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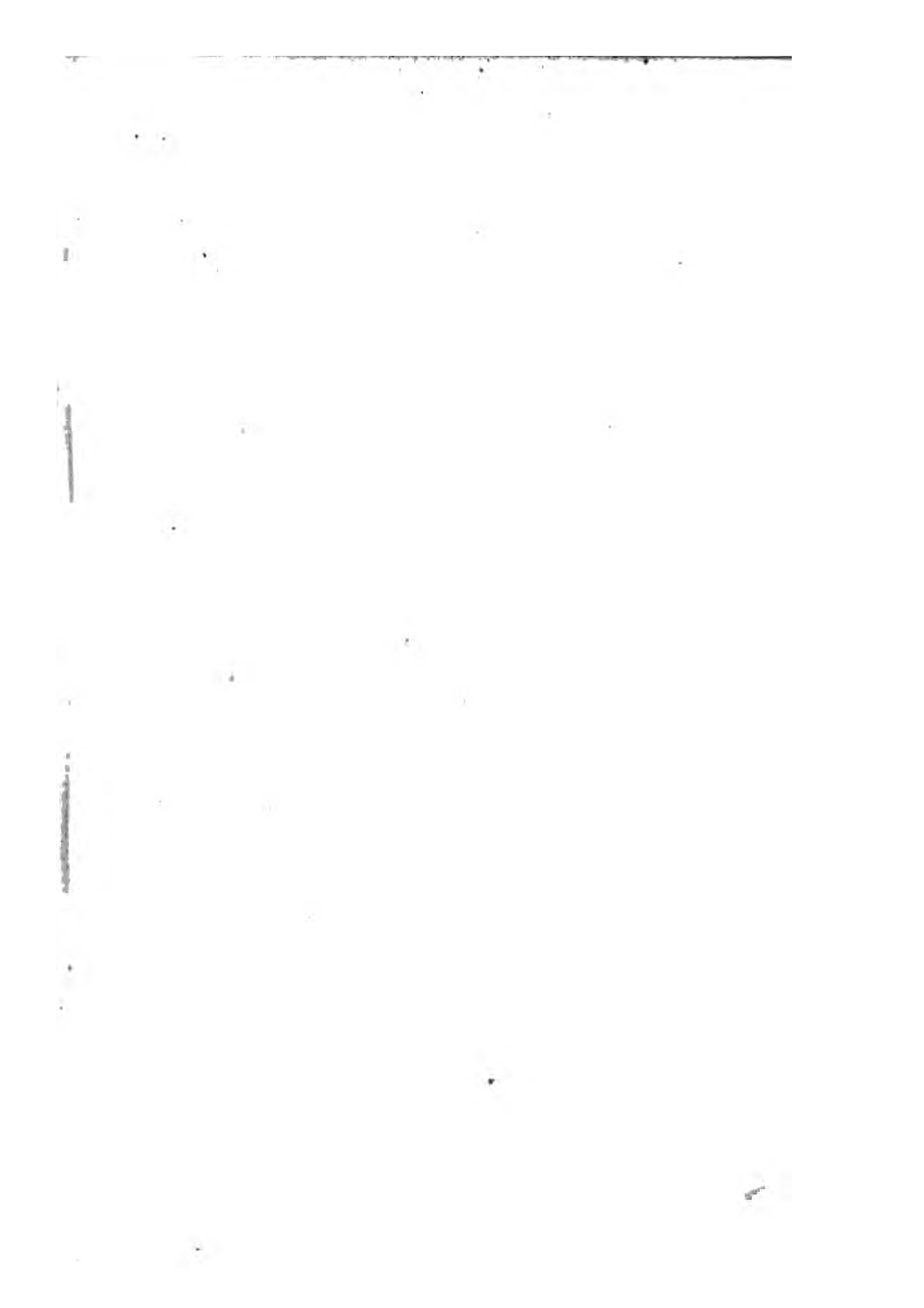
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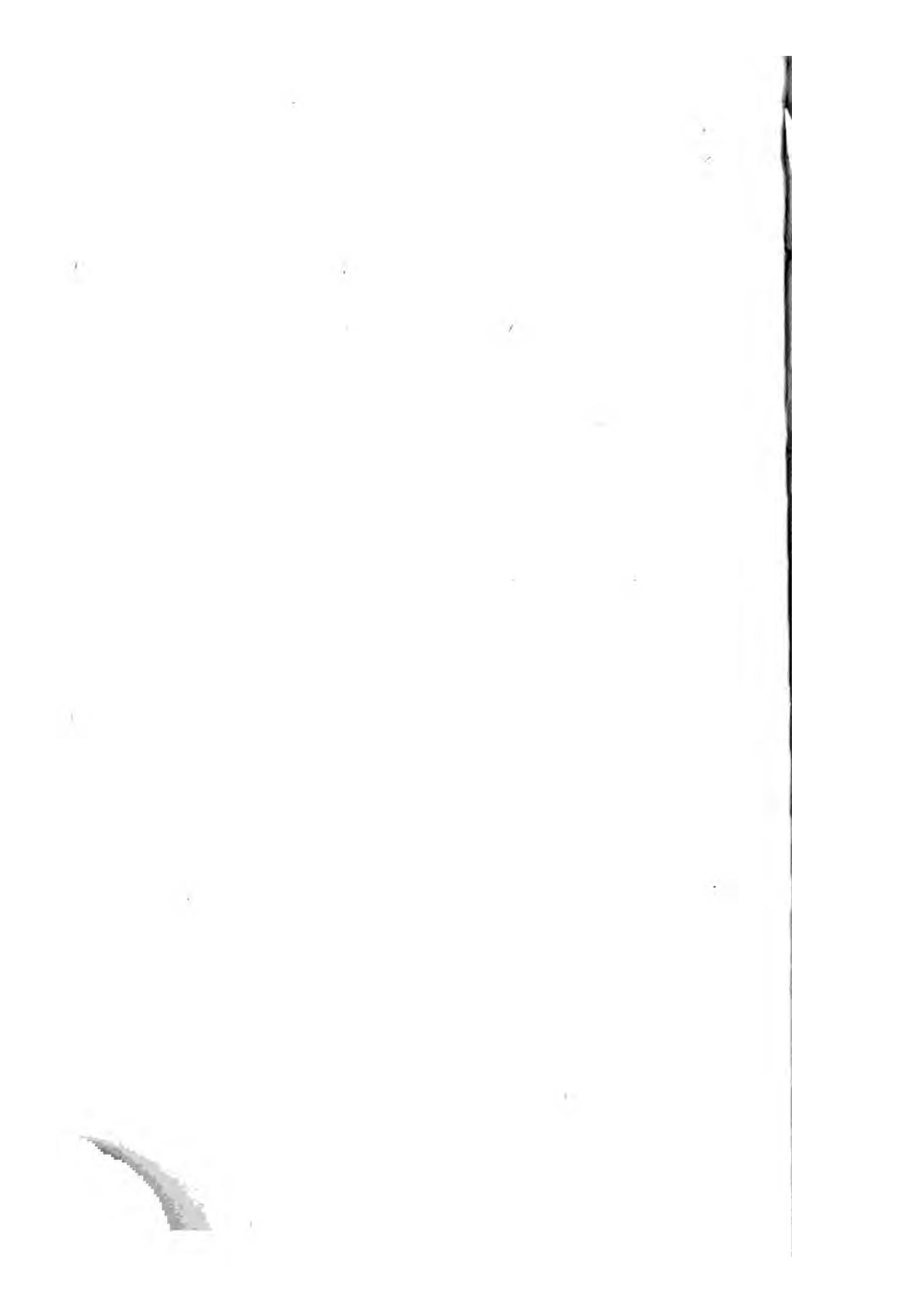
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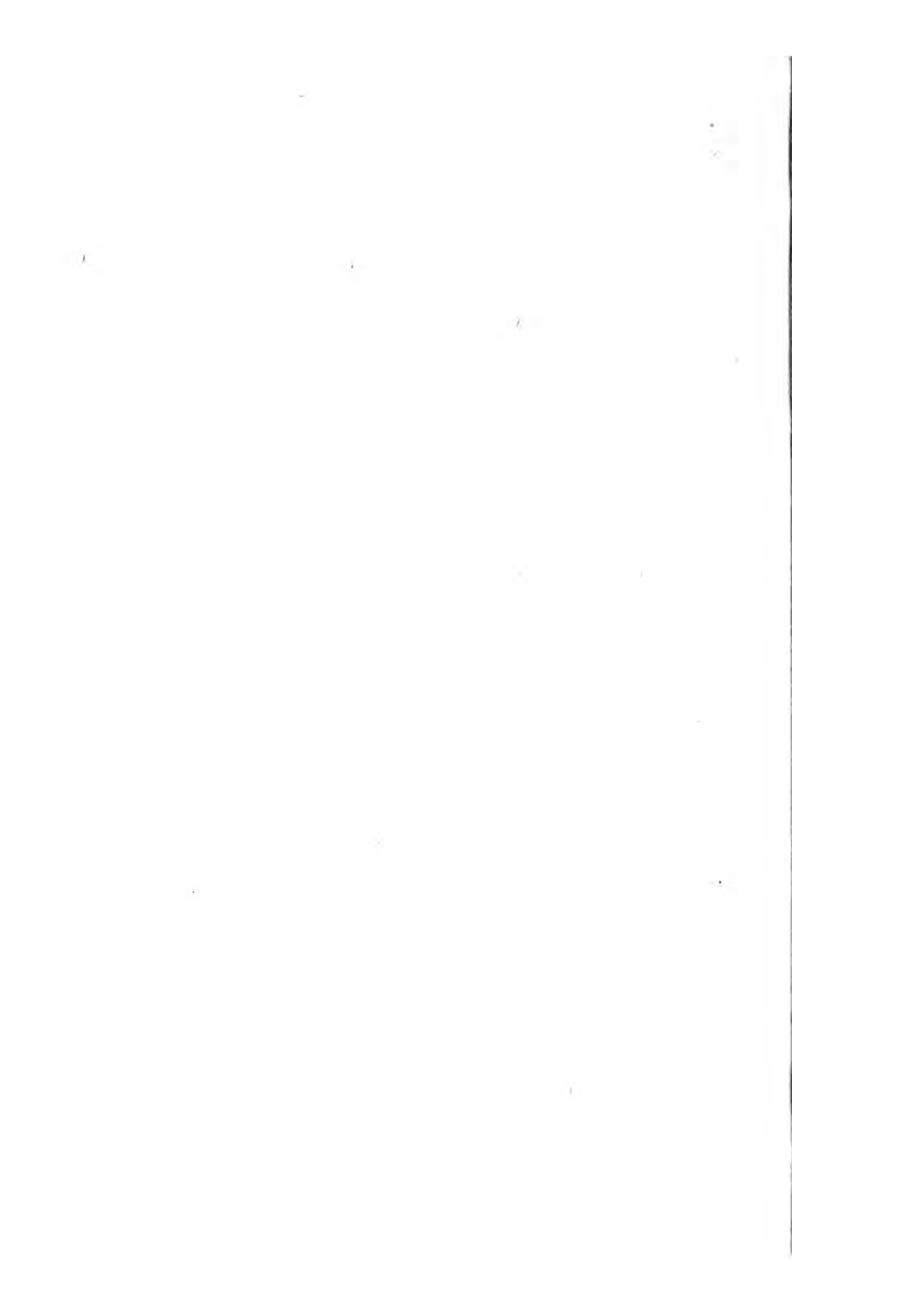
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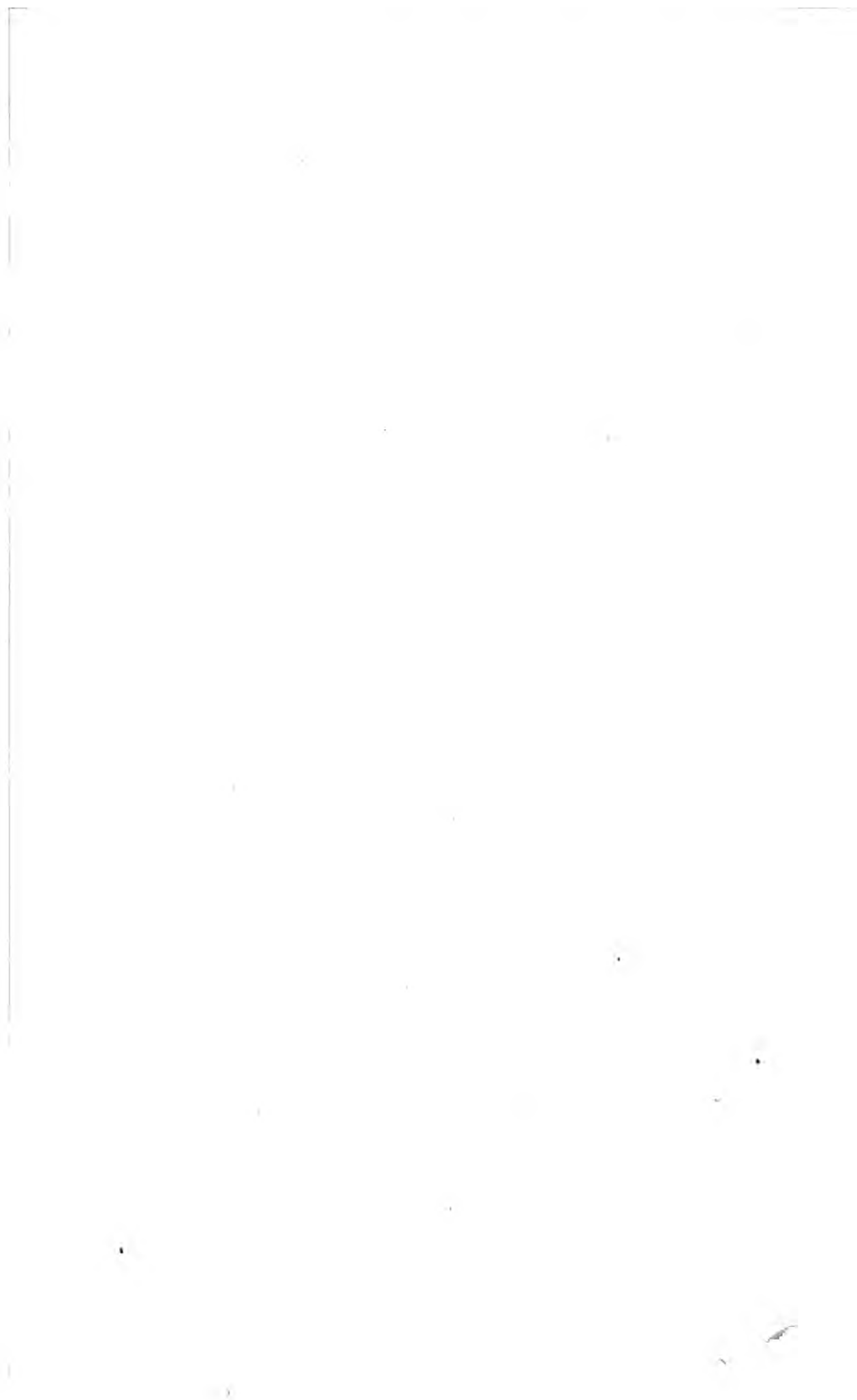






Dunston
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THE
BRITISH ESSAYISTS;

WITH

PREFACES,

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL,

BY

ALEXANDER CHALMERS, F. S. A.

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VOL. XLI.

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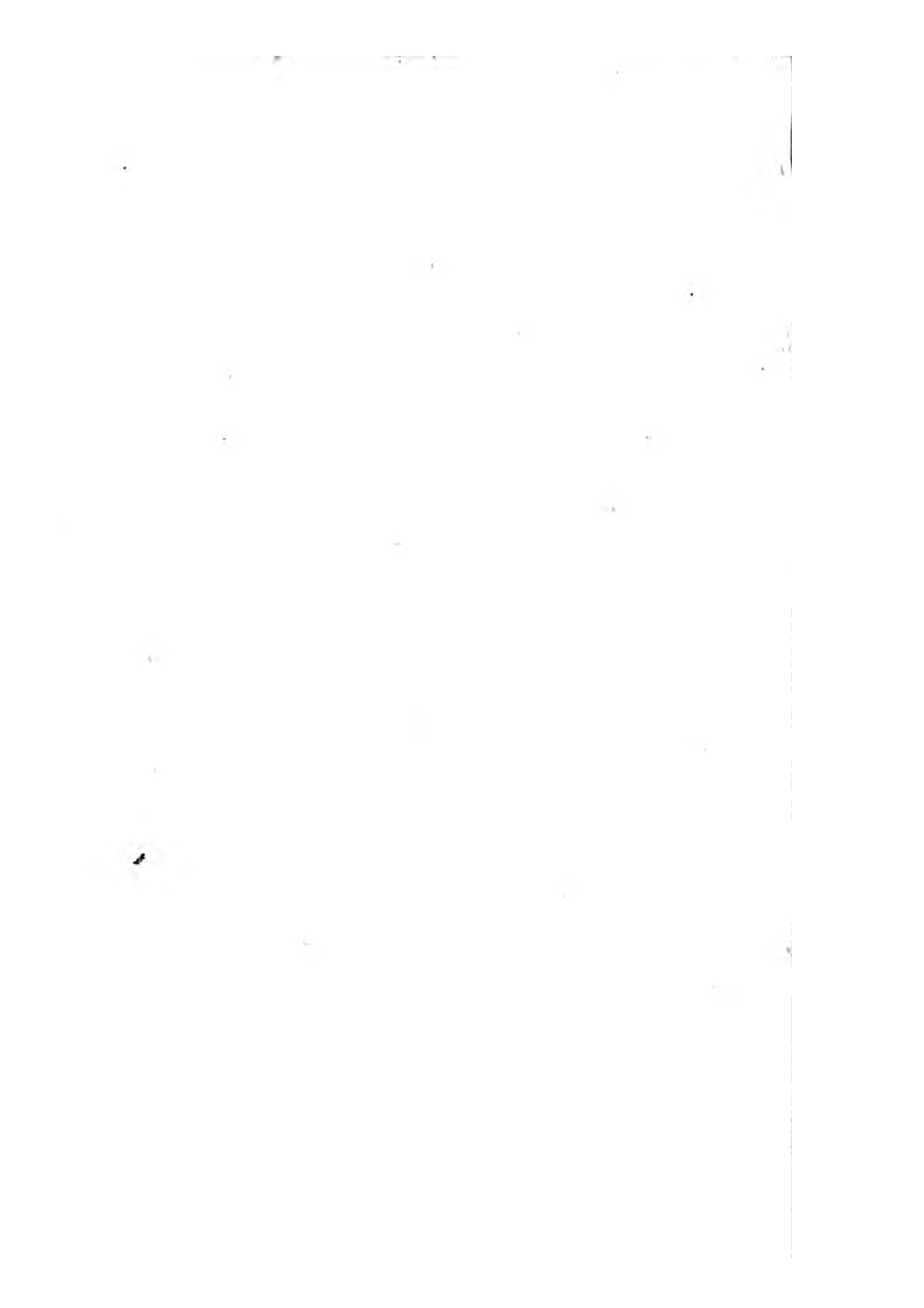
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THE  
**LOOKER-ON:**  
A  
PERIODICAL PAPER.

BY THE  
*REV. SIMON OLIVE-BRANCH, A.M.*

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N<sup>o</sup> 1—25.



**THESE PAPERS**

**ARE DUTIFULLY INSCRIBED TO HIS BEST BENEFACTOR  
AND PATRON,**

**HIS MUCH-HONOURED FATHER,**

**AS A HUMBLE EXPRESSION OF HIS LOVE,**

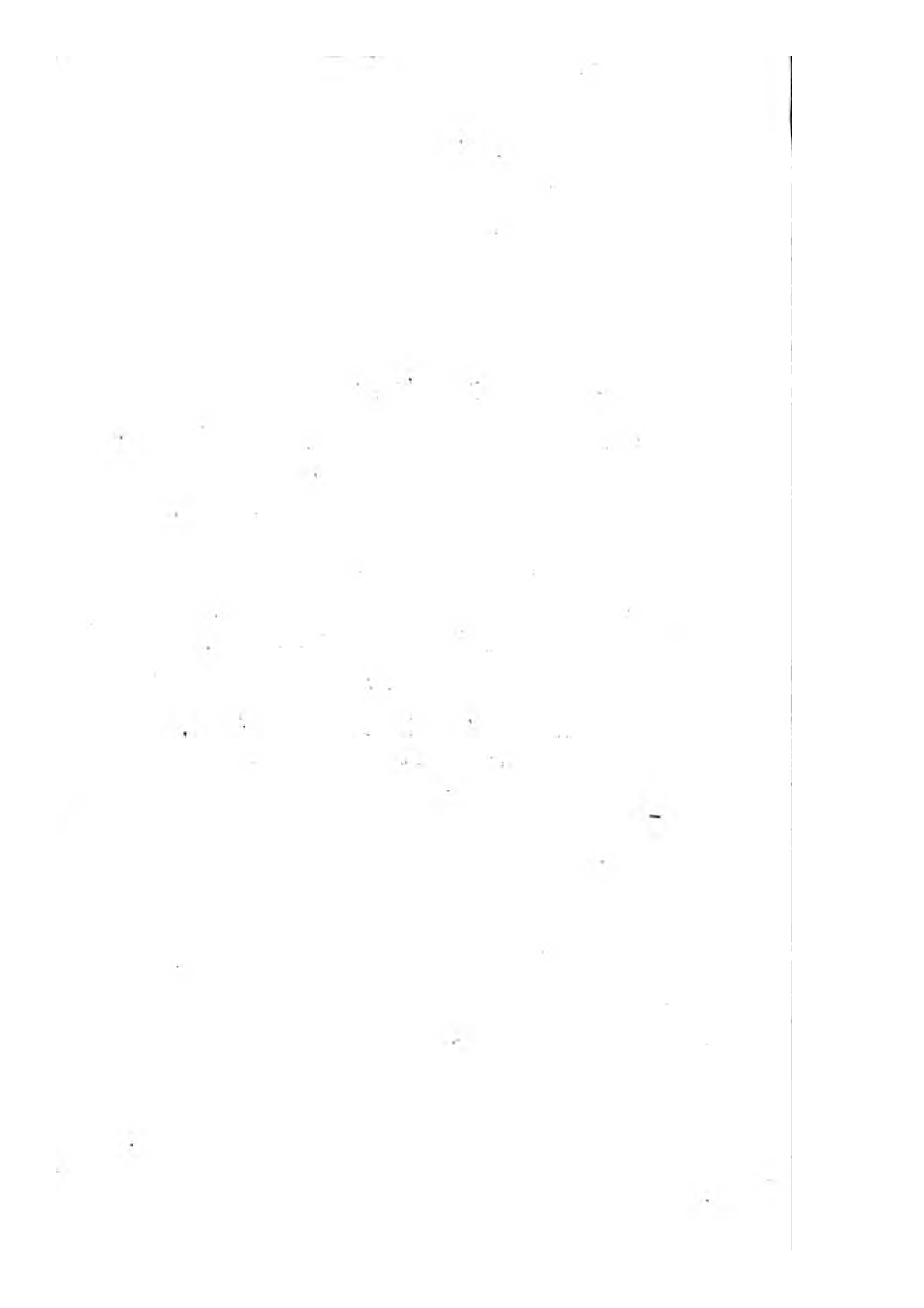
**AND A STILL HUMBLER TRIBUTE TO MANLY VIRTUE AND  
UNBLEMISHED INTEGRITY OF LIFE,**

**BY**

**WILLIAM ROBERTS, A. M.,**

**Late Fellow of G. C. Coll., Oxon.**





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## INTRODUCTION.

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**I**N the present state of literature, I am doubtful whether it be an evidence of merit, that a fourth edition of this book is called for. The popularity which the dullest performances can, under certain circumstances, obtain, robs my friend Mr. OLIVEBRANCH of this ground of self-commendation; or, at best, leaves it very equivocal. The absence of those circumstances, which bring to the productions of the day their popularity, should be shown, before this testimony is cleared of its ambiguity, and public favour becomes an argument of genuine desert. These papers will demonstrate for themselves, how far they are entitled to this distinction, to such as are disposed and qualified to examine their spirit and tendency. To those, however, whose observations have led them to draw no favourable inferences from public patronage, I deem it a respect due to their prejudices to assure them, that, by this little work of my friend's, religion is not philosophised, and philosophy is not sophisticated; truth is not made to consist in infidelity; and the old distinctions of virtue and vice are maintained. Magnetically fixed on an axis of immutable direction, the tenor of these volumes have kept at polar distances



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the denominations of good and ill; and the ear of profligacy has been tickled with no soft appellations, confounding things in their natures irreconcilable. Ancient and prescriptive rules have been adhered to, in rejection of modern discoveries in morals; and sense, experience, and conscience, are gravely set up, in defiance of the polite system of ethics which at present prevails. Yet, with all these disadvantages in the plan of the LOOKER-ON, it has lived to a fourth edition: and it is pleasing to think, that there is yet a party in the country which can relish the formal cut of Mr. OLIVE-BRANCH'S morality. There must needs (my friendship and these facts suggest to me) be something in the manner and character of this pious old gentleman that resists the unpropitiating effect of his doctrines, and disguises the salutary roughness of his admonitions. Vigorous in mind, though puny in structure; waxing in virtue, though waning in strength; a certain adolescence about the heart counteracts the decline of his years, and gives a spreading and active effect to his goodness, at a time of life when virtue for the greater part consists in negatives, and gives no proofs of its existence but in the forbearances of impotency. He has collected these transcripts of instruction from among a multiplicity of papers, devolved to him through a prudent ancestry, remarkable for their inheritance of innocence, and the antiquity of their estate, in a characteristic probity. He chose this juncture (it should have seemed an inauspicious one) to produce this little fund of morality, assuming to himself the task of giving it applicability to the times, and furnishing it with the vehicle which he thought might most attractively display it. Nothing, as it appeared to him, was better suited to this purpose than a periodical paper,

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on account of the scope and variety of such a work, and the versatility of its style and matter, as the interests of virtue might require, or as this or that folly might seem ripest for reprobation. He did not think that this branch of literature was exhausted; for besides its infinite capability of diversification, which tends so much to protract its interest, its successful cultivators had been comparatively but few. Its difficulty had been proved by a multitude of imbecile imitations of the original Spectatorial plan. Some bolder writers, in affecting to deviate from that plan, have been instances to show, that, where a great and original genius has primarily trodden, guided as it were by the hand of nature, he has struck out the true path; and though the footsteps of the first adventurer may be avoided, the same track must still be pursued.

Rules insensibly form themselves upon his model, and the design of the great projector must lead all subsequent attempts. It is the description indeed of a liberal, as distinguished from a servile imitation, that it is studious only of the principle and spirit of its model; and, without straining the resemblance to a mechanical conformity, raises a likeness not discernible in the detail, but stamped upon the generality of the whole; not existing in outward admeasurement and correspondence of feature, but furtively produced from a latent consentaneity of genius and character. Ignorance of these rules, or inability to follow them, has been one of the causes of the common failure of attempts to copy the graces and urbanity of the Spectator. There is, indeed, a sort of physical languor in all imitations; the conception and execution must be connate in the mind, to carry to their perfection the productions of genius. It is not so in the manual and mechanical

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arts; and the ground of the distinction is obvious. What is sensible and tangible, and what is purely ideal and intellectual, must proceed by very different principles of growth to their consummation; and it is easy to see, that the nature of one will scarcely endure the handling of different operators, and perishes under the ponderous accumulation of pretended improvements; while the perfection of the other arises from use and repetition, and the multiplied efforts of ingenuity and industry.

As there is no room for originality in this species of composition, disadvantaged as in many respects are the efforts of imitation, yet it is all that we can aspire to; and grace and dignity in the execution of a secondary part, must content our ambition. The delicacy of Addison's morality, the vivacity of his comments, and above all the spirit of his plan, are the just objects of judicious imitation; and he will most egregiously have failed, who aims only at forcing into his work a few of the principal ingredients of the Spectator, without having sounded the secret of those happy combinations of language, and that easy controul of imagery and illustration, which finish and adorn the admonitions, the raillery, and the reasonings of that master-production. Many of our late periodical writers, disdaining to imitate another's plan, have struck out a course in which no plan has been disclosed. They have miscarried, I think, in their attempts. A mere succession of essays, not connected by any common design, and conspiring to no general effect, is accordingly all that they have produced; and for want of that characteristic colouring, which in some instances has made this sort of publication the history of the mind of a thoughtful individual, whose character, insinuated through the work, has fixed the regards

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of the reader, there is a total failure of that collateral interest which carries one forwards from subject to subject with a superadded curiosity and delight. Something to organise the parts into correspondence, and to constitute a whole; some common attraction to a general design; touches of moral painting that produce a sort of portrait of the writer, and clothes him with a conciliating parental character, a varied intertexture of narration and anecdote; and a polished freedom of general railery; are, I think, among the essential requisites of this kind of composition; and a loose compilation of essays, having no cement or lining of this sort, must consequently fail of producing all this satisfaction in the reader's mind.

Thus much has been said on the requisites and perfections of a periodical paper, because it appears to have been treated too much as a branch of composition to which no rules were applicable, as dispensing with all order and design, and implying nothing more than a succession of detached essays. Sir Roger de Coverley, Will. Wimble, and the Short-faced Silent Man, are not characters necessary to a periodical paper; but they serve as illustrations of the principles and perfections alluded to; and true taste will condescend to imitation, and choose rather to proceed in the track already marked out by original excellence, than proudly to take a new course that justifies its departure from models by no hope or promise of compensation to the reader.

Great things are done by the gratuitous endowments of nature; but, if the richest in those endowments will choose a path where great geniuses have already trodden, they must bound their ambition to the praise of vigorous imitation.



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As affording room for a great diversity of topic and instruction, and as a powerful agent of moral culture, Mr. OLIVE-BRANCH adopted the plan of a periodical paper; and the public are to assign him his portion of credit in the conduct of it. Happily for the success of his scheme, his own character, as it floats upon the surface of these papers, is well adapted to aid the impression of his morality; for something there surely is, in almost every heart of common goodness, that bespeaks attention to the mild admonitions of considerate age, where grey hairs are the blossoms of wisdom, and not the fruit of worldly anxieties.

These papers upon the whole, therefore, it must be said, owe much to the personal and complexional advantages of the writer: they have given an exterior comeliness to his lessons and persuasions, more efficacious by much than the decorations of an artificial style, or the agency of personal satire. His morality is grave and independent, and his good humour would be ill understood if construed into courtesy to fashionable vices; it is in him only the boon of temperance, and the health of an honest and cheerful mind. In respect to the matter of these volumes, the reader will find that the vices of fashionable life, and the characteristic infirmities of the rich, are not endeavoured to be discountenanced by raising a fictitious contrast in the pretended exemptions of the poor. And the author seems to have thought, that the needy and the affluent, the vulgar and the great, are not distinguished in the substance of immorality, but in the modes; that profligacy is not the prerogative of the rich; and that sin and folly are not less in degree, because more homely in their practice, and less notorious in their career. Vice is of a subtile and mutable na-

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ture, and contracts itself to every size of understanding or estate. His censures and reprobation are therefore fastened on the quality of the thing; and the inherent turpitude of base actions are exposed, in whatever guise they may appear.

On the other hand, it is a gross mistake to regard vice as less vicious, because it dazzles with the glitter of polished life; or that the tones of satire are to be softened into complaisance, because injustice and profligacy are decorated with ribands, and operate through the medium of softer habitudes. The pleasantry in which the Spectator abounds was not meant as indulgence to crime and infamy, or to alter the old rules of ethics by giving new names and notions to actions authentically virtuous or vicious. Mr. Addison employed that fine raillery of his, where severer treatment had been justified; because he felt that the first consideration with the writer was to attract readers; and the votaries of pleasure and ease will only bear to hear the exposure of their own errors and immoralities, where the satire is sheathed in a courtesy of phrase; and where truth, in the disguise of raillery and ridicule, plays amusively about the heart, and penetrates by the avenues of pleasure to the seat of corruption.

The reader will perhaps think that Mr. OLIVEBRANCH is not without a share of this seasonable and sober sort of humour, where he has treated on subjects that called for the exercise of it; and perhaps he might be justified in a little less frequent use of it than some of his predecessors, because, in the present conjuncture, a hardihood, the effect of the spreading infidelity of the times, has entered into the vices of every class of society, which seems to require a robuster satire, and a less qualified exposure.

Politics and Religion are introduced with some

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reserve : and, I think, he should totally have declined them, as not suited to a light and popular production, if the attacks of the present innovators on those subjects had not been characterised by such a vulgar intrepidity, as to need no subtlety of argument to encounter them. The appeal from these fanatics is only to common sense and common nature. The **LOOKER-ON**, therefore, contains a few papers on the subjects of religion and politics. Religion, because it is the soul of morality, and the basis of every felicity and grace of life : politics, because of the great question to which it is now generalised human society itself is become a part, and the interests of man are involved, not only as he is the member of a corporation, but as a member of humanity ; not only as having a person and property to be protected, or civil rights to be maintained, but as having an understanding to be improved, passions to be restrained, a body to be nourished, and a soul to be saved. The particular state of these subjects brought home, as they are, to every man's bosom, seemed to make it necessary for Mr. **OLIVE-BRANCH** to bestow some consideration upon them ; to rescue them a little, according to his power, from mischievous misrepresentation ; to save them from the gripe of a mercenary philosophy, the hungry ravings of garretteers ; and a little to resist the quackery, cant, and cunning of prostituted scribblers. To allure the reader to these graver matters, tales and fables, the common artifices of moralists, have been made use of. The good effects of this mode of instruction are happily illustrated in a scheme lately instituted for distributing cheap publications among the poor ; a labour of love above all praise, and a scheme fraught with more unequivocal good to mankind, as far as it goes, than philanthropy or patriotism have yet devised.

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To have been silent on the subjects of criticism and polite letters, might have looked like a disregard in the author for these interesting and important inquiries, and would have very much circumscribed that variety of matter by which a production of this sort requires to be diversified. The present state, however, of literature in the country, had given Mr. OLIVE-BRANCH a disrelish for this part of his undertaking. But little is furnished from modern exertions to exercise criticism or taste ; and the round of criticism on ancient authors, has been travelled almost to satiety. Every classic is half smothered in commentaries ; and there is now but little encouragement to prosecute an inquiry where the theme no longer delights the fancy, or interests the curiosity of his contemporaries. The papers, therefore, which are bestowed on the subjects of literature, are generally of a desponding cast ; they lament the sensible decay of learning and taste among us, and lament it the more, because our country is, perhaps, arrived at that period of its course, when the example of history hardly suffers us to hope that the age of genius will return. I own, for myself, I much doubt, whether that vigorous efflorescence of national maturity in science, and learning, and taste, can be recalled, when once the fated æra is passed, and things are returning in a descending climax to the slow consummation of national fortunes. Without being of the persuasion, that there is any necessity in the constitution of things, which carries nations along in a course analogous to the progress of individuals from infancy to decrepitude ; I cannot but think, that, however different the things may be in their causes and their natures, there is sometimes a striking resemblance in procedure that gives a plausibility to these fanciful notions.



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There certainly is a period in the growth of states, when a florid health appears to circulate through the system,—a transitory period, and placed, I think, somewhere between the struggles of unformed empire, and the secure enjoyment of political greatness; while the stimulating effects of public agitations yet remain, and show themselves in a glowing vivacity of national character; and when there is a sufficient exemption from actual commotions, to give opportunity for the display of these intellectual advantages. It is to be hoped, that the imaginations of speculators have carried this parallel beyond the truth, when they tell us, that when once the race is run, when once the national welfare is betrayed by individual profligacy, the period is then come which corresponds with the physical decay of old-age in man; that nothing can restore the departed vigour; and that luxury, grown into second nature, becomes necessary to the life of the state, interposing a lingering suspense between disease and dissolution. But though it be confessed, that the tumults of rising states are well fitted to provoke the powers of the mind, yet it seems clear that such commotions as take place in nations in an advanced stage of their history, are not productive of the same effects. They are very different from the fermentation of youthful ardours, and the effects which arise from the contests of emulation and the fierce desire of glory: they are ungenerous strifes, of which avarice, envy, and the baser passions, are the stimulants and fomenters. When the bottom is dry, we shake the vessel in vain. In the early struggles of rising Rome, contentions for power and superiority called forth individual manhood and exercised the national vigour: in the declining periods of that great nation, the revolutions of state were only fruitful in changes

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for the worse, and hardened depravity into desperation. Few, indeed, of the nations of modern Europe are still standing at the highest point of their elevation. With a declination more or less rapid, they are leaving this altitude; and some, perhaps, viewing the course of ancient states and kingdoms, may think that this altitude can never again be arrived at by the same people, and never, perhaps, again be seen on the same spot, unless a fresh incursion of barbarous invaders shall again pitch upon it their desolating camps, and resolve things again into primæval rudeness, and the inceptive forms of society.

There is, to be sure, a spring and vigour in these green establishments, which after-times can seldom supply; and there does seem to be a succeeding period, when early agitations have yet an operation, and work upon a system of things that allows leisure for decoration and improvement: there then comes a sickly second childhood of national infirmity, wantoning in the imbecilities of decayed genius, and displaying the hoary puerilities of political dotage. I fear there is no magical kettle in which this national old-age can be concocted, and its virility reproduced: no revolutions seem able to effect this transformation; nor do the present convulsions of the political world promise any such compensation for the miseries they occasion. In the present view of things, however, there are circumstances in our own country that offer some consolation. The other nations of Europe have not proceeded as we have done in our political advancement. Many of them have forestalled their constitutional decay, by leaping at once out of barbarism into luxury, and have become rotten before they were ripe. In our own country, the growth and maturation of our

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national strength has slowly and gradually proceeded, and a long time has been taken in travelling to its accomplishment. Initiated and exercised in its progress in almost every form of policy, it has at length obtained a constitution in which the best ingredients of different states of society are admirably compounded; and has brought with it a strong experimental sagacity on the spirit of governments and laws, that may ensure to it a longer continuance of its greatness than other nations have enjoyed. It seems, however, as if there was a certain self-moving principle, a sort of acquired mechanical velocity, in the progress of a great nation, that forces it on in a career of outward prosperity, long after the national spirit has been on the decline. It is much to be hoped, that this is not the case with England, and that the public spirit of the people has not for some time been moving in a direction retrograde to the national wealth and exterior aggrandisement. But it is not this exterior importance, and this political splendor, that cherishes the exertions of genius: true taste, and a noble relish of the arts, can only consist with a vigorous state of the public mind, and a prevailing bent towards objects that exalt the feelings and expand the intellect. Public spirit, national virtue, and a severe sense of the sublime in morals, must predominate greatly among a people, to inspire that true sentiment of taste, which is the foundation of intellectual eminence.

When the manners rest at a polished luxury, which finds its gratification in the real embellishments of life, and the national energies are not yet corrupted and enfeebled by excess; when the fierce prejudices of ruder times have made way for a gentler, though not less animated system of manners; it is then that literature and the arts are placed in

#### INTRODUCTION.

the soil most propitious to their growth. May we hope that this golden crisis is not over with our own country, and that its capacities in the elegant attainments of genius and taste have not yet arrived at their greatest allowable perfection? It may be temporary, but the fact is too apparent, that there is, at this period, a general neglect of letters among us. The justness of this observation will be clear, while there remains to us a competent discernment between the true and the false sublime, between chaste and meretricious beauty in composition.

The same fate has attended the fine arts, under similar circumstances, in every period of history. And the hand of Providence, clearly discernible in this disposition, seems to have set certain bounds to national improvement, agreeably to his dispensations with respect to individuals, and to have stamped every thing in this preparatory world with the same revolutionary character. The plot of our adversities is laid in our felicities; and the consequence of a high degree of national prosperity, is the subduction of national virtue, and the loss of that principle, that sentiment, and sensibility, which as they are the grace and support of taste and genius in the individual, so do they nourish the fine arts among a people, and give a happy turn to their collective industry. It is much too wide a position which some are so fond of maintaining, that commerce, luxury, or war, is favourable to the growth of genius. The dispassionate observer, and the sound politician, will think, perhaps, that there are kinds of luxury, and degrees of commerce, diametrically opposite in their effects; he will discern the proximity of extremes, and that excess of refinement is on the confines of barbarity itself; he will see, perhaps, that there is a degree of commerce which administers



## INTRODUCTION.

only to depraved enjoyments, and nourishes capricious and sickly appetites; and that there is a degree of it which operates as the spring of political life, and opens all the streams of population and resource. So luxury, according to the nature of its objects, may decorate or debase society.

Of the effects of war, too, very different accounts may be given. In former times, ere funding systems were thought of, war brought only its immediate evils. Quarrels between states were the means of a circulation of treasure which peace had accumulated, and supplied, in some measure, the want of commerce: in modern times it proceeds by an anticipation of resource, and contrives that future generations, though no sharers in its iniquity, shall yet be visited with its worst effects.

There cannot, to be sure, be imagined an æra more destructive than the present of the arts and polite literature. In the midst of times that are but too much calculated to repress the growth of genius, by the spirit of profligacy that prevails, and by a distraction of mean pursuits in social life, that enervates the force of every generous sentiment, there has sprung up a wasting war, founded in an irreconcilable strife of opinion, and interwoven with so many domestic wrongs and animosities, as to disclose no prospects of permanent peace to Europe, till the pride of ancestry and the ties of blood are forgotten.

Yet, in the midst of these national sorrows, luxury and debauchery are no where checked in their career; but are become, by the crooked chicane of modern policy, a great and standing source of revenue. The English go sullenly on in their wasteful pleasures, and gild their despondency with unremitted profusion. Almost converted, by the recurrence of

## INTRODUCTION.

public loans, into a nation of annuitants, they all rush to the capital whence their incomes arise, which, by its present injurious plan of extension, promises to become the universal mart of vicious profusion.

Bribed by their miserable wealth to an apostacy from all intellectual interests, the inhabitants of this country turn all their eyes to the National Bank, as the great centre of their hopes and fears; a pedlar principle of profit and loss has absorbed all greater cares, and dignity is departed from the public mind. The state of science and letters is as low as might be expected from the circumstances of the nation. Though the number of writers may not be decreased, yet the contributors to the genuine stock of literature are easily counted. A prurience towards authorship produces some literary volunteers among the rich, who find it cheaper to purchase flattery than to patronise wit. What province of genius or letters maintains any longer a struggle with this declining destiny? Oratory, which, until the dimensions of the human capacity shrinks, will always mount towards its perfection in times of political fermentation, still remains to console the friends of genius, if consolation can arise from the successes of an art that is cherished by public calamities. Posterity will see whether the present æra of astonishing events is able to revive among them the sober spirit of history, gravely and impartially to record these violent transactions, to extricate them from the perplexity in which they are involved, and give life to those embryon lessons of wisdom with which they are impregnated.

At present the solidity of history is crumbled into anecdotes; and its ill-digested compilations no longer promote the study of man, or hold up to nations the mirror of their own imperfections. Poetry

## INTRODUCTION.

is banished from our island, as effectually as if Plato had moulded its institutions: but if a Plato had done it, he might have given us a little good philosophy in its place. It is strange that such an æra as this has not bred a single satirist of ability. There is, surely, enough in our political fantasies and literary absurdities to employ this salutary talent, if there was any genius to be provoked.

This inquiry would lead me, if I were to follow it further, into a wearisome extent of investigation; and my excuse for pursuing it thus far, must be the extreme importance of the subject, the provocation of existing circumstances, and the difficulty of disengaging the thoughts from a subject which includes such a variety of facts and inferences reciprocally illustrative and corroborative of each other. I was led moreover into the consideration, by the desire of accounting for the infrequency of papers, in the LOOKER-ON, upon the subjects of literature and the arts; topics which have principally exercised the pens of his predecessors. I shall conclude with making over to the reader what has been committed to me, in trust for him, by Mr. SIMON OLIVE-BRANCH. They are, in great part, the collected sentiments of a race of virtuous and sober-minded men, whose philosophy it has been to keep clear of all sects of opinionists; whose ethics have been honesty and simplicity of dealing; and whose politics have been compounded of sincere patriotism and the love of their kind.

THE  
LOOKER-ON.

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N<sup>o</sup> 1. SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 1792.

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*Spargens rore levi et ramo felicis Olive.*  
VIRGIL.

And dipp'd an Olive-branch in holy dew,  
Which next he sprinkled round.  
DRYDEN.

I AM an old man, whose best years have been employed less in the service than the survey of my fellow-creatures. It has been with me as it fares with most of us; the season of action was spent in speculation, and in husbanding up wise resolutions to be executed by and by. This by-and-by is a sort of phantom which seduces us on till we drop into old-age; and upon the first serious attack of the gout, it vanishes for ever, and carries along with it all our gay projects and cherishing hopes. Thus a youth of expectation is sure to prepare an old-age of regret; especially if, under favour of these holiday resolutions and speculative atonements, we think we may fairly contract a few debts to virtue, and intrench a little upon our future stock by the rule of anticipation. As



I never went upon this calculation myself, and was culpable for the most part only on the side of omission, I have committed very little depredation on the health of my body or the integrity of my intellect; and though advancing towards my grand climacteric, have still a competency of vigour about me, and am in a better condition than most of my age, to fetch up the arrears of my youth.

These considerations tempt me to my present undertaking, as the gravest use I can make of this twilight that remains to me; and as it is the most salutary kind of atonement for evil, to render it productive of good, I consider myself as going the directest way to work, in thus turning the indolent contemplations of my younger years to the account of virtue and morality. The same assurance and consolation, which, as Cicero tells us, encouraged the old husbandman to plant his oak while he was drooping himself, animates me also in the culture of my little plantation, and gives me warmth and alacrity in my grey years. I thought it proper in the first place to announce my age to my readers, that they might lay their account to find some old-fashioned opinions and remarks in the course of my work, and to bespeak some excuse for those freedoms which I may allow myself with the fair-sex in particular. Not that I look upon them to stand most in need of my corrections, but because I consider them as maintaining a very great influence over our sex in general, and as the authors in some measure of the excellencies and depravities of our social conduct. If I can bargain for a little more liberty on that account, I will promise always to promote their interests and empire, and to follow the example of Socrates, who was ever their firm friend, and who once delivered a discourse at the feast of Xenophon, which sent home both

bachelors and married men, some to provide themselves with wives, and others to cultivate the possession of those they already enjoyed. As I have no aches or pains about me but such as arise from sympathy with the sufferings of others, my readers will find in general that I have some good-humour in my old blood, and that cast of good-humour which flows from inward complacency of mind, and not the hey-day of animal spirits and constitutional ardour.

The present age, methinks, affords some proofs that the World is growing old as well as myself: and this crisis seems clearly to be announced by many characteristic infirmities. I do not pretend to discern any material change of physiognomy: she wears the same freshness and floridity in her looks; and though her habit has always been somewhat dropsical and gouty, her constant motion seems to have maintained her in tolerable health. Her passion for finery, too, is as great as ever; she is still as gay as before in her green and azure, and the rose and the lily still bloom in her countenance; nor is it suspected that her long journeys are performed with less ease and dispatch than in her earlier years. Her symptoms of decay are of a moral, and not a physical nature. I think I have observed, that she grows every day more prone to talk, and less patient to hear: go where you will, it is a noisy World, always holding forth, always haranguing; nothing but long speeches, from the gallows to the conventicle. She is always pointing her proof, or proving her point, and using her best endeavours to reduce the price of eloquence by an economy of thought. I consider indeed the debating-clubs as a fortunate kind of drain to this superabundance of loquacity, where much of its impertinence does periodically expend itself. The reading-clubs also, where the World goes entirely to talk, very

much assist this object; and it is a sensible pleasure to look forward to the time, when the reading-clubs and debating-clubs together may prevent this garrulity from overflowing our churches. It is also a consolation to reflect how sacred from all this clamour is the gaming-table, where nothing interrupts the silence, the order, the *religio loci*, but now and then a hollow murmur of repentance, or a burst of pious resolutions.

The solace however which we feel in these considerations, is checked by the reflection, that the mental decay of the World is so apparent in many other instances. No small suspicion of it is conveyed in that nice and difficult humour which she has of late contracted; her many odd appetites and caprices; her strange affection for wizards, witches, and conjurers; her dotage in respect to some of her youngest children, who consume her substance on the lowest pleasures; her jealousy of such as discover any real worth, and growing promise; and above all, her unwearied course of repetition, and the manifest decay of her inventive and original powers. To repair this loss of intellectual vigour, and to remove these moral complaints, is fairly out of the reach of any medicines of the mind, however administered. I could wish it were not too sanguine to hope that something might yet be done, while there is a portion of stamina remaining, in the way of palliation and diversion. Medicines of rude operation do not much agree with the patient's habit; and I should doubt of the success of any but those which act in a slow and alterative manner, and require to be administered in slight and regular doses.

Here I think I may drop my allegory, and tell my readers in unfigurative terms, that it is my design

to devote four sheets of paper a-week, to such as can be amused without the sacrifice of decency, or the prostitution of language; who can be grave without chagrin, inquisitive without malice, merry without victims; who are parties to whatever touches humanity, and can view with just sorrow the follies and infirmities of our nature, but without any contractedness of heart, or unsocialness of sentiment. I have always found myself, I don't know how, insensibly drawn towards the opinion of the Philosophical Bedlamite, who, being visited by an old friend, called him aside with a look of much importance, in order to disclose to him a very valuable secret, the purport of which was, that the bulk of mankind were mad, and had shut up within those walls all the sensible people they could find. I shall not undertake for the whole and literal acceptance of my friend the Madman's remark: but perhaps it might only be a mad kind of figure, by which he meant no more, than that, if all those who are disturbed in their intellects were inclosed within the pale of that charity, the professions would be considerably thinned, and that we should have very good elbow-room in all our public places; that to go down a country-dance would no longer be fatiguing; and that grass enough would grow in our squares to maintain all our coach and saddle horses, while the asses and goats might soon pick up a very comfortable subsistence on the road side between Charing-Cross and Temple-Bar. If our Madman had any such meaning as this, I do not see it in a light of such great absurdity; and perhaps some of those who shall follow up my papers, may be more and more reconciled to it as they proceed. In the mean time I shall do no more than my duty, in giving some account of myself, and of my qualifications for this undertaking.



I am descended from an ancient family by my mother's side, who, besides being an heiress, was a woman of great virtue and understanding. It so happened, that she was forbidden, by the conditions of the estate, to lay aside her name; a circumstance which might have brought her into difficulties, if she had not found in my father, a man who, having no particular obligations to his own name, was not unwilling to adopt hers for the sake of her good qualities. As I was the only child, I came in for a very large share of my good mother's attention; and the first piece of instruction she impressed on my mind, and which has certainly had a ruling influence on my subsequent conduct and behaviour, was drawn from a circumstance relating to her family which can never be sufficiently admired. As far back as she could trace, and she could trace very far back by the help of a variety of old records anxiously preserved, there was not one of her ancestors who had not been distinguished for a singular mildness of character, and serenity of deportment: none of them had figured at a tilt or tournament, or borne arms by profession; but in peaceful and domestic occupations, they had followed each other in quiet order to the grave, like the soft undulations of a silvery lake, where each wave that dies is renewed in its successor, which makes way for another, and another, and another, just to fill its place and depart. From this peaceful line I inherit the name of Olive-branch, to which that of Simon was added, in memory of my mother's grandfather, who was the most of a philosopher of the whole race.

Together with the name, I believe I may say I inherit some of the qualities also of the good family of the Olive-branches. What makes me think I am not degenerate, is, that I can conscientiously declare that I was never much ruffled or provoked but once,

about thirty years ago, when a careless servant threw by mistake into the fire a curious antique tobacco-stopper of my great-grandfather's, which my mother assured me it was his custom to play with between his fingers, when the buz of any debate grew high around him, with his eyes fixed on a little figure of Harpocrates, not badly expressed upon it, to prevent the danger of an appeal from either party. My mother had a pious regard for this relic, which was always one of her little *penates*, or pocket-gods; and as it had been my plaything when an infant, and constantly cured me of crying, she had almost brought herself to consider it as endued with certain sedative properties, and capable of calming the spirits under any provocation or disappointment.

My father died while I was young, and left to my mother the sole care of my education. To acquit herself of this trust, she sent me to Oxford in the year 1740. The succeeding ten years of my life passed so evenly and quietly, that they furnish me with no incident, except the considerable diminution of my mother's fortune, which arose from her own inattention to these matters, added to the mismanagement of her steward. This was somewhat made up to us, however, by my election to a fellowship of the college, in the year 1751, to which my quiet inoffensive character principally recommended me. From this time I spent a great many years in the pursuits of literature and philosophy, but chiefly in the observation of what passed around me; without ever forgetting the rule of my forefathers, to maintain a rigid neutrality among my friends and neighbours, and a catholic charity towards all mankind.

In this manner did forty years of my life steal on ingloriously, without occupation, without noise, with-

out notoriety, and with little variation of pulse or principle. My ease, however, was not of a slumbering or torpid kind: it was always a pleasure to me to speculate on the good of my species, to study the dispositions and characters of men, and to treasure up rules of life and conduct, in order to add to that store of observations and maxims, which it had been the ancient custom of our family to collect. Circumstances have since persuaded me to make a free offer to my contemporaries of this whole patrimony of common sense, accumulated and approved through many generations of the Olive-branch family. The public will as easily distinguish between what I have added myself, and what I have borrowed from my mother's manuscripts, as between old Hock or Canary, and the flavour of *English* port; or, to carry the allusion more home to the Olive-branches, they will find in my own produce none of that essential *balsamic oil*, which my ancestors had the art of expressing and bottling for preservation; and where I make an attempt to mix them together, they will think of those lines of Dryden's on the poor poet laureate:

But so transfus'd as oil and water flow,  
Theirs always floats above---thine sinks below.

But to go on with my history—When I had attained to the age of forty-five, my mother, who loved tranquillity, but not inoccupation, persuaded me to enter into holy orders; and in ten years afterwards she was able to purchase the living I at present enjoy in Northamptonshire, where I have now spent six years of my life with my usual serenity, and in perfect good understanding with all my parishioners, young and old. It is a great happiness to me, to have my mother still with me, and in good general health,

abating some necessary infirmities; a circumstance I attribute to her even economy and hereditary composure of spirits, which have kept the stream of life from exhausting itself in floods and torrents. To this smooth turn of character I do also attribute the great age to which most of my ancestors have arrived. I never shall forget one of my great-grandfather's letters on the death of his youngest brother, who was cut off at the age of seventy-one, wherein, after calling him a giddy young fellow, he tells us that he met his death in the act of pulling on a tight pair of boots after eating a bason of broth with Cayenne pepper. It has ever since been looked upon in our family as an unpardonable debauch, to swallow any thing that can raise the smallest combustion within us.

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N<sup>o</sup> 2. TUESDAY, MARCH 13.

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“ *Olet lucernam.*”

“ It smells of OIL.”

BEFORE I proceed in this my undertaking, I think it necessary to give a hint respecting it to my worthy contemporaries. As my mother and myself are the last of the Olive-branch family, and as it is one of our hereditary statutes (to which we always pay implicit obedience) to let none of our manuscripts stray into other hands, I hope to be encouraged to prosecute a plan, which, if pursued for any length of time, will put my countrymen in possession of this



valuable stock of ancestral wisdom before we take our leave of them, without any breach of our family institutes, which are as solemn as those of the Medes and Persians. The fruits also of the quiet and impartial observation of what hath passed around me these five-and-forty years, may be of some importance to them; and as the complacent turn of thought and morality, peculiar to our race, will perish with me, I wish to persuade the public to make the most of me while they have me, and to follow the example of the philosopher Thales, who, foreseeing a future dearth of *olives*, bought up all he could find, on a prudent speculation, to convince the world that he knew how to be rich if he chose it. Should I meet with this good disposition in the public towards me, I engage, on my part, to render these my lucubrations as various and amusing as possible; and as an Englishman is a fickle being, and in the space of one week will be full of whim, wit, wine, satire, sentiment, and sorrow, which succeed each other like the farming courses of turnips, barley, clover, wheat, the one making preparation for the other, I shall take pains to suit this diversity of character as much as may consist with the discretion and decency which are to run uniformly through the whole. I shall procure also, on the same account, the very best barometer that can be made, in order to consult the state and influence of the weather in this precarious climate; having enough to contend with, without entering into a contest with the elements. For I could wish that such of my papers as are of a gay and sprightly turn, should not have to combat with chronic pains and a cloudy atmosphere, and that my recommendation of rural pleasures should not fall on the rainiest day of the year. I would be cautious, too, of dwelling too much on domes-

tic occupations, when all the world are invited abroad by the salubrity and cheerfulness of the weather ;

“ And young and old come forth to play,  
“ On a sunshine holiday.”

This complaisance will be sufficiently rewarded, if it gain me the appellation of a polite writer. I would fain be *felix Oliva* and not *foliis Oleaster amaris* ; which phrases I beg such of my readers as have been at school to translate to their mothers, aunts, and wives, that the ladies in particular may know what they have to expect from me ; for my natural complacency of temper has always inspired me with a peculiar regard to the softer sex. I promise not to handle them more roughly than their old friend Mr. Ironside, or the gentle and courtly Spectator. When I venture on the subject of their failings, it is not by violence, but by reiterated endeavours, that I shall expect to carry my point ; and where it is my fate to encounter a flinty bosom, I shall cherish a hope, that the unwearied train of my admonitions may at length leave some track or vestige, like the foot-path which Pliny tells us is sometimes worn on the hardest stones, by the constant passage of the little pismires with their stores and merchandise.

If any choleric spirit, or gentleman whose honesty is swallowed up in his honour, any green gamester, any *prætextatus adulter*, any knight of industry, or loose-stocking hero, imagine himself reflected upon in the course of the work, the only revenge he can have of me will be to speak in praise of my speculations ; for as to fighting, I assure him, I am a very peaceful man, and will not, if I can help it, meet him either in this world or in the next. I

declare also, as plainly, that I write only to those in whose breasts there is some portion of native English worth, however modified or obscured: some original stuff there must be of staunch and staple quality, or nothing can be done effectually in the way of embellishment.

I give up all pretensions to please minds without religion, sense, or sensibility; for to such there is no access: and before any young gentleman, returned from his Italian tour, take my paper into his hand, I should wish him to have resided a year with his friends in the country, to have worn out his silk coat, and to have recovered a little of our tramontane principles, and the rustic probity of his rude forefathers. But, however frequently I shall appeal to religion and morality for the support of my observations, I shall allow myself a reasonable use of ridicule and satire, softening them as much as possible with all the urbanity that can enter into their composition; for as the sharpest vinegar is made from the sweetest wines, so that raillery is the keenest, which flows from good-humour and complacency.

On this subject it may be necessary to add a caution to some of our London sparks, against supposing that they can elude the observation of a country parson amidst the press of folly and fashion; for I assure them that I have correspondents who send me the most secret accounts of their histories and characters. It is well known to my correspondent, myself, and his mother, that the haughty Appius does not know his own father; and if the gallant Clodius cannot write a grammatical sentence, it is a circumstance which I am apprised of as well as his mistress.

I consider it as one of the severest conditions of this my undertaking, that I must counteract in many

instances the natural complacency of my temper, which leads me to be tender towards all mankind, and to qualify rather than expose their failings and their vices. A pusillanimous attack would only serve to provoke the courage of the enemy, by betraying a diffidence of the strength of my cause. I have therefore thoroughly made up my mind to pursue folly and depravity into all their entrenchments, to follow them from the gaming-house to the palace, and keep up with them in their curricles and phaëtons.

I shall consider nothing as sacred, but Virtue, Poverty, and Misfortune. No sacrifice will be made to the mode, but where the mode has sacrificed to nature and to reason; on the contrary, frequent attempts will be made to rescue many obsolete usages of our ancestors, which had utility and good sense on their side, from perishing in the lump with long-curl'd perriwigs, pug-dogs, and body-coachmen. For the necessary information in the prosecution of this plan, I trust to the fidelity and exertions of my correspondents in town, who have promised me their best endeavours towards the supply of such facts as will serve to ground my reflections upon. I feel indeed already all the weight of my undertaking; but am animated by the persuasion that some of the most intelligent of my countrymen or countrywomen will now and then give me a holiday, by a seasonable contribution.

The first check my courage received was in the very threshold of my work: I was not able, with all my pains, to discover a name for it, in the whole compass of the English language, that could meet the approbation of any three of my friends. Some were too short, some were too long, some were too high, some were too low; some they did not like, they did



not know why ; they liked another better, they did not know what : in some there was nothing, in others there was a sort of something. My mother liked the Rover ; but my curate's wife had lost a spaniel of that name. The Prophet, the Trumpet, and Budget, were too full of pretension. Telescope was too technical, Ordinary was too common-place, and Salmagunda would not be pretty in the mouth. The Old Bachelor was thought to be too taxable a shape to appear in. I was inclined, for some time, to Breakfast ; but it occurred to me, that the fashionable world have no stomach for this meal. For a fortnight I pleased myself with Bubble and Squeak ; but this, it appeared to some of my wary friends, would create a suspicion of its originality. I was a simple By-stander for some days, and very comfortable I was ; till being pushed out of my place by a low scribbler, who claimed it as his own, I contented myself with being a Looker-on, in one as remote from it as possible.

My thoughts have been so much occupied about the matter of my papers, ever since I determined finally on the name, that it is to be supposed I have had some dreams concerning them. One particularly has left such connected impressions on my memory, that I cannot forbear communicating it. Some persons, I know, are fond of collecting these pranks and vagaries of thought ; for my part, I consider them as the mere pastime of the soul—the frolics and gambols of a high-mettled horse, just loosed from the slavery of his collar, and turned out amidst the gay herbage of a green meadow.

I happened to sit up, the night before last, rather later than usual ; and, as my mother had retired to her pillow, I seated myself in a great chair, opposite a brisk fire, thinking over various subjects for my

future speculations; when, as was natural, I fell asleep, and had the following vision: There appeared before me an immense gallery, the sides of which were entirely filled up with books: methought the room was capable of containing every book of the least note in the English language. At the further extremity was a beautiful arch, built up with the works of different authors, and which I concluded to be the most considerable, as I observed the keystone was represented by the Bible itself. In the middle of the room, there was an exact pyramid of the same materials, which I had not leisure to examine thoroughly; I remember only to have seen near the bottom some of our best authors in algebra and the mathematics.

What surprised me most, in the scene before me, was the great distraction of lights that prevailed every where; some whole compartments were perfectly illuminated, while others were in total obscurity. In the Critic's corner there was a broken frittered light; and I could not but observe it to be the coldest part of the room. In the Philosophical division it was curious enough to mark the gradation: the works of Roger Bacon were wrapt in a grey sombre kind of light, which grew stronger and stronger, till it blazed out at the other extremity, where stood the volumes of Boyle, Newton, and Locke. In the division set apart for Polemic writers, there was a sullen sort of light with little or no radiance, something like the sun seen through a darkening medium: as I passed by this compartment, however, I felt the suffocating heat of a glass-house. In the Poet's range there was a prodigious glare, like the effect of crystals: it was particularly dazzling about the wits of our own time; but grew chaster and purer, as I cast my eye back towards the earlier

writers. I would fain have satisfied my curiosity a little further; but suddenly a murmur of people talking diverted my attention. I observed a stately person, whom I knew to be Alfred the Great, not by the assistance of our historical engravers, but by certain associations in my own mind. He marched up, in a very dignified manner, to a large table, by the side of which there was a costly urn, decorated with hieroglyphical figures. Some attendants followed, and stood around him, as if to wait his commands; while he was seated upon a throne of some folio volumes magnificently bound, which I guessed to be the Cyclopaedia. I was struck with awe at his imposing appearance, and shrunk behind a huge Atlas, peeping over it to see the ceremony.

A very great pile of books was presently laid upon the table; by which I rightly conjectured, that this first patron of English literature was about to enter on an inquisition of all the works which had appeared since his time. My curiosity was greatly inflamed, when I perceived that the object of this day's examination was the periodical works; and that, upon his taking up the top of the urn, there blazed out a clear bluish flame. I was amazed to see him throw the four volumes of the Tatler into the urn; and more so, when I observed enough only to compose three and a half come out again. After a little thought however on this phænomenon, it occurred to me, that this must be a purifying flame, which consumed only what was idle or immoral in the works committed to it.

Very few of the periodical essays lost any thing on the account of immorality; but the want of originality, strength, or elegance, sunk a good deal in most of them. Ungrammatical sentences, repetitions, and false wit, supplied plenty of nourishment to the

flame; and all our late productions suffered much on this score. When the Rambler was thrown in, there was a terrible crackling noise; not a sentence however seemed to have been consumed, though many of them had lost a sounding word or two. A multitude of other productions of the same denomination went through the same ordeal. Some very voluminous essays were reduced to single Duodecimos; some, from plump octavos, came out sixpenny pamphlets; of some there only survived a paper or two; of many there remained only their mottos; and some perished altogether. In the Spectator alone I could perceive no diminution of size: it came out with only the loss of its outside covers, which, happening to be of sheep-skin, were perhaps sacrificed as too ordinary for such a work. Its urbanity of criticism, its elegance of morality, its playfulness of allusion, and that humorous arrangement of words, which a breath might almost discompose, came out whole and untouched as the asbestos. At this instant a prodigious pile of News-papers and Magazines was thrown into the urn, which suddenly emitted such a fierce flame, accompanied with so black a smoke, that I imagined myself on the point of being burned or suffocated, and could not for a long time see my hand before me.

As soon as the room was a little cleared, I perceived walking towards the table a grave old man, who resembled exactly the portrait of my great-grandfather, the legislator of our family; and I thought I discovered in one hand the First Number of my work, and his favourite tobacco-stopper fast clenched in the other: he seemed to deliver it to the judge, who threw it into the inquisitorial flame. At that moment my apprehensions for the fate of my dear infant were so great, that I awoke



in the struggle, and was surprised to find myself in a crouching attitude, behind the back of my great chair; which I never see, without thinking of my old friend the Atlas: and even the tea-urn has never since made its appearance, without calling up a visible suffusion in my cheeks,

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N<sup>o</sup> 3. SATURDAY, MARCH 17.

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Πημα κακος γειτων ὅσον τ' αγαθος μεγ' ουειαρ.

HESIOD.

“ It is hard to say which is the greater, the inconvenience of a bad neighbour, or the advantage of a good one.”

WE are told, that Themistocles, having a farm to dispose of, took particular care to make it known that it had the advantage of a good neighbour; considering this as a circumstance that would greatly recommend it. I am so strongly of this opinion myself, that I regard it as the most fortunate occurrence of my life that I am surrounded by a worthy set of parishioners, who all study to make my residence among them the most agreeable in the world. It is true, indeed, I had the advantage of succeeding to a rector, who was not of the same contented turn, and was more frequently at issue with his brethren on a point of law than a point of doctrine. My placid temper was no sooner discovered, than it gained me the hearts of most of my flock; and I observe that this friendly disposition towards me is hourly im-

proving in them, as they find that they can reckon upon a continuance of this content and tranquillity on my part.

I have often thought that a small augmentation of tithes is dearly purchased by the sacrifice of this mutual cordiality and confidence. There is something in the consciousness that others share our joys and enter into our feelings, and that our health and happiness are a real concern to our neighbours, which cherishes the soul and seems to dilate its capacities. I glow with satisfaction, when, after some days' confinement, I see sincere congratulations in the looks of every one I meet: methinks at that moment I love myself the more for their sakes; and the delight of my honest parishioners is multiplied into my own.

Since I have been settled here, we have been gradually forming ourselves into a society that has something novel in its principle and constitution. Our number is sixteen, and includes many of the principal gentlemen in the neighbourhood. We have a discipline among us, the object of which is, to promote the ends of company and conversation, by maintaining the most perfect order, sobriety, and peace. My quiet behaviour, and known habits of complacency, have raised me, though with some reluctance on my part, to the place of perpetual president.

The fundamental article of our constitution, is the prohibition of every species of noise; for, as long as this is inadmissible, we think ourselves out of all danger of quarrelling, from which a degree of noise is inseparable: and though nonsense is not statutable among us, yet we are not afraid of its going to any great lengths under the evident disadvantages of order and tranquillity. There is a certain

severity in silence, which will often check the course of an idle argument, when opposition and ridicule are employed in vain. I remember hearing a plethoric young man run on with surprising volubility for an hour and a half, by the help only of two ideas, during the violence of a debate; till a sudden pause in the rest of the company proved clearly that he was talking about a matter which bore no relation to the point in dispute. The attention of the company being now wholly turned towards him, he began to totter under the mass of confusion he had so long been accumulating; when with one spring he cleared the present difficulty, and leaped from Seringapatam into the minister's budget: here, however, being nearly smothered, he made a violent effort; and before we could turn about to assist him, he was up to his neck in tar-water. He was twice, after this, in danger of being lost in the Southern Ocean; but an African slave-vessel took him up each time, and landed him, some how or other, at Nootka Sound. If I remember right, he held out till the siege of Oczakow, where he was put out of his misery by a summons from Tartary to the tea-table.—Thus a great deal of precious time is husbanded by this rule of silent attention among the members of our society; and many an idle speech falls to the ground ere it can get three sentences forwards, and is strangled like a Turkish criminal by dumb executioners.

Any elevation of voice above a certain pitch is highly illegal, and punishable accordingly; and to ascertain this proportion as duly as possible, we have taken a room for our purpose, in which there is a very distinct echo, which must not be roused from its dormant state, under very heavy penalties. Any man provoking it to repeat his last word, is judged to be defeated in the argument he is maintaining, and

the dispute must be abandoned altogether ; the echo pronounces his sentence, from which there is no appeal. The abuse of superlatives is also cognisable among us ; and no man is allowed to say, that his house is the pleasantest in the neighbourhood, that his dogs run the best, or that his crops are the most plentiful. Whatever carries the notion of a challenge with it, or can lead to a wager, we are pledged to discountenance. We admit neither toasting nor singing upon any pretext ; and it would be as great an offence to raise a horse-laugh in a quaker's meeting, as to encourage any rude expression of joy among us. An ancient gentleman, lately admitted, was bound over last Saturday, for an eulogy upon old Mr. Shapely's fresh countenance, and a hint at his maid Kitty's corpulency, accompanied with a wink to Mr. Barnaby the churchwarden.

We admit no bets upon any question whatever ; and gaming is proscribed by the most solemn inhibitions. The merits of our neighbours is a topic we are forbid to descant upon ; and it was a question at our last meeting but one, whether the mention of Mr. Courtly's carbuncle was not unconstitutional. As we are all old fellows, and have pretty well lived over the petulance and heyday of passion, these restraints bear less hard upon us, and forfeits become every day less frequent among us ; insomuch that we are likely soon to be forced upon some regular contributions, in place of the fines from which we have hitherto drawn our support. I am in hopes we shall at last bring our plan to that state of perfection, that a breach of any statute will stand upon our records as a remarkable occurrence.

The first visit of a new member is a spectacle diverting enough, and it is generally a full half-year before we can shape him and clip him to our stan-



dard. It is now about three years since 'squire Blunt bought a large estate in our neighbourhood; and, during the first twelve months, we heard of nothing but this gentleman's quarrels and litigations. As I sometimes walk in his chesnut-groves to meditate upon matter for the entertainment of my worthy readers, I have been twice prosecuted for a trespass, and for breaking down his palings in pursuit of game; and, happening one day to take a telescope out with me, I was again threatened with the vengeance of the law for carrying a gun on his manor.

As it is looked upon as some honour to be of our society, this rough gentleman was suddenly seized with an unaccountable inclination to become a member; and it was astonishing to every body, that, after being well apprised of the inconvenience and rigour of our institution, and his own inability to perform the engagements of it, his ambition seemed no wise discouraged, and he still persisted in his design of proposing himself. As we have a certain term of probation, we rarely refuse to any body above the age of fifty (which is the age of admission) the favour of a trial. The following is a list of Mr. Blunt's forfeits in the black book.

- 1st day—Endured his own silence so long, that he fell asleep. On being awakened at the hour of separation, swore a great oath, and paid a guinea.
- 2nd day—Had three shillings'-worth of superlatives, and a sixpenny whistle; besides paying a crown to the echo.
- 3rd day—Offered to lay a bottle that he would eat two hundred oysters, and paid five shillings:—went to sleep for the rest of the evening.

5th day—Called for a song, and paid a shilling instead ; nine shillings and sixpence for disturbing the echo ; paid thirty shillings and sixpence for contumacy, and swore himself to Coventry.

Here there was an interval of some months, during which our novice absented himself. We were surprised however, one day, with his company, after we had given him up as irreclaimable. He appeared indeed to bring with him a disposition greatly corrected, and actually incurred only two forfeits the whole evening ; namely, for bursting into a horse-laugh on Mr. Sidebottom's missing his chair, and giving Mr. Barnaby a slap on the back that raised the echo, and a violent fit of coughing. Since this time he has been twice off and on ; but has at last so far accommodated himself to the conditions of the society, as to be counted a valuable member. Having made a great progress in the science of self-correction, his understanding has obtained its proper poise ; his reason has had room to exert itself, and has given life and energy to a mass of much good meaning that lay buried at the bottom of his mind.

The fame of this mighty cure hath brought us a great accumulation of credit and power ; and it hath actually been in speculation among the freeholders and other voters in the county, to elect their representatives in future from our society ; a rule that would ensure to them men of ripe understandings and regular habits. We are subject (as every good institution is) to ridicule from without : the young gentlemen are very pleasant upon us ; and we pass under a variety of names among them, as, the Automats, the Quietists, the Meeting, the Dummies,



the Wig Club, the Rough Riders' Company, the Bearded Magdalens, the Grey Friars, the Court of Death, and the House of Correction. Such as have not quite turned the corner of fifty, and want a few months of being eligible, are very severe upon our age; call us the Antediluvians, and talk much of an opposition club of young fellows. While we have daily proofs, however, of the good effects of our institution, we are indifferent to attacks of every kind. We have the sensible pleasure of finding that the operation of our system is spreading; our married men return with sober spirits to their homes and hearths, and adopt, in part, our peaceful regulations in the bosom of their families; and it is not uncommon to see one of our old bachelors preferred by the ladies to beaux of five-and-twenty.

But the advantages resulting from these our institutions are not merely of a moral kind: topics of literature and criticism come frequently under our consideration, which will necessarily flourish under circumstances of peace and good order; and as at our meetings, which happen weekly, papers and communications on various subjects are read to us, I promise my readers to present them from time to time with such specimens as I think may amuse them.

On points of religion and politics, it is but rare that we allow ourselves to expatiate: religion being throughout a connected and analogous system, is never fairly viewed but when we take in the whole, and therefore can never properly become the object of broken and desultory conversation: politics being a question that produces much heat, and little satisfaction, where obliquity of views and attractions of interest are sure to falsify the balance of our minds, we have almost entirely proscribed it; and if it be

by accident introduced, it is presently condemned by the spiritual censures of the infallible echo. Yet, although we think these matters too delicate and dangerous to be treated of in an argument, we often hear them touched upon in papers which are the lubrications of such of our members as have leisure to commit their thoughts to writing; and, since very agreeable presents of this kind are sometimes made to us, I shall beg my reader's acceptance of such as I think will be most to his purpose.

But although we place great dependance on the efficacy of this regimen of tranquillity and order for the cure of a great many complaints in our social system, yet there are some which we are obliged to abandon to severer modes of chastisement.

Not to undertake above our ability, we exclude a certain description of characters from the privilege of a trial.

An avowed party-man is utterly inadmissible, whatever may be his other pretensions:—we set a higher value upon truth and temper, than upon the finest philippic in the world.

We have no room for atheists or ideots, or any such enemies to rule; especially as we hear that they have a club of their own, which meets sometimes in one place, sometimes in another, as *chance* directs; but very often in a street called Pall-Mall, or Pell-Mell, from some analogy in the name; which association, in strict conformity to their principles of confusion, is composed of all sorts except the good; and includes princes, and lords, and jockeys, who are jumbled together like their world of atoms.

We admit no man who keeps a woman, while he is kept by his wife.

We admit no notorious parasites or hangers-on.

Mr. Sykes, the curate of the next parish, has been refused, for having the run of the squire's kitchen, and the combing of my lady's lap-dog. Mr. Barnaby, the churchwarden, has complained of fleas, and the smell of parsnips, ever since he came to propose himself. When this gentleman is disposed to be facetious, he suggests the idea of a parasitical club, on the plan of one that was formerly established among the turnspit-dogs, when this fraternity was in its full glory and consequence, who were observed to meet every morning in the Grove at Bath, for the sake of business, friendship, or gallantry, and then distribute themselves about the town according to their different destinations.

We have a rooted abhorrence of all gamesters, liars, and debauchees: we are therefore particularly on our guard against all such as have aspired to the infamy of certain great connections. Bad husbands and sons, and all those who sin against these sacred duties and charities of life, we include under one solemn sentence of proscription.

We are very shy of a man who, after the age of fifty, continues to be called Dick or Jack such-a-one; such men have probably sacrificed too much to notoriety to deserve respect.

We give little encouragement to geniuses, as geniuses are at present; whose wit principally consists in a habit of negligence, uncleanness, and absence, and arises out of their want of judgement.

We have also a prejudice against a description of persons who are called ingenious gentlemen, who have in general no other claim to this title than what is derived from the solution of an enigma in the Lady's Magazine, or a contribution to the Poets' Corner. A rage for riddles and impromptues, were it to get footing among us, would be a mighty hin-

drance to the flow of conversation. It creates a kind of scramble in the mind of one that has a turn for these pleasantries, and scatters abroad his ideas like a ruined ant's nest; while those who are used to reason right forward, and to keep a steady point in view, are forced to sit in vacant silence, with their faculties bound up in a stupid thralldom.

It is the humour of our society to denominate all such as cannot be admitted among us, outlaws; which general term is meant to answer to the *οἱ Βαρβαροι* of the Greeks, with this difference, that the reproach conveyed in it does not fall indiscriminately on such as are without the circle, but merely on those to whom all entrance into it is for ever barred.

I shall conclude my paper of to-day with informing my readers, that the gentleman who hath had the principal share in drawing up our code of laws, is a Mr. Anthony Allworth, a most valuable member of this our society, of whom I shall have frequent occasion to speak in the course of my speculations, when I wish to hold up a more animated picture than ordinary of sublime virtue and practical religion. This gentleman is now in his seventieth year, and keeps himself in health by the diversion of his mind, and the exercise of his body, in his unwearied search after objects for his beneficence. He was one of our earliest members, and still suffers no weather to prevent his constant attendance. As he passes through many scenes in the course of every day, he never fails to introduce some agreeable or pathetic story, that sends us away more cheerful, or more resigned. His examples and admonitions are principally instrumental in conciliating new members, and rendering them more docile and tractable: he has completely won Mr.



Blunt's esteem; and has never been known to raise the echo himself, but in the cause of unprotected innocence, or forsaken truth.

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N<sup>o</sup> 4. TUESDAY, MARCH 20.

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*Licet superbus ambules pecuniâ,  
Fortuna non mutat genus.*

HORAT.

Fortune cannot change your blood,  
Although you strut as if it could.

In this land of industry and commerce, where fortunes are ever in a constant flux, it is curious to observe the rapid changes which perpetually occur in the consequence and figure of different individuals. These revolutions have, without doubt, their social advantages: they break the force of pride, which is always attended with an exclusive spirit; they open a wider field for the emulation of talents; and by diffusing the feelings of fellowship, and the ties of affinity among us, give a freer range to the duties of benevolence and the practice of virtue. If such be a natural result of this community and participation of riches and honour, it is painful to observe the exceptions exhibited in the conduct of certain individuals. There are some ordinary spirits among us, who, having just emerged, by a perverse partiality of fortune, from the lowest conditions, conceive that the only way of showing themselves qualified to maintain their new character, is to manifest an extreme scorn of the old

one; and that, to evince an elevation of mind proportioned to their rise of fortune, they have only to discard the associates and witnesses of their humble beginnings.—A gentleman who finds himself in this description of deserted friends, has made the following complaint to me, by letter, permitting me to make my own use of it.

*To the Rev. Simon Olive-branch.*

Dear Simon,

Oxford.

You remember, no doubt, your old fellow-collegian Tom Varnish, whose principal recommendation was his apparent good-nature, and his companionable qualities. You will be surprised to hear, that, by a fortunate connection, he is become dean of —. The first time I saw him after his preferment, I stretched out my hand to him, to wish him joy, in quality of an old friend and associate, but could only grasp the tip of his longest finger: he made me, however, a very polite bow, and told me his dinner was always on table at half after five, if I ever came his way. He left me in such utter surprise, that I was fixed on the spot for some moments. It occurred to me, however, upon a little reflection, that this must have been a mere joke, which would serve us to laugh over at some snug meeting at the deanery. His subsequent conduct has undeceived me; and I plainly see that I am never to be acknowledged on the ancient footing. I own I should feel a very violent indignation towards this poltroon, and should be provoked to some signal revenge, if such behaviour did not in a great measure carry its punishment with it; but I observe, that since his elevation there are fewer smiles on his countenance, and there seems to be a constraint in his looks and demeanour, which



betrays an inward perplexity, the constant companion of pride. There is always, methinks, a sort of treason in these abuses of friendship, that leaves a conscious stain upon the mind; a secret sense of unworthiness, that sinks us amidst our triumphs, and falsifies our greatness.

I happened to meet him the other day in a large company, where it was my fortune to be seated next to him. I thought this a favourable opportunity for pressing some anecdotes home to his recollection, that might stir up some ancient regards, if any were left at the bottom of his mind. I talked to him of the old tree, under whose shade we had passed so many hours, in reading a story of Chaucer, a play of Shakspeare, or the humours of the knight of La Mancha. I reminded him of our names cut out together on the examining-chair in the schools. I told him, that his likeness was still hanging over my mantle-piece, which brought to my mind a thousand soothing remembrances of my youth; and that I often pleased myself with contemplating the unconsciousness that appeared in my friend's countenance, of any views towards that elevation which he has since experienced. I assured him, that our little laundress, though not in the pride of her looks, was still fresh, florid, and good-natured; and often talked of Tom Varnish's genteel leg, and sociable temper.

All this, however, appeared to give him rather offence than pleasure. At the mention indeed of Miss Jenny, his eyes seemed to sparkle a little, and his fingers involuntarily moved towards his band, which had formerly passed through the renovating hands of the pretty laundress. I returned home, chagrined at the littleness of human pride, and the sorry make of our minds, which can be content thus

to barter the real enjoyments of life for its pageantry and impositions. Seeing a loose bit of paper and a pen on my table, the thought occurred to me of putting down certain obligations conferred upon our worthy dean in the days of our intimacy, which serve to point out the meanness from which he has emerged. As I think myself justified in keeping no measures with such a character, I authorise you to insert the following list in one of your periodical essays, if you think it worth your notice.

- Dec. 25, 1778. Being Christmas-day, lent to Tom Varnish a clean shirt and a sermon on the occasion.
- Jan. 3. A crown for a Christmas-box to Jenny.
- 31. Corrected a declamation for him, by making a new one.
- March 1. Lent him a pair of worsted gloves during the hard frost.
- April 4. Paid Mr. Gangrene for the setting of his collar-bone; also his forfeits to the free-and-easy club.
- June 22. Paid two-thirds of the expence of Jenny's misfortune.
- Aug. 28. Saved him from drowning, in a scheme down the river to Henley.
- Oct. 6. Lent him a pair of boots, a whip, and a shilling for the turnpikes, besides paying for his horse, to enable him to ride over to his uncle the cow-doctor, who lay ill of a dropsy.
- March 3, 1779. Puffed him off to Sir H. O'N., by whose interest he went with the lord-lieutenant to Ireland.
- July 15. Made up a quarrel about potatoes, which took place at the moment of his landing.

Aug. 7. Saved him from a challenge from the rev. Dr. Patrick O'Bryan, by proving that he had no meaning in any thing he said.

A multitude of little services have escaped my recollection; but these will be sufficient to show, that the dean of — has clean forgotten Tom Varnish, and Tom Varnish's friends. Be so good as to make a memorandum of this letter; and if I perceive any future changes in this self-tormenter, I will not fail to give you some further accounts of him.

Yours ever,

ANTHONY TRUEMAN.

I thought there was so much honesty and good sense in this letter, that I determined to make a present of it to my readers: and though the catalogue which my friend Trueman has sent me may seem to bear rather too hard upon the reverend dean, yet a pride of this sort does so eminently misbecome a teacher of Christianity, and betrays such a corruption of heart, that I cannot think the punishment improper either in kind or degree.

For my part, with my sedate habits, and sober complexion, these frightful transformations of my countrymen surprise me strangely. For as, in my own family, whole generations have exactly agreed, and the father has regularly reproduced himself in the son, I am the more astonished to see a man so much at variance with himself. There must certainly have been some witchcraft in Tom Varnish's history; which puts me very much in mind of the poet's account of the metamorphosis of Atlas into a mountain: his beard and hair shot up into a huge forest; his shoulders and hands became ridges; his head supplied the place of a pinnacle; his bones were converted into rocks; then his whole person

swelled out to a monstrous size, on which all the stars of heaven reposed.

“ Quantus erat mons factus Atlas : jam barba comæque  
 In silvas abeunt, juga sunt humerique manusque ;  
 Quod caput ante fuit, summo est in monte cacumen ;  
 Ossa lapis fiunt. Tum partes auctus in omnes  
 Crevit in immensum, (sic Di statuistis) et omne  
 Cum tot sideribus cœlum requievit in illo.”

Cicarella, in his life of Pope Sixtus Quintus, tells us, that that pontiff used frequently to please himself with jesting upon the meanness of his origin. He would say that he was *domo natus perillustri*; the cottage wherein he was born being so out of repair, that the sun shone through every part of it. Cicero, with more gravity, observes, *Satius est meis gestis florere quam majorum auctoritatibus inniti, et ita vivere ut sim posteris meis nobilitatis initium et virtutis exemplum.* “ It is more honourable for me to be dignified by my own actions, than to lean upon the authority of my ancestors; and so to live, that I may be a fountain of nobility and an example of virtue to my descendants.”

Our worthy dean does not appear at present to feel all the force of these laudable sentiments; but I depend upon his coming over to our party, at some period of his life. When old-age and sickness press upon him, he will look around him, perhaps in vain, for his old friend Anthony Trueman, to refresh his mind with the pleasing recollections of his youth, and to talk with him about young Jenny and the old tree.

Yesterday, as I was pursuing my reflections on this subject, it occurred to me, that some good advice to such characters as I have been describing might be conveyed in the notion of a letter from a



man's former self to his present self, which might run as follows :

“ Worshipful Sir,

“ Though perhaps you recollect with no great cordiality or esteem the person who now takes the liberty of addressing you, I feel so much interest in your honour and happiness, that I cannot refuse myself the satisfaction of laying before you some truths which you may turn greatly to account. I own I cannot but complain bitterly of the contempt with which you treat a person born of as good a family as yourself, and bred to the same expectations; and one too whom you formerly loved better than your father or mother, and as much as your own life.

“ If I am rightly informed, sir, you have extended this illiberal conduct to my friends, and have represented Mr. Shortland as a person of mean condition, to whom, nevertheless, you are in a great measure obliged for your present elevation. As to myself, be assured, sir, your efforts to cast oblivion and obscurity around me, will only make me the more noticed; and that, whatever comparisons shall be made, they will be to the disadvantage of yourself. I do not conceive in what circumstance you pretend to be my superior, except in the base article of wealth. You may be a greater man; but you have not so much ease, so much leisure, so much youth, so much health, so much strength, so many real friends, and so much content. I am pretty sure, too, that a certain lady, whom we have both addressed, prefers in her own breast my little farm to your fine house and your laced liveries: but I respect your happiness so much, that I would resign her to you, if you would but adopt a more amiable and rational way of thinking.

“ I shall never make any farther overtures towards a reconciliation ; but shall always be ready to embrace you whenever you feel yourself disposed to sink this awkward distance between us. You will be most likely to find me, on such an occasion, in the poplar-groves behind your house, or on the terrace just out of the village, at the hours of nine and ten in the evening, particularly if it be moonlight. Be assured, you will never hear of me at any public places ; for crowds are my abomination. I am sensible that the pride and deceit of these corrupt resorts first produced the melancholy separation that has taken place between us.

“ I knew what was to be my fate, from the moment that old lady Margaret Mildmay whispered in your ear the words ‘ seducing arts,’ and ‘ delicate situations.’ Ever since these ominous phrases, you have kept me at the most mortifying distance ; but finding it rather difficult to shake me off at once, you pinched, buckram’d, and pomatum’d me up to such a degree, that I could not hold out any longer. I have often tried to meet you since our total separation ; but as I have not been used to the smell of perfumes, I could never come within your atmosphere, except once indeed, when, in flying from two unmannerly catchpoles, you ran full against me in turning a corner, and did me the favour of jostling me into the kennel.

“ One thing however, sir, I must insist upon, which is, that you will forbear any contemptuous insinuations respecting my friend Dick Shortland’s family, since you cannot boast so good a one : and as to myself, sir, you cannot be ignorant that your great-grandfather was a chimney-sweeper, as well as my own ; and that, if it were not for that noble invention, for which the world is indebted to a person



who was great-uncle to both of us, of liquid shining blacking for shoes, you could never have expected to maintain so much consequence in life, as even your neglected friend and humble servant,

“ HUMPHRY QUONDAM.”

I cannot forbear following up this letter with an exhortation to my readers, to reflect, that the humane and social duties press equally on all situations of life ; and that, if prosperity deprive us of our unbought friendships, it must ever after remain in hopeless arrears to us, whatever degree of plenty it may shower into our bosoms : it has robbed us of the day-light, which no borrowed glare of lamps and crystals can supply.

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N<sup>o</sup> 5. SATURDAY, MARCH 24.

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*Sit mihi fas audita loqui.*

To spread those words abroad I cannot fear,  
Which virgins speak, and saints unblushing hear.

THOUGH I am an old bachelor, and naturally of a cold constitution, yet I have always been fond of mixing among my fair countrywomen wherever I have seen an opportunity. A fine eye affects me like a fine day, which sets my spirits afloat, and gives spring and vigour to my fancy. My vacant composure of countenance makes me less suspected of impertinent curiosity ; and as I am never heard to

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without malice, or without meaning. I have consequently been treated with a great deal of female anecdote, and female eloquence. Scarce a day passes, but my mother has a little levee of the young and old of her own sex, who are all enamoured of her complacency, her old-fashioned sense, and historical memory.

There is a sort of treaty of commerce between them, that turns to their mutual account. My mother has a way of reviving the remembrances of her youth, and of retailing her curious stock of obsolete anecdotes and usages, that gathers around her the most rational part of her own sex, who are glad to exchange, for this antiquated merchandise, all the articles and modes of daily intelligence. By this channel I come into possession of a great deal of history respecting the female world, and shall let my readers in for a part of the pillage.

These meetings are not yet formed into a regular society; but I think I can perceive a strong tendency that way; and they seem to be insensibly drawing towards the spirit of our own. They have their readings in imitation of ours; which are so much the more interesting, as the women are more communicative by nature than the men. No information comes from town, in the way of private correspondence, that is not shared among them. Anecdotes of high life, and occurrences that mark the manners of the times, and particularly those of their own sex, are perused with great eagerness; and I owe to these meetings many sage rules and maxims for female conduct, which will run through these my papers.

There is a delicacy of distinction and feeling in the morality of the ladies, that renders it generally

attractive and interesting; and if they knew how much it became their mouths, and what sweetness it bestowed on their smiles, they would redeem a still larger portion of their time from the topics of dissipation, to devote it to a subject in which virtue and vanity may in some sort coalesce. What put me upon this remark, was an opportunity which was the other day afforded me, of hearing some very excellent observations on the present state of female manners, at one of those little councils in my mother's apartment.

Methought the dignified sentiments which came from each in her turn, lighted up the countenance, and brought the very soul into the eyes; insomuch that I never shall be persuaded, that the happiest lover is able to provoke a sweeter look, or a more glowing smile, in the object of his adoration, than the consciousness of virtuous feelings at this moment excited, and that inward homage which we pay to ourselves, when we speak with ability in an amiable cause. There was a complacency in my old mother's forehead, which I would not have exchanged for the courtesy of a princess; and I observed that her shagreen spectacle-case dropped twice out of her hand, while her eyes were fixed on my great-grandfather's portrait with a look of pious satisfaction.

This becoming effect of virtuous conversation on the female face, and the irresistible force it lends to the expression, was well instanced in the few observations made by Miranda on the subject they were upon. "It has always appeared to me," she remarked, turning to my mother, who always sits in a sort of oracular state in these assemblies, speaking but seldom, as was the custom of her ancestors, "that we are to ascribe the principal faults that de-

grade at this moment the female character, to the sort of education we receive at our most fashionable schools. This blame, however, does by no means rest with these places of instruction, but falls more deservedly upon parents and guardians, whose vanity and false judgements interpose between the true interests of the scholars, and the persons to whom they are committed. If the main stream be discoloured, the rivulets which join it in its course will take the same complexion. However that may be, nothing is more certain than that we poor females are educated as if we had no souls to be saved, or old age to be provided for. To figure away with a fine exterior, and to share the stupid admiration of coxcombs, with their horses and their equipages, seems to be all that is required of us by our grave instructors. When this view is accomplished, we are brought forward, in all the mockery of dress, for the entertainment of the men, cased up like Indian idols, or carried out as victims to the altar.

“ Only that little of our lives is consulted which can contribute to the brilliancy of a ball-room, or the decoration of a court; so that just the prime and middle of our days is called for, the rest being thrown away like the tops and tails of radishes. To accomplish us in the flourishing trade and mystery of multiplying words without knowledge, to enable us to propagate repetition, and give wings to nonsense, we are taught as many languages as our memories can hold; without any enlargement of capacity, or accession of ideas; without any exercise of reason, or elevation of thought.

“ Nothing, however,” she continued, “ gives me such serious concern, as to observe, in the system of modish education, the perverse direction of the noble principle of shame, which was given us for the



greatest purposes. That tender conscious spirit, which was designed to be the principal guard of our virtue, and the support of all the great qualities of woman-kind, is applied to circumstances and occasions the most frivolous and absurd. To be hungry, healthy, rosy, and robust, are circumstances of shame to a girl of fashion. To run is rude, to laugh is vulgar, and to play is monstrous (because it is natural). Ignorance of cards is shocking, ignorance of fashions is abominable, and ignorance of French is heretical. But while they are taught shame at these excesses or deficiencies, they can brave the recollection of an uncharitable or unjust action; they can tell untruths without flinching; they can read the memoirs of stale actresses and battered demireps without confusion; they can ogle without a blush; and hug themselves in visions of rope-ladders and chaises and four, accomplished dancing-masters, and sentimental staymakers.

“Methinks,” continued Miranda, “that a truly fashionable school might consistently enough advertise, to refine and reduce the appetite so common in young people educated at ordinary schools; to banish all disagreeable redness from the cheeks; to correct the errors of nature, in the vulgar propensity youth have to exercise and play; to contract the waist, where nature has forgotten to do it; to pinch the foot to a sizeable disproportion and beautiful deformity; to comprehend all religious duties within a very small compass, and teach sound morals and virtuous principles at moderate rates.

“To the misapplication of these generous rudiments of virtue, given us with our nature, are ascribable all those vanities and petty ambitions, which so predominate amongst us, as to give a sort of title to the satirist to thunder out his catholic cen-



suers against us, and with an unqualifying severity to talk of the ruling passions of women as absolute universalities. The poets and moralists of ancient and modern times are stuffed with this common-place against us; and even the *petit-maitre* of philosophy, the flimsy Fontenelle, amidst all his gallantries, has not scrupled to put the following confession into the mouth of a queen of Syria, who, in one of his dialogues of the dead, tells her story to Dido, as illustrative of our ruling passion of vanity. — ‘ A painter, who was of the court of my husband, had long owed me a grudge; and, to gratify his resentment, he painted me in the arms of a soldier. The picture was exposed, and the artist absconded. My subjects, zealous for my honour, were on the point of burning the piece in the public street; but as I was, to say the truth, most admirably painted, and every way charming, although it must be acknowledged the attitude in which I was represented was not much to the advantage of my virtue, yet I rescued the picture, and pardoned the painter.’

“ It is surprising what transformations are sometimes formed by this perverse direction of the principle of shame. I remember a very promising girl, the daughter of a worthy neighbour, who had learned, under her mother’s instructions, many useful arts and accomplishments: she could make pastry and pickles, knew the price and quality of meat, and was a tolerable proficient in carving: she could write legibly, spell correctly, and speak her own language purely and grammatically: in short, her mind was so vulgarised, that she knew more of the Bible than of lord Chesterfield or Voltaire; and I really once detected her knitting stockings for prizes to the Sunday-school girls, whom she often instructed herself. On the death of her mother, she was sent by

her father to a place of fashionable education ; and, in the course of three weeks, rose to such a piece of modesty, as to blush at the mention of her former meannesses. She is now squared and tortured into a very fine married lady ; and so sensibly delicate, that, on passing by a butcher's shop the other day, she was seized with an agony in every joint ; and on meeting by accident a charity-girl, when she was far gone in her pregnancy, she has ever since been under the terrible apprehension of bringing into the world a child with a pair of knit-stockings on its legs.

“ I would not pretend to suggest any new system, in the place of that against which I have so much descanted ; I would only presume to recommend a little more of the Christian religion, and a little less of fashionable idolatry. I do not desire, that learning or politics, or riding astride, should succeed to this mischievous culture ; I wish only to see the native ornaments of a woman's mind primarily attended to ; I wish to see her arrayed in all her natural perfections of sensibility, softness, and grace ; and to contemplate, through a curtain of unaffected modesty, an understanding furnished with every thing that has a tendency to make the heart good, and the conduct exemplary.

“ How can I here resist the temptation to quote a passage from an admirable writer ? to quote whom cannot be pedantry even in a woman ; while not to have read and studied him, is want of taste in man or woman. It is thus that Dr. Hawkesworth sums up the character of Stella, in his life of Swift :—  
‘ Beauty, which alone has been the object of universal admiration and desire, which alone has elevated the possessor from the lowest to the highest situation, has given dominion to folly, and armed caprice with the power of life and death, was in Stella only the

ornament of intellectual greatness; and wit, which had rendered deformity lovely, and conferred honour upon vice, was in her only the decoration of such virtue, as without either wit or beauty would have compelled affection, esteem, and reverence.'

"I am very far from desiring to level these distinctions which custom has established between the virtues and excellencies of the male and female character. Nature has clearly enough appointed our different offices and destinations; and, by the many domestic wants and dependencies with which she has encompassed us, has circumscribed the sphere of our exertions and our ambitions within the circle of our families and our houses. When I see a woman launching out beyond this natural line of her ability, and challenging the rewards of popular talents, I look upon her as a kind of deserter, or as a soldier fighting under foreign banners, whose renown is infamy, and whose victories are disgraces.

"The expediency of life, and the moral order of the world, demand the observance of this natural distinction between our duties and capacities; and not only our greatest pleasures, but the highest concerns of our being, depend upon their separation. I regard the social system of the world as a great machine, which requires a regular distribution of labour, for the uniform course of its operation: a deficiency of hands in one part of it is little remedied by the superfluity of them in another; and such as are out of their place, can only be regarded as so much loss in quality, and incumbrance in quantity.

"We surely can never reasonably complain of our unimportance in the system, when we consider ourselves as charged with the first care of the species, and intrusted with the heirs of immortality, during that important interval, when the seeds of

virtue or of vice are sown in their minds. For the execution of so high and delicate a trust, we have a right to every advantage of culture and instruction in our youth, which will be necessary to correct our judgements, to regulate our desires, and multiply our innocent pleasures; but the duties which this paramount object of our lives imposes upon us, require also that nothing should enter into the scheme of our education that can taint our minds with a relish for those attainments and exertions, which belong to a different sphere of action, and another range of obligations.

“By keeping these objects, I mean the care of infant minds, and the management of our families, constantly in our view, we shall obtain a rational rule of female education, and a proper estimate of female worth. This measure will direct us in the cast of our studies, and the choice of our amusements. It will exclude, as well all the follies of the mode, and the laborious impertinence of fashionable culture, as the dangerous and distorted lessons of ambition and enterprise; while it will let in all those sensibilities and graces of the heart and understanding, which are of real weight and utility in the tender concerns of a wife or a mother, and are the ornaments of the female character in every scene and allotment of life.”

Here Miranda finished her discourse, which was very much applauded by the rest of the company, and seemed to speak the general sense. For my part, as my natural tenderness for the sex leads me always to mix a great deal of encomium in every question concerning them, I could not help thinking Miranda a little deficient on this head, and only excusable as a party concerned: I endeavoured, therefore, to fill up this deficiency, by quoting some very



fine things said in their commendation by very wise ancients. I perceived that I recommended myself much to them all by this piece of gallantry; and that my quotations from Plutarch, to which I took care to give the handsomest turn I could in my translation, were particularly admired.

Miranda, who was still a little heated from the great part she had taken in the conversation, went so far as to propose that the bust of that entertaining author should be placed in a part of the room, together with my own. The old lady my mother, who smiled more than was usual with her at this idea, putting her hand into her pocket with much significance, drew out of it the County Chronicle, and pointing with her knitting-needle to a particular advertisement, bid me read it aloud; declaring, that if we would consent to put the advertiser's head between those of Plutarch and Simon Olive-branch, she would agree to the proposal.

“ Woman is the master-piece of the Almighty.  
“ Has any of us beauty, softness, or grace, to com-  
“ pare with hers? Is not her mind the arcana of  
“ all that is desirable? Seek for elegance, you find  
“ it in her shape; for penetration, you find it in her  
“ eye; for beauty, you find it in every feature,  
“ especially if she has consulted the improvement of  
“ her charms so far as to adorn them with Vickery's  
“ incomparable têtes.”

I assure my readers that the project of the busts is totally laid aside.



N<sup>o</sup> 6. TUESDAY, MARCH 27.

ΘΕΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΟΠΟΙΙΑΥ ΕΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΥ ΕΞ ΩΥ ΕΘΑΥΜΑΖΕΥ.

C. ALEXANDRINUS.

“Their admiration of God’s might, displayed in his works, produced in them a conviction also of his providence and moral government.”

THERE is an agreeable parallel drawn in Cicero’s *Nature of the Gods*, which throws considerable ridicule on the obstinacy of an atheist: “His case,” says he, “is like that of a person, who, upon entering a large house beautifully constructed and commodiously arranged, and finding it untenanted by any animal of greater power, sagely concludes it to have been built by the mice he sees running about it.” Thus the atheist disbelieves in Providence, for no other reason than because he does not see him actually at the great work. He has, however, the choice only of two conclusions: he must either attribute the creation of the world, and its moral government, to God; or he must attribute unwearied constancy and unfailing order to chance.

When I see our reason thus raised in rebellion against our hopes, and nursing errors so frightful and monstrous, I am tempted to repine at this privilege and distinction of our nature, and can almost regret the possession of an instrument we may so easily handle to our own destruction. The sensible proofs of the existence of a God are so very manifest, and, to speak in scriptural language, are so scattered

about our paths, that one can hardly think this primary article of our faith a part of our probation, or that any degree of merit is attached to it. I have seen, however, in some men, a sort of foggy understanding, which outrages every object, and melts down proportion and colour into a mass of mighty confusion, in which there is no susceptibility of beauty, and whence light and order are for ever excluded. To one of this temper, the harmony of the system in which we move appeals in vain; the return of the seasons can make no impression upon him; and the revival of the verdure, and the regeneration of the blossom, brings him no delight or consolation.

I have ever considered it as one of the most touching instances of the benevolence of our Maker, that he has afforded us this great variety of sensible proofs of his existence and providence, in the vast scene that lies before us: and our sense of this bounty and condescension is very much raised by considering, that it not only sustains our hopes, and confirms our faith, but reaches to the mere concerns of this world, and diverts and refreshes the spirits, in the seasons of disappointment, of exertion, and of sorrow.

Sir William Temple has observed, that there is a kind of sensual pleasure in a fine day; our very organs and fibres seem to feel its invigorating influence; our veins riot, and our spirits bound. If it be a sensual pleasure, it is not only the most innocent, but it is ennobled by its relation to those which are intellectual: and it is plain how much it is our interest to enlarge the sphere of these sorts of enjoyments, which we may indulge in without reproach, and persevere in without satiety.

It was a favourite idea of the stoics, that to con-

template and admire the excellencies of Nature's works, forms a capital part of our duty and destination in this world. We may observe also, that, when they dwell on these testimonies of a providential government of the world, the unity of design that every where discovers itself obliges them to speak of one great Omnipotent. For the same reason does Cicero deify the world itself, rather than ascribe such integrity and perfection of plan to the counsels and agency of the gods in general.

Among all the animals which walk upon the earth, and inhale the breezes of a summer-day, man alone, erect and contemplative, is conscious of the benefaction, and capable of its delights: it should, methinks, therefore be somewhat affronting to the Deity, to pass by these tokens of his benevolence, without either tribute, or homage, or grace, or sensibility. For my part, I find no recreation so agreeable to my temper and my years, as the study of nature. I work under my mother's tuition in the school of botany; a science she has followed up, the greater part of her long life, with much perseverance and delight. She frequently bestows upon me great commendation for my specimens, but thinks I waste too much time in my comments and reasonings upon them; and the other day, on my forgetting the names of some of her favourites, she called me a giddy boy, and touching my cheek softly with her hand, observed, with a melancholy smile, that thus would the names and chronicles of the house of the Olive-branches be forgotten after our departure.

But to return to my subject: I was going to remark, that the study of nature is as much distinguished from other subjects by the variety of its topics, as by the value of its conclusions. All our different tastes and geniuses may here be severally

consulted. As the colour and tendency of our minds dispose us, we find a suitable order of proofs; and while one is struck with the solemn and unwearied return of seasons and of fruits, another is better pleased with considering the bland and unerring powers of instinct, which gathers under the mother's wing the little brood of helpless stragglers, and makes its voice heard amidst the howlings of the desert. It is by these contemplations that we learn, in the scriptural phrase, to walk with God, and cherish towards him a certain loyalty of heart, that brings all the ardours and sensibilities of our nature to the side of religion.

I cannot admit among those who reap the true advantage of this study, our modern collectors of cabinets, whose ambition is generally to accumulate rarities only for the distinction they confer, and to swell their lists from a sterile sort of ostentation, without any advancement of real knowledge. The true philosophical observer finds his cabinet of curiosities in his own and his neighbour's fields and gardens; and the interest he feels in every object is not in proportion to its unfrequency, but to the indication it affords of design and providence in the government of the world.

This consoling testimony, so abundantly spread over the face of nature, seems, if I may so express myself, to be distributed into different masses and portions, in the examination of which we may follow the bent of our particular tastes and studies. Thus some have been principally captivated by the stated motions of the heavenly bodies, as most inimical to the notion of chance; others consider the Divine wisdom as most emphatically announced in the structure of the human frame; and not a small number are best pleased with contemplating it in the



properties and affections given to plants. The playfulness and innocent joys of young children are to others the kindest proofs of a superintending Providence: and sir Isaac Newton was of opinion, that a primary mover of all things was incontrovertibly shown by the revolutions of the planets in their orbits, which are the combined effects of a projectile and centripetal force; the latter of which is accounted for by the laws of nature, but the former supposes the voluntary impulse of a predisposing hand.

Thus the various classes of nature's works present to the studious and contemplative a various arrangement of proofs, as different tastes and opinions decide. New discoveries enrich this valuable collection; and, as we advance in the knowledge of nature's varieties, we find fresh ornament in truth, fresh dignity in devotion, and fresh reason in religion. If, after this partial consideration, we mount a stage higher in the argument, and take a view of the whole plan and order of our system, the unity of design and connection of parts force us upon concluding that one pervading spirit directs the whole.

At this point did the excellent author of the Analogy take up the argument, and, bending his thoughts to discover how far this unity of plan lay open to human penetration, he has shown us that we can trace it through the course of natural and revealed religion: he has shown us that the same character of goodness and wisdom is stamped upon each portion of God's government; that the same venerable order and progression is every where observed; that the great truths of each unfold themselves in the same course of patient and gradual discovery; and that in each he has opposed certain limits to our in-



vestigations, and spread, with jealous might, his pavilion of darkness.

The argument therefore from analogy, which reconciles the scheme of natural and revealed religion to the course and constitution of nature, is the highest in the scale of those proofs with which the study of nature's works supplies us, and closes a series of testimony of the most complete and beautiful kind.

I shall now present my readers with a passage from Xenophon's Anecdotes of Socrates, where that philosopher makes a very noble use of the argument from analogy. After producing a great variety of instances in the economy of nature, to persuade his disciple to embrace the belief of a Providence, he calls upon him to yield to such convincing proofs, unless he is determined to wait until God shall please to render himself visible.

"This," says he, "would be a very unreasonable expectation, since, in this world, circumstances often reduce us to receive benefits from unknown hands: nor, in this case, are we so ungrateful as to attribute our felicity to the operation of chance. There may be something too that displeases the Deity in such an expectation; for there is great audacity, doubtless, in hoping to see our Creator with faculties probably incapable of sustaining such an interview.

"Consider," says he, "that the Sun, while he refreshes us with his kindly influence, does not allow himself to be too attentively regarded, and almost deprives him of sight who attempts it. The Deity also chooses to act by an invisible ministry. We hear the thunder rolling above us, and we know that it subdues whatever it encounters; but we behold neither its coming-on, nor its career, nor its departure. The winds also we cannot discern, but in their effects, which are very manifest; and we

can feel them rushing by us. Moreover, the soul of man comes nearest to the Deity of any thing which belongs to us : that it reigns within us, is manifest ; but no man has ever seen his own soul."

This has always struck me as one of the noblest passages in all antiquity, and is the best specimen of this argument from analogy I recollect in any heathen work. I have clothed the thoughts in English, without attempting to translate the Greek words, which are in this place so inimitably emphatic, that they may challenge any language to express them adequately.

It is my intention to carry on this subject through many of my future papers, if I see a disposition in my readers to attend to it. I think myself engaged, however, by the promise I have given, to present them with a perpetual variety ; and, like a good farmer, I bind myself never to take two successive crops of the same produce from the same piece of land. My excellent friend Mr. Anthony Allworth, whose character I have given in a former paper, insists upon my consecrating a portion of my labours to the subject of religion ; and I know of no way of rendering it so generally interesting and amusing to my readers, as by considering its analogies with the course and constitution of nature.

I know how well this road has been pointed out before ; but if I can throw any entertainment in the way by the discovery of new objects, or render it more sprightly and cheerful by new veins of thought, and fresh illustrations of fancy, I shall thank my friend very heartily for having suggested the idea. The loose form of this argument from analogy is what particularly recommends it to me, as on that account it will bear the numerous interruptions it must submit to with less relaxation of its force.

The rank growth of perishable pamphlets and

sermons which daily crowd our presses, serves only to dissipate and distract our attentions: they irritate our minds by occupying them ever on little disputed points, and divert us from the more comprehensive works of a graver age, wherein wide views of the subject are disclosed, and great bodies of proof collected. I considered therefore that it would be doing some service to my countrymen, if, instead of labouring either to increase the bulk of sacred literature, already grown unwieldy, or to swell the muddy stream of peevish controversy, I could allure my young readers to a portion of religious inquiry, which is perhaps the most inexhaustible of any, and which is of so spreading and various a nature, as to accommodate itself to almost every size of understanding, and every system of study.

There is moreover, in this argument from analogy, a strong tendency to liberalise the mind, by the removal of prejudices; while it provokes curiosity by the order and connection it produces wherever it enters, by its pleasing display of happy coincidences, and its allusions to common life and common observation. It is of small concern to me whether these my speculations upon the analogies of religion and nature be perused before or after that admirable work of the excellent Dr. Butler: in the former case they may serve as a sort of initiation to the reader; in the latter they will tend to keep up in his memory a perishable tenure, which requires frequent examination and repair.

I shall conclude this day's work with repeating my promise to be sparing of such grave subjects. They will be ranged at suitable distances from each other, like the sainted chapels by the road side, where the traveller was used to repose, till, after offering up his little orison, he gathered fresh spirits

for his journey. I submit the arrangement of all my papers to the old lady, my mother; hoping thereby to come at the taste and humour of my female readers; and I think she seems little disposed to satiate them with this topic. Not that any person can entertain a purer zeal than this complacent old dowager for the propagation of religion; but it is her humour to think that the party of profligacy is grown so strong and numerous, that, should religion find its way thither, it would be less likely to communicate its own advantages, than to share in the reproach of its new connections. She knows how religion has fared among fashionable philosophers, and your flimsy pretenders to a *liberal* devotion. She mourns too with a genuine sorrow for the wrongs it has suffered from many of its avowed friends, who have taken it under their insidious protection only to dishonour it more at their leisure; and have used what influence they have acquired over it by faithless and hollow professions, to gain credit to the plausible mischiefs they prepare against it, and to plunder it in secret of some of its fairest distinctions and firmest consolations. She tells me sometimes, with a sober sort of humour in her countenance, that, should religion be any how introduced into the fashionable world, it might come away so painted, patched, and disfigured, that she would hardly know it again.

I cannot wonder much at my mother's apprehensions, being sensible myself of correspondent feelings, in turning my eyes on fashionable life. When we become old, and have known the value of religion, we find so much comfort and repose in its pledges and assurances, and are so near its consummation and its rewards, that we cannot help regarding this solemn and final dependance with an aching



and irritable anxiety. For my part, I never leave a large company wherein doubts and paradoxes have been thrown about with sportive temerity, without questioning myself immediately as to the state of my mind, whether any article of my faith has been shaken or dislodged; like a certain prime-minister of Persia, whose custom it was always to feel about for his head upon leaving the audience-chamber of the despot his master.

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N<sup>o</sup> 7. SATURDAY, MARCH 31.

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*“ Plus vident oculi quam oculus.”*

*“ Many eyes see more than one.”*

It is one of the hardest conditions of my undertaking, that I must bend my thoughts so many various ways for the entertainment of the public. Like a good prince, I am expected to have no favourites among my subjects, but to stretch my regards equally to all. I have taken therefore the greatest pains to exercise myself in this versatility of attention, and have actually had three or four papers going on at once, to inure myself to this distraction of lights, and perplexity of objects.

The confusion which this flying study has sometimes produced in my essays, has been whimsical enough: upon reading over some of them for correction the other morning, I found fiddler, faro, Sunday, princes, cards, crops, curricles, conjurors,



all in the space of ten lines. I had delivered an old maid of two fine children; I had taken a judge off the bench; and carried him to a bagnio. In one place I had landed a vessel at Birmingham; and in another, the dissenters were furnished with copper bottoms. Some great statesmen were at church for the first time in their lives. A man of fashion produced an edition of Antoninus Pius, in one line; and a grave doctor in divinity led down a country-dance, in the next. I carried the whole house of lords to Newmarket in one of my papers, and a jockey brought in a bill in another; a parliament-man was put into a leaden coffin, came out presently after with a new constitution, and was soon followed by the corpse and undertakers. Grave as I am, I could not help laughing heartily, to find a petit-mâitre ogling a chimney-sweeper in one sentence, and the object of his vows half-way up the chimney in the next; and a young lady, who had bestowed a kiss upon an auctioneer, knocked down soon after by her lover.

There were many other strange combinations and coincidences; such as a reverend divine in a hoop-petticoat, and an old woman mounted into his pulpit; a common-councilman feasting upon true religion, and a turtle filling and expanding the mind. After an infinite number of mistakes and puzzles of this sort, I came at last to dispatch this multifarious business with surprising accuracy and discrimination; and am now arrived at such perfection, that I can round a period, turn a sentiment, and begin a story, in a hop, step, and a jump.

My mother, happening to come into my room while I was running from paper to paper, supposed me to be agonised by some inward pains; and asking me, with much tenderness and concern, what I

would have, I replied with great rapidity, having just completed at once three different sentences, "Expansion of thought, honour and virtue, a beautiful princess." This demand appeared so strange and exorbitant, that the old lady began in good earnest to suspect that my brain was injured by my late application, and was more ruffled than ever I remember her to have been since the æra of that fatal accident which happened about thirty years ago to my great-grandfather's tobacco-stopper. This talent, which I have taken such extraordinary pains to acquire, will contribute very much to render me independent; so that, if such as are capable of affording me assistance by their communications, should be determined to withhold it, and think to starve me to a surrender, I shall show them that I can hold out longer than they imagine, upon my own stock.

Another very great advantage of this my craft and mystery of writing is, that it makes me superior to common casualties, and puts me entirely out of the reach of all atmospherical influence. I can force myself to be grave or gay in spite of wind and weather, just as it may suit the interests of my paper: thus, upon occasion, I can rear a smile out of season, and am as proud of it as is the farmer behind the 'Change of raising a dish of peas at Christmas. I can launch forth a lively paper in the gloom of November; and can be merry in my little study, while my neighbours are shooting themselves in their bedchambers.

I do not wish however my readers to imagine that I have not yet been able to start any contributor: I have received many kind testimonies of a good disposition towards my undertaking from very unexpected quarters. The other day a letter was brought

me from a young nobleman, which I may perhaps insert for the instruction of my readers, after a thorough correction of the spelling: a young gentleman-commoner of one of our colleges favoured me with a very long epistle, as soon as my first number was published; the back of which will be of use, in containing many loose hints and memorandums for a future paper. Some anecdotes of great men, such as Lackington, Wittington, &c. have been obligingly sent to me; and the other day I received a very ingenious poem from an advertising dentist and dancing-master. Some treatises have been forwarded to me on the price of sugars, which I have dispatched to my grocer, to make the best use he can of them; and some popular preachers have presented me with sermons, the covers of which will be useful in making my common-place books. Some honest traders have sent me proposals to take in their advertisements; tempting me with a promise of ornamenting them with little cuts of carved Bacchuses, sugar-loaves, pairs of scales, bunches of grapes, and tobacco-rolls. One of this order entreats me to recommend his geometrical breeches; another has made a wig that will go in a letter; and a third has invented patent pistols for the cure of ruptures. I return my thanks to Dr. Lobb and Dr. Giranio, who have been so kind as to recommend to me their angelic snuff for the clearing of my head, and the advantage of my papers; and to that famous showman in the Borough, who courteously offers me a gratuitous admittance if I will advertise the public, that he has just imported two white Greenland bears, that are to be spoken with at any hour.

I have the advantage too of a very confidential correspondence with a great projector, who was formerly my intimate friend at the university; and

who, having a vast turn for invention, and an extraordinary share of patriotism, is determined to devote the remainder of his days to the public service. He is therefore always on the watch for some new discovery, that may contribute any way to the honour and happiness of his countrymen. I introduce him to my readers, not as a temporary acquaintance, but as a person they will often encounter in the course of these papers. As he was determined not to be behindhand in manifesting his regard for his old friend, he no sooner heard of my undertaking than he sent to me the advertisement of an eminent stationer, whose patron he declared himself to be, and whom I suspect to be indebted to him for most of his inventions.

“ Mr. Wright gives notice, that there may be had,  
“ at his library in the Strand, pocket-books for  
“ writing in the dark. These books are so contrived,  
“ that a person may, with great ease, in any posture,  
“ write any thing thereon, beginning where he left  
“ off. He is not even obliged to take his hand from  
“ beneath the bed-clothes. This way of writing may  
“ be as swift, lineal, and legible, as the operations of  
“ day-light, and must be exceedingly useful to phi-  
“ losophers and poets. The copper instrument is  
“ neat and handy.”

As my task, however, is such as to require more alleviation than even these honourable assistances supply, I must still invite those who have the means and the leisure, to afford me their aid. The Greek proverb, *εις ανηρ εδεις ανηρ*, applies to my present undertaking; for one man cannot well act a sufficient number of parts to suit so many tastes and complexions. I will therefore adopt any thing that I



think will conduce to the ends of my work, which is to encourage innocent mirth, and to administer religion, morality, and criticism, in the most palatable forms.

It is my design, after the example of the most venerable of those who have preceded me in this undertaking, to set up for a redresser, or an avenger of ordinary grievances, in the commerce of society; and I invite particularly the ladies to make application to me, when they deign to think that an old man can be of any use to them. If they have children that torment them, or husbands that neglect them, or lovers that deceive them, they may depend upon my assistance, the mode of which they themselves may prescribe. I promise also to attend to the complaints of my own sex, when they do not originate in their own misconduct, and upon undoubted proofs being given that every thing has been done on their part towards the cure of the evil.

I shall now give my reasons for not taking notice of some requisitions which have already been made to me on the score of grievances, &c.

The lamentation of Mr. T——, the tall Irishman, on his being disappointed of his new liveries on his marriage with old Mrs. Ogleby, I considered as a very heavy charge, till upon inquiry I discovered, that there was a bill upon him ever since he wore his first pair of callimanco breeches, and turned his pepper-and-salt coat to walk in the procession on St. Patrick's day. When my Irish client has paid off his arrears, if his tailor continue to disappoint him, I promise to keep no *measures* with the delinquent.

The gentleman who complains to me that his Sunday's dinner is commonly spoiled by the length of Dr. H——r's sermons, may at any time remove



the grievance by begging the Doctor's company to dinner.

A married lady makes affidavit to me, that she scarcely ever goes into public, but a man of fashion attacks her with indecent conversation. She complains very bitterly of this outrage upon decorum, and this cowardly assassination of virtue and modesty; but declares that she cannot be so singularly ill-bred as to take umbrage at any thing that is offered her by so fine a gentleman. This lady is yet to learn, that to be fine gentlemen we must begin with being men of honour. She has either forgotten, or never knew, that Sir Philip Sidney, who was esteemed the most accomplished cavalier in Christendom, was no less conspicuous for the spotless integrity of his life; that the same man wrote and felt elegantly on the subject of love, produced a version of the Psalms, and perished in battle at the age of thirty-two, brightening his last moments with a well-known act of Christian heroism. I would advise my fair client to improve her ideas of good breeding by some truer model than the one she has before her, and to try a little of her husband's company, who perhaps may be nearer the mark. I can assure her that the true gentleman is of much nobler metal than any of our swaggering youths about town; and, to borrow the phrase of that gallant Englishman whose name has been mentioned above, he must be distinguished by "high-erected thoughts, seated in a heart of courtesy."

The cheesemonger who takes it so ill that he cannot obtain a gentlemanly satisfaction of Mr. Holiday, the latter, may apply to Sir Lucius O'Trotter, who lodges with a widow on Snow-hill, and who will be very glad to pay his bill to Mr. H. by *discharging the contents* of his pistol at him.

The Welsh gentleman who thinks it so hard that his jokes are never regarded, must send for a fresh pipe of Madeira, add another dish to his table, and one story more to his chin.

The young nobleman who complains that my papers are not merry enough, may interleave them with some scenes out of our latest tragedies.

The discerning part of my readers will enter into my reasons for not listening to such kind of complaints, while they cannot but applaud my design of embarking in so laudable a career as that of an avenger of wrongs. The allegations I hope to receive from different quarters, will greatly enrich my stock of temporary matter, and bring me acquainted with the various shapes of folly and infamy, as they start up with a rank and fungous luxuriance in the walks of business and pleasure.

## Nº 8. TUESDAY, APRIL 3.

Αναχωρησεις αυτοις ζητησιν, αγροικιας και αιγιαλως και ορη· ειωθας δε και συ τα τοιαυτα μαλιςα ποθειν, ολον δε τβτο ιδιωτικωτατον εσιν, εξον ης αν ωρας εθελησης εις εαυτον αναχωρειν. Ουδαμω γαρ βτε ησυχιωτερον βτε απραγμονεσερον ανθρωπος αναχωρει, η εις τον εαυτω ψυχην· μαλισθ' οςις εχει ενδον τοιαυτα, εις α εγχυψας, εν παση ευμαρεια ευθυς γινεται· Την δε ευμαρειαν λεγω βδεν αλλω η ευκοσμιαν. συνεχως βν διδω σεαυτω ταυτην την αναχωρησιν, και αναβω σεαυτον.

MARC. ANTON. iv. 3.

There are those who look out for solitary retreats, such as hamlets, shores, and mountains: you yourself discover a vast inclination for such abodes. All this, however, is a vulgar resource, since in fact you carry this retreat about you, to enjoy it whenever you please; for no where will a man find a more tranquil and abstracted refuge than in the recesses of his own soul---especially if he possess within himself a fund for that sober contemplation, which begets serenity of mind. By serenity I mean that internal repose of the spirits, which implies a certain mental equilibrium and economy. Court, as it becomes you, this true retirement, and thus renew, from time to time, your acquaintance with yourself.

LAST night, after a day's close application in my study, I resolved to give my thoughts a little stretch; and for that purpose took a walk into the fields of my neighbour Blunt. As the reader is already acquainted with the transformation that has been wrought in this gentleman's character, he will not be surprised to hear that I am at present free to range where I please over his grounds; and that he

has actually erected a seat for me in his chesnut groves, where, to do me all possible honour, he has caused two statues to be placed, the one representing Harpocrates, the god of silence, with his finger on his lip, and his two feet joined together; while the other, in the character of Fame, is blowing, a little rudely, her trumpet in his ear.

The evening, however, of yesterday was so fine and tranquil, that before I visited this consecrated spot, I amused myself, in the open fields, with contemplating the blue canopy over my head, and the soft effects of light and shadow on the waving corn. The author of the Plurality of Worlds has some pretty thoughts on this subject. "*Il me semble pendant la nuit que tout soit en repos: on s'imagine que les étoiles marchent avec plus de silence que le soleil; les objets que le ciel présente, sont plus doux; la vue s'y arrête plus aisément: enfin, on rêve mieux, parcequ'on se flatte d'être alors dans toute la nature la seule personne occupée à rêver. Peut-être aussi que le spectacle du jour est trop uniforme; ce n'est qu'un soleil et une voûte bleue: mais il se peut que la vue de toutes ces étoiles, semées confusément, et disposées au hasard en mille figures différentes, favorise la rêverie, et un certain désordre de pensées où l'on ne tombe point sans plaisir.*"

For my own part, I do not always feel these last-mentioned sensations; my mind is better pleased with revolving the immensity of a scheme which folds up in one mysterious order this boundless variety, which stretches through eternity, and fills up the measure of existence. Thus do I generally raise my thoughts to imagine as many entire worlds and systems as I see little stars above me; and am almost in the case of the crazy philosopher in Rasselas, who conceived that he had the care of the universe

on his head. Last night, however, my thoughts ran chiefly on the miserable loss which those sustain, whose noisy avocations, or corrupted tastes, deny them these pleasures of contemplation, and shut them out from the knowledge of themselves, and from every opportunity of regulating and composing their thoughts by the salutary counsels of their own hearts. That *δευτερον ομμα*, that sort of second sight, is only to be obtained by strong habits of reflection, and severe contemplation.

To estimate the actions of others, we must look into the springs and motives of our own; and I know not how this reckoning is to be made, unless in the secret hours of repose and solitude. The commerce of company and fashion, in what is called high life, produces nothing but a beggarly confusion of ideas, and teaches only the completest methods of forgetting one's self and one's natural destination.

The difficulty of coming at the knowledge of themselves, must be necessarily greater in those ill-assorted classes where so many are acting parts they were never by nature designed for, and the clumsy munificence of fortune is decorating her swine with pearls — where ladies, consummated for the duties of the kitchen and the scullery, are burlesquing the follies of fashionable life; and fine gentlemen are wearing the coats they ought to have been occupied in making — where, amidst the miracles of the moral world, we see beings rising in a counter direction to their gravity, and the dross of the community sublimed into the vapour and volatility of fashion. These topsy-turvy dispositions, and this desperate disorder, has ever made me turn from fashionable life with disgust and contempt; with a mixture, however, of compassion for those of my fellow-creatures whose



lives are squared to this melancholy rule, and who are constrained to act in such dull scenes to the end of the drama.

It is curious to observe the different ways which different men use of shunning themselves, and the society of their own thoughts. I have known a person consume an hour in looking over a game at chess, without understanding the moves; and a neighbour of mine, being confined the other morning to his chamber by a slight cold, was found by a visitor far advanced in his fourth rubber with three dummies. A young man of fashion will travel you fifty miles in five hours, and kill a horse or two, rather than endure his own company half an hour longer; and I remember a contemporary of mine at college, who would always reserve the choosing of a coat, or the trial of a new pair of boots, for a rainy morning, when there was the greatest danger of his being left to himself. I observe, that nobody cares to walk or ride, except he can find company; so that few of my countrymen can yet *go alone*. Dull company, or any company, is better than our own; and the barking of a cur by our side is very useful in breaking the tranquil currency of thought, and producing that agreeable confusion of mind, that "*désordre de pensées*," of which the French philosopher, quoted at the beginning of this paper, was so fond.

How different in the frame of his mind from the young men of the present day, was Eugenio; whose greatest pleasure was the cultivation of his own thoughts, and the free indulgence of meditation! It was on the lessons of his own mind that he grafted that fine judgement in human actions and affairs, from which I reaped such profit and amusement about twenty years ago. But Eugenio is gone; and though I should live to a greater age than the oldest

of the Olive-branches, I never shall forget the sweetness of his countenance, and the manliness of his deportment. I have still a pleasure in recollecting the person of Eugenio : his figure was tall and graceful ; but his shoulders were a little rounded, and his head drooped a little between them ; the effect, perhaps, of sorrow and meditation ; for, during our acquaintance together, he was under the constant pressure of bitter disappointments. In his limbs there was the finest moulding, and a certain finish about them, such as we remark in a high-bred racer : his complexion was a ruddy brown ; his forehead ample ; and his temple was relieved with two or three eloquent veins, where the blood rose like the mercury in a barometer, and betrayed every emotion of his mind. There was a tenderness mixed with vivacity in his eyes, that was felt and confessed by all who conversed with him : his air was open, frank, and noble ; his manners easy and unconscious ; his assiduities delicate and interesting.

I never shall forget an evening walk I once had with Eugenio, when I was on a visit at his father's house in Shropshire : it was in a little vista, formed in a wood, about half a mile from the house. As soon as we had entered it, he took me by the hand, and addressed me thus — “ As it was here I first began to know myself, I propose here also to bring you more acquainted with your friend than you have hitherto been. To know myself, and to subdue myself, is the great lesson I have learned from my commerce with the genius of this place. It was here that I felt the force of that fine comment on the precept of Delphos, which Socrates makes to the vain-glorious Alcibiades, ‘ that, as the eye sees its image in the pupil of another, so the soul of man, to know itself, must look into the divine soul of wisdom and

knowledge, and contemplate the whole Deity therein.' There is no part of this ground that has not been witness to some victory I have obtained over myself. At the foot of that spotted beech, I laid down my resentment towards a scandalous neighbour of ours: near that festoon of honeysuckle, I determined to lose my right, rather than enter into a lawsuit with one of my kindred: leaning against the branch of that elm which has grown into the one that is next to it, I determined to refuse an estate offered me by a rich old gentleman, in exclusion of his nearest relation: where that hornbeam and that oak mix their foliage together, I resolved to guard the secret of a friend, though it should cost me my peace and my feelings: and where you see that weeping birch, and that little rivulet that runs murmuring by it (here he heaved a profound sigh), I determined, though with many—many struggles, to shun for ever the presence of Amelia, on hearing that a person to whom she had promised herself, and who had long been supposed dead in a distant country, was returning." At these words, his head sunk upon his bosom, and his whole frame underwent a violent agitation; he stood fixed in a melancholy reverie for some moments; and as I put my hand upon his, a warm tear dropped upon it,—the last, I believe, he ever shed upon this occasion.

I little suspected, at that time, how much this last sacrifice would cost Eugenio: he sunk into a settled melancholy; and every day I could trace fresh inroads on the graces of his person, and the integrity of his understanding. About a month before his departure, his despondency was visibly abated, and his spirits grew more tranquil and composed; his mind too recovered its former strength; but there was an abstraction in his looks and deportment,

which indicated that his peace was built upon the prospect of a future life, and not a reconciliation with the present. He never after spoke to me of his love, or desired my company in his evening walks to the wood ; but fell, by swift degrees, into a hectic fever, which ended in a consumption ; and Eugenio died in my arms.

About an hour before his departure, he put into my hands a little packet, which I afterwards found to contain many passages of his life, and some letters to his dear Amelia ; which, in the course of my papers, I shall give to the public, to serve as an example to the gay youths of the present day, and those dull merry fellows to whom solitude is penance, and reflection is loss of time. Ever since the death of my poor friend Eugenio, I have loved to indulge the melancholy recollection of him in solitary moonlight walks, and have ever entertained a particular fancy for natural vistas. I revere, methinks, St. Austin the more, because his conversion happened in a grove ; and my contempt for Xerxes is lessened, when I consider, that, in passing through Achaia, he would not permit a grove that was dedicated to Jupiter to be violated, but ordered his army to regard it as sacred.

But for these meditations and reckonings with one's self, little that is decent or honourable would ripen into action ; life would be the anarchy of humours, and glory the grave of virtue. I am no friend to the Platonic system of ravings and reveries ; but sometimes to cultivate the soul, and dilate its capacities by silent thought and reflection, is to turn our rest and indolence to account, and fit ourselves for the seasons of labour and exertion. A habit of serious thinking arms us at every point, and plants securities round our virtue in the moment of greatest



danger, when our minds are careless and unbent, and most accessible to passion and vice.

I shall conclude my paper of to-day with an agreeable little poem, though I cannot tell the reader how I came by it. I can only tell him it is not my own: it was among some loose papers, and caught my eye yesterday as they lay on my table. I introduce it, as being applicable to my present purpose.

“ Says BODY to MIND, 'Tis amazing to see,  
 We're so nearly related, yet ne'er can agree ;  
 But lead a most wrangling strange sort of a life,  
 As great plagues to each other as husband and wife.  
 The fault, sir, is yours, who, with flagrant oppression,  
 Inroach ev'ry day on my lawful possession.  
 The best room in my house you have seiz'd, for your own,  
 And turn'd the whole tenement quite upside down ;  
 Whilst you hourly bring in a disorderly crew  
 Of vagabond rogues, who have nothing to do  
 But to run in and out, hurry-scurry, and keep  
 Such a horrible uproar, I can't get to sleep.  
 My kitchen sometimes is as empty as sound :  
 I call for my servants---not one to be found ;  
 They all are sent out on your ladyship's errand---  
 To fetch some more riotous guests in, I warrant.  
 In short, things are growing, I find, worse and worse ;  
 I'm determin'd to force you to alter your course.  
 Poor MIND, who heard all with extreme moderation,  
 Thought it now time to speak, and make her accusation:---  
 'Tis I who, methinks, have most cause to complain,  
 For I'm cramped and confin'd like a slave in a chain :  
 I did but step out, on some weighty affairs,  
 To visit last night my good friends in the stars,  
 When, before I was got half as nigh as the moon,  
 You dispatch'd Spleen and Vapours to hurry me down ;  
*Vi et armis* they seiz'd me, in midst of my flight,  
 And shut me in caverns as dark as the night.  
 'Twas no more, reply'd BODY, than what you deserv'd :  
 While you rambled abroad, I at home was half starv'd ;  
 And unless I had closely confin'd you in hold,  
 You had left me to perish with hunger and cold.



I've a friend in reserve, who though slow is yet sure,  
 And will ease me, says MIND, of these pains I endure ;  
 Will knock down your mud-walls, your fabric destroy,  
 And leave you depriv'd of all force to annoy ;  
 And, whilst in the dust your dull ruins decay,  
 I shall snap off my chains, and fly freely away."

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N<sup>o</sup> 9. SATURDAY, APRIL 7.

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Ὅρα γε μὲν δή, καὶ γυναιξίν ὡς Ἀρης  
 ΕΥΕΣΙΝ. SOPHOCLES.

Take care, nor rouse the war of female minds.

WHEN I reflect upon the great influence which the characters of women have upon the lives and conduct of men ; that our constitutions are determined, in a great measure, at our births ; that our infancy is moulded by their methods and maxims ; that the first tendencies of our minds depend chiefly upon the direction they give to them ; and that it is in a great measure the pride and emulation of our youth to gain their commendation and regard ; I cannot think I have chosen my part ill, in determining to dedicate to them a great portion of my labours. The scheme of education is usually first considered in every endeavour to reform the manners of an age : but I look upon this as only watering the root of the tree ; while such labours as have in view the improvement of the female world, reach to the very nature and condition of the soil itself, and render it more kindly and productive.

What led me to this subject, was an account I received, a day or two ago, from a correspondent in town, who is always on the watch for any sudden growth of idle opinions that have novelty enough to seduce, and speciousness enough to betray. He tells me of a claim, just set up by some pretty theorists, about the rights of women. Now the worst of it is, that these rights of women involve a question of competency very difficult to adjust: for suppose they prove ever so plainly, that the order of things has been shamefully reversed, and that nature designed that men should preside at the tea-table, regulate the household, and rule the nursery; while all the offices of state, and business of commerce, should pass into the hands of the ladies; yet it would be impossible for them to make unreasonable men come into these suitable arrangements, till they could acquire strength enough to strip us of our usurpations, confirmed to us by such long prescription, and such ancient prejudices.

As if, however, a violence of this nature was actually intended us, I find some very spirited lamentations, in a treatise that was handed about at our female society a few days ago, on the pernicious neglect of all muscular exercises at our female boarding-schools; so that it is plain how little the fair author agrees with Mons. Rousseau on that head, who thinks that "the empire of woman is the empire of softness, of address, of complacency: her commands are caresses; her menaces are tears."

In this clamour about rights, my friend the projector has contrived to make himself heard; and is actually on the point of finishing the draught of a new system of female education, on a basis of justice, nature, and truth. He has favoured me with an abridgement of his plan, which I read at the last

meeting of our society, till my neighbour Blunt, and some of our married men of the old school, began to draw in their *horns*; and Mr. Barnaby, the churchwarden, gave the table such a resolute blow, that the echo was raised, three tumblers were shattered, and a general shock was given, of so unusual a violence in our society, that it seemed like an earthquake, or the return of chaos; and my curate could not close his mouth upon a very fine Colchester oyster, for the space of half a minute.

My friend the projector lays down a regular course of discipline for the week, in which nothing seems neglected, that can fit his fair students to shine in the civil, ecclesiastical, or military departments.

*Monday.*—In the morning, being all equipped in buff jackets for the occasion, they will take their lessons in fencing, to bring their muscles into play after the repose of Sunday. The forenoon will be employed in their different studies, according to their different destinations. Some will be exercised in logic and polemic divinity; some will be lectured in litigation and forensic oratory; and others will be instructed in fortification and gunnery. The evening will be dedicated to athletic exercises and games, among which the Pyrrhic dance must never be omitted; in which, according to ancient custom, the young ladies will be armed with swords of box.

*Tuesday.*—This day is to be devoted to polite arts: there will be models in each kind exhibited for the direction of their respective talents and geniuses; care being taken to select such as are calculated to fill their conceptions with the sublime and noble. A Hercules, or Gladiator, are to be preferred to a Venus or a Niobe; and the soft graces of a Titian or a Guido, must give place to the bolder de-

signs of a Michael Angelo or a Salvator Rosa. So, in music, those compositions which inspire grand and lofty ideas, will exclude such as soothe and enervate; and a march, or an Indian war-song, will be esteemed above any pastoral or melting strains whatever. To blow the horn, will be considered as a first-rate accomplishment in this branch.

*Wednesday.* — Mathematics, algebraic questions, and chemistry, shall be the objects of this day. In the prosecution of the first, their ambition shall always be pointed towards the quadrature of the circle, and the discovery of perpetual motion. By the energies of their minds also, we may possibly come at the solution of that question which so puzzled the monks some ages ago; namely, how many square inches, in the regions below, might suffice for all the souls that were there lodged, so as for each ghost to have elbow-room? By their efforts in chemistry, we shall not despair of arriving at the knowledge of the philosopher's stone, and the ingredients of Medea's kettle.

*Thursday.* — Classical reading will take its turn this day, in which, it must be remembered, the greatest female names of antiquity are to be constantly held up to view; such as Semiramis, Sheba, Thalestris, Penthesilea, and Camilla; the contemplation of which will give them the spirit of ancient hardihood, and teach them their own strength. It is proper also that the young ladies drop their own names of Maria, Dorothea, &c. and adopt those of Sappho, Erinna, Demophila, Cleobulina, Corinna, Telesilla, Aspasia, Lastthemia, Axiothea, Hipparchia, Cornelia, Sempronia, Polla, Argentaria, Cornificia, and Sulpitia.

*Friday.* — This day will be divided between poetry, oratory, and the polite languages. In poetry,



the lyric will be preferred for its fire and irregularity; unless, perhaps, the feminine verse, which consists of thirteen syllables, be judged more favourable to female volubility, which it will be the object of this institution to promote. Thus has Mr. Pope thought proper to make Camilla “fly o’er th’ unbending corn” with a longer train of syllables than an ordinary person, to give dignity to her stride, and spring to her activity. Their principal subjects will be chosen in a view to the terrible and sublime; such as the burning of Persepolis, the labours of Hercules, the discovery of Achilles, the murder of Orpheus, the spells of Medea.—In oratory, the vehemence of Demosthenes will be chiefly commendable, into which they may throw as much of the spleen of the Satirist as they please; taking care always to be sufficiently long; for which reason we shall recommend to their imitation those British senators only who can persist for four hours together. The living languages will be eminently useful to our fair disciples, in exercising their organs so variously, that the most rattling and tremendous words will give them no pain in the utterance; and by being thus enabled to multiply sound, and ring changes on the same idea, they may fill up every interval of conversation, to the entire exclusion of male impertinence.

*Saturday*—must be left whole for political inquiry: the conduct of persons in power will be rigorously canvassed; and such as have brought the nation to the brink of ruin, shall be burned or beheaded in effigy. A rigid discipline shall be maintained to-day; and something will be saved to the institution in the banyan beverage of black broth and onions.

*Sunday*.—Devout exercises will constitute the business of to-day: two by two they shall march to



church twice a-day, suffering their lines to be broken by no Sunday cavaliers; nobly asserting the wall, as the most powerful, and not claiming it as the weakest. In the evening, their ardour will be called forth on disputed points; in the course of which, if any quarrel take place, the decision of it will be postponed to Monday morning.

My friend had said a great deal more on each day's employment; but the limits of my paper oblige me to content myself with mentioning only the most remarkable particulars. He dwells much on the necessity of making an entire alteration in the mode of their dress, which he wishes to be rendered as expedite as possible, and compatible with the fullest play of their muscles and proportions; and those who are destined to military lives are to be arrayed like the "*florentes ara catervæ*," or brazen troops of Camilla. In the article of food, the firmest aliments, and those which throw in the greatest nourishment, should in all cases be preferred: and according to him, the morning, noon, and evening repast, should all consist of solid meat, or marrow puddings, diluted with home-brewed ale, or stout October.

Tea is entirely banished from his ideal republic, as only fit to please the masculine effeminacy of male housewives. He makes it a great point, that their games should be the most athletic and robust; such as wrestling, coits, cricket, hop-sotch, and Hunt the devil to Highgate.

Whether our projector will ever bring this laudable plan to bear, is yet a doubt with me, notwithstanding the fondness of the age for novelties and inversions. I am sure, however, my friend will put forth all his might, in a cause which he has so much at heart.

As his plan is to be laid very broad, he has form-

ed a club of Bill-of-Rights Women, who have drawn up a Magna Charta, or *Charta Foresta*, which they propose to send to the heads of the nation, by whom if they be not weighed as they could wish, they will throw into the lighter balance the sword of Brennus. For my own part, being an old man, and somewhat timorous, I do not enter into this ingenious plan with all the warmth it may deserve: I have been so long used to love my countrywomen in their usual forms, that I do not like to hazard any change. Nor am I sure they would be gainers by the promotion, or I might perhaps be tempted to become of their party, out of pure love and veneration. I am a friend to the sense of that ancient epigram, which represents the naked Venus as more formidable than Pallas with her shield and buckler.

My mother is decidedly against the scheme, and raises her voice above her usual tones in speaking about it. She reminds me, that Rome (for the old lady is more of a classic than she desires to be thought) was rescued from two imminent catastrophes by the blandishments of her sex; alluding to the story of Coriolanus's wife and mother, who turned that exasperated chief from his fatal purpose by their tears and entreaties; and that of the Sabine ladies, who reconciled by the same means two furious armies, on the point of falling upon each other.

I shall, however, wait till I see the effects of my correspondent's plan, before I declare myself more decidedly about it; and shall remain in tranquil suspense till I see a regiment of female dragoons, and a woman in armour at the Lord Mayor's show. We are much afraid that a few of these spirited female adventurers will claim to be admitted into our club; for some of our old bachelors, who pique

themselves greatly upon their gallantry, would be very much chagrined at being forced upon a refusal. Mr. Barnaby the churchwarden, who is a very plain speaker upon all occasions, and very jealous of the credit of our society, raised the echo three times about it last night, and paid a guinea for declaring, with a tremendous oath, that he would never give up the exclusive, unalienable, hereditary right of wearing breeches, which he conceived to be transmitted to us through as long a line of ancestry as any privilege we enjoy, and as sacred as our property and our lives. But I will venture to break in upon Mr. Barnaby's harangue, for the sake of introducing a little story, which some of my readers may be pleased with.

One of the latest European travellers to the interior parts of South America, as he pursued his journey along the famous river Orelana, in the country of Amazonia, came up with an old man who was employed in catching tortoises. He put many questions to him, and found him very communicative and full of information. Among other anecdotes, he obtained from him the following.—In the centre of the mountains of Guiana lived a nation of *Cougnontain Secouima* (women without husbands), who had separated themselves entirely from men, and went about in armed troops. Though they admitted the males among them once a year, yet they abstained from forming any attachments; and it was one of their most sacred and inviolable laws, that new connections should be made at every fresh intercourse with our sex. The offspring, if male, was sent to the father, to be educated by him; if female, it was brought up by the mother. The favourite ornament of these female warriors was a certain green gem, which they found in great abundance on the other side of a river

called the Black river; and hither the young women of quality used to repair every month in armed bodies, in search of this decoration of their ears and wrists.

It happened on a certain day, as some of the flower of the Amazonian maidens were out on this errand, they fell in with a troop of Indian youths, who were going on an embassy to a neighbouring tribe. The young men were so struck with the beauty of these adventurers, that they immediately laid at their feet a part of the presents with which they were loaded for the purposes of their commission. The desire of pleasing each other soon became mutual, and grew so rapidly, that the next day they joined in building little temporary cottages on the spot. Every month they met together at the same place, where the strictest decorum was preserved. The women slept always in separate lodgings; their heads reposing on their bucklers, and their feet covered with the fleeces of the lama, the presents of their lovers. The youths also assisted them in gathering the green gems, and were delighted with the occupation of decorating their persons and their arms with the costliest they could find. At every fresh meeting they brought with them the plumage of green parrots for their helmets, and chains of lion's teeth for their necks and wrists; not forgetting to load themselves with presents of fish and venison, and fruits of the fairest kinds, such as guavas, bananas, pomegranates, and pine-apples. By the force of these assiduities, they obtained a promise from the female warriors, to choose them for their temporary husbands, when the time should arrive which was appointed by the laws of the Amazonian state for the intercourse of the sexes.

This moment at length came, and their tender



engagements were faithfully performed. The short interval allowed them was passed in the fondest endearments; but at the end of the fourth day the terrible order for separation was issued, and proclaimed by the rattling of their spears against their corslets, and such funereal shouts as it was their custom to raise in sorrow for departed friends. They took a final leave of each other, never to meet again but in the land of souls. The male pledges of their loves were sent back to their fathers; and the females were brought up by the mothers for the supply of the commonwealth.

It so happened, that, in the course of some sixteen years, a war broke out between the very tribe to which these Indians belonged, and the nation of the Amazons. After many desperate encounters, and a great deal of bloodshed, the men proved an overmatch for the women, burned and laid waste their country, and advanced towards their last town, with minds prepared to revenge their fallen associates. The little devoted capital was thrown into terrible consternation; the air was filled with the shrieks of helpless virgins miserably murdered by their own mothers, to save them from the bloody hands of an exasperated enemy.

In the midst of this cruel disorder, one of those very women who had been made mothers in the amorous adventure with the Indian youths, was inspired by her guardian spirit with a thought that saved the remnant of her countrywomen. Gathering together all she could muster of her comrades, who had shared in the expedition after the green gems, she made a short harangue, full of the most touching remonstrances, on the necessity of laying aside all measures of resistance; and besought them vehemently to try what the force of nature might do for them,



and the tender pleadings of those bosom recollections which their presence must awaken in the minds of their former lovers. Scarcely had she finished, when, actuated by a common spirit, with a shout that ran along the mountains in ominous echoes, they all threw away their targets of canes, and their half-moon bucklers, and rushed out with naked breasts to meet the enemy. The novelty of the sight arrested for some moments the march of the Indians. A solemn silence prevailed; taking advantage of which, the forlorn females raised their voices, and called upon their temporary husbands, and the sons of their pleasures and their vows, repeating their names, and reminding them of the crowns of parrot's feathers, and all the pledges of their former loves.

As these Indians were originally a Peruvian colony, they had inherited a portion of that softness, and humanity of character, which distinguished that tranquil race. When they beheld the offspring of that tender rencounter, and those breasts which they had pressed so often with fond delight, their heads fell upon their bosoms, and their axes dropped from their hands; they rushed forwards, and embraced with enthusiasm their wives and their mothers, and spared for their sakes the remains of the Amazonian nation. Admonished by this event, these warrior women relinquished their bows and their spears, and resolved in future to trust more to their weakness than their strength, to their tears than their arrows, to their extended arms than to their half-moon bucklers, to their soft bosoms than their adamantine corslets: and, whatever imposing travellers may relate, there are no more such people to be found in the mountains of Guiana.

N<sup>o</sup> 10. TUESDAY, APRIL 10.



“ *Stultitia plerumque exitio est.*”

“ Foolery is often fatal.”

*To the Rev. Simon Olive-Branch.*

Sir,

April 2, 1792.

YOUR great predecessor, the Spectator, has noticed the custom, even in his time an ancient one, of distinguishing the first day of the present month by the practice of what has always been called “making April Fools.” It is his idea, that the pleasure we feel from this exercise of our understanding is nothing more than a self-satisfaction, which is excited in our bosoms by the discovery of another’s disparity. Such a pride, however, one should be tender of condemning too widely, lest, on examination, it should be found, in some shape, or with some modification, at the bottom of most of our great exertions and great achievements: yet this pride, when it can triumph in the overthrow of a person unprepared, can construe simplicity into ignorance, and be content with such equivocal proofs of superiority as the successes of artifice and untruth, must be of a very ordinary and unproductive kind: in its higher degrees, it is cruel; in its lower, contemptible.

How it has happened that a particular day has long been appropriated, though by no means ex-

clusively, to the exercise of this amusement, and why the first of April was destined to that purpose, I leave to the investigation of antiquaries; hazarding only one conjecture, that, at some very remote period, the worshippers of the goddess Folly, the idlers and witlings of the world, in imitation of other heathens, established this anniversary celebration of their deity; and perhaps some analogy may be traced between the sacrifices of the ancients and the offerings which Folly's votaries continue to heap before her altar on this her high festival: nay, though the heathen system of theology is long since exploded, this deity finds her power over the world by no means on the decline: and while Venus is no longer invoked by our belles, while pickpockets forget their obligations to Mercury, and Neptune is neglected even on his own element, Folly has splendid temples in every city, priests in every family; and whole hecatombs of human victims (if you allow the expression) swell the honours of her *red-letter day*.

What led me into this train of thought was an accidental visit, which I paid yesterday, to an old acquaintance, formerly a domestic in the family of my grandfather, and by him established, above forty years ago, in a little shop, where he has found means to acquire a decent subsistence. When but a boy, as I have heard my father say, he was esteemed an oddity by all the neighbourhood, and always had a strong propensity to little mischievous exploits. He would stalk through the churchyard at night, wrapped in a tablecloth; he would hide the maid's shoes, blacken his face to frighten the children, and grease the strings of the chaplain's violin. Indeed, my grand father, though he had a regard for the boy, was at length obliged to discard him, for fasten-

ing his grand-aunt Anna Maria's lappet to the chair, while she sat at dinner, to her utter confusion as soon as she attempted to quit her place.

I found him in the little apartment behind his shop, with a large book open before him, in which he seemed to have been writing; and on the back of which was lettered, not unaptly, as will appear from what follows, *DAY-BOOK*.

He observed that he had been just bringing up his accounts to the close of yesterday; but added, with a shake of the head, "How unlucky it is, it should have happened on a Sunday! — I shall be below *par* this year. — I believe I may say without vanity," said he, seeing me somewhat at a loss to understand him, "that there is not a man in the parish, who makes so many fools as myself. Why, sir, I have averaged, for the last fourteen years, thirty fools *per annum*; and it would have been more, but for that plaguy gout which confined me last spring.—Ah! it was a great loss to me; I had not a single fool, except my apothecary's apprentice, whom I sent to the upper end of Islington to get me some genuine *pantilum pulverosum*;— but then, the year before was a plentiful year, a very plentiful year. Do, sir, let me read you my journal for the first of April in that year." I assented: he put on his spectacles, and read as follows.

"1st April, 1790.—Got up early this morning, to prepare for business—Sally still a-bed—Flung the watchman a shilling out of the window, to rap at my door, and cry *fire*—Sally started up in a fright, overturned my best wig, which stood in the passage, and ran into the street half naked—Was obliged to give her a shilling, to quiet her.



- “ Ten o'clock.—Sent a letter to Mr. Plume, the undertaker, telling him that my neighbour old Frank Fuz, who was married on Monday to his late wife's step-daughter, had died suddenly last night—Saw six of Plume's men go in, and heard old Fuz very loud with them.
- “ Invited all our club to dine at deputy Dripping's, and invited him to dine with alderman Grub, at Hampstead. — N. B. The alderman is on a visit to his son-in-law in Kent.
- “ Twelve o'clock.—Received an order, in the name of a customer in Essex, for six pounds of snuff, to be sent by the coach—Smoked the bite, and kicked the messenger out of the shop.— N. B. Not catch old birds, &c.
- “ One o'clock.—Afraid Sally would play some trick upon me in dressing my dinner; so went to get a steak at a coffeehouse—Chalked the waiter's back as he gave me my change. — N. B. Two bad shillings.
- “ Asked an old woman in Cheapside, what was the matter with her hat?—She took it off; and while I was calling her April fool, a boy ran off with my handkerchief in his hand.
- “ Tapped a Blue-school boy on the shoulder, and asked what he had got behind him? He answered, A fool—The people laughed at this: I did not see much in it.
- “ Three o'clock.—Sent Sally to the Tower, to see a democrat; carried the key of the cellar with her, and spent me half-a-crown in coach-hire.
- “ Gave Giles my shopman a glass of brandy, which he took for a glass of wine. Giles unable to attend shop the next day.”

I readily prevailed on my old acquaintance to give



me a copy of this diary, on my promising to transmit it to you. It was with more difficulty I drew from him, that his neighbour Fuz never from that day bought any more tobacco at his shop; and that, two days afterwards, he received a letter by post, from his Essex customer, threatening him with an action for assaulting his servant, and ordering him to furnish his bill immediately: that the club had sent him to *Coventry*; and that he had lost deputy Dripping's interest for the office of churchwarden, to which he then aspired.

But (to quit my old acquaintance and his diary) even this custom, sir, absurd as it is, will afford the moralist a topic of useful instruction: the danger of credulity on the one hand, and of over-caution on the other, may be inferred from the exploits of an April-day fool-maker. The young and inexperienced will find this one day, within the circle of their own acquaintance, no bad sketch of the world as it is every day, and in every age: much deception, much falsehood; every body suspicious of his neighbour, and every body more ready to join in the shout of triumph at an instance of successful imposition, than to unite in detecting and punishing the deceiver. The practical professor of this honourable art too, if he have any sense remaining, may take an useful hint, that, however successful he may be, he is open to the same imposition from his more skilful brethren; and that ridicule, when it falls on him, will fall with augmented force: at all events, that this contemptible and vulgar talent, though in season but for a day, may produce most lasting effects; and that a friend may be lost, and an enemy created, by the momentary triumph of ill-founded pride and bastard humour.

OCTAVIUS.

The letter of Mr. Octavius was read at our society, and judged worthy of admission.—Mr. Barnaby and Mr. Blunt made some trifling objections, which were soon over-ruled by Mr. Allworth. I was tempted almost myself to enter a clause in favour of those industrious mechanics, whose turn to be witty comes round only once a-year. I own, it has sometimes given me a sensible pleasure to contemplate, among the petty triumphers of this one day, those worthy gentlemen who have served as butts all the other 364. The muddy-headed part of society, or what Lucian calls the *παχεις των ανθρωπων*, must be kept in good-humour with themselves, or they will not proceed with cheerfulness and activity in the duties of life which they are destined to fulfil. I think therefore, that, in regard to this description of men, there is a degree of injustice and impolicy in discountenancing their jokes, and in refusing to open our gates to them for twelve hours, while we sport without scruple on their manors as long as it is convenient.

I am very easy myself in this particular; and, if it were not for the dignity and interests of my calling, the whole parish might try their wit upon me, so long as the effects of it were confined to the first of April: and I think there would be no great fear of their lasting much longer, as, for want of Attic salt, these jokes do rarely keep above a day. I am a voluntary martyr to the facetiousness of an old maid-servant, who acts in quality of housekeeper, at every return of this Saturnalia: for these twenty years she has regularly sent us up a pie with nothing but the crust; and my mother and myself as regularly fall to, as if we had set our hearts upon this part of the dinner alone. If she should ever throw up this long-established custom, which she

holds by a sort of charter, we should feel much chagrined at the disappointment, and regard it as one of those ominous lapses of time, in which some cement is loosened, or some prop succumbs, to warn us of the ruin of the fabric of life.

Yet, although this holiday humour may, I think, be fairly allowed to a certain description of persons, whose play is innocent, and whose jokes are powerless, yet it is a dangerous engine in the hands of those who have malice enough to meditate mischiefs, and wit enough to render them successful. In such a case, however, the victor has nothing but a laugh to support him, and the vanquished has nothing to shame him, unless truth and unsuspection can do it. It is in fact in this instance a disgrace to be triumphant, and an honour to be defeated. Yet the mere momentary feelings of the parties are not alone to be considered; for, as my correspondent observes, very solid mischiefs may frequently result from this meretricious mirth. I have seen an amiable woman seriously disordered by the false alarm it has occasioned her; and many a very manly mind has been disqualified for the business of the whole day before him, by some dreadful intelligence at his entrance into the breakfast-room. But, besides all this, it is ever a dangerous thing to tamper with truth; and, however good-natured our meaning may be, the habit may take root in the most diminutive trifles, and may gain upon us under the cover of various denominations and excuses, till it usurps a leading influence on our conduct and deportment.

There is surely something sacred in simplicity; and no well-constituted mind can bear to abuse it. To one of this make, it is like leading the blind into the ditch, to foster the mistakes of a person in order to oppress him with ridicule. The world, with its

disappointments, is quick enough in wearing away the sanguine and ingenious bloom of our thoughts, which we bring with us at first into the commerce of mankind. Let us leave it therefore untouched as long as we can, and reverence it as a testimony that does honour to our nature, and the original constitution of our minds.

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N<sup>o</sup> 11. SATURDAY, APRIL 14.

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*Ipse ordo annalium mediocriter nos retinet quasi enumeratione fastorum ; at viri sæpe excellentis ancipites variique casus habent admirationem, expectationem, lætitiã, molestiam, spem, timorem.*

CICERO.

Annals, by their very nature, can interest us but little more than almanacks ; but the changes and distresses in the life of an excellent character, raise in our bosoms admiration, expectation, joy, sorrow, hope, fear.

It is a common custom with me, when my mother is gone to bed, to take up some entertaining book for a quarter of an hour, in order to steal my mind from the weight of this undertaking, which otherwise would so oppress my brain that I should not be able to take my due rest : for there is a sort of tenacity in one's thoughts, that makes them adhere to what they have been exercised upon, in spite of one's self ; just as iron which has been rubbed upon a loadstone, is drawn towards it with a greater force of attraction.

The other night, feeling myself in the predicament I have been describing, I took up the first book



that offered itself, which happened to be a volume of Tacitus. It opened itself at that passage which is at the end of the life of Julius Agricola, where the author pours forth his feelings in that pious apostrophe, and sums up, in a few sentences, all that is great or amiable in the human character. There is something in these unbought testimonies of genuine praise, that reaches to the hearts of those who are simple lookers-on; and I always feel that I have this advantage over the parties themselves, that whereas they can have but a single object of admiration or gratitude, I can venerate and admire both at the same time, and feel a double portion of sensibility and delight.

This is one among the many reasons, which render biography the most agreeable kind of reading in the world. It is the business of History to trace, through a long succession of events, the remote relations of cause and effect, to mark the different gradations in the progress of society, and to hold out to man the humiliating lesson of national vicissitude: but Biography is studious of finding out the paths which lead to our finest sensibilities, and, by acquainting us with the domestic transactions, introducing us to the private hours, and disclosing to us the secret propensities, enjoyments, and weaknesses of celebrated persons, increase our sympathy in proportion to our intimacy with the object held up to us, and heighten our curiosity with the touches of affection and interest.

Even in the contemplation of characters eminently flagitious, from this close inspection afforded us by the minuteness of biography, we feel a gloomy sort of satisfaction, in witnessing their moments of remorse and sorrow, and (as the heart is rarely abandoned to total depravity) in tracing out those so-



linary features of humanity, which save the blank and hopeless extinction of all virtue. But if the character held up to our view be such as to call forth our love and admiration, our ardours and sympathies are excited with so much the greater vehemence, as they are accumulated upon one object, like the rays of the sun collected into a focus. Nothing is more pleasing than thus to gain a distinct and steady view of those of whom we have hitherto caught only a transient glimpse, through the medium of history, amidst a crowd of contending objects; to be able in a manner to erect for our favourite hero a separate altar, and to offer up at his shrine peculiar adoration and appropriate honours.

The advantages of biography in a moral view are no less apparent: for as our sympathies are more strongly excited, when our attention is drawn towards a single object, than in the more cursory and crowded prospects of human actions; in the same proportion is the simple and narrow course of biography more capable of aiding the cause of virtue, than the more extended and ostentatious plan of historical composition.

Our respect for biography is still further increased when we consider that a prevailing taste for it is some indication of the good dispositions of an age, as it argues a spirit of emulation, and a general admiration of virtuous excellence: "*Virtutes iisdem temporibus optimè estimantur quibus facillimi gignuntur.*" "Virtues have most credit given to them in that age which is most fertile in producing them." But these advantages do not of necessity arise out of biography, but depend entirely upon its proper management and cultivation. Its fairest opportunities and noblest designs may be defeated and lost, by a neglect of those rules and principles to which it

should ever conform, or without a competent share of genius and penetration. The choice of incidents, the developement of character, the arrangement of matter, the harmony of colouring, the seasonable introduction of subordinate actors, and the due gradation of importance bestowed upon them, are essentials in this species of composition greatly beyond the reach of ordinary capacities; and the delicacy and difficulty which attends it have been signally proved in the many unsuccessful attempts which have been made to mould into an interesting and impressive form the memoirs of a very virtuous and wise, though partial and austere, character of the present age.

What at first view may appear to be a considerable advantage in the nature of biographical writings, may ultimately prove a source of much inconvenience. The exemption to which it seems entitled from the graver and chaster rules of history, has caused many to abuse this indulgence, and to fall into the extreme of irregularity and licentiousness. They have thought it enough to scrape together a loose and undigested mass of anecdotes, without attending to the great points of arrangement and colouring; they have heaped a pile of facts together, without troubling themselves to observe if they united in their conclusions: so that the reader is at last abandoned to his own unaided judgement and undecided opinions, unable to reconcile the multifarious collection of contradictory elements and incongruous parts.

It is true, the varieties of every man's conduct, when viewed at different times, and under different circumstances, present an unaccountable medley to the superficial observer; but such as study human nature attentively, and examine deeply into the motives and spirit of human actions, discover a latent

order and analogy in these contradictory appearances, and perceive that the same passions of the human breast produce very different effects and phenomena in different situations, while the springs and principles are still the same; and that we still propose to ourselves the same ends and gratifications, while we frequently change our modes of pursuit, and adopt various and even opposite means, as expediency or humour directs.

To make up a perfect whole, and to afford the mind an opportunity of deducing those general conclusions on which it is ever so fond of reposing, to unfold the leading principles of action in the character under contemplation, and to single out those facts and incidents which exhibit the principal object in the fullest point of view, is the proper task of biography; our respect for which is heightened by thus considering its extent and importance; and we cannot but allow that it exercises a great portion of taste and imagination, and combines the excellencies of robust and solid parts, with those which spring from brilliant capacities and delicate perceptions.

It is worth while also to remark with what advantage this spirit of biography will sometimes enter into the plan of history, the most attractive and animated parts of which are often those partial delineations of select and favourite characters, where the vehemence of admiration overcomes the general sobriety, and equal tenour, of historical representation; and the heat of the writer's bosom prevails above the ceremony of rules, and shows itself in bold and enthusiastical touches of extraordinary splendor.

These hints upon the nature and rules of biography, came from my friend Mr. Alworth's mouth, at the last meeting of our society, where the conversa-

tion happened to turn upon that subject; and as they appeared to be judicious, I put them together as well as I could remember them, for the entertainment of my readers. I certainly have often felt the truth of my friend's observation, in reading some of our best histories. I love those genuine passages, in which the dignity of the historian gives way to the feelings of the man, and the heart conspires with the head in the eulogy or vindication of a great and virtuous character. This will only be permitted, however, to a grave and weighty historian; nor indeed will these partial bursts have much effect upon the reader, unless they be contrasted with the general abstinence and equability of the whole. This remark is particularly applicable to our countryman David Hume; and I challenge any person of sensibility to contemplate the portraits he has drawn of the dukes of Montrose and Ormond, and the lords Strafford and Ossory, without feeling their spirits raised almost to rapture and enthusiasm. The original intention of this excellent historian, to write only the reigns of the Stuarts, has given to his work those lively dashes of biography, which have greatly contributed to render it so popular and interesting.

Never, perhaps, has there existed a greater rage for biography, than at the present moment. I cannot, however, help considering it as grossly prostituted; when I see it rendered a vehicle for profligate examples, or the purposes of scandal and abuse. The memoirs of impure females, of petits-mâîtres and buffoons, which are every day poured in upon us, will in the end, I fear, bring discredit upon this species of writing; and it will be considered as an honour to go out of life without getting INTO print. Thus, in another century, instead of containing a list of British worthies, biography will be the sink of Bri-



tish infamy; and all that our great men will aspire to, will be the negative renown of escaping the bookseller's shop, and of giving up the ghost without being entered at Stationers' Hall.

I live in hopes that the peaceful tenour of my life will put me out of all danger; and on that account am disposed to congratulate myself very much upon the obscurity in which I have lived. I must not however depend too much upon this obscurity; for I observe that many of my fellow-subjects, who have never been spoken of while they lived, have made a great noise by their deaths, and have gone off with an explosion like an air-gun.

About half a year ago died Mr. Stentor, my clerk, who had held his post under a succession of rectors for the space of fifty years. I did not think it possible to rake up sufficient matter concerning him, to make a solitary rural distich for his tomb-stone; but Mr. Crossbones the sexton had hardly put him into his grave, before he produced a neat little duodecimo history of his life, with a very sleek and comely portrait, a motto from the hundreth psalm, and a very handsome dedication to the Rev. Simon Olivebranch.

It would be well enough if this biographical mania could be confined to such harmless subjects; but I am informed by my correspondent in town, that many of those lives which used to be bought of a cryer in the street for a half-penny the day after an execution, will now cost you two-and-sixpence at a reputable bookseller's shop. I am assured also that an evening lecturer in town is engaged in a work which is to be called Biographical Sketches of Eminent Swindlers, &c. or the Young Gentleman's Pocket Companion, with all the smart sayings and gallantries of those brave youths, and their portraits



at full length, executed by the most celebrated artists in the kingdom.

Some little time ago, as my correspondent reports, there lodged, within a few doors of St. Sepulchre's church, a biographical genius, who lived three years very comfortably on the death of his friends, till, having lost his credit with the booksellers, and in consequence all means of livelihood, by the recovery of an old uncle, whose life and death he had already put into their hands, he took the heroical resolution of killing himself, in order to provide for his family; and I am told his memoirs have already apprenticed out his eldest son to an undertaker.

It is a remark of Mr. Allworth's, who, in regard to his fellow-creatures, may be said, like the traveller in the fable, to blow hot and cold upon them with the same breath, whose expressions pinch like the frost, and whose charity drops like the dew — I say, it is an observation of his, that the cant of biography is growing so broad and common-place, and mankind are so ambitious of generalising their conduct to one common standard of depravity, that we shall soon buy ready-made lives in our shops, as the village landlord first purchases a human likeness, and then determines between Admiral Keppel and the Emperor of Germany. I hardly think I should outrage this remark of my excellent friend, if I were to carry it a little further, and observe that even the brute creation might be comprehended in this general extension and simplification of the biographical plan. The heads and particulars of the life of an ass maintain a sort of parallelism with that of a modern adventurer, and might run as follows:

How he was born in an obscure village in Yorkshire, and was christened Jack.

- How his youth was spent in play, &c.
- How he became very wild, as he came to years of discretion.
- How he formed some bad connections, and saw many troubles.
- How he ran away with a young gipsy-wench.
- How he came up to London, and found many rich relations.
- How he forsook the gipsy-wench, and carried about a market-girl to all the public places.
- How he made a great noise, and kicked up a great dust.
- How he took part in many dirty occupations.
- How he changed sides like the Vicar of Bray.
- How he became callous to all correction.
- How successful he was in haranguing the populace, and commanding attention.
- How he was loaded with more employment than he could bear.
- How he raised his hopes to the woolsack.
- How he was promised a stall for his brother, and the Order of the Thistle for himself; and how he was turned out of place without any provision.
- How he was bribed to hold his tongue by a lady in the straw.
- How he lay in clover for three years.
- How he grew very amorous, and how the queen's zebra was talked of.
- How he was bought and sold by people in power.
- How he put on a lion's skin, and grew very formidable.
- How he turned tail, on being pulled by the ears.
- How he sat upon thorns.
- How he was turned out of place, fell again into obscurity, died, and left all he possessed among his natural children.

I shall conclude my paper of to-day with a little conversation in the shades below, between a modern biographer and a kennel-scraper, in imitation of Mr. Fontenelle's fourth dialogue, between Anacreon and Aristotle.

**BIOGRAPHER.**

I never should have imagined that a vile kennel-scraper could have the effrontery to compare his occupation on earth to the dignified task of the biographer.

**KENNEL-SCRAPER.**

You make a great bustle about the dignity of a biographer; but I should be glad to be informed on what circumstance, except the Greek origin of your name, you can found your claim to superiority.

**BIOGRAPHER.**

I desire, sir, first of all, to know what pretensions your office on earth has given you to challenge an equal honour with a man who has employed his talents for the entertainment and instruction of mankind.

**KENNEL-SCRAPER.**

The point of utility I can very boldly assert; and I see no reason to blush in your presence, if the dignity of our trades be made the question. I think, sir, with submission, that my old nails and broken horse-shoes are discoveries as valuable to the world, as those scraps and shreds of immorality, impertinence, and prostitution, you were so earnestly employed in collecting. Is it not of more consequence to the community that one industrious man gets his bread in peace, than that fifty names and follies should be supported by the pains of the biographer? And as to dignity, I maintain that to rake up the

trash and rubbish of a noisy fellow's history, and wait upon his memory backwards and forwards, from the gaming-house to the brothel, is the most degrading office in the world; and sooner than have any hand in such a business, I would have them both immersed a whole day in the most pestilential abyss in his majesty's three dominions.

## BIOGRAPHER.

You make no distinctions between the different orders and degrees in which biographers may be classed. Your intellect is as muddy as your occupation. You will not surely rank yourself with Plutarch, and with geniuses of a similar order in our own country.

## KENNEL-SCRAPER.

Pardon me, sir; my business was always to separate and select. I wish to be understood to speak only of the latest biographers. I have a very proper respect for those great men to whom you allude; and I observe that they have enough for themselves, to keep as distant from you as possible; for in yonder meadow, covered with the bloom of the amaranth, and intersected with amber streams, I can discern the venerable Plutarch, surrounded by a set of heroes and philosophers, who strive with each other in their testimonies of gratitude and esteem.

N<sup>o</sup> 12. TUESDAY, APRIL 17.

*Est mollis flamma medullas  
Interea, et tacitum vivit sub pectore vulnus.*

VIRGIL.

A gentle fire she feeds within her veins,  
Where the soft god secure in silence reigns.

DRYDEN.

My good-natured readers will pardon me if sometimes I discover the vanity of a grey-headed man in speaking of these papers, which I consider in a manner as my grandchildren. When I take my usual saunter in our little filbert-walk, before our old lady summons me to breakfast, I am tempted, I own, to make a comparison between the gradual opening of my plan in these essays, and the lively progress of vegetation at this cherishing time of the year. The same kindling influence which unfolds the bud, and spreads out the blossom, seems also to impart a sort of growth to my fancy, and to fructify within me every germ of thought, of feeling, and of affection.

Now turning from the wintry signs, the Sun  
His course exalted through the Ram had run,  
And, whirling up the skies, his chariot drove  
Through Taurus, and the lightsome realms of Love;  
Where Venus from her orb descends in showers,  
To glad the ground, and paint the fields with flowers;  
When first the tender blades of grass appear,  
And buds that yet the blast of Eurus fear  
Stand at the door of life, and doubt to clothe the year;



Till gentle heat, and soft repeated rains,  
Make their green blood to dance within their veins ;  
Then, at the call embolden'd, out they come,  
And swell the gems, and burst the narrow room.

FLOWER AND THE LEAF.

Without these physical aids of fine weather, and the sort of renovation which the spring seems to produce in me, I do not know how such a little frosty old fellow as myself could ever find sufficient animation in his bosom to give my fair countrywomen a chapter upon love. It is almost impossible, indeed, amidst this universal "passion of the groves," when every feathered songster is warbling out his sweet pain, and every sprig is conscious of the double weight of some newly-wedded pair—it is almost impossible, I say, for a heart that is disengaged from low pursuits and pleasures, not to yield to these gentle sympathies and gay emotions. It was at this season of the year, when the honeysuckle sends forth new shoots, and the bosom new desires; when the passions feel a fresh impulse towards their object, and the ivy embraces the elm anew; that my mother used to make her strongest efforts to persuade me to marry.

That the Olive-branch family should become extinct after me, was a thought which she never could dwell upon without uneasiness; and I really would have married fifty times over, to have spared her this pain, but that my little pinched-up, mummy-like figure would never let me think of matrimony without shame and confusion. Besides which, after my poor friend Eugenio's death, after he had breathed out on my breast his last hope and his last sorrow, all my care and assistance were wanting to console the virtuous Amelia, who survived her lover about ten years, and then died a virgin, in purest

faith, and thought, and act, at the age of thirty-six.

For these reasons I used to avail myself of the same subterfuge which was used by the philosopher Thales, who, when his mother pressed him to marry, would excuse himself for a length of years, by alleging that he was yet too young, till, after turning a critical corner in life, he suddenly shifted his ground, and maintained that he was now too old to think of it. By these evasions I gained leisure to cultivate the friendship of the chaste Amelia, during the course of ten years: and whatever tenderness mingled itself in our intercourse and correspondence, it was borrowed from the soft recollection of Eugenio, which cast over it a sombre and refracted light, like that which remains to the world after the sun has abandoned it.

I never could prevail on myself to open the little packet which Eugenio had put into my hands, till the death of Amelia, when my thoughts could rest on no other object but the loves of this gentle pair; and there was a sort of void and craving in my mind, which could only be satisfied by the constant repetition of the names and the sentiments of my poor young friends. This looked most like conversing with them, and has always been a balm to my spirits which I would not have foregone for any pleasures or preferments the world could offer me. Since I am become old, these letters are still the lecture I most delight in: oftentimes, in reading them, I stretch out my hand to find Eugenio's, and take off my eyes to meet the blue languish that used to beam from those of Amelia.

Now then, since the worms have preyed upon what was mortal of these tender friends, and no heart remains but my own, to beat at the recollec-

tion of their sorrows, I shall take out from my parcel the letters which have passed between them, and single out such as I think will give most entertainment; hoping that they will meet with some sympathising bosoms even in this shallow age, and moisten the cheeks of some of my female readers, in honour of faithful love and virtuous calamity.

As to those vulgar spirits whose time is spent in the gross amusements of the town, or those dull plodders whose hearts are stuffed with pedlar principles and mean cares, or those pigmy politicians who have frittered away their feelings with puzzle and chicane, I tell them fairly, whenever, in turning their eyes over one of my papers, they encounter the name of Eugenio, to lay it down as no concern of theirs; for there is something mysterious in love, as there is also something sacred in its sufferings, by which they are veiled over in the presence of the uninitiated and profane;—it is only here and there that we find a tender bosom which has a true feeling and conception of the pangs or the pleasures of this generous passion.

I shall give these letters to the public, as nearly as I can, according to the order in which they were written. The following one seems to have been composed just after the false news had been received of the death of the young gentleman in the East-Indies, to whom Amelia had been long promised, but for whom it does not appear that she ever felt more than a great regard.

“ My dearest Amelia,

“ It has of late become a part of my plan of conduct, to prevent a too great elation or depression under circumstances of joy or sorrow, by sometimes forcing my thoughts, as far as I am able, on subjects

which stand opposed to the actual state of things around me. At this moment I ought to be, and really feel myself, one of the happiest beings that walk upon the earth, since I am loved by one of the fairest and worthiest. And yet forgive me if sometimes I steal a few minutes from the happiness that will ever accompany the thought of the sweet avowal you made me yesterday, to devote them to a melancholy subject, which, though the foundation of all my joys, does yet continue to tinge them with a sombre sort of colouring. The subject I mean, is the death of the poor youth who had been taught to expect at his return from a long and perilous expedition, the greatest compensation this life could yield him—the hand of Amelia. And yet how could the hand of Amelia have made him happy, without that heart which Amelia tells me was never his?—A truth but lately known to herself, and too late discovered by half the females who receive the professions of their lovers. If however his own passion were great as he declared it, gracious God! how great must have been his want of thy merciful consolations to soften the seeming severity of thy decree! How heavy the sentence must have appeared to him, which robbed him even of the gloomy comfort of straining his last looks on his dear Amelia, and of locking up her hand within his own in the struggle of death, as if to perpetuate so sweet a property beyond the grave?

“ The other night a dream presented him to me in the moment of his dissolution; and I thought I heard him sigh forth these words—‘ Farewell, dear Amelia! alas! how bitter it is to die at such a distance from thee! Death itself would be sweet in your society; but since I am never to see thee again with these mortal eyes, my spirit shall seek thee over the wide



sea, and present thee with a purer homage when dismantled of this fleshy incumbrance.' When I awoke, I found my pillow bedewed with my tears, which I thought a sufficient tribute to the memory of a departed rival; and turning myself about, went again to sleep, when, by a strange perverseness of my fancy, I imagined myself in the same situation in which I had before pictured the poor Horatio. Methought I too died at a distance from Amelia, though no sea was betwixt us; and somehow or other I seemed to have a confused notion that Horatio was in existence, and in perfect health. The agitation which this occasioned within me soon broke through my sleep, and I awoke in terrible perturbation.

"After this I resolved to go to sleep no more, but lay many hours awake, cheering my brain with the prospect of that happiness I am soon to taste in the undisturbed possession of my beloved Amelia. I pictured to myself our little cottage; stocked our farm with horses, cows, and poultry; made a variety of agricultural arrangements; and employed a full hour in forming a little collection of books, such as I knew would engage my Amelia to sit with me often in my hours of reading and study.

"Ah! when will these happy times come? Something at my heart tells me this delay is dangerous. Why must we give up a precious month of our lives to an idle punctilio? Time is so apt to traverse and overthrow the petty schemes and gay promises of life, that I tremble at giving him such latitude to work his mischiefs in; and yet what a sorry calculator am I, who am a being destined to eternity, and can yet be so anxious about a little month! Let it comfort us, sweet girl, to think that so dread an engine as Time, is in the hands of one that is the rewarder of virtue, and the protector of innocence. Adieu."



I shall here drop my little history for some time, which however I shall resume and drop again by starts, till my readers are tired of myself and my friends. After treating of the pathos of love, some general rules for the direction and controul of this passion might reasonably have been expected; and yet, perhaps, there is no concern of life in which rules are of less avail; for so silent and imperceptible are the attacks of love, that we are always half overcome before we are sensible of our danger. In this conflict, too, our reason will often prove an arrant deserter; and when we come to muster our forces, we find our principal dependance already gone over to the enemy. The only real security in circumstances so delicate and dangerous, consists in the general seasoning of a good education, and the early influence of virtuous models and examples. When, by long habits and due preparation, her judgement and taste are rectified, and a kind of poise given to her humours and affections, a young woman comes forth ready disciplined to encounter the trials of her sex; and the impertinence of flattery will provoke the pride of her understanding, as much as the sophistry of seduction will shock the rectitude of her principles.

In a future paper the female reader may expect some rules from Miranda, who has already shown her zeal in the cause of her sex, tending to establish some criteria by which true love may be distinguished from false love. At present there is only room for a very pretty little poetical contribution, the author of which, whoever he be, I shall be very glad to see in our filbert-walk in Northamptonshire. Those who admire the well-known poem beginning with "Come live with me, and be my love," will not despise the efforts of this kind contributor.

## WINTER.

Stern Winter, though thy rugged reign  
Chills the pale bosom of the plain,  
And in deep sighs thy hollow blast  
Tells me the happy hours are past  
That saw meek Spring her blossoms rear,  
And lead along the infant year ;  
Thy thickening glooms, and leafless tree,  
Have charms for Emma and for me.

And though the light-wing'd breeze no more  
Wafts the rich sweets of Summer's store,  
Though Autumn's scene no more beguiles,  
My cot is warm, and Emma smiles.  
Then, Winter, come ! thy storms and rain  
Beat on this happy roof in vain :  
The shivering blast, and leafless tree,  
Have charms for Emma and for me.

Then what avail thy wind and storm,  
That Nature's withering face deform,  
If Fancy's brisk and sportive lay,  
Awake to Pleasure's willing sway ;  
If the quick jest and lively song,  
Bid the slow night move blithe along ?  
For then thy glooms, and leafless tree,  
Have charms for Emma and for me.

Thus, when the bloom of youth is dead,  
And Fancy's frolic hours are fled,  
Tranquil, and free from passion's rage,  
I'll meet the hoary frost of age.  
Then, Winter, come ! these blessings bring ;  
I sigh not for the gaudy Spring :  
So shall thy glooms, and leafless tree,  
Have charms for Emma and for me.

N<sup>o</sup> 13. SATURDAY, APRIL 21.

*Vestra, inquit, munera vobis  
Certa manent, pueri, et palmam movet ordine nemo.*

VIRGIL.

Let no disputes arise:  
Where fortune plac'd it, I adjudge the prize.

DRYDEN.

It is a greater difficulty than the world may imagine, to adjust the measure of my thoughts to the dimensions of my paper: on some subjects I must exert great pains to coax them out to the usual length; while, on others, they disdain their ordinary bounds, and demand room to range and expatiate. *Mon esprit ne marche qu'à son heure*, is, I remember, a phrase of a French writer, which very well expresses the unaccommodating character of the mind. I never could have imagined, before I entered upon my present career, that our thoughts could rise in this sort of mutiny, and create such an involuntary confusion in our minds, as to disappoint all our endeavours towards consistency.

“Man”, (I have somewhere read) “is not the monarchy of reason, but the democracy of humours;” and I think, if we allow sufficiently for the subjugation of our minds to the influence of external circumstances, we shall not think the expression extravagant. There is, no doubt, a certain sort of organisation and predisposition necessary, before we can write happily on any subject; and whatever we force from ourselves, without consulting this internal guide, is for

the most part an unkindly sort of produce, that turns to but little account. This morning it was my design to touch upon the politics of a neighbouring country, had I not been detained at home by a kind of contrary wind in the channel of my thoughts.

The subject of biography, to which last Saturday's speculation was devoted, has still a claim upon me, as the limits of my paper excluded several observations it was my wish to subjoin: I must yield therefore to this arbitrary humour of the moment, and pursue, with the best grace I can, the subject to which it impels me. In my paper of Saturday, no notice was taken of the advantage to be derived from a comparative view of the great particulars in the lives of illustrious men; from which extension of plan, many new sources of pleasure and instruction are opened in this species of writing.

Every object of curiosity or study rises in value and importance, in proportion as it branches out into new connections and analogies. It is as true an observation in respect to a portion of knowledge, as a portion of matter, that the more points it touches, the more closely it settles, and the more indissoluble it becomes.—Thus, nothing is more clear, both in science and morality, than that, in proportion as the mind is supplied with the means of comparing, its judgement is improved and strengthened, and its fund of knowledge enriched, not with loose and miscellaneous articles, but with compacted truths and solid axioms. A mind stored with this sort of intelligence, may be compared to the owner of a rich and united territory, where there is no intervening slip of dubious land that can produce cause of anxiety to the owner, or of litigation to his neighbours.

It is the same with persons as it is with things: our judgements are never good, but when they are furnished from a great stock of materials, and a copious range of observations. Thus, to estimate and to feel the value of a great character, we must place it by the side of other great characters; and to know what we ought reasonably to expect from a virtuous man, in such or such a contingency, we must have a rule in our minds, drawn from the observation of many virtuous men, acting under similar circumstances.—It is on this principle that comparative biography may afford us great assistance in making up our judgements as to the separate characters held up to our view: Augustus Cæsar looks less by the side of the czar Peter, and the czar Peter himself turns a little pale at the approach of Alfred the Great; sir Walter Raleigh must strike his colours to sir Thomas More, and sir Thomas More is a head shorter when sir Philip Sidney makes his appearance.

It is by bringing in this manner those who have figured in each other's absence, face to face, and by placing them at the same time before us in the corresponding scenes of their lives, that we are enabled fairly to discriminate between them, and to proportion our esteem and admiration; whereas, in the successive and changing prospects which history presents, the hero that comes last into the field is almost sure of gaining the completest victory over us: still, however, the impressions which he leaves grow weaker and weaker, as the object becomes more remote; and the fickle lover is scarcely more inconstant amidst the various influence of contending beauty. There is no better remedy for this evil, than the mode of comparing together characters illustrious in history; and these comparisons in



general will interest and surprise, in proportion to the distance, in the order of time, between the heroes they approximate: they are a sort of artificial medium, by the help of which we bring antiquity nearer to our own times, and gain a distincter view of those august forms of magnanimity and heroism which history has preserved.

We may make too some flattering discoveries by this proximity of comparison, and convince ourselves that in many instances fancy alone, aided by a superstitious reverence for past ages, has magnified ancient prowess and ancient worth so much above modern excellence: thus, in these solemn kinds of trials, the admirable personages in modern history will often come forth with fairer fame and greener laurels, and recover what they have lost by overbearing partiality and pedantic preference.

To these particular advantages we may add others of a more general nature: by the strong resemblance and vivacity of such pictures, the imagination is heightened and invigorated; by what it opens to us of the analogous constitution of our minds, our views of human nature are enlarged; by the sudden effects of coincidence and contrast, our thoughts are pleasingly suspended and relieved; and by discovering the relationship and sympathy of great souls, our feelings are raised to rapture, and our hearts are expanded with delight.

I do not know any writer who has been more successful in the execution of this idea, or who has hit upon a juster parallel between two characters famous in history, than a living author, who has brought under one view the lives of Philip of Macedon and Frederick of Prussia. These conquerors are perhaps as much entitled to our attention as any whom history records, both on account of their own pecu-

liar complexions, and the nature of the events which surrounded them. In the life of Philip are involved the causes and beginnings of an entire change in the condition of the ancient world; to the other is owing a more salutary revolution in the political state of modern Europe, than the struggles of a whole age without his assistance would have been able to produce.

Something also appropriate in these characters, distinguishes them from the genius of the times in which they lived, and excites in a particular manner the attention of those who love to contemplate dispositions and qualities, which are the genuine progeny of human feelings, heightened by native nobility of soul, and directed by a great and independent understanding. This pre-eminence particularly belongs to Frederick the Second, who appears in a remarkable degree to have followed the counsels of his own heart, in every concern, religious, moral, and political. All the leading measures and principles of his administration originated in himself; and the discipline of his army was not more exclusively the effort of his own genius, than those peaceful establishments which cast such lustre on his reign, and showed themselves, amidst the calamities of long and unequal wars, like the tops of mountains displaying themselves above the storm. From his attachment to antiquity, there was bred in his mind something of the hardihood of earlier times; and the stoical magnanimity of his end corresponded with the exits of ancient philosophers and heroes.

Philip was equally distinguished by qualities peculiar and complexional, and relieved (if the expression will be allowed me) from the genius of the age in which he lived. If Frederick borrowed something from the heroical examples of antiquity,

Philip seems to have anticipated the arts and stratagems of modern policy ; and thus these two remarkable men met half-way in their career of glory ; and, with their native and superinduced characters, exhibit an astonishing resemblance. Both were lovers of pleasure and lovers of money, but were governed by neither ; both were inventors in the art of war ; both possessed the qualities of a general in the highest perfection ; and both were alike eminent in arts and arms. The turn of their minds was remarkably social ; and both delighted to lay aside the incumbrance of majesty, and unbend in familiar conversation with their subjects ; and as they partook in the liveliest manner of the pleasures of equal society, and the uncontrouled commerce of sentiments and opinions, they alike considered it as their interest to overthrow the delusions of superstition, and to treat the grave impostures of philosophers and priests with contempt and derision. It is remarkable too, that the private feelings of both were embittered, the one by Voltaire, and the other by Theopompus the Chian. They agreed as well in their attachment to shows, amusements, and pleasures, as in the encouragement they held out to useful industry ; and both equally signalised themselves by their activity in promoting objects of public utility, by their unexampled success in improving their dominions, and their extraordinary attention to the education of their subjects. In their situation with regard to foreign powers, the coincidence is no less remarkable : yet there are points of difference on this side of the comparison, which are very much to the advantage of the Prussian monarch, who was undoubtedly a prince of great honour and probity. In the gross, however, an attentive reader of the histories of these princes may push this parallel to a surprising length,

and discover such pleasing resemblances, as will tempt him to make similar comparisons of other eminent men who have figured in modern and ancient history.

It has often occurred to me, that a very entertaining and useful book might be written on these characteristical resemblances. Strong touches of similitude might be found between Cromwell and Pisistratus, Richard III. and Jugurtha, Dionysius and Harry VIII.; Lewis XIV., Augustus, and Alyattes; Mithridates and Hyder Ally:—on the fairer side of the comparison, between Henry VII. and Vespasian; between Washington, Timoleon, and Doria; Andrew Marvel, Aristides, and Scipio Nasica; Wolf, Epaminondas, and the son of Cato the younger. The point of resemblance between the three last heroes, was the moment of their deaths: they all died in the lap of victory, rejoicing to think that the last instant of their lives should add a fresh laurel to their brows.

This leads me to observe another very solemn resemblance, which must come home to the memories and the bosoms of the sensible part of my readers. The illustrious earl Chatham, and that Crassus whom Cicero so feelingly deplores, sealed their patriotism with the last act of their lives, and sunk down, in the midst of an awe-struck senate, under the weight of their duty and the excess of their exertions. Cicero concludes his account of this melancholy event with these affecting expressions: “ *Illa tanquam cycnea fuit divini hominis vox et oratio, quam quasi expectantes post ejus interitum veniebamus in curiam, ut vestigium illud ipsum in quo ille postremum institisset, contueremur; namque tum latus ei dicenti condoluisse, sudoremque multum consecutum esse audiebamus; ex quo cum cohorrisset, cum feбри domum rediit*”



dieque septimo lateris dolore consumptus est.”—  
“The last words of this excellent man were like the dying notes of the swan. At the news of his death we repaired to the senate-house, where we dwelt with enthusiasm on this last trace of him, and almost worked up our fancies to the expectation of hearing again that voice which we had often listened to with delight. This last effort was too much for the frame of his body, which laboured under the ardour of his exertions. He proceeded with symptoms of great inward pain, and the sweat dropped from him in quantities; after which, he was seized with a shivering, and returned home in a raging fever, which terminated in his death at the end of seven days.”

Having now presented my readers with enough of my own reflections on the advantages and abuses of biography, I shall lay before them a letter which has been brought to me since the appearance of my paper of last Saturday: it is from the gentleman whom I have already introduced under the title of Projector.

“My old Friend,

“I approve so much of most of your ideas on the subject of biography, that I have resolved to scheme a little upon them; and as soon as the distraction of my other engagements will allow me a moment’s respite, I will send you the draught of a plan, in which you will recognise many of your favourite ideas. I have started so many embryos lately, that it is now a full week, by my housekeeper’s almanack, since my beard has been shaved, or my watch wound up. But as soon as my diving-machine is finished, which is to disclose to us the kingdoms



of Behemoth and the great Leviathan, and to carry my wife and children to the bottom of the ocean, I shall have leisure to meditate some scheme of advantage to the art of biography.

“Some thoughts occurred to me the other night in bed :—I was thinking that my countrymen might be distributed into twelve classes, or tribes ; and that for each of these classes there should be made twelve little bags, to answer to the months of the year ; that these bags again should be divided into four lots, representative of the four seasons ; and that in every bag there should be thirty tickets, numbered according to the days of the month ; that to each class also there should be twelve other bags, containing each thirty tickets ; that, on every one of these last thirty tickets, there should be written some suitable and natural event, agreeable to the class to which it belonged.

“With this apparatus, suppose me sitting down to the task of biography. The only assistance I require is that of a little boy who can put his hand into a bag, and reckon as far as thirty ; so that the saving of labour will be almost as one to a hundred. Suppose a two-and-sixpenny life of a man of fashion be wanted : I call for my twelve bags belonging to his class, which I shall name, for distinction sake, Bagatelles ; I give my boy the bag for January, and take the other bag into my own hand, containing the eventful tickets : he calls out with a solemn voice, ‘N<sup>o</sup> 13.’ I draw my ticket, and find on it, ‘Rose at twelve—breakfasted—took three turns in Bond-street—tried on a pair of pantaloons—sat two hours with —, while she thrummed on the piano—dined at the Piazza—went drunk to Cady D—’s, and lost my money to the general.’ Now, by the help of these thirty tickets, contained in every bag,

which may be transposed and diversified like the letters of the alphabet, I can produce an exhaustless variety; and though each person, at the end of the month, will have gone through pretty much the same process with the rest of his class, yet the order and succession of events may always be different. My wife prefers getting into my bag, to going down in my diving-bell; and my eldest boy, who has just finished the *Life of Whittington and his Cat*, declares he will wait till he is lord-mayor of London, and then let the cat out of the bag, by getting into it himself.

“Yours, &c.”

“P.S. As fast as the emperors and kings of Sweden can die, I shall put them into my bags; as I shall of course have a particular class for princes, popes, emperors, czars, chams, kings of the gypsies, sultans, bashaws, &c.

“The idea of my bags is classical, in as much as it was suggested to me by the wind-bags of which Ulysses talks to Alcinoüs in the *Odyssey*.”

N<sup>o</sup> 14. TUESDAY, APRIL 24.

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*Nunc ego te in hac re mihi oro ut adjutrix fies.*

TERENTIUS.

Now, reader, tell me what I shall do to satisfy such opposite demands.

I AM mightily encouraged in the prosecution of my work, by the notice that is taken of me by the ladies, who begin to favour me with their censures and commendations through the channel of a delightful correspondence. As none of these letters are sent to me with any limitations or injunctions, I shall make no scruple of laying them before the public.

“ Old Simon,

“ I am one of those who took in your first and second papers, but have since discontinued them : nor do I know why I should scruple to declare to you my reasons, since I am sure I shall be countenanced in them by all those ladies who live in the great world, and have the true dash and fire of fashion about them. I tell thee fairly then, Old Simon, thou art too quakerish and formal for me ; and there is in thy manner something too much of—of—I don’t know what exactly, but I believe of virtue.

“ I expected something monstrously wicked and delightful was coming, when you called yourself the Looker-on. Well, I read over your first paper with great attention, and found it very chaste and very dull ; but I made sure of being shocked at a little

in the second, and determined to think of something very frightful all the while my maid was reading it to me, that no double meaning might escape me. Betty cried out, 'It's too bad! it's too bad!' and looked very pleased at several passages, particularly when you talked about your infant: but I own it was not wicked enough for me, and produced neither flushing in my cheeks, nor titillation in my thoughts.

"If you wish to sell your publication among us dashing women, you must let your humour come home to our business and bosoms, like those shocking allusions on the stage, which penetrate the clouded understandings of the gods in the galleries, and run through and through the delicate part of the audience. Adieu — Take pains to become more shocking, and perhaps you will find a friend in

"BELINDA DAUB."

"P. S. If you want any shocking stuff, I know a most impertinent creature of a man who will send you some communications."

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"Reverend Simon,

"Your age, your situation, your profession, and your promises, had all led me to expect a revival of that Spectatorial humour, in which it was difficult to decide whether there was most delicacy, wit, or wisdom. I must candidly confess, that my expectations have every way been egregiously disappointed. Instead of that scrupulous reserve, and chastity of expression, which distinguished the labours of your great predecessor, there is an uncomeliness in your jokes, and an irreverence in your raillery, which offends the chaste ear, and savours



much of the theatrical gust. I cannot bear that desperate sort of humour, which, rather than miss of being understood in all its points, descends to be its own commentator. Your vessel will never come safe into harbour, if you make it thus a rule to spread out your canvas in all weathers.

“Should my rude daughter-in-law, who is indelicate enough to doat upon your style and manner, have the assurance to write you word that I do not like to spare the money for your paper, you are desired to set her down for one of the falsest and most impertinent chits on earth. If I have discontinued to take in your paper, it is because I have chastised my notions to a certain rule of morality and decorum, which must not be sacrificed to the titillation of a rude jest. Forgive me the sincerity which I use towards you, and believe me to be

“Your well-wisher,

“SARAH SOLEMN.”

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“Dear Mr. Simon,

“I happened yesterday to see a letter on my mother-in-law’s table, directed to you, which, most probably, contains a great many untruths, especially if she speak of me in the course of it; for you are to know we have just had a most terrible quarrel about your paper. I am very certain that the objection she makes to it is very far from being sincere, and is merely a cover to that regard for her money which only yields to certain selfish gratifications, which I am sure she will never own. The other evening, a tall gentleman in the militia brought her some books, which she has kept in her drawers among lavender and rose-leaves all this week; and since she has been in possession of this treasure, she has been very bitter against what she calls the loose

turn of your papers. The other day, while she was out on a visit at captain Gorget's, I stole into her chamber, and, finding the drawer open, satisfied my curiosity at leisure.

“ I thought, to be sure, that I should find the *Whole Duty of Man*, or *Gregory's Last Legacy to his Daughters*, or some such instructive manual ; when, to my great astonishment, I discovered that this treasure, which had been preserved with such pious care, was nothing less than the memoirs of a very notorious female, who has lately published her infamy in several volumes. I think, therefore, meek Mr. Olive-branch, we may very charitably suppose her objections to your paper on the score of indelicacy, insincere.

“ For my part, I am delighted with it, and have already wept over the urn of poor Eugenio. Alas ! do try and find me such a man ; for I have quite tired my imagination with fancying a young fellow after his mould, and myself the object of his admiration. Poor comfort ! unsubstantial bliss ! Do, do, Mr. Simon, either show me his parallel, or show me yourself, who were his friend ; and if you can reconcile yourself to a young woman of some talents, and some beauty, and very fond of vistas, and moonlight walks, perhaps—but I have said enough. Remember, Rhodope fell in love with *Æsop*, who was, to the full, as much an oddity in figure as you have represented yourself. Adieu, dear little old man—Adieu.

“ Yours ever,

“ LUCINDA HEARTFREE.”

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“ Good Mr. Olive-branch,

“ I am a constant reader of your papers ; and, upon the whole, am very much pleased with

them. I cannot help thinking, however, that sometimes you treat us people of fashion with too much asperity : your taste too is a little rustic, in regard to the qualities of our sex. In solitude and in theory, your simplicity, your nature, and your sensibility, may do admirably well ; but believe me, the business of fashionable life cannot be carried on without a little duplicity, a little imposition, a little dishonour, a little impiety, and a great deal of effrontery ; which, when mixed up in due proportion with virtue and religion, have a wonderfully accommodating influence upon them, and tend very powerfully to facilitate their diffusion, by adjusting their duties and principles to our worldly interests and gratifications. Thus, if you will compound for a little ogling, young women will go regularly to church ; if you will allow a little feasting and peculation, a man of the world will concern himself with the affairs of the poor ; if you will admit a little hypocrisy, a fine lady will be content to be religious ; and a handsome wife will love her neighbour as herself, if you will but indulge her in a few freedoms with him.

“ You must not indeed, Mr. Simon, be so testy : you are for burning out our complaints with a hot iron, like the savages ; and if you are sprightly for a moment, it is all malice in disguise ; and your smiles are sure to end like the wedding of St. Bartholomew. Besides, sir, this rigour will only provoke opposition ; and you know but little of our sex, if you think we are to be reasoned into what is right.

“ About three months ago, my youngest sister was made desperately in love with a young gentleman, whom my father and mother thought a very prudent match for her, by telling her to be particularly cautious of fixing her affections upon Mr. Summers, as he was absolutely engaged to another. The conse-

quence was, as might be expected; Lætitia was far gone in love with Mr. Summers before a week was over, and is since become a happy wife. If you tell me once more that you are determined never to marry, you will certainly provoke me to pay you a visit. In the mean time,

“ Yours,

“ GRACE LATITUDE.”

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“ Old Boy,

“ Since your paper on the rights of women, I have unordered a pair of half-boots for snipe-shooting, and have taken my name out of the eleven in the famous cricket-match that was to be played between the Maids of Kent and the Merry Wives of Windsor.

“ Yours ever,

“ MARTHA MUSCLE.”

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“ Mr. Olive-Branch,

“ I have now been married six years, but have only tasted the true delights of matrimony these last six weeks; a circumstance to which you have the honour of being greatly instrumental. To make this clear to you, I will just give a sketch of my life since my wedding-day.—My husband and myself are first-cousins, who were paired by our friends as soon as we had both finished our education, and had passed the critical age of twenty-one. As our fortunes were ample, and our persons not disagreeable, it was agreed on all hands, that, although we might not be happy, we could not be miserable.

“ No sooner had I promised obedience in due form, than I began to assume the reins of authority; and, as soon as I had stepped out of the carriage



which conveyed us home, I gave the servants to understand, that they were to receive all their orders from me : I appointed the time for the introduction of the chamber-candles, settled the breakfast hour, and adjusted the arrangements for the morning. All this was quietly acquiesced in ; but, when I began to choose every pipe of wine according to my own fancy, and to name the price that should be given for my husband's saddle-horses ; when I began to interfere between himself and his tailor, to lay wholesome restraint on his appetite, and to make a variety of petty articles contraband, which he saw were freely permitted in every family but his own ; his pride was worked up to a great pitch of fury, and mutual hostilities began : the whole economy of the house was soon overturned ; and the servants, from the fear of disobliging the one or the other, disobeyed us both : our provisions grew every day shorter and shorter ; for, whatever joint was brought to table, it was sure to give some displeasure to one or the other ; it was either too salt, or too fresh ; too little, or too much done ; and the baker was put to his inventions, to mottle a loaf of so dubious a grey, that both our tastes might be in some degree consulted.

“ Thus circumstanced were our affairs, when I found myself far advanced in the situation so natural to married women. At the birth of an infant, terrible contests arose about the three ways of bringing it up : either of these might have done ; but the difficulty was to bring our disputes to an issue ; and before this could be effected, the baby died. Grief for this accident produced a peace for one quarter of a year, when an unexpected windfall raised a fresh hurricane about our ears. By the will of a distant relation, we were entitled to the sum of thirty thou-

sand pounds, whenever we should make known to the executor the precise stock in which we could agree to have it invested. My husband (who, by the way, was never well instructed in the nature of the funds) peremptorily declared in favour of Bank stock; whereas, ever since the proving of the will, I had set my mind upon South-Sea annuities. This dissension, however, after having deprived us of the interest of the legacy for one twelvemonth, was too sensibly felt to last much longer; and as my husband promised to give me up a third part for my own disposal, the moment I should accede to his opinion, after much struggle, I gave up the point.

“ Now, then, for the first time since our nuptials, in the same room, in the same tone of voice, did we order the chariot to the door; and though we had full half a mile to ride, yet we both exerted wonderful forbearance, till we arrived at the house of Mr. C—, the executor. Here I ordered a very thundering rap at the door to be given, which a little disconcerted my husband, who had been afflicted the whole morning with a violent head-ache. Mr. C— was not at home, but we were assured he would return in five minutes. Well, sir, with admirable patience did we support these five minutes: at last Mr. C— entered; but as my husband rushed by me, to pay his proper compliments, his knee-buckle caught in my delicate muslin gown, and away it flew into a hundred threads.—This was too much—I had only temper to bring out the words South-Sea annuities; and throwing myself into my chariot, desired to be driven home.

“ From that time we ceased to eat at the same table, and sleep in the same chamber; till my husband, one morning, to my great surprise, entered my apartment, with a countenance full of sorrow and

softness. After a little conversation, he recommended to me the perusal of your third number; a request I could not refuse, as it was urged with such becoming humility. As soon as I had read it, he pressed me, with an irresistible grace, to join with him in adopting some of the regulations of your society, as the means of rendering our future lives harmonious. As I doat on oddity and whim, I struck a league with him on the spot. We accordingly agreed on the abolition of superlatives, and the establishment of an echo. The steward received a joint command to draw up articles of pacification, in which it was stipulated, that we might continue our arguments on every subject till the interference of the echo. The articles were signed with proper solemnity, and each party hastened to fit up a temple to the Goddess of Sound.

“ I saw, with silent horror, my drawing-room stripped of its furniture; its girandoles parted with, much under their value; my register-stove removed, to afford a passage to the air; and a very beautiful paper supplanted by a coarse brown stucco. I was not behindhand, however, in making reprisals, and my husband's study was presently dismantled. Besides all this, our chamber was stripped of its furniture, and for many nights did we sleep without curtains or tester; but all was in vain, for the coy spirit was not to be raised: we have therefore found it absolutely necessary to repair to the old mansion in Cumberland, where, as the doors unfolded, we were delighted to hear the grating of the hinges re-echo thrice along the moated castle. Here have we lived for five weeks, and in such peace and harmony, as I had never any conception of before.

“ The other day, however, the tumbling of an

unlucky tile put us so strongly in mind of our own windfall, that the ancient dispute was revived, and we immediately repaired to the hall, which is always the place of disputation. There it was carried on with various success, till the echo decided in my favour. Had I been content with a sober triumph, my glory might have lasted through my life; but I must needs exult, and that in tones so forcible, that the whole roof was convulsed; and nothing but South-Sea annuities was heard for the space of twenty seconds.

“ Well, sir, to dwell no longer on a part of my life of which I am thoroughly ashamed, the Bank stock is bought, and we live in affluence and content: we are now the happiest couple in all the country; and if curiosity should ever tempt you to visit the lakes, you will find a most welcome reception at Noisy-Hall, from

“ Your obliged and faithful humble servant,

“ RACHEL UNRULY.”

*Noisy-Hall, Cumberland.*

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N<sup>o</sup> 15. SATURDAY, APRIL 28.

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*Ex fronte et vultu, etiam in ipso oris silentio, natura loquitur.*

LACTANTIUS.

Nature speaks in the forehead, and the looks, and even in our very silence.

It appears, without doubt, a little extraordinary, considering the returning fondness of the age for



the occult sciences, that I should so long have forborne to give the public a description of my physiognomy. The truth is, if I understand myself right, I have so just a sense of my own disparity in this particular, and am at the same time so apprehensive of forfeiting the little favour I may have conciliated among my fair countrywomen, that I dare not come forward with the whole truth. Without proclaiming, therefore, the length of my nose, or the width of my forehead, I shall merely give my readers the outline of my figure.

I am a little pinched-up old man, and look as if I had been cased up and embalmed a century and a half. My mother tells me that I am the very counterpart of my great-grandfather; and that, when I have on my figured roquelaure, or my purple coat with the large cuffs, she can almost persuade herself that our ancestor's portrait is walking out of its frame. It has been a remarkable peculiarity in the Olive-branch family, that they have all looked as old at twenty-five as at sixty-three: and it used to be no small diversion to me to see myself led to the great chair with a soft bottom to it by the fire-side, at every first visit at a neighbour's house, before I had turned the corner of thirty. Old lady Downhill, who had heard at least twenty cuckoos more than myself, would never let me stoop to pick up my glove, and would often make a tender of her arm in walking to church. It used to give me pleasure to remark the freedoms the young ladies would allow themselves in my presence; and my ears have been regaled with little histories and confessions of the most interesting kind, while I have been thought fast asleep by the chimney-corner. I can very well remember that when I was at school, the formality of my face got me the nick-name of Conjuror; and

in the year sixty-one, when I was about eight-and-twenty, I was asked if I remembered king William's landing. As I am even to this day without a beard (another characteristic of the Olive-branch family), no change has been remarked in my appearance these forty years; and I seem to have stood in a sort of winter solstice ever since I came to the age of maturity. My friend the Projector, who is a mighty calculator of nativities, used to insist upon it, that I should die before I reached thirty; and is at a loss what to believe, when he looks in my patriarchal countenance, and considers the decay of his own constitution.

Having now said all that it is discreet to say respecting my own physiognomy, I shall go on to the consideration of the study itself, which seems to take so strong a possession of some persons' fancies. Physiognomy, like every other object of human inquiry, has been dyed in the various colours of caprice and enthusiasm. Our passion for systematising all our perceptions, has kept us ever at issue with the anomalies and irregularities of nature; and our struggles to bring them to an accommodation has forced us upon inventions and schemes, in which our imaginations have risen above all measure and controul. No man, it is certain, should let himself loose in any new province of study, before he has well considered its nature, use, and limits. We may run mad in the soberest pursuits, without a due sense of the imbecility of our minds, and the imperfection of our plans.

There is a fundamental difference also to be attended to in the nature and capabilities of different subjects. Some are susceptible of demonstration as far as they go; while others are purely complexional and arbitrary, and depend upon our stock

of observation, and the progress of our judgements. It is thus with physiognomy—No reasoning can raise it into a science, nor form it into a collection of general rules, to decide for all mankind: but every man will still determine for himself; and the same countenance will continue, in spite of our systems, to invite confidence, and alarm distrust, as it is viewed with different associations, impressions, and prejudices. It is in vain that we bring in the aids of analogy, and appeal to the support of authority; the system is daily discountenanced, as a system, by glaring facts, and positive experience.

But although the testimony of fixed signs, such as the length of the nose, or the shape of the forehead, can never run parallel with observation and experience, yet it has always been clear to me, that there are certain fluctuating evidences which may be pretty much depended upon. When I see a dimpled smile upon the face, that is not merely local, but shifts its place and prints itself in every corner of the countenance, too lubricous for the eye to follow, I am immediately thrown off my guard, my bosom is in a manner unlocked of its treasures, and my soul peeps out at my eyes. Such a smile had Eugenio, in giving utterance to some worthy sentiment, or in pronouncing the name of his Amelia.

There are doubtless a great many other running characters and expressions, which throw an unequivocal light on the qualities of the mind: but I would as soon pretend to judge of a book by its title-page, as pronounce upon my neighbour's disposition or genius from the shape of his features.

It must be owned, however, so far, in favour of fixed signs, that the constant exercise of particular muscles in the face, in the expression of the same

feelings of the mind, may give them in the end a particular contour and character. But the ancient philosophers, who were many of them great physiognomists, persuaded themselves that the original shape of the features invariably announced the original propensities of the mind; while they acknowledged that the interference of reason, education, and habit, might prevent the influence of these propensities on our lives. Thus Philemon reported as badly of Hippocrates, from the observation of his countenance, as Zopyrus of Socrates; and both their accounts were confirmed by the confession of those great men themselves, who at the same time expressed their obligations to philosophy, which had controuled this malignity of their stars, and given a new turn to their thoughts and behaviour.

All this, however, is vague and unsatisfactory, there being no proof but the confession of these sages themselves, that their dispositions were originally more dangerous than those of the rest of mankind; and there are no greater impositions than those which we practise on ourselves in the estimation of our own qualities. Our opinions, therefore, must always remain without confirmation, as to those qualities and dispositions of a man's heart or head, of which we have had no practical testimony. Thus, though it would be obstinacy to doubt that the influence of philosophy might meliorate dispositions originally bad, yet no certain proofs can be obtained that such has been the case in this or that particular instance; and I should question, on the other hand, notwithstanding such grave authority, whether the most promising set of features in the world would redeem us from depravity or folly, without the aid of culture, and the exercise of reason.

Physiognomy, in its earliest state, was wrapped in



absurdity and error; and in its general notion included the doctrine of materialism, by supposing a closer connection between the mind and body than is consistent with religion or reason. Thus Plato, Aristotle, and Galen, held absurd conjectures on this head, and imagined an elemental affinity between our corporeal and spiritual natures. Hermes first adopted a different theory, and taught that there existed a certain analogy between the mind and body, without admitting any physical connection: thus, according to him, courage is represented by amplitude of chest, quickness of thought, by celerity of pace; and clearness of intellect, by composure of countenance: and this notion seems to have been favoured by Milton, in describing the person of the first man—

“ His fair large front, and eye sublime, declar’d  
Absolute rule,” &c.

Philo-Lacedæmonius comes nearer to the opinion I have already submitted to my readers, and attends almost solely to the temporary and changeable expressions of the face. I do not recognise any material improvement of this study in modern times, and I fear that our attempts to reduce it to a science will ever terminate in confusion and embarrassment. Every one may enrich it by the force of his own observations, may consult attentively the inexhaustible variety of specimens which every day supplies to him, and collect rules for his own judgement from the average of these experiences; but these rules must be bred afresh in every man’s mind, and cannot devolve through any line of inheritance, or be propagated through any channels of instruction.

The reader may perhaps be amused by the following letters which were put into my hands yesterday

morning, and which gave me the thought on which my present paper has turned.

*To the Rev. Simon Olive-branch.*

“ Complacent Sir,

“ What a succession of absurdities have flowed in upon us, since men began to philosophise! A set of impostors in every art have at all times been spawned out of the weakness and credulity of our minds, who have found their account in obstructing the progress of truth and knowledge, by occupying as much as possible of our little lives about idle, unfruitful novelties. Thus augury, astrology, geomancy, koskinomancy, chiromancy, divination, witchcraft, magic, and magnetism, have all had their turns, as the posture of men’s minds, and the bias of the moment, have favoured the one or the other. Those must have been delightful times, when every family had some one belonging to it whose head was turned with one or other of these chimeras.

“ I can speak feelingly on this subject, as a nephew of mine, who has been long in my counting-house, and has hitherto given proofs of very solid parts, is lately gone wild with the prevailing conceits about physiognomy. When a merchant enters the room, he takes out his pencil, and instead of making memorandums, minutes down the proportions of his face, makes an entry of his nose and mouth; and, if his business detain my customer long enough, will squeeze his whole head and shoulders into the margin of his waste-book.

“ I found the other day, instead of an order of great amount, half an ear, a high forehead, and a pair of lantern jaws; and some of my best friends have been cavalierly treated for having too narrow a

mouth. My ledger, which it was once my pride to see clean and neat, is now dashed over with eyes and noses ; and my entries for blonds, lace, ribands, and fans, are made in the names of cardinal Bentivoglio, Charles XII., and the chevalier Bayard. I have frequently attacked him, though surrounded by these heroes, with threats and remonstrances, and have sometimes imagined myself on the point of prevailing. But if the malady give way in one part, it is sure to break out somewhere else, and is a kind of inveterate humour that circulates through the whole mass.

“ Within these three or four days he is grown less studious of the face, and seems to lay much greater stress upon the hand-writing. He will accept a bill without looking at the signature, if the shape of the O be to his mind, and bears a proper testimony of openness and integrity. Every bit of paper that contains any writing upon it, is in jeopardy if it come within his reach ; and the other day a piece of roasting beef, discovering the back of a letter with a fine flourish upon it, was arrested in its progress before the fire, and stripped in a moment. I cannot help suspecting that I saw a scrap of my own hand-writing, at the tail of some stupid remarks on narrowness of mind ; and a little crooked E, which I learned from my father, has been brought in evidence against me and my whole family, for I don't know how many generations backwards.

“ When this flying disorder was thus lodged in the fingers' ends, I thought there was some hope of its going altogether ; but, alas ! it begins already to show itself in the legs ; and a man cannot walk a yard without betraying the emotions and qualities of his heart and head. I find also that he takes into the calculation the tones and inflexions of the voice ; and

his hair is cut above his ears, I suppose to facilitate the entrance of every cadence and semi-tone.

“ Now, sir, if this rage should spread much, we must begin to talk with our fingers, and manufacture words like yarn ; for no man will be able to look you in the face, or speak or write, without disclosing every secret of his bosom. As my nephew reads the LOOKER-ON, your admission of this letter may turn out greatly to his benefit, and will much oblige

“ Yours, faithfully,

“ BENJ. INVOICE.”

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*To the Rev. Simon Olive-branch.*

“ Worthy Simon,

“ I do not doubt but that it will give you greater pleasure to be informed of any new invention of public utility, than of any new shape or instance of folly or degeneracy. I am the author of a discovery which I think of great and general importance, as it supplies a method, that is perfectly innocent, of coming at the real characters of those with whom we are connected. When I was a little boy, I could tell, by my father’s manner of stirring the fire at his return from ’Change, the price of stocks, and the news at Lloyd’s. If things went ill, he would spend half an hour in beating it down, till the same gloom was created in the parlour that prevailed in the Alley ; but if a fleet had just arrived, he would be sure to raise a flame to give it a warm reception.

“ My observations stood me in great stead during my apprenticeship ; and the sound of the poker over head, when my master came home to dinner, like the bar before the entrance of an opera singer, acquainted me at once with the disposition I should find him in when I went up stairs ; whether I was to be re-



proached for foppery and neglect, or commended for my decency and diligence.

“ I have since frequented clubs and parish meetings, and have always foreseen, by the aid of this criterion, who was to be the speaker, and what turn the argument was to take. I know, the moment a man advances towards the poker, that there is something stirring in his head ; and, when the subject has been politics, I have been able to pronounce, from a violent raking of the bottom bar, that his indignation would be directed against places and pensions. I can now determine, at a morning call, whether or not I am to be asked to dinner, by the use that is made of the poker. Whenever I have any business to settle, I desire to talk it over before the fire ; and no man handles my money, till I know how he handles my poker. Authors are the only characters out of my reach, who are seldom seen to stir a fire on any provocation ; either because they have no fire at home to stir, or because they are seldom placed within reach of them abroad.

“ Thus, sir, do I call over the coals every man I meet ; and the course of my discoveries can only be suspended by a warm summer, or a detention of the colliers. You will at once see the advantage of my practice over physiognomy, chiromancy, chiromancy, or any other occult art, as a touch of the windcolic may stamp a very good-natured fellow a churl ; hand-writing may be forged, and the hand itself be hardened by labour : but the plan I offer will always be practicable, while cold pinches and fire burns.

“ Yours, with great warmth,

“ PETER POKER.”

N<sup>o</sup> 16. TUESDAY, MAY 1.

“ *O curas hominum ! O quantum est in rebus inane !* ”

“ Oh, the ridiculous cares of men ! how much nothingness there is in their pursuits ! ”

## EMPIRE OF NOTHING.

## A VISION.

AMONG my qualifications for the undertaking in which I am embarked, I should do myself great injustice not to include my talent for dreaming. When my waking thoughts begin to fail me, I have nothing to do but to place myself in my mother's great chair, and fall deliberately asleep. This I do with such success, that the old lady says I have a genius this way ; and very much commends the felicity of my sleeping fancies. Upon these occasions, however, when, to prevent my readers from sleeping, I find it necessary to fall asleep myself, I never omit the ceremony of putting on my figured roquelaure, which exhibits a sort of mystical hieroglyphical pattern, and may, on that account, contain as much virtue and efficacy, as Mrs. Corbyn's original root for gold and silver dreams.

Yesterday being Thursday, there was a meeting of our society, in which Mr. Anthony Allworth delivered some excellent observations on the vulgar tautology of fashionable life, and the nonsense and nullity of most of those pursuits which fill out the measure of our existence and our exertions. I came home, determined to follow up my friend's remarks

through the course of a paper ; but finding myself sinking below my model, in spite of my utmost efforts, I called for my oracular gown, and dropping into the great chair, where I could neither see nor be seen, was presently charmed into a gentle sleep, that produced a new creation around me.

Methought I was wandering through a dark forest, and, propelled by an irresistible impulse, was pursuing my way, with pain and weariness, through a never-ending labyrinth of brakes and thickets, until on a sudden I found myself near the mouth of a prodigious cavern, out of which there issued vast clouds of fog and vapour. An unaccountable attraction drew me onwards, till I reached the spot, where I could not abstain from standing at the entrance of the cave, and stooping forwards as much as I could, to gain a view of the interior parts of it. At this moment I was attacked with such a giddiness and stupor, accompanied with such a strange singing in my head, that with all my efforts I could not keep my feet ; but, after a few turns, fell prone into the hollow abyss, and seemed to fall through a “ vast vacuity ” “ ten thousand fathom deep.”

*Τοσον ενέρθ' ὑπο γης ὅσον βρανος ες' ἀπο γαιης.*

My fall seemed to resemble that of the Titans, who were nine days and nights in reaching the profundity of Tartarus ; and I had began to think I never should regain my footing, when suddenly I found myself in the midst of a spacious plain, at one extremity of which I could discern the spires and turrets of a vast city. As the whole country was enveloped in a thick fog, every object appeared extremely large, and out of all proportion ; and a crowd of people that were amusing themselves with

some plays and gambols, in the champaign that stretched itself before me, put me strongly in mind of Stonehenge, on Salisbury Plain, which was very poetically named by the ancient Saxons, "The Dance of the Giants."

While I was looking about with the usual stare of a foreigner, there came running towards me, very much out of breath, a civil gentleman, with a body swollen out to a vast circumference, and a countenance extremely bloated, who offered very politely to be my conductor and interpreter, as I seemed to have no acquaintance in the place where I was. I thanked him very much for his condescension, and accepted his offer with the best grace I could, declaring myself a perfect stranger to the country in which I found myself. "I guessed as much," he replied, with great civility in his looks, but still puffing and blowing as if he never could have recovered himself. "You are not in that plump, high-fed condition so general among the natives of this country; and it is plain from your appearance, that you have not been nourished with our country foods, our saw-dust soups, and stews of oyster-shells. I must begin then with informing you that you are at this moment in the kingdom of Nothing, the most populous and flourishing empire of all the states of the universe."—"Is it possible," cried I, "that this can be the case, when the very resistance of the ground to the pressure of my feet, and the perfect use I have of all my senses, prove incontestibly that what moves before me is not inanity, but substance and matter?"

"Your remark," replied my new acquaintance, "is not unnatural; but you are to learn that the nothings of which this our country is composed, are not distinguished by their impalpability, but their vanity and inutility; not by their want of weight, but



their want of value: and we have no one article among us, that, on a fair valuation, would purchase an old song, in the island you have left—I say, on a *fair* valuation; because, somehow or other, our inanities and vanities have risen to such high estimation among you of late years, and our emigrations have been so numerous and frequent by means of our balloons, that his Inane Majesty has been obliged to oppose severe prohibitions and restrictions to this increasing rage, which would otherwise soon exhaust and depopulate his kingdom: he has therefore, within these few days, recalled, by a very solemn edict, all his loving subjects wherever distributed; and I doubt not, but that you will encounter, by and by, many old faces, if not old friends, who have taken much less time about the journey than probably you have done, by reason of their knowledge of the shortest way hither. When you return, you will be astonished at the depopulated state of your own country, and yet will wonder at the tumult and violence which prevails; for those of our people who are latest arrived, report, that the virtuous and vicious parts of mankind, for want of some intermediate characters to break and divide their forces, are fallen upon each other with unqualified fury. But while your curiosity is so powerfully excited by the objects that lie before you, I will not detain you by any political discussions. We will now proceed towards the city, which is called Tintinabia; and where one hour will give you a greater insight into our manners and customs, than a whole day spent in discoursing upon them. I have two or three very great philosophers to dine with me to-day on some of the best dephlogisticated air the country can produce; and I hope for the pleasure of introducing you to them. I can promise you, besides, some various

kinds of steam, all excellent, and some of the froth of bottled small-beer, which has been in my cellar these twenty years."

After expressing my sense of this courtesy in the handsomest manner possible, we stepped together into the balloon of my conductor, and arrived in a few minutes in the largest street in the capital. As soon as we alighted, I was almost stunned with the noise which prevailed all around me, and which seemed to issue from every corner; so that I could scarcely catch a word that fell from my friend's mouth, though I could observe that he seemed to have no difficulty in hearing every thing I said; and appeared to be not at all surprised or embarrassed by the indistinct clamour which followed us wherever we went.

There was an appearance of trade in the city, though the articles exhibited for sale were such for the most part as would pass in the estimation of a May-day chimney-sweeper as paltry finery. The press and hurry of each person that was walking in the street was remarkable, and the more so, as none of them seemed to have any point in view, but went backwards and forwards, in the same track, with the utmost eagerness and precipitation in their countenances; and, look which way you would, you might have imagined a pick-pocket escorted to the pump, or an attorney to the pillory. I thought I recollected many farcically solemn persons in this crowd, whom I had formerly remarked at the Royal Exchange in London, and who, while they seemed to have the burden of Atlas upon their shoulders, were actually little more than noisy nothings, that puzzled business, and carried all their consequence in their looks.

As I passed on, I peeped into every shop to form

some judgement of their commerce, their wants, their fashions, and their tastes; and feeling myself a little disordered by the foggy atmosphere of this region, called in at an apothecary's, where I swallowed a pill of whity-brown paper, which I was assured would remove my complaint; and on my looking a little suspicious, my guide assured me that I had taken a most admirable alterative and sweetener of the blood, which had made the fortune of the first physician in the country. This naturally enough led to a conversation on the state of medicine as a science among them; and I could find that it had had its share of national cultivation, by the multitude of contradictory aphorisms that were daily promulged among their fashionable doctors. There was not a single article of diet or dress that had not been found out to be deleterious in the extreme, or fraught with every benefit to the constitution; and every young licentiate raised himself into reputation by discrediting some ordinary aliment of general subsistence, or discovering the wholesome efficacy of some notorious poisons. Electricity, however, and factitious airs, and the water extracted from potatoes, were remedies of so established a name, that no one had yet been found sufficiently paradoxical to suggest any plain doubts of their efficacy, any more than of that of animal magnetism, which, of all the tribe of remedies in this country, held the foremost reputation. The large sum, however, required by government for a licence to practice as an animal magnetist, and the excise duties upon electricity and medicinal air, made them rather uncommon in their application. It must be owned, moreover, that these mighty remedies had lost a little of the public predilection, since the death of one of the daughters of his Inane Majesty, who had lately been carried off by the measles, after

having been treated by all the animal magnetists in the country, and in spite of a shock received from an electrical battery in a delirious stage of the disorder. The genius of this people, which certainly in most things was very peculiarly turned, was characterised, in respect to medicine, by a strange disposition towards experiment, without any regard to positive and direct experience; and it was told me, as a circumstance of very distinguishing merit in the physician to the royal household, that he had destroyed between five and six thousand kittens and puppies, to prove the rapid effect of carbonic acid air in occasioning death; and had killed a hundred horses with corrosive sublimate, to furnish an *à fortiori* proof of its deleterious efficacy on man. This curious indefatigable philanthropical experimenter has several acres of the finest land upon his estate planted, like the garden of Attalus, with poisonous vegetables, on which jack-asses are constantly feeding, to establish their virtues by experiment, without being aware of the good they are doing to mankind, or at what expense to themselves they are paying their debt of kindness to our species. The modes and causes of the deaths of these animals furnish very useful deductions as to their various effects on the vital principle. The obligations of his country to this great physiologist are incalculable, though his friends and neighbours are somewhat inconvenienced by the noise of a whole menagerie on the premises under the most ingenious torments of various kinds for various ends, who have no philosophy under the most philosophical experiments.

But to drop this digression, I shall proceed to detail things in the order in which they occurred. The barbers' shops were surprisingly full; at which I ceased to be astonished, when I was told that state



affairs were frequently adjusted in these places, and the cabinet ministers had that day been sitting under the hair-dresser's hands, for dispatch of business. The milliners' and haberdashers' shops were not less crowded; and it seems that the labour of twirling ribands employed a million of able-bodied subjects. Many persons, whom I understood to be authors, and who seemed in very excellent case for authors, were regaling themselves with the steam which issued from a tavern kitchen: and when they had satisfied nature, I observed that they consistently enough paid for their treat, by jingling their money in their breeches pockets.

The number of lottery-offices was prodigious, almost every twentieth house being devoted to this idle traffic. The prizes were paid in a paper money; and what sounded in their numeration like the revenue of a principality, would not have paid the tax upon a hungry spaniel in our own country. As a great many of these chance-merchants had been recalled by the late edict, it was pleasant enough to see written over their doors, "Removed from Cheapside," or "Fleet-street;" or, such a one, "late lottery-office keeper in the Poultry."

I own it gave me much satisfaction to see the booksellers' shops so full; as this raised in me a pleasing hope of finding, on my return, much thinner and choicer collections in my own country; for I have always thought that the advantages arising from the discovery of printing are nearly overbalanced by the spreading ills its abuse and prostitution have occasioned. In most of these shops there was a prodigious number of dedications and panegyrics, which had been brought back on speculation by the numerous tribe of bookmongers and authors who had been recalled. I saw prefixed to treatises,

*de Chirothecis et Ocreis, de Lucernis et Candelabris, de Custellis et Furcis*, very splendid dedications, addressed to persons whom nobody has ever heard of, under the titles of *Historiæ et Antiquitatum Instauratori felicissimo, Ecclesiæ Propugnatori acerrimo*. I could find, too, that Salmanaazar's Description of the Fortunate Island, the Travels into Abyssinia, Munchausen's Adventures, and Lucian's True History, were books of unquestionable authority in the literature of this country. In turning over a variety of volumes on the subject of philosophy, I could not but remark a great many folios of French discoveries in physics and metaphysics, mixed together with a heap of poems and novels. Almost all our late dramatic productions, it seems, had been recalled; and all our modern scribblers of prologues, farces, and musical pieces, together with our whole herd of wretched imitators of Shakspeare, had been summoned away in the midst of their triumphs and their gains, and ordered to bring their plays in their pockets.

To have gratified more minutely the curiosity I felt to investigate the true state of learning and the arts among this singular people, would have demanded more leisure than the multiplicity of objects yet before me would allow: by the help, however, of catalogues, and the assistances of my guide, I drew some satisfaction on these topics of inquiry. It was here that the most striking examples occurred, to illustrate what my conductor had told me of the nature of their nothings; for the ponderous folios and voluminous compilations that presented themselves to me on every side, were sufficient proofs that moral, and not physical levity, constituted the nothingness of this nugatory world. No kind of reading, as was testified by the vast variety of this sort of publica-

tions, attracted so much the attention of their wits as collections of anecdotes, and what were announced under the various titles of *Curiosities of Literature*, *Gleanings*, or *Beauties*, or *Elegant Extracts*; and the inanity of their tastes was such, and whatever was solid or valuable in the books that had been the subject of these selections had been so cautiously and dextrously avoided, that future editions might be much improved and purified by these negative instructions, and might at once reduce their compass, and enhance their value, by striking out, with a similar caution, the adoptions of these busy purgators.

I had not been long engaged in this examination, in one of the largest shops in the city, before there flocked round me a great number of persons of both sexes, of whom each presented me with a long list of names, purporting to be the names of subscribers to works in contemplation to be published. I answered them with a bow and a smile, and made the best of my way into the street, where my obliging conductor paid me a handsome compliment upon my penetration.

In the course of my perambulation, it was impossible not to take notice of the many airy equipages which were passing to and fro; and, to judge from the multitude of ducal and other coronets which were painted thereon, there seemed to be a mighty number of most noble and right honourable peers: and my conductor told me, that so many of this number had been recalled, that I should find, on my return, the coachmakers' warehouses full of the second-hand carriages of the nobility; and should be able to call a state-coach from the stand at Charing Cross, and ride in it to St. Paul's for eighteen-pence.

As there happened to be a stoppage of the balloon-coaches, in a narrow street called Frippery Row, I had leisure to observe the different faces of those who were carried along in them, and was pleased at recognising some very noisy members of our house of commons. There were also a great many sleek faces in full-bottomed wigs, and a vast deal of lawn and prunella, in many of these floating carriages.

I own I could not help being a little scandalised at the prodigious number of "Lookers-on" that choked up the streets; but my guide assured me that these were no observers of men and manners, but received from what was passing before them a sort of idiotic gratification, or such a pleasure as children experience in beholding a sky-rocket or catharine-wheel. "The most serious parts of these men's lives," said he, "are spent in *assisting* at dinners, or walking in processions; and it is surprising what numbers of this description have been recalled by our edict from the country to which you belong." Here I interrupted my guide, and begged to know the hour of the day; but he told me that no watches or clocks could be made to go in that country, owing to some quality in the air which relaxed their springs; a circumstance, however, the less to be regretted, as a people that had nothing to do, could have no great reckonings with time. He added, that they generally told the days of the week by the length of the men's beards in the market-places.

I remarked to my friend, as we continued our walk, the prodigious noise of tongues, which seemed to issue from almost every third house we passed; and was surprised at being told that there was no less a number than five thousand debating-clubs in the city of Tintinabia; and that, in a part of the town called Rag-Street, Echo Square, there was a



perpetual rumbling, like the sound of hackney-coaches in London. I did not forget to pay my visit to some of the churches, which were all crowded like every other public place, and where all seemed to be talking as loud as they could, but the clergyman (with the help of his sounding-board) louder than them all; and I could observe a great number of pious and plump devotees throw quantities of oyster-shells and rotten nuts into the poor's boxes.

In regard to the buildings, I could not but take notice, that they seemed throughout of a similar construction and consistency to those new rows of houses which have lately been pasted together in the suburbs of London; and the place altogether looked more like the model of a city, or such a one as the pastry-cook in Cornhill will build for a lord-mayor's dinner, than a real and habitable metropolis.

I shall give the remaining part of the history of my vision in a future paper, which will contain a description of my travels up the country, and my introduction at court.

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N<sup>o</sup> 17. SATURDAY, MAY 5.

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*Discrepet his alius. Geminos, horoscope, varo  
Producis genio.*

PERS. Sat. 61

Under the self-same planet born, we see  
E'en twins will in their natures disagree.

**My constant attention to the various descriptions of characters into which mankind distribute themselves,**

has brought me acquainted with several smaller classes and subdivisions, which pass unobserved by those who watch these diversities less narrowly than myself. In my profession of a Looker-on, there is a skill in classing and arranging, not unlike that which is expected from the botanist in the detail of his particular science. It will often happen, that a curious individual among men, like a rare specimen among plants, will pass for a non-descript with those who have pushed their researches to but a moderate extent; while others, who have prosecuted their inquiries with greater accuracy and ardour, and have taken richer and wider views of their subject, will have no difficulty, for the most part, in referring to some separate division each fresh particular, and gaining a property in their new discoveries by thus bringing them within a sort of inclosure.

In the course of my observations, there have started up in my way a set of men who are occupied through all the prime part of their lives in hunting after their own genius without success; who, with unwearied pertinacity, are forcing their faculties into every channel but the right, and, after torturing their minds a thousand ways, yield to the depression of constant disappointment, and sink into barren despondency, or the ruinous resources of vulgar dissipation. Those who are without the restlessness of ambition, or the promptitude of talents, may easily find their proper level, and have only to live in harmless inoccupation, or toil under the directions of an active task-master: but such as feel a consciousness of ability, and a spirit to exert it, have a strong interest in discovering the employment most congenial to their characters, and proportionate to their capacities. Under this latter description the greater part of us most certainly may rank; for, happily, the instances

are not common, wherein nature has sent mere blanks into life, of which no application can be made to the general advantage : and I am apt to think, that many of the least gifted among us, have fire enough within us to yield a spark, if our destiny do but bring us into collision with the proper object.

I remember, about five-and-thirty years ago, at college, a youth of a fair face, a plump condition, and a vivacity of deportment, who was most sanguinely bent upon discovering that particular spot, in the whole range of human excellence, which nature had designed him to illuminate, and where his genius might claim a sort of home and inheritance. Dick Addle, without being obliged to Plato, had accidentally fallen upon the ancient doctrine of reminiscence ; and it was a blind opinion of his, that if we could but hit upon the pursuit that corresponded with the stress and tendency of our genius, we should have little else to do but to exert the faculty of memory in resuming those ideas which had been given us at our births, and which only needed to encounter their congenial objects to be summoned into life and activity.

Dick set out on his discoveries with amazing ardour, and proceeded with uncommon perseverance : all the ocean of his intellect was sailed over, and its shallows ascertained with plummet and line ; but Dick saw nothing but a barren sea, a *ποντος ατρυγεταιος* : and still, as he urged his course, there was opened before him a wider and more disconsolate expanse of sullen uniformity. I used to pity this young gentleman very much, on the account of his repeated failures ; and could not help lamenting that so much good meaning should meet with so much ill luck.

But Dick was indefatigable in his endeavours : sometimes he was an author, sometimes a patron,

sometimes a politician, sometimes a jester, sometimes a philosopher, and sometimes a fiddler ; now a magistrate, now a mechanic, an antiquary, an algebraist, an astrologer : but all would not do ; for before Dick had got half through with his metamorphoses and experiments, he was robbed, ridiculed, cheated, cuffed, lampooned, posted, pelted, roasted, cut up, tossed in a blanket, and so often kicked, that, as we read in *Hudibras*, he rose at last to such nicety of discrimination, as to tell, by his sensations alone, the difference between Spanish and neat's leather.

Under all these trials and defeats, Dick's face grew longer, and his purse shorter, every day ; till, by one of the luckiest accidents in the world, Dick married a wife ; and at the end of three years being the father of five rosy children, he appeared every where with the most smiling and contented face in the world ; declaring to all his friends, that his pains were at last rewarded, by the discovery of his particular talent, which lay, as was proved, in supplying the community with healthy children, and in teaching them to ride on broomsticks.

Not all the gravity, however, of his more important situation in life, could ever banish from the memories of his college-acquaintance the ludicrous name that was given to him, of *Doubting Dicky*. I am informed too, that his original character has frequently discovered itself afresh, in the embarrassment he has laboured under in the disposal of his children ; and that his eldest son, after being drubbed as a wit, thrown into a ditch in the character of a fox-hunter, and cashiered as a soldier, was, about a month ago, with great difficulty recovered from drowning by the process of the Humane Society, after courageously setting the Thames at defiance with his diving-bell and balloon, in the character of a modern philosopher.



I beg leave to follow up this account of poor Dick Addle, with a rule, that may perhaps be serviceable to those who may happen to find themselves in a similar distress. Let such as doubt, like Dick, of their proper destination, make choice at once of some humble handicraft employment, in which there is little risk to themselves, and a sure profit to the community. In these unambitious walks of life, a failure can terminate in no very important evils; while, on the contrary, the unsuccessful trials which are every day made in the provinces of genius and taste, spread wide their mischievous effects, and leave lasting impressions of injury and discredit.

I have no doubt but that society must gain greatly by the general adoption of such a rule as I have laid down; for where it loses one man of real genius, it will escape a score of pretenders. Besides which, perhaps it would be found, that out of the mass of mechanical industry, into which I would throw all these hesitating gentlemen, the more subtile and volatile parts would rise with a chemical alacrity, and leave behind them the heavier and solider substances, to occupy their natural places in the order of life.

One of my ancestors, who was the greatest droll of all the Olive-branches, among other odd particulars, has left us a list of the accidental discoveries which his different acquaintances have made of their own talents, and the occasions of those discoveries; a few articles of which I will lay before my readers. His motto is,

*Plus enim fati valet hora benigni  
Quam si te Veneris commendet epistola Marti.*

“ Try all you can, by int'rest, love, or letter;  
A lucky hit will do your business better.”

11th of March, 1672.—Sam Stunt, happening to put himself into a pair of scales in the course of

some experiments on the effects of air on the human body, discovered himself to be the exact weight for a horse; and, instead of a ridiculous philosopher, is become a very learned jockey.

1st of April.—Tom Hardcastle, in endeavouring to be witty this day on all mankind, found he did better as a butt, and has since served in that capacity, to the great entertainment of his friends.

4th of June.—Ned Spare-rib began to walk the hospital this day, and convinced himself and the world, before night, that nature had designed him for a carcass-butcher.

17th of August.—Will Cross-stick, who had written several pamphlets, and much treason, without turning a penny, as he was whistling out his meditations, saw a rusty razor lying on the road: his genius took fire at the omen, and he is since become a topping barber at Shore-ditch.

2d of September.—Jack Parsnip, who had begun his career as a parish-officer, and had since stepped forward as a great politician, being pursued hard by the bailiffs, hid himself in a dung-cart: his genius for gardening began immediately to make great shoots; and the best melons in the county are now of his raising.

4th of November.—Bob Smirk, after following the business of an attorney without success for many years, found out his talent for mimicry as he followed a rich uncle to the grave.

1st of December.—Ben Bodkin was a fellow of sprightly parts: he felt conscious of a genius for something, but he did not know what: he tried various callings and occupations, till, being hired at the theatre to assist in the procession in

the tragedy of Alexander the Great, he scraped acquaintance with a journeyman tailor: his genius developed itself in a moment; and before Alexander could well get into Babylon, he drew a pair of scissors from his pocket, and made a desperate effort to cabbage the skirt of his royal mantle. I am told that at this day there is nothing in the whole trade so capital as the cut of Ben Bodkin's coats.

24th of December.—As Bob Furbish was turning the corner of a street, his hat was blown off into an auctioneer's pulpit: he followed it close, and mounted the rostrum just as they had begun to bid for it. The moment he saw the crowd below him, the workings of his mind were prodigious; he declared himself inspired, and hurried down without his hat: the next day he entered into the profession; and no man handles the hammer like Bob Furbish at this hour.

2d of January, 1673.—Paul Puff had acted as pedlar, puppetshow-man, and quack-doctor, till, being tempted on the evening of this day to take a hot mutton-pye in exchange for a box of pills, all the pastry-cook was lighted up in his soul, and his shop is now the most considerable in the city.

But I must drop these drolleries of Mr. Isaac Olive-branch, my great-great-grandfather, in order to leave room for the following letter.

“ Sir,

“ I am a constant reader of the ‘ Looker-on,’ and confess I am pleased with your manner of treating those diseases of the mind which have fallen under your contemplation. I have not yet, however,

had the good fortune to find in it a sufficient remedy for my own. In order therefore that my case may be taken into consideration, I will give you as accurate an account as I can, both of the symptoms of the complaint, and of the methods I have used towards its cure; requesting that whatever may appear to promise relief to your distressed patient, may be published in your paper as soon as possible.

“ I am a bachelor of about fifty years of age, and am a prey to a passion that consumes me. I can rest neither night nor day for the rage I feel for authorship, and the honours of genius; the trophies of some Miltiades or other are for ever disturbing my peace. How early this passion gained possession of my mind, I cannot accurately inform you; but to the best of my remembrance I perceived the first intrusions of it about fifteen years ago, when I was admitted a member of the Royal Society. My whole distress arises from my inability to discover whether I am a man of genius or not. This is a discovery which I am extremely anxious to make, before I either entirely resign the thoughts of becoming an author, or determine to enter upon this toilsome career.

“ Various are the means which I have pursued, and laborious are the researches which I have made, to convince myself of a truth so necessary to the establishment of my peace or the increase of my fame: among others, I collect from all quarters the lives and anecdotes of great men; and according as I find a similarity between their habits and my own, I judge of the extent of my capacity. The consequence of this is, that when I discover in myself a congeniality of thought or coincidence of behaviour with them, I am elated above measure, consider such an agreement as an undoubted proof of my genius,



and feel my soul expand with secret assurances of immortality on earth; but if no points of similitude discover themselves, I am thrown at once into despondency, and feel myself sinking to the level of those who have lain long forgotten in their tombs. As I look upon superiority of genius to be the highest felicity here below, and dulness as a terrible visitation, my mind is continually bandied between hope and despair, dejection and pride.

“All the night before last I passed in waking dreams of greatness, occasioned by my having somewhere read, that, after the ordinary attendance at college, the great John Locke had, like myself, been judged unqualified to take his degrees. But this happiness was only of a night’s duration: in the morning my hopes were at once blasted, by reading, in Plutarch’s Lives, that Cæsar was afflicted with an epilepsy; a disorder from which I unfortunately found myself free. The melancholy impressions produced by this discovery were very soon removed by overhearing my landlady tell one of her neighbours, that during the paroxysms of a violent fever I had acted as Dean Swift used to do in his periodical fits.

“My manners also are as variable as my happiness is uncertain; for when I can detect no traces of similitude between my ordinary habits, and those of the great man whose life I am reading, I take violent pains to accommodate myself to the model I so much admire. I have suffered, however, greatly in the course of this laudable ambition; for having heard that Ben Jonson used commonly to write without his coat, forgetting to inquire at what time of the year, I sat at my desk all January last in my doublet and hose, till I caught a rheumatism that nearly cost me my life. Hence the different lives I

read have as great effect upon my conduct as the passions of the cameleon upon the colour of its body. At one time I am silent and sober, like Addison; at another, convivial and loquacious, like Steele: this day I assume the sternness and incivility of Johnson; again, I am all submission, like Gay: now, I am proud and imperious, like Swift; then, like Thompson, modest and unassuming: in short, I constantly carry along with me the spirit of the author whose life I am perusing.

“ In the pursuit of this great object of my life, I have often pushed my inquiries very far into the profundity of natural causes, but have been as unsuccessful in this as in my other attempts. My escapes, however, from a total discovery of dulness on the one hand, and my disappointments in not attaining to a complete confirmation of my ingenuity on the other, have been narrow and numerous. All hopes of immortalising my name were very lately almost entirely cut off, by reading an account of giants and pygmies in Goldsmith’s Natural History. Here, in opposition to my favourite theory, that the minds of men are great in proportion to the size of their bodies, that author attempts to prove, that the middle stature is best fitted to nourish intellectual powers; and that any great deviation from this size, whether above or below it, argues in general an imbecility of intellect.

“ I was more than relieved from the depression of mind occasioned by this senseless theory, when I found that Fenton the poet was six feet two inches high, which is precisely my size. I recovered from a similar dejection, that arose from reading somewhere that the powers of the mind begin to decay from the age to which mine is approaching; when I

recollected that Milton was older than I am when he began his *Paradise Lost*.

“ But the question which has given me the greatest trouble to investigate, is, whether my head be of that particular shape which is necessary to constitute a man of genius. I have been the more intent upon this object, as I thought it offered the most promising appearance of a complete demonstration. Lavater I have perused with great attention, as also a number of other famous physiognomists; but though I do not suppose myself deficient in point of mathematical genius, I have never been able to perform the mensuration according to the rules they lay down.

“ I would recommend it, as well worthy the attention of some person who has arrived at a due estimate of his abilities by the aid of this criterion, to construct a machine of such a nature, that, upon its admitting or excluding the head, the extent or weakness of the capacity may be ascertained without further trouble. I should consider it, too, as a great improvement of such a machine, if, since some are fitted by nature to excel in one branch of literature and some in another, it could have the additional property of pointing out a direction of our talents conformable to the design of nature.

“ This would be one of the most solid inventions with which the genius of man has yet been inspired. Its utility would diffuse itself over all professions, trades, and degrees: agriculture would recover her sons, of which the pulpit, the bar, and the senate, had robbed her; and many a Cincinnatus would be recalled from the plough, to the bench and the cabinet. I cannot help being surprised, that in this age, in which a spirit for the improvement in manu-

factures and agriculture so much prevails, and has been so successfully cultivated, an invention of this kind should never have been attempted, which must tend so powerfully to facilitate labour, by distributing it in such due proportions, and with such just appropriations and appointments.

“ I shall conclude my application to you with suggesting, that, as there is probably a numerous class of men who sympathise exactly with me in the case which I have submitted to you, a particular attention to my complaint may be of public service, and will greatly console

Your distressed and obedient humble servant,  
WILL. WHETHERALL.”

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N<sup>o</sup> 18. TUESDAY, MAY 8.

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Oh, how canst thou renounce the boundless store  
Of gifts, which Nature to her votaries yields,  
The warbling woodlands, the resounding shore,  
The pomp of groves, the garniture of fields,  
All that the genial ray of Morning gilds,  
And all that echoes to the song of Even,  
All that the shelt'ring mountain's bosom shields,  
And all the dread magnificence of Heaven---  
Oh! how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven!  
MINSTREL.

I HAVE often thought it a sad reflection on my countrymen, that at this season of the year, and in this month especially, when the Country puts on a new dress to attract us, and spreads out her green carpet



for us to tread upon, we should still prefer the tinselled frippery and artificial splendor of public places in town, to the unpurchasable beauties and chaste decorations of rural scenery. It is to be admired that a nation so studious of novelty should still love to linger in the dull confines of fashionable uniformity, while Nature, with an universal and progressive variety, in her great plan, is painting the fields and the gardens with a rich succession of colours, deepening the gloom of her arbours, heightening the vivacity of her lawns, and purpling over the distant hills to terminate her groves and her vistas. But there is a something in the pleasures of the country, that reaches much beyond the gratification of the eye; a something that invigorates the mind, that erects its hopes, that allays its perturbations, that mellows its affections; and it will generally be found, that our happiest schemes and wisest resolutions are formed under the mild influence of a country scene, and the soft obscurities of rural retirement.

I don't know how it is, but, to my abstracted notion of things, man always appears a much less important animal when I view him in all his relations with society, in the midst of a large city, than when I behold him in his retirement, walking over his fields, and contemplating his prospects. A real and relative importance, I consider as different things; and while all around me are paying their homage to what we call personal influence, and power of connections, I keep all my veneration for him who has obtained the greatest command over himself, and lives the most independently of others. I look upon such as are engaged in the busy pursuits of gain, as subordinate characters to those who are arrived at the actual relish of innocent pleasure; and the man who

has enlarged his mind to the enjoyment of all the beauties of nature which his eye can encircle, is in my thoughts a greater personage, and has a larger property in effect, than one who has risen to what is called weight in the country, by the force of connections or riches.

It is doubtless a great unhappiness to want a sense of rural pleasures: he who has no heart for delights so pure and natural, must bribe his appetite with a forced and artificial kind of enjoyment, for which costly preparations must sometimes be made, sometimes the invention must be racked, and sometimes the principles subdued. This morality, which mixes with our rural pleasures, gives to them that security of innocence, which is so necessary to constitute complete happiness, and vindicates their superiority over all the gaities of town dissipation, which are at best but negative in a moral view, and which, in feeling minds, are generally attended with a sense of unworthiness, and the disquietude of inward reproach.

But, when I talk of the charms of a country life, I have not in my contemplation the sports and exercises of the field, which however I have no intention to disparage; but my thoughts are turned towards those deep and durable pleasures, which are supported by their connections with great objects and noble conclusions, and require no effort or uproar to maintain their vigour and vivacity. Such pleasures are those which we feel in contemplating the blue canopy of the heavens, reflected on the hazy valleys, and wrapping them in rich confusion, when our minds catch the sympathy, and open their internal prospects into visions of immensity, varied by the colours of fancy, and brightened by the radiance of hope; such pleasures are those which expand the bosom in sur-

veying the kind provisions of nature, and in pursuing in thought the bounties of Providence, through all the classes of his visible government; such pleasures as presented themselves to the mind of our great poet, when he wrote that feeling eulogy on rural gratifications,

“ Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,  
With charm of earliest birds,” &c.

The first of this month is a day which I love to honour in my parish by some little celebration; and the green before my house is usually on this occasion the scene of much genuine mirth and seasonable jollity. It is on this day that all the young women of the parish seize, with earnestness, the opportunity of testifying their gratitude to my mother, for her bounties through the year, by building up for her a little bower, which they decorate with garlands, and what devices they are capable of inventing.

Last Tuesday they were bent upon doing her particular honour; for which purpose, the way from our garden-door to the arbour was covered with a carpeting of cowslips, enclosed with chains of flowers; and two young girls came to my door early in the morning, each with a honeycomb in her hand, and begged to be permitted to carry the great chair in triumph to the temple which they had consecrated to my mother. This I saw done amidst a chorus of voices, in which as enviable an eulogy was uttered, as that which attended Camillus to the Capitol. I own, this testimony of simple regard made me glow with a conscious pleasure; and I felt something like the pride of blood, at seeing this good old remain of the Olive-branch family raised to the highest honour

of which I had any conception. She smiled too, herself, with more than her usual complacency, when, after the rustic dance round the May-pole was completed, every couple snatched a wreath from it, and, carrying it between them in the form of a festoon to her little sanctuary, threw it down at her feet.

To this ceremony another succeeded, that was not less agreeable to the feelings of the good old lady. It has always been, on this occasion, her custom to give a crown-piece to every poor family of merit in the neighbourhood; while every girl that has gained the praise of diligence and good manners, is sure to be rewarded with a new milk-pail, and a straw hat with cherry-coloured ribands. The great chair, which is the hot-bed of all my visions, is raised to greater importance in my eyes, since the honours it has lately received; and I am in hopes that its journey to the bower will be the occasion of its carrying me in my future dreams to the sylvan haunts of Faunus and the Dryads, or to the amber streams and amaranthine meadows of Elysian scenery.

The morning after this little anniversary, I took a walk to the bower before breakfast; and casting my eyes on the ground, I saw a piece of paper in the form of a note, which I had too much curiosity not to take up immediately; and was glad when breakfast was announced, that I might have the satisfaction of reading its contents to the old lady. It was directed to the Rev. Simon Olivebranch; and upon opening it, I could not help thinking that the hand-writing looked very like Miranda's; a suspicion which was not a little confirmed by the whimsicalness of the conception, and the goodness of the design.



“ The Petition of a very innocent, useful, and much-abused person, to that grave Reformer, the Rev. Simon Olive-branch,

“ Humbly showeth,

“ That your petitioner has most seriously to complain of divers abuses and outrages, which he humbly conceives it is within your province to chastise. He will begin, however, with stating his claims and pretensions, and then proceed to enumerate the instances in which his merits are despised, and his rights trampled under foot.

“ That your petitioner is the healthiest, floridest, and comeliest of twelve brothers ; and is the father of thirty children ; all of whom have been well brought up, and preserve their posts and execute their functions with unflinching order and punctuality.

“ Your petitioner’s exemplary mildness of temper should give him a peculiar claim to the attention of one of the Olive-branch family, as sympathy of character generally begets mutual kindness. He can plead, besides, that he has known your whole race these many centuries ; and can carry his personal recollection back to anecdotes and facts concerning them, much beyond the compass of your mother’s records, ancient as they are. He nursed your great-grandfather on his lap, when he was yet unable to walk ; and gave him a nosegay before he could lisp out *tobacco-stopper*. He has the honour of informing you, that he brought into the world a great-grandson of Shem, who was the son of Noah, &c. : that this great-grandson of Shem attached a considerable number of followers to himself, by reason of his pacific qualities, and settled on the borders of

the Euphrates, where, it is said, he planted the first Olive; for that which the dove brought to the ark was only a branch of the wild species. His youngest son was named *יה—עלה* or Olive-branch; and with him the race of Olive-branches properly began. That your petitioner has ever looked with great affection on this goodly race, and has always received particular honours at their hands. That he humbly hopes, therefore, that the last of this ancient family will not refuse to listen to his requisitions, which are founded on such just pretensions.

“ That he has also great merits to plead, independent of his connections with the house of Olive-branch. That he is the only even-tempered character out of twelve brothers, the rest being all either too warm and passionate, or too cold and severe; and the one, especially, who was born just before him, is so fretful and fickle, that there is no knowing what to do with him, not to mention that he has a malignant pleasure in making fools of his majesty’s subjects. That, besides the negative merit of preserving his temper in the midst of such examples, he and his thirty sons are employed in the active office of dressing out our general mother the Earth, and promoting her fruitfulness and abundance.

“ That your petitioner is not only prodigal of his benefits and kindnesses to man, but may claim, in a very high degree, the merit of impartiality in the distribution of them, holding all ranks in the same estimation, and oftentimes drying up the tears of the wretched, and creating a sunshine in his thoughts. That his thirty sons too, who join him in this humble petition, are always occupied, whenever their turn comes round, in spreading joy and love and beauty and abundance, over the face of the earth. Ever studious of the honour of their family, they are tainted with

no mean jealousy of each other's abilities; and one brother is continually improving upon the work of the other. It is also an extraordinary peculiarity belonging to them, that they are mature in proportion to their youth; and the youngest of them all is the ripest and forwardest. Sometimes, when your petitioner has finished his own task, he observes one of them flying over the commons and wastes, to hang every furze-bush he can meet, with golden baskets. Others are seen successively employed in clustering the lilac, perfuming the violet, forging the yellow chain of the liburnum, hooding the sweet-pea, and variegating the daisy. Another will employ himself in sweeping the train of his green garment over the meads and lawns, and leave impressed upon their surface a glossy verdure. This undertakes, as his charge, the painting of the almond blossom; while his next brother is occupied as musician to the grove, and teaches to the lark its matins, and its vespers to the nightingale.

“ Your petitioner trusts he need not enlarge upon his merits with the love-sick part of mankind: the influence of his family in propitiating the fair objects of their vows, and in lending an irresistible persuasion to their addresses, is so evident, as to challenge even human ingratitude to deny it.

“ Your petitioner has now only to state the topics of his complaint, which he will do as briefly as possible, not caring to expatiate upon matters so clear and striking.

“ 1st, The greatest part of those who used to do him honour at their rural seats, are now so disrespectful as to remain in town during his anniversary.

“ 2d, That he is even unable to enforce the attendance of the country folks, who are so brutal as

to prefer the beasts over Exeter 'Change to his lambs and his nightingales.

“ 3d, That the people of London and the neighbourhood are pleased with insulting him, by putting some of the best clothes his wardrobe contains, upon the backs of chimney-sweepers.

“ 4th, A great many old ladies have abused him beyond measure, and called him dull and stupid, for no other reason than because he has robbed them of a party at Whist or Cassino.

“ 5th, Some of the same faction attempted his life not a week ago, by shutting out the sun, and lighting up candles before six.—N. B. This is a desperate gang of *old* offenders, who have frequently attempted to murder Time, your petitioner's father, and have obliged him to go armed with a scythe.

“ 6th, Some young ladies, lately arrived in town from Gloucestershire, to whom your petitioner gave a copy of his receipt for colouring the rose, and bleaching the lily, have lately been using a wretched mixture, they call the 'Turkish Wash.

“ 7th, Some young fortune-hunters, at Bath, the other day, found a resemblance for your petitioner in old Mrs. D. who has not a tooth in her head.

“ 8th, A large party at Faro was made, on the evening of his anniversary, at a great house in Piccadilly; and the cards were flying about, while his herald, the Cuckoo, whom he had sent out some days before with his own invitations, was in the neighbourhood of Hyde-Park.

“ 9th, The sentiments which your petitioner used to inspire, are now called romantic; and he verily believes that if he were himself to court a lady arrayed in his mantle of lilies, and breathing out his love-like ambrosia, he should be treated with disdain



unless he could show her a carriage with a couple of handsome footmen behind it.

“ Your petitioner forbears to bring forward a variety of charges, as weighty as those he has already produced; trusting that these will be amply sufficient to induce you to take his case into your most serious consideration: in which confidence your petitioner will ever pray for your happiness while living, and will strew his choicest flowers on the tombs of your ancient mother and yourself, when it shall please Providence to give to the worms the remnant of the Olive-branch family.

“ MAY-DAY.”

I shall conclude with a letter from poor Eugenio to his Amelia, containing a little poem not unsuitable to the subject of this paper.

“ My dearest Love,

“ My little vista in the wood begins to look delightful:—I have just made a seat in it which is to be sacred to you, when you deign to pay it a visit; and the woodbine seems to make haste to grow about it, as if it were preparing to receive no vulgar guest. Yesterday evening, as I sat in your little temple, I tried to fill up the vacancy your absence always leaves in my mind, by writing a few verses to a Bee that was playing around me, by way of present to you on this first day of May; a day which I know you love to see honoured.

#### VERSES TO THE BEE.

“ Daughter of Spring, that ply'st thy mazy flight,  
 “ Telling a love-tale to the list'ning air,  
 “ Wherever buds of balmy breath invite,  
 “ Borne on thy busy wings of gossamer!

- “ Here, little spoiler, seek the haunts of Spring,  
 “ For here the hare-bell gives its still retreat ;  
 “ Here ply thy cares, thy cheerful descant sing,  
 “ And fearless sport around my mossy seat ;  
  
 “ For here the violet sweet exhales its balm,  
 “ And here the rose-bud locks the breath of May ;  
 “ Nor fear from me the hostile hand of harm,  
 “ Ruthless to tear thy treasur’d sweets away.  
  
 “ But haste thee, wand’rer ; day’s last ling’ring light  
 “ With dying lustre paints the low’ring sky :  
 “ Ah ! haste thee, wand’rer, ere the treach’rous night  
 “ Conceal some feather’d ruffian hovering nigh.  
  
 “ Go, and with speed unlock thy little cell,  
 “ And wind thy welcome horn, that friends may hear ;  
 “ Go, in thy waxen chamber peaceful dwell ;  
 “ For passion, restless passion, riots here.  
  
 “ How blest art thou, to roam to ev’ry flow’r,  
 “ Repose thy load, and sink to cloister’d rest !  
 “ Ah ! could I so repay the weary hour,  
 “ So soothe the sorrows of my lab’ring breast !

“ How long, my dearest Love, shall I envy the  
 repose of every thing around me, and wait the slow  
 performance of that promise which you have made  
 with those “ lips that lock the breath of May,” to  
 your faithful and fond

“ EUGENIO !”

N<sup>o</sup> 19. SATURDAY, MAY 12.

*Vino vendibili Olivâ suspensâ nihil est opus.*

There needs no *Olive-branch* to recommend a good Paper.

*The following Epistle, which comes to me from Oxford, suggests a better remedy than I could discover myself for that malady of the mind complained of in the letter that appeared in my paper of last Saturday. When I am consulted in these difficult cases, as I pretend to no panaceas or elixirs for mental infirmities, I think it fair to call in the faculty to my aid; and I do not know where to turn myself with greater confidence than to a society which I venerate, as consisting, in general, of the truest patriots in literature, and the natural protectors and promoters of genius and of science.*

“ Reverend Sir,

“ No apology can be necessary for communicating, to a person who has the interests of the public so much at heart, any scheme or invention by which its welfare may be materially promoted. Do not be alarmed, my good sir, at the mention of public interests, as if I were about to shock your disposition to peace and literature, by suggesting any crude ideas of political reform: very different is the subject of my letter. Discoveries which can enable ships to sail without wind, carriages to move without horses; schemes for the abridgement of pensions and pluralities; and expedients which will secure the presence of a rector in his parish, and a

diocesan in his district, for at least nine months out of the twelve ; are topics infinitely above the scope and pretensions of my talents ; and, from a mixture of delicacy and diffidence, I confess myself extremely averse to the discussion of them.

“ Resigning therefore to others the wide range of political disquisition, I am content that my own poor efforts should be confined to the humble and neglected provinces of English literature. Now, sir, the greatest obstacle to the real improvement of the arts among us, appears to me to have arisen from an unfortunate blunder through which authors have totally mistaken the bearings of their genius, and applied it to those subjects, of all others, in which it was impossible they should excel.

“ Thus the poet affects metaphysical subtlety ; the philosopher, poetical embellishment ; the divine enters the list with the painter and musician ; while, to complete the climax of cross-purposes, and render ‘ confusion worse confounded,’ the female politician quits the sampler and the spindle, to discover the origin of civil government, and to maintain, with senatorial eloquence, the Rights of Man ! It is obvious that this unnatural perversion of genius, and misapplication of talents, must produce as much disorder in the literary world, as would result from a confusion of trades and professions to the common offices and occurrences of civil life.

“ To provide some effectual remedy for this sort of evil, has been for many years the wish of my heart, and the constant employment of my leisure ; and I know not that I should ever have escaped from the embarrassments in which I have been involved by this research, had I not enjoyed the honour of a correspondence with a distinguished professor of a foreign university. My enterprise long



appeared to be hopeless; for what project could be more difficult and hazardous, than the attempt to convince authors, or to furnish them with the means of convincing themselves, that they had totally misapprehended their powers, and were unqualified by nature and habits for the pursuits they had chosen? This, you will readily allow, was no very promising task; and after various schemes, successive efforts, and repeated communications on the subject, I began to despair of ever bringing my labours to a successful issue, unless something could be invented, which might decide these nice questions by an appeal to the senses, and exhibit a palpable and unfailing evidence upon the point in dispute.

“ Poetry has been from childhood my favourite study; and as I acquired a relish for the best productions of that divine art, from the observations of my uncle Geoffrey, a man eminent for the taste and solidity of his criticisms, my first wish was to do honour to my favourite study, by furnishing the community of poets, at present so numerous, with a just criterion whereby they might ascertain the extent of their powers, and discriminate their peculiar tendencies. This project I was upon the verge of abandoning as visionary and impracticable, when I received the enclosed letter from my ingenious friend Tiberius Vosterhusius, whom I had some months since excited to the same pursuit. The original is in the German language; but, for the benefit of a numerous description of society, I mean the poets and poetesses of our island, I beg to present it to you in an English dress.

‘ *January, 1792.*

‘ It is with the most animated satisfaction I inform you that an infallible standard has at length

been discovered for the estimate and regulation of poetical genius. The discovery has been celebrated here with unusual rejoicings; the experiments it has given rise to, are daily tried with the most certain success; and the results in many instances have occasioned scenes the most laughable and ridiculous that the imagination can paint. Since the properties of the magnet were revealed, I know not that chance has led the votaries of science to any secret more wonderful in its nature, or important in its effects. In short, sir, a fluid has been discovered which possesses the surprising quality of showing the precise degree of genius which belongs to any pretender to poetical excellence.

‘ It has at present obtained no better appellation than that of the sympathetic fluid; but I hope, when it is more known, and has been submitted to the inspection of your English societies, it will be honoured with a title more expressive of its merits. The mode of using it is as follows: a certain quantity is poured into a small thermometer; and this is applied, for a few seconds, to the temporal artery: the tube is fixed upon a scale marked at certain intervals with the words,

EPIC,

TRAGIC,

LYRIC,

&c. &c. &c.

‘ If the fluid rise gradually, and remain fixed and motionless, opposite to either of the titles upon the scale, the experimenter may assure himself that he possesses talents equal to that particular branch of the art. On the contrary, if the liquor ascends with a rapid irregular motion, appears in a state of fermentation, and then falls hastily within the bulb, he cannot show his prudence more, than by acquies-

cing in the infallible decisions of his little silent monitor, whose verdict is not to be altered by supplications or bribes. Many chemical experiments have been made by our learned friend Slautenbunkius, upon this unparalleled fluid, but without effect: it hitherto escapes the most delicate analysis; and its sympathetic property is the only one with which we are at present acquainted.

‘ You will have pleasure in hearing that a separate establishment is soon to be erected, for a professor and six students, to whom the care of making these inimitable criteria is to be publicly consigned. A statute is also in contemplation, whereby it will be forbidden to any member of this university to compose verses on any subject, without consulting a poetical regulator, duly stamped with the arms of the Academy; and authorised, moreover, by the signature of the above-mentioned professor. I cannot conclude without congratulating you upon the rare merit of this important discovery, and expressing a hope that the enclosed may arrive safe, and meet with your approbation.

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ TIBERIUS VOLTERHUSIUS.’

‘ N. B. Immediately on the discovery, we found it difficult to prevail on authors to submit to the trial. Our fashionable bards were extremely shy: at length experiments were made, by order of the magistracy, upon three poets now under confinement at our public prison; one convicted of blasphemy and an Ode to Liberty; another, of writing obscene verses; the third, of stealing a shirt and six pair of silk stockings, besides seducing the affections of his patron’s wife.’

“ Such is the interesting communication of my worthy correspondent Tiberius. Nothing could be more welcome to me than the arrival of this little magical tube. I cannot describe the emotions into which I was thrown upon taking it into my hands; and was half wild, till I found a proper subject on whom its effects might be tried. It was not long before an opportunity occurred; for, a few days after the receipt of it, I happened to dine with a certain great patron, whose table is always luxuriously spread before the sons of Apollo, several of whom were then in company. Excellent wines, and mirth, and wit, and song, went round, and at length began to overpower the faculties of many of these enthusiastic votaries, when the thought struck me of having recourse to the criticisms of my pocket companion; and, by occasionally changing my place, I gained an exact scale of the poetical capacities of each.

“ The gentleman on whose temple I first placed my poemeter, was a poet of considerable fame in high life, having written odes, comedies, tragedies, and a sort of epic poem. I had never read his works; but having seen them in a second edition, thought they might have some merit, and that the gay circle that approved them might not be entirely destitute of true taste. But what was my surprise, when, on the application of the tube, the column instantly rose with a very disturbed motion; and having made a momentary pause at each degree in the scale, it sunk with a kind of guggling noise that had nearly awakened the slumbering bard! I continued to hold it in the same position, hoping that the liquor might take a situation more favourable to the author, but in vain: the decision was irreversible, and it refused to ascend.



“ I renewed my experiment upon my neighbour on my left hand, who, I had been assured by some person, as a kind hint, was a pretender to the laurel, with very few of the necessary qualifications. From this trial, therefore, I hoped to discover the young poet’s real talents, and the truth or injustice with which his brethen had pronounced his secret sentence. As there was something ingenuous and spirited in the countenance of this gentleman, that had, during the whole day, conciliated my good will, I was sorry to observe, that, after the application of the tube for a few seconds, no visible alteration took place. I was puzzling to find the cause of this circumstance, when the liquor began to mount upwards with a slow and steady motion; and, having arrived at the mark Sonnet, it there became stationary, and appeared infinitely more bright and transparent than I had ever remarked it. After reposing at this point some time, it gradually ascended to Tragic; at which degree it remained awhile, and then subsided regularly to its former post. From this I inferred that the author’s genius qualified him for a higher species of composition; but that he was withheld, by modesty, from the attempt. This decision gave me infinite delight; and I could not help casting a look of indignation and reproof towards those illiberal detractors who had been base enough to derogate from so real and so diffident a genius.

“ In the course of the evening I had informed myself accurately of the poetical powers of every individual present. The verdicts were various, as you may imagine: sometimes the fluid appeared dark and turbid; at other times it retained its natural colour; and once it became perfectly luminous and bright: it ascended also to different heights, with different degrees of emotion. Of one gentleman it

gave me a very favourable intimation. Upon inquiry I found that he had not yet been prevailed upon to publish any of his compositions, though a club of wits, with what views I know not, had long urged him to that dangerous step.

“ These, sir, were the first experiments that I made upon the arrival of this marvellous instrument; and as I have been in habits of frequenting the chief literary societies of both sexes, I soon found excellent opportunities of enriching my stock of discoveries. Every fresh acquisition I have used myself to write down with the most scrupulous precision, upon my return to my lodgings; so that I have now, in my porte-feuille, a sheet of fool’s-cap, on which a great many poetical names of consequence in the present age may be found, with the sentence of the fluid faithfully annexed. This awful and tremendous record, which, if divulged, would consign hundreds of volumes to perpetual oblivion, I promise to conceal with inviolable secrecy, provided that the convicted authors henceforward desist from publication. Should they, however, in contempt of this my solemn notice, and lenient reserve, continue to obtrude their futile productions upon the attention of the world, I hereby declare, that I will, from time to time, insert in the most approved journal of the republic of letters, certain authentic and indubitable extracts from this my *Liber Veritatis*.

“ During the course of my observations on this subject, I have remarked, that, in almost every instance, the liquor was violently agitated upon rising to Ode and Pastoral; from which I concluded that these branches of the art were either difficult in the extreme, or that the circumstances of the age were unpropitious to the cultivation of them. Now, my good Mr. OLIVE-BRANCH, I leave it to you to consider

whether the introduction of these regulators be at present practicable; how far any opposition to the use of them is to be apprehended from our academical professors; and whether the writers for the two theatres will readily agree to the establishment of so severe and impartial a test.

“The mode of introducing them could not be very difficult. Presses may be licensed through the kingdom, and an Act passed, by which every printer should be obliged to furnish himself with a tube, and bound to refuse publication to authors who had not received the necessary sanction. As I disclaim all political disquisitions, better heads must determine how far the importation of these little instruments (which will doubtless be very great) may constitute a new branch of national commerce. I cannot avoid expressing this hint, because I hear, from good authority, that the Dutch, who have no poets in their country, and consequently no use for these tubes, mean nevertheless to profit from the discovery, by making it a part of their carrying trade. In the mean time, if you can suggest an expedient that will less affect the liberty of the press, than the idea respecting licences, &c. you will confer a lasting obligation on your

“Humble servant,  
“STEPHEN STANZA.”



N<sup>o</sup> 20. TUESDAY, MAY 15.

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*Quorsum hæc ?*

To what end do these things conduce ?

## EMPIRE OF NOTHING.

### SECOND PART.

If what I have already related of my extraordinary vision of the Empire of Nothing have left any curiosity in the minds of my readers, they will not think it too early to give them the rest of it.

After having been pretty much fatigued with the bustle, pomp, and noise, of the great city of Tintinabia, I entreated my guide to conduct me a little way up the country ; a request which he acceded to with his usual complaisance, and immediately ordered his balloon to be brought round to meet us at one of the gates, called Addle-gate, where the road began which led to the palace of his Inane Majesty. In the mean time we continued our walk through the suburbs of the city ; and passing on through Rottenrow and Trumpery-street, we came to Abra-Cadabra-square, one side of which was filled up with the great college of arts and sciences. Being myself of a learned profession, I felt a strong inclination to make some inquiries respecting the institutions and practices of this venerable community ; and it was doubtless an instance of great good fortune, that my guide,



being himself a considerable member of it, was well able to instruct me in all these particulars.

I have not room to give a detail of half what I saw, much less relate all the observations I made upon the spot: I shall give my readers merely a glance into this emporium of literature and philosophy. It was here that the very spirit of inanity and nothingness seemed to reside, and that the taste for genuine nonsense prevailed in its classical purity.

The public library, which I was told was a complete repository of the national learning, was contained in a vast amphitheatre, that made a most resplendent show of ornamented binding. I entertained myself with turning over as many volumes as my time would permit; and must confess, that the matter they comprised was, in general, of a graver cast than those which the booksellers' shops had presented. One whole compartment, which I was informed contained a hundred thousand volumes, was wholly allotted to treatises on conjuration with cards, and the rules of leger-de-main. Next to that was a similar space, taken up with dissertations on the black art, and the study of demonology and witchcraft. Modern metaphysics made a most important figure in this wonderful collection; and the learning accumulated on the subject of animal magnetism, was the pride of their academy. The rules of divination had occupied no small number of their schoolmen and philosophers; and having these short and satisfactory modes of ascertaining the future, they held it folly, if not impiety, to reason from the past. In politics, the books of the highest authority were such as promulgated principles the most abstracted from man's nature and capacities; and the vulgar notion of civil society, as composed of individual men, had long been exploded as the ground-work of their political

reasonings. All their practical rules of government and civil polity were drawn from the consideration of human beings, as existing in a collective, metaphysical, corporate capacity ; and to man, in this sublime and contemplative idea of him, were all laws to be so framed and tempered as, at length, to constitute an indivisible invisible part of his spiritual essence ; to rush into a sort of sudden sympathetic union with the qualities of the soul ; and thus to anticipate the completion of our nature, and carry us at once into the order of superior intelligences.

I was very much chagrined, feeling as I do for the credit of the fair sex, to see so many female contributors to this learned lumber, the warmth of whose fancies does not always suffer them to engage in these stubborn disquisitions with a sufficient regard to facts and possibilities.

While we were thus considering this class of learned productions, my guide called my attention to a manuscript very superbly bound and lettered, purporting to be the Scheme of a Commonwealth. Before we turned over any of the pages of this valuable book, I was apprised of a feature of this nation's polity, which I believe is peculiar to itself, and may be a fact important to be known to my countrymen and others in these goodly times of political experiment. There was a certain island, situated at the distance of about two thousand miles from the great kingdom of Nothing, and nearly as far separated from every other shore. The property of this island had formerly been vested in the crown of Inania, or the great kingdom of Nothing ; and as it was barren of every produce that was marketable in the mother country, being entirely covered with solid timber and substantial fruits, it had long been made the receptacle of obnoxious persons, of which description

a very large supply was annually exported from the shores of Inania. But though the productions of this country were considered as of no value by this whimsical nation, yet a means had been found of turning it to very admirable account. A society of politicians had lately sprung up within the walls of the university, which, as it had innovated upon the long-established modes of treating the great questions of civil polity, having so far inverted the order of inquiry as to postpone hypothesis to experiment, had with great difficulty obtained their charter of incorporation. By making, however, such proposals as his Inane Majesty could not resist; having, as my oracle informed me, paid into the royal treasury a prodigious sum in horse-chesnuts, which was the specie of that country; they were admitted purchasers of this island, which they had destined to the purpose I shall now explain to my readers.

The object of this society carried with it very lofty pretensions, being nothing less than an undertaking to promote and improve political knowledge, by a course of philosophical experiments; and as the compass which experiments of such magnitude demanded must needs be extensive, they had, by the aid of a general subscription, enabled themselves to purchase this remote territory, with a view to try therein each new theory of government, that was thought worthy of experiment by this highly patriotic fraternity. It was the rule of the society to prepare, digest, and render mature for trial, once in every two years, a new scheme of a commonwealth; and at every expiration of that term, to dispatch to the devoted island, with all due observance of ceremony, a draught or instrument, containing the new constitutional system, with the seal of the corporation subjoined, which was immediately to be established by

proclamation, and to displace every vestige of former institutions. The proceedings of this extraordinary body produced two very different effects: to the mother country, it was a source of everlasting expectation, and kept up a very lively suspense in the public mind; to the unhappy theatre of these political dramas, it occasioned a perpetuity of bloodshed and horror, in so much that there was need of very large and frequent draughts of population from the ports of Inania. As the inhabitants of this miserable place were merely considered as the subjects of experiment, and that for an object so vast as the interest of human nature at large, their pains and sufferings weighed nothing in so unequal a scale; and it was thought the mark of a very diminutive mind, to lament the catastrophes consequent upon these trials, or to cherish any moral or humane scruples respecting them. So fast did these plans of government follow each other, and so sudden and radical a change was necessary, at every introduction of a fresh system, to give it immediate effect, that it was impossible for the habits of the people to keep pace with these transitions, or for the best-disposed member of this versatile community to be cognisant of the laws under which he was to live. The first month, therefore, after the new establishments had been imported, or, in other words, the commission of the new constitution had been opened, was sure to bring many hundreds to public execution, who, in the perplexity of jarring codes, mistook the rule of their political conduct, and were hanged as traitors to-day for the patriotism of yesterday. A leap-year was always particularly sanguinary, as it had never been settled whether the intercalary day belonged to the old or the new establishments, till the commissioners or deputies had time to determine the point, which



was generally about a month after that day. And as this resolution of the deputies operated by relation to the time in which it respected, for an anxious period after every leap-year, no one knew whether he was a traitor or not; and every individual in the island was potentially guilty of a capital crime, till the moment in which this fact, as to the day, was decided. As might be supposed, under such circumstances, civil wars and domestic factions were no very uncommon events in this country; and the truth was, that an immense force was necessary to give effect to each fresh constitution that was to be tried upon this devoted community.

The manuscript which my conductor had put into my hands, was a counterpart of another draught which had been lately sent over to this island, and which contained one of these probatory schemes of a commonwealth, that had raised peculiar hopes of success among the people of Inania. It was thought to be so happily conceived as to be hardly of human composition; and having for its end, universal peace, love, and harmony, it was judged worthy of an extraordinary military equipment, to procure its more effectual introduction. It being the invention of a celebrated female personage of the city of Tintinabia, who had, as I was told, distinguished herself by many specimens of genius, according to the taste of that city, I was induced to bestow upon it something more than a cursory attention. The general reasoning on which the positive laws contained in this subtle system of legislation was grounded, was, as far as I can recollect, to this purpose.

“ Man is a simple, not a compounded being:—he has no elemental evil or good in his composition; but such as are called his good and evil propensities are indifferent in themselves, and take their colour

and quality from the relation they bear to the things without us. In reality and in truth, we are all righteous in our original natures; and as we are born, so should we continue innocent, were it not that these original qualities of our nature, by coming in contact with contagious and contaminating mischiefs, disseminated through life, and banefully implicated in every system of polity and jurisprudence, contract an adventitious character and tendency that designates them as evil propensities. It is thus that colours, by being blended one with the other, lose their original denomination; but as blue would never of itself become green, without the admixture of yellow, so neither would the original qualities of the mind contract any stain or discoloration, unless driven into union with the impure objects of life, and the hurtful ingredients with which all human institutions have hitherto been dashed. The only method by which this deformation of the human character and disposition can be prevented, is to preserve it from all contagion, and so to dispose all the circumstances of life, by the force of our artificial institutions, as to render them incompatible with vicious habits and pursuits; on the same principle of reasoning that frames are constructed to straighten crooked limbs, and backboards are used where children are inclined to be round-shouldered."

Solon being asked if he had given to the Athenians the best laws, answered, that he had given to them the best they could bear — a sentiment very much applauded by Montesquieu; but which did not so strike our fair lawgiver. She was for contriving such legislative arrangements as were to make no allowances for human imperfection; and, despising those loose and uncompact systems

which are adapted to a being of infirmity and passion, was for contriving a pure scheme of polity, in which human corruption was not to be supposed, and to the shape and proportions of which man's nature and propensities were to be forcibly adjusted. There was a vast deal of reasoning to this effect, in a very elaborate introduction to the provisions which followed; but as I had already spent a great deal of my time in this examination, I could only afford a very few minutes to a further consideration of the work, and have therefore but a superficial recollection of the substance of those rules and canons of polity which were erected on this novel foundation. I can remember, however, that all the ten commandments were proposed to be re-enacted by legislative authority, and enforced by very heavy penalties. It was to be felony, without benefit of clergy, not to love one's neighbour more than one's self; and if a man were to be smitten on one side of his face, and refused to offer the other, such refusal might be punished by an action at law, in which treble damages were recoverable. There was not to be a landmark throughout the whole country, and property was to be distributed in proportions of exact equality; and even this property was to be merely nominal; for as every man was to have a right to his neighbour's cow or horse, he could have no exclusive right to his own. If a married pair were without children, they were to be compelled to take a share in the education of their neighbour's offspring; and it was a high misdemeanour not to love them as their own. If a man or woman laboured under any bodily deformity, they were respectively entitled to the hand of the handsomest person of the opposite sex, among their acquaintance, to compensate for this disparity of natural en-

dowment. No person was to be guilty of the smallest intemperance ; and, to prevent excesses, every one was constrained, under very rigorous pains, to eat before he was hungry, and drink before he was dry, so to destroy even temptation in the bud. Every man was to under-rate his own qualifications, and to dissemble his own superiority ; and it was not only criminal to aspire after fame, honour, or riches ; but not to court degradation, when it could be attained without the sacrifice of virtue, was to be fineable in the courts of justice.

But if there was any part of this benign system, which was at all liable to the charge of enthusiasm, and wanted a little more accommodation to human imbecility, it might be said to be that which proposed to incorporate among its legislative and positive institutions, all those rules of good breeding and urbanity, which have sprung up with the refinement of manners. This, however, was boldly attempted ; and to utter a complaint, if a man weighing eighteen stone perchance should tread upon my gouty toe, or to impute a dishonest design to one who should mistake my horse, my house, or my wife, for his own, was a wrong that had its legal remedy in this elegant digest of jurisprudence.

What seemed a little difficult to reconcile with this statutable courtesy of manners, was the perfect equality of condition and property that was to be established among all the members of the community, since complaisance seems more naturally the fruit of a distinction of orders and degrees : but it was the boast of this plan to force into fellowship discordant principles, and by compounding the extracts of all the different excellencies of our nature, purged of every corrupt admixture, to exhibit man in his ultimate state of physical and moral perfec-



tion. To reduce and equalise the disparities of intellect and endowment, by which, if nature were left to her own contrivances, she would inevitably work the overthrow of this equality—the fundamental law of the state—a plan of public education was to be adopted in exclusion of all particular seminaries, in which, by a certain economy in the distribution of instruction, all intellectual disproportions were to be levelled to an uniform standard of proficiency. Thus my conductor, whose judgement went in general very much along with that of the ingenious delineator of this plan, confessed it was the boldest feature of it, and incomparably the greatest mark of the characteristic intrepidity of the whole conception. Some common rule of mensuration to adjust the altitudes of different geniuses, was acknowledged to be necessary; but this was left to the researches of future experimenters; with a hint, however, that perhaps in cases of very obstinate deviations, and where the partial luxuriancy of nature produced very incorrigible irregularities, it might be worth consideration, whether this intellectual rankness of growth might not be corrected by extinguishing or suspending the operation of some or one of the senses, or by some such method of reducing the nourishment of the soul. Thus the moral and intellectual order of the world would move on with a solemn uniformity of progression; and envy, ambition, detraction, pride, contumely, hatred, and every principle of uncharitableness, would be starved out of the social system, and exist only in the page of the historian.

So much of my time had been given up to the perusal of this curious performance, that I was forced to yield to the importunity of my guide, to proceed in our perambulation, without any further gratifica-

tion of my curiosity in this vast collection of literary labour: as we walked on, however, I learned from my good-humoured instructor, that by the dispatches they had received from the unfortunate scene of these political experiments, the philanthropic and pacific system of government, the plan of which I had just been examining, had been characterised, in its first introduction, by an extraordinary effusion of blood; and a reinforcement of military strength was about to be sent, as the whole garrison had been slaughtered by the malcontents; and that the faction of those who persisted in loving themselves better than their neighbours, had been so numerous and united as to bear down all opposition.

As we walked across the quadrangle, we heard a great hubbub to the left of us, which, my guide told me, proceeded from a knot of grammarians, who were in high dispute whether Aristotle's word for the soul should be written *ενδελεχεια* with a Delta, or *εντελεχεια* with a Tau; and whether the Greek word for the sea should be called *θαλαττα*, or *θαλασσα*. We had scarcely taken leave of these disputatious gentlemen, when we found ourselves suddenly in the midst of some quarrelsome persons in grave dresses, who were arguing with such excessive violence, that I was every moment afraid of some tragical consequences. Upon listening with some attention, I discovered that we had fallen among an assemblage of divines, who were reviving the old question about the word *nisi*, which formerly so distracted the Council of Basil.

As soon as I had satisfied my curiosity, I was glad to make good my retreat; and passing into another school, I found an assembly of young academicians who were exercising themselves in punning, or the paranomasia. We stayed to hear a few subjects

proposed by an elderly person in a great chair, whose chin was built up three or four stories high, and whose sides and corporation were swelled out like the equatorial parts of the globe, by the continual exercise of laughter. My guide pointed out to me a promising young student, who had punned upon every word in the Old and New Testament, and had already advanced a great way in the Statutes at Large; and while I was in the room, a youth with a vacant face advanced to receive a very showy gingerbread medal for the best joke upon pumpkin.

We passed through a great number of conundrum-parties, and whole rows of rebus-makers, till we came to a detached part of the building, which, I was informed, was wholly destined to the students in philosophy. Here the area of the quadrangle was so full and so noisy, that I could have imagined myself at the Stock Exchange in London, if it had not been for the prodigious number of instruments and apparatuses with which the court was filled. I walked up leisurely to a cluster of people who seemed to be very busy in a corner of the square, with a variety of kettles and pans about them; but was very glad to get out of their reach, as soon as I heard that they were employed in making thunder and lightning. I was much more at my ease when I found myself in the midst of a set of projectors, who had just satisfied their minds as to the philosopher's stone, and the quadrature of the circle.

Many were the different objects which seemed to stimulate the labours of this learned body. I could observe a few Platonic spirits, who appeared to be lost in thought, and, according to my conductor, were contemplating the *αυτοπτον αγαλμα*; others were calculating the decay of moral evidence by

arithmetical proportions. Some were stripping themselves to dig to the centre of the earth; not a few were crying about their summum bonums, mithridates, and panaceas; while some very Bœotian faces were looking through telescopes at the sun, and declaring they saw churches, sign-posts, and hackney-coaches.

A great number of animal magnetists were among this crowd of philosophers; and some of them engaged to round my little hatchet-face to a reasonable plumpness, by treating me only for a few days. I could not help asking my conductor, what could be the intention of a crowd of persons who were standing in the great square in travelling dresses, and with all the eagerness of expectation in their countenances? "These," replied he, "are a set of enterprising philosophers, who are bent on errands of great importance. They have all their different destinations, and are on the point of setting out in search of those seas, islands, and cities, of whose existence the documents and testimonies we have hitherto had, seem to stand a little in need of confirmation. Those noblemen, with long trains of clerks and secretaries behind them, are going on embassies from his Inane Majesty to Plato's republic, Utopia, Lilliput, and Laputa. The two gentlemen who are so thinly clothed, are prepared to penetrate into the sultry regions of Africa, in quest of the Troglodytæ and Prester John's kingdom; and the person whom you see equipped with a cork jacket, sets sail in an hour's time in search of Lucian's ocean of cream, with the islands of cheese in the middle of it."

Here my guide finished speaking; and taking me by the arm, led me through this crowd of philosophical adventurers, to another range of building, in which was the museum, or cabinet of curiosities.



Though there seemed to be a great number of rare articles in this repository, yet I had too confused a recollection, when I awoke, of what I had seen, to be able to trace out the particulars on paper. Some impressions however were left in my memory, of the wooden dove of Archytus, the brazen bull of Albertus Magnus, the Maid of Orleans' shift, Scriblerus's shield, some skin of the true Pergamenian parchment, a sprig of the laurel into which Daphne was metamorphosed, and a shoe made of the hide of the archer who was flayed alive for shooting King Richard the First.

Having now no further curiosity to satisfy in Abra-Cadabra-square, we pursued our walk towards Addle-gate, where we expected our balloon to wait for us. I should not however forget to mention, that at the end of Blowbladder-street was the hospital for hypochondriacs, or *malades imaginaires*. In walking hastily through the wards, I could observe many stout-looking gentlemen wrapped up as if they laboured under a complication of disorders. Upon asking one of them, whose legs I observed to be encircled with hay-bands, what was the nature of his complaint, he assured me, with a countenance of the floridest melancholy I ever beheld, that a general vitrification had begun to take place in his person; that his legs were already converted into glass bottles; and that, if it were not for these hay-bands, he should be continually in danger of breaking his own shins, and wounding those of his neighbours.

After leaving this humane institution, we soon found ourselves at the city gate, near to which is the Royal Exchange, where, as we passed, we heard a vast deal about tontines, securities, assignats, &c.; but having no great curiosity about these matters, we mounted into our balloon-carriage, and set out on

our expedition. A brisk gale carried us with great rapidity over an immense tract of country, the population of which filled me with astonishment. As we passed over a very flourishing province, called the Region of Expectation, my guide, seeing my curiosity awakened, threw down a sort of anchor which caught in a hollow tree, and arrested our progress.

I never shall forget the ecstasy of surprise I was thrown into, on perceiving a prodigious number of castles built in the air, all constructed of the finest marble, and displaying a magnificence far exceeding the description my childhood had been amused with in eastern story-books. As most of these edifices were extremely high, we were afraid of striking against some of their turrets, and therefore judged it prudent to depart before the wind increased. We came next to the Land of Promise; where, stopping a few minutes at a little town, I heard a candidate for the representation of the county promising a grocer, in return for his vote, that his son should be made *Lord High Almoner*; while another was pledging himself to make the son of a credulous baker, *Master of the Rolls*.

In sailing over the Land of Dreams, we had the curiosity to pay it a short visit, and found it so exactly answerable to the description of it which Lucian gives us in his true history, that I may spare myself the trouble of offering any particular account of it in this place. The next object that excited my attention, was the Island of Gapers and Yawners, where I observed almost every body stretching out his arms, as if just awakened from a heavy sleep, and every mouth extended like so many oysters waiting for the tide. As I already began to be infected with a drowsiness, I begged my guide to hasten

out of this atmosphere, lest I should close my eyes upon the wonders of this great empire, which yet remained for me to contemplate.

Our route lay next by the Land of Jokes, to the Paradise of Fools. In passing over the first-mentioned province, the undulation of the air, caused by the unceasing laughter of the people of this country, rocked our balloon like a ship in a troubled ocean. The Paradise of Fools was peaceable enough; and their supreme pleasure seemed to consist in lolling out their tongues, and singing lullabies as they leaned against each other. Some of them found entertainment in spitting into a running stream; others whistled away their lives; and not a few were blowing bubbles into the air, and running after them open-mouthed. It was here that I thought I recollected some faces of old standing at college.

I was soon disgusted with this scene, and begged to proceed in our journey; but was not much better pleased, when in a few minutes we found ourselves in the Land of Fops. Till we descended to within about fifty yards of the ground, I guessed them to be a race of Albino's, by the mighty protuberance about their necks; but I perceived that this phenomenon was nothing more than a kind of bolster which it was the fashion to carry about with them. The whole atmosphere was sophisticated with a thousand perfumes; and yet now and then a cross current of air conveyed to my sense such a putrid steam of human maladies, that I could not help fancying myself in the neighbourhood of a hospital or lazar-house. Most of these fops seemed to be of the travelled monkey kind, and resembled such as, in the language of Mr. Pope, had

. . . . . saunter'd Europe round,  
And gather'd every vice on Christian ground;

Seen every court, heard every king declare  
His royal sense of operas, or the fair ;  
The stews and palace equally explor'd ;  
Intrigu'd with glory, and with spirit whor'd ;  
Try'd all *hors-d'œuvres*, all *liqueurs* defin'd ;  
Judicious drank, and greatly daring din'd ;  
Dropp'd the dull lumber of the Latin store,  
Spoil'd their own language, and acquir'd no more ;  
All classic learning, lost on classic ground,  
At last turn'd air, the echo of a sound !

We now proceeded in our journey towards the celebrated city of Shim-Sham; near to which stood the palace of the great King; and nothing particular occurred between these two places, but that we pass'd over a country called the Land of Secrets, where dwell a people with long lopping ears and little gimlet eyes. We had not time to make any inquiry into the customs and character of the natives; but my guide promised, in compensation for this loss, to procure for me one of their ears for dissection, which I thought might be of great advantage to me, as it was my design to complete that moral anatomy of the human frame, of which the Spectator has given such excellent specimens in his account of the structure of a beau's head, and a coquette's heart.

While I was turning over these projects in my mind, we arrived at the city of Shim-Sham, wherein was kept the King's treasure, as well as the wardrobes of all the royal family. In this place every thing was mockery and imitation, and the shops were filled up with such articles as are vended by the pedlar Jews in our country. Every thing was hollow and unsubstantial, and the jewels of the King's crown were of a correspondent value. Here I observed a very consequential gentleman walking along as upright as a dart, with his hands spread out



as if he had just washed them, and was waiting for a towel: he had three large leathern curls on each side, and a pair of very superb paper ruffles. After walking a few paces, I saw him step into a fine painted balloon-carriage, which my guide informed me was to conduct him to court. I could not hear this without signifying a very strong desire to follow him thither; which my guide no sooner understood, than he directed our aërial carriage towards the palace of his Inane Majesty.

We were soon conveyed to a structure of a very stately appearance, but which I afterwards understood could never be made to last above a year: here we alighted before a flight of steps, which conducted us to a saloon of prodigious extent, where all the courtiers were assembled. The strut and stare of this place did very much embarrass me at first, and methought I wished myself in my great chair with my figured roquelaure. There was instantly such a press of courtiers about me, that my little frame could with difficulty support it; and I had some serious apprehensions of being smothered with the thronging assiduities of this polished crowd. Every one seemed to have known, or seen, or heard of me, so much that I began to feel humbled in the thought that my name was so much respected in the most nugatory portion of this realm of Nothing.

I was relieved however from this inquietude, by hearing the same sort of bastard compliments bandied about from one to the other among these hollow professors; Cæsar and Alexander were laid at the feet of those whose courage was to be commended; and, in the hey-day of their inverted comparisons, decayed dowagers and waning spinsters waxed young again by the defamation of the rose, the lily, and the coral. I was not much surprised to find that

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the edict of revocation, which was mentioned in my first paper on this subject, had hurried back vast numbers of our court gentry, and I seemed to have some recollection of almost every third face I met. His Inane Majesty was at the further end of the room, in a very singular dress. He had a hat of cork on his head, with a plumage of goose's feathers, which together presented an appearance not unlike a huge shuttlecock. His mantle was of whity-brown paper, ornamented with rows of beads; and his hair was tied up in a great blue bladder. As for his person, it was swelled out to an unaccountable size; and a very fat unthinking face seemed to procure him the respect of all present. A kind of muddy liquor floated in his eyes, which his brows overhung like weeping willows. He carried the largest jewel that belonged to him at the end of his nose; and the courtiers best versed in flattery, were sure to begin with admiring its lustre and magnitude. His Majesty had an only son, who trod exactly in his steps, and promised to uphold the dignity of the sceptre: he had profited much under the most accomplished masters in astrology, magic, magnetism, augury, necromancy, leger-de-main, conundrum-making, and punning; being the studies in the highest estimation in this kingdom, and deemed absolutely essential to the accomplishments of a young prince.

A mixture of gay and melancholy sentiments took place in my mind on contemplating this scene: on the one hand, the thought of seeing, at my return into my own dear country, the effects of this wide edict of revocation, in depriving our court of all those gaudy nothings that used to flutter about it like butterflies round a Mayflower, shaded with a sort of pensiveness the pleasure which I felt, on the other hand, in reflecting that now there would be

room for conscious worth and high promise to press forward and recommend themselves to the notice of our own monarch.

Just as my kind conductor was taking me by the hand to present me to his Inane Majesty, the whole scene vanished from before me, and I seemed to be carried up in a sort of sailing cloud to a considerable height in the air. The dread of falling so troubled my fancy, that the agitation awoke me; but for full ten minutes I imagined myself in my conductor's balloon, instead of the great chair by the fire-side. I had nearly forgotten to inform my reader, that, the instant before this visionary fabric dissolved, I could not help thinking that in the face of my inane friend who had shown me so much civility, there lurked a strong likeness of my old school-fellow the Projector: the lines of this resemblance were, however, very much obscured by the vast margin which the frothy and puffing elements of this country are sure to produce in every face.

N<sup>o</sup> 21. SATURDAY, MAY 19.

*Ut flos in septis, secretus nascitur hortis,  
 Ignotus pecori, nullo convulsus aratro,  
 Quem mulcent auræ, firmat sol, educat imber,  
 Multi illum pueri, multæ optavère puellæ ;  
 Idem quum tenui carptus defloruit ungui  
 Nulli illum pueri, nullæ optavère puellæ.*

CATULLUS.

Sweet is that flower which in retirement grows,  
 Untouch'd, inglorious, in the garden's close.  
 Fann'd by soft airs, and bath'd by min'string rain ;  
 While cattle homage pay, and ploughshares rude refrain.  
 Its charms---its opening charms, and taper height,  
 The virgins and the love-sick boys invite !  
 Yet ravish from the stem the blushing prize,  
 How soon, alas ! the sapless beauty dies !  
 No more its opening charms and taper height,  
 The virgins and the love-sick boys invite.

THE other day, as I was pursuing an agreeable train of thought, in a view to the entertainment of the public, a letter from one of my town correspondents gave me so rude a check, that I was obliged to take three turns in the filbert-walk, to recover my composure.

The letter brought me advice of a very sore evil, in the commerce of society, which increases with a growth so rank and rapid, that all the spirit I can assume, and all the influence I can exert, must be condensed, in a manner, towards this one point for the present. The rage for gaming is the danger about which this alarum has been rung by my correspondent ; and, if the facts and instances which



he has collected for me be as well grounded as other instructions which have come to me from the same quarter, I tremble for all that is sacred, or decent, or honourable, in life; and my heart misgives me, at the rumour of a pestilence that must soon produce a general rottenness in the higher ranks of society, and poison all the springs of virtue and humanity. There is no vice or passion, among all the badges of human misery, that is of a nature so spreading and malignant as the practice of gaming; nor will it be difficult to discover the ground of this mischievous pre-eminence, if we attend to the course of its operation and progress in the mind.

There is something in the very aspect and colour of other vices which shocks the moral sense, and is at open hostility with whatever good principles or habits have been nourished in us by education or example; but we easily persuade ourselves to look upon gaming as a practice in which we trust to the fair issue of chance; and, by shutting our eyes against its consequences, we not only veil over its reproach, but lend to it a degree of plausibility, which renders its temptation irresistible. By this deceitful accommodation, and despicable casuistry, the odium of this vice is melted away, and nothing but the first blush of innocence is opposed to it, and a certain decorum of sentiment, which is the natural growth of every well-constituted mind.

The effects therefore of this vice are always first perceived on the side of feeling and delicacy; and oftentimes, while the principle of virtue is left standing itself, all its decorations and attractions will be mouldering away, under the influence of this sour ungenial habit. But although the infantine advances of this pestilent practice degrade the mind with no stain of reproach or criminality, yet ruin that is

slow, is not the less certain ; and when the first repugnance of habit is removed, the progress to corruption is easy and direct. Other vices attack us more openly, and alarm at once all the vigour and caution of our minds ; sometimes take us by assault ; sometimes are repulsed in the onset ; but the practice of gaming undermines and reduces us by slow and subtle degrees ; and, while our conscience reposes in a flattering security, robs it of that timidity of feeling, and sensibility of honour, which constitute its principal safety.

Thus the progress of gaming is so much the more successfully fatal, as it enters into our habits with little opposition from our principles, takes full possession of our souls by imperceptible degrees, and delays its attack upon the sacred citadel of virtue, till it has effected a desertion of all those delicacies of sentiment, which form a noble defence about it. It is on the same account that the most disgusting influence of this sordid practice is remarked in female minds, which lose their fairest distinctions and privileges, when they lose the blushing honours of modesty, delicacy, and peace. It is here that the habit shows itself in its pride of deformity, and appears in the most afflicting shapes of wretchedness and ruin. A female mind deprived of its sensibilities, is one of the most desolate scenes in the world ; and a man bereft of his reason is hardly a more abject and sorrowful spectacle. These ruinous consequences of gaming, my correspondent assures me, have already begun to display themselves in the character and deportment of the gentler sex : already the sweetest qualities of womanhood are perishing under its blast ; and, having nearly completed its havoc on the blossoms and the foliage, it

must soon reach to the very root and principle of society itself.

To behold a fine eye, that was made to swell with the tender feelings of conscious love, to exalt, to correct, to animate, to transport its object, lend all its ardours and its ecstasies to the icy appetite of avarice; and to contemplate a hand and arm, that nature had cast in her happiest mould, like the tendril of the vine, to act as the graceful bond of union and affection, busied in the beggarly office of conducting a Faro bank; is a sad perversion of nature's decrees, and an outrage upon all that is decorous or lovely in the female character. But it were ridiculous to complain only of the solecisms of behaviour and deformities of appearance produced in the female world by this unblushing vice, as if these were its worst effects. It has a destroying appetite, that swallows up all the regards and charities of the mind, and leaves in it no principle of activity, but covetousness and desperation. To the female gamester, virtue, and probity, and faith, as never coming into use, are of little value, and no where so cheaply purchased as in these unprincipled resorts; so that, as I am told, every practised seducer, who can be gratified with less than the costly sacrifice of innocence, seeks his objects at the gaming-table, where he finds a very few attractions will carry him a great way in a course of easy victories.

In the whole compass of language no terms are so misapplied, as those which are expressive of happiness; and happiness itself is a word which all of us are prompt in explaining, but which none of us in fact understand. Thus, what is denominated the gay world, consists in reality of the gravest and dullest part of mankind; and he who loves to see the hu-

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man face overspread with genuine joy, will certainly not find his account in the regions of high life, and the crowded haunts of fashion. Where every hope of a woman's heart is rivetted on her neighbour's purse, and every feeling is engaged for her own; where the rapture of one is the ruin of another; where gain is without credit, and loss without consolation; there can be little room or occasion for the relaxations of harmless mirth, and the sportiveness of innocent pleasure. That vacancy of mind, that excursiveness of fancy, and that rambling of thought, in which true mirth and jollity delight, is not surely to be found in those courts of avarice, where all our sensibilities are absorbed by the appetite of gain, and a groveling solicitude about the issue of a card or a number.

About fourteen years ago, Sophia was the envy of her own sex, and the idol of ours. She was then in the prime of her age, and beautiful was that prime: but her beauty was her least praise; for her heart had all the luxury of feeling, and her understanding all the graces of improvement. A winning unconsciousness of her own charms, an innocent playfulness of manner, and a kind-hearted attention to her inferiors, distinguished her among her companions, and made her the delight and ornament of every circle. But her ill-fortune would not suffer her to remain long in this sovereignty of innocence at her father's house in ——shire: at the age of twenty-one she was married to the member for the county; and, in the winter of 1777, began her career in town with such company as her equipage and condition entitled her to keep. A long time she held out against all the obligations of fashion and allurements of example: she had an in-bred abhorrence of gambling; and while she patiently sustained the impu-



tation of meanness for refusing to contribute to the Faro bank, her unavowed charities were daily pouring balm into Misfortune's wounds; and some of those who upbraided her parsimony, had felt, in secret aids, the force of her generosity, when distresses, which they had well deserved, were on the point of overwhelming them.

But virtue that stands alone, and discountenanced, is unequally opposed to the constant influence of importunity and example; and Sophia wanted those aids of counsel and encouragement which a tender and rational husband might well have afforded her. I marked the first inroads that were made on the delicacy of her sentiments, and the untouched bloom of her mind. I saw the gaiety of her spirits cankered and corroded; and I saw all her sensibilities gradually decaying, like the sapless germs of a withering rose-tree.

It was among a notorious set of female gamblers, at a house kept by a baron's lady, that her transformation was completed; where a conspiracy was formed to win from her some valuable jewels, which her father had presented her with on the day of her marriage; and where her husband was wretch enough to share in the plunder. This had the effect of rendering her desperate. From that time she has continued to sink deeper and deeper into all the infamy of a hardened gamester; and her virtue and her probity are gone, together with her family jewels. Her face too, which once was illuminated with unchequered delight, and replete with innocent graces, is now contracted to a cross expression of discontent and malice; and her beauty, instead of being left to the gradual wear of time, that seldom obliterates every trace, is prematurely and radically ruined, by the unsparing influence of sordid passions

and corroding anxieties. The heroine of this short tale is at this moment well known in what are called the gay circles of life, though the portrait I have drawn will be recognised only by a few; by those, alas! who have gazed, as I have gazed, on the gilded morning of her life, and have seen, as I have seen, that morning shrouded in a sudden gloom, pregnant with blight and with mildew.

My correspondent has forwarded this letter to me, which he received a few days ago from a contemplative friend, who desired that it might be communicated to the old gentleman employed in schooling the town, under the title of the LOOKER-ON.

“ My dear sir,

“ The other day I paid a visit to a medical person who lives at a short distance from town, and who has under his care a small number of lunatic patients. As I am curious to see my species under every variety of aspect, I readily accepted the offer he made me, of introducing me to some of his unhappy lodgers. He accordingly carried me into all their apartments, and surprised me with such sights of human woe, as sunk all the pride of my nature, and humbled the man within me. I shall dwell only on one spectacle, which interested me and afflicted me above the rest, and forced me upon reflecting how much we are the creatures of habit, and how soon, by a degenerate course of action, we may depart from ourselves, and entomb every trace and vestige of original worth.

“ In a little room, at the top of the house, on the foot of a mattress, sat a woman whose age seemed to be about forty: she had a long night-gown that was tied about her neck, and reached to her feet; and her hair, which was mostly grey, was combed back

into a sort of cap, or caul, which served to keep it together. Her eyes were deep sunk in their sockets, and her cheeks were miserably fallen in. Her neck was bent forwards, and bowed with wretchedness; and her looks expressed that frantic gloom, that keen sort of melancholy, and that eating care, which consume with perpetual anguish, and allow no comforting thought, not even in the prospect of death.

“As we entered the room, we awakened not the smallest curiosity in her mind. Her chin fell on the palm of her hand, while her elbow rested on her knee; and pointing to a spot in the floor, she drew forth a sigh so hollow, and so sad, that my whole frame underwent an agitation almost too much to support. In a moment she sprang violently from her bed, and rushing to the spot at which she had pointed with her finger, fell prone with her face upon it, crying, “Ah! my little, little babes, will you knit for ever those innocent brows on your poor wicked mother?” Then looking at us with a countenance full of the most intense feelings, she cried, “Hush, hush, I conjure you! My little ones, my murdered little ones, will speak to me, if you will but keep silence!” She continued after this prostrate on the floor, and talking indistinctly. In this situation we left her.

“I could not rest till the keeper consented to give me, in a few words, the history of this afflicted person, which he did, to this effect:—‘This poor woman,’ said he, ‘was once the ornament of her family, and the delight of all who knew her. I remember her, about twenty years ago, with a little cherub-like face, sparkling with pleasure and with innocence. She married the youngest son of a Baronet, who had taken orders, and held a living in the neighbourhood

of her father's residence. He was a youth of rare talents and exemplary worth; and they lived together in domestic happiness, and unassuming plenty, a few short years, till ill health, and a fair opportunity, induced the husband to try the benefit of sea air, in a voyage to the Mediterranean, when she was persuaded to accept an invitation to spend the winter in town, at the house of a female relation. This lady had neither honour nor conscience remaining, and had long, unknown to her country connections, kept a kind of decoy in —— square, where, under the notion of routs, the young and the simple were allured, to the ruin of their fortunes and their principles.

“ In this vortex of villainy, where vice appeared to her in a kind of masquerade, and tempted her with the show of elegance, and the authority of fashion, was this poor creature abused, seduced, and vitiated. After an absence of three quarters of a year, her husband returned, and fled to her with that ardour and anxiety with which a husband approaches a wife whom he tenderly loves, and who, for reasons unknown, has ceased to correspond with him for many months. He fled to her, to chide her for her neglect, and to seal their reconciliation with kisses so long untasted,—when, instead of that elegant, affectionate, and artless character, which had drawn from him so many tears at parting, he found her transformed into the cold and fantastic creature of fashion, and stripped of all the virtues and the graces that belonged to her native simplicity.

“ Being acquainted, however, with the whole of her unworthiness, and the full extent of her profligacy, he lived with her for two years, on an income much abridged by her losses at play, and a mind



penetrated with sorrow and despondency at the hourly proofs of her degeneracy. His spirits were so affected, and his fortune so sunk, that both his health and pocket united to persuade him to accept the place of chaplain to a man of war, which was just on the point of sailing to convoy a fleet of merchantmen. Here his tender constitution and his aching heart so ill agreed with the rough situation to which he consigned himself, that he fell into a lingering illness, and returned in a few months, to die of what is usually called a broken heart. His wife, who had long ago laid down all the noble feelings of nature at the gaming-table, and had to reckon her virtue and her faith among the losses she had there incurred, beheld without remorse his pining condition, and saw his head bent down upon his bosom with little self-accusation or sorrow.

““ One night a sudden indisposition brought her home earlier than usual, from the lady's house where her ruin had begun. She came, as if led by the hand of Providence, to receive her husband's last sigh, and to behold the completion of her work. It seemed as if her spirits had been borne up till this moment, only to experience a more sudden fall, and to feel the piercing remorse that followed with greater bitterness and anguish. A sudden recollection seized her, attended with such horror and such agony of grief, that her faculties were overborne, and her reason, her health, and her beauty, were the sudden forfeits of her crimes. It was not long before she gave the severest proof of her insanity which it was in her power to afford, by mixing up deliberately a quantity of poison, of which she took a part herself, and found means to administer the rest to her two little children and her maid servant: the

mixture, however, was so inefficacious, that it produced only a temporary illness in those on whom it was tried.

“ ‘ It was immediately judged necessary to put her under strict confinement, and she has now been five years a lodger in my house. She will wear no dress but the one she has now on, and chooses that little remote chamber in preference to any other. But the circumstance most to be admired is, that nothing can persuade her that her children are alive; she persists in declaring, that their spirits are constantly in the room, and continues to converse with them the whole day, as if they were actually present. If, at those moments when she seems to be a little more composed, we venture to place her children before her, she immediately falls into a fit of raving, and cries out that they are multiplied into four, and are come with scorpions to torment her.’

“ Here my friend finished his sad account, and I took my leave, impressed with more horror than any spectacle has ever yet created in my mind. If Mr. Simon Olive-branch can make any use of this story, which I send in this naked and simple form, he is at liberty to employ it, as he has done others, in the cause of virtue and humanity.

“ Yours, &c.”

N<sup>o</sup> 22. TUESDAY, MAY 22.

*Nec tu sperne piis venientia somnia portis;  
Cum pia venerunt somnia, pondus habent.* PROPERTIUS.

When serious dreams the door of fancy gain,  
Think not these serious dreams were sent in vain.

*To the Rev. Simon Olive-branch.*

“ Sir,

“ ALL those who have marched before you with the greatest dignity in the speculative office of reforming the town, have been so remarkable for the faculty of dreaming, that it is now indispensably requisite for a periodical writer to devote his slumbers, as well as his waking meditations, to the entertainment of his readers. Nor is it without reason that this faculty is held in so great esteem; for, if dreams have any thing of inspiration in them, those whom they most frequently visit must be allowed to be fittest for the task of instruction. Nor can advice ever come more modestly disguised, than when cloaked under the emblematical covering of this mystical morality.

“ It was with real satisfaction, therefore, that I perceived in your second paper such unquestionable marks of your being possessed of this valuable faculty, which I look upon as a genuine voucher of your true descent from the dreamers of former times, and a proof that you are not unworthy to sit in the Spectator’s chair. For I consider the most respectable part of the periodical writers to be all of one literary family; and that, like the Incas of Peru

among their countrymen, they hand down one to the other a kind of appropriate hereditary talents which distinguish them among the community of authors.

“ The Spectator, who was the founder of this family, as well as some of the worthiest of his posterity, not only could dream when they pleased, but could also choose the subject of their dream. Being thus provided with a domestic oracle, the philosopher had no difficulty to fear. When a knotty case occurred, he had nothing more to do than to compose himself to sleep as quickly as he could. The busy embryon thought soon expanded in his brain; and, when he awoke, out sprung the armed goddess.

“ As I take it for granted that you are possessed of this discretionary dreaming power, I hope you will not refuse to sleep a little now and then on my affairs, if I should have occasion for your assistance; and, as it is more than probable that I may sometimes dream a little myself, I shall take a pleasure in submitting my visions to your eye, that you may either communicate them to the public, or use them as rough materials to be wrought up and adorned in your own slumbers.

“ It may be worth observing, that there are two distinct kinds of dreams: the one, of a plain and household nature, such as ordinary persons experience; the other, more refined and spiritualised, and peculiar to periodical writers: the one, foggy and frothy, and bred of indigestion and vapour; the other, pure and ethereal, the essence of fancy, and the spirit of contemplation. The one, in short, is involuntary and constitutional; the other is dependent on the will, and subordinate to the judgment.



“ Voluntary dreams were little known among the ancients ; and I think the first person who succeeded in this way, in our own country, was the celebrated John Bunyan, who has carried the art to a great degree of perfection. He chose the field of allegory, as best calculated to exercise his superior talents for invention and imagery ; and it is but justice to this famous dreamer, to allow that the perspicuity and simplicity of his language, and the entertaining flow of his narrative, render his allegorical writings fitter perhaps than any others to captivate youthful imaginations. His merit will more appear, when we consider that he was perfectly original ; and that Spencer himself, with the Italian poets for a model, and with all the advantages of the most melodious poetry, has but few readers who persevere to the end, and still fewer who follow him with clear ideas and connected impressions. His delineations are perhaps too picturesque : they are admirable when taken individually ; but it is so difficult to keep sight of the connection, that they derive no lustre from their union. Honest Bunyan, on the other hand, seeks no refinement, but follows nature even in fiction ; and when we have accompanied his Pilgrim to the end of his journey, we can clearly recollect every step of his progress.

“ The dreams of this author are all serious ; as Quevedo’s, on the contrary, are humorous and satirical. Addison, who touched with the happiest art every chord of polite learning, has occasionally employed a dream to convey his instructions, whether his subject were gay, severe, or solemn. The paper of the Spectator, entitled the Vision of Mirza, has a grandeur and solemnity of imagery, with an elegance and melody of language, that stand unrivaled in English literature. The subject of human

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life has likewise been cast into a dream by the author of the Rambler, whose strong and penetrating mind enabled him to excel in every species of writing; but any one who will take the trouble to compare the two papers together, will not hesitate long to give the preference to Addison. His conceptions seem to flow without labour or effort; and even in point of solemnity, which is the style most natural to the author of the Rambler, the Spectator has, in this instance, snatched a glorious victory in the heart of his empire.

“ This species of writing seems best adapted to subjects of a grave kind, because there is something naturally serious in a dream. When a man is thrown into a state in which he is barely conscious of his existence, the workings of his fancy, however absurd, have something awful in their character. Hence in all ages they have been considered as sacred; and though the greater part of the fleeting creations of fancy are instantly forgotten, there are few of us who have not at some time or other been visited with dreams which have made a durable impression.

“ The ancients paid the greatest attention to their dreams, and assigned a very distinguished rank in the state to the persons who were appointed to interpret them. They believed that the will of the gods was often to be collected from these nightly communications; but as they turned out to be more frequently false than true, they believed that but a small part were sent by the gods, and that the *vana insomnia*, the illusive visions, were continually fluttering about the earth in multitudes, ready to insinuate themselves into drowsy brains.

“ Virgil relates, in the sixth book of the *Æneid*, that these idle dreams were the fruit of a huge elm-

tree, which grew in the entrance of the infernal regions.

“ *In medio, ramos annosaque brac'ia pandit  
Ulmus, opaca, ingens; quam sedem somnia vulgo  
Vana tenere ferunt, foliisque sub omnibus hærent.*

“ Full in the midst of this infernal road  
An elm displays her dusky arms abroad:  
The god of sleep there hides his heavy head;  
And empty dreams on ev'ry leaf are spread.

“ And it is somewhat remarkable that he describes this tree to be situated amidst the Furies, Centaurs, Gorgons, Harpies, Diseases, Cares, Pain, Famine, Poverty, and all the horrid crew which inhabit that tremendous abode; alluding, no doubt, to the influence which the passions represented by these allegorical beings are known to possess in producing dreams. The same author afterwards copies Homer in describing the avenues by which dreams pass from the Elysian Fields to the upper world. There are two gates, he says; the one of ivory, through which false dreams find their way; the other of horn, which admits only the true. These were the regular channels of communication; but it sometimes happened, on extraordinary occasions, that a dream was sent down from the throne of Jupiter himself, as in the case of Agamemnon, when he was persuaded by a vision to give battle to the Trojans without the assistance of Achilles.

“ The *manes*, or the ghosts of the dead, were believed to send pleasant dreams, with salutary admonitions respecting futurity, to their former friends on earth, and frightful and ghastly apparitions to those who had offended or injured them. Hence it became a principal part of domestic worship to appease the *manes*:

“ *Ne tibi neglecti mittant mala somnia manes.*

“ Lest the neglected *manes* sad dreams send.

“ The ceremony used for this purpose was the offering of a cake sprinkled with salt :

“ *Somnia fallaci ludunt temeraria nocte,  
Et pavidas mentes falsa timere jubent ;  
Et vanum ventura hominum genus omnia noctis  
Farre pio placant, et saliente sale.*

“ When falls the blood-stain'd curtain of the night,  
Dire dreams rush forth, and timorous souls affright ;  
Then, urg'd by superstitious faith, we bake  
Our childish antidotes of salted cake.

“ I quote this from Tibullus ; who, in another passage, describes himself as occupied in expelling evil dreams from the slumbers of his sick mistress, by the same means :

“ *Ipse procuravi ne possent sæva nocere  
Somnia, ter sanctâ deveneranda molâ.*

“ The thrice-blest cake have I prepar'd, to keep  
From sad tumultuous dreams her sacred sleep.

“ I know not whether the practice among the vulgar in many parts of this country, of laying a piece of cake under their pillow, on certain occasions, to procure pleasant dreams, have not taken its origin from this old ceremony ; and I have no doubt but that a regular analogy might be traced between the notions and customs of the ancients, and those of the moderns, on this curious subject, since superstition is nearly the same in all ages and countries. Instead of the agency of the *manes*, we have substituted that of good and evil spirits ; and the belief of this supernatural interference will continue till the natural cause of dreams is generally understood. Milton has



given countenance to this opinion by the well-known passage which he puts into the mouth of Adam :

“ Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,  
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep, &c.

“ And more strongly still by the description wherein Satan is represented in the act of inspiring evil dreams into the fancy of Eve :

----- “ Him there they found  
Squat like a tode, close at the ear of Eve,  
Assaying by his dev'lish art to reach  
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge  
Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams ;  
Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint  
Th' animal spirits that from pure blood arise  
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure ; there raise  
At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,  
Vain hope, vain aims, inordinate desires,  
Blown up with high conceits, engend'ring pride.

“ I do not mean to examine whether supernatural communications have at any time been made to men during sleep ; but it is certain that the greater number of dreams proceed from natural causes. It is generally agreed, that a person will seldom fail to dream in the night of whatever has seriously engaged his attention during the day. An uneasy posture in bed, a bad state of body, or any impressions of disease or pain, will likewise infallibly produce uneasy and frightful dreams. The same effect attends a heavy supper, or, in short, any thing which overloads and oppresses the body, or agitates the mind. An instance is mentioned by Mr. Locke, of a person who dreamed that he was ascending Mount *Ætna*, and that he felt his feet scorched with the heat of the soil, which was really occasioned by a bottle of warm water that was applied to his soles. Every person is

furnished with stories and instances in proof of this observation. Those who have known what it is to love, will have no occasion to be reminded of the influence of this powerful passion on their sleeping thoughts. In short, the prevailing passion, or the leading habit of our lives, if it do not create, will at least always give a tinge and colour to our dreams, which is fancifully attributed by Shakspeare to the influence of Queen Mab, who

“ Gallops, night by night,  
Through lovers’ brains, and then they dream of love ;  
O’er lawyers’ fingers, who straight dream on fees ;  
O’er ladies’ lips, who straight on kisses dream :  
And sometimes comes she with a tithe-pig’s tail,  
Tickling the parson as he lies asleep ;  
Then dreams he of another benefice.  
Sometimes she driveth o’er a soldier’s neck,  
And then he dreams of cutting foreign throats,  
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,  
Of healths five fathom deep.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

“ I have only to remark further, that in very sound sleep the mind is not subject to be disturbed by dreams ; and accordingly it is in the morning chiefly that these illusions appear, when the slumbers are light. This naturally suggests a remedy, which while it goes to the bottom of this complaint, will circulate at the same time its moral advantages through the whole system of our duties and exertions — I mean that of early rising, which I consider as an object of such importance as to lay claim to a separate discussion in some future paper. The fresh air of the morning is a sort of bath to the spirits, that braces and restores them after the tumultuous tossings of a feverish night.

“ I do not mean to say that the remedy I have

mentioned will be of any avail to save the mind of the oppressor from nightly fears, or to wipe away remorse from an evil conscience : these are the proper rewards of crimes. The blessings of a sound and undisturbed imagination are not to be procured but by temperance, activity, and a good life.

“ I am, sir,

“ Your most obedient

“ and most humble servant,

“ G——.”

*London, 26 March, 1792.*

My correspondent's sensible letter leaves me room for a few remarks, with which I shall close this paper.—In the course of my speculations upon human life, some thoughts have naturally been bestowed upon that large and miscellaneous part of it which is spent in dreaming. Mankind are divided in their opinions on this subject, as on most others on which two opinions can be held, by too wide an interval. The vulgar and superstitious regard their dreams as oracular; while those who pretend to greater culture and intelligence consider them as wholly unworthy of regard. There is a point that stands equally distant from these two opposite sentiments, by attending to which some useful ideas may arise on the subject.

When we carry our respect for ordinary dreams so far as to suppose them prophetic, very serious impressions may be given, and much inconvenience may result to the waking and substantial parts of our lives. It has often happened (no doubt) that a dream, by presenting to the imagination a lucky number, has induced a poor man to commit himself in the lottery : and I have been told of young ladies, who have stooped to low alliances, in obedience to the suggestions of these empty counsellors. I think

too I have observed, in the nature of these nightly conjurations, a tendency to invert the order of things, as it stands in reality. What we have contemplated with reverential awe during the day, we encounter in our dreams with a careless familiarity, and are frequently drawn into the closest intimacy with what has filled our waking thoughts with dread and abhorrence.

In the drama too of our dreams, the most topsyturvy dispositions are made, and the different parts are sustained by the most improper persons in the world: thus our best friends will sometimes act in these scenes like the bitterest enemies, and the purest characters will be concerned in the basest actions. To draw therefore from such confused appearances rules for our daily practice, and to suspect virtue and honesty because our mischievous fancy has traduced them in our dreams, would be to lay a foundation for such caprice, misconstruction, and abuse, as totally to disqualify us for the commerce of society.

A confidence in these chimeras has led many persons into mistakes respecting their real qualifications and their proper parts in life. A very peaceful hard-working cobbler of my own parish, by some distortion of his fancy, became suddenly so valiant in his dreams, and so wasted his spirits by night with his military achievements, that he actually needed repose in the day-time, and was obliged to excuse himself to his customers on account of his double profession. His fancy became at last so possessed with images of war, that he considered it as impious to oppose Heaven any longer; and accordingly enlisted for a soldier, leaving a farewell epistle to his family, in which he assured them that he felt himself born to great actions, and exhorted them to sell his stock



in trade, which might help to maintain them till he returned the colonel of his regiment. Before he had well gained acquaintance with his firelock, he was drilled into a new order of dreams, which took now so opposite a turn, that he mended in a month more shoes in his sleep, than he had done for years in the ordinary course of his labour. I have since heard, that he has deserted; but have been able to trace him no further.

Though I suspect that a superstitious reliance on the authenticity of dreams, is often the secret source of much perplexity and sorrow to the unenlightened part of the community; yet, on the other hand, I cannot think it wise to treat so remarkable a property of our natures, as perfectly fruitless and inane. It may possibly be of much latent consequence to the animal economy, and is by no means without its moral advantages. Though I should scruple to allow that our dreams are significant of the future, unless the future have already occupied our waking thoughts; yet I respect them as a kind of allegory of our past life, in which the sentiments that have governed us during the day are obliquely and metaphorically alluded to, under various shapes and disguises. I look upon them as bringing to the secret tribunal of our consciences, a testimony in regard to the general complexion of our thoughts, and making favourable or unfavourable reports accordingly as our sentiments have been pure and upright, or have contracted the stain of latent criminality.

I shall finish with recommending to such as are curious in this part of natural knowledge, this Oniro-critica, by treasuring up their own experiences this way, to establish a sort of scale of dreams for the estimation and regulation of their waking thoughts; and shall myself, probably, in some future paper,

prosecute these hints for their advantage, unless a dreaming correspondent shall communicate something to me on the subject that shall supersede my own observations.

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N<sup>o</sup> 23. SATURDAY, MAY 26.

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In tumbling over our family manuscripts a day or two ago, my attention was arrested by a long epistle addressed to a king. It seems to have been written by one of the Olive-branches, who was in holy orders. But, as many of us have been of the clerical profession, and as this performance happens to be without date, I must leave my readers to guess at the crisis of the state, and the period of our history, in which it was written, by the complexion of its matter.

TO THE KING.

Sir,

As I consider this as a moment in which every honest endeavour should be made to tranquillise the suspense of the nation, and to fix the public opinion on the safe and sober side, I look upon myself as justified by the character I maintain of a gentleman, and a clergyman of England, in thus addressing your majesty on a subject so critically interesting to yourself and us all. It is in vain that I hold forth from my pulpit thus twice a week the solemn truths and injunctions of religion, and endeavour through the week to keep up in my parishioners

the practice of what I have taught, while their minds are discomposed and ruffled by menaces and alarms, and while their attention is drawn towards objects of immediate concern to their repose and preservation.

At a juncture like this, so big with destiny, and so prolific of change, every thinking man is contemplating whatever is most dear and sacred to him, in the system in which he moves, with an aching solicitude; and you, sir, above all, must feel yourself touched with the present instability of thrones, of constitutions, and establishments.

I have ever contemplated your majesty as the greatest prince in Christendom; not because you have the greatest power, not because you are at the head of the greatest nation, but because you are of all princes the most important to the people over whom you reign. It must assuredly give you great weight in your own eyes, to reflect that you make an essential part of a constitution under which mankind have been happier and greater than in any state of things hitherto experienced. But if there be a crisis in the history of your country, in which this your consequence to your subjects is more particularly felt, I scruple not to say that this is that crisis. When the caprice of innovation, and the indefinite love of change, gets abroad among a sanguine people like your English subjects, it is natural and right for good men to turn towards the resources which the constitution has provided for its own security and continuance.

Now that part of it to which wise men have principally ascribed its poise and stability, is the share which your majesty enjoys; a share which has excluded the fluctuating rage and unbridled ambition of Democracies, while it has admitted and strength-

ened all the virtuous efficacy of the Republican form. It is this steadiness and integrity which the state has derived from the crown, that enables us to boast that the frame of our constitution has undergone no material change since the æra of the Restoration, if we except the triennial law passed under King William, and repealed under George the First. This principle of conservation, so characteristic of your majesty's crown, naturally holds it up to those who are conspiring against the blessings of our constitution, as the great mark of their destroying system. This they obscurely drive at through the medium of collateral ruin; to this end a thousand arts and deceptions are employed, in a progressive course of operation; and the mildest professions and projects of reform are at this time only the first steps of the scale of destruction, the initiative forms of that towering fabric of mischief which they meditate in their hearts.

The base of every revolution is broad and comprehensive; a multitude of different factions unite to compose it, characterised by one spirit of discontent, but with different views and different motives. The disappointment, however, of their separate endeavours, brings them closer together; the society of resentment shapes the cause of the one to the cause of the other; each considers that the wishes of the rest run parallel to a certain length with his own; as their spirits become heated, their thoughts become blended; till at last the views of the violent and the wicked prevail altogether, and a common desperation overspreads the whole. Your majesty's acquaintance with history must bring to your mind a sufficient number of examples of this gathering and condensing principle in all plots and machinations against government; it must put you upon your



guard against those specious reforming requisitions, which, however reasonable they may be, when abstractedly considered, are always to be distrusted when they make their appearance in unreasonable times, in times of heat and of clamour, like the present. I speak of this spirit of innovation with reference to our happy constitution: in other places it may be justified by other circumstances; but while we sit under the shade of our own laws, and feel all the cherishing benignity of our own government, it is fair almost to look with distrust and prejudice on all projects of change whatever, and to regard them as necessarily involving much hazard and danger.

In a constitution so complicated as ours, and composed of so many minute parts which require a sound knowledge of human affairs to understand their subserviency to the whole, it is not for every pretender to tell us what we can spare, or what props are necessary to an edifice which has not been erected at once on mathematical principles, or after any pre-concerted plan or model, but has grown and spread with time, occasion, and emergency; and has been pieced and parcelled into various apartments, more with a view to accommodation than grace, to capacity than proportion, to interior comfort than outward symmetry and order. A constitution so mysteriously wrought, so fashioned to the changing condition of the human mind, so pliable to the wants and demands of our nature, however slow in finishing, has a higher claim to our regard, than if it had been woven at once in the brains of a single set of men, or in the revolution of a single æra, to fit with scrupulous adjustment the philosophy of the times, or a transitory crisis of popular opinion.

It is enough for us to know that our constitution

has been sealed with the sanction of time and successive generations; that it has been found answerable to all the purposes of national aggrandisement; that fighting under its banners we have gloriously conquered; that under its protection we have maintained our religion; that we have found its spirit congenial to commerce, and friendly to the progress of knowledge and humanity: it is enough to know this, without troubling ourselves to inquire into the nature of its origin, or its qualifications of birth.

If our constitution, whole as it is, had no original foundation in the free consent of a people; if we do not enjoy it as the entire gift of a solemn confederation; there is nevertheless no part of it that has not been tried in all its points, and all its bearings; that has not many times over been weighed in the balance by contending interests; that has not been examined, in times of trouble and in times of repose, with jealous scrupulosity; and that has not come down to us, marked with no particular humour of a particular juncture, but bearing in its aspect the reverend authority of time, the different subscriptions of different ages, and the broad testimony of human nature at large.

Those, therefore, of your majesty's subjects, who are so pleased with discovering that our government is no constitution, because they are unable to trace it back to any general association and consent of the people, are solicitous about formalities that have no natural ground in human affairs, which proceed by an involuntary course of incidental progression and improvement. Secure in the actual blessings of political freedom, we need not contend about forms and titles: we will not make war upon these verbal politicians, in vindication of our right to the name of constitution, if they, on their part, will not insist on

our razing this our structure of happiness to the ground, because the first stone was laid without the due decorums of ceremony and punctilio.

If these Rights of Man, which have taken such hold of some men's fancies, be so encumbered with formality; if their tendency be to dissolve all governments, whether good or bad, supposing them to have proceeded informally; I have no compunction in declaring, that these rights of man are inconsistent with his social character, are inimical to his true interests, and subversive of his civil freedom; but may serve, to the end of time, as the stale pretence of revolutions; and afford to factious leaders a language unintelligibly imposing to the gaping vulgar, and rich in the unideal terms of a raving philosophy.

Let not such flimsy reasoners disturb your majesty's peace, or shake your faith in the loyalty of the good people of England, who love you, not merely as their king, but as an integral part of a great whole, in which their security is involved, and as the bond and pledge of perpetuity to these our political blessings. We look upon you, sir, as one of the system with us; as sharing in all its wholesome restraints, and as feeling a fellowship with your people in all the benefits it diffuses. Look then, with confidence, to the depth, and breadth, and solidity, of the scheme of our government, as a sufficient defence against the irregular attacks of a political banditti.

A parliament-house may be burned with all its journals and records; but who shall burn out of our hearts those witnesses and documents of freedom which are lodged and cherished there? The riots of the capital may be renewed; but what sudden fury shall prevail against the rocky frame of our

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constitution, of which no man's mind has furnished the model, but which time and the hour have raised with an insensible progress, and have built of materials that blows and buffets only serve to indurate? The sense of the nation may subside, and alarm and distrust may take a sudden possession of their minds; but what efforts of disappointed malice shall prevail against the seated prosperity of the country, the evidence of actual enjoyment, and the strong arguments of fact and feeling?

Should it, however, be your majesty's fate to see some disturbances ere you sink into the tomb of your ancestors, you have been taught how to combat with ills, and to wrestle with calamity. Your brother of France was fostered in the lap of indulgence, and spoiled in the nursery of despotism. To an absolute monarch, his subjects are his playthings while he lies in his cradle, and the sport of his passions when he sits upon his throne; but the kings of England are tutored, and corrected, and lessoned, and catechised by the people at an early age: and your majesty especially has been brought up in the school of disappointment, and has been exercised in trouble and in sorrow. We doubt not, therefore, but that you will stand firm, should any severer trials befall you;—you will not be wanting to your affectionate subjects, who desire to be told how to serve you;—you will consider yourself as pledged for the maintenance of our free government;—you will make a severe, but chaste use of your authority;—you will yield to no galling requisitions, which may force you into disgraceful dilemmas, and induce you to tamper with your sacred honour;—and you will attempt no illegal stretch of prerogative, to shame your faithful and loyal subjects.

With this constancy of mind, your majesty is pre-



pared to encounter the worst that can happen ; and with its natural support, our constitution is able to sustain the secret or open assaults of its enemies. Did it rest on a single point, like the old sovereignty of France, standing on its pinnacle like an inverted cone, every passing wind might make it totter to its fall ; but the monumental pyramid of our government, seated on its natural base, which is the people, shall require no common convulsion of nature to shake its foundations.

But although there is nothing in the present aspect of things to fill your majesty's mind with gloomy presages, yet let not this rooted firmness of your throne induce you to contemplate, with a bosom of apathy, the agitations of your people, however partial they may be. Every little alarm has a claim upon your feelings, and demands on your part a solicitous paternal attention. In times of seditious machinations, it is to you that the virtuous part will turn, as to the spring of their consolation, and the guide of their activity. The throne is the central object of their trust and their fears ; it is the point of union to the different members of the constitution ; it compacts, settles, and holds together in a mysterious combination, the various virtues of various communities, which time has operated to blend together in this favoured country ; it is the refuge of our hopes, it is the anchorage of our freedom, it is the haven of our constitution.

Thus held up to the view of your people, and thus important to the safety of our liberties and laws, your majesty cannot be inactive in the state, without great reproach to your sensibility and your understanding ; you will not content yourself with thundering out bulls and proclamations, which may cut off a branch or so, while they strengthen the root of

sedition; but you will gather the complaints of your people, and sift their grounds and their motives; you will not let your name and authority be abused, by interested men, to the purposes of their own aggrandisement; you will set all your resources and spirits to work for the discovery of expedients to diffuse happiness and content among your subjects. There are always constitutional means in your majesty's hands, of conciliating the people of this country to your person and government; and your majesty must know, better than I do, the properest methods to be used.

Certain I am, that one generous act of spirited justice, in reducing those superfluous expenses of government, which add so little to the dignity of the crown, and plant no real securities around it, would soon chase all these sophistries of change and innovation out of the bosoms of Englishmen. Unless there be a real sense of suffering, a real difficulty of subsistence among a large part of your subjects, your majesty has little to apprehend from those knots of speculating politicians, which are still so obscure and insignificant in the country, that I will venture to say, there are very few in the ordinary ranks of life, who have any other occupation or employ, that know their names or their motions. The general idea of want, and the general idea of a revolution, are coupled together in the common mind, without any reference to the jargon about the rights of man. They are coupled together, they will subside together, and they will ferment together, according to the manner in which they are treated by those who have power to aggravate or to compose them. It was not the theories about the rights of man that overturned the monarchy of France; it was the distress and beggary of millions, occasioned by the total want of feeling

in their government, which abandoned them to the mercy of miserable extortioners.

The people of England are not ungenerous; they love to contribute to the becoming splendour of their monarch; they would glow with shame to fetter the free range of your majesty's bounty, or, in this age of national prosperity, to narrow your appointments to the unprincely rule of a mercantile calculation. But are there no prodigalities or abuses in the current expenses of government, which, so far from being essential to the support of your majesty's crown, are a real satire upon it, and conduce only to the maintenance of the fluctuating power of certain individuals, which has often no other dependence either on the regards of the prince, or the confidence of the people?

I would be understood to speak of no particular set of men: what truths I urge, are plain general truths, and want no particular illustration from example. It is a galling thing for any part of a free people to know, that much of their poverty and calamity is artificially produced, in contradiction to the circumstances of the country at large, by the profuseness and ambition of a particular description of their fellow-subjects: it is a galling thing for a reflecting people to feel that their little ones must often forego a hearty meal, to pamper the luxury of those, towards whom they acknowledge neither love nor obligation.

These would be the strongest arguments for the revolutionists to set forth, could they prove that this obliquity of principle was indelibly inherent in the constitution. Such a vital rottenness would well argue the want of a total change, and the wise and the good would be called upon to liberate their country from so reproachful a servitude: but my mind is sa-

tified that this is not the necessary condition of my countrymen ; this constitutional beggary, this system of corruption, this forced state of society, has not been the nursery of those great men, whose labours have advanced human nature, or of those great exploits which decorate the English history. Places, and pensions, and salaries, are all good to a certain extent : as public rewards of merit, as officially useful in the various departments of the state, I recognise them as a part of the constitutional scheme ; but, as instruments of corruption, as ministering to the support of the governing party, I regard them as mere incumbrances that ambition has formed about the constitution, to obstruct its free motions, and to depress the natural vigour of its life and action.

Were all the collateral and oblique expenses of government spared, somewhat of insecurity would result to the permanence of subsisting power, which might bring with it additional caution. Opposition too might be purified in its motives, in the ratio that power was stripped of its temptations ; yet patronage enough might remain to inspire a just confidence into government, and to stimulate the hopes of temperate ambition. Corruption would feel a check in all its classes of venality ; for private fortunes would be squandered with more reserve and timidity, when the situations to which the sacrifice was to be made, held out more limited compensations, and more frugal rewards. Where only private fortunes could be wasted in corruption, the fountains would speedily be exhausted, and the evil would furnish its own remedy : the action of bribery being thus suspensive and temporary, would afford frequent pauses for the true spirit of the constitution to revive ; the downright plebeian good sense of the people would often exalt its tones ; and the spring of men's minds would conti-



nually revert to its natural posture with renewed activity.

As much therefore as it may be in your majesty's power to alleviate of the present burdens of the people without injury to your crown, it is doubtless your duty to attempt ; remembering, that the king of France lost his authority and his freedom by an inattention to the beginnings of complaint among his subjects ; that, slumbering in the shadow of his ministers, he was himself overwhelmed in their fall ; and that, being at first a sharer in the reproach of government, he soon became a principal in the ruin that followed.

As the incitement to revolutions in the minds of the community is rather the hope of an alleviation of their burdens than an exemption from restraint, it is doubtless religiously to be wished, that some moderate means might be adopted of assuaging whatever discontents prevail among the people. Some silent arrangements might perhaps be made, which would save an angry search into the failings of our constitution and government, at a time when a general spirit of cavilling, and wild ideas of regeneration prevail, together with some proportion of disaffection, obliquity, and rage, among certain descriptions of the community. I do not propose to declare myself an enemy to reform : I acknowledge, in the constitution of my country, a principle of improvement which fits it for the nearest approaches to perfection which human infirmity permits ; but at this moment a spirit of rash refinement and visionary conceit is gone abroad, which is so opposite to the experimental character and the gradual growth and confirmation of our laws and liberties, that if it were once carried into the correction of our system, it might lead to its total demolition.

Whatever can be done on the ground of our constitution, to cultivate its natural advantages, and improve its capabilities, I shall rejoice in, with the good part of your majesty's subjects; but I dread to see all the floodgates opened, and the barriers removed, till the ocean burst in upon us, and deluge this fair land with all its fruits and its promises. The real friends of sober reform will see an end of all their plans and prospects in the wasting fury of a revolution, and must cherish a peculiar anxiety for those principles on which they propose to build their amendments and alterations; since to spoil and to improve, are terms of stronger opposition than to spoil and to preserve.

Let therefore your majesty's heart be warmed towards your patriotic subjects, who forbear at this time to set forth the imperfections of government, as viewing it in the light of a friend under persecution; as considering the times as unpropitious to moderate and wholesome correction; as conceiving the present moment to call rather for restraints on licentiousness, than controul on power; as weighing the inconvenience of delay against the dangers of precipitation and the violence of enthusiasm. We must in the mean time keep firm together; we must be reserved and moderate in our actions and our speeches.

On your part, be just to your people, respect the privileges of your subjects, to whom your honour is pledged, and your affection belongs; respect the rights of juries, and the rest of the rights of the people; let no man be rashly prosecuted for speaking his mind, or for venting his malice: rather let us suffer the enemies of our wise constitution to lose their strength and their credit in the excesses of their hate and the madness of their disappointment. The arch-theorist himself of the Rights of Man, of those

rights which transfer the reins from his reason to his passion, of those rights which dissolve ties, which confound distinctions, which destroy security, let him shine with his new lights upon human governments, till he call up the practical and solid parts into vapour, and lose himself in the fog which is gathered around him.

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N<sup>o</sup> 24. TUESDAY, MAY 29.

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..... *Illud sit vide*  
*Exemplum disciplinae.*

TERENTIUS.

See the exemplary effects of discipline.

It is now so long since my readers have had their attention called towards our club, that I am afraid my good friends will think I neglect them. This, however, it is out of my power to do, while I have such daily instances before me, of the admirable effects of our mode of discipline. It is indeed a sensible pleasure to reflect, that I am at the head of an institution whose benefits are solid, though circumscribed; and whose laws have introduced among a little community, a cheerfulness that arises out of temperance, and a good-humour that is nursed by tranquillity. I persuade myself too, that there is some merit in making a mere echo productive of substantial good, and in discovering the practical uses of an article in life, which has hitherto been looked upon as a mockery of sense, and the most barren of all modes of existence. This equalization of voice established by our echo, proves a sufficient remedy for most of the

abuses of argument, and gives full play to sense by rendering sound a corrective of itself. Whatever be the turn of the conversation, no man obtrudes his opinions without a competent share of information; and a real knowledge of the subject can alone bespeak attention among us. None, without this claim, can obtain even a hearing, unless his part in the dialogue consist chiefly of interrogations. For it is a plain case, that where other circumstances are equal, knowledge will always prevail over ignorance; and nonsense has but an indifferent chance, without the countenance of friends, or the violence of vociferation.

But the great praise and principal advantage of our institutions is the particular power of compression they possess, by which double the quantity of knowledge is produced in a given time, on a given subject, comparatively with any other society, supposing the mean quantity of information in the members to be the same. This, and more, will be granted me by every man of common sense and candour, who makes the proper allowance for the accumulation of idle matter, that fills out the dialogue of ordinary meetings, and the little room that is left for the temperate flow of rational observation, amidst the press of volubility, and the pertinacity of opposition.

The praise of long harangues and lofty declamation is considered here as profane; and we do all we can to have the *condimenta sermonum*, without the *lateris contentio*; “the delicacies of speech, without the vehemence of delivery.” This object, our scale of sense, no less than our scale of sounds, is designed to promote; for every man is too fond of his own opinions and hypotheses, to persevere long in the support of them, without launching into superlatives, which he no sooner does, than he pays the forfeit of



his ambition, and perishes often on the very eve of victory. Like some of the eastern generals of old, he brings his elephants into the field of battle, which in the heat of the conflict turn back upon his own troops, and occasion the ruin of his cause.

I should be sorry, however, if the better part of my readers should imagine, that under these circumstances of restraint, the utterance of noble feelings must be shackled, and virtue fail of her due homage and reward. In the relation of a virtuous action, the simpler the tale, the more forcible its effects; and in the defence or eulogy of virtue itself, a vehement phraseology carries not so high a commendation as a sober and practical display of its advantages and excellencies. Our panegyrics, in general, are robbed of half their lustre, and all their discrimination, by being carried at once as far as they can go: thus, when a picture is varnished too highly, ~~we lose all~~ the distinctions of light and shadow; and all those bold touches, that give strength and relief, are lost in the dusky glare of glowing confusion.

There are doubtless a multitude of circumstances that pass without observation or comment at the time, which have nevertheless a mighty influence on conversation, and are singly sufficient to spread a cheerful or gloomy complexion over a whole evening. We have all of us our jealous points; we have all our secret vanities, our topics of self-adulation, in which we readily grant to no man undisputed precedence: whence, it is probable that out of a large company, some are always displeased when superlatives are lavished on others, and when they feel themselves called upon to acquiesce in a judgement that pronounces their own exclusion. Such is the inborn pride of the human heart, that most of us would rather that no estimate at all were made of

our merit, unless that estimate would raise us to the highest rank, and that it were doubted whether we possessed abilities or not, than that those abilities, by being ascertained, should be fixed and confined to second-rate excellence.

I believe I shall not extend my observation too far, by maintaining, that even in cases wherein we are no ways imposed upon by the whispers of self-love, or at least wherein we nourish no conceit of superior excellence, it is yet unwelcome to the greater part of us to hear superlatives scattered prodigally around us, while we ourselves are left so decidedly out of the question, and while the superiority, which perhaps we do not arrogate, is carried, at the moment that we are looking towards it, to a cautious distance above the reach of our pretensions. Thus, in our little society, where every member has bid adieu to the morning of youth and meridian of manhood, I think I have sometimes observed the countenances of some of my old friends overcast for a moment, when a new member has talked of the stoutest and handsomest man of all his acquaintance; and a remark having fallen inadvertently from one of the company at our last meeting, that Tom Topping the blacksmith was by much the strongest man in the parish, Mr. Blunt gave my hand so cordial a squeeze at parting, that the blacksmith's superiority was left very undecided in my mind.

I don't know how it is, but Mr. Allworth seems to feel no inconvenience from this abolition of superlatives at our club. He has a way of doing virtue such justice, and expressing his feelings so forcibly without them, that we sometimes can hardly persuade ourselves that he has escaped the penalty of our statute; and I have observed Mr. Barnaby, who has a few littlenesses of character and a sportive

kind of malice belonging to him, note my good friend's words with a great deal of attention, in hopes to catch him tripping, and to have the glory of putting his name in the Black Book. Of this triumph, however, he has always hitherto been disappointed; for when this worthy gentleman's sensibilities are wrought up to such a pitch as almost to bear down his philosophy, as will sometimes be the case when he favours us with some tender story, and when the quivering of his cheek discovers the agitation which prevails within him, he yet continues to avoid an absolute superlative, while he gives full latitude to his own feelings on the subject, and satisfies the mind of every body present. "A greater soul was never displayed on any occasion"—"One of the best characters in the world"—"As great abilities as ever shone in that station"—or some such qualified expression, serves his purpose quite as well as a direct superlative: it is a modester clothing for his own opinions, and is a tacit courtesy to all that hear him, which operates insensibly in begetting attention, and in conciliating acquiescence.

I have heard Mr. Allworth, in maintaining the expediency of this rule, which has been opposed more than any other which we have established, compare a man whose enthusiasm always pushes him at once into superlatives, to a singer, who, by beginning with a note too high, is obliged in consequence to strain his voice to a pitch that robs it of its music and modulation. In speaking on this subject the other day, I thought he made a just allusion to those lines of Horace,

*"Vis consili expers mole ruit sua,  
Vim temperatam Dii quoque provehunt  
In majus."*

“ Force without judgement, falls by its own weight ; but force circumscribed by prudence, is amplified by the favour of Heaven itself.”

In my two papers on this subject, I have gone to some length on these two fundamental rules of our little constitution, relating to the judgement of the Echo, and the abolition of superlatives, as the two supporters on which the whole fabric bears. The advantages indeed, which result from them, are so numerous, as to reduce within a very small compass our other canons of conversation, which we esteem a very great happiness, as we look upon the multiplication of laws as a multiplication of disputes, and that too much theory in government is subversive of practice and utility. So much is our constitution simplified by the breadth and compass of our laws and regulations, that we have only six departments for the cognizance and prohibition of all possible offences. Over each of these departments we have a judge, whose determination is final in all cases which come under his province: one of these judges is perpetual, the rest are elected every year. We have also a registrar, who notes down offences and forfeits in what are called black books, one of which is appropriated to each member; and if any member's book be filled in the course of the first six weeks after his election into our society, he is judged to be incorrigible, and his seat is declared vacant. The executive power is lodged with the president, whose business it is to protect and enforce the laws, to elect to certain offices, and to declare to the whole society the decrees of each department. Our six departments are.—

1st. *Noise.* ECHO *the perpetual judge.*

The decisions of this court are characterized by



an accuracy, justice, and dispatch, truly worthy of imitation ; a circumstance of peculiar felicity to our constitution, as the cognizance of this department extends over the largest description of offences. The authority of the echo is effectual in preventing loud laughter, hallooing, whistling, cracking of whips, scraping on the floor, tattooing, nonsense, confusion, menaces, impertinence, pretended zeal, debates on politics, debates on religion, haste, dogmatism, and a multitude of other enemies to peace and order, which cannot well exist without noise.

2d. *For Superlatives.* Mr. MANACLE, *judge.*

The cognizance of this court carries a particular force against long harangues, boasting speeches, declamation, passion, contempt, revenge, invective, moroseness, exaggeration, enthusiasm, and such like invaders of mirth and harmony.

3d. *For Immoralities.* Mr. ALLWORTH, *judge.*

This is a very solemn court ; and the gentleman who presides at present, is repeatedly chosen to the same office, which he executes with a rigour of which nobody complains. Profane or indecent allusions, oaths, irreverent doubts, falsehood, abuse, scandal, invidious comparisons, personal reflections, ridicule, &c. have no mercy shown to them by this upright lawgiver.

4th. *For Indecencies.* Mr. SHAPELY, *judge.*

Mr. Shapely, I should premise, is the youngest member of our society, and has passed a youth of great levities and indiscretions. Accident brought him acquainted with Mr. Allworth a few years ago, whose lessons of virtue being grafted on his natural politeness and knowledge of the world, have rendered

him a very complete gentleman. He has discharged the duties of his office so ably and punctually, that occasions are rare which call for his interference. No man can wound, or shock, or disconcert the feelings of another, without subjecting himself to the censures of this court, which are exact and severe. All impolite speeches, solecisms in good manners, interruptions, contradictions, abruptnesses, negligencies, mimicry, sarcasm, vulgar wit, buffoonery, contemptuous smiles, &c. fall under the correction of Mr. Shapely's department.

5th. *For Wagers.* Mr. BROWNCOLE, *judge.*

This gentleman's office simply requires him to punish and controul the itch for betting and gaming. His duty demands firmness and vigour, as he is frequently opposed to two offenders at once. Mr. Browncole is a steady and judicious person, but being a little choleric in his temper, gives to the disgraced members frequent opportunities of making reprisals: at the last meeting he paid half-a-crown for offering to lay a crown that Mr. Barnaby would propose a wager before we broke up. In these cases the president always interferes to punish the judge.

6th. *For Toasting.* Mr. SOLOMON, *my curate, judge.*

We prohibit this practice, as leading frequently to discourses about the merits of particular persons, and as affording an opportunity to one man of disconcerting another by an eulogy on his particular enemy.

In any case of difficulty, a judge has the privilege of inviting to his aid a certain number of the members, who are of more than a year's standing among us. The punishments are assigned to all by the six judges, who compose on this occasion a sort of coun-

cil, though it must be owned that Mr. Allworth has a very leading share in these judiciary determinations.

We have admitted one new member since I spoke of my little commonwealth in my third Paper. This gentleman was remarkable for his absence of mind; and has proved one of the most impracticable subjects on whom the efficacy of our system has been tried. Mr. Farthingale was introduced to us as a man of indefatigable research, and great profundity of thought: but what avail our thoughts and our researches, if they furnish no matter of contemplation to others; if they bring no accession to the treasures of human knowledge, and lend neither countenance to virtue, nor confirmation to truth? To him who, not content with locking up within the cavern of his mind all the knowledge he may possess, buries also his manners along with it, doubtless the world has fewer obligations, than to the coarse mechanic, who has his rough industry to plead, or to the well-bred loiterer, who strews at least a few flowers in our path, and helps us to pass cheerily onward through the vale of years.

Mr. Farthingale has been six weeks a constant attendant at our meetings, and has not yet surprised us with any thoughts that seem worth the sacrifice of all present objects and obligations, or which others might not arrive at, without the fatigue and parade of so long a journey. Though nothing can be more evident than the truth of this statement, yet so great is the vulgar prepossession in favour of this gentleman's genius and penetration, so convincing are the proofs of excellence drawn from the discoveries of deficiency, that nothing is wanting to complete the perfection of his philosophical character, but his walking off a precipice into the sea, or eating up his little finger instead of a radish.

This gentleman's dress and figure is altogether uncommon. He is somewhat about six feet four inches high, with a considerable protuberance before, overhanging a pair of legs so slender and inadequate, that it seems as if his body were supported by some invisible geometrical principles; between his lower clothes and his waistcoat, there is, for the most part, a quantity of linen displayed, forming a kind of interregnum; and as his neckcloth is continually missing were it should in due order appear, we often suspect some cross purposes in the business, and that it has, somehow or other, been tied about the middle, instead of the neck. It is reported, that when a boy he never could acquire the talent of dressing himself; and it used to be a common jest among his school-fellows, to send him into school with his shirt over his coat. Even at this day he loses a quarter of an hour every morning before he can determine whether his coat is to be buttoned before or behind; and is sure to try it on three times before he has made up his mind. As he is continually without a handkerchief, he thinks himself privileged to pocket our Doyleys; and if the robbery be charged upon him, pleads his *alibi*, while he confesses the crime. It is in vain to drink his health, or inquire after his family: he answers, "pretty well, I thank you," to the first civility; and, "I am much obliged to you," to the second. He will begin a story to the tallest man in our society, and finish it to the shortest; and at our last meeting asked Mr. Barnaby, the churchwarden, several serious questions about his periodical undertaking.

While he was courting the daughter of one of my neighbours a few weeks ago, there was not a man in the club who did not receive a love-letter from him; while notes intended for them were carried to his



mistress, with inquiries after her gout, or dropsy, her wife or children. The other day he threw our whole society into the greatest distress imaginable, by bringing the intelligence of Mr. Allworth's death. In about half an hour afterwards Mr. Allworth entered the room, looking remarkably well; and upon referring to the news-paper, we found it was a Mr. Alders, in the East Indies. About a year ago, he was on the point of being married to an elderly maiden lady, of large property, when, happening to take her out for an airing on a pillion behind him, he spoke so disrespectfully of her short allowance of teeth to a friend who was riding by his side, that he was obliged to trot home with her under a pretty heavy load of abuse.

Such is the history of Mr. Farthingale, our new member, of whom I shall make some further reports to my readers, if I shall be so happy as to discover in him any instances of progressive amendment, under the lessons and corrections of our little society.

N<sup>o</sup> 25. SATURDAY, JUNE 2.

Τ' ἀληθες εὐρησεῖς ἀριθμῶν ἀδελ.

By calculation you will find the truth.

AN opulent merchant of Bagdad, being afflicted with a latent disorder which had baffled all the medical abilities of his native town, resolved to set out for a place, at the distance of a day's journey, which had long been famous for the number and the skill of its physicians. As he had wrought up his mind to the highest pitch of confidence in the art and experience of these professors, he entered the town in great gaiety of heart, notwithstanding the number of fresh graves which he observed in the burying-places, and the many pallid countenances he met in the streets : for (with respect to these last) said he to himself, " it needs no calculation to convince me that these are but a small part of the whole population of the city, and possibly these are all in a state of convalescence from a much lower condition."

As he proceeded, he inquired for the most eminent practitioner, and was directed to a very long irregular street, which, he was told, was inhabited entirely by physicians. On entering the street, he was struck with its gloomy appearance, as it was shaded with yew-trees from top to bottom ; and so infested with owls and bats, that it was with difficulty he could make his way. His alarms were prodigiously increased, when, upon advancing towards

the door of the largest house, he found himself in a throng of ghosts, who instantly made a passage for him by separating into two ranks. He pursued his way, as if he was running the gauntlet, till he came to the door, where, having given a modest rap, his business was inquired by a damsel who seemed far gone in a decline. "My dear," said he, "before I declare my errand, have the kindness to tell me the meaning of all this unsubstantial gentry, who press round your door like beggars the day after a feast?" "Stranger," she replied, "it is nothing more than a crowd of impudent ghosts, who are continually upbraiding my master with the failure of his prescriptions." Now as there were pretty nearly five hundred of this order, our young merchant, without troubling himself with any calculations, or staying to consider that this number was small or great in proportion to the extent of the physician's practice, or that his superior skill might have drawn to him all the most desperate cases, yielded to his first impressions, and marched away in great good-humour with his own penetration.

Before the next house there were not more than three hundred ghosts, which, however, was a formidable number, in our traveller's estimation, and fixed his opinion respecting the merit of the doctor. A circumstance that puzzled him not a little was, that the magnitude and respectability of the houses decreased in the same ratio with the number of the ghosts which were ranged before them; for it seemed reasonable to conclude, that the best physicians would be best lodged, on account of their superior gains. But this was entering too much into calculation; so on he went, till he came to the end of the street, where was a small house of one story, and with only one ghost before it. "Here," said he,

“without doubt lives the man whom the Prophet has destined to be my restorer: with only one ghost in all his practice, it is odds indeed against my being the second.” So saying, he knocked boldly at the door, and was introduced to the doctor by a very plump and rosy maid-servant. Having made his case known, he was promised a speedy deliverance; and accordingly was put to bed, and operated upon so many ways, that in a short time he was reduced to a most deplorable condition.

He did such honour to the doctor's medicines, that at the end of the fourth day he found it advisable to make his will. The notary could not help expressing his surprise that a person of such large property should put himself into such hands; and asked him, if any severe calamities had reduced him to this act of desperation? This brought on a conversation, in which it transpired, that our young traveller was only the second patient that had fallen under the doctor's care since he had entered into the profession about three years ago. The notary, who happened to be an honest man, was touched with compassion at the melancholy situation of the dying merchant. Having finished the business of the will, he proposed to him a trial of some more eminent physician; and having satisfied the one-ghost doctor with the pretence of changing the air, removed the patient with great care, in a litter, to the house where he had first applied, and had been frightened away by the five hundred ghosts. On entering the house, the merchant was astonished to see the poor consumptive maiden, who had opened the door to him a little time ago, converted into a very florid and healthy person. This raised in him great hopes, which were amply justified by the event: for in the course of two weeks he returned to



Bagdad completely restored, whither he carried with him the notary's daughter, whom he married from motives of love towards herself, and gratitude to her father. He made also a resolution never to decide at first view, but always to bestow some pains on calculation before he fixed his adoption.

The story of the young merchant of Bagdad is the story of the greater part of my countrymen, both young and old. Few of us set a sufficient value upon our second thoughts, to wait for their decision; we prefer in general the easiest methods to the safest, and choose rather to err with dispatch than to succeed with deliberation. On this impatience of judgement, this inclination finally to determine on a general view of a subject, rather than to trouble ourselves with an examination of the particulars, is the common success of many ludicrous betts founded. To gather into a heap a hundred stones placed at the distance of a single yard from each other, seems to many a young man a task which he could with ease accomplish in an hour; but before him who calculates how many hundred yards of ground he must go over, ere the work can be completed, this appearance of ease retires. It is thus that computation supplies the place of experience, and forms a safeguard to those whose want of more extensive information lays them particularly open to deception.

A little acquaintance with history is enough to satisfy us, that numerous errors are discovered, and great misrepresentations detected, by the simple process of calculating and comparing dates and distances: and I am persuaded, that those among the younger part of my readers, who will condescend to take the counsel I give, will hereafter thank me for advising them to bring all relations of important

circumstances to the test of numbers. Were this practice more frequently observed, many compilers, who owe no small portion of their credit to the idleness of their readers, would lose that fame which too confident a reliance on their fidelity or their knowledge has accumulated around them. Many received opinions, many plausible systems, would sink under this trial; nor is there any thing that would more strongly contribute to defend the cause of truth against the bold assumptions and vain assertions of the enemies of Revelation. How much calculation avails in matters of legal testimony, those conversant with the practice of our courts of justice will bear me witness. But for this, criminals, by suborning persons of trading consciences, might every session establish *alibis*, that would make the capital appear clear of thieves, and leave crimes without their perpetrators.

Nor is it of less advantage in civil causes, where, probably, still more impositions would be detected, if the technical part of arithmetic were better attended to in the education of those intended for the profession of the law. Neither shall we charge too much on the neglect of this basis of science, if we ascribe to it a large portion of the mistakes of economy, and the miscarriages of trade. When I hear (from one of my town correspondents) that a young man has ruined his fortune by his extravagance, and, to satisfy his creditors, is obliged to sell or mortgage his estate, I immediately conclude that he had never taken the trouble to calculate to what expense his income was adequate, that he might arrange his establishment so as not to exceed it: and when I lately learnt, that it had become a fashion among the Great not to rise till noon, and then to dine at six in the evening for the sake of a long morning, it

occurred to me, that this absurdity in practice must have arisen from their not having adverted to the difference there is between the number of hours which intervene between those of six in the morning and three in the afternoon, and the hours which pass between mid-day and six in the evening. To be sensible, indeed, of the ill consequences which such an inverted disposition of the twenty-four hours must occasion to the vigour of our mental and corporeal faculties, requires a degree of reflection greater than that which common arithmetic supplies: they must therefore, by every rule of calculation, be totally out of the reach of a generation who imagine, that, while they are acting inconsistently with the course of nature, they can gain any enjoyments comparable to those which nature has in store for such as will not strive to counteract what they know it is impossible to transpose.

. In restraining too the sallies of vanity and the extravagance of ostentation, the habit of computing the difference between real and apparent numbers would be of considerable use. How much would it reduce the exultation of the owner of a splendid equipage; were he to consider how large a proportion of those who gaze at his carriage, his horses, or his liveries, as he passes through the streets, are not rapt in admiration, but are tacitly occupied in moralising on the manlier purposes to which that wealth might have been directed, or in inquiring if his estate be equal to his appearance, or if the merit of the man be proportionate to the brilliancy of the rank he has assumed. In the balance of conversation, a little calculation is eminently useful; and nothing would tend more to sink the courage and reduce the mettle of the forward and loquacious. The attention which such characters excite, by being estimated only in

the gross, is placed by themselves to the account of admiration; when, if a separate computation were made of those who are struck dumb by the presumption, or lost in wonder at the folly or the ignorance of the orator, but a small quotient would remain to flatter their conceit, or support their arrogance.

Diffidence is so constitutional in the other sex, that after all the pains taken to extirpate it from the breasts of our young females, by the modern mode of education, so much of it still remains, that any errors of the kind I am noticing, are rather to be ascribed in them to the deceitful flatteries of our sex, than attributed to any high conceit of their own charms: yet even here this exercise of computation may be introduced as an useful guard; and I recommend to my fair readers, when they feel conscious in their fluttering hearts of attracting the eye of every male in company, to spare one moment from their triumph, to consider how disproportionate to the whole number is that of those whose admiration is an honour that ought to flatter female pride, and be truly acceptable to virtuous sensibility; to consider that a large number, struck only with their outward form, are total strangers to the more subtle and furtive graces of manner and expression, and strangers to the just value of that sensibility of heart, that delicacy of sentiment, and that fidelity of affection, which are the greatest attributes of woman's nature; that the admiration of others is but the momentary effect of surprise, which soon gives place to uncandid criticisms on that beauty which they before deemed superior to censure; while the honours of simplicity will be given to design, and the gifts of nature to meretricious decorations. Should they think, however, that they may reason-



ably count upon the admiration of their own sex as a tribute at least sincere, let them reflect upon the various sentiments which excite praise in the bosoms of the fair; let them reflect that it is the lot of some females to owe their praise to their inability to alarm jealousy; let them, in short, allow fairly for the many invidious motives which govern both praise and censure; and they will see reason to deduct largely from the number of apparent, when they would note the sum of real admirers, and be convinced, that the disinterested love which dwells in mine, is not to be found in the breast of EVERY LOOKER-ON.

As every one knows that commerce could not be carried on without it, it might seem only an affected extension of my subject to speak of calculation as useful to the mercantile and trading world, did not the numbers of those who stop payment in all parts of the island prove that there are, even in this description of my countrymen, many who at least err in their accounts: I cannot therefore forbear recommending a more careful attention to the harmony of numbers. It might help to clear obscurities that frequently occur in the books of such traders, whose business is chiefly centered in Guildhall, were two or three new articles admitted into ledgers, such as entertainments, excursions to watering-places, and subscriptions to public amusements.

It is however a satisfaction to me to think, that our country is by no means destitute of those who are sensible of the advantages of computation. I am well informed, that there are some even of our nobility, who have by practice acquired a very commanding skill in the calculation of chances; and that their success induces others, whose rank adds still greater dignity to the pursuit, to apply to the

same study with a perseverance which neither natural infirmity, reiterated difficulties, nor repeated losses, can vanquish. I am happy to find too, that there are some of my own profession whose proficiency in calculation will help to refute that general charge of indolence, which is frequently and inconsiderately cast on the body of the clergy; since, though they may sometimes be mistaken in the estimate of a life, when, from their earnest desire to be employed in the duties of their calling, they purchase a next presentation, there are many instances, among both incumbents and curates, of extraordinary accuracy in computing the exact number of minutes within which they can contrive to read the church service, or ride from one parish to another.

Among the members of that august assembly by which laws are made for others to observe, we naturally expect to find the practice of every thing that is commendable; and I was not at all surprised at hearing, that the art, in recommendation of which I am now writing, is there so well cultivated, that some members can accurately declare what number will vote on one side of a question, and how many on the other, even before the reasons for determining it either way have been heard. But though in an assemblage of men selected from the nation at large, on account of their eminent qualities, partly by the royal adoption, partly by popular esteem, I could not be astonished to find that any thing praiseworthy was pursued; yet was it peculiarly gratifying to me to be informed that the science of numbers was thus studied among them; as I must confess, that what I had read in the public papers of debates on the revenue of the country, in which the orators of different parties undertook to demonstrate, by arithmetic, positions directly contrary to each other, had nearly

fixed me in a very low opinion of the calculating powers of the politicians of my country.

I own I have observed how little, in most of their measures, they have considered by what means the happiness of the nation, which consists but in that of the component parts of it, could be gradually furthered; and I recollect but very few measures for the internal benefit of the country, taken up on a broad basis, and framed to extend its happy effects to future generations; although a little disinterested calculation might suggest several improvements in our national economy, which from their importance would secure lasting honour to the promoters of them, and make our politicians no longer appear like accountants whose minds have been contracted by long confinement to the arithmetic of fractions.

As these moral calculations will often come happily in aid of experience to supply the deficiency of years, so will they contribute to reconcile and approximate the differences and contentions of youth and age. By a just estimate of the little lapse of time that has intervened since these passions and propensities were his own, the old man's severity is softened into compassion, and his rebuke into counsel, in contemplating the errors of youth; while the florid cavalier, in the full tide of blood and spirits, by properly estimating the short interval interposed between this vigorous crisis and the season of decrepitude, or, to keep to the idea of calculation, by regarding through the same arithmetical series the decreasing quantity of his manhood will feel a greater tenderness for those weaknesses which are so soon to be his own allotment, and consequently a kinder interest in administering consolations of which he will shortly be reduced to partake. Thus also this spirit of calculation suggests a sort of balance of infirmities

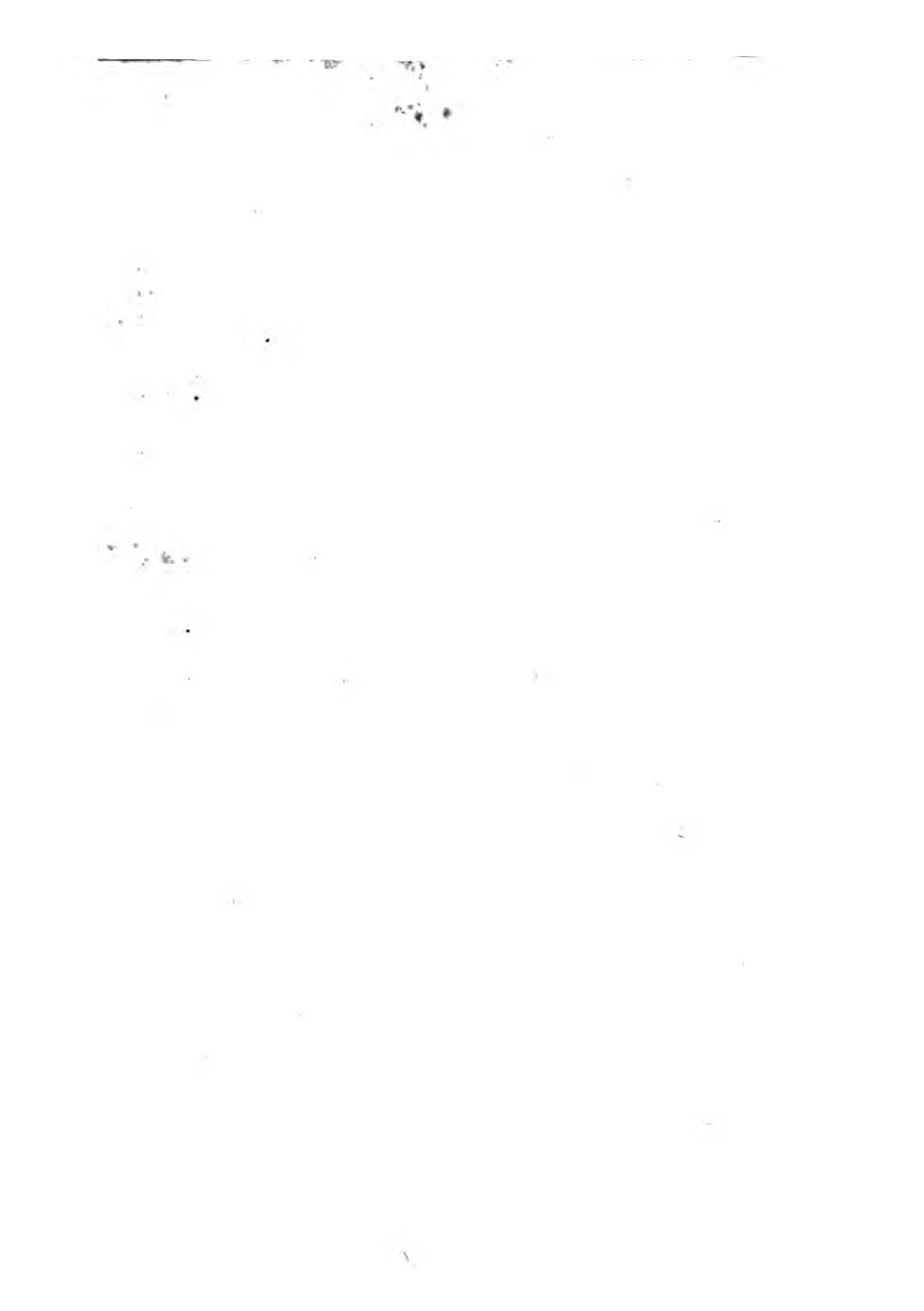
between the characters of youth and age : arrogance accounts with anger, and peevishness with pride ; ambition and apathy, closeness and prodigality, prejudice and contempt, enthusiasm and chicane, have their reckonings together ; and on the whole they find it easy to compromise, as the debts on one side are nearly cancelled by the debts on the other.

As we extend this rule of proportion over the whole scheme of human life, we learn politically to estimate the worldly advantages of virtue and religion, and we despise the pitiful product of vicious pleasures, when the proper subtractions are made on the side of constitution and conscience. Still elevating our views on this scale of calculation, we rise at length to a sort of infinite series, and take into the account the glorious promises of eternal life. It is then that our worldly interests hardly hold the place of units in our minds, and we feel the full force of those authoritative admonitions which we have received, to *live soberly, redeeming the time because the days are evil* ; and are impelled to join the Psalmist in his solemn supplication, " So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

END OF VOL. XLI.







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