and affected. People seldom improve when they have no other model but themselves to copy after. I remember to have known a notable performer of the other sex, who made great use of this flattering monitor, and yet was one of the stiffest figures I ever saw. I am told his apartment was hung round with looking-glasses, that he might see his person twenty times reflected upon entering the room; and I will make bold to say, he saw twenty very ugly fellows whenever he did so.

# THE BEE.

No. III. — SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1759.

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## ON THE USE OF LANGUAGE.

THE manner in which most writers begin their treatises on the use of language, is generally thus: — "Language has been granted to man, in order to discover his wants and necessities, so as to have them relieved by society. Whatever we desire, whatever we wish, it is but to clothe those desires or wishes in words, in order to fruition; the principal use of language, therefore," say they, "is to express our wants, so as to receive a speedy redress."

Such an account as this may serve to satisfy grammarians and rhetoricians well enough, but men who know the world maintain very contrary maxims: they hold, and I think with some show of reason, that he who best knows how to conceal his necessity and desires, is the most likely person to find redress; and that the true use of speech is not so much to express our wants, as to conceal them.

When we reflect on the manner in which mankind generally confer their favours, we shall find, that they who seem to want them least, are the very persons who most liberally share them. There is something so attractive in riches, that the large heap generally collects from the smaller; and the poor find as much pleasure in increasing the enormous mass, as the miser who owns it sees happiness in its increase. Nor is there in this any thing repugnant to the laws of true morality. Seneca himself allows, that in conferring benefits, the present should always be suited to the dignity of the receiver. Thus the rich receive large presents, and are thanked for accepting them; men of middling stations are obliged to be content with presents something less; while the beggar, who may be truly said to want indeed, is well paid if a farthing rewards his warmest solicitations.

Every man who has seen the world, and has had his ups and downs in life, as the expression is, must have frequently experienced the truth of this doctrine, and must know, that to have much, or to seem to have it, is the only way to have more. Ovid finely compares a man of broken fortune to a falling column: the lower it sinks, the greater weight it is obliged to sustain. Thus, when a man has no occasion to borrow, he finds numbers willing to lend him. Should he ask his friend to lend him a hundred pounds, it is possible, from the largeness of his demand, he may find credit for twenty; but should he humbly only sue for a trifle, it is two to one whether he might be trusted for twopence. A certain young fellow at George's, whenever he had occasion to ask his friend for a guinea, used to prelude his request as if he wanted two hundred, and talked so familiarly of large sums, that none could ever think he wanted a small one. The same gentleman, whenever he wanted credit for a new suit from his tailor, always made a proposal in laced clothes; for he found by experience, that if he appeared shabby on these occasions, Mr Lynch had taken an oath against trusting; or, what was every bit as bad, his foreman was out of the way, and would not be at home these two days.

There can be no inducement to reveal our wants, except to find pity, and by this means relief; but before a poor man opens his mind in such circumstances, he should first consider whether he is contented to lose the esteem of the person he solicits, and whether he is willing to give up friendship only to excite compassion. Pity and friendship are passions incompatible with each other, and it is impossible that both can reside in any breast for the smallest space, without impairing each other.* Friendship is made up of esteem and pleasure; pity is composed of sorrow and contempt: the mind may for some time fluctuate between them, but it never can entertain both together.

Yet, let it not be thought that I would exclude pity from the human mind. There are scarcely any who are not, in some degree, possessed of this pleasing softness; but it is at best but a short-lived passion, and seldom affords distress more than transitory assistance; with some it scarcely lasts from the first impulse till the hand can be put into the

* This is hard doctrine, and its truth is at least questionable. Pity, surely, does not necessarily imply contempt; and perhaps the most remarkable instances of friendship are to be found among men of unequal fortune. — B.

pocket; with others it may continue for twice that space, and on some of extraordinary sensibility I have seen it operate for half an hour. But, however, last as it will, it generally produces but beggarly effects; and where, from this motive, we give a halfpenny, from others we give always pounds. In great distress, we sometimes, it is true, feel the influence of tenderness strongly; when the same distress solicits a second time, we then feel with diminished sensibility, but, like the repetition of an echo, every new impulse becomes weaker, till at last our sensations lose every mixture of sorrow, and degenerate into downright contempt.

Jack Spindle and I were old acquaintance; but he's gone. Jack was bred in a counting-house, and his father dying just as he was out of his time, left him a handsome fortune, and many friends to advise with. The restraint in which he had been brought up had thrown a gloom upon his temper, which some regarded as habitual prudence, and from such considerations, he had every day repeated offers of friendship. Those who had money were ready to offer him their assistance that way; and they who had daughters, frequently in the warmth of affection advised him to marry. Jack, however, was in good circumstances; he wanted neither money, friends, nor a wife, and therefore modestly declined their proposals.

Some errors in the management of his affairs, and several losses in trade, soon brought Jack to a different way of thinking; and he at last thought it his best way to let his friends know, that their offers were at length acceptable. His first address was, therefore, to a scrivener, who had formerly made him frequent offers of money and friendship, at a time when, perhaps, he knew those offers would have been refused.

Jack, therefore, thought he might use his old friend without any ceremony; and, as a man confident of not being refused, requested the use of a hundred guineas for a few days, as he just then had an occasion for money. "And pray, Mr Spindle," replied the scrivener, "do you want all this money?"—"Want it, sir," says the other, "if I did not want it, I should not have asked it."—"I am sorry for that," says the friend; "for those who want money when they come to borrow, will want money when they should come to pay. To say the truth, Mr Spindle, money is money now-a-days. I believe it is all sunk in the bottom

of the sea, for my part; and he that has got a little, is a fool if he does not keep what he has got."

Not quite disconcerted by this refusal, our adventurer was resolved to apply to another, whom he knew to be the very best friend he had in the world. The gentleman whom he now addressed, received his proposal with all the affability that could be expected from generous friendship. "Let me see,—you want a hundred guineas; and, pray, dear Jack, would not fifty answer?"—"If you have but fifty to spare, sir, I must be contented."—"Fifty to spare! I do not say that, for I believe I have but twenty about me."—"Then I must borrow the other thirty from some other friend."—"And pray," replied the friend, "would it not be the best way to borrow the whole money from that other friend, and then one note will serve for all, you know? Lord, Mr Spindle, make no ceremony with me at any time; you know I'm your friend, when you choose a bit of dinner or so. You, Tom, see the gentleman down. You won't forget to dine with us now and then? Your very humble servant."

Distressed, but not discouraged at this treatment, he was at last resolved to find that assistance from love, which he could not have from friendship. Miss Jenny Dismal had a fortune in her own hands, and she had already made all the advances that her sex's modesty would permit. He made his proposal, therefore, with confidence, but soon perceived, "No bankrupt ever found the fair one kind." Miss Jenny and Master Billy Galoon were lately fallen deeply in love with each other, and the whole neighbourhood thought it would soon be a match.

Every day now began to strip Jack of his former finery: his clothes flew piece by piece to the pawnbrokers; and he seemed at length equipped in the genuine mourning of antiquity. But still he thought himself secure from starving; the numberless invitations he had received to dine, even after his losses, were yet unanswered; he was, therefore, now resolved to accept of a dinner, because he wanted one; and in this manner he actually lived among his friends a whole week without being openly affronted. The last place I saw poor Jack was at the Reverend Dr Gosling's. He had, as he fancied, just nicked the time, for he came in as the cloth was laying. He took a chair without being desired, and talked for some time without being attended to. He assured the company, that nothing procured so good an appetite as

a walk to White Conduit House, where he had been that morning. He looked at the tablecloth, and praised the figure of the damask, talked of a feast where he had been the day before, but that the venison was overdone. All this, however, procured the poor creature no invitation, and he was not yet sufficiently hardened to stay without being asked; wherefore, finding the gentleman of the house insensible to all his fetches, he thought proper at last to retire, and mend his appetite by a walk in the Park.

You then, O ye beggars of my acquaintance, whether in rags or lace — whether in Kent Street, or the Mall — whether at Smyrna or St Giles's, — might I advise you as a friend, never seem in want of the favour which you solicit. Apply to every passion but pity for redress. You may find relief from vanity, from self-interest, or from avarice, but seldom from compassion. The very eloquence of a poor man is disgusting; and that mouth which is opened, even for flattery, is seldom expected to close without a petition.

If, then, you would ward off the gripe of poverty, pretend to be a stranger to her, and she will at least use you with ceremony. Hear not my advice, but that of Offellus. If you be caught dining upon a halfpenny porringer of pease soup and potatoes, praise the wholesomeness of your frugal repast. You may observe that Dr Cheyne has prescribed pease broth for the gravel; hint that you are not one of those who are always making a god of your belly. If you are obliged to wear a flimsy stuff in the midst of winter, be the first to remark that stuffs are very much worn at Paris. If there be found some irreparable defects in any part of your equipage, which cannot be concealed by all the arts of sitting cross-legged, coaxing, or darning, say that neither you nor Sampson Gideon were ever very fond of dress. Or if you be a philosopher, hint that Plato and Seneca are the tailors you choose to employ; assure the company, that men ought to be content with a bare covering, since what is now so much the pride of some, was formerly our shame. Horace will give you a Latin sentence fit for the occasion, —

**Toga defendere frigus,**
**Quamvis crassa, queat.***

In short, however caught, do not give up, but ascribe to

* My robe, though homely, keeps its owner warm.

the frugality of your disposition, what others might be apt to attribute to the narrowness of your circumstances, and appear rather to be a miser than a beggar. To be poor, and to seem poor, is a certain method never to rise. Pride in the great is hateful, in the wise it is ridiculous; beggarly pride is the only sort of vanity I can excuse.

## THE HISTORY OF HYPASIA.

MAN, when secluded from society, is not a more solitary being than the woman who leaves the duties of her own sex to invade the privileges of ours. She seems, in such circumstances, like one in banishment; she appears like a neutral being between the sexes; and, though she may have the admiration of both, she finds true happiness from neither.

Of all the ladies of antiquity I have read of, none was ever more justly celebrated than the beautiful Hypasia, the daughter of Leon the philosopher. This most accomplished of women was born at Alexandria, in the reign of Theodosius the younger. Nature was never more lavish of its gifts than it had been to her, endued as she was with the most exalted understanding, and the happiest turn to science. Education completed what nature had begun, and made her the prodigy not only of her age, but the glory of her sex.

From her father she learned geometry and astronomy; she collected from the conversation and schools of the other philosophers, for which Alexandria was at that time famous, the principles of the rest of the sciences.

What cannot be conquered by natural penetration and a passion of study? The boundless knowledge which, at that period of time, was required to form the character of a philosopher, no way discouraged her; she delivered herself up to the study of Aristotle and Plato, and soon not one in all Alexandria understood so perfectly as she all the difficulties of these two philosophers.

But not their systems alone, but those of every other sect, were quite familiar to her; and, to this knowledge, she added that of polite learning, and the art of oratory. All the learning which it was possible for the human mind to contain, being joined to a most enchanting eloquence, rendered this lady the wonder not only of the populace,

who easily admire, but of philosophers themselves, who are seldom fond of admiration.

The city of Alexandria was every day crowded with strangers, who came from all parts of Greece and Asia to see and hear her. As for the charms of her person, they might not probably have been mentioned, did she not join to a beauty the most striking, a virtue that might repress the most assuming; and though, in the whole capital famed for charms, there was not one who could equal her in beauty; though in a city, the resort of all the learning then existing in the world, there was not one who could equal her in knowledge; yet, with such accomplishments, Hypasia was the most modest of her sex. Her reputation for virtue was not less than her virtues; and, though in a city divided between two factions, though visited by the wits and the philosophers of the age, calumny never dared to suspect her morals, or attempt her character. Both the Christians and the Heathens who have transmitted her history and her misfortunes, have but one voice, when they speak of her beauty, her knowledge, and her virtue. Nay, so much harmony reigns in their accounts of this prodigy of perfection, that, in spite of the opposition of their faith, we should never have been able to judge of what religion was Hypasia, were we not informed, from other circumstances, that she was a heathen. Providence had taken so much pains in forming her, that we are almost induced to complain of its not having endeavoured to make her a Christian; but from this complaint we are deterred by a thousand contrary observations, which lead us to reverence its inscrutable mysteries.

This great reputation, of which she so justly was possessed, was, at last, however, the occasion of her ruin.

The person who then possessed the patriarchate of Alexandria, was equally remarkable for his violence, cruelty, and pride. Conducted by an ill grounded zeal for the Christian religion, or, perhaps, desirous of augmenting his authority in the city, he had long meditated the banishment of the Jews. A difference arising between them and the Christians, with respect to some public games, seemed to him a proper juncture for putting his ambitious designs into execution. He found no difficulty in exciting the people, naturally disposed to revolt. The præfect who, at that time, commanded the city, interposed on this occasion, and thought it just to put one of the chief creatures of the patriarch to

the torture, in order to discover the first promoter of the conspiracy. The patriarch, enraged at the injustice he thought offered to his character and dignity, and piqued at the protection which was offered to the Jews, sent for the chiefs of the synagogue, and enjoined them to renounce their designs, upon pain of incurring his highest displeasure.

The Jews, far from fearing his menaces, excited new tumults, in which several citizens had the misfortune to fall. The patriarch could no longer contain: at the head of a numerous body of Christians, he flew to the synagogues, which he demolished, and drove the Jews from a city, of which they had been possessed since the times of Alexander the Great. It may be easily imagined, that the præfect could not behold, without pain, his jurisdiction thus insulted, and the city deprived of a number of its most industrious inhabitants.

The affair was, therefore, brought before the emperor. The patriarch complained of the excesses of the Jews, and the præfect, of the outrages of the patriarch. At this very juncture, five hundred monks of Mount Nitria, imagining the life of their chief to be in danger, and that their religion was threatened in his fall, flew into the city with ungovernable rage, attacked the præfect in the streets, and, not content with loading him with reproaches, wounded him in several places.

The citizens had by this time notice of the fury of the monks; they therefore assembled in a body, put the monks to flight, seized on him who had been found throwing a stone, and delivered him to the præfect, who caused him to be put to death without farther delay.

The patriarch immediately ordered the dead body, which had been exposed to view, to be taken down, procured for it all the pomp and rites of burial, and went even so far as himself to pronounce the funeral oration, in which he classed a seditious monk among the martyrs. This conduct was by no means generally approved of; the most moderate even among the Christians perceived and blamed his indiscretion; but he was now too far advanced to retire. He had made several overtures towards a reconciliation with the præfect, which not succeeding, he bore all those an implacable hatred whom he imagined to have any hand in traversing his designs; but Hypasia was particularly destined to ruin. She could not find pardon, as she was known to

have a most refined friendship for the præfect; wherefore the populace were incited against her. Peter, a reader of the principal church, one of those vile slaves by which men in power are too frequently attended—wretches ever ready to commit any crime which they hope may render them agreeable to their employer,—this fellow, I say, attended by a crowd of villains, waited for Hypasia, as she was returning from a visit, at her own door, seized her as she was going in, and dragged her to one of the churches called Cesarea, where, stripping her in a most inhuman manner, they exercised the most inhuman cruelties upon her, cut her into pieces, and burnt her remains to ashes. Such was the end of Hypasia, the glory of her own sex, and the astonishment of ours.

## ON JUSTICE AND GENEROSITY.

Lysippus is a man whose greatness of soul the whole world admires. His generosity is such that it prevents a demand, and saves the receiver the trouble and the confusion of a request. His liberality also does not oblige more by its greatness than by his inimitable grace in giving. Sometimes he even distributes his bounties to strangers, and has been known to do good offices to those who professed themselves his enemies. All the world are unanimous in the praise of his generosity: there is only one sort of people who complain of his conduct,—Lysippus does not pay his debts.

It is no difficult matter to account for a conduct so seemingly incompatible with itself. There is greatness in being generous, and there is only simple justice in satisfying his creditors. Generosity is the part of a soul raised above the vulgar. There is in it something of what we admire in heroes, and praise with a degree of rapture. Justice, on the contrary, is a mere mechanic virtue, fit only for tradesmen, and what is practised by every broker in Change Alley.

In paying his debts a man barely does his duty, and it is an action attended with no sort of glory. Should Lysippus satisfy his creditors, who would be at the pains of telling it to the world? Generosity is a virtue of a very different

complexion. It is raised above duty, and, from its elevation, attracts the attention and the praises of us little mortals below.

In this manner do men generally reason upon justice and generosity. The first is despised, though a virtue essential to the good of society; and the other attracts our esteem, which too frequently proceeds from an impetuosity of temper, rather directed by vanity than reason. Lysippus is told that his banker asks a debt of forty pounds, and that a distressed acquaintance petitions for the same sum. He gives it without hesitating to the latter; for he demands as a favour what the former requires as a debt.

Mankind in general are not sufficiently acquainted with the import of the word *justice:* it is commonly believed to consist only in a performance of those duties to which the laws of society can oblige us. This, I allow, is sometimes the import of the word, and in this sense justice is distinguished from equity; but there is a justice still more extensive, and which can be shewn to embrace all the virtues united.

Justice may be defined to be that virtue which impels us to give to every person what is his due. In this extended sense of the word, it comprehends the practice of every virtue which reason prescribes, or society should expect. Our duty to our Maker, to each other, and to ourselves, are fully answered, if we give them what we owe them. Thus justice, properly speaking, is the only virtue, and all the rest have their origin in it.

The qualities of candour, fortitude, charity, and generosity, for instance, are not, in their own nature, virtues; and if ever they deserve the title, it is owing only to justice, which impels and directs them. Without such a moderator, candour might become indiscretion, fortitude obstinacy, charity imprudence, and generosity mistaken profusion.

A disinterested action, if it be not conducted by justice, is at best indifferent in its nature, and not unfrequently even turns to vice. The expenses of society, of presents, of entertainments, and the other helps to cheerfulness, are actions merely indifferent, when not repugnant to a better method of disposing of our superfluities; but they become vicious when they obstruct or exhaust our abilities from a more virtuous disposition of our circumstances.

True generosity is a duty as indispensably necessary as

those imposed upon us by law. It is a rule imposed upon us by reason, which should be the sovereign law of a rational being. But this generosity does not consist in obeying every impulse of humanity, in following blind passion for our guide, and impairing our circumstances by present benefactions, so as to render us incapable of future ones.

Misers are generally characterized as men without honour or without humanity, who live only to accumulate, and to this passion sacrifice every other happiness. They have been described as madmen, who, in the midst of abundance, banish every pleasure, and make from imaginary wants real necessities. But few, very few, correspond to this exaggerated picture ; and perhaps there is not one in whom all these circumstances are found united. Instead of this, we find the sober and the industrious branded by the vain and the idle with this odious appellation ; men who, by frugality and labour, raise themselves above their equals, and contribute their share of industry to the common stock.

Whatever the vain or the ignorant may say, well were it for society had we more of this character among us. In general, these close men are found at last the true benefactors of society. With an avaricious man we seldom lose in our dealings ; but too frequently in our commerce with prodigality.

A French priest, whose name was Godinot, went for a long time by the name of the Griper. He refused to relieve the most apparent wretchedness, and, by a skilful management of his vineyard, had the good fortune to acquire immense sums of money. The inhabitants of Rheims, who were his fellow-citizens, detested him ; and the populace, who seldom love a miser, wherever he went received him with contempt. He still, however, continued his former simplicity of life, his amazing and unremitted frugality. This good man had long perceived the wants of the poor in the city, particularly in having no water but what they were obliged to buy at an advanced price ; wherefore, that whole fortune which he had been amassing, he laid out in an aqueduct, by which he did the poor more useful and lasting service, than if he had distributed his whole income in charity every day at his door.

Among men long conversant with books, we too frequently find those misplaced virtues of which I have been now complaining. We find the studious animated with a

strong passion for the great virtues, as they are mistakingly called, and utterly forgetful of the ordinary ones. The declamations of philosophy are generally rather exhausted on these supererogatory duties, than on such as are indispensably necessary. A man, therefore, who has taken his ideas of mankind from study alone, generally comes into the world with a heart melting at every fictitious distress. Thus he is induced, by misplaced liberality, to put himself into the indigent circumstances of the person he relieves.

I shall conclude this paper with the advice of one of the ancients, to a young man whom he saw giving away all his substance to pretended distress. "It is possible that the person you relieve may be an honest man; and I know that you who relieve him are such. You see, then, by your generosity, you only rob a man who is certainly deserving, to bestow it on one who may possibly be a rogue; and, while you are unjust in rewarding uncertain merit, you are doubly guilty by stripping yourself."

## SOME PARTICULARS RELATING TO FATHER FREIJO.

Primus mortales tollere contra
Est oculos ausus, primusque assurgere contra. —LUCR.

THE Spanish nation has, for many centuries past, been remarkable for the grossest ignorance in polite literature, especially in point of natural philosophy—a science so useful to mankind, that her neighbours have ever esteemed it a matter of the greatest importance to endeavour, by repeated experiments, to strike a light out of the chaos in which truth seemed to be confounded. Their curiosity in this respect was so indifferent, that though they had discovered new worlds, they were at a loss to explain the phenomena of their own, and their pride so unaccountable, that they disdained to borrow from others that instruction which their natural indolence permitted them not to acquire.

It gives me, however, a secret satisfaction to behold an extraordinary genius now existing in that nation, whose studious endeavours seem calculated to undeceive the superstitious, and instruct the ignorant,—I mean the celebrated Padre Freijo. In unravelling the mysteries of

ature, and explaining physical experiments, l
pportunity of displaying the concurrence of sec
n those very wonders which the vulgar ascri
atural influence.

An example of this kind happened a few y
mall town of the kingdom of Valencia. Pas
t the hour of mass, he alighted from his m
eeded to the parish church, which he fou
crowded, and there appeared on the faces
a more than usual alacrity. The sun, it seer
been for some minutes under a cloud, had b
a large crucifix, that stood on the middl
udded with several precious stones. The
ese, and from the diamond eyes of some s
led the multitude, that they unanimously
cle! a miracle!" whilst the priest at t
ning consternation, continued his heavenl
re Freijo soon dissipated the charm,
dkerchief round the head of one of the sta
was arraigned by the Inquisition; whos
er, he has had the good fortune hitherto to

# THE BEE.

## No. IV. — SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1759.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

WERE I to measure the merit of my present undertaking by its success, or the rapidity of its sale, I might be led to form conclusions by no means favourable to the pride of an author.* Should I estimate my fame by its extent, every newspaper and magazine would leave me far behind. Their fame is diffused in a very wide circle, that of some as far as Islington, and some yet farther still; while mine, I sincerely believe, has hardly travelled beyond the sound of Bow-Bell; and while the works of others fly like unpinioned swans, I find my own move as heavily as a new plucked goose.

Still, however, I have as much pride as they who have ten times as many readers. It is impossible to repeat all the agreeable delusions in which a disappointed author is apt to find comfort. I conclude, that what my reputation wants in extent, is made up by its solidity. *Minus juvat gloria lata quam magna.* I have great satisfaction in considering the delicacy and discernment of those readers I have, and in ascribing my want of popularity to the ignorance or inattention of those I have not. All the world may forsake an author, but vanity will never forsake him.

Yet, notwithstanding so sincere a confession, I was once induced to shew my indignation against the public, by discontinuing my endeavours to please; and was bravely resolved, like Raleigh, to vex them by burning my manuscript in a passion. Upon recollection, however, I considered what set or body of people would be displeased at my rashness. The sun, after so sad an accident, might

* Goldsmith once complained very pathetically to a friend, that whenever he wrote any thing, the public *made a point* of knowing nothing about it. — B.

shine next morning as bright as usual; men might laugh and sing the next day, and transact business as before, and not a single creature feel any regret but myself.

I reflected upon the story of a minister, who, in the reign of Charles II, upon a certain occasion, resigned all his posts, and retired into the country in a fit of resentment. But as he had not given the world entirely up with his ambition, he sent a messenger to town, to see how the courtiers would bear his resignation. Upon the messenger's return he was asked, whether there appeared any commotion at court? To which he replied, there were very great ones. "Ay," says the minister, "I knew my friends would make a bustle; all petitioning the king for my restoration, I presume?"—"No, sir," replied the messenger, "they are only petitioning his majesty to be put in your place." In the same manner, should I retire in indignation, instead of having Apollo in mourning, or the Muses in a fit of the spleen; instead of having the learned world apostrophizing at my untimely decease,—perhaps all Grub Street might laugh at my fall, and self-approving dignity might never be able to shield me from ridicule. In short, I am resolved to write on, if it were only to spite them. If the present generation will not hear my voice, hearken, O Posterity, to you I call, and from you I expect redress! What rapture will it not give to have the Scaligers, Daciers, and Warburtons of future times, commenting with admiration upon every line I now write, working away those ignorant creatures who offer to arraign my merit, with all the virulence of learned approach. Ay, my friends, let them feel it: call names, never spare them; they deserve it all, and ten times more. I have been told of a critic,* who was crucified at the command of another to the reputation of Homer. That, no doubt, was more than poetical justice, and I shall be perfectly content if those who criticise me are only clapped in the pillory, kept fifteen days upon bread and water, and obliged to run the gauntlet through Paternoster Row. The truth is, I can expect happiness from Posterity either way. If I write ill, happy in being forgotten; if well, happy in being remembered with respect.

Yet, considering things in a prudential light, perhaps I

* Zoilus, the *scourge of Homer*, is said to have been crucified by order of Ptolemy Philadelphus, who was a great encourager of learning. In this monarch's reign, and by his authority, the Greek version of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint, was executed. — B.

was mistaken in designing my paper as an agreeable relaxation to the studious, or a help to conversation among the gay; instead of addressing it to such, I should have written down to the taste and apprehension of the many, and sought for reputation on the broad road. Literary fame, I now find, like religious, generally begins among the vulgar. As for the polite, they are so very polite as never to applaud upon any account. One of these, with a face screwed up into affectation, tells you, that fools may *admire*, but men of sense only *approve*. Thus, lest he should rise in rapture at any thing new, he keeps down every passion but pride and self-importance; approves with phlegm; and the poor author is damned in the taking a pinch of snuff. Another has written a book himself, and being condemned for a dunce, he turns a sort of king's evidence in criticism, and now becomes the terror of every offender. A third, possessed of full-grown reputation, shades off every beam of favour from those who endeavour to grow beneath him, and keeps down that merit, which, but for his influence, might rise into equal eminence. While others, still worse, peruse old books for their amusement, and new books only to condemn; so that the public seem heartily sick of all but the business of the day, and read every thing now with as little attention as they examine the faces of the passing crowd.

From these considerations, I was once determined to throw off all connections with taste, and fairly address my countrymen in the same engaging style and manner with other periodical pamphlets, much more in vogue than probably mine shall ever be. To effect this, I had thoughts of changing the title into that of the ROYAL BEE, the ANTI-GALICAN BEE, or the BEE'S MAGAZINE. I had laid in a proper stock of popular topics, such as encomiums on the King of Prussia, invectives against the Queen of Hungary and the French, the necessity of a militia, our undoubted sovereignty of the seas, reflections upon the present state of affairs, a dissertation upon liberty, some seasonable thoughts upon the intended bridge of Blackfriars, and an address to Britons; the history of an old woman, whose teeth grew three inches long, an ode upon our victories, a rebus, an acrostic upon Miss Peggy P. and a journal of the weather. All this, together with four extraordinary pages of letter-press, a beautiful map of England, and two prints curiously coloured from nature, I fancied might touch their very

souls. I was actually beginning an address to the people, when my pride at last overcame my prudence, and determined me to endeavour to please by the goodness of my entertainment, rather than by the magnificence of my sign.

The Spectator, and many succeeding essayists, frequently inform us of the numerous compliments paid them in the course of their lucubrations — of the frequent encouragements they meet to inspire them with ardour, and increase their eagerness to please. I have received *my letters* as well as they; but, alas! not congratulatory ones — not assuring me of success and favour, — but pregnant with bodings that might shake even fortitude itself.

One gentleman assures me, he intends to throw away no more threepences in purchasing the Bee; and, what is still more dismal, he will not recommend me as a poor author wanting encouragement to his neighbourhood, which, it seems, is very numerous. Were my soul set upon threepences, what anxiety might not a denunciation produce! But such does not happen to be the present motive of publication: I write partly to shew my good nature, and partly to shew my vanity; nor will I lay down the pen till I am satisfied one way or another.

Others have disliked the title and the motto of my paper; point out a mistake in the one, and assure me the other has been consigned to dulness by anticipation. All this may be true; but what is that to me? Titles and mottos to books are like escutcheons and dignities in the hands of a king: the wise sometimes condescend to accept of them; but none but a fool will imagine them of any real importance. We ought to depend upon intrinsic merit, and not the slender helps of title. *Nam quæ non fecimus ipsi, vix ea mostra voco.*

For my part, I am ever ready to mistrust a promising title, and have, at some expense, been instructed not to hearken to the voice of an advertisement, let it plead never so loudly, or never so long. A countryman coming one day to Smithfield, in order to take a slice of Bartholomew Fair, found a perfect show before every booth. The drummer, the fire-eater, the wire-walker, and the salt-box, were all employed to invite him in. "Just a-going; the court of the King of Prussia in all his glory: pray, gentlemen, walk in and see." From people who generously gave so much away, the clown expected a monstrous bargain for his

money when he got in. He steps up, pays his sixpence, the curtain is drawn ; when, too late, he finds that he had the best part of the show for nothing at the door.

### A FLEMISH TRADITION.

EVERY country has its traditions, which, either too minute, or not sufficiently authentic to receive historical sanction, are handed down among the vulgar, and serve at once to instruct and amuse them. Of this number, the adventures of Robin Hood, the hunting of Chevy Chase, and the bravery of Johnny Armstrong, among the English ; of Kaul Dereg, among the Irish ; and Crichton, among the Scots, are instances. Of all the traditions, however, I remember to have heard, I do not recollect any more remarkable than one still current in Flanders ; a story generally the first the peasants tell their children, when they bid them behave like Bidderman the wise. It is by no means, however, a model to be set before a polite people for imitation ; since if, on the one hand, we perceive in it the steady influence of patriotism, we, on the other, find as strong a desire of revenge. But, to wave introduction, let us to the story.

When the Saracens overran Europe with their armies, and penetrated as far even as Antwerp, Bidderman was lord of a city, which time has since swept into destruction. As the inhabitants of this country were divided under separate leaders, the Saracens found an easy conquest, and the city of Bidderman, among the rest, became a prey to the victors.

Thus dispossessed of his paternal city, our unfortunate governor, was obliged to seek refuge from the neighbouring princes, who were as yet unsubdued, and he for some time lived in a state of wretched dependence among them.

Soon, however, his love to his native country brought him back to his own city, resolved to rescue it from the enemy, or fall in the attempt : thus, in disguise, he went among the inhabitants, and endeavoured, but in vain, to excite them to a revolt. Former misfortunes lay so heavily on their minds, that they rather chose to suffer the most cruel bondage, than attempt to vindicate their former freedom.

As he was thus one day employed, whether by information or from suspicion is not known, he was apprehended by a Saracen soldier as a spy, and brought before the very tribunal at which he once presided. The account he gave of himself was by no means satisfactory. He could produce no friends to vindicate his character; wherefore, as the Saracens knew not their prisoner, and as they had no direct proofs against him, they were content with condemning him to be publicly whipped as a vagabond.

The execution of this sentence was accordingly performed with the utmost rigour. Bidderman was bound to the post, the executioner seeming disposed to add to the cruelty of the sentence, as he received no bribe for lenity. Whenever Bidderman groaned under the scourge, the other, redoubling his blows, cried out, "Does the villain murmur?" If Bidderman entreated but a moment's respite from torture, the other only repeated his former exclamation, "Does the villain murmur?"

From this period, revenge, as well as patriotism, took entire possession of his soul. His fury stooped so low as to follow the executioner with unremitting resentment. But, conceiving that the best method to attain these ends was to acquire some eminence in the city, he laid himself out to oblige its new masters, studied every art, and practised every meanness, that serve to promote the needy or render the poor pleasing; and, by these means, in a few years, he came to be of some note in the city, which justly belonged entirely to him.

The executioner was, therefore, the first object of his resentment, and he even practised the lowest fraud to gratify the revenge he owed him. A piece of plate, which Bidderman had previously stolen from the Saracen governor, he privately conveyed into the executioner's house, and then gave information of the theft. They who are any way acquainted with the rigour of the Arabian laws, know that theft is punished with immediate death. The proof was direct in this case; the executioner had nothing to offer in his own defence, and he was therefore condemned to be beheaded upon a scaffold in the public market-place. As there was no executioner in the city but the very man who was now to suffer, Bidderman himself undertook this, to him, most agreeable office. The criminal was conducted from the judgment seat, bound with cords: the scaffold was erected,

and he placed in such a manner as he might lie most con venient for the blow.

But his death alone was not sufficient to satisfy the resentment of this extraordinary man, unless it was aggravated with every circumstance of cruelty. Wherefore, coming up the scaffold, and disposing every thing in readiness for the intended blow, with the sword in his hand he approached the criminal, and, whispering in a low voice, assured him that he himself was the person that had once been used with so much cruelty; that, to his knowledge, he died very innocently, for the plate had been stolen by himself, and privately conveyed into the house of the other.

"Oh, my countrymen!" cried the criminal, "do you hear what this man says?"—"Does the villain murmur?" replied Bidderman, and immediately, at one blow, severed his head from his body.

Still, however, he was not content, till he had ample vengeance of the governors of the city, who condemned him. To effect this, he hired a small house adjoining to the town wall, under which he every day dug, and carried out the earth in a basket. In this unremitting labour he continued several years, every day digging a little, and carrying the earth unsuspected away. By this means, he at last made a secret communication from the country into the city, and only wanted the appearance of an enemy in order to betray it. This opportunity at length offered: the French army came into the neighbourhood, but had no thoughts of sitting down before a town which they considered as impregnable. Bidderman, however, soon altered their resolutions, and, upon communicating his plan to the general, he embraced it with ardour. Through the private passage above mentioned, he introduced a large body of the most resolute soldiers, who soon opened the gates for the rest, and the whole army rushing in, put every Saracen that was found to the sword.

## THE SAGACITY OF SOME INSECTS.

### TO THE AUTHOR OF THE BEE.

Sir,—Animals, in general, are sagacious, in proportion as they cultivate society. The elephant and the beaver

shew the greatest signs of this when united; but when man intrudes into their communities, they lose all their spirit of industry, and testify but a very small share of that sagacity, for which, when in a social state, they are so remarkable.

Among insects, the labours of the bee and the ant have employed the attention and admiration of the naturalist; but their whole sagacity is lost upon separation, and a single bee or ant seems destitute of every degree of industry, is the most stupid insect imaginable, languishes for a time in solitude, and soon dies.

Of all the solitary insects I have ever remarked, the spider is the most sagacious; and its actions, to me who have attentively considered them, seem almost to exceed belief. This insect is formed by nature for a state of war, not only upon other insects, but upon each other. For this state, nature seems perfectly well to have formed it. Its head and breast are covered with a strong natural coat of mail, which is impenetrable to the attempts of every other insect, and its belly is enveloped in a soft pliant skin, which eludes the sting even of a wasp. Its legs are terminated by strong claws, not unlike those of a lobster; and their vast length, like spears, serves to keep every assailant at a distance.

Not worse furnished for observation than for an attack or a defence, it has several eyes, large, transparent, and covered with a horny substance, which, however, does not impede its vision. Besides this, it is furnished with a forceps above the mouth, which serves to kill or secure the prey already caught in its claws or its net.

Such are the implements of war with which the body is immediately furnished; but its net to entangle the enemy seems what it chiefly trusts to, and what it takes most pains to render as complete as possible. Nature has furnished the body of this little creature with a glutinous liquid, which, proceeding from the anus, it spins into thread, coarser or finer as it chooses to contract or dilate its sphincter. In order to fix its thread, when it begins to weave it emits a small drop of its liquid against the wall, which, hardening by degrees, serves to hold the thread very firmly; then receding from the first point, as it recedes the thread lengthens; and, when the spider has come to the place where the other end of the thread should be fixed, gathering up with its claws the thread which would otherwise be too

slack, it is stretched tightly, and fixed in the same manner to the wall as before.

In this manner, it spins and fixes several threads parallel to each other, which, so to speak, serve as the warp to the intended web. To form the woof, it spins in the same manner its thread, transversely fixing one end to the first thread that was spun, and which is always the strongest of the whole web, and the other to the wall. All these threads, being newly spun, are glutinous, and therefore stick to each other wherever they happen to touch; and, in those parts of the web most exposed to be torn, our natural artist strengthens them, by doubling the threads sometimes six-fold.

Thus far naturalists have gone in the description of this animal; what follows, is the result of my own observation upon that species of the insect called a house spider. I perceived, about four years ago, a large spider in one corner of my room, making its web; and, though the maid frequently levelled her fatal broom against the labours of the little animal, I had the good fortune then to prevent its destruction; and, I may say, it more than paid me by the entertainment it afforded.

In three days the web was, with incredible diligence, completed; nor could I avoid thinking, that the insect seemed to exult in its new abode. It frequently traversed it round, examined the strength of every part of it, retired into its hole, and came out very frequently. The first enemy, however, it had to encounter, was another and a much larger spider, which, having no web of its own, and having probably exhausted all its stock in former labours of this kind, came to invade the property of its neighbour. Soon, then, a terrible encounter ensued, in which the invader seemed to have the victory, and the laborious spider was obliged to take refuge in its hole. Upon this I perceived the victor using every art to draw the enemy from his strong-hold. He seemed to go off, but quickly returned; and when he found all arts in vain, began to demolish the new web without mercy. This brought on another battle, and, contrary to my expectations, the laborious spider became conqueror, and fairly killed his antagonist.

Now, then, in peaceable possession of what was justly its own, it waited three days with the utmost patience, repairing

the breaches of its web, and taking no sustenance that I could perceive. At last, however, a large blue fly fell into the snare, and struggled hard to get loose. The spider gave it leave to entangle itself as much as possible, but it seemed to be too strong for the cobweb. I must own I was greatly surprised when I saw the spider immediately sally out, and in less than a minute weave a new net round its captive, by which the motion of its wings was stopped; and when it was fairly hampered in this manner, it was seized, and dragged into the hole.

In this manner it lived, in a precarious state; and nature seemed to have fitted it for such a life, for upon a single fly it subsisted for more than a week. I once put a wasp into the net; but when the spider came out in order to seize it as usual, upon perceiving what kind of an enemy it had to deal with, it instantly broke all the bands that held it fast, and contributed all that lay in its power to disengage so formidable an antagonist. When the wasp was at liberty, I expected the spider would have set about repairing the breaches that were made in its net, but those it seems were irreparable; wherefore the cobweb was now entirely forsaken, and a new one begun, which was completed in the usual time.

I had now a mind to try how many cobwebs a single spider could furnish; wherefore I destroyed this, and the insect set about another. When I destroyed the other also, its whole stock seemed entirely exhausted, and it could spin no more. The arts it made use of to support itself, now deprived of its great means of subsistence, were indeed surprising. I have seen it roll up its legs like a ball, and lie motionless for hours together, but cautiously watching all the time; when a fly happened to approach sufficiently near, it would dart out all at once, and often seize its prey.

Of this life, however, it soon began to grow weary, and resolved to invade the possession of some other spider, since it could not make a web of its own. It formed an attack upon a neighbouring fortification with great vigour, and at first was as vigorously repulsed. Not daunted, however, with one defeat, in this manner it continued to lay siege to another's web for three days, and at length, having killed the defendant, actually took possession. When smaller flies happen to fall into the snare, the spider

does not sally out at once, but very patiently waits till it is sure of them; for, upon his immediately approaching, the terror of his appearance might give the captive strength sufficient to get loose: the manner then is to wait patiently, till, by ineffectual and impotent struggles, the captive has wasted all its strength, and then he becomes a certain and easy conquest.

The insect I am now describing lived three years; every year it changed its skin, and got a new set of legs. I have sometimes plucked off a leg, which grew again in two or three days. At first it dreaded my approach to its web, but at last it became so familiar as to take a fly out of my hand; and, upon my touching any part of the web, would immediately leave its hole, prepared either for a defence or an attack.

To complete this description, it may be observed, that the male spiders are much less than the female, and that the latter are oviparous. When they come to lay, they spread a part of their web under the eggs, and then roll them up carefully, as we roll up things in a cloth, and thus hatch them in their hole. If disturbed in their holes, they never attempt to escape without carrying this young brood in their forceps away with them, and thus frequently are sacrificed to their parental affection.

As soon as ever the young ones leave their artificial covering, they begin to spin, and almost sensibly seem to grow bigger. If they have the good fortune, when even but a day old, to catch a fly, they fall to with good appetites; but they live sometimes three or four days without any sort of sustenance, and yet still continue to grow larger, so as every day to double their former size. As they grow old, however, they do not still continue to increase, but their legs only continue to grow longer; and when a spider becomes entirely stiff with age, and unable to seize its prey, it dies at length of hunger.

## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GREATNESS.

In every duty, in every science in which we would wish to arrive at perfection, we should propose for the object of our pursuit some certain station even beyond our abilities —

some imaginary excellence, which may amuse and serve to animate our inquiry. In deviating from others, in following an unbeaten road, though we perhaps may never arrive at the wished-for object, yet it is possible we may meet several discoveries by the way; and the certainty of small advantages, even while we travel with security, is not so amusing as the hopes of great rewards, which inspire the adventurer. "Evenit nonnunquam," says Quintilian, "ut aliquid grande inveniat qui semper quærit quod nimium est."

This enterprising spirit is, however, by no means the character of the present age; every person who should now leave received opinions, who should attempt to be more than a commentator upon philosophy, or an imitator in polite learning, might be regarded as a chimerical projector. Hundreds would be ready not only to point out his errors, but to load him with reproach. Our probable opinions are now regarded as certainties; the difficulties hitherto undiscovered as utterly inscrutable; and the writers of the last age inimitable, and therefore the properest models of imitation.

One might be almost induced to deplore the philosophic spirit of the age, which, in proportion as it enlightens the mind, increases its timidity, and represses the vigour of every undertaking. Men are now content with being prudently in the right; which, though not the way to make new acquisitions, it must be owned is the best method of securing what we have. Yet this is certain, that the writer who never deviates, who never hazards a new thought, or a new expression, though his friends may compliment him upon his sagacity, though criticism lifts her feeble voice in his praise, will seldom arrive at any degree of perfection. The way to acquire lasting esteem, is not by the fewness of a writer's faults, but the greatness of his beauties; and our noblest works are generally most replete with both.

An author who would be sublime, often runs his thought into burlesque: yet I can readily pardon his mistaking ten times for once succeeding. True genius walks along a line; and perhaps our greatest pleasure is in seeing it so often near falling, without being ever actually down.

Every science has its hitherto undiscovered mysteries, after which men should travel, undiscouraged by the failure of former adventurers. Every new attempt serves perhaps to facilitate its future invention. We may not find the

philosopher's stone, but we shall probably hit upon new inventions in pursuing it. We shall perhaps never be able to discover the longitude, yet perhaps we may arrive at new truths in the investigation.

Were any of those sagacious minds among us,—and surely no nation, or no period, could ever compare with us in this particular—were any of those minds, I say, who now sit down contented with exploring the intricacies of another's system, bravely to shake off admiration, and, undazzled with the splendour of another's reputation, to chalk out a path to fame for themselves, and boldly cultivate untried experiment, what might not be the result of their inquiries, should the same study that has made them wise make them enterprising also? What could not such qualities united produce? But such is not the character of the English: while our neighbours of the Continent lanch out into the ocean of science, without proper store for the voyage, we fear shipwreck in every breeze, and consume in port those powers which might probably have weathered every storm.

Projectors in a state are generally rewarded above their deserts; projectors in the republic of letters, never. If wrong, every inferior dunce thinks himself entitled to laugh at their disappointment; if right, men of superior talents think their honour engaged to oppose, since every new discovery is a tacit diminution of their own pre-eminence.

To aim at excellence, our reputation, our friends, and our all must be ventured; by aiming only at mediocrity, we run no risk, and we do little service. Prudence and greatness are ever persuading us to contrary pursuits. The one instructs us to be content with our station, and to find happiness in bounding every wish: the other impels us to superiority, and calls nothing happiness but rapture. The one directs us to follow mankind, and to act and think with the rest of the world: the other drives us from the crowd, and exposes us as a mark to all the shafts of envy or ignorance:

Nec minus periculum ex magna fama quam ex mala. — TACIT.

The rewards of mediocrity are immediately paid, those attending excellence generally paid in reversion. In a word, the little mind who loves itself will write and think

with the vulgar, but the great mind will be bravely eccentric, and scorn the beaten road, from universal benevolence.

## A CITY NIGHT PIECE.

Ille dolet vere, qui sine teste dolet.

The clock just struck two, the expiring taper rises and sinks in the socket, the watchman forgets the hour in slumber, the laborious and the happy are at rest, and nothing wakes but meditation, guilt, revelry, and despair. The drunkard once more fills the destroying bowl, the robber walks his midnight round, and the suicide lifts his guilty arm against his own sacred person.

Let me no longer waste the night over the page of antiquity, or the sallies of contemporary genius, but pursue the solitary walk, where vanity, ever changing, but a few hours past walked before me—where she kept up the pageant, and now, like a froward child, seems hushed with her own importunities.

What a gloom hangs all around! The dying lamp feebly emits a yellow gleam; no sound is heard but of the chiming clock, or the distant watch-dog. All the bustle of human pride is forgotten: an hour like this may well display the emptiness of human vanity.

There will come a time, when this temporary solitude may be made continual, and the city itself, like its inhabitants, fade away, and leave a desert in its room.

What cities, as great as this, have once triumphed in existence, had their victories as great, joy as just and as unbounded; and, with short-sighted presumption, promised themselves immortality! Posterity can hardly trace the situation of some: the sorrowful traveller wanders over the awful ruins of others; and, as he beholds, he learns wisdom, and feels the transience of every sublunary possession.

"Here," he cries, "stood their citadel, now grown over with weeds; there their senate-house, but now the haunt of every noxious reptile; temples and theatres stood here, now only an undistinguished heap of ruin. They are fallen, for

luxury and avarice first made them feeble. The rewards of the state were conferred on amusing, and not on useful members of society. Their riches and opulence invited the invaders, who, though at first repulsed, returned again, conquered by perseverance, and at last swept the defendants into undistinguished destruction."

How few appear in those streets which but some few hours ago were crowded! and those who appear, now no longer wear their daily mask, nor attempt to hide their lewdness or their misery.

But who are those who make the streets their couch, and find a short repose from wretchedness at the doors of the opulent? These are strangers, wanderers, and orphans, whose circumstances are too humble to expect redress, and whose distresses are too great even for pity. Their wretchedness excites rather horror than pity. Some are without the covering even of rags, and others emaciated with disease; the world has disclaimed them; society turns its back upon their distress, and has given them up to nakedness and hunger. These poor shivering females have once seen happier days, and been flattered into beauty. They have been prostituted to the gay luxurious villain, and are now turned out to meet the severity of winter. Perhaps, now lying at the doors of their betrayers, they sue to wretches whose hearts are insensible, or debauchees who may curse, but will not relieve them.

Why, why was I born a man, and yet see the sufferings of wretches I cannot relieve! Poor houseless creatures! the world will give you reproaches, but will not give you relief. The slightest misfortunes of the great, the most imaginary uneasiness of the rich, are aggravated with all the power of eloquence, and held up to engage our attention and sympathetic sorrow. The poor weep unheeded, persecuted by every subordinate species of tyranny; and every law which gives others security, becomes an enemy to them.

Why was this heart of mine formed with so much sensibility? or why was not my fortune adapted to its impulse? Tenderness, without a capacity of relieving, only makes the man who feels it more wretched than the object which sues for assistance.

But let me turn from a scene of such distress to the

sanctified hypocrite, who has been talking of virtue till the time of bed,* and now steals out, to give a loose to his vices under the protection of midnight — vices more atrocious because he attempts to conceal them. See how he pants down the dark alley, and, with hastening steps, fears an acquaintance in every face. He has passed the whole day in company he hates, and now goes to prolong the night among company that as heartily hate him. May his vices be detected! may the morning rise upon his shame! Yet I wish to no purpose: villainy, when detected, never gives up, but boldly adds impudence to imposture.†

* Then talk'd of virtue till the time of bed. — PARNELL. — B.

† This last piece forms Letter CXVII. of the *Citizen of the World;* but as the latter part of it is there omitted, we have restored it entire to its original place. — B.

# THE BEE.

No. V.—SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1759.

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## UPON POLITICAL FRUGALITY.

FRUGALITY has ever been esteemed a virtue as well among Pagans as Christians: there have been even heroes who have practised it. However, we must acknowledge, that it is too modest a virtue, or, if you will, too obscure a one, to be essential to heroism; few heroes have been able to attain to such a height. Frugality agrees much better with politics; it seems to be the base and support, and, in a word, seems to be the inseparable companion of a just administration.

However this be, there is not, perhaps, in the world a people less fond of this virtue than the English; and of consequence, there is not a nation more restless, more exposed to the uneasiness of life, or less capable of providing for particular happiness. We are taught to despise this virtue from our childhood; our education is improperly directed, and a man who has gone through the politest institutions, is generally the person who is least acquainted with the wholesome precepts of frugality. We every day hear the elegance of taste, the magnificence of some, and the generosity of others, made the subject of our admiration and applause. All this we see represented, not as the end and recompense of labour and desert, but as the actual result of genius, as the mark of a noble and exalted mind.

In the midst of these praises bestowed on luxury, for which elegance and taste are but another name, perhaps it may be thought improper to plead the cause of frugality. It may be thought low, or vainly declamatory, to exhort our

youth from the follies of dress, and of every other superfluity; to accustom themselves, even with mechanic meanness, to the simple necessaries of life. Such sort of instructions may appear antiquated; yet, however, they seem the foundations of all our virtues, and the most efficacious method of making mankind useful members of society. Unhappily, however, such discourses are not fashionable among us, and the fashion seems every day growing still more obsolete, since the press, and every other method of exhortation, seems disposed to talk of the luxuries of life as harmless enjoyments. I remember, when a boy, to have remarked, that those who in school wore the finest clothes, were pointed at as being conceited and proud. At present, our little masters are taught to consider dress betimes, and they are regarded, even at school, with contempt, who do not appear as genteel as the rest. Education should teach us to become useful, sober, disinterested, and laborious members of society; but does it not at present point out a different path? It teaches us to multiply our wants, by which means we become more eager to possess, in order to dissipate; a greater charge to ourselves, and more useless or obnoxious to society.

If a youth happens to be possessed of more genius than fortune, he is early informed, that he ought to think of his advancement in the world—that he should labour to make himself pleasing to his superiors—that he should shun low company (by which is meant the company of his equals)—that he should rather live a little above than below his fortune—that he should think of becoming great: but he finds none to admonish him to become frugal—to persevere in one single design—to avoid every pleasure and all flattery, which, however seeming to conciliate the favour of his superiors, never conciliate their esteem. There are none to teach him, that the best way of becoming happy in himself, and useful to others, is to continue in the state in which fortune at first placed him, without making too hasty strides to advancement; that greatness may be attained, but should not be expected; and that they who most impatiently expect advancement, are seldom possessed of their wishes. He has few, I say, to teach him this lesson, or to moderate his youthful passions; yet this experience may say, that a young man, who, but for six years of the early part of his life, could seem divested of all his passions, would certainly

make, or considerably increase, his fortune, and might indulge several of his favourite inclinations in manhood with the utmost security.

The efficaciousness of these means is sufficiently known and acknowledged; but as we are apt to connect a low idea with all our notions of frugality, the person who would persuade us to it might be accused of preaching up avarice.

Of all vices, however, against which morality dissuades, there is not one more undetermined than this of avarice. Misers are described by some as men divested of honour, sentiment, or humanity: but this is only an ideal picture, or the resemblance at least is found but in a few. In truth, they who are generally called misers, are some of the very best members of society. The sober, the laborious, the attentive, the frugal, are thus styled by the gay, giddy, thoughtless, and extravagant. The first set of men do society all the good, and the latter all the evil that is felt. Even the excesses of the first no way injure the commonwealth; those of the latter are the most injurious that can be conceived.

The ancient Romans, more rational than we in this particular, were very far from thus misplacing their admiration or praise: instead of regarding the practice of parsimony as low or vicious, they made it synonymous even with probity. They esteemed those virtues so inseparable, that the known expression of *Vir frugi* signified, at one and the same time, a sober and managing man, an honest man, and a man of substance.

The Scriptures, in a thousand places, praise economy; and it is every where distinguished from avarice. But, in spite of all its sacred dictates, a taste for vain pleasures and foolish expense is the ruling passion of the present times. Passion, did I call it? rather the madness which at once possesses the great and the little, the rich and the poor: even some are so intent upon acquiring the superfluities of life, that they sacrifice its necessaries in this foolish pursuit.

To attempt the entire abolition of luxury, as it would be impossible, so it is not my intent. The generality of mankind are too weak, too much slaves to custom and opinion, to resist the torrent of bad example. But if it be impossible to convert the multitude, those who have received a more extended education, who are elightened and judicious, may find some hints on this subject useful. They may see some

abuses, the suppression of which would by no means endanger public liberty ; they may be directed to the abolition of some unnecessary expenses, which have no tendency to promote happiness or virtue, and which might be directed to better purposes. Our fireworks, our public feasts and entertainments, our entries of ambassadors, &c. — what mummery all this! what childish pageants! what millions are sacrificed in paying tribute to custom! what an unnecessary charge at times when we are pressed with real want, which cannot be satisfied without burdening the poor!*

Were such suppressed entirely, not a single creature in the state would have the least cause to mourn their suppression, and many might be eased of a load they now feel lying heavily upon them. If this were put in practice, it would agree with the advice of a sensible writer of Sweden, who, in the *Gazette de France*, 1753, thus expressed himself on that subject: "It were sincerely to be wished," says he, "that the custom were established amongst us, that in all events which cause a public joy, we made our exultations conspicuous only by acts useful to society. We should then quickly see many useful monuments of our reason, which would much better perpetuate the memory of things worthy of being transmitted to posterity, and would be much more glorious to humanity, than all those tumultuous preparations of feasts, entertainments, and other rejoicings used upon such occasions."

The same proposal was long before confirmed by a Chinese emperor, who lived in the last century, who, upon an occasion of extraordinary joy, forbade his subjects to make the usual illuminations, either with a design of sparing their substance, or of turning them to some more durable indications of joy, more glorious for him, and more advantageous to his people.

After such instances of political frugality, can we then

* In this paper, the author has not sufficiently attended to the distinction between luxury as it affects individuals and as it affects a community. It uniformly hurts the individual who indulges it, by impoverishing him, but to the community at large it is not necessarily hurtful, since it only promotes the circulation of wealth ; and as it promotes industry, it may even be said to be sometimes beneficial. What is true of communities also applies to governments, which, in well regulated states, are the representatives of their respective communities, and the distributors of its resources. — B.

continue to blame the Dutch ambassador at a certain court, who receiving at his departure the portrait of the king, enriched with diamonds, asked what this fine thing might be worth? Being told that it might amount to about two thousand pounds,—"And why," cries he, "cannot his majesty keep the picture and give the money?" The simplicity may be ridiculed at first; but when we come to examine it more closely, men of sense will at once confess that he had reason in what he said, and that a purse of two thousand guineas is much more serviceable than a picture.

Should we follow the same method of state frugality in other respects, what numberless savings might not be the result! How many possibilities of saving in the administration of justice, which now burdens the subject, and enriches some members of society, who are useful only from its corruption!

It were to be wished, that they who govern kingdoms would imitate artisans. When at London a new stuff has been invented, it is immediately counterfeited in France. How happy were it for society, if a first minister would be equally solicitous to transplant the useful laws of other countries into his own. We are arrived at a perfect imitation of porcelain; let us endeavour to imitate the good to society that our neighbours are found to practise, and let our neighbours also imitate those parts of duty in which we excel.

There are some men, who, in their garden, attempt to raise those fruits which nature has adapted only to the sultry climates beneath the Line. We have at our very doors a thousand laws and customs infinitely useful: these are the fruits we should endeavour to transplant—these the exotics that would speedily become naturalized to the soil. They might grow in every climate, and benefit every possessor.

The best and the most useful laws I have ever seen, are generally practised in Holland. When two men are determined to go to law with each other, they are first obliged to go before the reconciling judges, called the peace-makers. If the parties come attended with an advocate, or a solicitor, they are obliged to retire, as we take fuel from the fire we are desirous of extinguishing.

The peace-makers then begin advising the parties, by assuring them, that it is the height of folly to waste their

substance, and make themselves mutually miserable, by having recourse to the tribunals of justice ; follow but our direction, and we will accommodate matters without any expense to either. If the rage of debate is too strong upon either party, they are remitted back for another day, in order that time may soften their tempers, and produce a reconciliation. They are thus sent for twice or thrice : if their folly happens to be incurable, they are permitted to go to law, and, as we give up to amputation such members as cannot be cured by art, justice is permitted to take its course.

It is unnecessary to make here long declamations, or calculate what society would save, were this law adopted. I am sensible, that the man who advises any reformation, only serves to make himself ridiculous. What! mankind will be apt to say, adopt the customs of countries that have not so much real liberty as our own? our present customs, what are they to any man? we are very happy under them: this must be a very pleasant fellow, who attempts to make us happier than we already are! Does he not know that abuses are the patrimony of a great part of the nation? Why deprive us of a malady by which such numbers find their account? This, I must own, is an argument to which I have nothing to reply.

What numberless savings might there not be made in both arts and commerce, particularly in the liberty of exercising trade, without the necessary prerequisites of freedom! Such useless obstructions have crept into every state, from a spirit of monopoly, a narrow selfish spirit of gain, without the least attention to general society. Such a clog upon industry frequently drives the poor from labour, and reduces them by degrees to a state of hopeless indigence. We have already a more than sufficient repugnance to labour; we should by no means increase the obstacles, or make excuses in a state for idleness. Such faults have ever crept into a state, under wrong or needy administrations.

Exclusive of the masters, there are numberless faulty expenses among the workmen,—clubs, garnishes, freedoms, and such like impositions, which are not too minute even for law to take notice of, and which should be abolished without mercy, since they are ever the inlets to excess and idleness, and are the parent of all those outrages which naturally fall upon the more useful part of society. In the towns and countries I have seen, I never saw a city or

village yet, whose miseries were not in proportion to the number of its public-houses. In Rotterdam, you may go through eight or ten streets without finding a public-house. In Antwerp, almost every second house seems an alehouse. In the one city, all wears the appearance of happiness and warm affluence ; in the other, the young fellows walk about the streets in shabby finery, their fathers sit at the door darning or knitting stockings, while their ports are filled with dunghills.

Alehouses are ever an occasion of debauchery and excess, and, either in a religious or political light, it would be our highest interest to have the greatest part of them suppressed. They should be put under laws of not continuing open beyond a certain hour, and harbouring only proper persons. These rules, it may be said, will diminish the necessary taxes; but this is false reasoning, since what was consumed in debauchery abroad, would, if such a regulation took place, be more justly, and perhaps more equitably for the workman's family, spent at home ; and this cheaper to them, and without loss of time. On the other hand, our alehouses being ever open, interrupt business ; the workman is never certain who frequents them, nor can the master be sure of having what was begun, finished at a convenient time.

A habit of frugality among the lower orders of mankind, is much more beneficial to society than the unreflecting might imagine. The pawnbroker, the attorney, and other pests of society, might, by proper management, be turned into serviceable members ; and, were these trades abolished, it is possible the same avarice that conducts the one, or the same chicanery that characterizes the other, might, by proper regulations, be converted into frugality and commendable prudence.

But some who have made the eulogium of luxury, have represented it as the natural consequence of every country that is become rich. Did we not employ our extraordinary wealth in superfluities, say they, what other means would there be to employ it in? To which it may be answered, if frugality were established in the state, if our expenses were laid out rather in the necessaries than the superfluities of life, there might be fewer wants, and even fewer pleasures, but infinitely more happiness. The rich and the great would be better able to satisfy their creditors ; they would be better able to marry their children, and, instead of one marriage

at present, there might be two, if such regulations took place.

The imaginary calls of vanity, which, in reality, contribute nothing to our real felicity, would not then be attended to, while the real calls of nature might be always and universally supplied. The difference of employment in the subject, is what, in reality, produces the good of society. If the subject be engaged in providing only the luxuries, the necessaries must be deficient in proportion. If, neglecting the produce of our own country, our minds are set upon the productions of another, we increase our wants, but not our means; and every new imported delicacy for our tables, or ornament in our equipage, is a tax upon the poor.

The true interest of every government is to cultivate the necessaries, by which is always meant, every happiness our own country can produce; and suppress all the luxuries, by which is meant, on the other hand, every happiness imported from abroad. Commerce has, therefore, its bounds; and every new import, instead of receiving encouragement, should be first examined whether it be conducive to the interest of society.

Among the many publications with which the press is every day burdened, I have often wondered why we never had, as in other countries, an Economical Journal, which might at once direct to all the useful discoveries in other countries, and spread those of our own. As other journals serve to amuse the learned, or, what is more often the case, to make them quarrel — while they only serve to give us the history of the mischievous world, for so I call our warriors, or the idle world, for so may the learned be called, — they never trouble their heads about the most useful part of mankind, our peasants and our artisans: were such a work carried into execution, with proper management and just direction, it might serve as a repository for every useful improvement, and increase that knowledge which learning often serves to confound.

Sweden seems the only country where the science of economy seems to have fixed its empire. In other countries, it is cultivated only by a few admirers, or by societies which have not received sufficient sanction to become completely useful; but here there is founded a royal academy, destined to this purpose only, composed of the most learned and powerful members of the state — an academy which declines

every thing which only terminates in amusement, erudition, or curiosity; and admits only of observations tending to illustrate husbandry, agriculture, and every real physical improvement. In this country, nothing is left to private rapacity; but every improvement is immediately diffused, and its inventor immediately recompensed by the state. Happy, were it so in other countries! By this means, every impostor would be prevented from ruining or deceiving the public with pretended discoveries or nostrums; and every real inventor would not, by this means, suffer the inconveniences of suspicion.

In short, the economy equally unknown to the prodigal and avaricious, seems to be a just mean between both extremes; and to a transgression of this at present decried virtue it is that we are to attribute a great part of the evils which infest society. A taste for superfluity, amusement, and pleasure, bring effeminacy, idleness, and expense in their train. But a thirst of riches is always proportioned to our debauchery, and the greatest prodigal is too frequently found to be the greatest miser: so that the vices which seem the most opposite, are frequently found to produce each other; and, to avoid both, it is only necessary to be frugal.

Virtus est medium vitiorum ut utrinque reductum. — Hor.

## A REVERIE.

Scarcely a day passes in which we do not hear compliments paid to Dryden, Pope, and other writers of the last age, while not a mouth comes forward that is not loaded with invectives against the writers of this. Strange, that our critics should be fond of giving their favours to those who are insensible of the obligation, and their dislike to those who, of all mankind, are most apt to retaliate the injury.

Even though our present writers had not equal merit with their predecessors, it would be politic to use them with ceremony. Every compliment paid them would be more agreeable, in proportion as they least deserved it. Tell a lady with a handsome face that she is pretty, she only thinks it her due; it is what she has heard a thousand times before

from others, and disregards the compliment: but assure a lady, the cut of whose visage is something more plain, that she looks killing to-day, she instantly bridles up, and feels the force of the well timed flattery the whole day after. Compliments which we think are deserved, we accept only as debts, with indifference; but those which conscience informs us we do not merit, we receive with the same gratitude that we do favours given away.

Our gentlemen, however, who preside at the distribution of literary fame, seem resolved to part with praise neither from motives of justice or generosity: one would think, when they take pen in hand, that it was only to blot reputations, and to put their seals to the packet which consigns every new born effort to oblivion.

Yet, notwithstanding the republic of letters hangs at present so feebly together—though those friendships which once promoted literary fame seem now to be discontinued—though every writer who now draws the quill seems to aim at profit, as well as applause,—many among them are probably laying in stores for immortality, and are provided with a sufficient stock of reputation to last the whole journey.

As I was indulging these reflections, in order to eke out the present page, I could not avoid pursuing the metaphor of going a journey in my imagination, and formed the following Reverie, too wild for allegory, and too regular for a dream:—

I fancied myself placed in the yard of a large inn, in which there were an infinite number of wagons and stage-coaches, attended by fellows who either invited the company to take their places, or were busied in packing their baggage. Each vehicle had its inscription, shewing the place of its destination. On one I could read, The Pleasure Stage Coach; on another, The Wagon of Industry; on a third, The Vanity Whim; and on a fourth, The Landau of Riches. I had some inclination to step into each of these, one after another; but, I know not by what means, I passed them by, and at last fixed my eye upon a small carriage, Berlin fashion, which seemed the most convenient vehicle at a distance in the world; and upon my nearer approach found it to be The Fame Machine.

I instantly made up to the coachman, whom I found to be an affable and seemingly good-natured fellow. He informed me, that he had but a few days ago returned from

the Temple of Fame, to which he had been carrying Addison, Swift, Pope, Steele, Congreve, and Colley Cibber: that they made but indifferent company by the way; and that he once or twice was going to empty his berlin of the whole cargo: "however," says he, "I got them all safe home, with no other damage than a black eye, which Colley gave Mr Pope, and am now returned for another coachfull."—"If that be all, friend," said I, "and if you are in want of company, I'll make one with all my heart. Open the door; I hope the machine rides easy."—"Oh, for that, sir, extremely easy." But still keeping the door shut, and measuring me with his eye, "Pray, sir, have you no luggage? You seem to be a good-natured sort of a gentleman; but I don't find you have got any luggage, and I never permit any to travel with me but such as have something valuable to pay for coach-hire." Examining my pockets, I own I was not a little disconcerted at this unexpected rebuff; but considering that I carried a number of the BEE under my arm, I was resolved to open it in his eyes, and dazzle him with the splendour of the page. He read the title and contents, however, without any emotion, and assured me he had never heard of it before. "In short, friend," said he, now losing all his former respect, "you must not come in: I expect better passengers; but as you seem a harmless creature, perhaps, if there be room left, I may let you ride a while for charity."

I now took my stand by the coachman at the door; and since I could not command a seat, was resolved to be as useful as possible, and earn by my assiduity what I could not by my merit.

The next that presented for a place was a most whimsical figure indeed.* He was hung round with papers of his own composing, not unlike those who sing ballads in the streets, and came dancing up to the door with all the confidence of instant admittance. The volubility of his motion and address prevented my being able to read more of his cargo than the word Inspector, which was written in great letters at the top of some of the papers. He opened the coach door himself without any ceremony, and was just slipping

* Sir John Hill, whom Churchill in the Rosciad describes as—

> The Proteus Hill—
> Actor, inspector, doctor, botanist.

Davies, in his *Life of Garrick*, says, that Dr Hill was a "quack in medicine, and not to be depended on in science."—B.

in, when the coachman, with as little ceremony, pulled him back. Our figure seemed perfectly angry at this repulse, and demanded gentleman's satisfaction. "Lord, sir!" replied the coachman, "instead of proper luggage, by your bulk you seem loaded for a West India voyage. You are big enough, with all your papers, to crack twenty stage-coaches. Excuse me, indeed, sir, for you must not enter." Our figure now began to expostulate: he assured the coachman, that though his baggage seemed so bulky, it was perfectly light, and that he would be contented with the smallest corner of room. But Jehu was inflexible, and the carrier of the Inspectors was sent to dance back again, with all his papers fluttering in the wind. We expected to have no more trouble from this quarter, when, in a few minutes, the same figure changed his appearance, like harlequin upon the stage, and with the same confidence again made his approaches, dressed in lace, and carrying nothing but a nosegay. Upon coming nearer, he thrust the nosegay to the coachman's nose, grasped the brass, and seemed now resolved to enter by violence. I found the struggle soon begin to grow hot, and the coachman, who was a little old, unable to continue the contest; so, in order to ingratiate myself, I stept in to his assistance, and our united efforts sent our literary Proteus, though worsted, unconquered still, clear off, dancing a rigadoon, and smelling to his own nosegay.

The person * who after him appeared as candidate for a place in the stage, came up with an air not quite so confident, but somewhat, however, theatrical; and, instead of entering, made the coachman a very low bow, which the other returned, and desired to see his baggage; upon which he instantly produced some farces, a tragedy, and other miscellany productions. The coachman, casting his eye upon the cargo, assured him, at present he could not possibly have a place, but hoped in time he might aspire to one, as he seemed to have read in the book of nature, without a careful perusal of which none ever found entrance at the Temple of Fame. "What!" replied the disappointed poet, "shall my tragedy, in which I have vindicated the cause of liberty and virtue——"—"Follow nature," returned the other, "and never expect to find lasting fame by topics

* Probably Mr Murphy.—B.

which only please from their popularity. Had you been first in the cause of freedom, or praised in virtue more than an empty name, it is possible you might have gained admittance; but at present I beg, sir, you will stand aside for another gentleman whom I see approaching."

This was a very grave personage,* whom at some distance I took for one of the most reserved, and even disagreeable figures I had seen; but as he approached, his appearance improved, and when I could distinguish him thoroughly, I perceived that, in spite of the severity of his brow, he had one of the most good-natured countenances that could be imagined. Upon coming to open the stage door, he lifted a parcel of folios into the seat before him, but our inquisitorial coachman at once shoved them out again. "What! not take in my Dictionary?" exclaimed the other in a rage. "Be patient, sir," replied the coachman, "I have drove a coach, man and boy, these two thousand years; but I do not remember to have carried above one dictionary during the whole time. That little book which I perceive peeping from one of your pockets, may I presume to ask what it contains?"—"A mere trifle," replied the author; "it is called the *Rambler*."—"The Rambler!" says the coachman, "I beg, sir, you'll take your place; I have heard our ladies in the court of Apollo frequently mention it with rapture; and Clio, who happens to be a little grave, has been heard to prefer it to the Spectator; though others have observed, that the reflections, by being refined, sometimes become minute."

This grave gentleman was scarcely seated, when another,† whose appearance was something more modern, seemed willing to enter, yet afraid to ask. He carried in his hand a bundle of essays, of which the coachman was curious enough to inquire the contents. "These," replied the gentleman, "are rhapsodies against the religion of my country."—"And how can you expect to come into my coach, after thus choosing the wrong side of the question?"—"Ay, but I am right," replied the other; "and if you give me leave, I shall, in a few minutes, state the argument."—"Right or wrong," said the coachman, "he who disturbs religion is a blockhead, and he shall never travel in a coach of mine."—"If, then," said the gentleman, mustering up

* Dr Samuel Johnson.—B. † David Hume.—B.

all his courage, "if I am not to have admittance as an essayist, I hope I shall not be repulsed as a historian; the last volume of my history met with applause."—"Yes," replied the coachman, "but I have heard only the first approved at the Temple of Fame; and as I see you have it about you, enter, without farther ceremony."* My attention was now diverted to a crowd who were pushing forward a person† that seemed more inclined to the Stage-coach of Riches; but by their means he was driven forward to the same machine, which he, however, seemed heartily to despise. Impelled, however, by their solicitations, he steps up, flourishing a voluminous history, and demanding admittance. "Sir, I have formerly heard your name mentioned," says the coachman, "but never as a historian. Is there no other work upon which you may claim a place?"—"None," replied the other, "except a romance; but this is a work of too trifling a nature to claim future attention."—"You mistake," says the inquisitor, "a well-written romance is no such easy task as is generally imagined. I remember formerly to have carried Cervantes and Segrais; and if you think fit, you may enter."

Upon our three literary travellers coming into the same coach, I listened attentively to hear what might be the conversation that passed upon this extraordinary occasion; when, instead of agreeable or entertaining dialogue, I found them grumbling at each other, and each seemed discontented with his companions. Strange! thought I to myself, that they who are thus born to enlighten the world, should still preserve the narrow prejudices of childhood, and, by disagreeing, make even the highest merit ridiculous. Were the learned and the wise to unite against the dunces of society, instead of sometimes sliding into opposite parties with them, they might throw a lustre upon each other's reputation, and teach every rank of subordinate merit, if not to admire, at least not to avow dislike.

In the midst of these reflections, I perceived the coachman, unmindful of me, had now mounted the box. Several were approaching to be taken in, whose pretensions, I was sensible, were very just; I therefore desired him to stop, and take

* The first part of Hume's *History of England* which was published, was his History of the Stuarts, of which the first volume appeared in 1754, and the second in 1756; his History of the House of Tudor did not appear till 1759.—B.

† Probably Dr Smollet.

in more passengers: but he replied, as he had now mounted the box, it would be improper to come down; but that he should take them all, one after the other, when he should return. So he drove away; and for myself, as I could not get in, I mounted behind, in order to hear the conversation on the way.

(*To be continued.*)

## A WORD OR TWO ON THE LATE FARCE CALLED "HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS."*

JUST as I had expected, before I saw this farce, I found it formed on too narrow a plan to afford a pleasing variety. The sameness of the humour in every scene could not at last fail of being disagreeable. The poor, affecting the manners of the rich, might be carried on through one character, or two at the most, with great propriety; but to have almost every personage on the scene almost of the same character, and reflecting the follies of each other, was unartful in the poet to the last degree.

The scene was almost a continuation of the same absurdity, and my Lord Duke and Sir Harry, (two footmen who assume these characters,) have nothing else to do but to talk like their masters, and are only introduced to speak, and to shew themselves. Thus, as there is a sameness of character, there is a barrenness of incident, which, by a very small share of address, the poet might have easily avoided.

From a conformity to critic rules, which perhaps on the whole have done more harm than good, our author has sacrificed all the vivacity of the dialogue to nature; and though he makes his characters talk like servants, they are seldom absurd enough, or lively enough, to make us merry. Though he is always natural, he happens seldom to be humorous.

The satire was well intended, if we regard it as being masters ourselves; but probably a philosopher would rejoice in that liberty which Englishmen give their domestics; and for myown part, I cannot avoid being pleased at the happiness of those poor creatures, who in some measure contribute to mine. The Athenians, the politest and best-natured people

* This farce was written by Garrick. — B.

upon earth, were the kindest to their slaves; and if a person may judge, who has seen the world, our English servants are the best treated, because the generality of our English gentlemen are the politest under the sun.

But not to lift my feeble voice among the pack of critics, who probably have no other occupation but that of cutting up every thing new, I must own, there are one or two scenes that are fine satire, and sufficiently humorous; particularly the first interview between the two footmen, which at once ridicules the manners of the great, and the absurdity of their imitators.

Whatever defects there might be in the composition, there were none in the action; in this the performers shewed more humour than I had fancied them capable of. Mr Palmer and Mr King were entirely what they desired to represent; and Mrs Clive—(but what need I talk of her, since, without the least exaggeration, she has more true humour than any other actor or actress upon the English or any other stage I have seen)—she, I say, did the part all the justice it was capable of. And, upon the whole, a farce, which has only this to recommend it, that the author took his plan from the volume of nature, by the sprightly manner in which it was performed, was, for one night, a tolerable entertainment. This much may be said in its vindication, that people of fashion seemed more pleased in the representation than the subordinate ranks of people.

## UPON UNFORTUNATE MERIT.

**Every age seems to have its favourite pursuits, which serve to amuse the idle, and to relieve the attention of the industrious. Happy the man who is born excellent in the pursuit in vogue, and whose genius seems adapted to the times in which he lives. How many do we see, who might have excelled in arts or sciences, and who seem furnished with talents equal to the greatest discoveries, had the road not been already beaten by their predecessors, and nothing left for them except trifles to discover, while others of very moderate abilities become famous, because happening to be first in the reigning pursuit!**

Thus, at the renewal of letters in Europe, the taste was not to compose new books, but to comment on the old ones. It was not to be expected that new books should be written, when there were so many of the ancients either not known or not understood. It was not reasonable to attempt new conquests, while they had such an extensive region lying waste for want of cultivation. At that period, criticism and erudition were the reigning studies of the times; and he who had only an inventive genius, might have languished in hopeless obscurity. When the writers of antiquity were sufficiently explained and known, the learned set about imitating them: hence proceeded the number of Latin orators, poets, and historians, in the reigns of Clement the Seventh and Alexander the Sixth. This passion for antiquity lasted for many years, to the utter exclusion of every other pursuit, till some began to find, that those works which were imitated from nature, were more like the writings of antiquity, than even those written in express imitation. It was then modern language began to be cultivated with assiduity, and our poets and orators poured forth their wonders upon the world.

As writers become more numerous, it is natural for readers to become more indolent; whence must necessarily arise a desire of attaining knowledge with the greatest possible ease. No science or art offers its instruction and amusement in so obvious a manner as statuary and painting. Hence we see, that a desire of cultivating those arts generally attends the decline of science. Thus the finest statues and the most beautiful paintings of antiquity, preceded but a little the absolute decay of every other science. The statues of Antoninus, Commodus, and their contemporaries, are the finest productions of the chisel, and appeared but just before learning was destroyed by comment, criticism, and barbarous invasions.

What happened in Rome may probably be the case with us at home. Our nobility are now more solicitous in patronizing painters and sculptors than those of any other polite profession; and from the lord, who has his gallery, down to the apprentice, who has his twopenny copperplate, all are admirers of this art. The great, by their caresses, seem insensible to all other merit but that of the pencil; and the vulgar buy every book rather from the excellence of the sculptor than the writer.

How happy were it now, if men of real excellence in that profession were to arise!* Were the painters of Italy now to appear, who once wandered like beggars from one city to another, and produce their almost breathing figures, what rewards might they not expect! But many of them lived without rewards, and therefore rewards alone will never produce their equals. We have often found the great exert themselves, not only without promotion, but in spite of opposition. We have often found them flourishing, like medical plants, in a region of savageness and barbarity, their excellence unknown, and their virtues unheeded.

They who have seen the paintings of Caravagio, are sensible of the surprising impression they make; bold, swelling, terrible to the last degree,—all seems animated, and speaks him among the foremost of his profession; yet this man's fortune and his fame seemed ever in opposition to each other.

Unknowing how to flatter the great, he was driven from city to city in the utmost indigence, and might truly be said to paint for his bread.

Having one day insulted a person of distinction, who refused to pay him all the respect which he thought his due, he was obliged to leave Rome and travel on foot, his usual method of going his journeys, down into the country, without either money or friends to subsist him.

After he had travelled in this manner as long as his strength would permit, faint with famine and fatigue, he at last called at an obscure inn by the way-side. The host knew, by the appearance of his guest, his indifferent circumstances, and refused to furnish him a dinner without previous payment.

As Caravagio was entirely destitute of money, he took down the innkeeper's sign, and painted it anew for his dinner.†

Thus refreshed, he proceeded on his journey, and left the innkeeper not quite satisfied with this method of payment.

* Had Goldsmith written a few years later, he would probably have allowed this excellence to his friend Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great ornament of the English school. — B.

† In an obscure village in Fifeshire is an alehouse sign painted by the Scottish Teniers, Wilkie. We are not aware that the artist had the same motive to exertion with the unfortunate Caravagio. — B.

Some company of distinction, however, coming soon after, and struck with the beauty of the new sign, bought it at an advanced price, and astonished the innkeeper with their generosity: he was resolved, therefore, to get as many signs as possible drawn by the same artist, as he found he could sell them to good advantage; and accordingly set out after Caravagio, in order to bring him back. It was night-fall before he came up to the place, where the unfortunate Caravagio lay dead by the roadside, overcome by fatigue, resentment, and despair.

# THE BEE.

No. VI. — SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1759.

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## ON EDUCATION.

### TO THE AUTHOR OF THE BEE.

Sir, — As few subjects are more interesting to society, so few have been more frequently written upon, than the education of youth. Yet is it not a little surprising, that it should have been treated almost by all in a declamatory manner? They have insisted largely on the advantages that result from it, both to the individual and to society, and have expatiated in the praise of what no one has ever been so hardy as to call in question.

Instead of giving us fine but empty harangues upon this subject, instead of indulging each his particular and whimsical system, it had been much better if the writers on this subject had treated it in a more scientific manner, repressed all the sallies of imagination, and given us the result of their observations with didactic simplicity. Upon this subject the smallest errors are of the most dangerous consequence; and the author should venture the imputation of stupidity upon a topic, where his slightest deviations may tend to injure the rising generation.

I shall, therefore, throw out a few thoughts upon this subject, which have not been attended to by others, and shall dismiss all attempts to please, while I study only instruction.

The manner in which our youth of London are at present

educated is, some in free schools in the city, but the far greater number in boarding schools about town. The parent justly consults the health of his child, and finds that an education in the country tends to promote this much more than a continuance in the town. Thus far they are right: if there were a possibility of having even our free schools kept a little out of town, it would certainly conduce to the health and vigour of perhaps the mind as well as of the body. It may be thought whimsical, but it is truth,—I have found by experience, that they who have spent all their lives in cities, contract not only an effeminacy of habit, but even of thinking.

But when I have said, that the boarding schools are preferable to free schools, as being in the country, this is certainly the only advantage I can allow them; otherwise it is impossible to conceive the ignorance of those who take upon them the important trust of education. Is any man unfit for any of the professions? he finds his last resource in setting up school. Do any become bankrupts in trade? they still set up a boarding school, and drive a trade this way, when all others fail: nay, I have been told of butchers and barbers, who have turned schoolmasters; and, more surprising still, made fortunes in their new professions.

Could we think ourselves in a country of civilized people—could it be conceived that we have any regard for posterity, when such are permitted to take the charge of the morals, genius, and health of those dear little pledges, who may one day be the guardians of the liberties of Europe, and who may serve as the honour and bulwark of their aged parents? The care of our children, is it below the state? is it fit to indulge the caprice of the ignorant with the disposal of their children in this particular? For the state to take the charge of all its children, as in Persia or Sparta, might at present be inconvenient; but surely with great ease it might cast an eye to their instructors. Of all members of society, I do not know a more useful, or a more honourable one, than a schoolmaster; at the same time that I do not see any more generally despised, or whose talents are so ill rewarded.

Were the salaries of schoolmasters to be augmented from a diminution of useless sinecures, how might it turn to the advantage of this people—a people whom, without flattery, I may in other respects term the wisest and greatest upon earth! But, while I would reward the deserving, I would

dismiss those utterly unqualified for their employment: in short, I would make the business of a schoolmaster every way more respectable, by increasing their salaries, and admitting only men of proper abilities.

There are already schoolmasters appointed, and they have some small salaries; but where at present there is but one schoolmaster appointed, there should at least be two; and wherever the salary is at present twenty pounds, it should be a hundred. Do we give immoderate benefices to those who instruct ourselves, and shall we deny even subsistence to those who instruct our children? Every member of society should be paid in proportion as he is necessary: and I will be bold enough to say, that schoolmasters in a state are more necessary than clergymen, as children stand in more need of instruction than their parents.

But, instead of this, as I have already observed, we send them to board in the country to the most ignorant set of men that can be imagined. But lest the ignorance of the master be not sufficient, the child is generally consigned to the usher. This is generally some poor needy animal, little superior to a footman either in learning or spirit, invited to his place by an advertisement, and kept there merely from his being of a complying disposition, and making the children fond of him. "You give your child to be educated to a slave," says a philosopher to a rich man; "instead of one slave, you will then have two."

It were well, however, if parents, upon fixing their children in one of these houses, would examine the abilities of the usher as well as of the master; for, whatever they are told to the contrary, the usher is generally the person most employed in their education. If, then, a gentleman, upon putting out his son to one of these houses, sees the usher disregarded by the master, he may depend upon it, that he is equally disregarded by the boys; the truth is, in spite of all their endeavours to please, they are generally the laughingstock of the school. Every trick is played upon the usher; the oddity of his manners, his dress, or his language, is a fund of eternal ridicule; the master himself now and then cannot avoid joining in the laugh, and the poor wretch, eternally resenting this ill usage, seems to live in a state of war with all the family. This is a very proper person, is it not, to give children a relish for learning? They must esteem learning very much, when they see its

professors used with such ceremony! If the usher be despised, the father may be assured his child will never be properly instructed.*

But let me suppose, that there are some schools without these inconveniences,—where the master and ushers are men of learning reputation, and assiduity. If there are to be found such, they cannot be prized in a state sufficiently. A boy will learn more true wisdom in a public school in a year, than by a private education in five. It is not from masters, but from their equals, youth learn a knowledge of the world: the little tricks they play each other, the punishment that frequently attends the commission, is a just picture of the great world, and all the ways of men are practised in a public school in miniature. It is true, a child is early made acquainted with some vices in a school, but it is better to know these when a boy, than be first taught them when a man, for their novelty then may have irresistible charms.

In a public education boys early learn temperance; and if the parents and friends would give them less money upon their usual visits, it would be much to their advantage, since it may justly be said, that a great part of their disorders arise from surfeit,—*plus occidit gula quam gladius*. And now I am come to the article of health, it may not be amiss to observe, that Mr Locke and some others have advised, that children should be inured to cold, to fatigue, and hardship, from their youth; but Mr Locke was but an indifferent physician. Habit, I grant, has great influence over our constitutions, but we have not precise ideas upon this subject.

We know that, among savages, and even among our peasants, there are found children born with such constitutions, that they cross rivers by swimming, endure cold, thirst, hunger, and want of sleep, to a surprising degree; that when they happen to fall sick, they are cured, without the help of medicine, by nature alone. Such examples are adduced, to persuade us to imitate their manner of education, and accustom ourselves betimes to support the same fatigues. But had these gentlemen considered, first, that those savages and peasants are generally not so long lived as they who

* The author's remarks upon this subject are the more worthy of attention, that he himself knew by experience the duties and annoyances of such a situation. — B.

have led a more indolent life; secondly, that the more laborious the life is, the less populous is the country: had they considered, that what physicians call the *stamina vitæ*, by fatigue and labour become rigid, and thus anticipate old age; that the number who survive those rude trials, bears no proportion to those who die in the experiment: Had these things been properly considered, they would not have thus extolled an education begun in fatigue and hardships. Peter the Great, willing to inure the children of his seamen to a life of hardship, ordered that they should drink only sea water, but they unfortunately all died under the experiment.

But while I would exclude all unnecessary labours, yet still I would recommend temperance in the highest degree. No luxurious dishes with high seasoning, nothing given children to force an appetite, as little sugared or salted provisions as possible, though never so pleasing; but milk, morning and night, should be their constant food. This diet would make them more healthy than any of those slops that are usually cooked by the mistress of a boarding school; besides, it corrects any consumptive habits, not unfrequently found amongst the children of city parents.

As boys should be educated with temperance, so the first greatest lesson that should be taught them is, to admire frugality. It is by the exercise of this virtue alone, they can ever expect to be useful members of society. It is true, lectures continually repeated upon this subject, may make some boys, when they grow up, run into an extreme, and become misers; but it were well had we more misers than we have among us. I know few characters more useful in society; for a man's having a larger or smaller share of money lying useless by him no way injures the commonwealth; since, should every miser now exhaust his stores, this might make gold more plenty, but it would not increase the commodities or pleasures of life; they would still remain as they are at present: it matters not, therefore, whether men are misers or not, if they be only frugal, laborious, and fill the station they have chosen. If they deny themselves the necessaries of life, society is no way injured by their folly.

Instead, therefore, of romances, which praise young men of spirit, who go through a variety of adventures, and, at last, conclude a life of dissipation, folly, and extravagance, in riches and matrimony, there should be some men of wit

employed to compose books that might equally interest the passions of our youth; where such a one might be praised for having resisted allurements when young, and how he, at last, became lord mayor—how he was married to a lady of great sense, fortune, and beauty: to be as explicit as possible, the old story of Whittington, were his cat left out, might be more serviceable to the tender mind than either Tom Jones, Joseph Andrews, or a hundred others, where frugality is the only good quality the hero is not possessed of. Were our schoolmasters, if any of them had sense enough to draw up such a work, thus employed, it would be much more serviceable to their pupils, than all the grammars and dictionaries they may publish these ten years.

Children should early be instructed in the arts, from which they would afterwards draw the greatest advantages. When the wonders of nature are never exposed to our view, we have no great desire to become acquainted with those parts of learning which pretend to account for the phenomena. One of the ancients complains, that as soon as young men have left school, and are obliged to converse in the world, they fancy themselves transported into a new region: "Ut cum in forum venerint existiment se in aliam terrarum orbem delatos." We should early, therefore, instruct them in the experiments, if I may so express it, of knowledge, and leave to maturer age the accounting for the causes. But instead of that, when boys begin natural philosophy in colleges, they have not the least curiosity for those parts of the science which are proposed for their instruction; they have never before seen the phenomena, and consequently have no curiosity to learn the reasons. Might natural philosophy, therefore, be made their pastime in school, by this means it would in college become their amusement.

In several of the machines now in use, there would be ample field both for instruction and amusement: the different sorts of the phosphorus, the artificial pyrites, magnetism, electricity, the experiments upon the rarefaction and weight of the air, and those upon elastic bodies, might employ their idle hours, and none should be called from play to see such experiments but such as thought proper. At first, then, it would be sufficient if the instruments, and the effects of their combination, were only shewn; the causes should be deferred to a maturer age, or to those times when natural curiosity prompts us to discover the

wonders of nature. Man is placed in this world as a spectator; when he is tired with wondering at all the novelties about him, and not till then, does he desire to be made acquainted with the causes that create those wonders.

What I have observed with regard to natural philosophy, I would extend to every other science whatsoever. We should teach them as many of the facts as were possible, and defer the causes until they seemed of themselves desirous of knowing them. A mind thus leaving school stored with all the simple experiences of science, would be the fittest in the world for the college course; and though such a youth might not appear so bright, or so talkative, as those who had learned the real principles and causes of some of the sciences, yet he would make a wiser man, and would retain a more lasting passion for letters, than he who was early burdened with the disagreeable institution of effect and cause.

In history, such stories alone should be laid before them as might catch the imagination: instead of this, they are too frequently obliged to toil through the four empires, as they are called, where their memories are burdened by a number of disgusting names, that destroy all their future relish for our best historians, who may be termed the truest teachers of wisdom.

Every species of flattery should be carefully avoided: a boy, who happens to say a sprightly thing, is generally applauded so much, that he happens to continue a coxcomb sometimes all his life after. He is reputed a wit at fourteen, and becomes a blockhead at twenty. Nurses, footmen, and such, should therefore be driven away as much as possible. I was even going to add, that the mother herself should stifle her pleasure or her vanity, when little master happens to say a good or smart thing. Those modest lubberly boys who seem to want spirit, generally go through their business with more ease to themselves, and more satisfaction to their instructors.

There has of late a gentleman appeared, who thinks the study of rhetoric essential to a perfect education.* That bold male eloquence, which often without pleasing convinces,

* Probably Mr Thomas Sheridan, who about this time read lectures on rhetoric and elocution. — B.

is generally destroyed by such institutions. Convincing eloquence, however, is infinitely more serviceable to its possessor than the most florid harangue, or the most pathetic tones that can be imagined; and the man who is thoroughly convinced himself, who understands his subject, and the language he speaks in, will be more apt to silence opposition, than he who studies the force of his periods, and fills our ears with sounds, while our minds are destitute of conviction.

It was reckoned the fault of the orators at the decline of the Roman empire, when they had been long instructed by rhetoricians, that their periods were so harmonious, as that they could be sung as well as spoken. What a ridiculous figure must one of these gentlemen cut, thus measuring syllables, and weighing words, when he should plead the cause of his client! Two architects were once candidates for the building a certain temple at Athens: the first harangued the crowd very learnedly upon the different orders of architecture, and shewed them in what manner the temple should be built; the other, who got up to speak after him, only observed, that what his brother had spoken he could do; and thus he at once gained his cause.

To teach men to be orators, is little less than to teach them to be poets; and for my part, I should have too great a regard for my child, to wish him a manor only in a bookseller's shop.

Another passion which the present age is apt to run into, is to make children learn all things,—the languages, the sciences, music, the exercises, and painting. Thus the child soon becomes a *talker* in all, but a *master* in none. He thus acquires a superficial fondness for every thing, and only shews his ignorance when he attempts to exhibit his skill.

As I deliver my thoughts without method or connection, so the reader must not be surprised to find me once more addressing schoolmasters on the present method of teaching the learned languages, which is commonly by literal translations. I would ask such, if they were to travel a journey, whether those parts of the road in which they found the greatest difficulties would not be most strongly remembered? Boys who, if I may continue the allusion, gallop through one of the ancients with the assistance of a translation, can

have but a very slight acquaintance either with the author or his language. It is by the exercise of the mind alone that a language is learned; but a literal translation, on the opposite page, leaves no exercise for the memory at all. The boy will not be at the fatigue of remembering, when his doubts are at once satisfied by a glance of the eye; whereas, were every word to be sought from a dictionary, the learner would attempt to remember, in order to save him the trouble of looking out for it for the future.

To continue in the same pedantic strain, though no schoolmaster, of all the various grammars now taught in schools about town, I would recommend only the old common one; I have forgot whether Lilly's, or an emendation of him. The others may be improvements; but such improvements seem to me only mere grammatical niceties, no way influencing the learner, but perhaps loading him with trifling subtleties, which at a proper age he must be at some pains to forget.

Whatever pains a master may take to make the learning of the languages agreeable to his pupil, he may depend upon it, it will be at first extremely unpleasant. The rudiments of every language, therefore, must be given as a task, not as an amusement. Attempting to deceive children into instruction of this kind, is only deceiving ourselves; and I know no passion capable of conquering a child's natural laziness but fear. Solomon has said it before me; nor is there any more certain, though perhaps more disagreeable truth, than the proverb in verse, too well known to repeat on the present occasion. It is very probable that parents are told of some masters who never use the rod, and consequently are thought the properest instructors for their children; but though tenderness is a requisite quality in an instructor, yet there is too often the truest tenderness in well-timed correction.

Some have justly observed, that all passion should be banished on this terrible occasion; but, I know not how, there is a frailty attending human nature, that few masters are able to keep their temper whilst they correct. I knew a good-natured man, who was sensible of his own weakness in this respect, and consequently had recourse to the following expedient to prevent his passions from being engaged, yet at the same time administer justice with

impartiality: Whenever any of his pupils committed a fault, he summoned a jury of his peers, — I mean of the boys of his own or the next classes to him; his accusers stood forth; he had a liberty of pleading in his own defence, and one or two more had a liberty of pleading against him: when found guilty by the panel, he was consigned to the footman who attended in the house, who had previous orders to punish, but with lenity. By this means the master took off the odium of punishment from himself; and the footman, between whom and the boys there could not be even the slightest intimacy, was placed in such a light as to be shunned by every boy in the school.*

And now I have gone thus far, perhaps you will think me some pedagogue, willing, by a well-timed puff, to increase the reputation of his own school; but such is not the case. The regard I have for society, for those tender minds who are the objects of the present essay, is the only motive I have for offering those thoughts, calculated not to surprise by their novelty, or the elegance of composition, but merely to remedy some defects which have crept into the present system of school education. If this letter should be inserted, perhaps I may trouble you in my next with some thoughts upon a university education, not with an intent to exhaust the subject, but to amend some few abuses. I am, &c.

## ON THE INSTABILITY OF WORLDLY GRANDEUR.

An alehouse keeper near Islington, who had long lived at the sign of the French King, upon the commencement of the last war with France pulled down his old sign, and put up the Queen of Hungary. Under the influence of her red face and golden sceptre, he continued to sell ale till she was no longer the favourite of his customers; he changed

* This dissertation was thus far introduced into the volume of Essays, afterwards published by Dr Goldsmith, with the following observation:

"This treatise was published before Rousseau's Emilius: if there be a similitude in any one instance, it is hoped the author of the present essay will not be termed a plagiarist."

her, therefore, some time ago, for the King of Prussia, who may probably be changed in turn for the next great man that shall be set up for vulgar admiration.

Our publican in this imitates the great exactly, who deal out their figures, one after the other, to the gazing crowd beneath them. When we have sufficiently wondered at one, that is taken in, and another exhibited in its room, which seldom holds its station long, for the mob are ever pleased with variety.

I must own I have such an indifferent opinion of the vulgar, that I am ever led to suspect that merit which raises their shout; at least I am certain to find those great, and sometimes good men, who find satisfaction in such acclamations, made worse by it; and history has too frequently taught me, that the head which has grown this day giddy with the roar of the million, has the very next been fixed upon a pole.

As Alexander VI. was entering a little town in the neighbourhood of Rome, which had been just evacuated by the enemy, he perceived the townsmen busy in the market-place in pulling down from a gibbet a figure, which had been designed to represent himself. There were also some knocking down a neighbouring statue of one of the Orsini family, with whom he was at war, in order to put Alexander's effigy, when taken down, in its place. It is possible a man who knew less of the world would have condemned the adulation of those barefaced flatterers; but Alexander seemed pleased at their zeal, and, turning to Borgia his son, said with a smile, *Vides, mi fili, quam leve discrimen patibulum inter et statuum.* "You see, my son, the small difference between a gibbet and a statue." If the great could be taught any lesson, this might serve to teach them upon how weak a foundation their glory stands, which is built upon popular applause; for as such praise what seems like merit, they as quickly condemn what has only the appearance of guilt.

Popular glory is a perfect coquette: her lovers must toil, feel every inquietude, indulge every caprice, and perhaps at last be jilted into the bargain. True glory, on the other hand, resembles a woman of sense: her admirers must play no tricks; they feel no great anxiety, for they are sure in the end of being rewarded in proportion to their merit. When Swift used to appear in public, he generally had the mob

shouting in his train. "Pox take these fools!" he would say, "how much joy might all this bawling give my Lord Mayor!"

We have seen those virtues which have, while living, retired from the public eye, generally transmitted to posterity as the truest objects of admiration and praise. Perhaps the character of the late Duke of Marlborough may one day be set up, even above that of his more talked of predecessor; since an assemblage of all the mild and amiable virtues is far superior to those vulgarly called the great ones. I must be pardoned for this short tribute to the memory of a man, who, while living, would as much detest to receive any thing that wore the appearance of flattery, as I should to offer it.

I know not how to turn so trite a subject out of the beaten road of commonplace, except by illustrating it, rather by the assistance of my memory than my judgment, and instead of making reflections, by telling a story.

A Chinese, who had long studied the works of Confucius, who knew the characters of fourteen thousand words, and could read a great part of every book that came in his way, once took it into his head to travel into Europe, and observe the customs of a people whom he thought not very much inferior even to his own countrymen, in the arts of refining upon every pleasure. Upon his arrival at Amsterdam, his passion for letters naturally led him to a bookseller's shop: and, as he could speak a little Dutch, he civilly asked the bookseller for the works of the immortal Ilixofou. The bookseller assured him he had never heard the book mentioned before. "What! have you never heard of that immortal poet?" returned the other, much surprised; "that light of the eyes, that favourite of kings, that rose of perfection! I suppose you know nothing of the immortal Fipsihihi, second cousin to the moon?"—"Nothing at all, indeed, sir," returned the other.—"Alas!" cries our traveller, "to what purpose, then, has one of these fasted to death, and the other offered himself up as a sacrifice to the Tartarean enemy, to gain a renown which has never travelled beyond the precincts of China!"

There is scarcely a village in Europe, and not one university, that is not thus furnished with its little great men. The head of a petty corporation, who opposes the designs of a prince who would tyranically force his subjects to save their best clothes for Sundays—the puny pedant who finds

one undiscovered property in the polype, describes an unheeded process in the skeleton of a mole, and whose mind, like his microscope, perceives nature only in detail—the rhymer who makes smooth verses, and paints to our imagination when he should only speak to our hearts,—all equally fancy themselves walking forward to immortality, and desire the crowd behind them to look on. The crowd takes them at their word. Patriot, philosopher, and poet, are shouted in their train. Where was there ever so much merit seen? no times so important as our own! ages yet unborn shall gaze with wonder and applause! To such music the important pigmy moves forward, bustling and swelling, and aptly compared to a puddle in a storm.

I have lived to see generals, who once had crowds hallooing after them wherever they went, who were bepraised by newspapers and magazines, those echoes of the voice of the vulgar, and yet they have long sunk into merited obscurity, with scarcely even an epitaph left to flatter. A few years ago, the herring fishery employed all Grub Street; it was the topic in every coffeehouse, and the burden of every ballad. We were to drag up oceans of gold from the bottom of the sea; we were to supply all Europe with herrings upon our own terms. At present we hear no more of all this. We have fished up very little gold that I can learn; nor do we furnish the world with herrings as was expected. Let us wait but a few years longer, and we shall find all our expectations a herring fishery.

## SOME ACCOUNT OF THE ACADEMIES OF ITALY.

THERE is not, perhaps, a country in Europe, in which learning is so fast upon the decline as in Italy; yet not one in which there are such a number of academies instituted for its support. There is scarcely a considerable town in the whole country, which has not one or two institutions of this nature, where the learned, as they are pleased to call themselves, meet to harangue, to compliment each other, and praise the utility of their institution.

Jarchius has taken the trouble to give us a list of those clubs or academies, which amount to five hundred and fifty, each distinguished by somewhat whimsical in the name.

The academies of Bologna, for instance, are divided into the Abbandonati, the Ausiosi, Ociosio, Arcadi, Confusi, Dubbiosi, &c. There are few of these who have not published their transactions, and scarcely a member who is not looked upon as the most famous man in the world, at home.

Of all those societies, I know of none whose works are worth being known out of the precincts of the city in which they were written, except the Cicalata Academia (or, as we might express it, the Tickling Society) of Florence. I have just now before me a manuscript oration, spoken by the late Tomaso Crudeli at that society, which will at once serve to give a better picture of the manner in which men of wit amuse themselves in that country, than any thing I could say upon the occasion. The oration is this:

"The younger the nymph, my dear companions, the more happy the lover. From fourteen to seventeen you are sure of finding love for love; from seventeen to twenty-one, there is always a mixture of interest and affection. But when that period is passed, no longer expect to receive, but to buy — no longer expect a nymph who gives, but who sells, her favours. At this age, every glance is taught its duty; not a look, not a sigh without design; the lady, like a skilful warrior, aims at the heart of another, while she shields her own from danger.

"On the contrary, at fifteen you may expect nothing but simplicity, innocence, and nature. The passions are then sincere; the soul seems seated in the lips; the dear object feels present happiness, without being anxious for the future; her eyes brighten if her lover approaches; her smiles are borrowed from the Graces, and her very mistakes seem to complete her desires.

"Lucretia was just sixteen. The rose and lily took possession of her face, and her bosom, by its hue and its coldness, seemed covered with snow. So much beauty and so much virtue seldom want admirers. Orlandino, a youth of sense and merit, was among the number. He had long languished for an opportunity of declaring his passion, when Cupid, as if willing to indulge his happiness, brought the charming young couple by mere accident to an arbour, where every prying eye but love was absent. Orlandino talked of the sincerity of his passion, and mixed flattery with his addresses; but it was all in vain. The nymph was

pre-engaged, and had long devoted to Heaven those charms for which he sued. 'My dear Orlandino,' said she, 'you know I have been long dedicated to St Catherine, and to her belongs all that lies below my girdle; all that is above, you may freely possess, but farther I cannot, must not, comply. The vow is passed; I wish it were undone, but now it is impossible.' You may conceive, my companions, the embarrassment our young lovers felt upon this occasion. They kneeled to St Catherine, and though both despaired, both implored her assistance. Their tutelar saint was entreated to shew some expedient, by which both might continue to love, and yet both be happy. Their petition was sincere. St Catherine was touched with compassion; for lo, a miracle! Lucretia's girdle unloosed, as if without hands; and though before bound round her middle, fell spontaneously down to her feet, and gave Orlandino the possession of all those beauties which lay above it."

# THE BEE.

No. VII. — SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1759.

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## OF ELOQUENCE.

Of all kinds of success, that of an orator is the most pleasing. Upon other occasions, the applause we deserve is conferred in our absence, and we are insensible of the pleasure we have given; but in eloquence, the victory and the triumph are inseparable. We read our own glory in the face of every spectator; the audience is moved; the antagonist is defeated; and the whole circle bursts into unsolicited applause.

The rewards which attend excellence in this way are so pleasing, that numbers have written professed treatises to teach us the art; schools have been established with no other intent; rhetoric has taken place among the institutions; and pedants have ranged under proper heads, and distinguished with long learned names, some of the strokes of nature, or of passion, which orators have used. I say only some; for a folio volume could not contain all the figures which have been used by the truly eloquent; and scarcely a good speaker or writer, but makes use of some that are peculiar or new.

Eloquence has preceded the rules of rhetoric, as languages have been formed before grammar. Nature renders men eloquent in great interests, or great passions. He that is sensibly touched, sees things with a very different eye from the rest of mankind. All nature to him becomes an object of comparison and metaphor, without attending to it; he throws life into all, and inspires his audience with a part of his own enthusiasm.

It has been remarked, that the lower parts of mankind generally express themselves most figuratively, and that tropes are found in the most ordinary forms of conversation. Thus, in every language the heart burns: the courage is roused; the eyes sparkle; the spirits are cast down; passion inflames, pride swells, and pity sinks the soul. Nature everywhere speaks in those strong images, which, from their frequency, pass unnoticed.

Nature it is which inspires those rapturous enthusiasms, those irresistible turns; a strong passion, a pressing danger, calls up all the imagination, and gives the orator irresistible force. Thus a captain of the first caliphs, seeing his soldiers fly, cried out, "Whither do you run? the enemy are not there! You have been told that the caliph is dead; but God is still living. He regards the brave, and will reward the courageous. Advance!"

A man, therefore, may be called eloquent, who transfers the passion or sentiment with which he is moved himself, into the breast of another; and this definition appears the more just, as it comprehends the graces of silence and of action. An intimate persuasion of the truth to be proved, is the sentiment and passion to be transferred; and who effects this, is truly possessed of the talent of eloquence.

I have called eloquence a talent, and not an art, as so many rhetoricians have done, as art is acquired by exercise and study, and eloquence is the gift of nature. Rules will never make either a work or a discourse eloquent; they only serve to prevent faults, but not to introduce beauties; to prevent those passages which are truly eloquent and dictated by nature, from being blended with others which might disgust, or at least abate our passion.

What we clearly conceive, says Boileau, we can clearly express. I may add, that what is felt with emotion is expressed also with the same movements; the words arise as readily to paint our emotions as to express our thoughts with perspicuity. The cool care an orator takes to express passions which he does not feel, only prevents his rising into that passion he would seem to feel. In a word, to feel your subject thoroughly, and to speak without fear, are the only rules of eloquence, properly so called, which I can offer. Examine a writer of genius on the most beautiful parts of his work, and he will always assure you, that such passages are generally those which have given him the

least trouble, for they came as if by inspiration. To pretend that cold and didactic precepts will make a man eloquent, is only to prove that he is incapable of eloquence.

But, as in being perspicuous it is necessary to have a full idea of the subject, so in being eloquent it is not sufficient, if I may so express it, to feel by halves. The orator should be strongly impressed, which is generally the effect of a fine and exquisite sensibility, and not that transient and superficial emotion which he excites in the greatest part of his audience. It is even impossible to affect the hearers in any great degree without being affected ourselves. In vain it will be objected, that many writers have had the art to inspire their readers with a passion for virtue, without being virtuous themselves, since it may be answered, that sentiments of virtue filled their minds at the time they were writing. They felt the inspiration strongly, while they praised justice, generosity, or good nature; but, unhappily for them, these passions might have been discontinued, when they laid down the pen. In vain will it be objected again, that we can move without being moved, as we can convince without being convinced. It is much easier to deceive our reason than ourselves: a trifling defect in reasoning may be overseen, and lead a man astray, for it requires reason and time to detect the falsehood; but our passions are not easily imposed upon,—our eyes, our ears, and every sense, are watchful to detect the imposture.

No discourse can be eloquent that does not elevate the mind. Pathetic eloquence, it is true, has for its only object to affect; but I appeal to men of sensibility, whether their pathetic feelings are not accompanied with some degree of elevation. We may then call eloquence and sublimity the same thing, since it is impossible to be one without feeling the other. Hence it follows, that we may be eloquent in any language, since no language refuses to paint those sentiments with which we are thoroughly impressed. What is usually called sublimity of style, seems to be only an error. Eloquence is not in the words, but in the subject; and in great concerns, the more simply any thing is expressed, it is generally the more sublime. True eloquence does not consist, as the rhetoricians assure us, in saying great things in a sublime style, but in a simple style; for there is, properly speaking, no such thing as a sublime style; the sublimity lies only in the things; and when they

are not so, the language may be turgid, affected, metaphorical,—but not affecting.

What can be more simply expressed than the following extract from a celebrated preacher,* and yet what was ever more sublime? Speaking of the small number of the elect, he breaks out thus among his audience: —"Let me suppose that this was the last hour of us all—that the heavens were opening over our heads—that time was passed, and eternity begun—that Jesus Christ in all his glory, that man of sorrows, in all his glory, appeared on the tribunal, and that we were assembled here to receive our final decree of life or death eternal! Let me ask, impressed with terror like you, and not separating my lot from yours, but putting myself in the same situation in which we must all one day appear before God, our judge,—let me ask, if Jesus Christ should now appear to make the terrible separation of the just from the unjust, do you think the greatest number would be saved? Do you think the number of the elect would even be equal to that of the sinners? Do you think, if all our works were examined with justice, would he find ten just persons in this great assembly? Monsters of ingratitude! would he find one?" Such passages as these are sublime in every language. The expression may be less speaking, or more indistinct, but the greatness of the idea still remains. In a word, we may be eloquent in every language and in every style, since elocution is only an assistant, but not a constituter of eloquence.

Of what use, then, will it be said, are all the precepts given us upon this head both by the ancients and moderns? I answer, that they cannot make us eloquent, but they will certainly prevent us from becoming ridiculous. They can seldom procure a single beauty, but they may banish a thousand faults. The true method of an orator is not to attempt always to move, always to affect, to be continually sublime, but at proper intervals to give rest both to his own and the passions of his audience. In these periods of relaxation, or of preparation rather, rules may teach him to

* Massilon, Bishop of Clermont, of whom M. de la Harpe says, "Dans les sermons, il est au-dessus de tout ce qui l'a précédé et de tout ce qui l'a suivi, par le nombre, la variété, et l'excellence de ses productions." Louis the Fourteenth, on one occasion, paid him the high compliment: "Mon père, j'ai entendu de grands orateurs dans ma chapelle, j'en ai été fort content; pour vous, toutes les fois que je vous ai entendu, j'ai été très-mécontent de moi-même."—B.

avoid any thing low, trivial, or disgusting. Thus criticism, properly speaking, is intended not to assist those parts which are sublime, but those which are naturally mean and humble, which are composed with coolness and caution, and where the orator rather endeavours not to offend, than attempts to please.

I have hitherto insisted more strenuously on that eloquence which speaks to the passions, as it is a species of oratory almost unknown in England. At the bar it is quite discontinued, and I think with justice. In the senate it is used but sparingly, as the orator speaks to enlightened judges. But in the pulpit, in which the orator should chiefly address the vulgar, it seems strange that it should be entirely laid aside.

The vulgar of England are, without exception, the most barbarous and the most unknowing of any in Europe. A great part of their ignorance may be chiefly ascribed to their teachers, who, with the most pretty gentleman-like serenity, deliver their cool discourses, and address the reason of men who have never reasoned in all their lives. They are told of cause and effect, of beings self-existent, and the universal scale of beings. They are informed of the excellence of the Bangorian controversy, and the absurdity of an intermediate state. The spruce preacher reads his lucubration without lifting his nose from the text, and never ventures to earn the shame of an enthusiast.

By this means, though his audience feel not one word of all he says, he earns, however, among his acquaintance, the character of a man of sense; among his acquaintance only, did I say? nay, even with his bishop.

The polite of every country have several motives to induce them to a rectitude of action,—the love of virtue for its own sake, the shame of offending, and the desire of pleasing. The vulgar have but one,—the enforcements of religion; and yet those who should push this motive home to their hearts, are basely found to desert their post. They speak to the Squire, the philosopher, and the pedant; but the poor, those who really want instruction, are left uninstructed.

I have attended most of our pulpit orators, who, it must be owned, write extremely well upon the text they assume. To give them their due also, they read their sermons with elegance and propriety; but this goes but a very short way in true eloquence. The speaker must be moved. In this,

in this alone, our English divines are deficient. Were they to speak to a few calm, dispassionate hearers, they certainly use the properest methods of address; but their audience is chiefly composed of the poor, who must be influenced by motives of reward and punishment, and whose only virtues lie in self-interest or fear.

How, then, are such to be addressed? not by studied periods or cold disquisitions; not by the labours of the head, but the honest spontaneous dictates of the heart. Neither writing a sermon with regular periods, and all the harmony of elegant expression — neither reading it with emphasis, propriety, and deliberation — neither pleasing with metaphor, simile, or rhetorical fustian — neither arguing coolly, and untying consequences united in *à priori*, nor bundling up inductions *à posteriore* — neither pedantic jargon, nor academical trifling, can persuade the poor, — writing a discourse coolly in the closet, then getting it by memory, and delivering it on Sundays, even that will not do. What then is to be done? I know of no expedient to speak — to speak at once intelligibly and feelingly — except to understand the language. To be convinced of the truth of the object — to be perfectly acquainted with the subject in view — to prepossess yourself with a low opinion of your audience — and to do the rest extempore, — by this means, strong expressions, new thoughts, rising passions, and the true declamatory style, will naturally ensue.

Fine declamation does not consist in flowery periods, delicate allusions, or musical cadences, but in a plain, open, loose style, where the periods are long and obvious; where the same thought is often exhibited in several points of view: all this, strong sense, a good memory, and a small share of experience, will furnish to every orator; and without these, a clergyman may be called a fine preacher, a judicious preacher, and a man of good sense; he may make his hearers admire his understanding, but will seldom enlighten theirs.

When I think of the Methodist preachers among us, how seldom they are endued with common sense, and yet how often and how justly they affect their hearers; I cannot avoid saying within myself, had these been bred gentlemen, and been endued with even the meanest share of understanding, what might they not effect! Did our bishops, who can add dignity to their expostulations, testify the same fervour, and entreat their hearers, as well as argue, what

might not be the consequence! * The vulgar, by which I mean the bulk of mankind, would then have a double motive to love religion, first, from seeing its professors honoured here, and next, from the consequences hereafter. At present the enthusiasms of the poor are opposed to law; did law conspire with their enthusiasms, we should not only be the happiest nation upon earth, but the wisest also.

Enthusiasm in religion, which prevails only among the vulgar, should be the chief object of politics. A society of enthusiasts, governed by reason, among the great, is the most indissoluble, the most virtuous, and the most efficient of its own decrees that can be imagined. Every country, possessed of any degree of strength, have had their enthusiasms, which ever serve as laws among the people. The Greeks had their καλοκἀγαθία, the Romans their *Amor Patriæ*, and we the truer and firmer bond of the Protestant Religion. The principle is the same in all: how much, then, is it the duty of those whom the law has appointed teachers of this religion, to enforce its obligations, and to raise those enthusiasms among people, by which alone political society can subsist?

From eloquence, therefore, the morals of our people are to expect emendation; but how little can they be improved by men, who get into the pulpit rather to shew their parts, than convince us of the truth of what they deliver; who are painfully correct in their style, musical in their tones; where every sentiment, every expression, seems the result of meditation and deep study!

Tillotson has been commended as the model of pulpit eloquence: thus far he should be imitated, where he generally strives to convince rather than to please; but to adopt his long, dry, and sometimes tedious discussions, which serve to amuse only divines, and are utterly neglected by the generality of mankind—to praise the intricacy of his periods, which are too long to be spoken—to continue his cool phlegmatic manner of enforcing every truth,—is certainly erroneous. As I said before, the good preacher should adopt no model, write no sermons, study no periods; let him but understand his subject, the language he speaks, and be convinced of the truths he delivers. It is amazing

* See vol. ii. Essay IV. On the English Clergy and Popular Preachers, in which the author advocates this style of pulpit eloquence at greater length. — B.

to what heights eloquence of this kind may reach! This is that eloquence the ancients represented as lightning, bearing down every opposer; this the power which has turned whole assemblies into astonishment, admiration, and awe; that is described by the torrent, the flame, and every other instance of irresistible impetuosity.

But to attempt such noble heights, belongs only to the truly great or the truly good. To discard the lazy manner of reading sermons, or speaking sermons by rote; to set up singly against the opposition of men who are attached to their own errors, and to endeavour to be great, instead of being prudent, are qualities we seldom see united. A minister of the Church of England, who may be possessed of good sense, and some hopes of preferment, will seldom give up such substantial advantages for the empty pleasure of improving society. By his present method, he is liked by his friends, admired by his dependents, not displeasing to his bishop; he lives as well, eats and sleeps as well, as if a real orator, and an eager asserter of his mission: he will hardly, therefore, venture all this, to be called, perhaps, an enthusiast; nor will he depart from customs established by the brotherhood, when, by such a conduct, he only singles himself out for their contempt.

## CUSTOM AND LAWS COMPARED.

WHAT, say some, can give us a more contemptible idea of a large state, than to find it mostly governed by custom; to have few written laws, and no boundaries to mark the jurisdiction between the senate and the people? Among the number who speak in this manner is the great Montesquieu, who asserts that every nation is free in proportion to the number of its written laws, and seems to hint at a despotic and arbitrary conduct in the present King of Prussia, who has abridged the laws of his country into a very short compass.*

As Tacitus and Montesquieu happen to differ in sentiment upon a subject of so much importance, (for the Roman

* In the *Code Frederique*. Napoleon Bonaparte has made a similar digest of the French laws in his *Code Napoleon*. — B.

expressly asserts, that the state is generally vicious in proportion to the number of its laws,) it will not be amiss to examine it a little more minutely, and see whether a state, which, like England, is burdened with a multiplicity of written laws, or which, like Switzerland, Geneva, and some other republics, is governed by custom and the determination of the judge, is best.

And to prove the superiority of custom to written law, we shall at least find history conspiring. Custom, or the traditional observance of the practice of their forefathers, was what directed the Romans as well in their public as private determinations. Custom was appealed to in pronouncing sentence against a criminal, where part of the formulary was *more majorum.* So Sallust, speaking of the expulsion of Tarquin, says, *mutato more*, and not *lege mutato;* and Virgil, *pacisque imponere morem.* So that, in those times of the empire in which the people retained their liberty, they were governed by custom; when they sank into oppression and tyranny, they were restrained by new laws, and the laws of tradition abolished.

As getting the ancients on our side is half a victory, it will not be amiss to fortify the argument with an observation of Chrysostom's: "That the enslaved are the fittest to be governed by laws, and free men by custom." Custom partakes of the nature of parental injunction; it is kept by the people themselves, and observed with a willing obedience. The observance of it must, therefore, be a mark of freedom; and coming originally to a state from the reverenced founders of its liberty, will be an encouragement and assistance to it in the defence of that blessing: but a conquered people, a nation of slaves, must pretend to none of this freedom, or these happy distinctions; having, by degeneracy, lost all right to their brave forefathers' free institutions, their masters will in policy take the forfeiture; and the fixing a conquest must be done by giving laws, which may every moment serve to remind the people enslaved of their conquerors; nothing being more dangerous than to trust a late subdued people with old customs, that presently upbraid their degeneracy, and provoke them to revolt.

The wisdom of the Roman republic in their veneration for custom, and backwardness to introduce a new law, was perhaps the cause of their long continuance, and of the virtues

of which they have set the world so many examples. But to shew in what that wisdom consists, it may be proper to observe, that the benefit of new written laws is merely confined to the consequences of their observance; but customary laws, keeping up a veneration for the founders, engage men in the imitation of their virtues as well as policy. To this may be ascribed the religious regard the Romans paid to their forefathers' memory, and their adhering for so many ages to the practice of the same virtues, which nothing contributed more to efface than the introduction of a voluminous body of new laws over the neck of venerable custom.

The simplicity, conciseness, and antiquity of custom, give an air of majesty and immutability that inspires awe and veneration; but new laws are too apt to be voluminous, perplexed, and indeterminate, whence must necessarily arise neglect, contempt, and ignorance.

As every human institution is subject to gross imperfections, so laws must necessarily be liable to the same inconveniences, and their defects soon discovered. Thus, through the weakness of one part, all the rest are liable to be brought into contempt. But such weaknesses in a custom, for very obvious reasons, evade an examination; besides, a friendly prejudice always stands up in their favour.

But let us suppose a new law to be perfectly equitable and necessary; yet, if the procurers of it have betrayed a conduct that confesses by-ends and private motives, the disgust to the circumstances disposes us, unreasonably indeed, to an irreverence of the law itself; but we are indulgently blind to the most visible imperfections of an old custom. Though we perceive the defects ourselves, yet we remain persuaded, that our wise forefathers had good reason for what they did; and though such motives no longer continue, the benefit will still go along with the observance, though we do not know how. It is thus the Roman lawyers speak: "Non omnium, quæ a majoribus constituta sunt, ratio reddi potest, et ideo rationes eorum quæ constituuntur inquiri non oportet, alioquin multa ex his quæ certa sunt subvertuntur."

Those laws which preserve to themselves the greatest love and observance, must needs be best; but custom, as it executes itself, must be necessarily superior to written laws, in this respect, which are to be executed by another. Thus, nothing can be more certain, than that numerous written laws are a sign of a degenerate community, and are

frequently not the consequences of vicious morals in a state, but the causes.

Hence we see how much greater benefit it would be to the state, rather to abridge than increase its laws. We every day find them increasing; acts and reports, which may be termed the acts of judges, are every day becoming more voluminous, and loading the subject with new penalties.

Laws ever increase in number and severity, until they at length are strained so tight as to break themselves. Such was the case of the latter empire, whose laws were at length become so strict, that the barbarous invaders did not bring servitude, but liberty.

## OF THE PRIDE AND LUXURY OF THE MIDDLING CLASS OF PEOPLE.

Of all the follies and absurdities under which this great metropolis labours, there is not one, I believe, that at present appears in a more glaring and ridiculous light, than the pride and luxury of the middling class of people. Their eager desire of being seen in a sphere far above their capacities and circumstances, is daily — nay hourly — instanced, by the prodigious numbers of mechanics who flock to the races, gaming tables, brothels, and all public diversions this fashionable town affords.

You shall see a grocer or a tallow chandler, sneak from behind the counter, clap on a laced coat and a bag, fly to the E O table, throw away fifty pieces with some sharping man of quality; while his industrious wife is selling a pennyworth of sugar, or a pound of candles, to support her fashionable spouse in his extravagances.

I was led into this reflection by an odd adventure which happened to me the other day at Epsom races, whither I went, not through any desire, I do assure you, of laying bets or winning thousands, but at the earnest request of a friend, who had long indulged the curiosity of seeing the sport, very natural for an Englishman. When we had arrived at the course, and had taken several turns to observe the different objects that made up this whimsical group, a figure suddenly darted by us, mounted and dressed in all the

elegance of those polite gentry who come to shew you they have a little money, and rather than pay their just debts at home, generously come abroad to bestow it on gamblers and pickpockets. As I had not an opportunity of viewing his face till his return, I gently walked after him, and met him as he came back, when, to my no small surprise, I beheld in this gay Narcissus the visage of Jack Varnish, a humble vender of prints. Disgusted at the sight, I pulled my friend by the sleeve, pressed him to return home, telling him all the way, that I was so enraged at the fellow's impudence that I was resolved never to lay out another penny with him.

And now, pray, sir, let me beg of you to give this a place in your paper, that Mr Varnish may understand he mistakes the thing quite, if he imagines horse-racing recommendable in a tradesman; and that he who is revelling every night in the arms of a common strumpet (though blessed with an indulgent wife) when he ought to be minding his business, will never thrive in this world. He will find himself soon mistaken, his finances decrease, his friends shun him, customers fall off, and himself thrown into a jail. I would earnestly recommend this adage to every mechanic in London, "Keep your shop, and your shop will keep you." A strict observance of these words will, I am sure, in time gain them estates. Industry is the road to wealth, and honesty to happiness; and he who strenuously endeavours to pursue them both, may never fear the critic's lash, or the sharp cries of penury and want.

## SABINUS AND OLINDA.

In a fair, rich, and flourishing country, whose cliffs are washed by the German ocean, lived Sabinus, a youth formed by nature to make a conquest wherever he thought proper; but the constancy of his disposition fixed him only with Olinda. He was indeed superior to her in fortune, but that defect on her side was so amply supplied by her merit, that none was thought more worthy of his regards than she. He loved her—he was beloved by her; and in a short time, by joining hands publicly, they avowed the union of their hearts. But, alas! none, however fortunate, however

happy, are exempt from the shafts of envy, and the malignant effects of ungoverned appetite. How unsafe, how detestable are they who have this fury for their guide! How certainly will it lead them from themselves, and plunge them in errors they would have shuddered at, even in apprehension! Ariana, a lady of many amiable qualities, very nearly allied to Sabinus, and highly esteemed by him, imagined herself slighted, and injuriously treated, since his marriage with Olinda. By incautiously suffering this jealousy to corrode in her breast, she began to give a loose to passion; she forgot those many virtues for which she had been so long and so justly applauded. Causeless suspicion and mistaken resentment betrayed her into all the gloom of discontent; she sighed without ceasing; the happiness of others gave her intolerable pain; she thought of nothing but revenge. How unlike what she was,—the cheerful, the prudent, the compassionate Ariana!

She continually laboured to disturb a union so firmly, so affectionately founded, and planned every scheme which she thought most likely to disturb it.

Fortune seemed willing to promote her unjust intentions: the circumstances of Sabinus had been long embarrassed by a tedious law-suit, and the court determining the cause unexpectedly in favour of his opponent, it sank his fortune to the lowest pitch of penury from the highest affluence. From the nearness of relationship, Sabinus expected from Ariana those assistances his present situation required; but she was insensible to all his entreaties, and the justice of every remonstrance, unless he first separated from Olinda, whom she regarded with detestation. Upon a compliance with her desires in this respect, she promised that her fortune, her interest, and her all, should be at his command. Sabinus was shocked at the proposal; he loved his wife with inexpressible tenderness, and refused those offers with indignation, which were to be purchased at so high a price. Ariana was no less displeased to find her offers rejected, and gave a loose to all that warmth which she had long endeavoured to suppress. Reproach generally produces recrimination; the quarrel rose to such a height, that Sabinus was marked for destruction, and the very next day, upon the strength of an old family debt, he was sent to jail, with none but Olinda to comfort him in his miseries. In this mansion of distress, they lived together with resignation, and even

with comfort. She provided the frugal meal, and he read to her while employed in the little offices of domestic concern. Their fellow prisoners admired their contentment, and whenever they had a desire of relaxing into mirth, and enjoying those little comforts that a prison affords, Sabinus and Olinda were sure to be of the party. Instead of reproaching each other for their mutual wretchedness, they both lightened it, by bearing each a share of the load imposed by Providence. Whenever Sabinus shewed the least concern on his dear partner's account, she conjured him by the love he bore her, by those tender ties which now united them for ever, not to discompose himself; that so long as his affection lasted, she defied all the ills of fortune, and every loss of fame or friendship; that nothing could make her miserable but his seeming to want happiness; nothing pleased but his sympathizing with her pleasure. A continuance in prison soon robbed them of the little they had left, and famine began to make its horrid appearance; yet still was neither found to murmur: they both looked upon their little boy, who, insensible of their or his own distress, was playing about the room, with inexpressible yet silent anguish, when a messenger came to inform them that Ariana was dead, and that her will, in favour of a very distant relation, who was now in another country, might easily be procured and burnt, in which case all her large fortune would revert to him, as being the next heir at law.

A proposal of so base a nature filled our unhappy couple with horror; they ordered the messenger immediately out of the room, and, falling upon each other's neck, indulged an agony of sorrow, for now even all hopes of relief were banished. The messenger who made the proposal, however, was only a spy sent by Ariana to sound the dispositions of a man she at once loved and persecuted. This lady, though warped by wrong passions, was naturally kind, judicious, and friendly. She found that all her attempts to shake the constancy or the integrity of Sabinus were ineffectual; she had therefore begun to reflect, and to wonder how she could so long and so unprovoked injure such uncommon fortitude and affection.

She had, from the next room, herself heard the reception given to the messenger, and could not avoid feeling all the force of superior virtue: she therefore reassumed her former goodness of heart; she came into the room with tears in

her eyes, and acknowledged the severity of her former treatment. She bestowed her first care in providing them all the necessary supplies, and acknowledged them as the most deserving heirs of her fortune. From this moment Sabinus enjoyed an uninterrupted happiness with Olinda, and both were happy in the friendship and assistance of Ariana, who, dying soon after, left them in possession of a large estate, and, in her last moments, confessed, that virtue was the only path to true glory; and that, however innocence may for a time be depressed, a steady perseverance will in time lead it to a certain victory.

## THE SENTIMENTS OF A FRENCHMAN ON THE TEMPER OF THE ENGLISH.

NOTHING is so uncommon among the English as that easy affability, that instant method of acquaintance, or that cheerfulness of disposition, which make in France the charm of every society. Yet in this gloomy reserve they seem to pride themselves, and think themselves less happy if obliged to be more social. One may assert, without wronging them, that they do not study the method of going through life with pleasure and tranquillity like the French. Might not this be a proof that they are not so much philosophers as they imagine? Philosophy is no more than the art of making ourselves happy; that is, of seeking pleasure in regularity, and reconciling what we owe to society with what is due to ourselves.

This cheerfulness, which is the characteristic of our nation, in the eye of an Englishman passes almost for folly. But is their gloominess a greater mark of their wisdom? and, folly against folly, is not the most cheerful sort the best? If our gaiety makes them sad, they ought not to find it strange if their seriousness makes us laugh.

As this disposition to levity is not familiar to them, and as they look on every thing as a fault which they do not find at home, the English who live among us are hurt by it. Several of their authors reproach us with it as a vice, or at least as a ridicule.

Mr Addison styles us a comic nation. In my opinion, it is not acting the philosopher on this point, to regard as a

fault that quality which contributes most to the pleasure of society and happiness of life. Plato, convinced that whatever makes men happier makes them better, advises to neglect nothing that may excite and convert to an early habit this sense of joy in children. Seneca places it in the first rank of good things. Certain it is, at least, that gaiety may be a concomitant of all sorts of virtue, but that there are some vices with which it is incompatible.

As to him who laughs at every thing, and him who laughs at nothing, neither of them has sound judgment. All the difference I find between them is, that the last is constantly the most unhappy. Those who speak against cheerfulness, prove nothing else but that they were born melancholic, and that, in their hearts, they rather envy than condemn that levity they affect to despise.

The Spectator, whose constant object was the good of mankind in general, and of his own nation in particular, should, according to his own principles, place cheerfulness among the most desirable qualities; and, probably, whenever he contradicts himself in this particular, it is only to conform to the tempers of the people whom he addresses. He asserts, that gaiety is one great obstacle to the prudent conduct of women. But are those of a melancholy temper, as the English women generally are, less subject to the foibles of love? I am acquainted with some doctors in this science, to whose judgment I would more willingly refer than to his. And perhaps, in reality, persons naturally of a gay temper, are too easily taken off by different objects to give themselves up to all the excesses of this passion.

Mr Hobbes, a celebrated philosopher of his nation, maintains that laughing proceeds from our pride alone. This is only a paradox, if asserted of laughing in general, and only argues that misanthropical disposition for which he was remarkable.

To bring the causes he assigns for laughing under suspicion, it is sufficient to remark, that proud people are commonly those who laugh least. Gravity is the inseparable companion of pride. To say that a man is vain, because the humour of a writer, or the buffooneries of a harlequin, excite his laughter, would be advancing a great absurdity. We should distinguish between laughter inspired by joy, and that which arises from mockery. The malicious sneer is improperly called laughter. It must be owned, that pride

is the parent of such laughter as this: but this is, in itself, vicious; whereas, the other sort has nothing in its principles or effects that deserves condemnation. We find this amiable in others, and is it unhappiness to feel a disposition towards it in ourselves?

When I see an Englishman laugh, I fancy I rather see him hunting after joy than having caught it; and this is more particularly remarkable in their women, whose tempers are inclined to melancholy. A laugh leaves no more traces on their countenance, than a flash of lightning on the face of the heavens. The most laughing air is instantly succeeded by the most gloomy. One would be apt to think that their souls open with difficulty to joy, or, at least, that joy is not pleased with its habitation there.

In regard to fine raillery, it must be allowed, that it is not natural to the English, and, therefore, those who endeavour at it make but an ill figure. Some of their authors have candidly confessed, that pleasantry is quite foreign to their character; but, according to the reason they give, they lose nothing by this confession. Bishop Sprat* gives the following one: "The English," says he, "have too much bravery to be derided, and too much virtue and honour to mock others."

* Bishop of Rochester; the friend and biographer of Cowley. — B.

# THE BEE.

No. VIII. — SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1759.

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### ON DECEIT AND FALSEHOOD.

THE following account is so judiciously conceived, that I am convinced the reader will be more pleased with it than with any thing of mine, so I shall make no apology for this new publication :—

#### TO THE AUTHOR OF THE BEE.*

SIR, — Deceit and falsehood have ever been an overmatch for truth, and followed and admired by the majority of mankind. If we inquire after the reason of this, we shall find it in our own imaginations, which are amused and entertained with the perpetual novelty and variety that fiction affords, but find no manner of delight in the uniform simplicity of homely truth, which still sues them under the same appearance.

He, therefore, that would gain our hearts, must make his court to our fancy, which, being sovereign controller of the passions, lets them loose, and inflames them more or less, in proportion to the force and efficacy of the first cause which is ever the more powerful the more new it is. Thus, in mathematical demonstrations themselves, though they seem to aim at pure truth and instruction, and to be

* Almost the whole of this paper is copied verbatim from an essay "On Witchcraft," in a volume called *The Humourist*, published in 1741. What is not borrowed is evidently Goldsmith's own; but probably a slight feeling of compunction, at the idea of appropriating what did not fairly belong to him, induced him to give the whole in the form of a communication from a correspondent. — B.

addressed to our reason alone, yet I think it is pretty plain, that our understanding is only made a drudge to gratify our invention and curiosity, and we are pleased, not so much because our discoveries are certain, as because they are new.

I do not deny but the world is still pleased with things that pleased it many ages ago, but it should at the same time be considered, that man is naturally so much a logician, as to distinguish between matters that are plain and easy, and others that are hard and inconceivable. What we understand we overlook and despise, and what we know nothing of, we hug and delight in. Thus there are such things as perpetual novelties; for we are pleased no longer than we are amazed, and nothing so much contents us as that which confounds us.

This weakness in human nature gave occasion to a party of men to make such gainful markets as they have done of our credulity. All objects and facts whatever now ceased to be what they had been for ever before, and received what make and meaning it was found convenient to put upon them: what people ate, and drank, and saw, was not what they ate, and drank, and saw, but something farther, which they were fond of because they were ignorant of it. In short, nothing was itself, but something beyond itself; and by these artifices and amusements the heads of the world were so turned and intoxicated, that at last there was scarcely a sound set of brains left in it.

In this state of giddiness and infatuation it was no very hard task to persuade the already deluded, that there was an actual society and communion between human creatures and spiritual demons. And when they had thus put people into the power and clutches of the devil, none but they alone could have either skill or strength to bring the prisoners back again.

But so far did they carry this dreadful drollery, and so fond were they of it, that to maintain it and themselves in profitable repute, they literally sacrificed for it, and made impious victims of numberless old women and other miserable persons, who, either through ignorance could not say what they were bid to say, or through madness said what they should not have said. Fear and stupidity made them incapable of defending themselves, and frenzy and infatuation made them confess guilty impossibilities, which produced cruel sentences, and then inhuman executions.

Some of these wretched mortals, finding themselves either hateful or terrible to all, and befriended by none, and perhaps wanting the common necessaries of life, came at last to abhor themselves as much as they were abhorred by others, and grew willing to be burned or hanged out of a world, which was no other to them than a scene of persecution and anguish.

Others of strong imaginations and little understandings, were, by positive and repeated charges against them of committing mischievous and supernatural facts and villainies, deluded to judge of themselves by the judgment of their enemies, whose weakness or malice prompted them to be accusers. And many have been condemned as witches and dealers with the devil, for no other reason but their knowing more than those who accused, tried, and passed sentence upon them.

In these cases, credulity is a much greater error than infidelity, and it is safer to believe nothing than too much. A man that believes little or nothing of witchcraft, will destroy nobody for being under the imputation of it; and so far he certainly acts with humanity to others, and safety to himself; but he that credits all, or too much, upon that article, is obliged, if he acts consistently with his persuasion, to kill all those whom he takes to be the killers of mankind; and such are witches. It would be a jest and a contradiction to say, that he is for sparing them who are harmless of that tribe, since the received notion of their supposed contract with the devil implies, that they are engaged, by covenant and inclination, to do all the mischief they possibly can.

I have heard many stories of witches, and read many accusations against them; but I do not remember any that would have induced me to have consigned over to the halter or the flame any of those deplorable wretches, who, as they share our likeness and nature, ought to share our compassion, as persons cruelly accused of impossibilities.

But we love to delude ourselves, and often fancy or forge an effect, and then set ourselves as gravely as ridiculously to find out the cause. Thus, for example, when a dream or the hyp has given us false terrors or imaginary pains, we immediately conclude that the infernal tyrant owes us a spite, and inflicts his wrath and stripes upon us by the hands of some of his sworn servants among us. For this

end an old woman is promoted to a seat in Satan's privy-council, and appointed his executioner in chief within her district. So ready and civil are we to allow the devil the dominion over us, and even to provide him with butchers and hangmen of our own make and nature.

I have often wondered why we did not, in choosing our proper officers for Beelzebub, lay the lot rather upon men than women, the former being more bold and robust, and more equal to that bloody service; but, upon inquiry, I find it has been so ordered for two reasons: first, the men, having the whole direction of this affair, are wise enough to slip their own necks out of the collar; and, secondly, an old woman is grown by custom the most avoided and most unpitied creature under the sun, the very name carrying contempt and satire in it. And so far, indeed, we pay but an uncourtly sort of respect to Satan, in sacrificing to him nothing but the dry sticks of human nature.

We have a wondering quality within us, which finds huge gratification when we see strange feats done, and cannot at the same time see the doer or the cause. Such actions are sure to be attributed to some witch or demon; for if we come to find they are slily performed by artists of our own species, and by causes purely natural, our delight dies with our amazement.*

It is, therefore, one of the most unthankful offices in the world, to go about to expose the mistaken notions of witch-craft and spirits; it is robbing mankind of a valuable imagination, and of the privilege of being deceived. Those who at any time undertook the task, have always met with rough treatment and ill language for their pains, and seldom escaped the imputation of atheism, because they would not allow the devil to be too powerful for the Almighty. For my part, I am so much a heretic as to believe, that God Almighty, and not the devil, governs the world.

If we inquire what are the common marks and symptoms by which witches are discovered to be such, we shall see how reasonably and mercifully those poor creatures were burned and hanged who unhappily fell under that name.

In the first place, the old woman must be prodigiously

* Doubtless the pleasure is as great
Of being cheated as to cheat;
And lookers-on feel more delight
That least perceive the juggler's sleight. — HUDIBRAS. — B.

ugly; her eyes hollow and red, her face shrivelled; she goes double, and her voice trembles. It frequently happens, that this rueful figure frightens a child into the palpitation of the heart: home he runs, and tells his mamma, that Goody such a one looked at him, and he is very ill. The good woman cries out her dear baby is bewitched, and sends for the parson and the constable.

It is moreover necessary that she be very poor. It is true, her master, Satan, has mines and hidden treasures in his gift; but no matter, she is, for all that, very poor, and lives on alms. She goes to Sisly the cook-maid for a dish of broth, or the heel of a loaf, and Sisly denies them to her. The old woman goes away muttering, and perhaps in less than a month's time, Sisly hears the voice of a cat, and strains her ancles, which are certain signs that she is bewitched.

A farmer sees his cattle die of the murrain, and his sheep of the rot, and poor Goody is forced to be the cause of their death, because she was seen talking to herself the evening before such a ewe departed, and had been gathering sticks at the side of the wood where such a cow ran mad.

The old woman has always for her companion an old gray cat, which is a disguised devil too, and confederate with Goody in works of darkness. They frequently go journeys into Egypt* upon a broom-staff in half an hour's time, and now and then Goody and her cat change shapes. The neighbours often overhear them in deep and solemn discourse together, plotting some dreadful mischief you may be sure.

There is a famous way of trying witches, recommended by King James I. The old woman is tied hand and foot, and thrown into the river, and if she swims she is guilty, and taken out and burned; but if she is innocent, she sinks, and is only drowned.

The witches are said to meet their master frequently in churches and church-yards. I wonder at the boldness of

* Upper Egypt is particularly famous in the tales of Eastern romance writers, as the country of magicians: in this respect, it yields only to the celebrated Dom-daniel of Tunis. It was probably by means of the Crusaders that the prejudices of the Asiatics against Africa found a place in European demonology. Our witches still visit Egypt, and the most effectual way of laying a ghost, is by conjuring him into the Red Sea.—B.

Satan and his congregation, in revelling and playing mountebank farces on consecrated ground; and I have as often wondered at the oversight and ill policy of some people in allowing it possible.

It would have been both dangerous and impious to have treated this subject at one certain time in this ludicrous manner. It used to be managed with all possible gravity, and even terror: and indeed it was made a tragedy in all its parts, and thousands were sacrificed, or rather murdered, by such evidence and colours, as, God be thanked! we are this day ashamed of. An old woman may be miserable now, and not be hanged for it.

## AN ACCOUNT OF THE AUGUSTAN AGE OF ENGLAND.

THE history of the rise of language and learning is calculated to gratify curiosity rather than to satisfy the understanding. An account of that period only when language and learning arrived at its highest perfection, is the most conducive to real improvement, since it at once raises emulation, and directs to the proper objects. The age of Leo X. in Italy, is confessed to be the Augustan age with them. The French writers seem agreed to give the same appellation to that of Louis XIV; but the English are yet undetermined with respect to themselves.

Some have looked upon the writers in the times of Queen Elizabeth as the true standard for future imitation; others have descended to the reign of James I, and others still lower, to that of Charles II. Were I to be permitted to offer an opinion upon this subject, I should readily give my vote for the reign of Queen Anne, or some years before that period. It was then that taste was united to genius; and as before our writers charmed with their strength of thinking, so then they pleased with strength and grace united. In that period of British glory, though no writer attracts our attention singly, yet, like stars lost in each other's brightness, they have cast such a lustre upon the age in which they lived, that their minutest transactions will be attended to by posterity with a greater eagerness, than the most important occurrences of even empires which have been transacted in greater obscurity.

At that period there seemed to be a just balance between patronage and the press. Before it, men were little esteemed whose only merit was genius; and since, men who can prudently be content to catch the public, are certain of living without dependence. But the writers of the period of which I am speaking, were sufficiently esteemed by the great, and not rewarded enough by booksellers to set them above dependence. Fame, consequently, then was the truest road to happiness; a sedulous attention to the mechanical business of the day, makes the present never-failing resource.

The age of Charles II, which our countrymen term the age of wit and immorality, produced some writers that at once served to improve our language and corrupt our hearts. The king himself had a large share of knowledge, and some wit; and his courtiers were generally men who had been brought up in the school of affliction and experience. For this reason, when the sunshine of their fortune returned, they gave too great a loose to pleasure, and language was by them cultivated only as a mode of elegance. Hence it became more enervated, and was dashed with quaintnesses, which gave the public writings of those times a very illiberal air.

L'Estrange, who was by no means so bad a writer as some have represented him, was sunk in party faction; and having generally the worst side of the argument, often had recourse to scolding, pertness, and, consequently, a vulgarity that discovers itself even in his more liberal compositions. He was the first writer who regularly enlisted himself under the banners of a party for pay, and fought for it, through right and wrong, for upwards of forty literary campaigns. This intrepidity gained him the esteem of Cromwell himself, and the papers he wrote even just before the Revolution, almost with the rope about his neck, have his usual characters of impudence and perseverance. That he was a standard writer cannot be disowned, because a great many very eminent authors formed their style by his. But his standard was far from being a just one; though, when party considerations are set aside, he certainly was possessed of elegance, ease, and perspicuity.

Dryden, though a great and undisputed genius, had the same cast as L'Estrange. Even his plays discover him to be a party man, and the same principle infects his style in

subjects of the lightest nature; but the English tongue, as it stands at present, is greatly his debtor. He first gave it regular harmony, and discovered its latent powers. It was his pen that formed the Congreves, the Priors, and the Addisons, who succeeded him; and had it not been for Dryden, we never should have known a Pope, at least, in the meridian lustre he now displays. But Dryden's excellences, as a writer, were not confined to poetry alone. There is, in his prose writings, an ease and elegance that have never yet been so well united in works of taste or criticism.

The English language owes very little to Otway, though, next to Shakespeare, the greatest genius England ever produced in tragedy. His excellences lay in painting directly from nature, in catching every emotion just as it rises from the soul, and in all the powers of the moving and pathetic. He appears to have had no learning, no critical knowledge, and to have lived in great distress. When he died, (which he did in an obscure house near the Minories,) he had about him the copy of a tragedy, which, it seems, he had sold for a trifle to Bentley the bookseller. I have seen an advertisement at the end of one of L'Estrange's political papers, offering a reward to any one who should bring it to his shop. What an invaluable treasure was there irretrievably lost by the ignorance and neglect of the age he lived in!

Lee had a great command of language, and vast force of expression, both which the best of our succeeding dramatic poets thought proper to take for their models. Rowe, in particular, seems to have caught that manner, though in all other respects inferior. The other poets of that reign contributed but little towards improving the English tongue, and it is not certain whether they did not injure, rather than improve it. Immorality has its cant as well as party, and many shocking expressions now crept into the language, and became the transient fashion of the day. The upper galleries, by the prevalence of party spirit, were courted with great assiduity, and a horse-laugh following ribaldry was the highest instance of applause, the chastity as well as energy of diction being overlooked or neglected.

Virtuous sentiment was recovered, but energy of style never was. This, though disregarded in plays and party writings, still prevailed amongst men of character and business. The despatches of Sir Richard Fanshaw, Sir

William Godolphin, Lord Arlington, and many other ministers of state, are all of them, with respect to diction, manly, bold, and nervous. Sir William Temple, though a man of no learning, had great knowledge and experience. He wrote always like a man of sense and a gentleman; and his style is the model by which the best prose writers in the reign of Queen Anne formed theirs. The beauties of Mr Locke's style, though not so much celebrated, are as striking as that of his understanding. He never says more nor less than he ought, and never makes use of a word that he could have changed for a better. The same observation holds good of Dr Samuel Clarke.

Mr Locke was a philosopher; his antagonist, Stillingfleet, Bishop of Worcester, was a man of learning; and therefore the contest between them was unequal. The clearness of Mr Locke's head renders his language perspicuous, the learning of Stillingfleet's clouds his. This is an instance of the superiority of good sense over learning, towards the improvement of every language.

There is nothing peculiar to the language of Archbishop Tillotson, but his manner of writing is inimitable; for one who reads him, wonders why he himself did not think and speak it in that very manner. The turn of his periods is agreeable, though artless, and every thing he says seems to flow spontaneously from inward conviction. Barrow, though greatly his superior in learning, falls short of him in other respects. *

The time seems to be at hand when justice will be done to Mr Cowley's prose, as well as poetical writings; and though his friend Dr Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, in his diction falls far short of the abilities for which he has been celebrated, yet there is sometimes a happy flow in his periods, something that looks like eloquence. The style of his successor, Atterbury, has been much commended by his friends, which always happens when a man distinguishes himself in party; but there is in it nothing extraordinary. Even the speech which he made for himself at the bar of the House of Lords, before he was sent into exile, is void of eloquence, though it has been cried up by his friends to such a degree, that his enemies have suffered it to pass uncensured.

* The author must mean in respect of manner, for in acuteness and power of thinking, Barrow certainly does not "fall short" of Tillotson, or of any other writer of his age. —B.

The philosophic manner of Lord Shaftesbury's writing is nearer to that of Cicero than any English author has yet arrived at; but perhaps had Cicero written in English, his composition would have greatly exceeded that of our countryman. The diction of the latter is beautiful, but such beauty as, upon nearer inspection, carries with it evident symptoms of affectation. This has been attended with very disagreeable consequences. Nothing is so easy to copy as affectation, and his Lordship's rank and fame have procured him more imitators in Britain than any other writer I know; all faithfully preserving his blemishes, but unhappily not one of his beauties.

Mr Trenchard and Dr Davenant were political writers of great abilities in diction, and their pamphlets are now standards in that way of writing. They were followed by Dean Swift, who, though in other respects far their superior, never could arise to that manliness and clearness of diction in political writing, for which they were so justly famous.

They were all of them exceeded by the late Lord Bolingbroke, whose strength lay in that province; for as a philosopher and a critic he was ill qualified, being destitute of virtue for the one, and of learning for the other. His writings against Sir Robert Walpole are incomparably the best part of his works. The personal and perpetual antipathy he had for that family, to whose places he thought his own abilities had a right, gave a glow to his style, and an edge to his manner, that never yet have been equalled in political writing. His misfortunes and disappointments gave his mind a turn which his friends mistook for philosophy, and at one time of his life he had the art to impose the same belief upon some of his enemies. His idea of a patriot king, which I reckon (as indeed it was) amongst his writings against Sir Robert Walpole, is a masterpiece of diction. Even in his other works, his style is excellent; but where a man either does not, or will not understand the subject he writes on, there must always be a deficiency. In politics, he was generally master of what he undertook; in morals, never.

Mr Addison, for a happy and natural style, will be always an honour to British literature. His diction, indeed, wants strength, but it is equal to all the subjects he undertakes to handle, as he never (at least in his finished works) attempts any thing either in the argumentative or demonstrative way.

Though Sir Richard Steele's reputation as a public writer

was owing to his connections with Mr Addison, yet after their intimacy was formed, Steele sank in his merit as an author. This was not owing so much to the evident superiority on the part of Addison, as to the unnatural efforts which Steele made to equal or eclipse him. This emulation destroyed that genuine flow of diction which is discoverable in all his former compositions.

Whilst their writings engaged attention and the favour of the public, reiterated but unsuccessful endeavours were made towards forming a grammar of the English language. The authors of those efforts went upon wrong principles. Instead of endeavouring to retrench the absurdities of our language, and bringing it to a certain criterion, their grammars were no other than a collection of rules attempting to naturalize those absurdities, and bring them under a regular system.

Somewhat effectual, however, might have been done towards fixing the standard of the English language, had it not been for the spirit of party. For both Whigs and Tories being ambitious to stand at the head of so great a design, the Queen's death happened before any plan of an academy could be resolved on.

Meanwhile, the necessity of such an institution became every day more apparent. The periodical and political writers, who then swarmed, adopted the very worst manner of L'Estrange, till not only all decency, but all propriety of language, was lost in the nation. Leslie, a pert writer, with some wit and learning, insulted the government every week with the grossest abuse. His style and manner, both of which were illiberal, were imitated by Ridpath, Defoe, Dunton,* and others of the opposite party, and Toland pleaded the cause of atheism and immorality in much the same strain; his subject seemed to debase his diction, and he ever failed most in one, when he grew most licentious in the other.

Towards the end of Queen Anne's reign, some of the greatest men in England devoted their time to party, and then a much better manner obtained in political writing. Mr Walpole, Mr Addison, Mr Mainwaring, Mr Steele, and many members of both houses of Parliament, drew their pens for the Whigs; but they seem to have been over-matched, though not in argument, yet in writing, by Bolingbroke,

* All these gentlemen have honourable mention made of them in the *Dunciad*. — B.

Prior, Swift, Arbuthnot, and the other friends of the opposite party. They who oppose a ministry have always a better field for ridicule and reproof than they who defend it.

Since that period, our writers have either been encouraged above their merits or below them. Some who were possessed of the meanest abilities acquired the highest preferments, while others, who seemed born to reflect a lustre upon their age, perished by want or neglect. More, Savage, and Amherst, were possessed of great abilities, yet they were suffered to feel all the miseries that usually attend the ingenious and the imprudent—that attend men of strong passions, and no phlegmatic reserve in their command.

At present, were a man to attempt to improve his fortune or increase his friendship by poetry, he would soon feel the anxiety of disappointment. The press lies open, and is a benefactor to every sort of literature, but that alone.

I am at a loss whether to ascribe this falling off of the public to a vicious taste in the poet, or in them. Perhaps both are to be reprehended. The poet, either dryly didactive, gives us rules which might appear abstruse even in a system of ethics, or, triflingly volatile, writes upon the most unworthy subjects; content, if he can give music instead of sense; content if he can paint to the imagination without any desires or endeavours to affect: the public, therefore, with justice, discard such empty sound, which has nothing but a jingle, or, what is worse, the unmusical flow of blank verse, to recommend it. The late method, also, into which our newspapers have fallen, of giving an epitome of every new publication, must greatly damp the writer's genius. He finds himself, in this case, at the mercy of men who have neither abilities nor learning to distinguish his merit. He finds his own composition mixed with the sordid trash of every daily scribbler. There is a sufficient specimen given of his work to abate curiosity, and yet so mutilated as to render him contemptible. His first, and perhaps his second work, by these means sink, among the crudities of the age, into oblivion. Fame, he finds, begins to turn her back: he therefore flies to profit, which invites him, and he enrolls himself in the lists of dullness and of avarice for life.

Yet there are still among us men of the greatest abilities, and who, in some parts of learning, have surpassed their predecessors. Justice and friendship might here impell me to speak of names which will shine out to all posterity, but

prudence restrains me from what I should otherwise eagerly embrace. Envy might rise against every honoured name I should mention, since scarcely one of them has not those who are his enemies, or those who despise him, &c.

## OF THE OPERA IN ENGLAND.

THE rise and fall of our amusements pretty much resemble that of empire. They this day flourish without any visible cause for such vigour; the next they decay without any reason that can be assigned for their downfall. Some years ago, the Italian opera was the only fashionable amusement among our nobility. The managers of the play-houses dreaded it as a mortal enemy, and our very poets listed themselves in the opposition: at present the house seems deserted, the *castrati* sing to empty benches; even Prince Vologese himself, a youth of great expectations, sings himself out of breath, and rattles his chain to no purpose.

To say the truth, the opera, as it is conducted among us, is but a very humdrum amusement; in other countries, the decorations are entirely magnificent, the singers all excellent, and the burlettas, or interludes, quite entertaining; the best poets compose the words, and the best masters the music; but with us it is otherwise: the decorations are but trifling and cheap; the singers, Matei only excepted, but indifferent. Instead of interlude, we have those sorts of skipping dances, which are calculated for the galleries of the theatre. Every performer sings his favourite song, and the music is only a medley of old Italian airs, or some meagre modern Capricio.

When such is the case, it is not much to be wondered if the opera is pretty much neglected. The lower orders of people have neither taste nor fortune to relish such an entertainment; they would find more satisfaction in the "Roast Beef of Old England" than in the finest closes of an eunuch; they sleep amidst all the agony of recitative. On the other hand, people of fortune or taste can hardly be pleased, where there is a visible poverty in the decorations, and an entire want of taste in the composition.

Would it not surprise one, that when Metastasio is so well known in England, and so universally admired, the

manager or the composer should have recourse to any other operas than those written by him? I might venture to say, that "written by Metastasio," put up in the bills of the day, would alone be sufficient to fill a house, since thus the admirers of sense as well as sound might find entertainment.

The performers also should be entreated to sing only their parts, without clapping in any of their own favourite airs. I must own, that such songs are generally to me the most disagreeable in the world. Every singer generally chooses a favourite air, not from the excellency of the music, but from difficulty; such songs are generally chosen as surprise rather than please, where the performer may shew his compass, his breath, and his volubility.

Hence proceed those unnatural startings, those unmusical closings, and shakes lengthened out to a painful continuance; such, indeed, may shew a voice, but it must give a truly delicate ear the utmost uneasiness. Such tricks are not music; neither Corelli nor Pergolesi ever permitted them, and they begin even to be discontinued in Italy, where they first had their rise.

And now I am upon the subject: our composers also should affect greater simplicity—let their bass clef have all the variety they can give it,—let the body of the music (if I may so express it) be as various as they please; but let them avoid ornamenting a barren groundwork, let them not attempt by flourishing to cheat us of solid harmony.

The works of Mr Rameau are never heard without a surprising effect. I can attribute it only to the simplicity he every where observes, insomuch that some of his finest harmonies are often only octave and unison. This simple manner has greater powers than is generally imagined; and were not such a demonstration misplaced, I think, from the principles of music, it might be proved to be most agreeable.

But to leave general reflection: With the present set of performers, the operas, if the conductor thinks proper, may be carried on with some success, since they have all some merit, if not as actors, at least as singers. Signora Matei is at once both a perfect actress and a very fine singer. She is possessed of a fine sensibility in her manner, and seldom indulges those extravagant and unmusical flights of voice complained of before. Cornacini, on the other hand, is a very indifferent actor—has a most unmeaning face—

seems not to feel his part—is infected with a passion of shewing his compass; but to recompense all these defects, his voice is melodious—he has vast compass and great volubility—his swell and shake are perfectly fine, unless that he continues the latter too long. In short, whatever the defects of his action may be, they are amply recompensed by his excellency as a singer; nor can I avoid fancying that he might make a much greater figure in an oratorio than upon the stage.

However, upon the whole, I know not whether ever operas can be kept up in England; they seem to be entirely exotic, and require the nicest management and care. Instead of this, the care of them is assigned to men unacquainted with the genius and disposition of the people they would amuse, and whose only motives are immediate gain. Whether a discontinuance of such entertainments would be more to the loss or the advantage of the nation, I will not take upon me to determine, since it is as much our interest to induce foreigners of taste among us on the one hand, as it is to discourage those trifling members of society who generally compose the operatical *dramatis personæ*, on the other.

# THE HISTORY

OF

# CYRILLO PADOVANO,

## THE NOTED SLEEP-WALKER.

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[The following little piece is reprinted from a volume entitled *Nouvellettes*, by Dr Goldsmith and Mrs Griffith, &c. published by Fielding and Walker, in 1780. The only pieces by Goldsmith which that collection contains, are this story and the Essay on Scotch Marriages, already given in vol. ii. of this edition. — B.]

It has often been a question in the schools, whether it be preferable to be a king by day, and a beggar in our dreams by night; or, inverting the question, a beggar by day, and a monarch while sleeping? It has been usually decided, that the sleeping monarch was the happiest man, since he is supposed to enjoy all his happiness without contamination; while the monarch in reality feels the various inconveniences that attend his station.

However this may be, there are none sure more miserable than those who enjoy neither situation with any degree of comfort, but feel all the inconveniences of want and poverty by day, while they find a repetition of their misery in a dream. Of this kind was the famous Cyrillo Padovano, of whom a long life has been written; a man, if I may so express it, of a double character, who acted a very different part by night from what he professed in the day. Cyrillo

was a native of Padua, in Italy, a little brown complexioned man, and, while awake, remarkable for his simplicity, probity, piety, and candour; but, unfortunately for him, his dreams were of the strongest kind, and seemed to overturn the whole system of waking morality; for he every night walked in his sleep, and, upon such occasions, was a thief, a robber, and a plunderer of the dead.

The first remarkable exploit we are told of Cyrillo, was at the University, where he shewed no great marks of learning, though some of assiduity. Upon a certain occasion, his master set him a very long and very difficult exercise, which Cyrillo found it impossible, as he supposed, to execute. Depressed with this opinion, and in certain expectation of being chastised the next day, he went to bed quite dejected and uneasy; but awaking in the morning, to his great surprise he found his exercise, completely and perfectly finished, lying upon his table, and, still more extraordinary, written in his own hand. This information he communicated to his master when he gave up his task, who, being equally astonished with him, resolved to try him the next day with a longer and a more difficult task, and to watch him at night when he retired to rest. Accordingly, Cyrillo was seen going to bed with great uneasiness, and soon was heard to sleep profoundly: but this did not continue long; for, in about an hour after he lay down, he got up, lighted his candle, and sat down to study, where he completed his work as before.

A mind like Cyrillo's, not naturally very strong, and never at rest, began, when he arrived at manhood, to become gloomy, solicitous, and desponding. In consequence of this turn of thinking, he resolved to leave the world and turn Carthusian, which is the most rigorous of all the religious orders. Formed for a severe and abstemious life, he was here seen to set lessons of piety to the whole convent, and to shew that he deserved the approbation as well of his fellows in seclusion as of the whole order. But this good fame did not last long; for it was soon found that Cyrillo walked by night, and, as we are told of the fabled Penelope, undid in his sleep all the good actions for which he had been celebrated by day. The first pranks he played were of a light nature, very little more than running about from chamber to chamber, and talking a little more loosely than became one of his professed piety. As it is against

the rules of the fraternity to confine any man by force to his cell, he was permitted in this manner to walk about; and, though there was nothing very edifying in his sleeping conversation, yet the convent were content to overlook and pity his infirmities.

Being carefully observed upon one of these occasions, the following circumstances offered: One evening, having fallen asleep on his chair in his cell, he continued immoveable for about an hour; but then, turning about in the attitude of a listener, he laughed heartily at what he thought he heard spoken; then snapping his fingers, to shew he did not value the speaker, he turned towards the next person, and made a sign with his fingers as if he wanted snuff: not being supplied, he seemed a little disconcerted; and, pulling out his own box, in which there was nothing, he scraped the inside as if to find some: he next very carefully put up his box again; and, looking round him with great suspicion, buttoned up the place of his frock where he kept it. In this manner he continued for some time immoveable; but, without any seeming cause, flew into a most outrageous passion, in which he spared neither oaths nor execrations, which so astonished and scandalized his brother friars, that they left him to execrate alone.

But it had been well if poor Cyrillo went no farther, nor driven his sleeping extravagances into guilt. One night he was perceived going very busily up to the altar, and, in a little beaufet beneath, to rummage with some degree of assiduity. It is supposed that he wished to steal the plate which was usually deposited there, but which had accidentally been sent off the day before to be cleaned. Disappointed in this, he seemed to be extremely enraged; but not caring to return to his cell empty handed, he claps on one of the official silk vestments; and finding that he could carry still more, he put one or two more over each other, and thus cumbrously accoutred, he stole off with a look of terror to his cell; there hiding his ill got finery beneath his mattress, he laid himself down to continue his nap. Those who had watched him during this interval, were willing to see his manner of behaving the morning after.

When Cyrillo awaked, he seemed at first a good deal surprised at the lump in the middle of his bed; and, going to examine the cause, was still more astonished at the

quantity of vestments that were bundled there: he went among his fellows of the convent, inquired how they came to be placed there, and learning the manner from them, nothing could exceed his penitence and contrition.

His last, and greatest project, was considered of a still more heinous nature. A lady, who had long been a benefactress to the convent, happening to die, was desirous of being buried in the cloister, in a vault which she had made for that purpose. It was there that she was laid, adorned with much finery, and a part of her own jewels, of which she had great abundance. The solemnity attending her funeral was magnificent, the expenses great, and the sermon affecting. In all this pomp of grief, none seemed more affected than Cyrillo, or set an example of sincerer mortification. The society considered the deposition of their benefactress among them as a very great honour, and masses in abundance were promised for her safety. But what was the amazement of the whole convent the next day, when they found the vault in which she was deposited broken open, the body mangled, her fingers, on which were some rings, cut off, and all her finery carried away! Every person in the convent was shocked at such barbarity, and Cyrillo was one of the foremost in condemning the sacrilege. However, shortly after, on going to his cell, having occasion to examine under his mattress, he there found that he alone was the guiltless plunderer. The convent was soon made acquainted with his misfortune; and, at the general request of the fraternity, he was removed to another monastery, where the prior had a power, by right, of confining his conventuals. Thus debarred from doing mischief, Cyrillo led the remainder of his life in piety and peace.

# THE LIFE

OF

# THOMAS PARNELL, D.D.

ARCHDEACON OF CLOGHER.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCLXX.

[The following Life of Parnell was originally prefixed to an edition of that poet's works in 1768. It was afterwards abridged by Dr Johnson for his Lives of the Poets. Goldsmith has succeeded in communicating some degree of interest to his sketch, by the justness of his remarks and the graces of his style; but his materials were too scanty to enable him to give that minuteness of detail, which constitutes the principal charm of biography. —B.]

# THE LIFE

OF

# DR PARNELL.

THE life of a scholar seldom abounds with adventure. His fame is acquired in solitude. And the historian, who only views him at a distance, must be content with a dry detail of actions by which he is scarcely distinguished from the rest of mankind. But we are fond of talking of those who have given us pleasure, not that we have any thing important to say, but because the subject is pleasing.

THOMAS PARNELL, D.D. was descended from an ancient family, that had for some centuries been settled at Congleton in Cheshire. His father, Thomas Parnell, who had been attached to the Commonwealth party, upon the Restoration went over to Ireland; thither he carried a large personal fortune, which he laid out in lands in that kingdom. The estates he purchased there, as also that of which he was possessed in Cheshire, descended to our poet, who was his eldest son, and still remain in the family. Thus want, which has compelled many of our greatest men into the service of the Muses, had no influence upon Parnell: he was a poet by inclination.

He was born in Dublin, in the year 1679, and received the first rudiments of his education at the school of Doctor Jones in that city. Surprising things are told us of the greatness of his memory at that early period; as of his being able to repeat by heart forty lines of any book at the

first reading; of his getting the third book of the Iliad in one night's time, which was given in order to confine him for some days. These stories, which are told of almost every celebrated wit, may perhaps be true. But for my own part, I never found any of those prodigies of parts, although I have known enow that were desirous, among the ignorant, of being thought so.

There is one presumption, however, of the early maturity of his understanding. He was admitted a member of the college of Dublin at the age of thirteen, which is much sooner than usual, as at that university they are a great deal stricter in their examination for entrance, than either at Oxford or Cambridge. His progress through the college course of study was probably marked with but little splendour; his imagination might have been too warm to relish the cold logic of Burgersdicius, or the dreary subtleties of Smiglesius; but it is certain, that, as a classical scholar, few could equal him. His own compositions shew this; and the deference which the most eminent men of his time paid him upon that head, put it beyond a doubt. He took the degree of Master of Arts the 9th of July, 1700; and, in the same year, he was ordained a Deacon, by William, Bishop of Derry, having a dispensation from the Primate, as being under twenty-three years of age. He was admitted into priest's orders about three years after, by William, Archbishop of Dublin; and, on the 9th of February, 1705, he was collated by Sir George Ashe, Bishop of Clogher, to the archdeaconry of Clogher. About that time also he married Miss Anne Minchin, a young lady of great merit and beauty, by whom he had two sons, who died young, and one daughter, who is still living. His wife died some time before him; and her death is said to have made so great an impression on his spirits, that it served to hasten his own. On the 31st of May, 1716, he was presented, by his friend and patron Archbishop King, to the vicarage of Finglass, a benefice worth about four hundred pounds a-year, in the diocese of Dublin, but he lived to enjoy his preferment a very short time. He died at Chester, in July, 1717, on his way to Ireland, and was buried in Trinity Church in that town, without any monument to mark the place of his interment. As he died without male issue, his estate devolved to his only nephew, Sir John Parnell, Baronet, whose father was younger brother to the Arch-

deacon, and one of the Justices of the King's Bench in Ireland.

Such is the very unpoetical detail of the life of a poet. Some dates, and some few facts scarcely more interesting than those that make the ornaments of a country tombstone, are all that remain of one, whose labours now begin to excite universal curiosity. A poet, while living, is seldom an object sufficiently great to attract much attention; his real merits are known but to a few, and these are generally sparing in their praises. When his fame is increased by time, it is then too late to investigate the peculiarities of his disposition: the dews of the morning are past, and we vainly try to continue the chase by the meridian splendour.

There is scarcely any man but might be made the subject of a very interesting and amusing history, if the writer, besides a thorough acquaintance with the character he draws, were able to make those nice distinctions which separate it from all others. The strongest minds have usually the most striking peculiarities, and would consequently afford the richest materials: but in the present instance, from not knowing Dr Parnell, his peculiarities are gone to the grave with him; and we are obliged to take his character from such as knew but little of him, or who, perhaps, could have given very little information if they had known more.

Parnell, by what I have been able to collect from my father and uncle, who knew him, was the most capable man in the world to make the happiness of those he conversed with, and the least able to secure his own. He wanted that evenness of disposition which bears disappointment with phlegm, and joy with indifference. He was ever very much elated or depressed; and his whole life spent in agony or rapture. But the turbulence of these passions only affected himself, and never those about him: he knew the ridicule of his own character, and very effectually raised the mirth of his companions, as well at his vexations as at his triumphs.

How much his company was desired, appears from the extensiveness of his connections, and the number of his friends. Even before he made any figure in the literary world, his friendship was sought by persons of every rank and party. The wits at that time differed a good deal from those who are most eminent for their understanding

at present. It would now be thought a very indifferent sign of a writer's good sense, to disclaim his private friends for happening to be of a different party in politics; but it was then otherwise,—the Whig wits held the Tory wits in great contempt, and these retaliated in their turn. At the head of one party were Addison, Steele, and Congreve; at that of the other Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot. Parnell was a friend to both sides, and, with a liberality becoming a scholar, scorned all those trifling distinctions, that are noisy for the time, and ridiculous to posterity. Nor did he emancipate himself from these without some opposition from home. Having been the son of a Commonwealth's man, his Tory connections on this side of the water gave his friends in Ireland great offence: they were much enraged to see him keep company with Pope, and Swift, and Gay; they blamed his undistinguishing taste, and wondered what pleasure he could find in the conversation of men who approved the treaty of Utrecht, and disliked the Duke of Marlborough. His conversation is said to have been extremely pleasing, but in what its peculiar excellence consisted is now unknown. The letters which were written to him by his friends, are full of compliments upon his talents as a companion, and his good-nature as a man. I have several of them now before me. Pope was particularly fond of his company, and seems to regret his absence more than any of the rest.

A letter from him follows thus:

"London, *July* 29.

"Dear Sir,—I wish it were not as ungenerous as vain to complain too much of a man that forgets me, but I could expostulate with you a whole day upon your inhuman silence: I call it inhuman; nor would you think it less, if you were truly sensible of the uneasiness it gives me. Did I know you so ill as to think you proud, I would be much less concerned than I am able to be, when I know one of the best-natured men alive neglects me; and if you know me so ill as to think amiss of me, with regard to my friendship for you, you really do not deserve half the trouble you occasion me. I need not tell you, that both Mr Gay and myself have written several letters in vain; and that we were constantly inquiring, of all who have seen Ireland, if they saw you, and that (forgotten as we are) we are every

day remembering you in our most agreeable hours. All this is true; as that we are sincerely lovers of you, and deplorers of your absence, and that we form no wish more ardently than that which brings you over to us, and places you in your old seat between us. We have lately had some distant hopes of the Dean's design to revisit England; will not you accompany him? or is England to lose every thing that has any charms for us, and must we pray for banishment as a benediction? I have once been witness of some, I hope all, of your splenetic hours: come, and be a comforter in your turn to me, in mine. I am in such an unsettled state, that I can't tell if I shall ever see you, unless it be this year: whether I do or not, be ever assured, you have as large a share of my thoughts and good wishes as any man, and as great a portion of gratitude in my heart as would enrich a monarch, could he know where to find it. I shall not die without testifying something of this nature, and leaving to the world a memorial of the friendship that has been so great a pleasure and pride to me. It would be like writing my own epitaph, to acquaint you with what I have lost since I saw you, what I have done, what I have thought, where I have lived, and where I now repose in obscurity. My friend Jervas, the bearer of this, will inform you of all particulars concerning me; and Mr Ford is charged with a thousand loves, and a thousand complaints, and a thousand commissions to you on my part. They will both tax you with the neglect of some promises which were too agreeable to us all to be forgot: if you care for any of us, tell them so, and write so to me. I can say no more, but that I love you, and am, in spite of the longest neglect of happiness, dear sir, your most faithful affectionate friend and servant, A. POPE."

"Gay is in Devonshire, and from thence he goes to Bath. My father and mother never fail to commemorate you."

Among the number of his most intimate friends was Lord Oxford, whom Pope has so finely complimented upon the delicacy of his choice:

For him thou oft hast bid the world attend,
Fond to forget the statesman in the friend;
For Swift and him despised the farce of state,
The sober follies of the wise and great;

Dext'rous the craving, fawning crowd to quit,
And pleased to 'scape from flattery to wit.

Pope himself was not only excessively fond of his company, but under several literary obligations to him for his assistance in the translation of Homer. Gay was obliged to him upon another account; for, being always poor, he was not above receiving from Parnell the copy money which the latter got for his writings. Several of their letters, now before me, are proofs of this; and as they have never appeared before, it is probable the reader will be much better pleased with their idle effusions, than with any thing I can hammer out for his amusement.

"BINFIELD, near OAKINGHAM, *Tuesday.*

"DEAR SIR,—I believe the hurry you were in hindered your giving me a word by the last post, so that I am yet to learn whether you got well to town, or continue so there. I very much fear both for your health and your quiet; and no man living can be more truly concerned in any thing that touches either than myself. I would comfort myself, however, with hoping, that your business may not be unsuccessful for your sake; and that at least it may soon be put into other proper hands. For my own, I beg earnestly of you to return to us as soon as possible. You know how very much I want you; and that, however your business may depend upon any other, my business depends entirely upon you; and yet still I hope you will find your man, even though I lose you the mean while. At this time, the more I love you, the less I can spare you; which alone will, I dare say, be a reason to you to let me have you back the sooner. The minute I lost you, Eustathius, with nine hundred pages, and nine thousand contractions of the Greek characters, arose to view! Spondanus, with all his auxiliaries, in number a thousand pages, (value three shillings,) and Dacier's three volumes, Barnes's two, Valterie's three, Cuperus, half in Greek, Leo Allatus, three parts in Greek, Scaliger, Macrobius, and (worse than them all) Aulus Gellius! All these rushed upon my soul at once, and whelmed me under a fit of the headach. I cursed them all religiously, damned my best friends among the rest, and even blasphemed Homer himself. Dear sir, not only as you are a friend, and a good-natured man, but as

you are a Christian and a divine, come back speedily, and prevent the increase of my sins; for, at the rate I have begun to rave, I shall not only damn all the poets and commentators who have gone before me, but be damned myself by all who come after me. To be serious: you have not only left me to the last degree impatient for your return, who at all times should have been so, (though never so much as since I knew you in best health here,) but you have wrought several miracles upon our family: you have made old people fond of a young and gay person, and inveterate papists of a clergyman of the Church of England; even Nurse herself is in danger of being in love in her old age, and (for all I know) would even marry Dennis for your sake, because he is your man, and loves his master. In short, come down forthwith, or give me good reasons for delaying, though but for a day or two, by the next post. If I find them just, I will come up to you, though you know how precious my time is at present; my hours were never worth so much money before; but perhaps you are not sensible of this, who give away your own works. You are a generous author; I a hackney scribbler: you a Grecian, and bred at a university; I a poor Englishman, of my own educating: you a reverend parson, I a wag: in short, you are Dr Parnelle, (with an *e* at the end of your name,) and I — Your most obliged and affectionate friend and faithful servant, A. Pope."

"My hearty service to the Dean, Dr Arbuthnot, Mr Ford, and the true genuine shepherd. J. Gay, of Devon. I expect him down with you."

We may easily perceive by this, that Parnell was not a little necessary to Pope in conducting his translation; however, he has worded it so ambiguously that it is impossible to bring the charge directly against him. But he is much more explicit when he mentions his friend Gay's obligations in another letter, which he takes no pains to conceal.

"Dear Sir, — I write to you with the same warmth, the same zeal of good-will and friendship, with which I used to converse with you two years ago, and can't think myself absent, when I feel you so much at my heart. The picture

of you, which Jervas brought me over, is infinitely less lively a representation than that I carry about with me, and which rises to my mind whenever I think of you. I have many an agreeable reverie through those woods and downs where we once rambled together: my head is sometimes at the Bath, and sometimes at Letcomb, where the Dean makes a great part of my imaginary entertainment, this being the cheapest way of treating me: I hope he will not be displeased at this manner of paying my respects to him, instead of following my friend Jervas's example, which, to say the truth, I have as much inclination to do as I want ability. I have been ever since December last in greater variety of business than any such men as you (that is, divines and philosophers) can possibly imagine a reasonable creature capable of. Gay's play, among the rest, has cost much time and long-suffering, to stem a tide of malice and party that certain authors have raised against it: the best revenge upon such fellows is now in my hands—I mean your Zoilus, which really transcends the expectation I had conceived of it. I have put it into the press, beginning with the poem Batrachom; for you seem, by the first paragraph of the dedication to it, to design to prefix the name of some particular person. I beg therefore to know for whom you intend it, that the publication may not be delayed on this account, and this as soon as is possible. Inform me also upon what terms I am to deal with the bookseller, and whether you design the copy money for Gay, as you formerly talked; what number of books you would have yourself, &c. I scarce see any thing to be altered in this whole piece; in the poems you sent I will take the liberty you allow me. The story of Pandora, and the Eclogue upon Health, are two of the most beautiful things I ever read. I do not say this to the prejudice of the rest, but as I have read these oftener. Let me know how far my commission is to extend, and be confident of my punctual performance of whatever you enjoin. I must add a paragraph on this occasion in regard to Mr Ward, whose verses have been a great pleasure to me. I will contrive they shall be so to the world, whenever I can find a proper opportunity of publishing them.

"I shall very soon print an entire collection of my own madrigals, which I look upon as making my last will and testament, since in it I shall give all I ever intend to

give, (which I'll beg yours and the Dean's acceptance of.) You must look on me no more a poet, but a plain commoner, who lives upon his own, and fears and flatters no man. I hope, before I die, to discharge the debt I owe to Homer, and get upon the whole just fame enough to serve for an annuity for my own time, though I leave nothing to posterity.

"I beg our correspondence may be more frequent than it has been of late. I am sure my esteem and love for you never more deserved it from you, or more prompted it from you. I desired our friend Jervas (in the greatest hurry of my business) to say a great deal in my name, both to yourself and the Dean, and must once more repeat the assurances to you both, of an unchanging friendship and unalterable esteem.—I am, dear sir, most entirely, your affectionate, faithful, obliged friend and servant, A. POPE."

From these letters to Parnell, we may conclude, as far as their testimony can go, that he was an agreeable, a generous, and a sincere man. Indeed, he took care that his friends should always see him to the best advantage: for, when he found his fits of spleen and uneasiness, which sometimes lasted for weeks together, returning, he returned with all expedition to the remote parts of Ireland, and there made out a gloomy kind of satisfaction, in giving hideous descriptions of the solitude to which he retired. It is said of a famous painter, that, being confined in prison for debt, his whole delight consisted in drawing the faces of his creditors in caricatura. It was just so with Parnell. From many of his unpublished pieces which I have seen, and from others that have appeared, it would seem that scarcely a bog in his neighbourhood was left without reproach, and scarcely a mountain reared its head unsung. "I can easily," says Pope, in one of his letters, in answer to a dreary description of Parnell's, "I can easily image to my thoughts the solitary hours of your eremitical life in the mountains, from some parallel to it in my own retirement at Binfield:" and in another place, "We are both miserably enough situated, God knows; but of the two evils, I think the solitudes of the South are to be preferred to the deserts of the West." In this manner Pope answered him in the tone of his own complaints: and these descriptions of the imagined distress of his situation served to give him a

temporary relief; they threw off the blame from himself, and laid upon fortune and accident a wretchedness of his own creating.

But though this method of quarreling in his poems with his situation served to relieve himself, yet it was not easily endured by the gentlemen in the neighbourhood, who did not care to confess themselves his fellow-sufferers. He received many mortifications upon that account among them; for, being naturally fond of company, he could not endure to be without even theirs, which, however, among his English friends, he pretended to despise. In fact, his conduct, in this particular, was rather splenetic than wise; he had either lost the art to engage, or did not employ his skill in securing those more permanent, though more humble connections, and sacrificed, for a month or two in England, a whole year's happiness by his country fireside at home.

However, what he permitted the world to see of his life was elegant and splendid: his fortune (for a poet) was very considerable, and it may be easily supposed he lived to the very extent of it. The fact is, his expenses were greater than his income, and his successor found the estate somewhat impaired at his decease. As soon as ever he had collected in his annual revenues, he immediately set out for England, to enjoy the company of his dearest friends, and laugh at the more prudent world that were minding business and gaining money. The friends to whom, during the latter part of his life, he was chiefly attached, were Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, Jervas, and Gay. Among these he was particularly happy, his mind was entirely at ease, and gave a loose to every harmless folly that came uppermost. Indeed, it was a society in which, of all others, a wise man might be most foolish, without incurring any danger or contempt. Perhaps the reader will be pleased to see a letter to him from a part of this junto, as there is something striking even in the levities of genius. It comes from Gay, Jervas, Arbuthnot, and Pope, assembled at a chophouse near the Exchange, and is as follows:—

"My Dear Sir,—I was last summer in Devonshire, and am this winter at Mrs Bonyer's. In the summer I wrote a poem, and in the winter I have published it, which I have sent to you by Dr Elwood. In the summer I ate two dishes of toad-stools of my own gathering, instead of

mushrooms; and in the winter I have been sick with wine, as I am at this time, blessed be God for it! as I must bless God for all things. In the summer I spoke truth to damsels: in the winter I told lies to ladies. Now you know where I have been, and what I have done, I shall tell you what I intend to do the ensuing summer: I propose to do the same thing I did last, which was to meet you in any part of England you would appoint; don't let me have two disappointments. I have longed to hear from you, and to that intent I teased you with three or four letters; but, having no answer, I feared both yours and my letters might have miscarried. I hope my performance will please the Dean, whom I often wished for, and to whom I would have often wrote, but for the same reasons I neglected writing to you. I hope I need not tell you how I love you, and how glad I shall be to hear from you, which, next to the seeing you, would be the greatest satisfaction to your most affectionate friend and humble servant, J. G."

"DEAR MR ARCHDEACON,—Though my proportion of this epistle should be but a sketch in miniature, yet I take up this half page, having paid my club with the good company both for our dinner of chops and for this paper. The poets will give you lively descriptions in their way; I shall only acquaint you with that which is directly my province. I have just set the last hand to a couplet, for so I may call two nymphs in one piece. They are Pope's favourites, and though few, you will guess must have cost me more pains than any nymphs can be worth. He has been so unreasonable as to expect that I should have made them as beautiful upon canvass, as he has done upon paper. If this same Mr P—— should omit to write for the dear frogs, and the *Pervigilium*, I must entreat you not to let me languish for them, as I have done ever since they crossed the seas: remember by what neglects, &c. we missed them when we lost you, and therefore I have not yet forgiven any of those triflers that let them escape and run those hazards. I am going on the old rate, and want you and the Dean prodigiously, and am in hopes of making you a visit this summer, and of hearing from you both, now you are together. Fortescue, I am sure, will be concerned that he is not in Cornhill, to set his hand to these presents, not only as a witness, but as a *Serviteur tres humble,* C. JERVAS."

"It is so great an honour to a poor Scotchman to be remembered at this time of day, especially by an inhabitant of the *Glacialis Ierne*, that I take it very thankfully, and have, with my good friends, remembered you at our table in the chophouse in Exchange Alley. There wanted nothing to complete our happiness but your company, and our dear friend the Dean's. I am sure the whole entertainment would have been to his relish. Gay has got so much money by his Art of Walking the Streets, that he is ready to set up his equipage; he is just going to the bank to negotiate some exchange bills. Mr Pope delays his second volume of his Homer till the martial spirit of the rebels* is quite quelled, it being judged that the first part did some harm that way. Our love again and again to the dear Dean. *Fuimus Tories*, I can say no more. ARBUTHNOT."

"When a man is conscious that he does no good himself, the next thing is to cause others to do some. I may claim some merit this way, in hastening this testimonial from your friends above writing: their love to you indeed wants no spur, their ink wants no pen, their pen wants no hand, their hand wants no heart, and so forth (after the manner of Rabelais, which is betwixt some meaning and no meaning;) and yet it may be said, when present thought and opportunity is wanting, their pens want ink, their hands want pens, their hearts want hands, &c. till time, place, and conveniency, concur to set them writing, as at present, a sociable meeting, a good dinner, warm fire, and an easy situation do, to the joint labour and pleasure of this epistle.

"Wherein if I should say nothing I should say much, (much being included in my love,) though my love be such, that if I should say much, I should yet say nothing, it being (as Cowley says) equally impossible either to conceal or to express it.

"If I were to tell you the thing I wish above all things, it is to see you again; the next is to see here your treatise of Zoilus, with the Batrachomuomachia, and the Pervigilium Veneris, both which poems are masterpieces in several kinds; and I question not the prose is as excellent in its sort as the Essay on Homer. Nothing can be more glorious to that great author, than that the same hand that

* The Jacobite insurgents of 1715.—B.

raised his best statue, and decked it with its old laurels, should also hang up the scarecrow of his miserable critic, and gibbet up the carcass of Zoilus, to the terror of the witlings of posterity. More, and much more, upon this and a thousand other subjects, will be the matter of my next letter, wherein I must open all the friend to you. At this time I must be content with telling you, I am faithfully your most affectionate and humble servant, A. POPE."

If we regard this letter with a critical eye, we must find it indifferent enough; if we consider it as a mere effusion of friendship, in which every writer contended in affection, it will appear much to the honour of those who wrote it. To be mindful of an absent friend in the hours of mirth and feasting, when his company is least wanted, shews no slight degree of sincerity. Yet probably there was still another motive for writing thus to him in conjunction. The above named, together with Swift and Parnell, had some time before formed themselves into a society, called the Scribblerus Club, and I should suppose they commemorated him thus, as being an absent member.

It is past a doubt that they wrote many things in conjunction, and Gay usually held the pen. And yet I do not remember any productions which were the joint effort of this society, as doing it honour. There is something feeble and quaint in all their attempts, as if company repressed thought, and genius wanted solitude for its boldest and happiest exertions. Of those productions in which Parnell had a principal share, that of the Origin of the Sciences from the Monkeys in Ethiopia, is particularly mentioned by Pope himself, in some manuscript anecdotes which he left behind him. The Life of Homer also, prefixed to the translation of the Iliad, is written by Parnell, and corrected by Pope; and, as that great poet assures us in the same place, this correction was not effected without great labour. "It is still stiff," says he, "and was written still stiffer; as it is, I verily think it cost me more pains in the correcting, than the writing it would have done." All this may be easily credited; for every thing of Parnell's that has appeared in prose, is written in a very awkward inelegant manner. It is true, his productions teem with imagination, and shew great learning, but they want that ease and sweetness for which his poetry is so much admired; and the language is

also shamefully incorrect. Yet, though all this must be allowed, Pope should have taken care not to leave his errors upon record against him, or put it in the power of envy to tax his friend with faults that do not appear in what he has left to the world. A poet has a right to expect the same secrecy in his friend as in his confessor; the sins he discovers are not divulged for punishment but pardon. Indeed, Pope is almost inexcusable in this instance, as what he seems to condemn in one place, he very much applauds in another. In one of the letters from him to Parnell, above mentioned, he treats the Life of Homer with much greater respect, and seems to say, that the prose is excellent in its kind. It must be confessed, however, that he is by no means inconsistent; what he says in both places may very easily be reconciled to truth; but who can defend his candour and sincerity?

It would be hard, however, to suppose that there was no real friendship between these great men. The benevolence of Parnell's disposition remains unimpeached; and Pope, though subject to starts of passion and envy, yet never missed an opportunity of being truly serviceable to him. The commerce between them was carried on to the common interest of both. When Pope had a Miscellany to publish, he applied to Parnell for poetical assistance, and the latter as implicitly submitted to him for correction. Thus they mutually advanced each other's interest or fame, and grew stronger by conjunction. Nor was Pope the only person to whom Parnell had recourse for assistance. We learn from Swift's letters to Stella, that he submitted his pieces to all his friends, and readily adopted their alterations. Swift, among the number, was very useful to him in that particular:* and care has been taken that the world should not remain ignorant of the obligation.

But in the connections of wits, interest has generally very little share; they have only pleasure in view, and can seldom find it but among each other. The Scribblerus Club, when the members were in town, were seldom asunder, and they often made excursions together into the country, and generally on foot. Swift was usually the butt of the company,

* Swift also assumes the credit of having introduced Parnell to the acquaintance of Lord Bolingbroke and the Earl of Oxford. "I value myself," he adds, "upon making the ministry desire to be acquainted with Parnell, and not Parnell with the ministry." *Letters to Mrs Dingley.* —B.

and if a trick was played, he was always the sufferer. The whole party once agreed to walk down to the house of Lord B——,* who is still living, and whose seat is about twelve miles from town. As every one agreed to make the best of his way, Swift, who was remarkable for walking, soon left the rest behind him, fully resolved, upon his arrival, to choose the very best bed for himself, for that was his custom. In the meantime, Parnell was determined to prevent his intentions, and taking horse, arrived at Lord B——'s by another way, long before him. Having apprized his lordship of Swift's design, it was resolved at any rate to keep him out of the house; but how to effect this was the question. Swift never had the small-pox, and was very much afraid of catching it; as soon, therefore, as he appeared striding along at some distance from the house, one of his lordship's servants was despatched to inform him, that the small-pox was then making great ravages in the family, but that there was a summer-house with a field-bed at his service, at the end of the garden. There the disappointed Dean was obliged to retire, and take a cold supper that was sent out to him, while the rest were feasting within. However, at last they took compassion on him; and upon his promising never to choose the best bed again, they permitted him to make one of the company.

There is something satisfactory in these accounts of the follies of the wise: they give a natural air to the picture, and reconcile us to our own. There have been few poetical societies more talked of, or productive of a greater variety of whimsical conceits, than this of the Scribblerus Club, but how long it lasted I cannot exactly determine. The whole of Parnell's poetical existence was not of more than eight or ten years' continuance; his first excursions to England began about the year 1706, and he died in the year 1718; so that it is probable the club began with him, and his death ended the connection. Indeed, the festivity of his conversation, the benevolence of his heart, and the generosity of his temper, were qualities that might serve to cement any society, and that could hardly be replaced when he was taken away. During the two or three last years of his life, he was more fond of company than ever, and could scarcely bear to be alone. The death of his wife, it is said,

* Lord Bathurst. — B.

was a loss to him that he was unable to support or recover. From that time he could never venture to court the Muse in solitude, where he was sure to find the image of her who first inspired his attempts. He began, therefore, to throw himself into every company, and to seek from wine, if not relief, at least insensibility. Those helps that sorrow first called for assistance, habit soon rendered necessary, and he died before his fortieth year, in some measure a martyr to conjugal fidelity.

Thus, in the space of a very few years, Parnell attained a share of fame, equal to what most of his contemporaries were a long life in acquiring. He is only to be considered as a poet; and the universal esteem in which his poems are held, and the reiterated pleasure they give in the perusal, are a sufficient test of their merit. He appears to me to be the last of that great school that had modelled itself upon the ancients, and taught English poetry to resemble what the generality of mankind have allowed to excel. A studious and correct observer of antiquity, he sets himself to consider nature with the lights it lent him; and he found that the more aid he borrowed from the one, the more delightfully he resembled the other. To copy nature is a task the most bungling workman is able to execute; to select such parts as contribute to delight, is reserved only for those whom accident has blessed with uncommon talents, or such as have read the ancients with indefatigable industry. Parnell is ever happy in the selection of his images, and scrupulously careful in the choice of his subjects. His productions bear no resemblance to those tawdry things, which it has for some time been the fashion to admire; in writing which the poet sits down without any plan, and heaps up splendid images without any selection; where the reader grows dizzy with praise and admiration, and yet soon grows weary, he can scarcely tell why. Our poet, on the contrary, gives out his beauties with a more sparing hand; he is still carrying his reader forward, and just gives him refreshment sufficient to support him to his journey's end. At the end of his course, the reader regrets that his way has been so short, he wonders that it gave him so little trouble, and so resolves to go the journey over again.

His poetical language is not less correct than his subjects are pleasing. He found it at that period in which it was brought to its highest pitch of refinement; and, ever since

his time, it has been gradually debasing. It is, indeed, amazing, after what has been done by Dryden, Addison, and Pope, to improve and harmonize our native tongue, that their successors should have taken so much pains to involve it into pristine barbarity. These misguided innovators have not been content with restoring antiquated words and phrases, but have indulged themselves in the most licentious transpositions and the harshest constructions, vainly imagining, that the more their writings are unlike prose, the more they resemble poetry. They have adopted a language of their own, and call upon mankind for admiration.* All those who do not understand them are silent, and those who make out their meaning are willing to praise, to shew they understand. From these follies and affectations the poems of Parnell are entirely free: he has considered the language of poetry as the language of life, and conveys the warmest thoughts in the simplest expression.

Parnell has written several poems besides those published by Pope, and some of them have been made public with very little credit to his reputation. There are still many more that have not yet seen the light, in the possession of Sir John Parnell, his nephew, who, from that laudable zeal which he has for his uncle's reputation, will probably be slow in publishing what he may even suspect will do it injury. Of those which are usually inserted in his works, some are indifferent, and some moderately good, but the greater part are excellent. A slight stricture on the most striking shall conclude this account, which I have already drawn out to a disproportionate length.

Hesiod, or the Rise of Woman, is a very fine illustration of a hint from Hesiod. It was one of his earliest productions, and first appeared in a miscellany published by Tonson.

Of the three songs that follow, two of them were written upon the lady he afterwards married; they were the genuine dictates of his passion, but are not excellent in their kind.

The anacreontic, beginning with "When spring came on with fresh delight," is taken from a French poet, whose name I forget, and, as far as I am able to judge of the French

* This censure is obviously aimed at Gray, Warton, and their imitators. — B.

language, is better than the original. The anacreontic that follows, " Gay Bacchus," &c. is also a translation * of a Latin poem, by Aurelius Augurellus, an Italian poet, beginning with,

Invitat olim Bacchus ad cænam suos
Comum, Jocum, Cupidinem.

Parnell, when he translated it, applied the characters to some of his friends, and as it was written for their entertainment, it probably gave them more pleasure than it has given the public in the perusal. It seems to have more spirit than the original; but it is extraordinary, that it was published as an original and not as a translation. Pope should have acknowledged it, as he knew.

The Fairy Tale is, incontestably, one of the finest pieces in any language. The old dialect is not perfectly well preserved, but this is a very slight defect, where all the rest is so excellent.

The Pervigilium Veneris (which, by the by, does not belong to Catullus,) is very well versified, and, in general, all Parnell's translations are excellent. The Battle of the Frogs and Mice, which follows, is done as well as the subject would admit; but there is a defect in the translation, which sinks it below the original, and which it was impossible to remedy,—I mean the names of the combatants, which, in the Greek, bear a ridiculous allusion to their natures, have no force to the English reader. A Bacon-eater was a good name for a mouse, and Pternotractas in Greek was a very good sounding word, that conveyed that meaning. Puffcheek would sound odiously as a name for a frog, and yet Physignathos does admirably well in the original.

The Letter to Mr Pope is one of the finest compliments that ever was paid to any poet; the description of his situation at the end of it is very fine, but far from being true. That part of it where he deplores his being far from wit and learning, as being far from Pope, gave particular offence to his friends at home. Mr Coote, a gentleman in his neighbourhood, who thought that he himself had wit, was very much displeased with Parnell for casting his eyes so far off for a learned friend, when he could so conveniently be supplied at home.

* Except the latter part, which, as Dr Johnson remarks, is purely Parnell's. — B.

The translation of a part of the Rape of the Lock into monkish verse, serves to shew what a master Parnell was of the Latin; a copy of verses made in this manner, is one of the most difficult trifles that can possibly be imagined. I am assured that it was written upon the following occasion: Before the Rape of the Lock was yet completed, Pope was reading it to his friend Swift, who sat very attentively, while Parnell, who happened to be in the house, went in and out without seeming to take any notice. However, he was very diligently employed in listening, and was able, from the strength of his memory, to bring away the whole description of the Toilet pretty exactly. This he versified in the manner now published in his works; and the next day, when Pope was reading his poem to some friends, Parnell insisted that he had stolen that part of the description from an old monkish manuscript. An old paper with the Latin verses was soon brought forth, and it was not till after some time that Pope was delivered from the confusion which it at first produced.

The Bookworm is another unacknowledged translation from a Latin poem by Beza. It was the fashion with the wits of the last age, to conceal the places whence they took their hints or their subjects. A trifling acknowledgment would have made that lawful prize, which may now be considered as plunder.

The Night Piece on Death deserves every praise, and, I should suppose, with very little amendment, might be made to surpass all those night pieces and churchyard scenes that have since appeared.

But the poem of Parnell's best known, and on which his best reputation is grounded, is the Hermit. Pope, speaking of this in those manuscript anecdotes already quoted, says, "That the poem is very good. The story," continues he, "was written originally in Spanish, whence, probably, Howel had translated it into prose, and inserted it in one of his letters. Addison liked the scheme, and was not disinclined to come into it." However this may be, Dr Henry Moore, in his Dialogues, has the very same story; and I have been informed by some, that it is originally of Arabian invention.*

* In these critical remarks, Goldsmith has taken no notice of the *Allegory on Man*, which, in Dr Johnson's opinion, is the happiest of all Parnell's performances. — B.

With respect to the prose works of Parnell, I have mentioned them already; his fame is too well grounded for any defects in them to shake it. I will only add, that the life of Zoilus was written at the request of his friends, and designed as a satire upon Dennis and Theobald, with whom his club had long been at variance. I shall end this account with a letter to him from Pope and Gay, in which they endeavour to hasten him to finish that production: —

"LONDON, *March* 18.

"DEAR SIR, — I must own I have long owed you a letter, but, you must own, you have owed me one a good deal longer. Besides, I have but two people in the whole kingdom of Ireland to take care of, — the Dean and you; but you have several who complain of your neglect in England. Mr Gay complains, Mr Harcourt complains, Mr Jervas complains, Dr Arbuthnot complains, my Lord complains, I complain. (Take notice of this figure of iteration, when you make your next sermon.) Some say you are in deep discontent at the new turn of affairs; others, that you are so much in the archbishop's good graces, that you will not correspond with any that have seen the last ministry. Some affirm you have quarreled with Pope, (whose friends, they observe, daily fall from him on account of his satirical and comical disposition;) others, that you are insinuating yourself into the opinion of the ingenious Mr What-do-ye-call-him. Some think you are preparing your sermons for the press, and others, that you will transform them into essays and moral discourses. But the only excuse that I will allow, is your attention to the life of Zoilus. The frogs already seem to croak for their transportation to England, and are sensible how much that doctor is cursed and hated, who introduced their species into your nation; therefore, as you dread the wrath of St Patrick, send them hither, and rid the kingdom of those pernicious and loquacious animals.

"I have at length received your poem out of Mr Addison's hands, which shall be sent as soon as you order it, and in what manner you shall appoint. I shall, in the meantime, give Mr Tooke a packet for you, consisting of divers merry pieces, — Mr Gay's new farce, Mr Burnet's letter to Mr Pope, Mr Pope's Temple of Fame, Mr Thomas Burnet's Grumbler on Mr Gay, and the Bishop of Ailsbury's Elegy, written either by Mr Cary or some other hand.

" Mr Pope is reading a letter; and, in the meantime, I make use of the pen to testify my uneasiness in not hearing from you. I find success, even in the most trivial things, raises the indignation of scribblers: for I, for my What-d'-ye-call-it, could neither escape the fury of Mr Burnet, or the German Doctor; then, where will rage end, when Homer is to be translated? Let Zoilus hasten to your friend's assistance, and envious criticism shall be no more. I am in hopes that we may order our affairs so as to meet this summer at the Bath; for Mr Pope and myself have thoughts of taking a trip thither. You shall preach, and we will write lampoons; for it is esteemed as great an honour to leave the Bath for fear of a broken head, as for a Terræ Filius of Oxford to be expelled. I have no place at court; therefore, that I may not entirely be without one everywhere, shew that I have a place in your remembrance. —Your most affectionate, faithful servants,

" A. Pope and J. Gay."

" Homer will be published in three weeks."

I cannot finish this trifle, without returning my sincerest acknowledgments to Sir John Parnell, for the generous assistance he was pleased to give me, in furnishing me with many materials, when he heard I was about writing the life of his uncle; as also to Mr and Mrs Hayes, relations of our poet; and to my very good friend Mr Stevens, who, being an ornament to letters himself, is very ready to assist all the attempts of others.

# THE LIFE

OF

# HENRY,

## LORD VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCLXXI.

[This Life was originally prefixed to the *Dissertation on Parties*, published in 1771, and afterwards to the large edition of *Bolingbroke's Works* in 1777. It is written with the author's usual elegance and discrimination of character, but with too evident a partiality to the restless politician whose history it professes to record. Lord Bolingbroke's philosophical writings have never been held in much esteem by the judicious; and even his political tracts, though they bear the marks of an acute and vigorous mind, refer too exclusively to the state of parties in his own time, to be extensively or generally useful. Yet it must be remembered in Goldsmith's vindication, that at the time when he wrote, Lord Bolingbroke's name was invested with a charm which it has now lost: he was still remembered as the secretary of state, the eloquent speaker, and the accomplished man of the world; he had besides been long the idol of the Tory wits of Queen Anne's reign, — of Swift, and Pope, and Arbuthnot, and Gay, whom our author reverenced too deeply to think of questioning their judgment; and to crown all, Goldsmith himself was warmly attached to that school of politics of which Bolingbroke was the great ornament. It must also be admitted, that this ambitious statesman had, on other grounds, a very legitimate claim on the admiration of his biographer. Possessed of the highest talents for business, and of extensive political information — a shrewd judge of character — a lover of learning and of learned men — an eloquent writer, and a powerful debater, — he seems to have wanted only a little less pride, and a little more moral courage, to have become the leading statesman of his age. — B.]

# THE LIFE

OF

# LORD BOLINGBROKE.

THERE are some characters that seem formed by nature to take delight in struggling with opposition, and whose most agreeable hours are passed in storms of their own creating. The subject of the present sketch was perhaps, of all others, the most indefatigable in raising himself enemies, to shew his power in subduing them; and was not less employed in improving his superior talents, than in finding objects on which to exercise their activity. His life was spent in a continual conflict of politics; and, as if that was too short for the combat, he has left his memory as a subject of lasting contention.

It is, indeed, no easy matter to preserve an acknowledged impartiality in talking of a man so differently regarded on account of his political, as well as his religious principles. Those whom his politics may please will be sure to condemn him for his religion; and, on the contrary, those most strongly attached to his theological opinions, are the most likely to decry his politics. On whatever side he is regarded, he is sure to have opposers; and this was perhaps what he most desired, having, from nature, a mind better pleased with the struggle than the victory.

Henry St John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke, was born in the year 1672, at Battersea, in Surrey, at a seat that had been in the possession of his ancestors for ages before. His family was of the first rank, equally conspicuous for its antiquity, dignity, and large possessions. It is found to trace its original as high as Adam de Port, Baron of Basing, in Hampshire, before the Conquest; and in a succession of ages, to have produced warriors, patriots, and statesmen, some of whom were conspicuous for their loyalty, and others for their defending the rights of the people. His grandfather, Sir Walter St John, of Battersea, marrying one of the daughters of Lord Chief Justice St John, who, as all know, was strongly attached to the republican party, Henry, the subject of the present memoir, was brought up in his family, and, consequently, imbibed the first principles of his education amongst the dissenters. At that time, Daniel Burgess, a fanatic of a very peculiar kind, being at once possessed of zeal and humour, and as well known for the archness of his conceits as the furious obstinacy of his principles, was confessor in the presbyterian way to his grandmother, and was appointed to direct our author's first studies. Nothing is so apt to disgust a feeling mind as mistaken zeal; and, perhaps, the absurdity of the first lectures he received might have given him that contempt for all religions, which he might have justly conceived against one. Indeed, no task can be more mortifying than what he was condemned to undergo. "I was obliged," says he, in one place, "while yet a boy, to read over the commentaries of Dr Manton, whose pride it was to have made an hundred and nineteen sermons on the hundred and nineteenth psalm." Dr Manton and his sermons were not likely to prevail much on one who was, perhaps, the most sharp-sighted in the world at discovering the absurdities of others, however he might have been guilty of establishing many of his own.

But these dreary institutions were of no very long continuance; as soon as it was fit to take him out of the hands of the women, he was sent to Eton school, and removed thence to Christ Church College in Oxford. His genius and understanding were seen and admired in both these seminaries, but his love of pleasure had so much the ascendency, that he seemed contented rather with the consciousness of his own great powers, than their exertion. However, his friends, and those who knew him most intimately, were

thoroughly sensible of the extent of his mind; and when he left the university, he was considered as one who had the fairest opportunity of making a shining figure in active life.

Nature seemed not less kind to him in her external embellishments than in adorning his mind. With the graces of a handsome person, and a face in which dignity was happily blended with sweetness, he had a manner of address that was very engaging. His vivacity was always awake, his apprehension was quick, his wit refined, and his memory amazing: his subtlety in thinking and reasoning was profound; and all these talents were adorned with an elocution that was irresistible.

To the assemblage of so many gifts from nature, it was expected that art would soon give her finishing hand; and that a youth begun in excellence, would soon arrive at perfection: but such is the perverseness of human nature, that an age which should have been employed in the acquisition of knowledge, was dissipated in pleasure; and instead of aiming to excel in praiseworthy pursuits, Bolingbroke seemed more ambitious of being thought the greatest rake about town. This period might have been compared to that of fermentation in liquors, which grow muddy before they brighten; but it must also be confessed, that those liquors which never ferment are seldom clear.* In this state of disorder, he was not without his lucid intervals: and even while he was noted for keeping Miss Gumley, the most expensive prostitute in the kingdom, and bearing the greatest quantity of wine without intoxication, he even then despised his paltry ambition. "The love of study," says he, "and desire of knowledge, were what I felt all my life: and though my genius, unlike the demon of Socrates, whispered so softly, that very often I heard him not in the hurry of these passions with which I was transported, yet some calmer hours there were, and in them I hearkened to him." These sacred admonitions were indeed very few, since his excesses are remembered to this very day. I have spoken to an old man, who assured me, that he saw him and one of his companions run naked through the Park in a fit

* Our author appears fond of this figure, for we find it introduced into his Essay on Polite Literature. The propriety, however, both of the simile, and of the position it endeavours to illustrate, is very questionable.

of intoxication ; but then it was a time when public decency might be transgressed with less danger than at present.

During this period all his attachments were to pleasure, o his studies only seemed to lean that way. His first attempts were in poetry, in which he discovers more wit than taste, more labour than harmony in his versification. We have a copy of his verses prefixed to Dryden's Virgil, complimenting the poet, and praising his translation. We have another, not so well known, prefixed to a French work, published in Holland, by the Chevalier de St Hyacinth, entitled, " Le Chef-d'-Oeuvre d'un Inconnu." This performance is a humorous piece of criticism upon a miserable old ballad ; and Bolingbroke's compliment, though written in English, is printed in Greek characters, so that at the first glance it may deceive the eye, and be mistaken for real Greek. There are two or three things more of his composition, which have appeared since his death, but which do honour neither to his parts nor memory.

In this mad career of pleasure he continued for some time ; but at length, in 1700, when he arrived at the twenty-eighth year of his age, he began to dislike his method of living, and to find that sensual pleasure alone was not sufficient to make the happiness of a reasonable creature. He therefore made his first effort to break from his state of infatuation, by marrying the daughter and co-heiress of Sir Henry Winchescomb, a descendant from the famous Jack of Newbury, who, though but a clothier in the reign of Henry VIII, was able to entertain the king and all his retinue in the most splendid manner. This lady was possessed of a fortune exceeding forty thousand pounds, and was not deficient in mental accomplishments ; but whether ne was not yet fully satiated with his former pleasures, or whether her temper was not conformable to his own, it is certain they were far from living happily together. After cohabiting for some time together, they parted by mutual consent, both equally displeased,—he complaining of the obstinacy of her temper, she of the shamelessness of his infidelity. A great part of her fortune some time after, upon his attainder, was given her back ; but, as her family estates were settled upon him, he enjoyed them after her death, upon the reversal of his attainder.

Having taken a resolution to quit the allurements of pleasure for the stronger attractions of ambition, soon after

his marriage he procured a seat in the House of Commons, being elected for the borough of Wotton-Basset in Wiltshire, his father having served several times for the same place. Besides his natural endowments and his large fortune, he had other very considerable advantages that gave him weight in the senate, and seconded his views of preferment. His grandfather, Sir Walter St John, was still alive; and that gentleman's interest was so great in his own county of Wilts, that he represented it in two Parliaments in a former reign. His father also was then the representative for the same; and the interest of his wife's family in the House was very extensive. Thus Bolingbroke took his seat with many accidental helps; but his chief and great resource lay in his own extensive abilities.

At that time the Whig and the Tory parties were strongly opposed in the House, and pretty nearly balanced. In the latter years of King William, the Tories, who, from every motive, were opposed to the court, had been gaining popularity, and now began to make a public stand against their competitors. Robert Harley, afterwards Earl of Oxford, a stanch and confirmed Tory, was, in the year 1700, chosen Speaker of the House of Commons, and was continued in the same upon the accession of Queen Anne, the year ensuing. Bolingbroke had all along been bred up, as was before observed, among the dissenters, his friends leaned to that persuasion, and all his connections were in the Whig interest. However, either from principle, or from perceiving the Tory party to be then gaining ground, while the Whigs were declining, he soon changed his connections, and joined himself to Harley, for whom he then had the greatest esteem; nor did he bring him his vote alone, but his opinion, which, even before the end of his first session, he rendered very considerable, the house perceiving even in so young a speaker the greatest eloquence, united with the profoundest discernment. The year following he was again chosen anew for the same borough, and persevered in his former attachments, by which he gained such an authority and influence in the House, that it was thought proper to reward his merit; and on the 10th of April, 1704, he was appointed Secretary at War, and of the Marine, his friend Harley having a little before been made Secretary of State.

The Tory party being thus established in power, it may easily be supposed that every method would be used to

depress the Whig interest, and to prevent it from rising; yet so much justice was done even to merit in an enemy, that the Duke of Marlborough, who might be considered as at the head of the opposite party, was supplied with all the necessaries for carrying on the war in Flanders with vigour: and it is remarkable, that the greatest events of his campaign, such as the battles of Blenheim and Ramilies, and several glorious attempts made by the Duke to shorten the war by some decisive action, fell out while Bolingbroke was Secretary at War. In fact, he was a sincere admirer of that great general, and avowed it upon all occasions to the last moment of his life: he knew his faults, he admired his virtues, and had the boast of being instrumental in giving lustre to those triumphs, by which his own power was in a manner overthrown.

As the affairs of the nation were then in as fluctuating a state as at present, Harley, after maintaining the lead for above three years, was in his turn obliged to submit to the Whigs, who once more became the prevailing party, and he was compelled to resign the seals. The friendship between him and Bolingbroke seemed at this time to have been sincere and disinterested; for the latter chose to follow his fortune, and the next day resigned his employments in the administration, following his friend's example, and setting an example at once of integrity and moderation. As an instance of this, when his coadjutors, the Tories, were for carrying a violent measure in the House of Commons, in order to bring the Princess Sophia into England, Bolingbroke so artfully opposed it, that it dropped without a debate. For this his moderation was praised, but perhaps at the expense of his sagacity.

For some time the Whigs seemed to have gained a complete triumph, and upon the election of a new Parliament, in the year 1708, Bolingbroke was not returned. The interval which followed, of above two years, he employed in the severest study; and this recluse period he ever after used to consider as the most active and serviceable of his whole life. But his retirement was soon interrupted by the prevailing of his party once more; for the Whig Parliament being dissolved in the year 1710, he was again chosen; and Harley being made Chancellor and under treasurer of the Exchequer, the important post of Secretary of State

was given to our author, in which he discovered a degree of genius and assiduity, that perhaps have never been known to be united in one person to the same degree.

The English annals scarcely produce a more trying juncture, or that required such various abilities to regulate. He was then placed in a sphere where he was obliged to conduct the machine of state, struggling with a thousand various calamities; a desperate enraged party, whose characteristic it has ever been to bear none in power but themselves; a war conducted by an able general, his professed opponent, and whose victories only tended to render him every day more formidable; a foreign enemy, possessed of endless resources, and seeming to gather strength from every defeat; an insidious alliance, that wanted only to gain the advantage of victory, without contributing to the expenses of the combat; a weak declining mistress, that was led by every report, and seemed ready to listen to whatever was said against him; still more, a gloomy, indolent, and suspicious colleague, that envied his power, and hated him for his abilities: these were a part of the difficulties that Bolingbroke had to struggle with in office, and under which he was to conduct the treaty of peace of Utrecht, which was considered as one of the most complicated negotiations that history can afford. But nothing seemed too great for his abilities and industry; he set himself to the undertaking with spirit; he began to pave the way to the intended treaty, by making the people discontented at the continuance of the war; for this purpose, he employed himself in drawing up accurate computations of the numbers of our own men, and that of foreigners, employed in its destructive progress. He even wrote in the Examiners, and other periodical papers of the times, shewing how much of the burden rested upon England, and how little was sustained by those who falsely boasted their alliance. By these means, and after much debate in the House of Commons, the Queen received a petition from Parliament, shewing the hardships the allies had put upon England in carrying on this war, and consequently how necessary it was to apply relief to so ill-judged a connection. It may be easily supposed that the Dutch, against whom this petition was chiefly levelled, did all that was in their power to oppose it; many of the foreign courts also, with whom he had any transactions, were continually at work to

defeat the minister's intentions. Memorial was delivered after memorial; the people of England, the Parliament, and all Europe, were made acquainted with the injustice and the dangers of such a proceeding: however, Bolingbroke went on with steadiness and resolution; and although the attacks of his enemies at home might have been deemed sufficient to employ his attention, yet he was obliged, at the same time that he furnished materials to the press in London, to furnish instructions to all our ministers and ambassadors abroad, who would do nothing but in pursuance of his directions. As an orator in the senate, he exerted all his eloquence, he stated all the great points that were brought before the House, he answered the objections that were made by the leaders of the opposition; and all this with such success, that even his enemies, while they opposed his power, acknowledged his abilities. Indeed, such were the difficulties he had to encounter, that we find him acknowledging himself, some years after, that he never looked back on this great event, passed as it was, without a secret emotion of mind, when he compared the vastness of the undertaking, and the importance of the success, with the means employed to bring it about, and with those which were employed to frustrate his intentions.

While he was thus industriously employed, he was not without the rewards that deserved to follow such abilities, joined to so much assiduity. In July, 1712, he was created Baron St John of Lidyard-Tregoze in Wiltshire, and Viscount Bolingbroke; by the last of which titles he is now generally known, and is likely to be talked of by posterity: he was also the same year appointed Lord Lieutenant of the county of Essex. By the titles of Tregoze and Bolingbroke, he united the honours of the elder and younger branch of his family; and thus transmitted into one channel the opposing interests of two races, that had been distinguished, one for their loyalty to King Charles I, the other for their attachment to the Parliament that opposed him. It was afterwards his boast, that he steered clear of the extremes for which his ancestors had been distinguished, having kept the spirit of the one, and acknowledged the subordination that distinguished the other.

Bolingbroke, being thus raised very near the summit of power, began to perceive more clearly the defects of him

who was placed there. He now began to find, that Lord Oxford, whose party he had followed, and whose person he had esteemed, was by no means so able or so industrious as he supposed him to be. He now began from his heart to renounce the friendship which he once had for his coadjutor; he began to imagine him treacherous, mean, indolent, and invidious; he even began to ascribe his own promotion to Oxford's hatred, and to suppose that he was sent up to the House of Lords only to render him contemptible. These suspicions were partly true, and partly suggested by Bolingbroke's own ambition: being sensible of his own superior importance and capacity, he could not bear to see another take the lead in public affairs, when he knew they owed their chief success to his own management. Whatever might have been his motives, whether of contempt, hatred, or ambition, it is certain an irreconcilable breach began between these two leaders of their party;* their mutual hatred was so great, that even their own common interest, the vigour of their negotiations, and the safety of their friends, were entirely sacrificed to it. It was in vain that Swift, who was admitted into their counsels, urged the unreasonable impropriety of their disputes; that while they were thus at variance within the walls, the enemy were making irreparable breaches without. Bolingbroke's antipathy was so great, that even success would have been hateful to him, if Lord Oxford were to be a partner. He abhorred him to that degree, that he could not bear to be joined with him in any case; and even some time after, when the lives of both were aimed at, he could not think of concerting measures with him for their mutual safety, preferring even death itself to the appearance of a temporary friendship.

Nothing could have been more weak and injudicious than their mutual animosities at this juncture; and it may be asserted with truth, that men who were unable to suppress or conceal their resentments upon such a trying occasion, were unfit to take the lead in any measures, be their industry or their abilities ever so great. In fact, their dissensions

* This breach is said to have originated in Lord Oxford's refusal to recommend Bolingbroke for a vacant riband of the Garter. This circumstance may at least have confirmed the disgust which mutual suspicion had already begun to excite. —B.

were soon found to involve not only them, but their party in utter ruin: their hopes had for some time been declining, the Whigs were daily gaining ground, and the Queen's death soon after totally destroyed all their schemes with their power.

Upon the accession of George I. to the throne, danger began to threaten the late ministry on every side: whether they had really intentions of bringing in the Pretender, or whether the Whigs made it a pretext for destroying them, is uncertain; but the king very soon began to shew that they were to expect neither favour nor mercy at his hands. Upon his landing at Greenwich, when the court came to wait upon him, and Lord Oxford among the number, he studiously avoided taking any notice of him, and testified his resentment by the caresses he bestowed upon the members of the opposite faction. A regency had been some time before appointed to govern the kingdom, and Addison was made secretary. Bolingbroke still maintained his place of State Secretary, but subject to the contempt of the great, and the insults of the mean. The first step taken by them to mortify him, was to order all letters and packets directed to the Secretary of State, to be sent to Mr Addison; so that Bolingbroke was in fact removed from his office, that is, the execution of it, in two days after the Queen's death. But this was not the worst; for his mortifications were continually heightened by the daily humiliation of waiting at the door of the apartment where the regency sat, with a bag in his hand, and being all the time, as it were, exposed to the insolence of those who were tempted by their natural malevolence, or who expected to make their court to those in power by abusing him.

Upon this sudden turn of fortune, when the seals were taken from him, he went into the country; and having received a message from court to be present when the seal was taken from the door of the secretary's office, he excused himself, alleging, that so trifling a ceremony might as well be performed by one of the under secretaries, but at the same time requested the honour of kissing the King's hand, to whom he testified the utmost submission. This request, however, was rejected with disdain; the King had been taught to regard him as an enemy, and threw himself entirely on the Whigs for safety and protection.

The new Parliament, mostly composed of Whigs, met the 17th of March, and, in the King's speech from the

throne, many inflaming hints were given, and many methods of violence chalked out to the two houses. "The first steps," (says Lord Bolingbroke, speaking on this occasion,) "in both were perfectly answerable; and, to the shame of the peerage be it spoken, I saw at that time several lords concur to condemn, in one general vote, all that they had approved in a former Parliament by many particular resolutions. Among several bloody resolutions proposed and agitated at this time, the resolution of impeaching me of high treason was taken, and I took that of leaving England, not in a panic terror, improved by the artifices of the Duke of Marlborough, whom I knew even at that time too well to act by his advice or information in any case, but on such grounds as the proceedings which soon followed sufficiently justified, and such as I have never repented building upon. Those who blamed it in the first heat, were soon after obliged to change their language: for what other resolution could I take? The method of prosecution designed against me would have put me out of a condition immediately to act for myself, or to serve those who were less exposed than me, but who were, however, in danger. On the other hand, how few were there on whose assistance I could depend, or to whom I would even in these circumstances be obliged? The ferment in the nation was wrought up to a considerable height; but there was at that time no reason to expect that it could influence the proceedings in Parliament, in favour of those who should be accused: left to its own movement, it was much more proper to quicken than slacken the prosecutions; and who was there to guide its motions? The Tories who had been true to one another to the last, were a handful, and no great vigour could be expected from them; the Whimsicals, disappointed of the figure which they hoped to make, began indeed to join their old friends. One of the principal among them, namely, the Earl of Anglesea, was so very good as to confess to me, that if the court had called the servants of the late Queen to account, and stopped there, he must have considered himself as a judge, and acted according to his conscience on what should have appeared to him; but that war had been declared to the whole Tory party, and that now the state of things was altered. This discourse needed no commentary, and proved to me, that I had never erred in the judgment I made of this set of men. Could I then resolve to be obliged to

them, or to suffer with Oxford? As much as I still was heated by the disputes, in which I had been all my life engaged against the Whigs, I would sooner have chosen to owe my security to their indulgence, than to the assistance of the Whimsicals;* but I thought banishment, with all her train of evils, preferable to either."

Such was the miserable situation to which he was reduced upon this occasion: of all the number of his former flatterers and dependents, scarcely was one found remaining. Every hour brought fresh reports of his alarming situation, and the dangers which threatened him and his party on all sides. Prior, who had been employed in negotiating the treaty of Utrecht, was come over to Dover, and promised to reveal all he knew. The Duke of Marlborough planted his creatures round his lordship, who artfully endeavoured to increase the danger; and an impeachment was actually preparing, in which he was accused of high treason. It argued, therefore, no great degree of timidity in his lordship, to take the first opportunity to withdraw from danger, and to suffer the first boilings of popular animosity to quench the flame that had been raised against him: accordingly, having made a gallant shew of despising the machinations against him, having appeared in a very unconcerned manner at the playhouse in Drury-Lane, and having bespoke another play for the night ensuing—having subscribed to a new opera that was to be acted some time after, and talking of making an elaborate defence,—he went off that same night in disguise to Dover, as a servant to Le Vigne, a messenger belonging to the French king; and there one William Morgan, who had been a captain in General Hill's regiment of Dragoons, hired a vessel, and carried him over to Calais, where the governor attended him in his coach, and carried him to his house with all possible distinction.

The news of Lord Bolingbroke's flight was soon known over the whole town; and the next day a letter from him to Lord Lansdowne was handed about in print, to the following effect:

"My Lord,—I left the town so abruptly, that I had no time to take leave of you or any of my friends. You

* Those of the high church, or Tory party, who affected to separate their principles from those of the Jacobites, were denominated Whimsicals.—B.

will excuse me, when you know that I had certain and repeated informations, from some who are in the secret of affairs, that a resolution was taken, by those who have power to execute it, to pursue me to the scaffold. My blood was to have been the cement of a new alliance, nor could my innocence be any security, after it had once been demanded from abroad, and resolved on at home, that it was necessary to cut me off. Had there been the least reason to hope for a fair and open trial, after having been already prejudged unheard by the two houses of Parliament, I should not have declined the strictest examination. I challenge the most inveterate of my enemies to produce any one instance of a criminal correspondence, or the least corruption of any part of the administration in which I was concerned. If my zeal for the honour and dignity of my Royal Mistress, and the true interest of my country, have any where transported me to let slip a warm or unguarded expression, I hope the most favourable interpretation will be put upon it. It is a comfort that will remain with me in all my misfortunes, that I served her Majesty faithfully and dutifully, in that especially which she had most at heart, relieving her people from a bloody and expensive war, and that I have also been too much an Englishman, to sacrifice the interests of my country to any foreign ally; and it is for this crime only that I am now driven from thence. You shall hear more at large from me shortly. Yours," &c.

No sooner was it universally known that he was retired to France, than his flight was construed into a proof of his guilt; and his enemies accordingly set about driving on his impeachment with redoubled alacrity. Mr, afterwards Sir Robert Walpole, who had suffered a good deal by his attachment to the Whig interest during the former reign, now undertook to bring in and conduct the charge against him in the House of Commons. His impeachment consisted of six articles, which Walpole read to the House, in substance as follows: — First, That whereas the Lord Bolingbroke had assured the Dutch ministers, that the Queen his mistress would make no peace but in concert with them, yet he had sent Mr Prior to France that same year, with proposals for a treaty of peace with that monarch, without the consent of the allies: Secondly, That he advised and promoted the making a separate treaty of

convention with France, which was signed in September: Thirdly, That he disclosed to M. Mesnager, the French minister at London, this convention, which was the preliminary instructions to her Majesty's Plenipotentiaries at Utrecht: Fourthly, That her Majesty's final instructions to her Plenipotentiaries were disclosed by him to the Abbé Gualtier, who was an emissary of France: Fifthly, That he disclosed to the French the manner how Tournay in Flanders might be gained by them: And lastly, that he advised and promoted the yielding up Spain and the West Indies to the Duke of Anjou, then an enemy to her Majesty. — These were urged by Walpole with great vehemence, and aggravated with all the eloquence of which he was master. He challenged any person in behalf of the accused, and asserted, that to vindicate, were, in a manner to share his guilt. In this universal consternation of the Tory party, none was for some time seen to stir; but, at length, General Ross, who had received favours from his Lordship, boldly stood up, and said, he wondered that no man more capable was found to appear in defence of the accused. However, in attempting to proceed, he hesitated so much, that he was obliged to sit down, observing, that he would reserve what he had to say to another opportunity. It may easily be supposed that the Whigs found no great difficulty in passing the vote for his impeachment through the House of Commons. It was brought into that House on the 10th of June, 1715, it was sent up to the House of Lords on the 6th of August ensuing, and in consequence of which he was attainted by them of high treason on the 10th of September.* Nothing could be more unjust than such a sentence; but justice had been drowned in the spirit of party.

Bolingbroke, thus finding all hopes cut off at home, began to think of improving his wretched fortune upon the Continent. He had left England with a very small fortune, and his attainder totally cut off all resources for the future. In this depressed situation he began to listen to some proposals which were made by the Pretender, who was then residing at Barr, in France, and who was desirous of admitting

* The Duke of Ormond was attainted at the same time. The Earl of Oxford's trial was put off for nearly two years, during which he was confined in the Tower; he was afterwards discharged in consequence of a dispute arising between the Lords and the Commons concerning the mode of his trial. — B.

Bolingbroke into his secret councils. A proposal of this nature had been made him shortly after his arrival at Paris, and before his attainder at home; but, while he had yet any hopes of succeeding in England, he absolutely refused, and made the best applications his ruined fortune would permit, to prevent the extremity of his prosecution.

He had for some time waited for an opportunity of determining himself, even after he found it vain to think of making peace at home. He let his Jacobite friends in England know that they had but to command him, and he was ready to venture in their service the little all that remained, as frankly as he had exposed all that was gone. "At length," says he, talking of himself, "these commands came, and were executed in the following manner. The person who was sent to me arrived in the beginning of July, 1715, at the place I had retired to in Dauphine. He spoke in the name of all his friends whose authority could influence me; and he brought word, that Scotland was not only ready to take arms, but under some sort of dissatisfaction to be withheld from beginning; that in England, the people were exasperated against the government to such a degree, that, far from wanting to be encouraged, they could not be restrained from insulting it on every occasion; that the whole Tory party was become avowedly Jacobites; that many officers of the army, and the majority of the soldiers, were well affected to the cause; that the city of London was ready to rise, and that the enterprises for seizing of several places were ripe for execution; in a word, that most of the principal Tories were in concert with the Duke of Ormond; for I had pressed particularly to be informed whether his Grace acted alone, or if not, who were his council; and that the others were so disposed, that there remained no doubt of their joining as soon as the first blow should be struck. He added, that my friends were a little surprised to observe that I lay neuter in such a conjuncture. He represented to me the danger I ran of being prevented by people of all sides from having the merit of engaging early in this enterprise, and how unaccountable it would be for a man, impeached and attainted under the present government, to take no share in bringing about a revolution, so near at hand, and so certain. He entreated that I would defer no longer to join the Chevalier, to advise and assist in carrying on his affairs, and to solicit and negotiate at the Court of

France, where my friends imagined that I should not fail to meet a favourable reception, and whence they made no doubt of receiving assistance in a situation of affairs so critical, so unexpected, and so promising. He concluded, by giving me a letter from the Pretender, whom he had seen in his way to me, in which I was pressed to repair without loss of time to Commercy ; and this instance was grounded on the message which the bearer of the letter had brought me from England. In the progress of the conversation with the messenger, he related a number of facts, which satisfied me as to the general disposition of the people ; but he gave me little satisfaction as to the measures taken to improve this disposition, for driving the business on with vigour, if it tended to a revolution, or for supporting it to advantage, if it spun into a war. When I questioned him concerning several persons whose disinclination to the government admitted no doubt, and whose names, quality, and experience, were very essential to the success of the undertaking, he owned to me that they kept a great reserve, and did at most but encourage others to act, by general and dark expressions. I received this account and this summons ill in my bed ; yet, important as the matter was, a few minutes served to determine me. The circumstances wanting to form a reasonable inducement to engage did not excuse me ; but the smart of a bill of attainder tingled in every vein, and I looked on my party to be under oppression, and to call for my assistance. Besides which, I considered first that I should be certainly informed, when I conferred with the Chevalier, of many particulars unknown to this gentleman ; for I did not imagine that the English could be so near to take up arms as he represented them to be, on no other foundation than that which he exposed."

In this manner, having for some time debated with himself, and taken his resolution, he lost no time in repairing to the Pretender at Commercy, and took the seals of that nominal king, as he had formerly those of his potent mistress. But this was a terrible falling off indeed ; and the very first conversation he had with this weak projector, gave him the most unfavourable expectations of future success. " He talked to me," says his Lordship, " like a man who expected every moment to set out for England or Scotland, but who did not very well know for which : and when he entered into the particulars of his affairs, I found, that concerning the

former he had nothing more circumstantial or positive to go upon, than what I have already related. But the Duke of Ormond had been for some time, I cannot say how long, engaged with the Chevalier: he had taken the direction of this whole affair, as far as it related to England, upon himself; and had received a commission for this purpose, which contained the most ample powers that could be given. But still, however, all was unsettled, undetermined, and ill understood. The Duke had asked from France a small body of forces, a sum of money, and a quantity of ammunition: but to the first part of the request he received a flat denial, but was made to hope that some arms and some ammunition might be given. This was but a very gloomy prospect; yet hope swelled the depressed party so high, that they talked of nothing less than an instant and ready revolution. It was their interest to be secret and industrious; but, rendered sanguine by their passions, they made no doubt of subverting a government with which they were angry, and gave as great an alarm, as would have been imprudent at the eve of a general insurrection."

Such was the state of things when Bolingbroke arrived to take up his new office at Commercy; and although he saw the deplorable state of the party with which he was embarked, yet he resolved to give his affairs the best complexion he was able, and set out for Paris, in order to procure from that court the necessary succours for his new master's invasion of England. But his reception and negotiations at Paris were still more unpromising than those at Commercy; and nothing but absolute infatuation seemed to dictate every measure taken by the party. He there found a multitude of people at work, and every one doing what seemed good in his own eyes; no subordination, no order, no concert. The Jacobites had wrought one another up to look upon the success of the present designs as infallible: every meeting-house which the populace demolished, as he himself says, every little drunken riot which happened, served to confirm them in these sanguine expectations; and there was hardly one among them, who would lose the air of contributing by his intrigues to the restoration, which he took for granted would be brought about in a few weeks. Care and hope, says our author very humorously, sat on every busy Irish face; those who could read and write had letters to shew, and those who had not arrived to

this pitch of erudition had their secrets to whisper. No sex was excluded from this ministry: Fanny Oglethorpe kept her corner in it; and Olive Trant, a woman of the same mixed reputation, was the great wheel of this political machine. The ridiculous correspondence was carried on with England by people of like importance, and who were busy in sounding the alarm in the ears of an enemy, whom it was their interest to surprise. By these means, as he himself continues to inform us, the government of England was put on its guard, so that before he came to Paris, what was doing had been discovered. The little armament made at Havre de Grace, which furnished the only means to the Pretender of landing on the coasts of Britain, and which had exhausted the treasury of St Germains, was talked of publicly. The Earl of Stair, the English minister at that city, very soon discovered its destination, and all the particulars of the intended invasion; the names of the persons from whom supplies came, and who were particularly active in the design, were whispered about at tea-tables and coffee-houses. In short, what by the indiscretion of the projectors, what by the private interests and ambitious views of the French, the most private transactions came to light; and such of the more prudent plotters, who supposed that they had trusted their heads to the keeping of one or two friends, were in reality at the mercy of numbers. "Into such company," exclaims our noble writer, "was I fallen for my sins." Still, however, he went on, steering in the wide ocean without a compass, till the death of Louis XIV,* and the arrival of the Duke of Ormond at Paris, rendered all his

* Louis XIV, who, partly out of ostentation, and partly from policy, had always befriended the Stuarts, died September 1, 1715. The Duke of Orleans, upon whom the regency devolved, for some time continued to amuse the partisans of the exiled family with promises of support, which he appears never to have intended to fulfil. That ambitious prince was resolved to ascend the throne of France, in case the young king, then a sickly child, should die without male issue; but as he knew that the succession would be strongly contested by the Spanish King Philip, formerly Duke of Anjou, he found it his interest to cultivate the friendship of the British Government, and he appears to have countenanced the Pretender's schemes only in so far as they could be made conducive to his object of inducing George I. to enter into his views on France: when this object was gained by the treaty of 1716, he readily consented to abandon the unfortunate Pretender, whom he banished beyond the Alps. — B.

endeavours abortive: yet, notwithstanding these unfavourable circumstances, he still continued to despatch several messages and directions for England, to which he received very evasive and ambiguous answers. Among the number of these, he drew up a paper at Chaville, in concert with the Duke of Ormond, Marshal Berwick, and De Torcy, which was sent to England just before the death of the King of France, representing that France could not answer the demands of their memorial, and praying directions what to do. A reply to this came to him through the French Secretary of State, wherein they declared themselves unable to say any thing, till they saw what turn affairs would take on the death of the King, which had reached their ears. Upon another occasion, a message coming from Scotland to press the Chevalier to hasten their rising, he despatched a messenger to London to the Earl of Mar, to tell him that the concurrence of England in the insurrection was ardently wished and expected: but, instead of that nobleman's waiting for instructions, he had already gone into the Highlands, and there actually put himself at the head of his clans. After this, in concert with the Duke of Ormond, he despatched one Mr Hamilton, who got all the papers by heart for fear of a miscarriage, to their friends in England, to inform them that though the Chevalier was destitute of succour, and all reasonable hopes of it, yet he would land as they pleased in England or Scotland at a minute's warning; and therefore they might rise immediately after they had sent despatches to him. To this message Mr Hamilton returned very soon with an answer given by Lord Lansdowne, in the name of all the persons privy to the secret, that since affairs grew daily worse, and would not mend by delay, the malcontents in England had resolved to declare immediately, and would be ready to join the Duke of Ormond on his landing; adding, that his person would be as safe in England as in Scotland, and that in every other respect it was better he should land in England; that they had used their utmost endeavours, and hoped the western counties would be in a good posture to receive him; and that he should land as near as possible to Plymouth. With these assurances the Duke embarked, though he had heard before of the seizure of many of his most zealous adherents, of the dispersion of many more, and the consternation of all; so that upon his arrival at Plymouth, finding nothing

in readiness, he returned to Brittany. In these circumstances the Pretender himself sent to have a vessel got ready for him at Dunkirk, in which he went to Scotland, leaving Lord Bolingbroke all this while at Paris, to try if by any means some assistance might not be procured, without which all hopes of success were at an end. It was during this negotiation upon this miserable proceeding, that he was sent for by Mrs Trant, (a woman who had for some time before ingratiated herself with the Regent of France, by supplying him with mistresses from England,) to a little house in the Bois de Boulogne, where she lived with Mademoiselle Chausery, an old superannuated waiting-woman belonging to the Regent. By these he was acquainted with the measures they had taken for the service of the Duke of Ormond; although Bolingbroke, who was actually secretary to the negotiation, had never been admitted to a confidence in their secrets. He was therefore a little surprised at finding such mean agents employed without his privity, and very soon found them utterly unequal to the task. He quickly, therefore, withdrew himself from such wretched auxiliaries, and the Regent himself seemed pleased at his defection.

In the meantime the Pretender set sail from Dunkirk for Scotland; and though Bolingbroke had all along perceived that his cause was hopeless, and his projects ill-designed; although he had met with nothing but opposition and disappointment in his service; yet he considered that this, of all others, was the time he could not be permitted to relax in the cause. He now, therefore, neglected no means, forgot no argument which his understanding could suggest, in applying to the court of France; but his success was not answerable to his industry. The King of France, not able to furnish the Pretender with money himself, had written some time before his death to his grandson, the King of Spain, and had obtained from him a promise of forty thousand crowns. A small part of this sum had been received by the Queen's treasurer at St Germains, and had been sent to Scotland, or employed to defray the expenses which were daily making on the coast; at the same time Bolingbroke pressed the Spanish ambassador at Paris, and solicited the minister at the Court of Spain. He took care to have a number of officers picked out of the Irish troops which serve in France, gave them their routes, and

sent a ship to receive and transport them to Scotland. Still, however, the money came in so slowly, and in such trifling sums, that it turned to little account, and the officers were on their way to the Pretender. At the same time he formed a design of engaging French privateers in the expedition, that were to have carried whatever should be necessary to send to any part of Britain in their first voyage, and then to cruise under the Pretender's commission. He had actually agreed for some, and had it in his power to have made the same bargain with others: Sweden on the one side, and Scotland on the other, could have afforded them retreats; and, if the war had been kept up in any part of the mountains, this armament would have been of the utmost advantage. But all his projects and negotiations failed by the Pretender's precipitate return, who was not above six weeks in his expedition, and flew out of Scotland even before all had been tried in his defence.*

The expedition being in this manner totally defeated, Bolingbroke now began to think that it was his duty as well as interest to save the poor remains of the disappointed party. He never had any great opinion of the Pretender's success before he set off; but when this adventurer had taken the last step which it was in his power to take, our Secretary then resolved to suffer neither him nor the Scotch to be any longer bubbles of their own credulity, and of the scandalous artifices of the French court. In a conversation he had with the Marshal de Huxelles, he took occasion to declare, that he would not be the instrument of amusing the Scotch; and since he was able to do them no other service, he would at least inform them of what little dependence they might place upon assistance from France. He added, that he would send them vessels, which, with those already on the coast of Scotland, might serve to

* It is scarcely just to accuse the Pretender of having left Scotland "before all had been tried in his defence." The rising in his favour in England had been entirely suppressed; and the Earl of Mar, having already received an effectual check from Argyle, though still master of the north Highlands, found himself too weak to attempt marching into the low country. The truth is, the fate of the Rebellion was sealed before the Pretender's landing; and the only fault with which he is chargeable, is his remaining a single day in the country, and exposing his adherents to the vengeance of the government, by commanding their attendance in the pageants of mock royalty, after all chance of final success was lost. — B.

bring off the Pretender, the Earl of Mar, and as many others as possible. The Marshal approved his resolution, and advised him to execute it, as the only thing which was left to do; but in the meantime the Pretender landed at Gravelines, and gave orders to stop all vessels, bound on his account to Scotland; and Bolingbroke saw him the morning after his arrival at St Germains, and he received him with open arms.

As it was the Secretary's business, as soon as Bolingbroke heard of his return, he went to acquaint the French court with it; when it was recommended to him to advise the Pretender to proceed to Barr with all possible diligence; and in this measure Bolingbroke entirely concurred. But the Pretender himself was in no such haste: he had a mind to stay some time at St Germains, and in the neighbourhood of Paris, and to have a private meeting with the Regent. He accordingly sent Bolingbroke to solicit this meeting, who exerted all his influence in the negotiation. He wrote and spoke to the Marshal de Huxelles, who answered him by word of mouth, and by letters, refusing him by both, and assuring him that the Regent said the things which were asked were puerilities, and swore he would not see him. The Secretary, no ways displeased with his ill success, returned with this answer to his master, who acquiesced in this determination, and declared he would instantly set out for Lorrain, at the same time assuring Bolingbroke of his firm reliance on his integrity.

However, the Pretender, instead of taking post for Lorrain, as he had promised, went to a little house in the Bois de Boulogne, where his female ministers resided, and there continued for several days, seeing the Spanish and Swedish ministers, even the Regent himself. It might have been in these interviews that he was set against his new Secretary, and taught to believe that he had been remiss in his duty, and false to his trust. Be this as it will, a few days after the Duke of Ormond came to see Bolingbroke, and, having first prepared him for the surprise, put into his hands a note directed to the Duke, and a little scrip of paper directed to the Secretary: they were both in the Pretender's hand-writing, and dated as if written by him on his way to Lorrain; but in this Bolingbroke was not to be deceived, who knew the place of his present residence. In one of these papers the Pretender declared, that he had no farther

occasion for the Secretary's service; and the other was an order to him to give up the papers in his office; all which, he observes, might have been contained in a letter-case of a moderate size. He gave the Duke the seals, and some papers which he could readily come at; but for some others, in which there were several insinuations, under the Pretender's own hand, reflecting upon the Duke himself, these he took care to convey by a safe hand, since it would have been very improper that the Duke should have seen them. As he thus gave up without scruple all the papers which remained in his hands, because he was determined never to make use of them, so he declares he took a secret pride in never asking for those of his own which were in the Pretender's hands; contenting himself with making the Duke understand, how little need there was to get rid of a man in this manner, who only wanted an opportunity to get rid of the Pretender and his cause. In fact, if we survey the measures taken on the one side, and the abilities of the man on the other, it will not appear any way wonderful that he should be disgusted with a party, who had neither principle to give a foundation to their hopes, union to advance them, nor abilities to put them in motion.

Bolingbroke, being thus dismissed from the Pretender's service, supposed that he had got rid of the trouble and the ignominy of so mean an employment at the same time; but he was mistaken: he was no sooner rejected from the office, than articles of impeachment were preferred against him, in the same manner as he had before been impeached in England, though not with such effectual injury to his person and fortune. The articles of his impeachment by the Pretender were branched out into seven heads, in which he was accused of treachery, incapacity, and neglect. The first was, that he was never to be found by those who came to him about business; and if by chance or stratagem they got hold of him, he affected being in a hurry, and by putting them off to another time, still avoided giving them any answer: The second was, that the Earl of Mar complained by six different messengers at different times, before the Chevalier came from Dunkirk, of his being in want of arms and ammunition, and prayed a speedy relief; and though the things demanded were in my Lord's power, there was not so much as one pound of powder in any of the ships which by his Lordship's directions parted from France: Thirdly, the Pretender himself, after his arrival, sent

General Hamilton to inform him, that his want of arms and ammunition was such, that he should be obliged to leave Scotland, unless he received speedy relief; yet Lord Bolingbroke amused Mr Hamilton twelve days together, and did not introduce him to any of the French ministers, though he was referred to them for a particular account of affairs; or so much as communicated his letters to the Queen, or any body else: Fourthly, the Count de Castel Blanco had for several months at Havre a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition, and did daily ask his Lordship's orders how to dispose of them, but never got any instructions: Fifthly, the Pretender's friends at the French court had for some time past no very good opinion of his Lordship's integrity, and a very bad one of his discretion: Sixthly, at a time when any merchants in France would have carried privately any quantity of arms and ammunition into Scotland, his Lordship desired a public order for the embarkation, which being a thing not to be granted, is said to have been done in order to urge a denial: Lastly, the Pretender wrote to his Lordship by every occasion after his arrival in Scotland; and though there were many opportunities of writing in return, yet from the time he landed there, to the day he left it, he never received any letter from his Lordship. Such were the articles, by a very extraordinary reverse of fortune, preferred against Lord Bolingbroke, in less than a year after similar articles were drawn up against him by the opposite party at home. It is not easy to find out what he could have done thus to disoblige all sides; but he had learned by this time to make out happiness from the consciousness of his own designs, and to consider all the rest of mankind as uniting in a faction to oppress virtue.*

But though it was mortifying to be thus rejected on both

* There is little doubt that Bolingbroke, if he did not actually betray, as he was accused of doing, the interests of the Pretender, did not exert himself very zealously in his cause. His sagacity had probably discovered very soon that there was little chance of success to the Jacobite cause; the preference given to Ormond and others must have convinced him that even in the event of success, his own part must be a subordinate one; and as there is every reason to believe that ambition alone induced him to enter into the service of the Pretender, he was willing enough to neglect his interests when he saw a chance of being restored to his native country, and it may even be suspected that he made a merit of this lukewarmness with his correspondents at home, and with Lord Stair, the English ambassador at Paris. — B.

sides, yet he was not remiss in vindicating himself from all. Against these articles of impeachment, therefore, he drew up an elaborate answer, in which he vindicates himself with great plausibility. He had long, as he asserts, wished to leave the Pretender's service, but was entirely at a loss how to conduct himself in so difficult a resignation; "but at length," says he, "the Pretender and his council disposed of things better for me than I could have done for myself. I had resolved, on his return from Scotland, to follow him till his residence should be fixed somewhere; after which, having served the Tories in this, which I looked upon as their last struggle for power, and having continued to act in the Pretender's affairs till the end of the term for which I embarked with him, I should have esteemed myself to be at liberty, and should, in the civilest manner I was able, have taken my leave of him. Had we parted thus, I should have remained in a very strange situation all the rest of my life; on one side he would have thought that he had a right on any future occasion to call me out of my retreat; the Tories would probably have thought the same thing; my resolution was taken to refuse them both, and I foresaw that both would condemn me: on the other side, the consideration of his having kept measures with me, joined to that of having once openly declared for him, would have created a point of honour, by which I should have been tied down, not only from ever engaging against him, but also from making my peace at home. The Pretender cut this Gordian knot asunder at one blow: he broke the links of that chain which former engagements had fastened on me, and gave me a right to esteem myself as free from all obligations of keeping measures with him, as I should have continued if I had never engaged in his interest."

It is not to be supposed that one so very delicate to preserve his honour, would previously have basely betrayed his employer: a man, conscious of acting so infamous a part, would have undertaken no defence, but let the accusations, which could not materially affect him, blow over, and wait for the calm that was to succeed in tranquillity. He appeals to all the ministers with whom he transacted business, for the integrity of his proceedings at that juncture; and had he been really guilty, when he opposed the ministry here after his return, they would not have failed to brand and detect his duplicity. The truth is, that he perhaps

was the most disinterested minister at that time in the Pretender's court; as he had spent great sums of his own money in his service, and never would be obliged to him for a farthing, in which case he believes that he was single. His integrity is much less impeachable on this occasion than his ambition; for all the steps he took may be fairly ascribed to his displeasure at having the Duke of Ormond and the Earl of Mar treated more confidentially than himself. It was his aim always to be foremost in every administration, and he could not bear to act as a subaltern in so paltry a court as that of the Pretender.

At all periods of his exile, he still looked towards home with secret regret; and had even taken every opportunity to apply to those in power, either to soften his prosecutions, or lessen the number of his enemies at home. In accepting his office under the Pretender, he made it a condition to be at liberty to quit the post whenever he should think proper; and being now disgracefully dismissed, he turned his mind entirely towards making his peace in England, and employing all the unfortunate experience he had acquired to undeceive his Tory friends, and to promote the union and quiet of his native country. It was not a little favourable to his hopes, that about this time, though unknown to him, the Earl of Stair, ambassador to the French court, had received full power to treat with him whilst he was engaged with the Pretender; but yet had never made him any proposals, which might be considered as the grossest outrage. But when the breach with the Pretender was universally known, the Earl sent one Monsieur Saludin, a gentleman of Geneva, to Lord Bolingbroke, to communicate to him his Majesty King George's favourable disposition to grant him a pardon, and his own earnest desire to serve him as far as he was able. This was an offer by much too advantageous for Bolingbroke in his wretched circumstances to refuse; he embraced it, as became him to do, with all possible sense of the King's goodness, and of the ambassador's friendship. They had frequent conferences shortly after upon the subject. The turn which the English ministry gave the matter, was to enter into a treaty to reverse his attainder, and to stipulate the conditions on which this act of grace should be granted him: but this method of negotiation he would by no means submit to; the notion of a treaty shocked him, and he resolved never

to be restored, rather than go that way to work. Accordingly, he opened himself without any reserve to Lord Stair, and told him, that he looked upon himself obliged in honour and conscience to undeceive his friends in England, both as to the state of foreign affairs, as to the management of the Jacobite interest abroad, and as to the characters of the persons; in every one of which points he knew them to be most grossly and most dangerously deluded. He observed, that the treatment he had received from the Pretender and his adherents, would justify him to the world in doing this; that, if he remained in exile all his life, he might be assured that he would never have more to do with the Jacobite cause; and that, if he were restored, he would give it an effectual blow, in making that apology which the Pretender had put him under a necessity of making; that in doing this, he flattered himself that he should contribute something towards the establishment of the King's government, and to the union of his subjects. He added, that if the court thought him sincere in those professions, a treaty with him was unnecessary; and, if they did not believe so, then a treaty would be dangerous to him. The Earl of Stair, who has also confirmed this account of Lord Bolingbroke's, in a letter to Mr Craggs, readily came into his sentiments on this head, and soon after the King approved it upon their representations; he accordingly received a promise of pardon from George I, who, on the 2d of July, 1716, created his father Baron of Battersea, in the county of Surrey, and Viscount St John. This seemed preparatory to his own restoration; and, instead of prosecuting any farther ambitious schemes against the government, he rather began to turn his mind to philosophy; and since he could not gratify his ambition to its full extent, he endeavoured to learn the art of despising it. The variety of distressful events that had hitherto attended all his struggles, at last had thrown him into a state of reflection, and this produced, by way of relief, a *consolatio philosophica*, which he wrote the same year, under the title of Reflections upon Exile. In this piece, in which he professes to imitate the manner of Seneca, he with some wit draws his own picture, and represents himself as suffering persecution, for having served his country with abilities and integrity. A state of exile thus incurred, he very justly shews to be rather honourable than distressful; and indeed there are few men who

will deny, that the company of strangers to virtue, is better than the company of enemies to it. Besides this philosophical tract, he also wrote this year several letters, in answer to the charges laid upon him by the Pretender and his adherents; and the following year he drew up a vindication of his whole conduct with respect to the Tories, in the form of a letter to Sir William Windham.

Nor was he so entirely devoted to the fatigues of business, but that he gave pleasure a share in its pursuits. He had never much agreed with the lady he first married, and after a short cohabitation they separated, and lived ever after asunder. She therefore remained in England upon his going into exile, and by proper application to the throne, was allowed a sufficient maintenance to support her with becoming dignity: however, she did not long survive his first disgrace; and upon his becoming a widower, he began to think of trying his fortune once more in a state which was at first so unfavourable. For this purpose he cast his eye on the widow of the Marquis of Villette, a niece to the famous Madame Maintenon, a young lady of great merit and understanding, possessed of a very large fortune, but encumbered with a long and troublesome lawsuit. In the company of this very sensible woman he passed his time in France, sometimes in the country, and sometimes at the capital, till the year 1723, in which, after the breaking up of the Parliament, his Majesty was pleased to grant him a pardon as to his personal safety, but neither as yet restoring him to his family inheritance, his title, nor a seat in Parliament.

To obtain this favour had been the governing principle of his politics for some years before; and upon the first notice of his good fortune, he prepared to return to his native country, where, however, his dearest connections were either dead, or declared themselves suspicious of his former conduct in support of their party. It is observable that Bishop Atterbury, who was banished at this time for a supposed treasonable correspondence in favour of the Tories, was set on shore at Calais, just when Lord Bolingbroke arrived there on his return to England. So extraordinary a reverse of fortune could not fail of strongly affecting that good prelate, who observed with some emotion, that he perceived himself to be exchanged: he presently left it to his auditors to imagine, whether his country were the loser or the gainer by such an exchange.

Lord Bolingbroke, upon his return to his native country, began to make very vigorous applications for farther favours from the crown: his pardon, without the means of support, was but an empty, or perhaps it might be called a distressful act of kindness, as it brought him back among his former friends in a state of inferiority his pride could not endure. However, his applications were soon after successful, for in about two years after his return, he obtained an act of Parliament to restore him to his family inheritance, which amounted to nearly three thousand pounds a-year. He was also enabled by the same to possess any purchase he should make of any other estate in the kingdom; and he accordingly pitched upon a seat of Lord Tankerville's, at Dawley, near Uxbridge in Middlesex, where he settled with his lady, and laid himself out to enjoy the rural pleasures in perfection, since the more glorious ones of ambition were denied him. With this resolution he began to improve his new purchase in a very peculiar style, giving it all the air of a country farm, and adorning even his hall with all the implements of husbandry. We have a sketch of his way of living in this retreat in a letter of Pope to Swift, who omits no opportunity of representing his Lordship in the most amiable points of view. This letter is dated from Dawley, the country farm above mentioned, and begins thus: "I now hold the pen for my Lord Bolingbroke, who is reading your letter between two hay-cocks; but his attention is somewhat diverted, by casting his eyes on the clouds, not in the admiration of what you say, but for fear of a shower. He is pleased with your placing him in the triumvirate between yourself and me; though he says he doubts he shall fare like Lepidus, while one of us runs away with all the power like Augustus, and another with all the pleasure, like Anthony. It is upon a foresight of this, that he has fitted up his farm, and you will agree that this scheme of retreat is not founded upon weak appearances. Upon his return from Bath, he finds all peccant humours are purged out of him; and his great temperance and economy are so signal, that the first is fit for my constitution, and the latter would enable you to lay up so much money as to buy a bishopric in England. As to the return of his health and vigour, were you here, you might inquire of his haymakers; but as to his temperance, I can answer that for one whole day we have had nothing for dinner but mutton broth, beans, and bacon, and

a barn-door fowl. Now his Lordship is run after his cart, I have a moment left to myself to tell you, that I overheard him yesterday agree with a painter for two hundred pounds, to paint his country hall with rakes, spades, prongs, &c. and other ornaments, merely to countenance his calling this place a farm." What Pope here says of his engagements with a painter, was shortly after executed; the hall was painted accordingly in black crayons only, so that at first view it brought to mind the figures often seen scratched with charcoal, or the smoke of a candle, upon the kitchen walls of farm houses. The whole, however, produced a most striking effect, and over the door at the entrance into it was this motto: *Satis beatus ruris honoribus.* His Lordship seemed to be extremely happy in his pursuit of moral tranquillity, and, in the exultation of his heart, could not fail of communicating his satisfactions to his friend Swift. "I am in my own farm," says he, "and here I shoot strong and tenacious roots: I have caught hold of the earth, to use a gardener's phrase, and neither my enemies nor my friends will find it an easy matter to transplant me again."

There is not, perhaps, a stronger instance in the world than his Lordship, that an ambitious mind can never be fairly subdued, but will still seek for those gratifications which retirement can never supply. All this time he was mistaken in his passion for solitude, and supposed that to be the child of philosophy which was only the effect of spleen: it was in vain that he attempted to take root in the shade of obscurity: he was originally bred in the glare of public occupation, and he secretly once more wished for transplantation. He was only a titular Lord; he had not been thoroughly restored; and, as he was excluded from a seat in the House of Peers, he burned with impatience to play a part in that conspicuous theatre. Impelled by this desire, he could no longer be restrained in obscurity, but once more entered into the bustle of public business, and disavowing all obligations to the minister, he embarked in the opposition against him, in which he had several powerful coadjutors: but previously he had taken care to prefer a petition to the House of Commons, desiring to be reinstated in his former emoluments and capacities. This petition at first occasioned very warm debates: Walpole, who pretended to espouse his cause, alleged that it was very right to admit him to his inheritance; and when Lord William Pawlet moved for a clause to disqualify him from sitting in either house, Walpole

rejected the motion, secretly satisfied with a resolution which had been settled in the cabinet, that he should never more be admitted into any share of power. To this artful method of evading his pretensions, Bolingbroke was no stranger; and he was now resolved to shake that power, which thus endeavoured to obstruct the increase of his own: taking, therefore, his part in the opposition with Pulteney, while the latter engaged to manage the House of Commons, Bolingbroke undertook to enlighten the people. Accordingly, he soon distinguished himself by a multitude of pieces, written during the latter part of George the First's reign, and likewise the beginning of that which succeeded. These were conceived with great vigour and boldness; and now, once more engaged in the service of his country, though disarmed, gagged, and almost bound, as he declared himself to be, yet he resolved not to abandon his cause, as long as he could depend on the firmness and integrity of those coadjutors, who did not labour under the same disadvantages with himself. His letters, in a paper called the *Craftsman*, were particularly distinguished in this political contest; and though several of the most expert politicians of the times joined in this paper, his essays were peculiarly relished by the public. However, it is the fate of things written to an occasion, seldom to survive that occasion: the *Craftsman*, though written with great spirit and sharpness, is now almost forgotten, although, when it was published as a weekly paper, it sold much more rapidly than even the *Spectator*. Beside this work, he published several other separate pamphlets, which were afterwards reprinted in the second edition of his works, and which were very popular in their day. This political warfare continued for ten years, during which time he laboured with great strength and perseverance, and drew up such a system of politics, as some have supposed to be the most complete now existing. But, as upon all other occasions, he had the mortification once more to see those friends desert him, upon whose assistance he most firmly relied, and all that web of fine spun speculation actually destroyed at once, by the ignorance of some, and the perfidy of others. He then declared that he was perfectly cured of his patriotic frenzy; he fell out not only with Pulteney* for his selfish views, but with his old friends the Tories, for

* Pulteney, afterwards created Earl of Bath, was at that time the leader of the opposition to Sir Robert Walpole's administration. — B.

abandoning their cause as desperate; averring, that the faint and unsteady exercise of parts on one side, was a crime but one degree inferior to the iniquitous misapplication of them on the other. But he could not take leave of a controversy in which he had been so many years engaged, without giving a parting blow, in which he seemed to summon up all his vigour at once, and where, as the poet says,

Animam in vulnere posuit.

This inimitable piece is entitled, "A Dissertation on Parties," and of all his masterly pieces it is in general esteemed the best.

Having finished this, which was received with the utmost avidity, he resolved to take leave, not only of his enemies and friends, but even of his country; and in this resolution, in the year 1736, he once more retired to France, where he looked to his native country with a mixture of anger and pity, and upon his former professing friends with a share of contempt and indignation. "I expect little," says he, "from the principal actors that tread the stage at present. They are divided not so much as it seemed, and as they would have it believed, about measures: the true division is about their different ends. Whilst the minister was not hard pushed, nor the prospect of succeeding to him near, they appeared to have but one end,—the reformation of the government. The destruction of the minister was pursued only as a preliminary, but of essential and indisputable necessity, to that end; but when his destruction seemed to approach, the object of his succession interposed to the sight of many, and the reformation of the government was no longer their point of view. They had divided the skin, at least in their thought, before they had taken the beast. The common fear of hastening his downfall for others made them all faint in the chase. It was this, and this alone, that saved him, and put off his evil day."

Such were his cooler reflections, after he had laid down his political pen, to employ it in a manner that was much more agreeable to his usual professions, and his approaching age. He had long employed the few hours he could spare, on subjects of a more general and important nature to the interests of mankind; but as he was frequently interrupted by the alarms of party, he made no great

proficiency in his design. Still, however, he kept it in view, and he makes frequent mention, in his letters to Swift, of his intentions to give metaphysics a new and useful turn. "I know," says he, in one of these, "how little regard you pay to writings of this kind; but I imagine, that if you can like any, it must be those that strip metaphysics of all their bombast, keep within the sight of every well constituted eye, and never bewilder themselves, whilst they pretend to guide the reason of others."

Having now arrived at the sixtieth year of his age, and being blessed with a very competent share of fortune, he returned into France, far from the noise and hurry of party; for his seat at Dawley was too near to devote the rest of his life to retirement and study.* Upon his going to that

* Of his new course of life and study, we have an account in the following extract from a letter of Pope to Swift, dated May 17, 1739:— "Your last, which was delivered me by Mr Swift, inquires where and how is Lord Bolingbroke? who, in a paragraph in my last, under his own hand, gave you an account of himself; and I employed almost a whole letter on his affairs afterwards. He has sold Dawley for twenty-six thousand pounds, much to his own satisfaction. His plan of life is now a very agreeable one, in the finest country of France, divided between study and exercise; for he still reads or writes five or six hours a-day, and hunts generally twice a-week. He has the whole forest of Fontainbleau at his command, with the king's stables and dogs, &c. his lady's son-in-law being governor of that place. She resides most part of the year with my lord, at a large house they have hired; and the rest with her daughter, who is abbess of a royal convent in the neighbourhood. I never saw him in stronger health, or in better humour with his friends; or more indifferent and dispassionate as to his enemies. He is seriously set upon writing some parts of the history of his times, which he has begun by a noble introduction, presenting a view of the whole state of Europe, from the Pyrenean treaty. He has hence deduced a summary sketch of the natural and incidental interests of each kingdom, and how they have varied from, or approached to, the true politics of each, in the several administrations to this time. The history itself will be particular only on such facts and anecdotes as he personally knew, or produces vouchers for, both from home and abroad. This puts into my mind to tell you a fear he expressed lately to me, that some facts in your history of the queen's last years (which he read here with me in 1727) are not exactly stated, and that he may be obliged to vary from them in relation, I believe, to the conduct of the Earl of Oxford, of which great care surely should be taken. And he told me, that when he saw you in 1727, he made you observe them, and that you promised to take that care."—B.

country, as it was generally known that disdain, vexation, and disappointment had driven him there, many of his friends, as well as his enemies, supposed, that he was once again gone over to the Pretender. Among the number who entertained this suspicion was Swift, whom Pope, in one of his letters, very roundly chides for harbouring such an unjust opinion. "You should be cautious," says he "of censuring any motion or action of Lord Bolingbroke, because you hear it only from a shallow, envious, and malicious reporter. What you writ to me about him, I find, to my great scandal, repeated in one of yours to another. Whatever you might hint to me, was this for the profane? The thing, if true, should be concealed; but it is, I assure you, absolutely untrue in every circumstance. He has fixed in a very agreeable retirement near Fontainbleau, and makes it his whole business *vacare literis*."

This reproof from Pope was not more friendly than it was true: Lord Bolingbroke was too well acquainted with the forlorn state of that party, and the folly of its conductors, once more to embark in their desperate concerns. He now saw that he had gone as far towards reinstating himself in the full possession of his former honours, as the mere dint of parts and application could go, and was, at length, experimentally convinced, that the decree was absolutely irreversible, and the door of the House of Lords finally shut against him. He, therefore, at Pope's suggestion, retired, merely to be at leisure from the broils of opposition, for the calmer pleasures of philosophy. Thus the decline of his life, though less brilliant, became more amiable; and even his happiness was improved by age, which had rendered his passions more moderate, and his wishes more attainable.

But he was far from suffering, even in solitude, his hours to glide away in torpid inactivity. That active, restless disposition still continued to actuate his pursuits; and having lost the season for gaining power over his contemporaries, he was now resolved upon acquiring fame from posterity. He had not been long in his retreat near Fontainbleau, when he began a course of letters on the study and use of history, for the use of a young nobleman.*

* The young nobleman to whom these letters were addressed was Lord Hyde, Viscount Cornbury. — B.

In these, he does not follow the methods of St Real and others who have treated on this subject, who make history the great fountain of all knowledge; he very wisely confines its benefits, and supposes them rather to consist in deducing general maxims from particular facts, than in illustrating maxims by the application of historical passages. In mentioning ecclesiastical history, he gives his opinion very freely upon the subject of the divine original of the sacred books, which he supposes to have no such foundation. This new system of thinking, which he had always propagated in conversation, and which he now began to adopt in his more laboured compositions, seemed no way supported either by his acuteness or his learning. He began to reflect seriously on these subjects too late in life, and to suppose those objections very new and unanswerable which had been already confuted by thousands. "Lord Bolingbroke," says Pope, in one of his letters, "is above trifling; when he writes of any thing in this world, he is more than mortal. If ever he trifles, it must be when he turns divine."

In the meantime, as it was evident that a man of his active ambition, in choosing retirement when no longer able to lead in public, must be liable to ridicule in resuming a resigned philosophical air, in order to obviate the censure, he addressed a letter to Lord Bathurst upon the true use of retirement and study; in which he shews himself still able and willing to undertake the cause of his country, whenever its distresses should require his exertion. "I have," says he, "renounced neither my country nor my friends; and by friends, I mean all those, and those alone, who are such to their country. In their prosperity they shall never hear of me; in their distress always. In that retreat wherein the remainder of my days shall be spent, I may be of some use to them, since, even thence, I may advise, exhort, and warn them." Bent upon this pursuit only, and having now exchanged the gay statesman for the grave philosopher, he shone forth with distinguished lustre. His conversation took a different turn from what had been usual with him; and, as we are assured by Lord Orrery, who knew him, it united the wisdom of Socrates, the dignity and ease of Pliny, and the wit of Horace.

Yet still, amid his resolutions to turn himself from politics, and to give himself up entirely to the calls of philosophy,

he could not resist embarking once more in the debates of his country; and, coming back from France, settled at Battersea, an old seat which was his father's, and had been long in the possession of the family. He supposed he saw an impending calamity, and, though it was not in his power to remove, he thought it his duty to retard its fall. To redeem or save the nation from perdition he thought impossible, since national corruptions were to be purged by national calamities; but he was resolved to lend his feeble assistance to stem the torrent that was pouring in. With this spirit he wrote that excellent piece, which is entitled "The Idea of a Patriot King;" in which he describes a monarch uninfluenced by party, leaning to the suggestions neither of Whigs nor Tories, but equally the friend and the father of all. Some time after, in the year 1749, after the conclusion of the peace two years before, the measures taken by the administration seemed not to have been repugnant to his notions of political prudence for that juncture: in that year he wrote his last production, containing reflections on the then state of the nation, principally with regard to her taxes and debts, and on the causes and consequences of them. This undertaking was left unfinished, for death snatched the pen from the hand of the writer.

Having passed the latter part of his life in dignity and splendour, his rational faculties improved by reflection, and his ambition kept under by disappointment, his whole aim seemed to have been to leave the stage of life, on which he had acted such various parts, with applause. He had long wished to fetch his last breath at Battersea, the place where he was born; and fortune, that had through life seemed to traverse all his aims, at last indulged him in this. He had long been troubled with a cancer in his cheek, by which excruciating disease he died, on the verge of fourscore years of age. He was consonant with himself to the last; and those principles which he had all along avowed, he confirmed with his dying breath, having given orders that none of the clergy should be permitted to trouble him in his latest moments.

His body was interred in Battersea church with those of his ancestors; and a marble monument erected to his memory, with the following excellent inscription:—

HERE LIES
HENRY ST JOHN,
IN THE REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE
SECRETARY OF WAR, SECRETARY OF STATE,
AND VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE:
IN THE DAYS OF KING GEORGE I. AND
KING GEORGE II.
SOMETHING MORE AND BETTER.
HIS ATTACHMENT TO QUEEN ANNE
EXPOSED HIM TO A LONG AND SEVERE PERSECUTION;
HE BORE IT WITH FIRMNESS OF MIND;
HE PASSED THE LATTER PART OF HIS TIME AT HOME,
THE ENEMY OF NO NATIONAL PARTY,
THE FRIEND OF NO FACTION;
DISTINGUISHED (UNDER THE CLOUD OF A PROSCRIPTION,
WHICH HAD NOT BEEN ENTIRELY TAKEN OFF,)
BY ZEAL TO MAINTAIN THE LIBERTY,
AND TO RESTORE THE ANCIENT PROSPERITY,
OF GREAT BRITAIN.
HE DIED THE 12TH OF DECEMBER, 1751
AGED 79.

In this manner lived and died Lord Bolingbroke, ever active, never depressed, ever pursuing fortune, and as constantly disappointed by her. In whatever light we view his character, we shall find him an object rather properer for our wonder than our imitation, more to be feared than esteemed, and gaining our admiration without our love. His ambition ever aimed at the summit of power, and nothing seemed capable of satisfying his immoderate desires, but the liberty of governing all things without a rival. With as much ambition, as great abilities, and more acquired knowledge than Cæsar, he wanted only his courage to be as successful; but the schemes his head dictated, his heart often refused to execute; and he lost the ability to perform, just when the great occasion called for all his efforts to engage.

The same ambition that prompted him to be a politician, actuated him as a philosopher. His aims were equally great and extensive in both capacities: unwilling to submit to any in the one, or any authority in the other, he entered the fields of science with a thorough contempt of all that had been established before him, and seemed willing to think every thing wrong, that he might shew his faculty in the reformation. It might have been better for his quiet, as a man, if he had been content to act a subordinate

character in the state; and it had certainly been better for his memory, as a writer, if he had aimed at doing less than he attempted. Wisdom in morals, like every other art or science is an accumulation that numbers have contributed to increase; and it is not for one single man to pretend, that he can add more to the heap than the thousands that have gone before him. Such innovators more frequently retard than promote knowledge; their maxims are more agreeable to the reader, by having the gloss of novelty to recommend them, than those which are trite only because they are true. Such men are, therefore, followed at first with avidity, nor is it till some time that their disciples begin to find their error. They often, though too late, perceive that they have been following a speculative inquiry, while they have been leaving a practical good: and while they have been practising the arts of doubting, they have been losing all firmness of principle, which might tend to establish the rectitude of their private conduct. As a moralist, therefore, Lord Bolingbroke, by having endeavoured at too much, seems to have done nothing; but as a political writer, few can equal, and none can exceed him. As he was a practical politician, his writings are less filled with those speculative illusions, which are the result of solitude and seclusion. He wrote them with a certainty of their being opposed, sifted, examined, and reviled; he therefore took care to build them up of such materials as could not be easily overthrown: they prevailed at the times in which they were written, they still continue to the admiration of the present age, and will probably last for ever.

## THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF THE LATE RIGHT HON. HENRY ST JOHN, LORD VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE.

In the name of God, whom I humbly adore, to whom I offer up perpetual thanksgiving, and to the order of whose providence I am cheerfully resigned: This is the Last Will and Testament of me, Henry St John, in the reign of Queen Anne, and by her grace and favour, Viscount Bolingbroke. After more than thirty years' proscription, and after the immense losses I have sustained by unexpected events in the course of it; by the injustice and

treachery of persons nearest to me; by the negligence of friends, and by the infidelity of servants: As my fortune is so reduced at this time, that it is impossible for me to make such disposition, and to give such ample legacies as I always intended, I content, therefore, to give as follows:—

My debts, and the expenses of my burial in a decent and private manner at Battersea, in the vault where my last wife lies, being first paid, I give to William Chetwynd of Stafford, Esq. and Joseph Taylor, of the Inner Temple, London, Esq. my two assured friends, each of them one hundred guineas, to be laid out by them as to each of them shall seem best, in some memorial, as the legacy of their departed friend; and I constitute them executors of this my will. The diamond ring which I wear upon my finger, I give to my old and long approved friend, the Marquis of Matignon, and, after his decease, to his son, the Count de Gace, that I may be kept in the remembrance of a family whom I love and honour above all others.

*Item*, I give to my said executors the sum of four hundred pounds in trust, to place out the same in some of the public funds, or government securities, or any other securities, as they shall think proper, and to pay the interest or income thereof to Francis Arboneau, my valet-de-chambre, and Ann his wife, and the survivor of them; and after the decease of the survivor of them, if their son, John Arboneau, shall be living, and under the age of eighteen years, to pay the said interest or income to him, until he shall attain his said age, and then to pay the principal money, or assign the securities for the same, to him; but if he shall not be living at the decease of his father and mother, or shall afterwards die before his said age of eighteen years, in either of the said cases the said principal sum of four hundred pounds, and the securities for the same, shall sink into my personal estate, and be accounted part thereof.

*Item*, I give to my two servants, Marianne Tribon, and Remi Charnet, commonly called Picard, each one hundred pounds; and to every other servant living with me at the time of my decease, and who shall have lived with me two years or longer, I give one year's wages more than what shall be due to them at my death.

And whereas I am the author of several books or tracts following, viz.:—

Remarks on the History of England, from the Minutes of Humphrey Oldcastle. In twenty-four letters.

A Dissertation upon Parties. In nineteen letters to Caleb Danvers, Esq.

The Occasional Writer. Numb. 1, 2, 3.

The Vision of Camilick.

An Answer to the London Journal of December 21, 1728, by John Trot.

An Answer to the Defence of the Inquiry into the Reasons of the Conduct of Great Britain.

A Final Answer to the Remarks on the Craftsman's Vindication.

All which books or tracts have been printed and published; and I am also the author of

Four Letters on History, &c.

Which have been privately printed, and not published; but I have not assigned to any person or persons whatsoever the copy, or the liberty of printing or reprinting any of the said books, or tracts, or letters: Now, I do hereby, as far as by law I can, give and assign to David Mallet, of Putney, in the county of Surrey, Esquire, the copy and copies of all and each of the before mentioned books or tracts, and letters, and the liberty of reprinting the same. I also give to the said David Mallet the copy and copies of all the manuscript books, papers, and writings, which I have written or composed, or shall write or compose, and leave at the time of my decease.* And I farther give to the said David Mallet, all the books which, at the time of my decease, shall be in the room called my library.

All the rest and residue of my personal estate, whatsoever and wheresoever, I give to my said executors; and hereby revoking all former wills, I declare this to be my last will and testament. In witness whereof, I have hereunto set

* Mallet was so sanguine in his expectations of profit from this bequest, that he rejected the offer of three thousand pounds, made to him by Millar the bookseller, for the copyright. He had afterwards reason to repent of his refusal, for the first edition of Bolingbroke's collected works was not sold off in twenty years. It was when this edition first appeared that Dr Johnson pronounced the memorable sentence upon the noble author and his editor: — "Sir, he was a scoundrel and a coward; a scoundrel for charging a blunderbuss against religion and morality; a coward, because he had not resolution to fire it off himself, but left half a crown to a beggarly Scotchman to draw the trigger after his death!" — B.

my hand and seal the twenty-second day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and fifty-one. HENRY SAINT JOHN, BOLINGBROKE.

Signed, sealed, published, and declared by the said testator, as and for his last will and testament, in the presence of

OLIVER PRICE.
THOMAS HALL.

Proved at London, the fifth day of March, 1752, before the worshipful Robert Chapman, doctor of laws and surrogate, by the oaths of William Chetwynd and Joseph Taylor, Esquires, the executors named in the will, to whom administration was granted, being first sworn duly to administer.

March, 1752. WILLIAM LEGARD, PETER ST ELOY, HENRY STEVENS, } Deputy Registers.

In Dr Matty's Life of Lord Chesterfield, he mentions that he had seen Lord Bolingbroke for several months labouring under a cruel, and, to appearance, incurable disorder. A cancerous humour in his face made a daily progress; and the empirical treatment he submitted to not only hastened his end, but also exposed him to the most excruciating pain. He saw him, for the last time, the day before his tortures began. Though the unhappy patient, as well as his friend, did then expect that he should recover, and accordingly desired him not to come again till his cure was completed, yet he still took leave of him in a manner which shewed how much he was affected. He embraced the Earl with tenderness, and said, "God, who placed me here, will do what he pleases with me hereafter,—and He knows best what to do. May he bless you." And in a letter from Chesterfield to a lady of rank at Paris, he says, "I frequently see our friend Bolingbroke, but I see him with great concern. A humour he has long had in his cheek proves to be cancerous, and has made an alarming progress of late. Hitherto it is not attended with pain, which is all he wishes, for as to the rest he is resigned. Truly, a mind like his, so far superior to the generality, would have well deserved that nature should have made an effort in his favour as to the body, and given him an uncommon share of health and duration."

The last scene is thus lamented, in a letter to the same lady:—"Are you not greatly shocked—but I am sure you are—at the dreadful death of our friend Bolingbroke? The remedy has hastened his death, against which there was no remedy, for his cancer was not topical, but universal, and had so infected the whole mass of his blood, as to be incurable. What I most lament is, that the medicines put him to exquisite pain—an evil I dread much more than death, both for my friends and myself. I lose a warm, an amiable, and instructive friend. I saw him a fortnight before his death, when he depended upon a cure, and so did I; and he desired I would not come any more till he was quite well, which he expected would be in ten or twelve days. The next day the great pains came on, and never left him till within two days of his death, during which he lay insensible. What a man! what extensive knowledge! what a memory! what eloquence! His passions, which were strong, were injurious to the delicacy of his sentiments; they were apt to be confounded together, and often wilfully. The world will do him more justice now than in his lifetime."

[We have mentioned in a preceding note, that Bolingbroke's Letters on History, which constitute the most objectionable part of his writings, were addressed to Lord Hyde Viscount Cornbury. In justice to the memory of this latter nobleman, we publish his remonstrance against their being published, when Mr Mallet, to whom Lord Bolingbroke had bequeathed the property of all his works, was preparing them for the press. It can hardly be wondered at that Mallet, who loved money, and openly professed the same infidel opinions with his deceased patron, should have disregarded the remonstrance; but every man who wishes well to society, must regret that Lord Cornbury's advice was not followed, and agree with him that Lord Bolingbroke's reputation would not have suffered by the omission. — B.]

## LETTER

### LORD HYDE TO DAVID MALLET, ESQ.

"PARIS, *March* 7, N.S. 1752.

"I LEARN from England, sir, that Lord Bolingbroke has left his manuscripts to you.* His friends must see with satisfaction those title-deeds of his reputation in the hands of the author of the life of the great Lord Bacon; and you will have had the distinguished honour of having been guardian to the fame of two of the greatest geniuses which our country, and perhaps humanity, has produced; but with greater honour to you in this last instance, because you are such by the designation and choice of the author himself.

"What works of his you may have for the public I know not. That, for which I was solicitous, because I believe it would be most instructive to the world, and might be most for his honour — he told me himself he had laid aside; I mean the history of the great transactions of Europe from the time when he began to consider and know them. There remains of that, I believe, no more than a summary review, which I had the good fortune some time ago to draw from him, upon an application which I made to him

* Lord Hyde having heard at Paris of Lord Bolingbroke's legacy of all his writings, printed and manuscript, to Mr Mallet, wrote from thence the above letter, the original of which was sent by the widow Mallet, with the manuscript of Lord Bolingbroke's philosophical works to the British Museum, in order to justify her husband's integrity in the edition of them.

to direct me in the study of history. You will probably have seen that summary review, which is in a collection of letters upon history, which he did me the honour to write me. It is but a sketch of the work he had proposed to himself; but it is the sketch of Lord Bolingbroke. He will probably have told you, that those letters were by his direction delivered up by me to Mr Pope, who burnt, as he told me, the manuscripts, and printed off, by a private press, some very few copies, which were to be considered still as manuscripts, one of which Mr Pope kept, and sent another to Lord Bolingbroke. Sir William Wyndham, Lord Bathurst, Lord Marchmont, Mr Murray, and Mr Lyttelton, I think, had each one. I do not remember to have been told of any copies given, except to myself, who have always preserved mine, as I would a MS. which was not my own,— observing not only the restrictions which Lord Bolingbroke himself had recommended to me, but securing likewise, as far as I could, even in case of my death, that this work should never become public from that copy, which is in my possession. I enlarge upon this, because I think myself particularly obliged, out of regard to Lord Bolingbroke, to give this account of that work to the person whom he has intrusted with all his writings, in case you might not have known this particularity. And at the same time I think it my duty, to the memory of Lord Bolingbroke, to myself, and to the world too, to say something more to you in relation to this work.

"It is a work, sir, which will instruct mankind, and do honour to its author; and yet I will take upon me to say, that for the sake of both, you must publish it with caution.

"The greatest men have their faults, and sometimes the greatest faults; but the faults of superior minds are the least indifferent, both to themselves and to society. Humanity is interested in the fame of those who excelled in it; but it is interested before all in the good of society, and in the peace of the minds of the individuals that compose it. Lord Bolingbroke's mind embraced all objects, and looked far into all; but not without a strong mixture of passions, which will always necessarily beget some prejudices, and follow more. And on the subject of religion particularly, (whatever was the motive that inflamed his passions upon that subject chiefly,) his passions were the most strong; and I will venture to say, (when called upon,

as I think, to say what I have said more than once to himself, with the deference due to his age and extraordinary talents,) his passions upon that subject did prevent his otherwise superior reason from seeing, that, even in a political light only, he hurt himself, and wounded society, by striking at establishments, upon which the conduct at least of society depends, and by striving to overturn in men's minds the systems which experience at least has justified, and which authority at least has rendered respectable, as necessary to public order and to private peace, without suggesting to their minds a better, or indeed any system.

"You will find, sir, what I say to be true in a part of the work I mentioned, where he digresses upon the criticism of church history.

"While this work remained in the hands only of those I have mentioned, (except, as I have been telling you, to himself and to them in private conversation,) I have otherwise been silent upon that subject; but I must now say to you, sir, that, for the world's sake and for his, that part of the work ought by no means to be communicated farther. And you see, that it is a digression not necessary to that work. If this digression should be made public, it will be censured,—it must be censured,—it ought to be censured. It will be criticised, too, by able pens, whose erudition, as well as their reasonings, will not be easily answered. In such a case, I shall owe to myself and to the world to disclaim publicly that part of a work, which he did me the honour to address to me; but I owe to the regard which he has sometimes expressed for me, to disclaim it rather privately to you, sir, who are intrusted with his writings, and to recommend to you to suppress that part of the work, as a good citizen of the world, for the world's peace, as one intrusted and obliged by Lord Bolingbroke, not to raise new storms to his memory.—I am, sir, your very humble servant, HYDE."

## LETTER

### DAVID MALLET, ESQ. TO LORD HYDE.

"My Lord,—I received a very real pleasure, and at the same time a sensible concern, from the letter your lordship has honoured me with. Nothing could be more agreeable to me than the favourable opinion of one, whom I have long admired for every quality that enters into an estimable and amiable character; but then nothing can occasion me more uneasiness than not to be able to suppress that part of a work which you would have kept from public view.

"The book was printed off before your lordship's letter reached my hands; but this consideration alone would have appeared trifling to me. I apprehend that I cannot, without being unfaithful to the trust reposed in me, omit or alter any thing in those works, which my Lord Bolingbroke had deliberately prepared for the press, and I will publish no other. As to this in particular, his repeated commands to me were, that it should be printed exactly according to the copy he himself, in all the leisure of retirement, had corrected with that view.

"Upon the whole, if your lordship should think it necessary to disclaim the reflections on Sacred History, by which I presume is meant some public and authentic declaration, that your notions on this head differ entirely from those of your noble friend; even in this case I am sure you will do it with all the delicacy natural to your own disposition, and with all the tenderness to his memory, that the particular regard he always bore you can deserve. I am, with the greatest respect, my lord," &c.

# PREFACES AND INTRODUCTIONS

# THE PREFACE

TO

# DOCTOR BROOKES'S

NEW AND ACCURATE SYSTEM OF

# NATURAL HISTORY.

PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR MDCCLXIII.

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Of all the studies which have employed the industrious or amused the idle, perhaps Natural History deserves the preference; other sciences generally terminate in doubt, or rest in bare speculation, but here every step is marked with certainty, and, while a description of the objects around us teaches to supply our wants, it satisfies our curiosity.

The multitude of Nature's productions, however, seems at first to bewilder the inquirer, rather than excite his attention: the various wonders of the animal, vegetable, or mineral world, seem to exceed all powers of computation, and the science appears barren from its amazing fertility. But a nearer acquaintance with this study, by giving method to our researches, points out a similitude in many objects which at first appeared different; the mind, by degrees, rises to consider the things before it in general lights, till, at length, it finds Nature, in almost every instance, acting with her usual simplicity.

Among the number of philosophers who, undaunted by their supposed variety, have attempted to give a description of the productions of nature, Aristotle deserves the first place. This great philosopher was furnished, by his pupil Alexander, with all that the then known world could produce to complete his design. By such parts of his work as have

escaped the wreck of time, it appears that he understood nature more clearly, and in a more comprehensive manner, than even the present age, enlightened as it is with so many later discoveries, can boast. His design appears vast, and his knowledge extensive: he only considers things in general lights, and leaves every subject when it becomes too minute or remote to be useful. In his History of Animals he first describes man, and makes him a standard with which to compare the deviations in every more imperfect kind that is to follow. But if he has excelled in the history of each, he, together with Pliny and Theophrastus, has failed in the exactness of their descriptions. There are many creatures described by those naturalists of antiquity, which are so imperfectly characterized, that it is impossible to tell to what animal now subsisting we can refer the description. This is an unpardonable neglect, and alone sufficient to depreciate their merits; but their credulity, and the mutilations they have suffered by time, have rendered them still less useful, and justify each subsequent attempt to improve what they have left behind. The most laborious, as well as the most voluminous naturalist among the moderns, is Aldrovandus. He was furnished with every requisite for making an extensive body of Natural History. He was learned and rich, and, during the course of a long life, indefatigable and accurate. But his works are insupportably tedious and disgusting, filled with unnecessary quotations and unimportant digressions. Whatever learning he had he was willing should be known, and, unwearied himself, he supposed his readers could never tire; in short, he appears a useful assistant to those who would compile a body of Natural History, but is utterly unsuited to such as only wish to read it with profit and delight.

Gesner and Johnson, willing to abridge the voluminous productions of Aldrovandus, have attempted to reduce Natural History into method, but their efforts have been so incomplete as scarcely to deserve mentioning. Their attempts were improved upon some time after, by Mr Ray, whose method we have adopted in the History of Quadrupeds, Birds, and Fishes, which is to follow. No systematical writer has been more happy than he in reducing Natural History into a form, at once the shortest, yet most comprehensive.

The subsequent attempts of Mr Klein and Linnæus, it is

true, have had their admirers, but as all methods of classing the productions of Nature are calculated merely to ease the memory and enlighten the mind, that writer who answers such ends with brevity and perspicuity is most worthy of regard. And in this respect Mr Ray undoubtedly remains still without a rival; he was sensible that no accurate idea could be formed from a mere distribution of animals in particular classes: he has therefore ranged them according to their most obvious qualities; and, content with brevity in his distribution, has employed accuracy only in the particular description of every animal. This intentional inaccuracy only in the general system of Ray, Klein and Linnæus have undertaken to amend, and thus, by multiplying divisions, instead of impressing the mind with distinct ideas, they only serve to confound it, making the language of the science more difficult than even the science itself.

All order whatsoever is to be used for the sake of brevity and perspicuity; we have therefore followed that of Mr Ray in preference to the rest, whose method of classing animals, though not so accurate, perhaps, is yet more obvious, and being shorter, is more easily remembered. In his lifetime he published his Synopsis Methodica Quadrupedum et Serpentini Generis, and after his death there came out a posthumous work under the care of Dr Derham, which, as the title page informs us, was revised and perfected before his death. Both the one and the other have their merits, but as he wrote *currente calamo*, for subsistence, they are consequently replete with errors; and, though his manner of treating Natural History be preferable to that of all others, yet there was still room for a new work, that might at once retain his excellencies, and supply his deficiencies.

As to the Natural History of Insects, it has not been so long or so greatly cultivated as other parts of this science. Our own countryman, Moufett, is the first of any note that I have met with, who has treated this subject with success. However, it was not till lately that it was reduced to a regular system, which might be, in a great measure, owing to the seeming insignificancy of the animals themselves; even though they were always looked upon as of great use in medicine, and, upon that account only, have been taken notice of by many medical writers. Thus Dioscorides has

treated of their use in physic; and, it must be owned, some of them have been well worth observation on this account. There were not wanting, also, those who long since had thoughts of reducing this kind of knowledge to a regular form, among whom was Mr Ray, who was discouraged by the difficulty attending it: this study has been pursued, of late, however, with diligence and success. Reaumur and Swammerdam have principally distinguished themselves on this account; and their respective treatises plainly shew, that they did not spend their labour in vain. Since their time, several authors have published their systems, among whom is Linnæus, whose method being generally esteemed, I have thought proper to adopt. He has classed them in a very regular manner, though he says but little of the insects themselves. However, I have endeavoured to supply that defect from other parts of his works, and from other authors who have written upon this subject; by which means, it is hoped the curiosity of such as delight in these studies, will be, in some measure, satisfied. Such of them as have been more generally admired, have been longest insisted upon, and particularly caterpillars and butterflies; relative to which, perhaps, there is the largest catalogue that has ever appeared in the English language.

Mr Edwards and Mr Buffon, one in the History of Birds, the other of Quadrupeds, have undoubtedly deserved highly of the public, as far as their labours have extended; out as they have hitherto cultivated but a small part in the wide field of Natural History, a comprehensive system in this most pleasing science has been hitherto wanting. Nor is it a little surprising, when every other branch of literature has been of late cultivated with so much success among us, how this most interesting department should have been neglected. It has been long obvious that Aristotle was incomplete, and Pliny credulous, Aldrovandus too prolix, and Linnæus too short, to afford the proper entertainment, yet we have had no attempts to supply their defects, or to give a history of nature at once complete and concise, calculated at once to please and improve.

How far the author of the present performance has obviated the wants of the public in these respects, is left to the world to determine; this much, however, he may without vanity assert, that whether the system here presented be approved or not, he has left the science in a better state

than he found it. He has consulted every author whom he imagined might give him new and authentic information, and painfully searched through heaps of lumber to detect falsehood; so that many parts of the following work have exhausted much labour in the execution, though they may discover little to the superficial observer.

Nor have I neglected any opportunity that offered of conversing upon these subjects with travellers, upon whose judgments and veracity I could rely: thus comparing accurate narrations with what has been already written, and following either, as the circumstances or credibility of the witness led me to believe. But I have had one advantage over almost all former naturalists, namely, that of having visited a variety of countries myself, and examined the productions of each upon the spot. Whatever America, or the known parts of Africa, have produced to excite curiosity, has been carefully observed by me, and compared with the accounts of others. By this I have made some improvements that will appear in their place, and have been less liable to be imposed upon by the hearsay relations of credulity.

A complete, cheap, and commodious body of Natural History being wanted in our language, it was these advantages which prompted me to this undertaking. Such therefore as choose to range in the delightful fields of Nature, will, I flatter myself, here find a proper guide; and those who have a design to furnish a cabinet will find copious instructions. With one of these volumes in his hand, a spectator may go through the largest museum, the British not excepted, see Nature through all her varieties, and compare her usual operations with those wanton productions, in which she seems to sport with human sagacity. I have been sparing, however, in the description of the deviations from the usual course of production, first, because such are almost infinite; and the natural historian, who should spend his time in describing deformed nature, would be as absurd as the statuary, who should fix upon a deformed man, from whom to take his model of perfection.

But I would not raise expectations in the reader which it may not be in my power to satisfy: he who takes up a book of science must not expect to acquire knowledge at the same easy rate that a reader of romance does entertainment; on the contrary, all sciences, and Natural History

among the rest, have a language and a manner of treatment peculiar to themselves, and he who attempts to dress them in borrowed or foreign ornaments, is every whit as uselessly employed as the German apothecary we are told of, who turned the whole dispensatory into verse. It will be sufficient for me, if the following system is found as pleasing as the nature of the subject will bear, neither obscured by an unnecessary ostentation of science, nor lengthened out by an affected eagerness after needless embellishment.

The description of every object will be found as clear and concise as possible, the design not being to amuse the ear with well-turned periods, or the imagination with borrowed ornaments, but to impress the mind with the simplest views of nature. To answer this end more distinctly, a picture of such animals is given as we are least acquainted with. All that is intended by this is, only to guide the inquirer with more certainty to the object itself, as it is to be found in nature. I never would advise a student to apply to any science, either anatomy, physic, or natural history, by looking on pictures only: they may serve to direct him more readily to the objects intended, but he must by no means suppose himself possessed of adequate and distinct ideas till he has viewed the things themselves, and not their representations.

Copperplates, therefore, moderately well done, answer the learner's purpose every whit as well as those which cannot be purchased but at a vast expense; they serve to guide us to the archetypes in nature, and this is all that the finest picture should be permitted to do, for Nature herself ought always to be examined by the learner before he has done.

# INTRODUCTION

TO A NEW

# HISTORY OF THE WORLD;

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN TWELVE VOLUMES OCTAVO,

BY J. NEWBERY, MDCCLXIV.

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## TO THE PUBLIC.

EXPERIENCE every day convinces us, that no part of learning affords so much wisdom upon such easy terms as history. Our advances in most other studies are slow and disgusting, acquired with effort and retained with difficulty; but in a well written history, every step we proceed only serves to increase our ardour: we profit by the experience of others, without sharing their toils or misfortunes; and in this part of knowledge, in a more particular manner, study is but relaxation.

Of all histories, however, that which, not confined to any particular reign or country, but which extends to the transactions of all mankind, is the most useful and entertaining. As in geography we can have no just idea of the situation of one country, without knowing that of others; so in history it is in some measure necessary to be acquainted with the whole thoroughly to comprehend a part. A knowledge of universal history is therefore highly useful, nor is it less entertaining. Tacitus complains, that the transactions of a few reigns could not afford him a sufficient stock of materials to please or interest the reader; but here that objection is entirely removed,—a History of the World presents the most striking events, with the greatest variety.

These are a part of the many advantages which universal

history has over all others, and which have encouraged so many writers to attempt compiling works of this kind among the ancients, as well as the moderns. Each invited by the manifest utility of the design, yet many of them failing through the great and unforeseen difficulties of the undertaking; the barrenness of events in the early periods of history, and their fertility in modern times, equally serving to increase their embarrassments. In recounting the transactions of remote antiquity, there is such a defect of materials, that the willingness of mankind to supply the chasm has given birth to falsehood, and invited conjecture. The farther we look back into those distant periods, all the objects seem to become more obscure, or are totally lost, by a sort of perspective diminution. In this case, therefore, when the eye of truth could no longer discern clearly, fancy undertook to form the picture; and fables were invented where truths were wanting. For this reason, we have declined enlarging on such disquisitions, not for want of materials, which offered themselves at every step of our progress, but because we thought them not worth discussing. Neither have we encumbered the beginning of our work with the various opinions of the heathen philosophers concerning the creation, which may be found in most of our systems of theology, and belong more properly to the divine than the historian. Sensible how liable we are to redundancy in this first part of our design, it has been our endeavour to unfold ancient history with all possible conciseness; and, solicitous to improve the reader's stock of knowledge, we have been indifferent as to the display of our own. We have not stopped to discuss or confute all the absurd conjectures men of speculation have thrown in our way. We at first had even determined not to deform the page of truth with the names of those, whose labours had only been calculated to encumber it with fiction and vain speculation. However, we have thought proper, upon second thoughts, slightly to mention them and their opinions, quoting the author at the bottom of the page, so that the reader, who is curious about such particularities, may know where to have recourse for fuller information.

As, in the early part of history, a want of real facts hath induced many to spin out the little that was known with conjecture, so in the modern part, the superfluity of trifling anecdotes was equally apt to introduce confusion. In one

case, history has been rendered tedious, from our want of knowing the truth; in the other, from knowing too much of truth not worth our notice. Every year that is added to the age of the world, serves to lengthen the thread of its history; so that, to give this branch of learning a just length in the circle of human pursuits, it is necessary to abridge several of the least important facts. It is true, we often at present see the annals of a single reign, or even the transactions of a single year, occupying folios: but can the writers of such tedious journals ever hope to reach posterity, or do they think that our descendants, whose attention will naturally be turned to their own concerns, can exhaust so much time in the examination of ours? A plan of general history, rendered too extensive, deters us from a study that is perhaps, of all others, the most useful, by rendering it too laborious; and, instead of alluring our curiosity, excites our despair. Writers are unpardonable who convert our amusement into labour, and divest knowledge of one of its most pleasing allurements. The ancients have represented history under the figure of a woman, easy, graceful, and inviting; but we have seen her in our days converted, like the virgin of *Nabis*,* into an instrument of torture.

How far we have retrenched these excesses, and steered between the opposites of exuberance and abridgment, the judicious are left to determine. We here offer the public a History of Mankind, from the earliest accounts of time to the present age, in twelve volumes, which, upon mature deliberation, appeared to us the proper mean. It has been our endeavour to give every fact its full scope; but at the same time, to retrench all disgusting superfluity, to give every object the due proportion it ought to maintain in the general picture of mankind, without crowding the canvass. We hope, therefore, that the reader will here see the revolutions of empires without confusion, and trace arts and laws from one kingdom to another, without losing his interest in

* Nabis, a Spartan tyrant, who caused a statue of his wife to be constructed, which, by means of springs, seized the criminal who was placed within its embrace, and tortured him in the most excruciating manner by pressing him against sharp spikes of steel hid under its robe. We have read of a similar image of the Virgin Mary, called *Madre Dolorosa*, which was discovered by the French in the dungeons of the Spanish Inquisition. — B.

the narrative of their other transactions. To attain these ends with greater certainty of success, we have taken care, in some measure, to banish that late, and, we may add, Gothic practice, of using a multiplicity of notes, — a thing as much unknown to the ancient historians, as it is disgusting in the moderns. Balzac somewhere calls vain erudition the baggage of antiquity; might we in turn be permitted to make an apophthegm, we would call notes the baggage of a bad writer. It certainly argues a defect of method, or a want of perspicuity, when an author is thus obliged to write notes upon his own works; and it may assuredly be said, that whoever undertakes to write a comment upon himself, will for ever remain without a rival his own commentator. We have, therefore, lopped off such excrescences, though not to any degree of affectation; as sometimes an acknowledged blemish may be admitted into works of skill, either to cover a greater defect, or to take a nearer course to beauty. Having mentioned the danger of affectation, it may be proper to observe, that as this, of all defects, is most apt to insinuate itself into such a work, we have, therefore, been upon our guard against it. Innovation, in a performance of this nature, should by no means be attempted: those names and spellings which have been used in our language for time immemorial, ought to continue unaltered; for, like states, they acquire a sort of *jus diuturnæ possessionis*, as the civilians express it, however unjust their original claims might have been.

With respect to chronology and geography, the one of which fixes actions to time, while the other assigns them to place, we have followed the most approved methods among the moderns. All that was requisite in this, was to preserve one system of each invariably, and permit such as chose to adopt the plans of others, to rectify our deviations to their own standard. If actions and things are made to preserve their due distances of time and place mutually with respect to each other, it matters little as to the duration of them all with respect to eternity, or their situation with regard to the universe.

Thus much we have thought proper to premise concerning a work which, however executed, has cost much labour and great expense. Had we for our judges the unbiassed and the judicious alone, few words would have served, or even silence would have been our best address; but when it is considered that we have laboured for the public, — that

miscellaneous being, at variance within itself, from the differing influence of pride, prejudice, or incapacity — a public already sated with attempts of this nature, and in a manner unwilling to find out merit till forced upon its notice, — we hope to be pardoned for thus endeavouring to shew where it is presumed we have had a superiority. A History of the World to the present time, at once satisfactory and succinct, calculated rather for use than curiosity, to be read rather than consulted, seeking applause from the reader's feelings, not from his ignorance of learning, or affectation of being thought learned: a history that may be purchased at an easy expense, yet that omits nothing material, delivered in a style correct, yet familiar, was wanting in our language; and, though sensible of our own insufficiency, this defect we have attempted to supply. Whatever reception the present age or posterity may give this work, we rest satisfied with our own endeavours to deserve a kind one. The completion of our design has for some years taken up all the time we could spare from other occupations, of less importance indeed to the public, but probably more advantageous to ourselves. We are unwilling, therefore, to dismiss this subject without observing, that the labour of so great a part of life should, at least, be examined with candour, and not carelessly confounded in that multiplicity of daily publications, which are conceived without effort, are produced without praise, and sink without censure.

# THE PREFACE

TO THE

# ROMAN HISTORY.

FIRST PRINTED IN MDCCLXIX.

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THERE are some subjects on which a writer must decline all attempts to acquire fame, satisfied with being obscurely useful. After such a number of Roman Histories, in almost all languages, ancient and modern, it would be but imposture to pretend new discoveries, or to expect to offer any thing in a work of this kind, which has not been often anticipated by others. The facts which it relates have been a hundred times repeated, and every occurrence has been so variously considered, that learning can scarcely find a new anecdote, or genius give novelty to the old. I hope, therefore, for the reader's indulgence, if, in the following attempt, it shall appear, that my only aim was to supply a concise, plain, and unaffected narrative of the rise and decline of a well known empire. I was contented to make such a book as could not fail of being serviceable, though of all others the most unlikely to promote the reputation of the writer. Instead, therefore, of pressing forward among the ambitious, I only claim the merit of knowing my own strength, and falling back among the hindmost ranks, with conscious inferiority.

I am not ignorant, however, that it would be no difficult task to pursue the same art by which many dull men, every day, acquire a reputation in history: such might easily be attained, by fixing on some obscure period to write upon, where much seeming erudition might be displayed, almost unknown, because not worth remembering; and many

maxims in politics might be advanced, entirely new, because altogether false. But I have pursued a contrary method, choosing the most noted period in history, and offering no remarks, but such as I thought strictly true.

The reasons of my choice were, that we had no history of this splendid period in our language, but what was either too voluminous for common use, or too meanly written to please. Catrou and Rouille's history, in six volumes folio, translated into our language by Bundy, is entirely unsuited to the time and expense mankind usually choose to bestow upon this subject. Rollin and his continuator Crevier, making nearly thirty volumes octavo, seem to labour under the same imputation; as likewise Hooke, who has spent three quartos upon the Republic alone, the rest of his undertaking remaining unfinished.* There only, therefore, remained the history by Echard, in five volumes octavo, whose plan and mine seemed to coincide; and had his execution been equal to his design, it had precluded the present undertaking. But the truth is, it is so poorly written, the facts so crowded, the narration so spiritless, and the characters so indistinctly marked, that the most ardent curiosity must cool in the perusal; and the noblest transactions that ever warmed the human heart, as described by him, must cease to interest.

I have endeavoured, therefore, in the present work, or rather compilation, to obviate the inconveniences arising from the exuberance of the former, as well as from the unpleasantness of the latter. It was supposed, that two volumes might be made to comprise all that was requisite to be known, or pleasing to be read, by such as only examined history, to prepare them for more important studies. Too much time may be given even to laudable pursuits, and there is none more apt than this to allure the student from the necessary branches of learning, and, if I may so express it, entirely to engross his industry. What is here offered, therefore, may be sufficient for all, except such who make history the peculiar business of their lives: To such, the most tedious narrative will seem but an abridgment, as they measure the merits of the work rather

* Mr Hooke's three quartos above mentioned reach only to the end of the Gallic war. A fourth volume, to the end of the Republic, was afterwards published in 1771. Dr Goldsmith's preface was written in 1769. Mr Hooke's quarto edition has been republished in eleven volumes octavo.

by the quantity than the quality of its contents: others, however, who think more soberly, will agree, that in so extensive a field as that of the transactions of Rome, more judgment may be shewn by selecting what is important, than by adding what is obscure.

The history of this empire has been extended to six volumes of folio; and I aver, that with very little learning, it might be increased to sixteen more; but what would this be, but to load the subject with unimportant facts, and so to weaken the narration, that, like the empire described, it must necessarily sink beneath the weight of its own acquisitions?

But while I thus endeavoured to avoid prolixity, it was found no easy matter to prevent crowding the facts, and to give every narrative its proper play. In reality, no art can contrive to avoid opposite defects: he who indulges in minute particularities, will be often languid; and he who studies conciseness, will as frequently be dry and unentertaining. As it was my aim to comprise as much as possible in the smallest compass, it is feared the work will often be subject to the latter imputation; but it was impossible to furnish the public with a cheap Roman History in two volumes octavo, and at the same time to give all that warmth to the narrative, all those colourings to the description, which works of twenty times the bulk have room to exhibit. I shall be fully satisfied, therefore, if it furnishes an interest sufficient to allure the reader to the end; and this is a claim to which few abridgments can justly make pretensions.

To these objections there are some who may add, that I have rejected many of the modern improvements in Roman History, and that every character is left in full possession of that fame or infamy which it obtained from its contemporaries, or those who wrote immediately after.

I acknowledge the charge, for it appears now too late to rejudge the virtues or the vices of those men, who were but very incompletely known even to their own historians. The Romans, perhaps, upon many occasions, formed wrong ideas of virtue; but they were by no means so ignorant or abandoned in general, as not to give to their brightest characters the greatest share of their applause; and I do not know whether it be fair to try Pagan actions by the standard of Christian morality.

But whatever may be my execution of this work, I have very little doubt about the success of the undertaking: the subject is the noblest that ever employed human attention; and, instead of requiring a writer's aid, will even support him with its splendour. The Empire of the World, rising from the meanest origin, and growing great by a strict veneration for religion, and an implicit confidence in its commanders; continually changing the mode, but seldom the spirit, of its government; being a constitution, in which the military power, whether under the name of citizens or soldiers, almost always prevailed; adopting all the improvements of other nations with the most indefatigable industry, and submitting to be taught by those whom it afterwards subdued. This is a picture that must affect us, however it be disposed; these materials must have their value, under the hand of the meanest workman.

# THE PREFACE

TO THE

# HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCLXXI.

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FROM the favourable reception given to my Abridgment of Roman History, published some time since, several friends, and others whose business leads them to consult the wants of the public, have been induced to suppose, that an English History, written on the same plan, would be acceptable.

It was their opinion that we still wanted a work of this kind, where the narrative, though very concise, is not totally without interest, and the facts, though crowded, are yet distinctly seen.

The business of abridging the works of others has hitherto fallen to the lot of very dull men; and the art of blotting, which an eminent critic calls the most difficult of all others, has been usually practised by those who found themselves unable to write. Hence our abridgments are generally more tedious than the works from which they pretend to relieve us; and they have effectually embarrassed that road which they laboured to shorten.

As the present compiler starts with such humble competitors, it will scarcely be thought vanity in him, if he boasts himself their superior. Of the many abridgments of our own history hitherto published, none seems possessed of any share of merit or reputation; some have been written

in dialogue, or merely in the stiffness of an index, and some to answer the purposes of a party. A very small share of taste, therefore, was sufficient to keep the compiler from the defects of the one, and a very small share of philosophy from the misrepresentations of the other.

It is not easy, however, to satisfy the different expectations of mankind in a work of this kind, calculated for every apprehension, and on which all are, consequently, capable of forming some judgment. Some may say that it is too long to pass under the denomination of an abridgment; and others, that it is too dry to be admitted as a history: it may be objected, that reflection is almost entirely banished to make room for facts, and yet, that many facts are wholly omitted which might be necessary to be known. It must be confessed, that all those objections are partly true; for it is impossible, in the same work, at once to attain contrary advantages. The compiler, who is stinted in room, must often sacrifice interest to brevity; and, on the other hand, while he endeavours to amuse, must frequently transgress the limits to which his plan should confine him. Thus, all such as desire only amusement may be disgusted with his brevity, and such as seek for information may object to his displacing facts for empty description.

To attain the greatest number of advantages with the fewest inconveniences, is all that can be attained in an abridgment, the name of which implies imperfection. It will be sufficient, therefore, to satisfy the writer's wishes, if the present work be found a plain, unaffected narrative of facts, with just ornament enough to keep attention awake, and with reflection barely sufficient to set the reader upon thinking. Very moderate abilities were equal to such an undertaking, and it is hoped the performance will satisfy such as take up books to be informed or amused, without much considering who the writer is, or envying any success he may have had in a former compilation.

As the present publication is designed for the benefit of those who intend to lay a foundation for future study, or desire to refresh their memories upon the old, or who think a moderate share of history sufficient for the purposes of life, recourse has been had only to those authors which are best known, and those facts only have been selected which are allowed, on all hands, to be true. Were an epitome of history the field for displaying erudition, the author could

shew that he has read many books which others have neglected, and that he also could advance many anecdotes which are at present very little known. But it must be remembered, that all these minute recoveries could be inserted only to the exclusion of more material facts, which it would be unpardonable to omit. He foregoes, therefore, the petty ambition of being thought a reader of forgotten books; his aim being not to add to our present stock of history, but to contract it.

The books which have been used in this abridgment, are chiefly Rapin, Carte, Smollett, and Hume. They have each their peculiar admirers, in proportion as the reader is studious of historical antiquities, fond of minute anecdote, a warm partisan, or a deliberate reasoner. Of these, I have particularly taken Hume for my guide, as far as he goes; and it is but justice to say, that wherever I was obliged to abridge his work, I did it with reluctance, as I scarcely cut out a single line that did not contain a beauty.

But though I must warmly subscribe to the learning, elegance, and depth of Mr Hume's history, yet I cannot entirely acquiesce in his principles. With regard to religion, he seems desirous of playing a double part,—of appearing to some readers as if he reverenced, and to others as if he ridiculed it. He seems sensible of the political necessity of religion in every state; but, at the same time, he would every where insinuate, that it owes its authority to no higher an origin. Thus he weakens its influence, while he contends for its utility, and vainly hopes, that while free-thinkers shall applaud his scepticism, real believers will reverence him for his zeal.

In his opinions respecting government, perhaps also he may be sometimes reprehensible; but in a country like ours, where mutual contention contributes to the security of the constitution, it will be impossible for a historian, who attempts to have any opinion, to satisfy all parties. It is not yet decided in politics, whether the diminution of kingly power in England tends to increase the happiness or the freedom of the people. For my own part, from seeing the bad effects of the tyranny of the great in those republican states that pretend to be free, I cannot help wishing that our monarchs may still be allowed to enjoy the power of controlling the encroachments of the great at home.

A king may easily be restrained from doing wrong, as he is but one man; but if a number of the great are permitted to divide all authority, who can punish them if they abuse it? Upon this principle, therefore, and not from empty notions of divine or hereditary right, some may think I have leaned towards monarchy. But as, in the things I have hitherto written, I have neither allured the vanity of the great by flattery, nor satisfied the malignity of the vulgar by scandal, as I have endeavoured to get an honest reputation by liberal pursuits, it is hoped the reader will admit my impartiality.

# THE PREFACE

TO A

# HISTORY OF THE EARTH

AND

# ANIMATED NATURE.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCLXXIV.

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NATURAL HISTORY, considered in its utmost extent, comprehends two objects: First, that of discovering, ascertaining, and naming all the various productions of Nature; secondly, that of describing the properties, manners, and relations, which they bear to us, and to each other. The first, which is the most difficult part of the science, is systematical, dry, mechanical, and incomplete: The second is more amusing—exhibits new pictures to the imagination, and improves our relish for existence, by widening the prospect of Nature around us.

Both, however, are necessary to those who would understand this pleasing science in its utmost extent. The first care of every inquirer, no doubt, should be, to see, to visit, and examine every object, before he pretends to inspect its habitudes or its history. From seeing and observing the thing itself, he is most naturally led to speculate upon its uses, its delights, or its inconveniences.

Numberless obstructions, however, are found in this part of his pursuit, that frustrate his diligence and retard his curiosity. The objects in Nature are so many, and even those of the same kind are exhibited in such a variety of forms, that the inquirer finds himself lost in the exuberance

before him, and, like a man who attempts to count the stars unassisted by art, his powers are all distracted in barren superfluity.

To remedy this embarrassment, artificial systems have been devised, which, grouping into masses those parts of Nature more nearly resembling each other, refer the inquirer for the name of the single object he desires to know, to some one of those general distributions, where it is to be found by farther examination. If, for instance, a man should in his walks meet with an animal, the name, and consequently the history, of which he desires to know, he is taught, by systematic writers of Natural History, to examine its most obvious qualities, whether a quadruped, a bird, a fish, or an insect. Having determined it, for explanation sake, to be an insect, he examines whether it has wings; if he finds it possessed of these, he is taught to examine whether it has two or four; if possessed of four, he is taught to observe whether the two upper wings are of a shelly hardness, and serve as cases to those under them; if he finds the wings composed in this manner, he is then taught to pronounce, that this insect is one of the beetle kind. Of the beetle kind there are three different classes, distinguished from each other by their feelers; he examines the insect before him, and finds that the feelers are elevated, or knobbed, at the ends: of beetles, with feelers thus formed, there are ten kinds, and among those he is taught to look for the precise name of that which is before him. If, for instance, the knob be divided at the ends, and the belly be streaked with white, it is no other than the Dor, or the Maybug, an animal, the noxious qualities of which give it a very distinguished rank in the history of the insect creation. In this manner, a system of Natural History may, in some measure, be compared to a dictionary of words: both are solely intended to explain the names of things; but, with this difference, that in the dictionary of words we are led from the name of the thing to its definition, whereas, in the system of Natural History, we are led from the definition to find out the name.

Such are the efforts of writers, who have composed their works with great labour and ingenuity, to direct the learner in his progress through Nature, and to inform him of the name of every animal, plant, or fossil substance, that he

happens to meet with; but it would be only deceiving the reader to conceal the truth, which is, that books alone can never teach him this art in perfection; and the solitary student can never succeed. Without a master and a previous knowledge of many of the objects in Nature, his book will only serve to confound and disgust him. Few of the individual plants or animals that he may happen to meet with are in that precise state of health, or that exact period of vegetation, whence their descriptions were taken. Perhaps he meets the plant only with leaves, but the systematic writer has described it in flower; perhaps he meets the bird before it has moulted its first feathers, while the systematic description was made in the state of full perfection: he thus ranges, without an instructor, confused, and with sickening curiosity, from subject to subject, till at last he gives up the pursuit, in the multiplicity of his disappointments. Some practice, therefore, much instruction and diligent reading are requisite to make a ready and expert naturalist, who shall be able, even by the help of a system, to find out the name of every object he meets with. But when this tedious, though requisite part of study is attained, nothing but delight and variety attend the rest of his journey. Wherever he travels, like a man in a country where he has many friends, he meets with nothing but acquaintances and allurements in all stages of his way. The mere uninformed spectator passes on in gloomy solitude, but the naturalist, in every plant, in every insect, and every pebble, finds something to entertain his curiosity, and excite his speculation.

Hence it appears, that a system may be considered as a dictionary in the study of Nature. The ancients, however, who have all written most delightfully on this subject, seem entirely to have rejected those humble and mechanical helps of science. They contented themselves with seizing upon the great outlines of history, and passing over what was common as not worth the detail, they only dwelt upon what was new, great, and surprising, and sometimes even warmed the imagination at the expense of truth. Such of the moderns as revived this science in Europe, undertook the task more methodically, though not in a manner so pleasing. Aldrovandus, Gesner, and Johnson, seemed desirous of uniting the entertaining and rich descriptions of the ancients

with the dry and systematic arrangement of which they were the first projectors. This attempt, however, was extremely imperfect, as the great variety of Nature was, as yet, but very inadequately known. Nevertheless, by attempting to carry on both objects at once—first, of directing us to the name of the things, and then giving the detail of its history —they drew out their works into a tedious and unreasonable length; and thus mixing incompatible aims, they have left their labours rather to be occasionally consulted, than read with delight, by posterity.

The later moderns, with that good sense which they have carried into every other part of science, have taken a different method in cultivating Natural History. They have been content to give, not only the brevity, but also the dry and disgusting air of a dictionary to their systems. Ray, Klein, Brisson, and Linnæus, have had only one aim,—that of pointing out the object in Nature, of discovering its name, and where it was to be found in those authors that treated of it in a more prolix and satisfactory manner. Thus Natural History, at present, is carried on in two distinct and separate channels, the one serving to lead us to the thing, the other conveying the history of the thing as supposing it already known.

The following Natural History is written with only such an attention to system as serves to remove the reader's embarrassments, and allure him to proceed. It can make no pretensions in directing him to the name of every object he meets with: that belongs to works of a very different kind, and written with very different aims. It will fully answer my design, if the reader, being already possessed of the name of any animal, shall find here a short, though satisfactory history of its habitudes, its subsistence, its manners, its friendships and hostilities. My aim has been to carry on just as much method as was sufficient to shorten my descriptions by generalizing them, and never to follow order where the art of writing, which is but another name for good sense, informed me that it would only contribute to the reader's embarrassment

Still, however, the reader will perceive that I have formed a kind of system in the history of every part of Animated Nature, directing myself by the great and obvious distinctions that she herself seems to have made, which, though too few

to point exactly to the name, are yet sufficient to illuminate the subject, and remove the reader's perplexity. M. Buffon, indeed, who has brought greater talents to this part of learning than any other man, has almost entirely rejected method in classing quadrupeds. This, with great deference to such a character, appears to me running into the opposite extreme: and, as some moderns have of late spent much time, great pains, and some learning, all to very little purpose, in systematic arrangement, he seems so much disgusted by their trifling, but ostentatious efforts, that he describes his animals almost in the order they happen to come before him. This want of method seems to be a fault, but he can lose little by a criticism, which every dull man can make, or by an error in arrangement, from which the dullest are the most usually free.

In other respects, as far as this able philosopher has gone, I have taken him for my guide. The warmth of his style and the brilliancy of his imagination are inimitable. Leaving him, therefore, without a rival in these, and only availing myself of his information, I have been content to describe things in my own way; and though many of the materials are taken from him, yet I have added, retrenched, and altered as I thought proper. It was my intention at one time, whenever I differed from him, to have mentioned it at the bottom of the page; but this occurred so often, that I soon found it would look like envy, and might, perhaps, convict me of those very errors which I was wanting to lay upon him.

I have, therefore, as being every way his debtor, concealed my dissent, where my opinion was different; but wherever I borrow from him, I take care at the bottom of the page to express my obligations. But, though my obligations to this writer are many, they extend but to the smallest part of the work, as he has hitherto completed only the history of quadrupeds. I was, therefore, left to my reading alone, to make out the history of birds, fishes, and insects, of which the arrangement was so difficult, and the necessary information so widely diffused, and so obscurely related when found, that it proved by much the most laborious part of the undertaking. Thus, having made use of M. Buffon's lights in the first part of this work, I may, with some share of confidence, recommend it to the

public. But what shall I say of that part, where I have been entirely left without his assistance? As I would affect neither modesty nor confidence, it will be sufficient to say, that my reading upon this part of the subject has been very extensive; and that I have taxed my scanty circumstances in procuring books, which are on this subject, of all others, the most expensive. In consequence of this industry, I here offer a work to the public, of a kind which has never been attempted in ours, or any other modern language that I know of. The ancients, indeed, and Pliny in particular, have anticipated me in the present manner of treating Natural History. Like those historians who described the events of a campaign, they have not condescended to give the private particulars of every individual that formed the army; they were content with characterizing the generals, and describing their operations, while they left it to meaner hands to carry the muster-roll. I have followed their manner, rejecting the numerous fables which they adopted, and adding the improvements of the moderns, which are so numerous, that they actually make up the bulk of Natural History.

The delight which I found in reading Pliny, first inspired me with the idea of a work of this nature. Having a taste rather classical than scientific, and having but little employed myself in turning over the dry labours of modern system makers, my earliest intention was to translate this agreeable writer, and by the help of a commentary, to make my work as amusing as I could. Let us dignify Natural History ever so much with the grave appellation of a useful science, yet still we must confess, that it is the occupation of the idle and the speculative, more than of the ambitious part of mankind. My intention was to treat what I then conceived to be an idle subject, in an idle manner; and not to hedge round plain and simple narratives with hard words, accumulated distinctions, ostentatious learning, and disquisitions that produced no conviction. Upon the appearance, however, of M. Buffon's work, I dropped my former plan, and adopted the present, being convinced by his manner, that the best imitation of the ancients was to write from our own feelings, and to imitate nature.

It will be my chief pride, therefore, if this work may be found an innocent amusement for those who have nothing

else to employ them, or who require a relaxation from labour. Professed naturalists will, no doubt, find it superficial; and yet I should hope, that even these will discover hints and remarks, gleaned from various reading, not wholly trite or elementary: I would wish for their approbation. But my chief ambition is to drag up the obscure and gloomy learning of the cell to open inspection; to strip it from its garb of austerity, and to shew the beauties of that form, which only the industrious and the inquisitive have been hitherto permitted to approach.

# PREFACE

TO THE

# BEAUTIES OF ENGLISH POETRY.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCLXVII.

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My bookseller having informed me that there was no collection of English Poetry among us, of any estimation, I thought a few hours spent in making a proper selection would not be ill bestowed.

Compilations of this kind are chiefly designed for such as either want leisure, skill, or fortune, to choose for themselves; for persons whose professions turn them to different pursuits, or who, not yet arrived at sufficient maturity, require a guide to direct their application. To our youth, particularly, a publication of this sort may be useful; since, if compiled with any share of judgment, it may at once unite precept and example, shew them what is beautiful, and inform them why it is so: I therefore offer this, to the best of my judgment, as the best collection that has as yet appeared; though, as tastes are various, numbers will be of a very different opinion. Many, perhaps, may wish to see in it the poems of their favourite authors, others may wish that I had selected from works less generally read, and others still may wish that I had selected from their own. But my design was to give a useful, unaffected compilation; one that might tend to advance the reader's taste, and not impress him with exalted ideas of mine. Nothing is so common, and yet so absurd, as affectation in criticism. The desire of being thought to have a more

discerning taste than others, has often led writers to labour after error, and to be foremost in promoting deformity.

In this compilation I run but few risks of that kind; every poem here is well known, and possessed — or the public has been long mistaken — of peculiar merit: every poem has, as Aristotle expresses it, a beginning, a middle, and an end, in which, however trifling the rule may seem, most of the poetry in our language is deficient: I claim no merit in the choice, as it was obvious, for in all languages best productions are most easily found. As to the short introductory criticisms to each poem, they are rather designed for boys than men; for it will be seen that I declined all refinement, satisfied with being obvious and sincere. In short, if this work be useful in schools, or amusing in the closet, the merit all belongs to others; I have nothing to boast, and at best can expect, not applause, but pardon. OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

### THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

This seems to be Mr Pope's most finished production, and is, perhaps, the most perfect in our language. It exhibits stronger powers of imagination, more harmony of numbers, and a greater knowledge of the world, than any other of this poet's works: and it is probable, if our country were called upon to shew a specimen of their genius to foreigners, this would be the work fixed upon.

### IL PENSEROSO.

I have heard a very judicious critic say, that he had a higher idea of Milton's style in poetry, from the two following poems, than from his Paradise Lost. It is certain the imagination shewn in them is correct and strong. The introduction to both in irregular measure is borrowed from the Italians, and hurts an English ear.

### AN ELEGY, WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD.

This is a very fine poem, but overloaded with epithet. The heroic measure with alternate rhyme is very properly adapted to the solemnity of the subject, as it is the slowest

movement that our language admits of. The latter part of the poem is pathetic and interesting.

### LONDON, IN IMITATION OF THE THIRD SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

THIS poem of Mr Johnson's is the best imitation of the original that has appeared in our language, being possessed of all the force and satirical resentment of Juvenal. Imitation gives us a much truer idea of the ancients than even translation could do.

### THE SCHOOLMISTRESS, IN IMITATION OF SPENSER.

THIS poem is one of those happinesses in which a poet excels himself, as there is nothing in all Shenstone which any way approaches it in merit; and, though I dislike the imitations of our old English poets in general, yet on this minute subject, the antiquity of the style produces a very ludicrous solemnity.

### COOPER'S HILL.

THIS poem by Denham, though it may have been exceeded by later attempts in description, yet deserves the highest applause, as it far surpasses all that went before it: the concluding part, though a little too much crowded, is very masterly.

### ELOISA TO ABELARD.

THE harmony of numbers in this poem is very fine. It is rather drawn out to too tedious a length, although the passions vary with great judgment. It may be considered as superior to any thing in the epistolary way; and the many translations which have been made of it into the modern languages, are in some measure a proof of this.

### AN EPISTLE FROM MR PHILIPS, TO THE EARL OF DORSET.

THE opening of this poem is incomparably fine. The latter part is tedious and trifling.

### A LETTER FROM ITALY, TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE CHARLES LORD HALIFAX, 1701.*

FEW poems have done more honour to English genius than this. There is in it a strain of political thinking that was, at that time, new in our poetry. Had the harmony of this been equal to that of Pope's versification, it would be incontestably the first poem in our language; but there is a dryness in the numbers, which greatly lessens the pleasure excited both by the poet's judgment and imagination.

### ALEXANDER'S FEAST; OR, THE POWER OF MUSIC. AN ODE, IN HONOUR OF ST CECILIA'S DAY.

THIS ode has been more applauded, perhaps, than it has been felt; however, it is a very fine one, and gives its beauties rather at a third or fourth than at a first perusal.

### ODE FOR MUSIC ON ST CECILIA'S DAY.†

THIS ode has by many been thought equal to the former. As it is a repetition of Dryden's manner, it is so far inferior to him. The whole hint of Orpheus, with many of the lines, has been taken from an obscure Ode upon Music, published in Tate's *Miscellanies*.

### THE SHEPHERD'S WEEK, IN SIX PASTORALS.

THESE are Mr Gay's principal performance. They were originally intended, I suppose, as a burlesque on those of Philips; but, perhaps without designing it, he has hit the true spirit of pastoral poetry. In fact, he more resembles Theocritus than any other English pastoral writer whatsoever. There runs through the whole a strain of rustic pleasantry, which should ever distinguish this species of composition; but how far the antiquated expressions used here may contribute to the humour, I will not determine; for my own part, I could wish the simplicity were preserved, without recurring to such obsolete antiquity for the manner of expressing it.

* By Addison. — B.

† By Pope. — B.

### MAC FLECKNOE.

THE severity of this satire, and the excellence of its versification, give it a distinguished rank in this species of composition. At present, an ordinary reader would scarcely suppose that Shadwell, who is here meant by Mac Flecknoe, was worth being chastised; and that Dryden, descending to such game, was like an eagle stooping to catch flies.

The truth, however, is, Shadwell at one time held divided reputation with this great poet. Every age produces its fashionable dunces, who, by following the transient topic or humour of the day, supply talkative ignorance with materials for conversation.

### ON POETRY. A RHAPSODY.

HERE follows one of the best versified poems in our language, and the most masterly production of its author. The severity with which Walpole is here treated was in consequence of that minister's having refused to provide for Swift in England, when applied to for that purpose, in the year 1725 (if I remember right.) The severity of a poet, however, gave Walpole very little uneasiness. A man whose schemes, like this minister's, seldom extended beyond the exigency of the year, but little regarded the contempt of posterity.

### OF THE USE OF RICHES.

THIS poem, as Mr Pope tells us himself, cost much attention and labour; and, from the easiness that appears in it, one would be apt to think as much.

### FROM THE DISPENSARY. CANTO VI.

THIS sixth canto of the Dispensary, by Dr Garth, has more merit than the whole preceding part of the poem, and, as I am told, in the first edition of this work it is more correct than as here exhibited; but that edition I have not been able to find. The praises bestowed on this poem are more than have been given to any other: but our approbation at present is cooler, for it owed part of its fame to party.

### SELIM; OR, THE SHEPHERD'S MORAL.

THE following eclogues, written by Mr Collins, are very pretty: the images, it must be owned, are not very local; for the pastoral subject could not well admit of it. The description of Asiatic magnificence and manners is a subject as yet unattempted amongst us, and, I believe, capable of furnishing a great variety of poetical imagery.

### THE SPLENDID SHILLING.*

THIS is reckoned the best parody of Milton in our language: it has been an hundred times imitated without success. The truth is, the first thing in this way must preclude all future attempts, for nothing is so easy as to burlesque any man's manner, when we are once shewed the way.

### A PIPE OF TOBACCO, IN IMITATION OF SIX SEVERAL AUTHORS.

MR HAWKINS BROWNE, the author of these, as I am told, had no good original manner of his own, yet we see how well he succeeds when he turns an imitator; for the following are rather imitations than ridiculous parodies.

### A NIGHT PIECE ON DEATH.

THE great fault of this piece, written by Dr Parnell, is, that it is in eight syllable lines, very improper for the solemnity of the subject; otherwise, the poem is natural, and the reflections just.

### A FAIRY TALE. BY DR PARNELL.

NEVER was the old manner of speaking more happily applied, or a tale better told, than this.

### PALEMON AND LAVINIA.

MR THOMSON, though in general a verbose and affected poet, has told this story with unusual simplicity: it is

* By J. Phillips. — B.

rather given here for being much esteemed by the public than by the editor.

### THE BASTARD.

ALMOST all things written from the heart, as this certainly was, have some merit. The poet here describes sorrows and misfortunes which were by no means imaginary; and thus there runs a truth of thinking through this poem, without which it would be of little value, as Savage is, in other respects, but an indifferent poet.

### THE POET AND HIS PATRON.

MR MORE was a poet that never had justice done him while living; there are few of the moderns have a more correct taste, or a more pleasing manner of expressing their thoughts. It was upon these fables he chiefly founded his reputation, yet they are by no means his best production.

### AN EPISTLE TO A LADY.

THIS little poem, by Mr Nugent, is very pleasing. The easiness of the poetry, and the justice of the thoughts, constitute its principal beauty.

### HANS CARVEL.

THIS bagatelle, for which, by the bye, Mr Prior has got his greatest reputation, was a tale told in all the old Italian collections of jests, and borrowed from thence by Fontaine. It had been translated once or twice before into English, yet was never regarded till it fell into the hands of Mr Prior.

A strong instance how much every thing is improved in the hands of a man of genius.

### BAUCIS AND PHILEMON.*

THIS poem is very fine, and, though in the same strain with the preceding, is yet superior.

* By Swift. — B.

TO THE EARL OF WARWICK, ON THE DEATH OF MR ADDISON.

THIS elegy (by Mr Tickell) is one of the finest in our language: there is so little new that can be said upon the death of a friend, after the complaints of Ovid and the Latin Italians in this way, that one is surprised to see so much novelty in this to strike us, and so much interest to affect.

COLIN AND LUCY. A BALLAD.

THROUGH all Tickell's works there is a strain of ballad-thinking, if I may so express it; and in this professed ballad he seems to have surpassed himself. It is, perhaps, the best in our language in this way.

THE TEARS OF SCOTLAND.

THIS ode, by Dr Smollett, does rather more honour to the author's feelings than his taste. The mechanical part, with regard to numbers and language, is not so perfect as so short a work as this requires; but the pathetic it contains, particularly in the last stanza but one, is exquisitely fine.

ON THE DEATH OF THE LORD PROTECTOR.

OUR poetry was not quite harmonized in Waller's time; so that this, which would be now looked upon as a slovenly sort of versification, was, with respect to the times in which it was written, almost a prodigy of harmony. A modern reader will chiefly be struck with the strength of thinking, and the turn of the compliments bestowed upon the usurper. Every body has heard of the answer our poet made Charles II, who asked him how his poem upon Cromwell came to be finer than his panegyric upon himself. "Your majesty," replies Waller, "knows that poets always succeed best in fiction."

THE STORY OF PHŒBUS AND DAPHNE, APPLIED.*

THE French claim this as belonging to them. To whomsoever it belongs, the thought is finely turned.

* By Swift. — B.

### NIGHT THOUGHTS. BY DR YOUNG.

THESE seem to be the best of the collection, from whence only the two first are taken. They are spoken of differently, either with exaggerated applause or contempt, as the reader's disposition is either turned to mirth or melancholy.

### SATIRE I.

YOUNG's Satires were in higher reputation when published than they stand in at present. He seems fonder of dazzling than pleasing; of raising our admiration for his wit, than our dislike of the follies he ridicules.

### A PASTORAL BALLAD.

THE ballads of Mr Shenstone are chiefly commended for the natural simplicity of the thoughts, and the harmony of the versification. However, they are not excellent in either.

### PHŒBE. A PASTORAL.

THIS, by Dr Byrom, is a better effort than the preceding.

### A SONG.

"Despairing beside a clear stream."

THIS, by Mr Rowe, is better than any thing of the kind in our language.

### AN ESSAY ON POETRY.

THIS work, by the Duke of Buckingham, is enrolled among our great English productions. The precepts are sensible, the poetry not indifferent, but it has been praised more than it deserves.

### CADENUS AND VANESSA.

THIS is thought one of Dr Swift's correctest pieces; its chief merit, indeed, is the elegant ease with which a story, but ill conceived in itself, is told.

### ALMA; OR, THE PROGRESS OF THE MIND.

Πάντα γέλως, καὶ πάντα κόνις, καὶ πάντα τὸ μηδέν·
Πάντα γὰρ ἐξ ἀλόγων ἐστὶ τὰ γιγνόμενα.

WHAT Prior meant by this poem I can't understand: by the Greek motto to it one would think it was either to laugh at the subject or his reader. There are some parts of it very fine; and let them save the badness of the rest.

# PREFACE

TO

# A COLLECTION OF POEMS,

## FOR YOUNG LADIES,

### DEVOTIONAL, MORAL, AND ENTERTAINING.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCLXVII.

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DOCTOR FORDYCE's excellent Sermons for Young Women, in some measure gave rise to the following compilation. In that work, where he so judiciously points out all the defects of female conduct to remedy them, and all the proper studies which they should pursue, with a view to improvement, Poetry is one to which he particularly would attach them. He only objects to the danger of pursuing this charming study through all the immoralities and false pictures of happiness with which it abounds, and thus becoming the martyr of innocent curiosity.

In the following compilation care has been taken to select, not only such pieces as innocence may read without a blush, but such as will even tend to strengthen that innocence. In this little work a lady may find the most exquisite pleasure, while she is at the same time learning the duties of life; and, while she courts only entertainment, be deceived into wisdom. Indeed, this would be too great a boast in the preface to any original work; but here it can be made with safety, as every poem in the following collection would singly have procured an author great reputation.

They are divided into Devotional, Moral, and Entertaining, thus comprehending the three great duties of life,—that which we owe to God, to our neighbour, and to ourselves.

In the first part, it must be confessed, our English poets have not very much excelled. In that department, namely, the praise of our Maker, by which poetry began, and from which it deviated by time, we are most faultily deficient. There are one or two, however, particularly the Deity, by Mr Boyse; a poem, when it first came out, that lay for some time neglected, till introduced to public notice by Mr Hervey and Mr Fielding. In it the reader will perceive many striking pictures, and perhaps glow with a part of that gratitude which seems to have inspired the writer.

In the Moral part I am more copious, from the same reason, because our language contains a large number of the kind. Voltaire, talking of our poets, gives them the preference in moral pieces to those of any other nation; and indeed no poets have better settled the bounds of duty, or more precisely determined the rules for conduct in life, than ours. In this department the fair reader will find the Muse has been solicitous to guide her, not with the allurements of a syren, but the integrity of a friend.

In the Entertaining part my greatest difficulty was what to reject. The materials lay in such plenty that I was bewildered in my choice; in this case, then, I was solely determined by the tendency of the poem; and where I found one, however well executed, that seemed in the least tending to distort the judgment, or inflame the imagination, it was excluded without mercy. I have here and there, indeed, when one of particular beauty offered with a few blemishes, lopped off the defects, and thus, like the tyrant,* who fitted all strangers to the bed he had prepared for them, I have inserted some, by first adapting them to my plan: we only differ in this, that he mutilated with a bad design, I from motives of a contrary nature.

It will be easier to condemn a compilation of this kind, than to prove its inutility. While young ladies are readers, and while their guardians are solicitous that they shall only read the best books, there can be no danger of a work of this kind being disagreeable. It offers, in a very small

* Procrustes. — B.

compass, the very flowers of our poetry, and that of a kind adapted to the sex supposed to be its readers. Poetry is an art, which no young lady can, or ought to be wholly ignorant of. The pleasure which it gives, and indeed the necessity of knowing enough of it to mix in modern conversation, will evince the usefulness of my design, which is to supply the highest and the most innocent entertainment at the smallest expense; as the poems in this collection, if sold singly, would amount to ten times the price of what I am able to afford the present.

# INTRODUCTION TO A SURVEY

OF

# EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY.

[This Introduction is here printed for the first time with Goldsmith's Prefaces, a distinction which it certainly merits on account of its excellence. The work to which it properly belongs is little known:—it is, indeed, superficial; but the author displays in it his usual art of communicating his knowledge in a pleasing manner; and the *Survey of Experimental Philosophy* may still be consulted with advantage by those whose acquaintance with science is too limited to enable them to understand more scientific works. — B.

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In order to explain all the appearances of nature, the ancients usually considered man as a being newly introduced into the world, ignorant of all he saw, and astonished with every object around him. In this great variety, the first efforts of such a being would be to procure subsistence, and, careless of the causes of things, to rest contented with their enjoyment.

The next endeavour of such a creature would be to know by what means he became blest with such a luxuriance of possession; he feels the grateful vicissitudes of day and night—perceives the difference of seasons—he finds some things noxious to his health, and others grateful to his appetite: he would therefore eagerly desire to be informed how these things assumed such qualities, and would himself, from want of experience, form some wild conjecture concerning them. He would, for instance, assert, as the primeval ancients have done, that the sun was made of red-hot iron, that at night it sunk into the sea to rest

from its journey; that summer issued through a chasm made in the skies for that purpose: and in this manner he would account for every other appearance that excited his curiosity.

Succeeding observations would, however, soon contradict his first prejudices, and he would begin to treasure up a history of the changes, that every object served to work either upon himself or upon each other. Thus his mind would become stored with the appearances of natural bodies, and with useful observations upon their effects. The number of these observations would in time arise to a considerable amount, and this would once more induce him to reduce them into form; and, by combining them, to arrive at their causes. From hence new systems would be erected, more plausible indeed than those already made by savage man, but still, from a want of a sufficient number of materials, extremely defective: so that fancy would be obliged to supply the greatest share of the fabric.

At length, after frequently experiencing the futility of system, man would be obliged to acknowledge his ignorance of the causes of most appearances, and now, grown more modest, would set himself down, not only to collect new observations, in order to enlarge his history of nature, but in a manner to torture nature by experiments, and oblige her to give up those secrets, which she had hitherto kept concealed. Several of these newly acquired observations being thus added to the former obvious amount, would at length form the groundwork of a system; and, by comparing each part, and uniting the whole, man would at last begin to discover the simplicity of nature under all her seeming variety.

Such is the progress of natural philosophy in the human mind, which, from enjoyment, proceeds to conjecture; from thence to observation of facts, which, from their paucity, give birth to hypothetical system, which is succeeded by experimental investigation, and this at length gives rise to the true experimental system, which, though still defective, is yet built upon the surest foundation.

Experimental philosophers, therefore, or those who endeavour to discover the hidden operations of nature, and find out new properties by trials made upon her, are the only sect from whom any expectations are to be had of advancing this science, and making us intimately acquainted

with whatever we see. We should leave to the Platonists their properties of number and geometrical figures; to the Peripatetics their privations, elementary virtues, occult qualities, sympathies, antipathies, and faculties; to the Mechanists their matter, motion, subtle particles, and actions of effluvia, and only follow where experience shall guide us.

The ancients seem to have been but little acquainted with the arts of making experiments for the investigation of natural knowledge. It is true, they treasured up numberless observations, which nature offered to their view, or which chance might have given them an opportunity of seeing; but they seldom went farther than barely the natural history of every object: they seldom laboured, by variously combining natural bodies, if I may so express it, to create new appearances, in order to afford matter for speculation.

They were but little employed in thus diving into the secret recesses of nature: they read the book as it lay before them; but then they read with great assiduity. Many facts which they have advanced, and which had at first been denied by the moderns, have been afterwards found to be true. They only sought for such qualities in nature as might be useful to the arts. Little concerned as to satisfying mere curiosity, they considered it as an intellectual pleasure, and only sought to gratify it by mere intellectual speculations.

But whatever assistance they might have given to real philosophy, the obscure ages, which succeeded theirs, seemed not disposed to avail themselves of their researches. In these times of darkness, they rested perfectly satisfied with words instead of things, — adopted the vain speculations of antiquity, and added many more of their own. Yet, in the midst of this barbarous period, there arose a man, who seemed formed to enlighten his contemporaries, if the darkness had not been too great for any single luminary to dispel. Roger Bacon, an Englishman and a monk of the twelfth century, pursued the true method of investigating nature: he even ventured to ridicule the unmeaning philosophy of Aristotle, or rather of his commentators; made several experiments in optics, chemistry, and every part of natural knowledge; and, even at that early period, found out the use of gunpowder. The only recompense he had from his ignorant contemporaries was to be accused

of magic, and to have his works despised by such as never read them, or were incapable of comprehending them if they had.

The remarkable men, who succeeded Bacon in the pursuit of natural knowledge, studied it rather as chemists than philosophers: they applied themselves to the analyzation of particular bodies by fire, and to their uses in medicine, rather than to consider nature with a general view, to the discovery of the laws of her operations. Though they were rich in a variety of curious and useful discoveries, yet they knew nothing, for instance, of the laws of motion, or the properties of fluids, upon a knowledge of which the whole system of modern philosophy is founded.

The great man, to whom experimental philosophy next owed its obligations, was of the same name and the same country with the former. Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, first discovered the general principles, which were to serve as guides in the study of nature. He first proposed the usefulness of experiments alone, and hinted at several, which others afterwards made with success. He set out with taking a general survey of natural knowledge, divided it into its parts, inquired into the degree of perfection at that time attained by each. He considered philosophy as only an instrument, which made us better or happier; and, an enemy to all systems, exhorted men to study only what was useful. This great man having thus broke through many of the chains in which true science was bound, was still deterred from attempting others, which prejudice and authority seemed to fasten.

In this review of experimental philosophy, Des Cartes must not be passed over, although mentioned rather for his fame than his services. He contributed not a little to explode the errors of scholastic philosophy; but, unfortunately, it was to substitute his own. Though he was very capable of reasoning closely, yet, to accommodate his philosophy to the multitude, he drew up rather a romance than a system. Like all works that strike the imagination, it pleased while new; but, wanting the basis of reason, the whole fabric has long since fallen to the ground. As his hypothesis, however, has been once embraced by the greatest part of Europe, and still continues to have its partisans, it may not be amiss to give the learner a superficial idea of it.

It is on all hands acknowledged, that the most obvious appearances in nature are those which are least understood. Why, for instance, a stone, when thrown upward, should fall to the ground back again, and not continue to go up to the skies, is one of those difficulties, which, though disregarded by the vulgar, has puzzled the philosophers of every age. To express it more philosophically,—the descent of bodies to the surface of the earth is a phenomenon long sought after without success, and for the cause of which Des Cartes thus attempted to account. "We are certain, from astronomical observations," says he, "that the earth turns continually round upon itself, like a top, with a very rapid motion, carrying with it every thing immediately attached to its surface. But, though the earth thus moves with great swiftness, yet there is diffused around it a very subtle matter, which, as it has less weight than the earth, has therefore much greater velocity, the lightest bodies being the most easily moved: so that this subtle matter whirls round the earth infinitely faster than the earth itself can move. If, therefore, a stone is thrown from the earth's surface upward into this subtle matter, it must soon be pressed downward by it to the earth again, in the same manner as if a person, in the midst of a whirlpool, should throw a plank from him into the surrounding current; this plank would be soon driven back to him in the centre again by the circulating fluid, and he could never by such means get free. In this way every one of the planets may be considered with its vortex or whirlpool of subtle matter turning round it, and pressing all the bodies that are thrown upward back upon its surface." Besides these particular vortexes in which each moved, they were represented as having altogether one common vortex, which regulated their motions, and in this manner all their revolutions were in the gross accounted for. An hypothesis thus formed by the fancy was liable to a thousand objections, which were drawn from experience. Each of these, the followers of Des Cartes endeavoured to answer, till at length the whole philosophical machine was found so much clogged, that it became utterly disregarded by its warmest asserters: they therefore quitted a fortress, which they found could be assailed on every side with advantage.

But, notwithstanding all his errors, he diffused a passion for natural knowledge, and excited a spirit of inquiry, which

insensibly spread itself over Europe. The academy of Cimento at Florence, Boyle, Mariotte, Torricelli, Huygens, and Pascal, all improved philosophy by producing new objects of speculation. The societies of London and Paris still farther enlarged the landmarks of the science, and adopted the experimental methods of investigating nature. Though they had not yet arrived at the true system of nature, yet they might justly be said to be on the road.

At length Newton appeared, who first effected what his predecessors had hitherto only aimed at; namely, the application of geometry to nature, and, by uniting experiments with mathematical calculations, discovered new laws of nature, in a manner at once precise, profound, and amazing. Whatever all his predecessors, from time immemorial, had handed down concerning this science, does not amount to the tenth part of the discoveries of the English philosopher only. Equally conspicuous for his researches in optics, as for his system of the world, he had the pleasure of seeing his countrymen at once seize the truths he revealed to mankind. France, for some years, rather through national prejudice than philosophical conviction, opposed his fame, and in their academies and universities continued to teach the opinions of their countryman Des Cartes. Truth, however, at length prevailed: the contemporaries of Newton, who might have opposed his merits from envy, being deceased, the succeeding generation adopted his discoveries, and his system now prevails in every polite part of Europe.

Thus far we have seen experimental philosophy continuing to improve; but it will be but justice to observe, that the successors of Newton have not since his time made that rapid progress in this science that was once expected. This judicious philosopher knew precisely those parts of nature which admitted of geometrical applications. Nothing could be more happily conceived than his applying mathematical calculations to the heavenly bodies, upon which no natural experiments could be made, and the greatness of whose bulks and distances could more easily be measured by numbers, and conceal the minute deviations of nature from universal theorems.

His followers, much less judicious, have expected more from geometry than the art could grant; and, by erroneous imitation, have applied it to parts of nature which are incapable of admitting mathematical calculations. Thus

we have seen the force of muscular motion determined by numbers; the velocity with which the blood circulates calculated with geometrical precision; the fermentation of liquors has undergone the same scrutiny; and the most inconstant appearances of nature have been determined with inflexible demonstration.

It would be absurd to deny the great use of geometry in natural inquiries; but sure it may be said, without offence, that mathematicians expect more from its assistance, than they have been hitherto able to find. If we expect to make discoveries in nature merely by the helps of geometry, it is probable we shall be disappointed, as this art is rather fitted to give precision to discoveries already made, than to conduct us to new. Though it may serve as a vehicle, through which to deliver our discoveries to others, yet it is seldom by this method that we have happened upon them ourselves.

However this may be, it is rather to accidental experiments, than to painful inductions, that we are indebted for the modern discoveries in this science. Electricity, magnetism, and congelation, have been rather the result of accident than of investigation. Of these we know but some of the properties; nor have we any substantial theory as yet concerning them. In fact, mankind at last begin to perceive, that our knowledge of nature is much more limited than we lately imagined it to be. In the last age it was fashionable to suppose, that we could satisfactorily account for every appearance around us: at present, the real philosopher seems to rest satisfied, that there is much in this science yet to be discovered, and that what he already knows bears no proportion to what remains unknown. He no longer, therefore, pretends to assign causes for all things, but waits till time, industry, or accident, shall bring new lights to guide the inquiry.

# APPENDIX.

# APPENDIX.

We have mentioned in another place, (see vol. i. p. 106,) the slight dispute between Goldsmith and Dr Percy regarding the originality of the beautiful ballad of *Edwin and Angelina*, the hint of which was supposed to have been taken from the *Friar of Orders Grey*. A still heavier charge of plagiarism was made a few years afterwards in the *Quiz*, a collection of essays *by a Society of Gentlemen*, where the author of the *Hermit* is broadly accused of taking the whole ballad from a French original. The Monthly Reviewers, in a short notice of this obscure collection of essays, in their number for September, 1797, insert the French poem. It bears the title of *Raimond et Angeline*, and is a very pretty *translation* of Goldsmith's ballad, slightly curtailed, and adapted to the French taste. That our readers may have an opportunity of judging of the merit of this little poem, we shall insert it, together with the controversy to which it gave rise.

## RAIMOND ET ANGELINE.

" Entens ma voix gémissante,
Habitant de ces vallons!
Guide ma marche tremblante
Qui se perd dans les buissons:
N'est il pas quelque chaumière
Dans le fond de ce reduit,
Où je vois une lumière
Perce l'ombre de la nuit?"

" Mon fils!" dit le Solitaire,
" Crains ce feu qui te seduit;
C'est une vapeur légère,
Elle egare qui la suit.
Viens dans ma cellule obscure,
Je t'offrirai de bon cœur,
Mon pain noir, ma couche dure,
Mon repos, et mon bonheur."

Ces accens faisant sourire
Le Voyageur attendri;
Un secret penchant l'attire
Vers le bienfaisant abri;
Un toit de chaume le couvre;
Et l'Hermite hospitalier
Pousse un loquet qui les ouvre
L'humble porte du foyer.

Devant lui son chien folatre
Et partage sa gaieté;
Le grillon chante dans l'atre;
Etincellant de clarté.
Mais helas! rien n'a des charmes
Pour son hôte malheureux,
Rien ne put tarir les larmes
Qui s'echappent de ses yeux.

L'Hermite voit sa tristesse
Et voudroit la soulager;
" D'où vient l'ennui qui te presse?"
Dit il au jeune etranger;
" Est-ce une amitié trahie?
Est-ce un amour dedaigné?
Ou la misère ennemie,
Qui te rende infortuné?

" Helas! tous les biens du monde
Sont peu dignes de nos vœux;
Et l'insensé qui s'y joint
Est plus meprisable qu'eux.
L'amitié, s'il en est une,
N'est qu'un fantôme imposteur;
Un vent qui suit la fortune,
Et s'éloigne du malheur.

" L'amour est plus vain encore
C'est un eclat emprunté;
Un nom faux dont se decore
L'ambitieuse beauté:
On ne voit l'amour fidelle,
S'il daigne quitter les cieux,
Qu'en nid de la tourterelle
Qu'il échauffe de ses feux.

" Va, crois moi, deviens plus sage,
Meprise un sex trompeur!"
L'hôte emu de ce langage
S'embellit par sa rougeur;
Son front où la candeur brille,
Les yeux, sa bouche, et son sein,
Font reconnoitre une fille
Dans le charmant Pelerin.

" Voyez," dit elle, " une amante
Qui cherche en vain le repos;
Voyez une fille errante
Dont l'amour cause les maux:
Long tems superbe inhumaine
Ignorant du prix d'un cœur,
A fuir une tendre chaine
J'avois mit tout mon bonheur.

" Dans cette foule volage
Qui venoit grossir mon cœur,
Raimond m'offroit son hommage,
Sans m'oser parler d'amour:
Le ciel etoit dans son ame,
Le lis qui s'ouvre au matin
N'est pas plus pur que la flame
Qui s'allumoit dans son sein.

" Sa naissance etoit commune,
Raimond sans bien, sans emploi,
N'avoit qu'un cœur pour fortune—
Mais ce cœur fut tout a moi:
Las de mon ingratitude
Il me quitte pour toujours;
Et dans une solitude
Il alla finir ses jours.

" Maintenant désespérée
Victime d'un fol orgueil,
Je m'en vais dans la contrée
Qui renferme son cercueil:
Là, je n'ai point d'autre envie
Que de mourir à ses pieds,
Payant des jours de ma vie
Ceux qu'il m'a sacrifié."

" Non! non!" dit Raimond lui-même,
En la serrant dans ses bras,
" Non, celui que ton cœur aime
N'a point subi trépas;
Regarde, O mon Angeline,
Cher objet de mes regrets,
Regarde, O fille divine,
Cet amant qui tu pleurois."

Angeline est dans l'ivresse
Sa transport coupe sa voix :
" Ah !" dit elle, avec tendresse,
" Est ce toi que je revois?
Vivons, mourons l'un pour l'autre,
Il ne faut plus nous quitter ;
Qu 'un seul trépas soit le nôtre
Qu'aurons nous a regretter ! "

" We insert the whole of the pretended original," say the Monthly Reviewers, " as we conceive that it will give great pleasure to our readers: but, in transcribing the poem, which is said to be taken from an old and scarce French novel, the title of which is *Les Deux Habitants de Lozanne*, we feel some apprehension of mistakes, from the general inaccuracy which we have observed to prevail in the printing of the volume before us, as the orthography is in an uncommon degree perverted.

" We have endeavoured to correct many of the errors of the printed copy, and to give the reader this charming and simple ballad as correctly as the various faults to which we have alluded would permit us, by inserting some conjectural emendations.

" After all, it is possible (we mean barely possible) that Goldsmith was innocent of the theft with which he is here charged. We recollect a report, at the time when the Vicar of Wakefield was first published, that the favourite ballad in question was *not* the composition of Goldsmith ; and that it was given to him by an ingenious friend, whose name was then freely mentioned, but which we now spare to repeat, from respect to a character which is deservedly held in high estimation in the republic of letters.

" With respect to the French composition, some have even questioned its originality ; alleging, that it is not *the French* of the age in which it is said to have been written ; but we have not leisure to undertake, on this occasion, the office of detection."

The following letter appeared in the *Review* for November of the same year : —

" TO THE AUTHORS OF THE MONTHLY REVIEW.

" You owe the trouble of a letter from an unknown correspondent to a motive which you have too much candour not to approve. The subject requires no farther introduction, and will speak for itself.

" In your account of the *Quiz*, (Review for September, Article 66,) you insert a French poem, given by the authors as the original of Goldsmith's *Edwin and Angelina*, and which seems to be considered by you as such. As the English poet, unfortunately for the world and himself, cannot assert his claim to his own work, it is a necessary duty of an old acquaintance and friend of his to do it for him.

" To judge only from internal evidence, there is no need of very profound judgment to discover at once that the French is a translation from the English ; and as it is possible that the translator is living,

and may read this, he would do better to acknowledge his imitation, than take to himself the silent enjoyment of an honour not his due —perhaps an honour unsought and unapproved.

"As I would wish this point should be determined upon principles of taste and judgment, (for the assertion of an anonymous correspondent, that other proof could be obtained, cannot be supposed to have much weight,) it may be observed, that the title of '*Raymond* and Angelina' does as well for an English as a French poem; but as '*Edwin* and Angelina' would not be so well in French, the translator rejected the original title and adopted another. Let it also be remembered that the French were once in the habit of making popular English poems of this kind their own. *Old Robin Grey* was translated by Florian; to whom, from mere circumstances, I should attribute the poem in question: but I may be mistaken, and, as is above mentioned, the author may be living to own his agreeable imitation, which I should be glad to see without the faults that at present disguise it.*

"My zeal for the honour of an original English poet has occasioned the above remarks, which I have purposely contracted, out of a proper regard to your limits for insertion."

To this letter the Reviewers append the following note: —

"Begging our correspondent's pardon, we did *not* consider the French poem as really the original of Goldsmith's *Edwin and Angelina*. The parenthesis, ("barely possible,") in our observation, pointed obliquely another way; and perhaps our delicacy has occasioned our being misunderstood: but we did apprehend that we had sufficiently manifested our scepticism, without presuming to *decide* on a point which required more examination than we had leisure to afford to the subject. On the whole, our ideas and those of our correspondent seem to be nearly the same. We shall be happy to hear again from him, on any future occasion."

With this the controversy seems to have rested for some time, till it was revived in the *European Magazine* for April, 1812, in the following letter, the writer of which had probably never seen the papers in the *Monthly Review*, as he quotes the French ballad, without any reference to the *Quiz*, the *Review*, or the work of M. Leonard, from a volume called *Tales of Other Realms*. Besides, his edition slightly differs from that given in the *Review*.

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE EUROPEAN MAGAZINE.

"SIR, —Much has been said lately on the claim of Dr Goldsmith and of Dr Percy to the original merit of their respective poems, the *Hermit* and the *Friar of Orders Grey*.

* The writer probably alludes to the numerous blunders in spelling which the Reviewers omitted to correct when they reprinted the poem. — B.

"When Dr Goldsmith was collecting materials for his *Traveller*, he, most probably, met with the ballad that gave birth to his *Hermit*, — *Raimond et Angeline*, of which it is a fine translation, and not an original poem, nor an imitation of Mr Percy's *Friar of Orders Grey*.

"This original, of higher antiquity by a century than its translation, may be seen at length in a volume of travels, denominated by its author *Tales of other Realms*, and which, by accident, fell into my hands this morning: the prototype was manifest to me on the first reading; although the author of the book which contains it, did not seem aware, when he gave it to the public, that it should have any other claim to notice than its intrinsic beauty.

"It were desirable that you would give it a place in your pages, together with a free translation, stanza by stanza, that the public might be enabled to judge of its being the true parent of the *Hermit*. — And I am, sir, your obedient servant, AN IDLER."

"BATH, *March* 3, 1812."

This letter was answered rather angrily, by another *Idler*, in the number for May of the same Magazine, who reprinted a former note by him, which appeared in the *Monthly Review* for 1798. With this letter, which appears to be sufficiently conclusive on the subject, we close this curious controversy.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EUROPEAN MAGAZINE.

"SIR, — I must confess I was not a little offended at the letter signed 'An Idler,' inserted in your last Magazine. The writer has, indeed, written a letter in character, for it is a very idle one. I regret my language is not more urbane; but when you come to the close of this letter, I flatter myself you will perceive it is not improper. If the productions of deceased authors are to be liable to be accused of plagiarism, on weak surmises and false statements, it would be difficult to mark where this evil is to end.

"'The Idler' sets off by informing us, that Dr Goldsmith's popular ballad of *Edwin and Angelina* is 'not an original poem, but a fine imitation;' that 'the original is of higher antiquity by a *century* than its translation;' and that 'this original may be seen at length in a volume of travels, denominated by its author, *Tales of other Realms*,' which 'The Idler' has transcribed for you. With these travels I am unacquainted; I imagine this book to be some modern publication — however, with the writer of those travels I have no quarrel; for, though he gives the poem in question, we are told he raises no accusation against Goldsmith.

"In the year 1798, I had to perform the duty I am now doing to the manes of Goldsmith. A certain publication, entitled 'The Quiz, by a Society of Gentlemen, Vol. I.' for the world was fortunately deprived of a second, presented us with the same poem, but in a manner which evidently betrayed a purposed design to deceive the world, and to injure our favourite poet; for the *Quiz* told us, that 'it was taken from an *old* and *scarce* French novel, entitled *Les deux Habitans de*

*Lausanne.*' On this subject I addressed a note to the Monthly Review, which may be found in the Review for July, 1798, and which I will now transcribe, as 'The Idler' may be answered as the *Quiz* has been, and retreat from the field in silence.

"In the Review for September 1797, p. 113, in the critique on a publication entitled the *Quiz*, is given a French poem, which the writers have ventured to tell the public is taken 'from an old and scarce French novel,' and which, they have the effrontery to add, is the original of Goldsmith's charming ballad. The title which they give to the work is, *Les deux Habitans de Lausanne.*

"For the honour of Goldsmith, and the love of truth, I beg leave to inform you, that the poem, literally as those writers have given it, is to be found in so modern a book as *Lettres de deux Amans, Habitans de Lyon*, by M. Leonard, 1792. Their accusation of Goldsmith being, probably, the only part of this work which has been deemed worth notice, and much inquiry having been ineffectually made for a book under the title which they have given to it, this notice may not be unnecessary.

"M. Leonard is the author of some pastorals, and a young writer; and, probably, had he seen our English journals, would have corrected the ignorance or malignity of these anonymous writers.

"What particularly angered me at the time, was the deception practised on the reader: the writers of the *Quiz* were transcribing a French translation of Goldsmith's poem, published only four or five years from the time they were writing, and had the audacity to call it 'an old and scarce French novel,' and now our 'Idler' calls this poem of *Raimond et Angeline*, 'this original, of higher antiquity by a *century* than its translation,' — meaning, by the translation, Goldsmith's *Edwin and Angelina.* Where did the 'Idler' derive his authority? No one who has the slightest knowledge of the French language, could ever suppose that a single verse of M. Leonard's poem was ancient: it is the most modern French. A few years ago, it was a fashionable employment among the young French poets, to imitate or translate our little ballad poems, to which they gave the title of 'Romances.' *Old Robin Grey* was translated by Florian. I could adduce more instances, but you can fill your pages with more entertaining matter. — And I, too, am AN IDLER."

"*May* 2, 1812."

## EPITAPH ON EDWARD PURDON. — (See vol. i. p. 138.)

THE thought of this epitaph is borrowed from the following one by Swift: —

Well then, poor G—— lies under ground!
So there 's an end of honest Jack:
So little justice here he found,
'Tis ten to one he 'll ne'er come back.

## LOCALITY OF AUBURN.

It has been disputed among the admirers of Goldsmith, whether the scene of the *Deserted Village* is laid in England or in Ireland, and quotations from the poem itself have been adduced, in support of their opinion, by both parties. The truth seems to be, however, that while the poem generally refers to England,—and, indeed, there are particular allusions which cannot possibly apply to Ireland,—the author, at the same time, naturally referred for his village description to the locality most familiar to his memory, and most intimately connected with his fondest associations. That his reflections refer to England is evident, from his dedication to Sir Joshua Reynolds, where he says, "I know you will object, (and indeed several of our best and wisest friends concur in the opinion,) that the depopulation it deplores is no where to be seen, and the disorders it laments are only to be found in the poet's own imagination. To this I can scarcely make any other answer, than that I sincerely believe what I have written; that I have taken all possible pains, in my country excursions, for these four or five years past, to be certain of what I allege; and that all my views and inquiries have led me to believe those miseries real, which I here attempt to display."

That in his particular description of Auburn he drew from a scene endeared to him by many fond recollections, and that Auburn and Lishoy are the same, will, we think, be proved to the satisfaction of the most sceptical, by the following extracts:—

"The poem of the *Deserted Village*," says Dr Strean, in a letter printed in Mr Mangin's *Essay on Light Reading*, "took its origin from the circumstance of General Robert Napier, the grandfather of the gentleman who now lives in the house, within half a mile of Lishoy, built by the General, having purchased an extensive tract of the country surrounding Lishoy, or *Auburn;* in consequence of which, many families, here called *cottiers*, were removed to make room for the intended improvements of what was now to become the wide domain of a rich man, warm with the idea of changing the face of his new acquisition, and were forced, 'with fainting steps,' to go in search of 'torrid tracts,' and 'distant climes.'

"This fact alone might be sufficient to establish the seat of the poem; but there cannot remain a doubt in any unprejudiced mind, when the following are added; viz. that the character of the Village Preacher, the above named Henry, the brother of the Poet, is copied from nature. He is described exactly as he lived; and his 'modest

mansion' as it existed. Burn, the name of the village master, and the site of his school-house, and Catharine Giraghty, a lonely widow,—

> The wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,
> To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,

(and to this day the brook and ditches near the spot where her cabin stood abound with cresses,) still remain in the memory of the inhabitants, and Catharine's children live in the neighbourhood. The pool, the busy mill, the house where 'nut-brown draughts inspired,' are still visited as the poetic scene; and the 'hawthorn bush,' growing in an open space in front of the house, which I knew to have three trunks, is now reduced to one, the other two having been cut, from time to time, by persons carrying pieces of it away to be made into toys, &c. in honour of the bard, and of the celebrity of his poem. All these contribute to the same proof; and the 'decent church,' which I attended for upwards of eighteen years, and which 'tops the neighbouring hill,' is exactly described as seen from Lishoy, the residence of the Preacher."

The next extract is taken from a notice in a respectable periodical, and confirms the description given by Dr Strean;—

"About three miles from Ballymahon, a very central town in the sister kingdom, is the mansion and village of Auburn, so called by their present possessor, Captain Hogan. Through the taste and improvement of this gentleman, it is now a beautiful spot, although fifteen years since it presented a very bare and unpoetical aspect. This, however, was owing to a cause which serves strongly to corroborate the assertion, that Goldsmith had this scene in view when he wrote his poem of the *Deserted Village*. The then possessor, General Napier, turned all his tenants out of their farms, that he might enclose them in his own private domain. Littleton, the mansion of the General, stands not far off, a complete emblem of the desolating spirit lamented by the poet, dilapidated and converted into a barrack.

"The chief object of attraction is Lishoy, once the parsonage-house of Henry Goldsmith, that brother to whom the poet dedicated his *Traveller*, and who is represented as the Village Pastor,

> Passing rich with forty pounds a-year.

"When I was in the country, the lower chambers were inhabited by pigs and sheep, and the drawing-rooms by oats. Captain Hogan, however, has, I believe, got it since into his possession, and has, of course, improved its condition.

"Though at first strongly inclined to dispute the identity of Auburn, Lishoy House overcame my scruples. As I clambered over the rotten gate, and crossed the grass-grown lawn, or court, the tide of association became too strong for casuistry: here the poet dwelt and wrote, and here his thoughts fondly recurred when composing his *Traveller*, in a foreign land. Yonder was the decent church, that literally 'topped the neigbouring hill.' Before me lay the little hill of Knockrue, on which he declares, in one of his letters, he had rather sit with a book

in hand, than mingle in the proudest assemblies. And above all, startlingly true, beneath my feet was

> Yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
> And still where many a garden flower grows wild.

"A painting from the life could not be more exact. 'The stubborn currant-bush' lifts its head above the rank grass, and the proud holy-hock flaunts where its sisters of the flower-knot are no more.

"In the middle of the village stands the old 'hawthorn tree,' built up with masonry, to distinguish and preserve it: it is old and stunted, and suffers much from the depredations of post-chaise travellers, who generally stop to procure a twig. Opposite to it is the village alehouse, over the door of which swings 'The Three Jolly Pigeons.' Within, every thing is arranged according to the letter:

> The white-wash'd wall, the nicely sanded floor,
> The varnish'd clock, that click'd behind the door,
> The chest contrived a double debt to pay,
> A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
> The pictures placed for ornament and use,
> The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose.

"Captain Hogan, I have heard, found great difficulty in obtaining 'the twelve good rules,' but at length purchased them at some London book stall, to adorn the white-washed parlour of 'The Three Jolly Pigeons.' However laudable this may be, nothing shook my faith in the reality of Auburn so much as this exactness, which had the disagreeable air of being got up for the occasion. The last object of pilgrimage is the quondam habitation of the schoolmaster,

> There in his noisy mansion skill'd to rule.

"It is surrounded with fragrant proofs of its identity in

> The blossom'd furze, unprofitably gay.

"Here is to be seen the chair of the poet, which fell into the hands of its present possessors at the wreck of the parsonage-house; they have frequently refused large offers of purchase; but more, I daresay, for the sake of drawing contributions from the curious, than from any reverence for the bard. The chair is of oak, with back and seat of cane, which precluded all hopes of a secret drawer, like that lately discovered in Gay's. There is no fear of its being worn out by the devout earnestness of sitters — a wear and tear that Geoffrey Crayon so humorously describes — as the cocks and hens have usurped undisputed possession of it, and protest most clamorously against all attempts to get it cleansed, or to seat one's self.

"The controversy concerning the identity of this Auburn, was formerly a standing theme of discussion among the learned of the neighbourhood, but since the *pros* and *cons* have been all ascertained, the argument has died away. Its abettors plead the singular agreement between the local history of the place and the Auburn of the poem, and the exactness with which the scenery of the one answers to the description of the other. To this is opposed the mention of the nightingale,

> And fill'd each pause the nightingale had made;

there being no such bird in the island. The objection is slighted, on the other hand, by considering the passage as a mere poetical licence. Besides, say they, 'the Robin is the Irish nightingale.' And if it be hinted, how unlikely it was that Goldsmith should have laid the scene in a place from which he was and had been so long absent, the rejoinder is always, 'Pray, sir, was Milton in hell when he built Pandemonium?'

"The line is naturally drawn between; there can be no doubt that the poet intended England by

——— The land to hast'ning ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

"But it is very natural to suppose, that at the same time his imagination had in view the scenes of his youth, which gives such strong features of resemblance to the picture."

To these proofs of the identity of Auburn and Lishoy, which seem to be sufficiently satisfactory, we shall only add one passage from the poem itself, where the author evidently alludes, in no fictitious character, to the scene of his childhood and early youth: —

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds,
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruin'd grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs — and God has given my share —
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting, by repose;
I still had hopes — for pride attends us still —
Amidst the swains to shew my book-learn'd skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;
And, as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return — and die at home at last.

## GOLDSMITH'S QUARREL WITH EVANS THE BOOKSELLER.

THE following is the letter which occasioned the *fracas* between Goldsmith and Evans the bookseller, mentioned in our Life of the Poet, vol. i. pp. 43–6. It is said to have been written by Dr Kenrick, who was, at the time, on terms of apparent friendship with Goldsmith, but whose malice seldom spared friend or foe, when they became sufficiently eminent to attract public attention. The letter is remarkable less for its wit than its malignity, and would scarcely have deserved insertion in this place, had it not given rise to a very ridiculous event in Goldsmith's personal history.

FOR THE LONDON PACKET. — TO DR GOLDSMITH.

Vous vous noyez par vanité.

"SIR, — The happy knack which you have learnt of puffing your own compositions, provokes me to come forth. You have not been the editor of newspapers and magazines, not to discover the trick of literary *humbug*. But the gauze is so thin, that the very foolish part of the world see through it, and discover the Doctor's monkey face and cloven foot. Your poetic vanity is as unpardonable as your personal. Would man believe it, and will woman bear it, to be told, that for hours the *great* Goldsmith will stand surveying his grotesque orang-outang's figure in a pier glass? Was but the lovely H——k* as much enamoured, you would not sigh, my gentle swain, in vain. But your vanity is preposterous. How will this same bard of Bedlam ring the changes in the praise of Goldy! But what has he to be either proud or vain of? The *Traveller* is a flimsy poem, built upon false principles — principles diametrically opposite to liberty. What is the *Good-Natured Man* but a poor, water-gruel, dramatic dose? What is the *Deserted Village* but a pretty poem, of easy numbers, without fancy, dignity, genius, or fire? And, pray, what may be the last *speaking pantomime*, so praised by the Doctor himself, but an incoherent piece of stuff, the figure of a woman with a fish's tail, without plot, incident, or intrigue? We are made to laugh at stale dull jokes, wherein we mistake pleasantry for wit, and grimace for humour; wherein every scene is unnatural, and inconsistent with the rules, the laws of nature, and of the drama: viz. two gentlemen come to a man of fortune's house, eat, drink, &c. and take it for an inn. The one is intended as a lover for the daughter: he talks with her for some hours; and when he sees her again, in a different dress, he treats her as a bar-girl, and swears she squinted. He abuses the master of the house, and threatens to kick him out of his own doors. The Squire, whom we are told is to be a fool, proves the most sensible being of the piece; and he makes out a whole act, by bidding his mother lie close behind a

* Miss Horneck. — B.

bush, persuading her that his father, her own husband, is a highwayman, and that he is come to cut their throats: and to give his cousin an opportunity to go off, he drives his mother over hedges, ditches, and through ponds. There is not, sweet sucking Johnson, a natural stroke in the whole play, but the young fellow's giving the stolen jewels to the mother, supposing her to be the landlady. That Mr Colman did no justice to this piece, I honestly allow; that he told all his friends that it would be damned, I positively aver; and, from such ungenerous insinuations, without a dramatic merit, it rose to public notice; and it is now the *ton* to go and see it, though I never saw a person that either liked it, or approved it, any more than the absurd plot of Home's tragedy of *Alonzo*. Mr Goldsmith, correct your arrogance, reduce your vanity, and endeavour to believe, as a man, you are of the plainest sort; and, as an author, but a mortal piece of mediocrity.

Brise le mirroir infidele,
Qui vous cache la verité.

"TOM TICKLE."

## DR JOHNSON'S EPITAPH ON DR GOLDSMITH.

IT has been already mentioned in the *Life of Goldsmith*, (see vol. i. p. 51,) that this epitaph gave rise to a sort of respectful remonstrance by some of the poet's friends, which was forwarded to Dr Johnson in the form of a Round Robin. Our readers will not be displeased to find this literary curiosity, together with its history, transferred from the amusing pages of Boswell to the illustration of the works of the poet, whose memory so many distinguished men were anxious to honour. We also transcribe two letters from Johnson to Sir Joshua Reynolds on the same subject:—

### TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"DEAR SIR,—I have been kept away from you, I know not well how, and of these vexatious hinderances I know not when there will be an end. I therefore send you the poor dear Doctor's epitaph. Read it first yourself; and if you then think it right, shew it to the Club. I am, you know, willing to be corrected. If you think any thing much amiss, keep it to yourself, till we come together. I have sent two copies, but prefer the card. The dates must be settled by Dr Percy. I am, sir, your most humble servant, SAM. JOHNSON."

"May 16, 1776."

### TO THE SAME.

"SIR,—Miss Reynolds has a mind to send the epitaph to Dr Beattie; I am very willing, but having no copy, cannot immediately recollect it. She tells me you have lost it. Try to recollect, and put down as much as you retain; you perhaps may have kept what I have dropped.

The lines for which I am at a loss are something of *rerum civilium sive naturalium.** It was a sorry trick to lose it; help me if you can. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"*June* 22, 1776. SAM. JOHNSON."

"The gout grows better but slowly."

"It was, I think, after I had left London in this year," continues Boswell, "that this epitaph gave occasion to a *Remonstrance* to the Monarch of literature, for an account of which I am indebted to Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo.

"Sir William Forbes writes to me thus: 'I enclose the Round Robin. This *jeu d' esprit* took its rise one day at dinner at our friend Sir Joshua Reynolds's. All the company present, except myself, were friends and acquaintance of Dr Goldsmith. The epitaph, written for him by Dr Johnson, became the subject of conversation, and various emendations were suggested, which it was agreed should be submitted to the Doctor's consideration. But the question was, who should have the courage to propose them to him. At last it was hinted, that there could be no way so good as that of a Round Robin, as the sailors call it, which they make use of when they enter into a conspiracy, so as not to let it be known who puts his name first or last to the paper. This proposition was instantly assented to; and Dr Barnard, Dean of Derry, now Bishop of Killaloe, drew up an address to Dr Johnson on the occasion, replete with wit and humour, but which it was feared the Doctor might think treated the subject with too much levity. Mr Burke then proposed the address as it stands in the paper in writing, to which I had the honour to officiate as clerk.

"'Sir Joshua agreed to carry it to Dr Johnson, who received it with much good humour,† and desired Sir Joshua to tell the gentlemen, that he would alter the epitaph in any manner they pleased, as to the sense of it; but *he would never consent to disgrace the walls of Westminster Abbey with an English inscription.*

"'I consider this Round Robin as a species of literary curiosity worth preserving, as it marks, in a certain degree, Dr Johnson's character.'"

"We, the circumscribers, having read with great pleasure, an intended epitaph for the monument of Dr Goldsmith, which, considered abstractedly, appears to be, for elegant composition and masterly style, in every respect worthy of the pen of its learned author, are yet of opinion, that the character of the deceased as a writer, particularly as a poet, is perhaps not delineated with all the exactness which Dr Johnson is capable of giving it. We, therefore, with deference to his superior judgment, humbly request that he would at least take the trouble of revising it, and of making such additions and alterations as he shall

* These words must have been in the other copy. They are not in that which was preferred.

† "He, however, upon seeing Dr Warton's name to the suggestion, that the epitaph should be in English, observed to Sir Joshua, 'I wonder that Joe Warton, a scholar by profession, should be such a fool.' He said, too, 'I should have thought Mund Burke would have had more sense.' Mr Langton, who was one of the company at Sir Joshua's, like a sturdy scholar, resolutely refused to sign the *Round Robin*. This epitaph is engraved upon Dr Goldsmith's monument without any alteration."

think proper, upon a farther perusal. But, if we might venture to express our wishes, they would lead us to request that he would write the epitaph in English rather than in Latin, as we think that the memory of so eminent an English writer ought to be perpetuated in the language to which his works are likely to be so lasting an ornament; which we also know to have been the opinion of the late Doctor himself."

This remonstrance was circumscribed with the following names: — "Edm. Burke, Tho. Franklin, Ant. Chamier, G. Colman, Wm. Vackell, J. Reynolds, W. Forbes, T. Barnard, R. B. Sheridan, P. Metcalfe, E. Gibbon, Jos. Warton."

## CELEBRATION OF GOLDSMITH'S BIRTH-DAY.

It will be gratifying to the admirers of Goldsmith, to find that his memory is still fondly cherished in the neighbourhood of his birth-place. The following account is extracted from the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1820.

On the 29th of November, some distinguished friends of taste and literature in Ireland, held a meeting at Ballymahon, to celebrate the anniversary of the celebrated poet, Oliver Goldsmith; and also for the purpose of devising the most practicable means of erecting a pillar to his memory, on that fascinating spot, in Lishoy, which presented to his eye the most agreeable horizon in nature. Unlike Swift, Congreve, and other ingrates, who either denied their country, or left no traces in their writings by which it could be ascertained, Goldsmith identified himself and his divine poetry with the localities of his natal spot, his inimitable delineations of which have elicited such universal feelings of admiration and delight. His memory, therefore, is well entitled to some public testimonial of regard from a country which derives so much honour from his birth; and we feel no doubt of the success of this laudable and spirited undertaking. We have been given to understand that it will not be necessary for any individual to subscribe more than a small sum, payable, in separate portions, on the two succeeding birth-days of the Poet; for it is reasonably expected that the subscription will be as general in Ireland as the feeling which has suggested it, in a country so remarkably distinguished for the literary taste and capabilities of its people. The Scotch have set us an example, very lately, by erecting a splendid pillar, near Dumfries, to the memory of Burns. The Bard of Avon has long been the idol of taste in England, where, in every village that can boast of having produced an eminent literary character, the spot of his nativity is pointed out with conscious exultation; but in Ireland, the only memorial of her Goldsmith, buried in a foreign land — of him whose heart, untravelled, still fondly turned to her — is his own old hawthorn tree in Lishoy, now nearly cut away by literary pilgrims, whose devotion to Goldsmith and his *Deserted Village*, shame the apathy of a country which has left both without a mark of public honour for almost half a century.

On the opening of the business, the Reverend Mr Graham, of Lifford, addressed the meeting nearly in the following words: —

"We are assembled here, gentlemen, upon an occasion as interesting to the scholar, the philosopher, or the statesman, as any other which has occurred in this island for many centuries. We are all sufficiently aware of the great value of education, particularly of that description of it which has been denominated classical — how it distinguishes one man from another, almost as much as nature has distinguished man from the order of beings below him in the creation. Education of that kind acquires and preserves rank in society, as well as the means of supporting that rank. Countless families have risen by it into opulence and distinction, — witness the descendants of men of the different learned professions, who are now, in almost every county of Ireland, proprietors of that soil on which the founders of their families, with difficulty, obtained the rudiments of the education which raised them from the lower walks of life, to be rulers of the land, to sit among princes: and as many at least have, by the neglect of education, fallen in a generation or two from the highest walks of life, into the lowest state of obscurity and indigence. Connected most intimately with the cause of education is that of literature, by which the minds of mankind are smoothed, harmonized, and rendered capable of calmly investigating truth, and separating it from falsehood; and by it, next to the divine influence of the Christian faith, are men rescued from that degraded demi-savage state, which ever prevails in the absence of education, rendering them unsocial, diffident, suspicious, and hostile to the slightest gleam of the light of knowledge, which never fails to prove offensive to eyes habituated to darkness, —

Omnes hi metuunt versus, odere Poetas.

"The press is ever charged with electric horrors for them — 'Quisquis tibi timet, odit, horret.' From such persons only may we expect either opposition or want of support on the present occasion, and of such a Trulleberian race did Goldsmith himself speak, in his letter to his brother-in-law, Daniel Hudson, Esq. directed to the post-office of Ballymahon, on the 27th of December, 1757, in which the following passages may be found: — 'Unaccountable, indeed, is it, that a man should have an affection for a place, who never received, when in it, above common civility — who never brought any thing out of it but his brogue and his blunders. But to be serious, let me ask myself what gives me a wish to see Ireland again? The country is a fine one, perhaps? No. — There is good company in Ireland? No. The conversation is there made up of an obscene toast, or an improper song; the vivacity supported by some humble cousin, who has just folly enough to earn his dinner. — Then, perhaps, there is more wit and learning among the Irish? No. There has been more money spent in the encouragement of a favourite race-mare there in one season, than given in rewards to men of learning since the times of Usher.'

"But the times, gentlemen, are now altered for the better in all parts of the British empire, as well as in Ireland. We now hear of poets purchasing estates, of booksellers enrolled among the legislators of the realm; and when a man writes, none of his friends (as in the days of Goldsmith) imagine that he starves, or that he lives in a garret. We,

therefore, consider this to be a favourable opportunity of paying a debt of public gratitude, too long due, and hitherto most shamefully neglected, and, therefore, have called this meeting, in the hope of its proving the means of drawing the public attention to the subject of a monument in honour of Oliver Goldsmith, that prodigy of talent and purity, considering the time in which he lived, and the low state of literature in the country which produced him. His poetry stands unrivalled, at this day, for true sublimity and genuine pathos. Disdaining the meretricious ornament and gaudy imagery which characterizes more than one of our modern poets, his finds the way at once to the heart; and such is the classical purity of his muse, that no sentiment is to be found in his charming poems, which the most scrupulous father would withhold from the pure and uncorrupted mind of his child. The same observation may be made of his prose: his unrivalled *Vicar of Wakefield*, his *Citizen of the World*, his *Essays*, his *Abridgment of History*, — in fact, to use the words of a distinguished Christian philosopher, who was never known to give such unqualified praise to any other writer, ancient or modern, —

Nullum fere scribendi genus non tetigit,
Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit;
Sive risus essent movendi,
Sive lachrymæ,
Affectuum potens, at lenis dominator:
Ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis,
Oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus.

" But, superadded to his general merit as a poet, a philosopher, and historian, Goldsmith possesses a more endearing claim, if possible, upon the veneration of his country: unlike Swift, Congreve, and others, he never denied his country, or left it a matter of doubt to posterity; on the contrary, we see that, although he had left it early and poor — though he could boast of having received no more than common civility in it, and but little of that even, from persons on whom he had the strongest claim, — the love of Ireland was ever uppermost in his mind wherever he went. Her lovely scenery is immortalized in his poems, and he never gave up his intention of returning to the spot where first he drew his breath, 'till he resigned that breath in the arms of a beloved countryman, who attended his deathbed with the tender solicitude of an affectionate brother.' To his brother, the Reverend Henry Goldsmith, at Lissoy, was his *Traveller* addressed, and to the post-office of Ballymahon the packet, containing that immortal poem, was directed. That Lissoy is the identical spot from which he drew the enchanting scenery of his *Deserted Village*, has been demonstrated by the late ingenious Dr Newell of Cambridge University, who, a few years ago, republished his poems, with drawings of the Parsonage-house, the Church, the Mill, and the Hawthorn tree, accompanied by notes, which put the matter beyond all doubt to those acquainted with the local history of the country; and this demonstration, gentlemen, came from the pen of a learned Englishman, notwithstanding a line or two in the poem which would seem to indicate that the description was intended for an English village:

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintain'd its man.

" The scene of his celebrated comedy, *The Mistakes of a Night*, was laid in the town of Ardagh, in this immediate neighbourhood, as

related in Otridge's splendid edition of his works, and confirmed to me by the late Sir Thomas Fetherston, Baronet, a short time before his death. Some friend had given the young Poet a present of a guinea on his going from his mother's residence in this town, to a school in Edgeworthstown, where, it appears, he finished his education, of which he received the rudiments from the reverend Mr Hughes, vicar of this parish. He had diverted himself on the way the whole day, by viewing the gentlemen's seats on the road, until the fall of night, when he found himself a mile or two out of his direct road, in the middle of the street of Ardagh. Here he inquired for the best house in the place, meaning an inn; but being wilfully misunderstood by a wag, a fencing-master, of the name of Kelly, who boasted of having been the instructor of the celebrated Marquis of Granby, he was directed to the large old-fashioned residence of Sir Ralph Fetherston, the landlord of the town, where he was shewn into the parlour, when he found the hospitable master of the house sitting by a good fire. His mistake was immediately perceived by Sir Ralph, who being a man of humour, and well acquainted with the Poet's family, encouraged him in the deception. Goldsmith ordered a good supper, invited his host and the family to partake of it, treated them with a bottle or two of wine, and at going to bed, ordered a hot cake to be prepared for his breakfast; nor was it till his departure, when he called for the bill, that he discovered that while he imagined he was at an inn, he had been hospitably entertained in a private family of the first rank in the country.

"It was originally intended, gentlemen, to hold this first anniversary of the birth of our Poet in Dublin, where, at this season of the year, we might hope for an attendance far more numerous than under any circumstances could be hoped for here; but it occurred to some of us, bound by ties whose force the Poet felt, that in this neighbourhood, if not in this very spot, directly opposite to the house in which he dwelt for many a year with his widowed mother, the proceedings ought to commence, which will, we hope, lead to the erection of some testimonial equally worthy of his memory and the spirit of a county which claims the honour of his birth.

"The necessity of our being among the first to carry so just and so patriotic an undertaking into effect, may be readily proved. I need not inform you, gentlemen, that the natal spot of Goldsmith, as well as that of Homer, is in some danger of being disputed by posterity. Such has been the blundering stupidity of several of the early editors of our Poet's works, in the biographical scraps which they prefixed to them, that one of them tells us he was born at Elphin, in the county of Roscommon, merely because he had many relations in that neighbourhood, and among them his cousin-german, the grandfather of my venerable friend here, John Goldsmith, of Ballyoughter, Esq.; and in the very same page almost, gives us his epitaph, written by Dr Johnson, directly contradicting that allegation in these words, which are inscribed on his monument in Westminster Abbey:

Natus in Hibernia Forniæ Longfordiensis
In loco cui nomen Pallas.

"Another biographer, worthy to be classed among the early editors of Shakespeare, gives the original words of this epitaph, and translates them thus in a parallel column, transferring the birth-place of the Poet

into the county of Wexford, — ' He was born at Fernes, in the province of Leinster, at a place where Pallas had set her name.' An unlucky mistake respecting the natal spot of our Poet, occurs also on the books of Trinity College, owing to the residence of his uncle Henry at Lishoy, or the circumstance of his father having resided there; the entry runs thus: — ' 1744, Olivarius Goldsmith, Siz. Filius Caroli Clerici, ann. agens 15, natus in Comitatu Westmeath, educatus sub Ferula M. Hughes — Tutor, M. Wilder.' But, notwithstanding these very contradictory statements, we may give full credit to the united testimony of many respectable persons, including some of the nearest relations of the Poet, but lately gone to their graves, that Oliver Goldsmith, who has been, in the same spirit of error, so often denominated a Doctor, was born within a mile and a half of Ballymahon, on the southern bank of the river Inny, at Pallas, in the parish of Cloncalla, commonly called Forney. The walls of the house are yet standing; the roof fell in but two years ago; it is distinctly visible from the canal between this and Tenelick, and in it, perhaps, rather than on any other spot, even his beloved ' mount before Lishoy gate,' should his monumental pillar be erected. The name of the townland in which this interesting ruin stands is spelled Pallice in our barony books; but those who can feel the charm of classic allusion under such a temptation, will readily pardon the great Antæus of literature, the author of the Dictionary of the English Language, for having once in his lifetime spelled a word erroneously. This evidence, gentlemen, I consider to be conclusive; for Dr Johnson cannot be supposed to have known that such obscure places as Pallice or Forney existed, except from the lips of the Poet himself, who was on the most intimate terms of friendship with him.

"If we, in Ballymahon, have, on this occasion, dwelt with too much minuteness upon this disputed point, our best apology is, that the contending for the honour of the birth-place of such an ornament to his country, is a pardonable ambition; and it will be recollected, too, in favour of our claim, as well as in apology for our maintenance of it, that one of the wishes dearest to the poet's heart, when unable to return to the place of his nativity, was, ' that his brother and his sister, Lissoy and Ballymahon, would altogether make a migration to him into the county of Middlesex.

" We have now, gentlemen, only to read some of the many interesting letters addressed to us on this occasion, and afterwards proceed to the consideration of the most practicable means of accomplishing the object of our meeting. Our undertaking is an honourable one, but we should recollect *in limine*, that the success of it depends upon causes entirely beyond our control. It is, as it were, a touchstone of the times we live in; if it succeeds, the statesman and the philosopher may augur favourably of the rising intelligence and prosperity of our island — if not, the very effort will stand in record on the pages of our history, to protect this generation, at least, from the Bœotian imputation of insensibility to the honour which devolves upon our country, for having produced such a man. As for him, to use the language of one of his earliest admirers, —

——— His own harmonious lays
Have sculptured out his monument of praise;
These shall survive to Time's remotest day,
While pillars fall, and marble tombs decay."

### EXTRACTS OF LETTERS READ AT THE MEETING.

From Mr, now Sir Walter Scott, dated in April, 1818, observing that the neglect of the birth-place of Goldsmith is rather discreditable to the country which derives so much honour from his birth.

From a gentleman present at the meeting, whose exertions, on this occasion, received the unanimous thanks of those assembled at it, John Hogan of Auburn, Esq. —

"Circumstances led me, in the early part of my life, to the knowledge of part of Goldsmith's family, and to the acquaintance of his nephew, Mr William Hudson, whose beautiful elegy on the death of several members of his family, including the Poet, bears the strongest marks of hereditary genius, and the lost stanza of which I make no doubt of being able to recover. You may suppose I became interested in every thing bolonging to the Poet. When I settled on the spot, I attempted to replace some of the almost forgotten identities that delighted me forty years since. I rebuilt his 'Three Jolly Pigeons,' restored his 'Twelve Good Rules, and Royal Game of Goose,' enclosed his 'Hawthorn Tree,' now almost cut away by the devotion of the literary pilgrims who resort to it; I also planted his favourite hill before Lissoy gate — that spot which presented to his eye the most agreeable horizon in nature; and, had not family affairs led me to reside in England for some years, I should have done a great deal more to gratify myself, and to point out the localities of the charming scene of the *Deserted Village*.

"Some years past, a gentleman named Newell, a fellow of Cambridge, came over here on a literary tour, and sketched these scenes alluded to in the poem, with great truth and spirit. On his return to England, he published an edition of Goldsmith's Poems in thin quarto, embellished by those views, and enriched by copious notes on the *Deserted Village*, proving the scenery of Lissoy to have been uppermost in the poet's mind, while composing it. He meant to have followed this up, by soliciting subscriptions for some public testimonial to the memory of Goldsmith, on the spot of the *Deserted Village*, and even on that mount before Lissoy gate, which he mentioned with so much enthusiasm in one of his letters; but Mr Newell died before he could accomplish his wish."

Several other letters were read to the meeting.

John Hogan, Esq. being called to the chair, — it was resolved, that a committee and secretary should be appointed, for the purpose of managing the concerns of this undertaking: and it was also resolved, that Lord Viscount Newcomen and Company be requested to receive the subscriptions.

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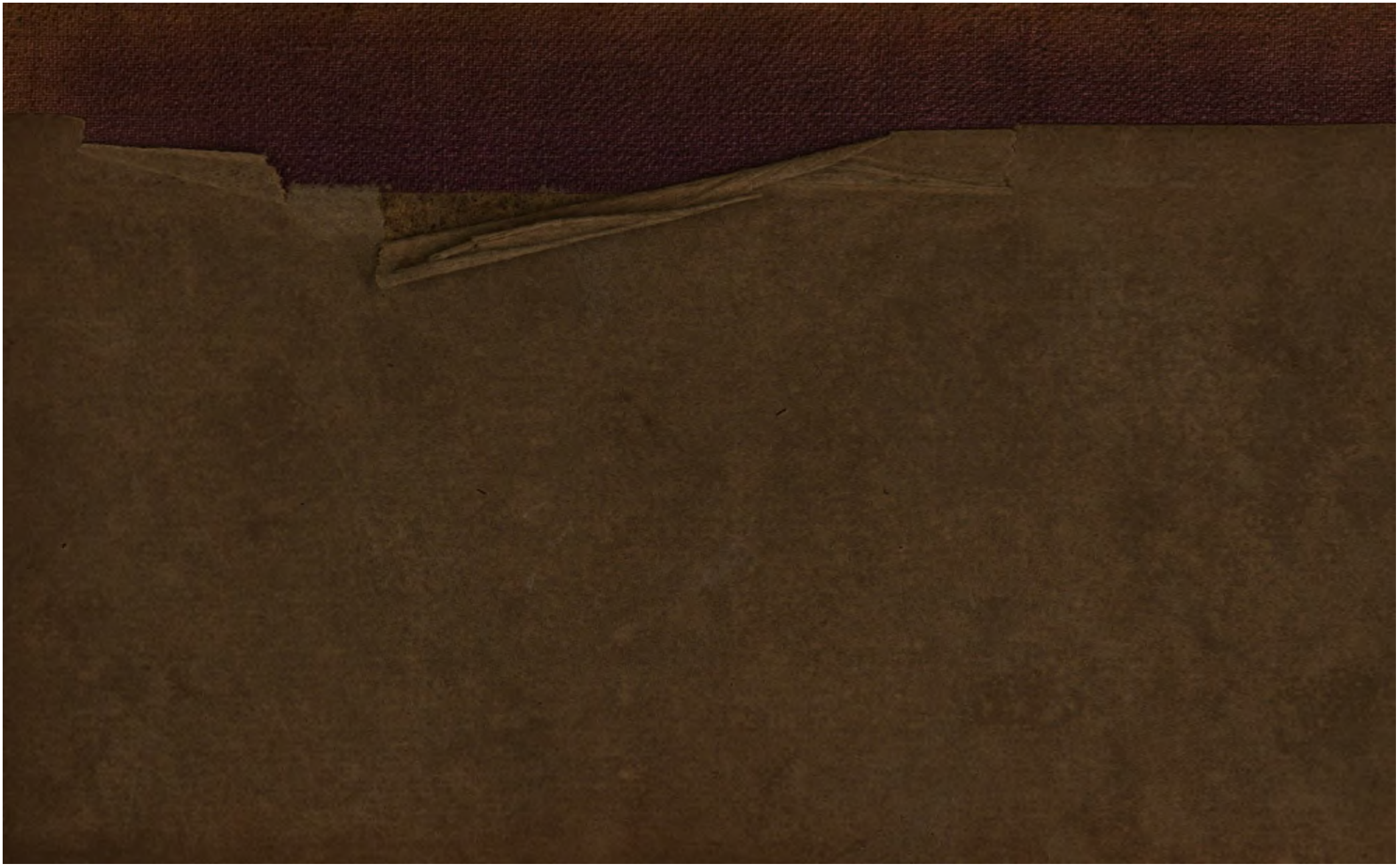
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