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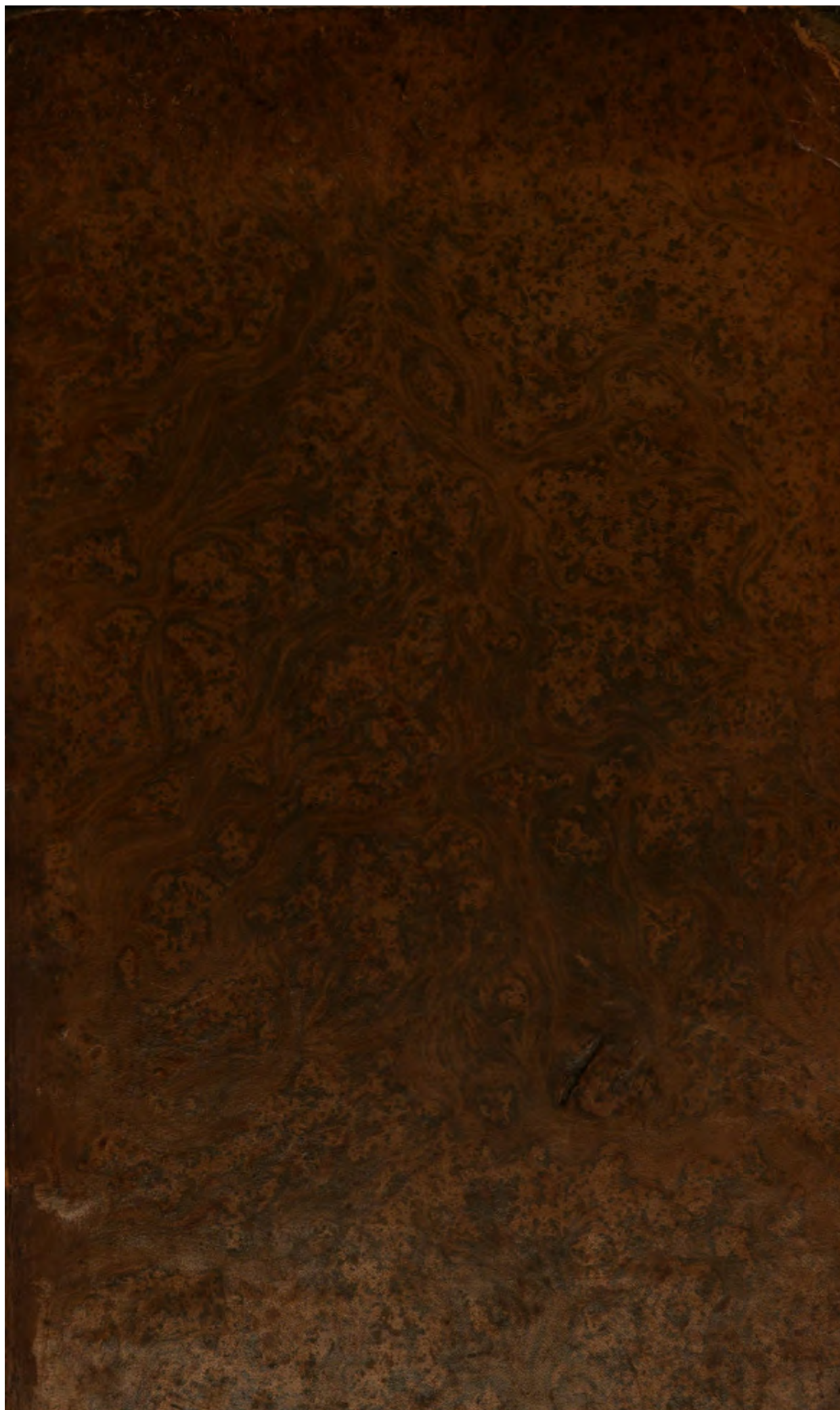
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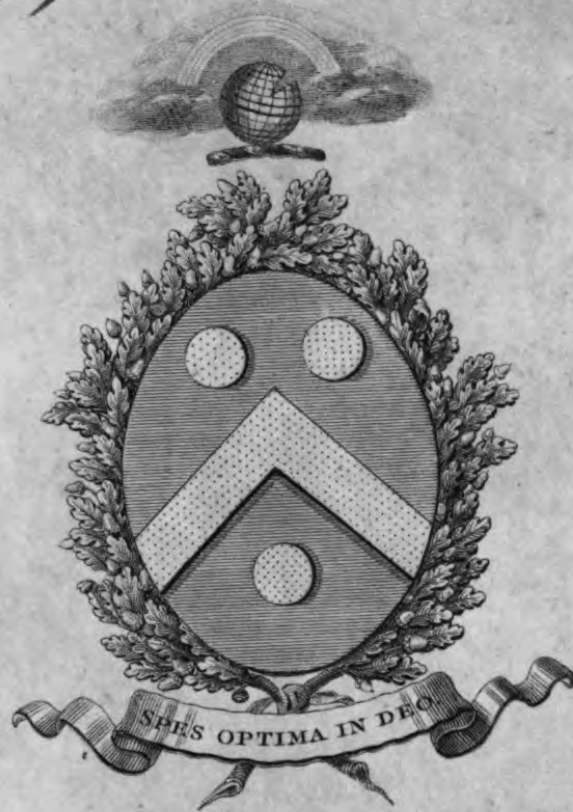
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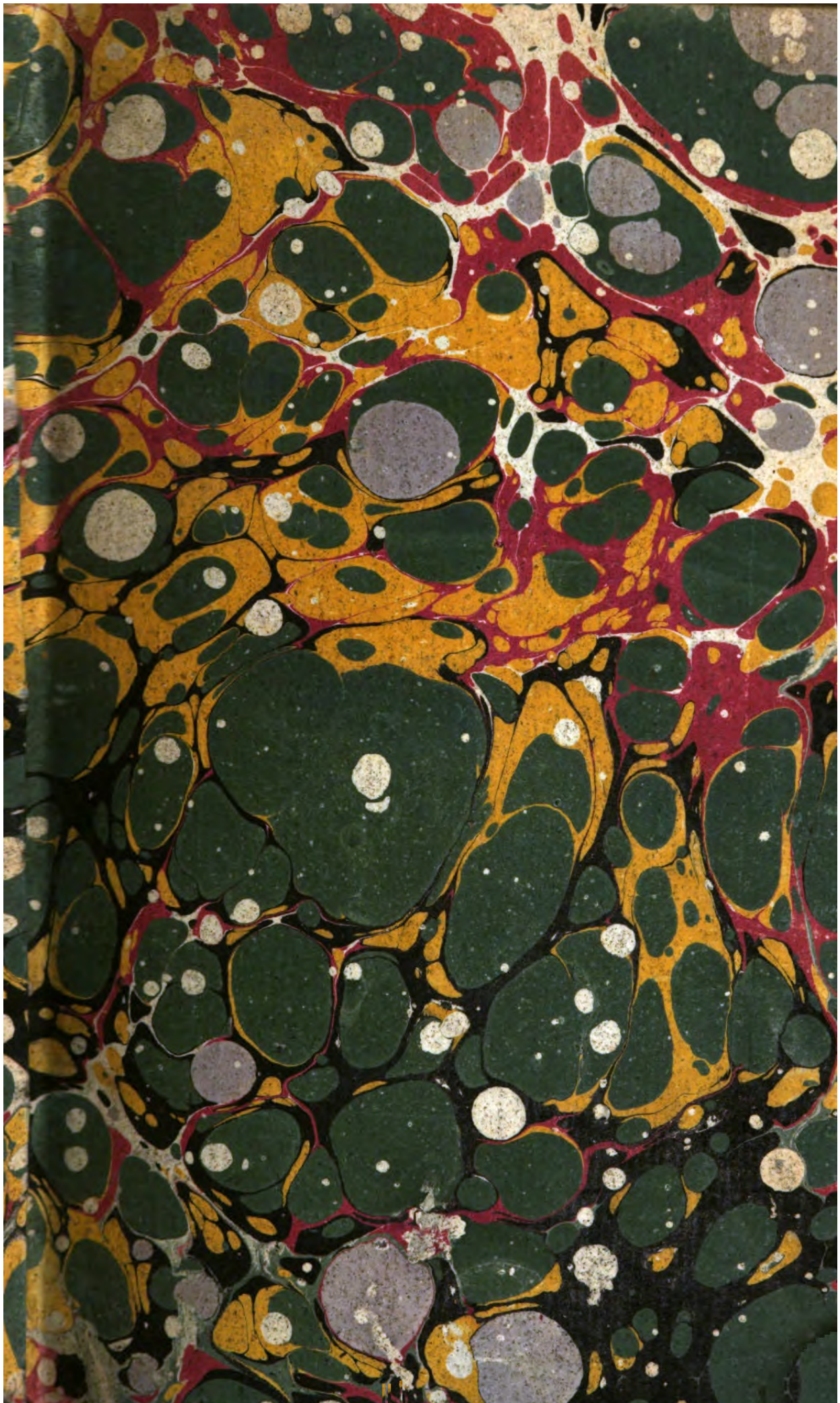
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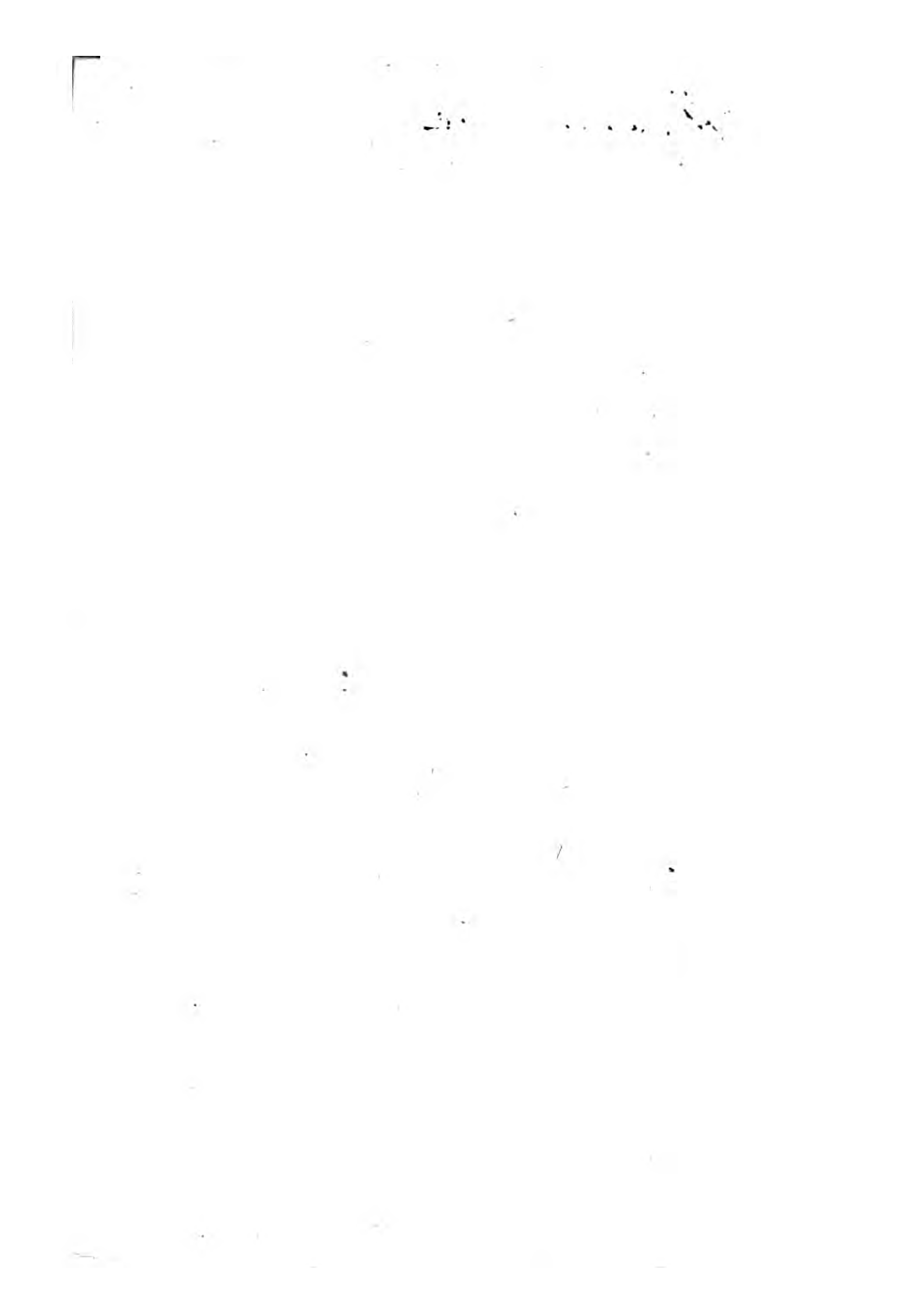
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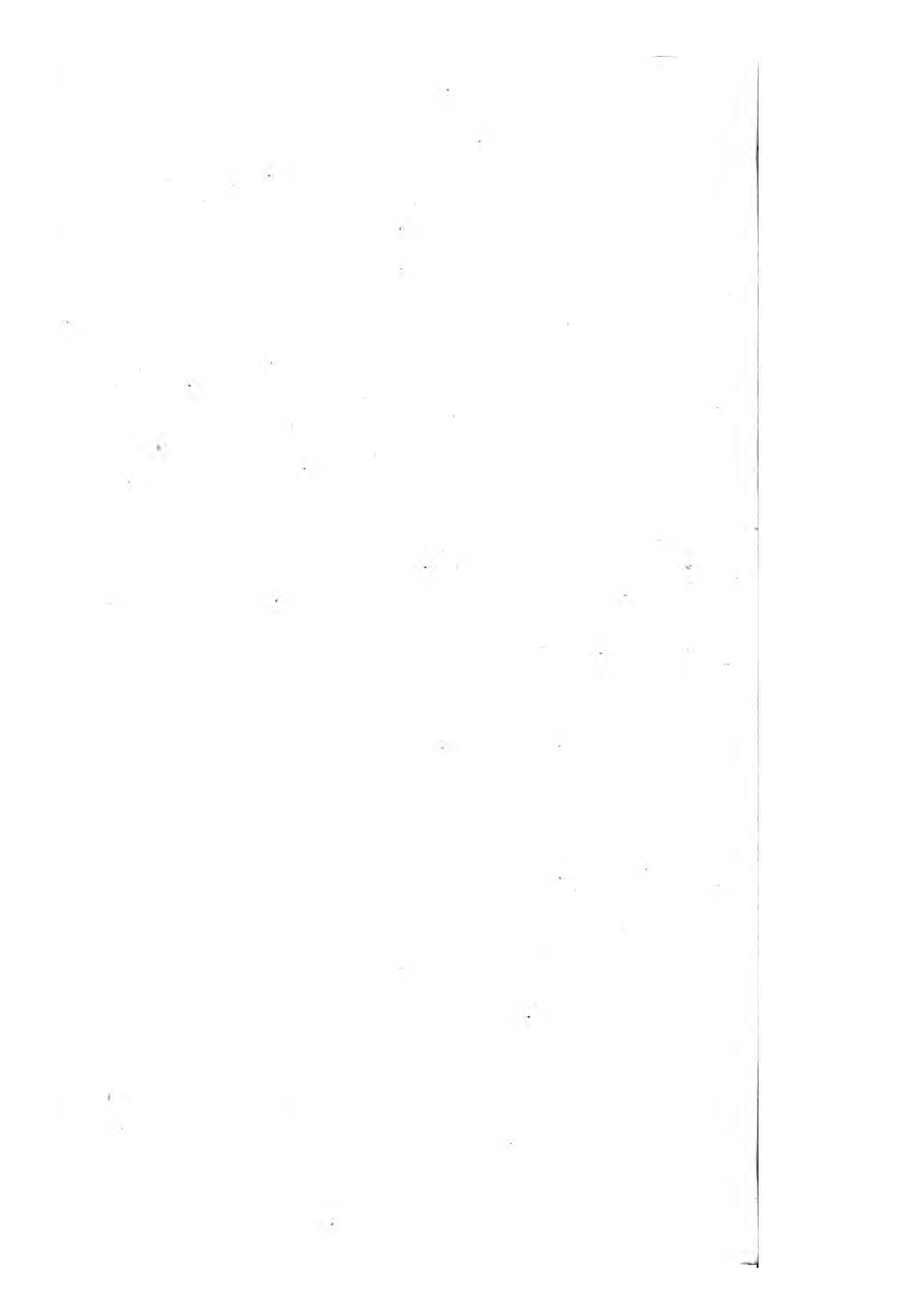


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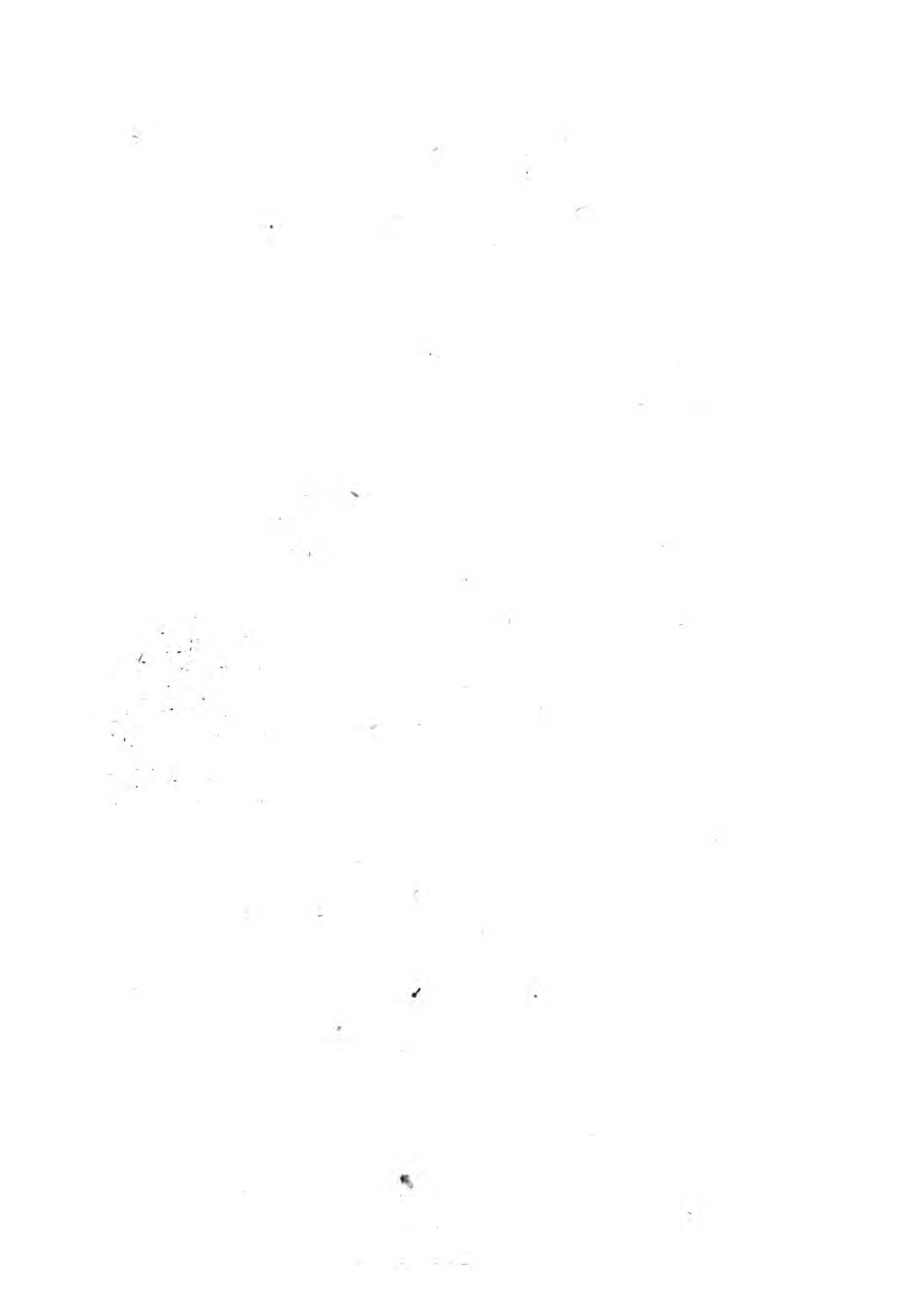
Harrell 1792











T H E  
**MICROCOSM,**

A PERIODICAL WORK,

B Y

**GREGORY GRIFFIN,**

Of the COLLEGE of ETON.

Inscribed to the Rev. Dr. DAVIES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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V O L. II.

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THE THIRD EDITION.

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*Quid vetat et nosmet.--HOR.*

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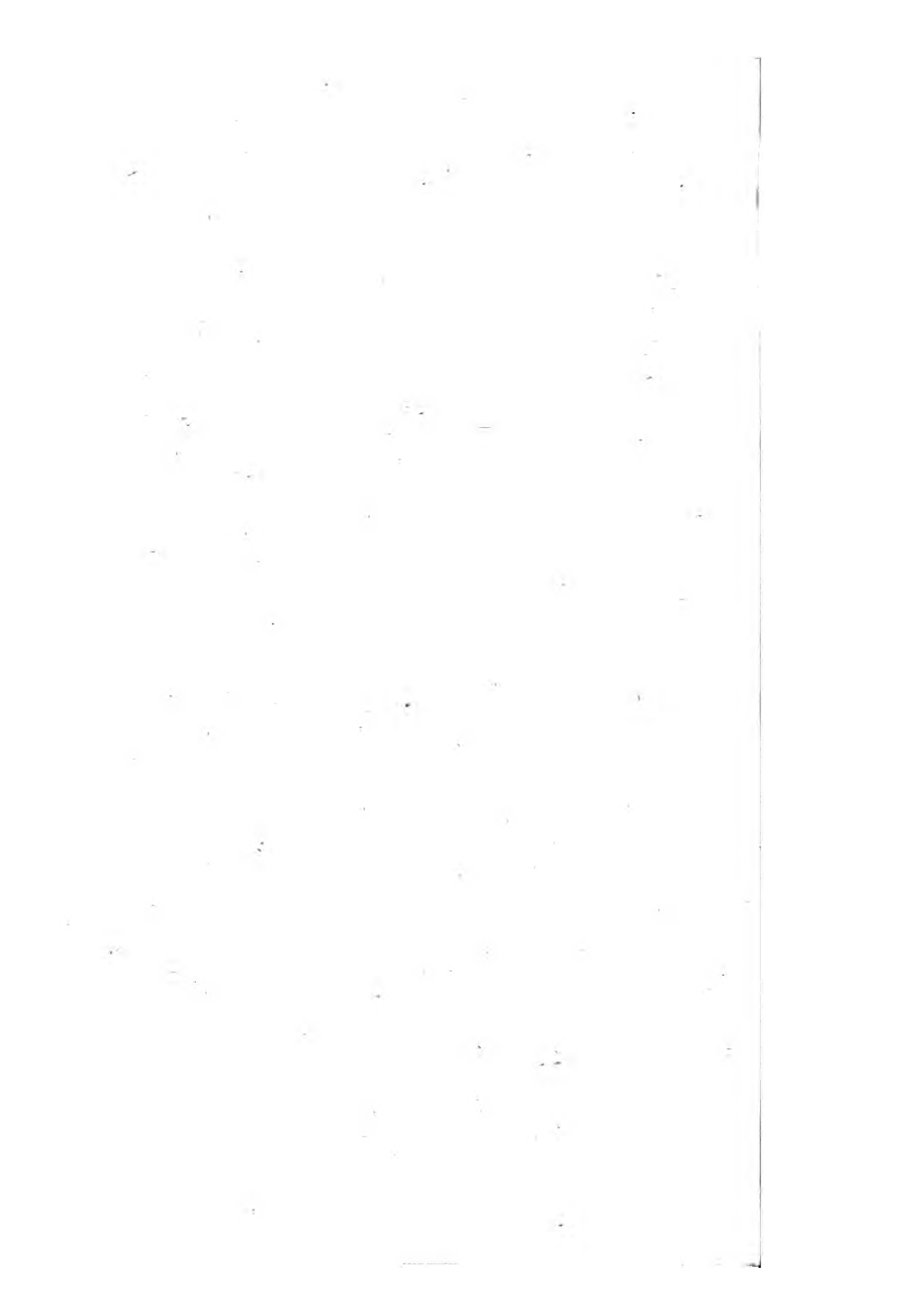
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M. DCC. XC.





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NAMES

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Mr. *Littlehales*, Letter signed *Cæmeterius*, No. 14.

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Unknown.—*Octavius*, *Observator*, in No. 6; *A Country Girl*, 14; *Alfred*, *Christopher Cutjoke*, 15; *Arthur Cassock*, *Etonensis*, 17; *L. 21*; *Vir Bonus*, 29, and 34.

\* In an Etonian's Letter, No. 36, we are proud of confessing the assistance of a name so respected in the literary world, as Mr *Capel Loft*, to whom, as an accident put it out of our power on a former occasion, we take this opportunity of acknowledging the obligation.

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XX.—MONDAY, *March 26, 1787.*

*Fratrem facere ex hostibus.*—PLAUT.

*To make a Brother of a Foe.*

HAVING occasion lately to refer to a  
H Chronological Epitome, I accidentally  
cast my eyes on the name of Julius  
Cæsar; and it was not without some  
emotion, that I read the following account of so  
extraordinary a Character:

*Julius Cæsar, Emperor of Rome, born July 10, 100,  
invaded Britain, landing at Deal, August 26th, 55,  
killed in the Senate-house, March 15, 44, A. C.  
after having fought 50 battles, slain above  
1,192,000 men, and taken by assault 1000 towns.*

Vol II.

B

Whether

Whether the compiler of this work has thus briefly given this list of destruction, without mentioning its causes, with a view to stigmatize Cæsar as an execrable tyrant, or that he really considered these exploits as the most striking instances of his greatness, is not for me to determine; certain it is, that a self-taught Philosopher would form but an indifferent opinion of mankind in general, should he, from this sketch, derive his knowledge of a hero, whose name is idolized as the standard of human greatness; whose actions command the admiration even of his enemies; and whose imitation terminates the most extensive prospects of ambition.

In this paper, therefore, I shall endeavour to prove, that it was not on the sacking of a thousand towns, with the murder or alienation of their inhabitants, that Cæsar laid the foundations of that immortality, the desire of which seems to have given motion to the designs of his capacious ambition; and roused every nerve to those astonishing exertions which characterize his measures as well in the cabinet as the field. That he understood and practised the noblest art of conquest, by attacking the generosity of his enemies in preference  
to

to their Fears. And that, if his ambition was of that kind which some have represented it, a more daring piece of injustice was never directed to more beneficial purposes.

A dauntless resolution, and cunning revenge, says Machiavel, are the most effectual assistants to ambition. How false this position is, we may ourselves conclude, when we see Borgia employing a life of fraud, in an unsuccessful attempt to acquire a petty principality; Julius, by an open liberality of sentiment, and a thorough knowledge of the human heart, rising from the inspection of weights and measures, to wield the sceptre of the world: The career of the former checked by the recoil of his own artifice, and himself protracting his miserable existence in the horrors of a debilitated constitution, and the disappointment of blasted ambition; the latter, nobly sinking in the very theatre of his glory, by the hands of those whom even in death he had the satisfaction of upbraiding with their ingratitude.

Cæsar's is a character, which, though more generally known, has perhaps been less equitably investigated than any other in history. Dazzled

with the lustre of his successes, a kind of reverential awe deters us from tracing their progress; or, if we cursorily examine it, we are prejudiced against him by what is imagined his prime motive, the aggrandizement of himself: and conceive, that as he was the first man who established despotism on any permanent footing in Rome, he must necessarily have been the oppressor of his country. His partizans have lost the vices of his heart, in the greatness of his mind; and his detractors have reduced even the virtues of a generous temper, to the cold prudence of Political foresight.

Should I endeavour to examine whether, in a corrupted Common-wealth a man is to be so far actuated by self-preservation, as to make himself first, where to be second is death; and where the contest is, who shall first seize illegal power to the prejudice of the other, whether ambition is justified in bearing an active part; I should approach nearer to a Metaphysical than an historical disquisition. I shall therefore content myself, with taking a short view of the conduct of Julius, when compared with that of Sylla and Augustus. For as all were nearly or precisely in the same situations,

situations, as all had equal power, all were exposed to the same temptations; and all had the same plea for the exercise of those cruelties, which the insolence of success, or political jealousy might dictate, the characters may surely be equitably compared; and the merits of each impartially distinguished.

The massacre of the Villa Publica, and the bloody tribunal of Mutina, are incontestible proofs of the savage depravity human nature is capable of, when steeled by the success of illegal ambition, or the avidity of premeditated revenge. But Sylla, it may be answered, was only retaliating on the Marians; and Augustus was gratifying a laudable resentment, when persecuting the murderers of his uncle. Yet Julius had both these instigations; an imitation of Sylla had been the constant threat of Pompey in consequence of a victory; and those who experienced the generosity of Cæsar, were the very assassins who had been instrumental to the murder of his relations. The unfeeling cruelty of Sylla, and the cold saturnine revenge of Augustus, are proofs of black and depraved hearts, which we no where find in Julius; on the contrary, if we may credit the



testimony of Suetonius, and other writers of his history, he seems to have expressed a concern for the alternative he was reduced to on the eve of every important enterprize during his civil wars; and even to have turned with horror and commiseration from the bleeding head of his most inveterate enemy. His apparent severity to the barbarians during his provincial administration, has with some appearance of reason been considered as a stigma on his character; but if we trace this consummate General through his operations in Gaul, if we thoroughly examine the character of the surrounding nations, their ferocity when conquerors, and their perfidy when admitted to equitable terms, we shall immediately acquit him of wanton cruelty; and refer any apparent act of injustice to the necessity he was under of subduing, by violent and arbitrary measures, a people, whose fears were their only ties of fidelity. Their entire subjection was absolutely necessary to the safety of the Romans, whose inmost barrier they surrounded on every side; yet even in this dangerous situation, Cæsar, on every possible occasion, preferred the more gentle method of expostulation and reproof, to those bloody remedies which seem to have been so repugnant to his disposition.

A similar behaviour in the succeeding age of so unimpeached a character as Germanicus, will sufficiently evince the necessity of seasonable acts of violence among barbarians. "*Orabat,*" says Tacitus, when describing his conduct in the midst of an engagement, "*insisterent cædibus; solam internecionem gentis finem bello fore.*" "He entered them to pursue their slaughter; that the extirpation of the whole race alone would put an end to the war;" plainly proving, by this unusual eagerness for bloodshed in so humane a conqueror, that it is sometimes necessary to frighten into servitude, those, who cannot be enticed into alliance.

From these appearances then, however his boundless ambition may have blinded him to the nicer distinctions of right and wrong, may we conclude, that it was not from a promiscuous effusion of blood, and the undistinguished mass of a million of carcases, that Cæsar strove to deserve the name of *great*; and that by whatever excesses it was gained, no man ever made a more temperate use of illegal authority. Nay, even admitting what it is improbable to suppose, that this lenity proceeded not from a disposition naturally merciful,

ciful, but from a refinement in political artifice, the man whose reason will enable him so far to subject his resentments to his interest, has at least the merit of promoting with his own, the common interest of mankind.

And here it may not be amiss to examine the tendency of this forgiving principle, which is so peculiarly the offspring of Christianity, that the contrary seems almost to have been a tenet of Heathen morality. For we find those alone among the ancients, whose greatness of mind, or purity of morals, as it were instinctively dictated to them some of the leading points in the Gospel doctrine, to have affected, or even conceived this philosophic conquest over the passions. Lycurgus, Aristides, Titus, Trajan, and Adrian, are striking instances of this; nor have we any example of the remembrance of an injury voluntarily foregone by a Claudius or a Tiberius. The reason is obvious; the mind of man naturally recoils at an indignity; and it is as much in our natures to seek the gratification of our revenge by the destruction of the offending object, as it is in the adder to wound the heel which treads on it. Unenlightened then, and undirected, how can man  
so

so far counteract the operations of his nature, as to detect the insidious treachery of this passion; and sacrifice what he considers a just resentment, to what the world would name a blameable timidity.

But let it not be imagined that the suppression of a passion so invariably implanted in our nature, will tend at all to Apathize the finer feelings of the soul; or that the patient endurance of the primitive Christian, borders on the haughty insensibility of the Stoic. In the very suffering an injury, a great mind feels a conscious satisfaction, in pity for the petulant weakness of the injurer; and in forgiving it, the sublime pleasure which this art of upbraiding an enemy into a friend, never fails to inspire. Revenge may for a moment cast an illusive gleam over the mind, but is incapable of lulling those reflections its consequences may give rise to; or obtaining that complete triumph over the inclinations of a fallen enemy.

But however this principle might tend to the happiness or aggrandizement of human nature, its superior advantages, without the assistance of revealed religion, would probably have never been

B. 5

thoroughly

thoroughly understood. For though in some instances the practice of it in the Heathen world may seem to stagger this opinion, their most refined Philosophy has never ranked it in their catalogue of virtues ; or considered it as one of those unalterable dogmas which constitute a wise and good man. In the disputations of the Socratic School, and the Philosophic retirement of Tullius, the subjection of ambition, pleasure, and the other leading passions of the human mind, to the calm and dispassionate direction of wisdom, were discussed with the utmost refinement of wit and knowledge ; and still remain the interesting pictures of superior understanding, emerging from the darkness of superstition, and struggling for liberality of sentiment, amidst the disadvantages of Pagan prejudice : while retaliation of injuries, nay, even hereditary enmities, were considered not as the weaknesses, but almost the absolute duties of human nature.

So seldom do we find this principle characterized in the writings of the ancients, that it was with some difficulty I could find a motto for this paper ; and had I not been afraid of so early alarming my fellow-citizens, I had at one time  
some

some thoughts of referring to the Greek testament for that purpose. Homer has described but one of his heroes as being *εὐήεα τε κρατερόν τε*, *gentle and valiant*. Even in the amiable Hector, who unites in his character the Patriot, the Son, the Husband, and Father, we do not find the superior generosity of foregoing his resentments. And Virgil's "*parcere subjectis*" may rather be considered as descriptive of the imperious condescension of the Roman Senate, than that refined lenity which strives to obliterate the obligation in the manner of conferring it. Cæsar indeed, in his letter to Oppius, has a profession of this virtue; but as I have in a great measure interwoven his defence with my subject, a quotation from him might have been considered as a partial evidence. I do not recollect that in any other passage of the more familiar classics, there is any thing perfectly descriptive of it; nay, even amidst the sounding pageantry of title with which their poets have decked the heathen deities, there is none in my opinion so comprehensively expressive of the divine attributes, as the simple and unaffected address of ALMIGHTY AND MOST MERCIFUL FATHER.

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXI.—MONDAY, *April 2, 1787.*

*Chlorcaque, Sybarimque, Daretaque, Therfilochumque.*  
VIRGIL'S *Æn.* 12. 363v.

*Chlorcus, and Sybaris, and Dares; and Therfilochus.*

‘T O G, G R I F F I N, E S Q.

‘S I R,

‘T H E author, from whom I have adopted  
‘ this motto, has been justly esteemed  
‘ of all Poets, both ancient and mo-  
‘ dern, the most pathetic. But per-  
‘ haps, if every passage, whose excellence con-  
‘ sisted in awaking the tender feelings of the  
‘ Reader, should be collected and compared to-  
‘ gether, there would not be found one, in which  
the

‘ the writer has displayed a greater share of sensi-  
 ‘ bility than in this single line which I have  
 ‘ selected.

‘ Such indeed with me has been the influence  
 ‘ of the abovementioned Hexameter, that I never  
 ‘ could reflect, without indignation and astonish-  
 ‘ ment, that Virgil, who had been so liberally re-  
 ‘ warded for twenty-six lines in the sixth book of  
 ‘ his *Æneid*, should for this never have received  
 ‘ the gratuity of a farthing. In whatever point of  
 ‘ view the two passages shall be examined, it will  
 ‘ be found that the latter is in all respects equal if  
 ‘ not superior to the former. There is no one, I  
 ‘ believe, who will be so hardy as to deny, that  
 ‘ the verse, for whose merit I am contending, is  
 ‘ eminently distinguished by every quality, which  
 ‘ the Critics have deemed necessary to the con-  
 ‘ stitution of the most beautiful poetry. If the  
 ‘ greatest originality of thought, the noblest sim-  
 ‘ plicity of expression, the most exquisite pathos,  
 ‘ and the finest adaption of the sound to the  
 ‘ sense, can entitle a verse to the name of ex-  
 ‘ cellent, I shall not hesitate to pronounce, that  
 ‘ the one I am speaking of, is as worthy of admi-  
 ‘ ration as any in the poem.



‘ In order to see whether it be so, let us try it  
‘ in each of the above particulars; though I am  
‘ sensible, that there are people, who have been  
‘ bold enough to assert, that the names which it  
‘ contains are borrowed from history or tradi-  
‘ tion; I cannot but look upon myself as in duty  
‘ bound to believe, that they are the genuine off-  
‘ spring of the poet’s imagination. For as no  
‘ such tradition is now current, and as no such  
‘ history has ever been produced, charity demands  
‘ of me, that I should incline to the favorable side  
‘ of the question. In this I am the more particu-  
‘ larly justified, when I reflect, that Virgil, from  
‘ other parts of his works, has given us strong  
‘ reason to conclude that he was abundantly ca-  
‘ pable of inventing for himself, what he is here  
‘ accused of having taken from another. With  
‘ regard to simplicity, I should hold myself much  
‘ indebted to any individual, who would point out  
‘ to me, in the whole compass of poetry, one sin-  
‘ gle passage by which in this respect the motto of  
‘ my letter has ever been exceeded. Tho’ the ex-  
‘ pression be plain and unaffected, there is nothing  
‘ that borders upon meanness; and although it is  
‘ copious, there is nothing redundant. Though  
‘ it

‘ it is level with the capacity of a child, it ex-  
‘ torts admiration from the wisdom of old age.

‘ Let us now see how excellent is the verifica-  
‘ tion; and how well it is suited to the meaning  
‘ which the words are intended to convey. The  
‘ author’s purpose was certainly to awaken the  
‘ finer sensibilities of the soul; to shew us how  
‘ suddenly the life of mortals passeth away; and  
‘ how many there are who seem to have existed,  
‘ merely that they might by their fall give a lustre  
‘ to others. How admirably the flow of the verse  
‘ in consideration is calculated to suggest these  
‘ ideas, the most undistinguishing and most un-  
‘ practised ear cannot but discern. For besides,  
‘ that there is in the general run of the line some-  
‘ thing most musically mournful and melancholy,  
‘ the Cæsura after the first foot has wonderfully  
‘ tended to promote this effect. The reader natu-  
‘ rally expects after a dactyl to rest upon a long  
‘ syllable, but here he is unhappily deceived, and  
‘ the ground which he imagined to be firm, sinks  
‘ as it were beneath him. How ingeniously does  
‘ this illustrate the case of mankind, who are apt to  
‘ regard this life as a permanent possession; but  
‘ soon find, that they have leaned upon a reed.

‘ Lastly,

‘ Lastly, let us consider this line with regard to  
 ‘ the pathetic. For my own part, I could scarcely  
 ‘ ever peruse it without shedding tears. If there  
 ‘ be a man who would feel no emotion in reading  
 ‘ over an enumeration of personages, whose ex-  
 ‘ istence is never mentioned but once, and that  
 ‘ only in order to tell you how it was concluded, I  
 ‘ should be apt, against such a one to exclaim with  
 ‘ my favorite Author,

‘ ——— *duris genuit te cautibus horrens*

‘ *Caucasus, Hircanæque admôrunt ubera tigres.*

‘ ——— *Caucasus, with rocks*

‘ *Horrid, disclosed him from his flinty sides*

‘ *And fierce Hyrcanian tygers gave him suck.*

TRAPP.

‘ Supposing, however, that people of this  
 ‘ disposition are rarely to be met with, I shall take  
 ‘ the liberty of addressing myself to my reader, as  
 ‘ to one who will think and sympathize with me.  
 ‘ Gentle, therefore, and courteous as I take thee  
 ‘ to be, I cannot but imagine that thou art troubled  
 ‘ with the same melancholy reflections as I am,  
 ‘ whenever thou beholdest a catalogue of persons  
 ‘ who are supposed indeed to have existed, but of  
 ‘ whom history has left us no trace or memorial,  
 ‘ except their names. For my part I must con-  
 ‘ fess,

' fess, that no invention of Poets, however artful,  
 ' no tale of Novelists, however tender, no elo-  
 ' quence of Orators, however elaborate, no narrative  
 ' of Historians, however tragical, has such power  
 ' to work upon my affections, as the simple and un-  
 ' adorned pages of a Parish Register. If I should  
 ' attempt to account for this effect, I would refer  
 ' it to two causes; the one, as they tend to inspire  
 ' us with melancholy and mortifying ideas of hu-  
 ' man nature itself; and the other, as they bring  
 ' home a painful truth to the bosom of almost  
 ' every Individual. Considering how small is the  
 ' number of persons, whose superior qualifications  
 ' of intellect or body can enable them to survive  
 ' the lapse of a single century, there are surely few,  
 ' whose endowments, whether fancied or real, can  
 ' prevent them from ranking themselves in the  
 ' number of those who are soon to be forgotten.  
 ' In reading those affecting catalogues of the liv-  
 ' ing and the dead, which are to be met with in  
 ' almost every village of the kingdom, we are apt,  
 ' upon recollecting the truth of the above obser-  
 ' vation, to put this simple question to ourselves,  
 ' *Have I any reason to suppose, that nature has be-*  
 ' *stowed upon me such pre-eminence of mind or body,*  
 ' *as may rescue my name from that oblivion which is*  
 ' *the*

“ *the general lot of humanity?*” Here vanity and  
‘ ambition tempt me to say *Yes*; but truth, like  
‘ Tisiphone, stares me in the face, ’till I am  
‘ compelled to answer *No*.

‘ Dreary as this idea may be, perhaps we are  
‘ little less mortified, when we turn from our-  
‘ selves, in order to survey the world at large; to  
‘ reflect, that amidst so many millions, so inconfi-  
‘ derable a portion should be able to erect for  
‘ themselves a memorial of a thousand years; that  
‘ few have wanted the vanity to aspire to what still  
‘ fewer have had the felicity to succeed in; that  
‘ the same end has been attempted by means dia-  
‘ metrically opposite; and that the most laborious  
‘ efforts of virtue and vice, of laudable and per-  
‘ verted ambition, have often been exhausted in  
‘ vain.

‘ Indeed, the idea of being utterly forgotten  
‘ after death, is so repugnant to the first and ruling  
‘ principles of our nature, that I am little sur-  
‘ prised at the extravagant audacity of that man,  
‘ who, resolving to be known to posterity, seized  
‘ probably upon the only method which lay within  
‘ the reach of his abilities, by setting fire to the  
‘ magnificent

‘ magnificent temple at Ephesus. The desire of  
 ‘ being distinguished when we are present, and of  
 ‘ being remembered when we are absent, is the  
 ‘ first passion which discovers itself in our youth ;  
 ‘ and the last which adheres to us in our old age.  
 ‘ You, Sir, must frequently have observed, how  
 ‘ fond the citizens of your little world are of carv-  
 ‘ ing their names upon every form and wainscot  
 ‘ in the school. Though this I know is apt to en-  
 ‘ flame the breast of a master with wrath and in-  
 ‘ dignation, I cannot but confess, that to my mind  
 ‘ it suggests a number of melancholy and pleasing  
 ‘ ideas. The sight of these curious engravings,  
 ‘ brings naturally to my recollection, that I was  
 ‘ lately at school myself ; that I was engaged in  
 ‘ the same amusements and pursuits with those  
 ‘ around me ; that I took the same methods to  
 ‘ immortalize my name which they have done ;  
 ‘ and that I failed in the attempt, which they too  
 ‘ may find to have been the case with themselves  
 ‘ hereafter.

‘ In order to shew how firmly this desire of im-  
 ‘ mortality is retained by us in the last period of  
 ‘ our existence, I cannot help mentioning Mr.  
 ‘ Powel, the Fire-eater, whom I remember to have  
 ‘ seen

‘ seen when at Eton. This gentleman, after hav-  
‘ ing amused himself with eating lead, brimstone,  
‘ and sealing-wax, melted down together, observed  
‘ to the company, that he was advancing, by very  
‘ rapid strides, towards “*that undiscovered country*  
‘ “*from whose bourn no traveller returns.*” He  
‘ consoled himself however with the idea, that the  
‘ miracle which he was performing upon his body,  
‘ would be retained with joy in the memories of  
‘ the spectators, at a time when that body should  
‘ be lying in the dust. Trivial as to some phi-  
‘ losophers may appear to have been the object of  
‘ this man’s ambition, I cannot help thinking, that  
‘ this was the ointment which counteracted the  
‘ natural influence of the lava which he had been  
‘ devouring. For it is with difficulty that I can  
‘ conceive a person undergoing such painful opera-  
‘ tions, and contenting himself with such unpa-  
‘ latable food, unless he was instigated by some  
‘ greater inducement than the trifling emoluments  
‘ accruing from his exhibitions.

‘ Here I cannot help staying to pay my tribute  
‘ of applause to the worth of so great a man. How-  
‘ ever some people may affect to despise the object  
‘ of Mr. Powel’s ambition, I shall make it my bu-  
‘ siness

‘ finess to shew, that it was not inconsistent with  
‘ the dignity of a man, a philosopher, and a  
‘ christian. How many stoics have consigned their  
‘ names to immortality, without any pretensions  
‘ to those sublime virtues which are conspicuous  
‘ in the character of Mr. Powel? It was the highest  
‘ boast of a stoic, that he could look with adaman-  
‘ tine indifference on the death of his nearest rela-  
‘ tions: In how much more amiable, and how  
‘ much more heroic a light does the conduct of  
‘ Mr. Powel appear to us! So far from steeling his  
‘ heart with the unnatural apathy of a stoic, he ex-  
‘ ulted in the *warm* benevolence of a christian; and  
‘ submitted to the most *fiery* trials, merely to en-  
‘ tertain those with whom he had not the most  
‘ distant connexion. By way of corollary, (to  
‘ use a term in mathematics) what would not this  
‘ man have undergone to serve his friends? If we  
‘ might reason from arguments *a fortiori*, we should  
‘ conclude, that he would have rejoiced to follow  
‘ even Shadrack, Meshack, and Abed-nego. After  
‘ what I have said, I should imagine, that few will  
‘ deny to Mr. Powel the merit of patience the  
‘ most enduring, combined with a philanthropy  
‘ the most comprehensive. There is another vir-  
‘ tue in which I think the character of Mr. Powel  
‘ may



‘ may stand in competition with that of the most  
‘ exalted heroes of antiquity—I mean temper-  
‘ ance. Seneca indeed has talked to us in very  
‘ lofty terms of the abstinence of some of the  
‘ earlier worthies of his own country, and those of  
‘ Lacedæmon; the diet of the former was such  
‘ as would at this day be esteemed a luxury by  
‘ thousands; and as for the black broth of the  
‘ latter, I do not recollect, amidst all the ingre-  
‘ dients which composed it, that melted lead,  
‘ sealing-wax, and brimstone, were ever included.  
‘ As a patriot, I consider Mr. Powel as one of the  
‘ greatest that this century can boast of; for tho’ I  
‘ do not recollect that he was ever called out by  
‘ any particular emergency to take an active part  
‘ in the defence of his country, who can believe,  
‘ that a Person to whom Fire had been literally  
‘ meat, drink, and cloathing, would not naturally  
‘ fly where war grew hottest; and would conse-  
‘ quently be most congenial to his disposition and  
‘ occupations in life? Now if we sum up our  
‘ evidence, we shall find, that the sublimer virtues  
‘ of patience, temperance, and patriotism; to-  
‘ gether with the softer and more amiable ones of  
‘ philanthropy and friendship, were of course in-  
‘ cluded in the art which Mr. Powel professed:  
‘ We

‘ We shall not hesitate therefore a moment in pro-  
‘ nouncing the object of his ambition to have  
‘ been compatible with the character of a wife  
‘ and good man.

‘ I cannot conclude this paper without re-  
‘ gretting my inability to perpetuate the memory  
‘ of this illustrious Phænomenon of *Salaman-*  
‘ *dership* and Virtue. This however I can assure  
‘ him, if my feeble endeavours could effect it,  
‘ *his name should flourish in the mouths of men.*”

L.’

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXII.—MONDAY, *April 9,* 1787.

*Tantum de medio sumptis accedit honoris.* —HOR.

*Such honour common subjects may receive.*

‘S I R,

‘I T must no doubt often have occurred  
‘to a writer of your penetration, that  
‘there is nothing more unjust, and illi-  
‘beral, than those ill-grounded prejudices, which  
‘confound in general censure, or undistinguishing  
‘contempt, any particular class or description of  
‘men. And yet these prejudices, however sen-  
‘sible

‘ sible we cannot but be of their improper ten-  
 ‘ dency, we are all too apt to indulge; till nou-  
 ‘ rished by long habit, they take as deep root in  
 ‘ our minds as if they had been implanted there  
 ‘ by nature; and acquire such strength, as enable  
 ‘ them to withstand the most forcible arguments,  
 ‘ to resist the most palpable conviction.

‘ There are in *Turkey* a body of men, against  
 ‘ whom universal contempt is indiscriminately,  
 ‘ as well as undeservedly directed; and these are  
 ‘ the worshipful company of GROCERS. Inso-  
 ‘ much, that should any member of a noble fa-  
 ‘ mily have disgraced himself and his connec-  
 ‘ tions, by living a life of tranquility, or what is  
 ‘ worse, dying in his bed, that is, a natural death,  
 ‘ his name is never pronounced by his relations  
 ‘ but with disapprobation and disgust; and his me-  
 ‘ mory is consigned to infamy, for having, as they  
 ‘ say, lived and died like a RACCAL, or GROCER.

‘ The person who has now the honour to address  
 ‘ you, is a member of a community, who by the  
 ‘ courtesy of England, are like the RACCALS of  
 ‘ *Turkey*, collectively involved in the most indiscri-  
 ‘ minate ridicule, the most comprehensive con-

' tempt; I say collectively, Sir, because, indivi-  
 ' dually we are allowed to have no existence; the  
 ' wicked waggery of the world, judging *nine*  
 ' WEAVERS, and *nine* TAYLORS requisite to the  
 ' formation of one man. Yes, Sir, to so high a  
 ' pitch have they carried the disrespect in which  
 ' these professions are held, that in the eyes of "the  
 ' "Many," (as the Poet calls them) to address a  
 ' man by the appellation either of WEAVER or  
 ' TAYLOR, implies not only, as formerly, a re-  
 ' flection on his horsemanship, but on his personal  
 ' courage, and even his personal existence.

' I, Sir, am a WEAVER; I feel for the injured  
 ' dignity of my profession; and since, thanks to  
 ' my own genius, and two years and a half of edu-  
 ' cation at an Academy on *Tower-Hill*, I have a  
 ' very decent acquaintance with the *Classics*; that  
 ' is I know them all by name, and can tell *Greek*  
 ' when I see it, any day in the week; and since,  
 ' as far as *Shakespear's* Plays, and all the *Monthly*  
 ' *Magazines* go, I have a very pretty share of  
 ' *English* book-learning; from these considerations,  
 ' Mr. Griffin, I think myself qualified to con-  
 ' tend, not for the utility and respectability only,  
 ' but for the honour of the Art of WEAVING.  
 ' TAY-

' TAYLORING, as it is secondary to WEAVING,  
' will of course partake of the fruits of my labours;  
' as, in asserting the dignity of the one, I maintain  
' the credit of the other.

' To this end, Mr. Griffin, I shall not appeal  
' to the candour of my readers, but shall provoke  
' their judgment; I shall not solicit their in-  
' dulgence, but by the force of demonstration  
' will claim their assent, to my opinion.

' POETRY, Sir, is universally allowed to be the  
' first and noblest of the arts and sciences; in-  
' much, that it is the opinion of critics, that an  
' Epic Poem is the greatest work the human  
' mind is capable of bringing to perfection. If  
' then I can prove, that the ART of WEAVING is  
' in any degree analogous to the ART of POETRY;  
' if this Analogy has been allowed by the whole  
' tribe of critics; so far, that in speaking of the  
' latter they have used the terms of the former,  
' and have passed judgment on the works of the  
' POET in the language of the MANUFACTURER;  
' nay, if POETRY herself has condescended to imi-  
' tate the expressions, and to adopt the technical  
' terms into her own vocabulary; then may I

‘ surely hope, that the sanction of CRITICISM may  
 ‘ challenge the respect, and the flattery of PO-  
 ‘ ETRY (for imitation is the highest degree of  
 ‘ flattery) may claim the admiration of mankind.

‘ First then with regard to CRITICISM; to se-  
 ‘ lect a few examples from a multitude of others,  
 ‘ are we not entertained in the works of *Longinus*  
 ‘ and the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, with delectable  
 ‘ dissertations on the WEAVING of Plots and the  
 ‘ INTERWEAVING of Episodes? Are we not con-  
 ‘ tinually informed, that the Author unravels the  
 ‘ WEB of his intrigue, or breaks the THREAD of  
 ‘ his narration? Besides these, a friend of mine, a  
 ‘ great Etymologist, has assured me, that BOM-  
 ‘ BAST and BOMBASIN originally spring from the  
 ‘ same root; and FUSTIAN, every body knows, is a  
 ‘ term applied indifferently to passages in poetry,  
 ‘ or materials for a pair of breeches. So similar is  
 ‘ considered the skill employed in the TEXTURE of  
 ‘ an EPIC POEM and a piece of BROAD CLOTH; so  
 ‘ parallel the qualifications requisite to throw the  
 ‘ SAUTTLE and guide the PEN.

‘ I was not a little pleased the other day to find,  
 ‘ in the critique of one of the most eminent writers  
 ‘ of

‘ of the present day, the works of a favourite Poet  
 ‘ styled a TISSUE. An idea then occurred to me,  
 ‘ suggested perhaps by my partiality for my pro-  
 ‘ fession, which I am not without some faint hope  
 ‘ of one day seeing accomplished.

‘ By a little labour and ingenuity, it might  
 ‘ surely be discovered, that the works of different  
 ‘ AUTHORS bear a considerable affinity, (like this  
 ‘ of the Tissue) to the different productions of the  
 ‘ LOOM. Thus, to enumerate a few instances,  
 ‘ without any regard to chronological order,  
 ‘ might not the flowery smoothness of POPE, be  
 ‘ aptly enough compared to FLOWERED SAT-  
 ‘ TIN? Might not the compositions of all the  
 ‘ POETS LAUREATE, ancient and modern, be  
 ‘ very properly termed PRINCES STUFF? And  
 ‘ who would dispute the title of HOMER, to EVER-  
 ‘ LASTING? For SHAKESPEAR indeed, I am at a  
 ‘ loss for a comparison, unless I should liken him  
 ‘ to those SHOT SILKS, which vary the brightness  
 ‘ of their hues into a multitude of different lights  
 ‘ and shades. And would Orthography allow of  
 ‘ the pun, I might say, that there are few Poets  
 ‘ but would be proud to be thought worthy of  
 ‘ the GREEN BAYS.



‘ For proof of the use which POETRY makes  
‘ of the WEAVER’s dictionary, *vide* ten thousand  
‘ Odes on Spring; where you may catch the fra-  
‘ grance of the DAMASK rose; listen to the rustling  
‘ of the SILKEN foliage; or lie extended with a  
‘ listless languor, pillowing your head upon the  
‘ VELVET mead; to say nothing of NATURE’S  
‘ LOOM, which is set to work regularly on the  
‘ first of May, to weave variegated CARPETS for  
‘ the lawns and landscapes. Now, Mr. Griffin,  
‘ these similitudes, though very pretty, and very  
‘ *a-propos*, I own I am not perfectly satisfied with.  
‘ The *Genoese* certainly excel us in the article of  
‘ VELVETS; and *French* SILKS are by many peo-  
‘ ple far preferred for elegance to any of *English*  
‘ manufacture. I appeal then to you, Mr. Grif-  
‘ fin, if these allusions would not be much more  
‘ delightful to *British* ears, if they tended to pro-  
‘ mote such manufactures as are more peculiarly  
‘ our own. The *Georgics* of Virgil, let me tell  
‘ you, Sir, have been suspected by some people,  
‘ to have been written with a political, as well as  
‘ poetical view; for the purpose of converting the  
‘ victorious spirits of the *Roman* Soldiery from  
‘ the love of war, and the severity of military  
‘ hardships, to the milder occupations of peace, and  
‘ the

' the more profitable employments of agriculture.  
 ' Surely, equally successful would be the endea-  
 ' vours of our Poets, if they would boldly extirpate  
 ' from their writings every species of foreign ma-  
 ' nufacture; and adopt in their stead, materials from  
 ' the prolific looms of their countrymen. Surely,  
 ' we have a variety which would suit all subjects  
 ' and all descriptions;—nor do I despair, if this  
 ' letter has the desired effect, but I shall presently  
 ' see landscapes beautifully diversified with (all due  
 ' deference being paid to alliteration) plains of  
 ' PLUSH, pastures of POPLIN, downs of DIMITY,  
 ' valies of VELVERET, and meadows of MAN-  
 ' CHESTER. How gloriously novel would this  
 ' be; how patriotically poetical an innovation;  
 ' which nothing but bigotted prejudice could ob-  
 ' ject to, nothing but disaffection to the interests  
 ' of the country could disapprove.

' Excuse me, Sir, if I have detained you beyond  
 ' the usual limits of a letter, on a subject, in  
 ' which I am so deeply interested. Pardon, Sir,  
 ' the partiality of an old man, to the profession of  
 ' his youth; and, O! Mr. Griffin, may your pa-  
 ' per be the means of rescuing from unmerited ri-  
 ' dicule and illiberal contempt, an ART, which

‘ has added a clearness and a polish to the remarks  
 ‘ of CRITICISM; and has cloathed the conceptions  
 ‘ of POETRY in the language of Metaphor: an  
 ‘ ART, inferior to none, but those, which have  
 ‘ so frequently and so successfully borrowed its  
 ‘ assistance; nor even to them, unless it can be  
 ‘ proved, that that which provides the necessary  
 ‘ raiment for the *body*, should yield to those which  
 ‘ are but the sources of *amusement* to the *Mind*.

‘ I am, Sir,

‘ Your’s, &c.

‘ H. HOMESPUN.’

I cannot but own myself much pleased with the enthusiasm which seems to animate my correspondent, while he treats on a subject so near his Heart. He has, I can assure him, my full approbation to his proposed improvements; and I am convinced every well meaning person in his Majesty’s kingdoms must feel the force of his reasoning.—Will any caviller presume to contend, that our Looms are not as fertile of poetic imagery, as those of our neighbours? Have we not handkerchiefs of printed cotton, crowded with all the beauties of rural scenery? and “azure flowers that blow,” in the carpets of the Wilton manufactory?

factory? Nay, even supposing an unquestionable inferiority on the side of the *English* Looms, would not every *Englishman* still shew a laudable partiality to his country? and by such a preference, what he lost in Poetry, would he not amply make up in patriotism?

In short, so convinced am I, by Mr. Homespun's arguments, that I cannot help taking the earliest opportunity to recommend to such of my correspondents, as may have been induced by the forwardness of the season, to begin Odes on Spring for the use of the MICROCOSM, that they would be careful to stick to the productions of the *English* Loom, if they think it necessary to draw Metaphors from WEAVING at all; that is, if they *do* really think, that NATURE can be embellished by the *technical terms* of ART; and that the works of the CREATOR, can receive additional beauty by being assimilated to those of the MANUFACTURER: Which, in my humble opinion, I will confess does not appear to be the case.

I know no better advice that I can give to my Correspondents on this head, unless indeed it were, not to write "Odes on Spring" at all. B.

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M.

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No. XXIII.—MONDAY, April 16, 1787.

*If there be any land, as fame reports,  
Where common laws restrain the Prince and subjects;  
A happy land, where circulating power  
Flows thro' each member of the embodied state;  
Sure not unconscious of the mighty blessing,  
Her grateful sons shine bright with every virtue;  
Untainted with the lust of innovation,  
Sure all unite to hold her league of rule,  
Unbroken as the sacred chain of Nature,  
That links the jarring elements in peace.*

JOHNSON'S IRENE.

FROM a subject that has been so often  
handled as the various modes and forms  
of government, little novelty can be  
expected; and the ablest pen could ef-  
fect no more, than to place in new lights, or cloath  
in different words, those arguments which have  
been urged for ages by the advocates of different  
parties.

parties. As I am not qualified by my years or experience to decide amidst such contending factions, or to give any additional weight to either side by a declaration of my opinion, my only endeavour in this essay shall be to collect and place in one point of view, the most important points of the controversy; to rest my assertions not on the frail foundations of speculation, but experience; and by exhibiting the several expedients of human wisdom for the regulation of society, make my fellow-citizens sensible of the blessings of that constitution, under which we live; and to the protection of whose privileges they will most probably be hereafter summoned.

To trace the progress of legal Government, from the simple subordination of the Patriarchal power, to the complex system of modern politics; to mark the gradual encrease and extension of acknowledged authority from the head of a single family to the sovereignty of a mighty empire, may prove an ample reward to the toil of useful curiosity; but it is a task beyond the limits of my paper, or the extent of my abilities. I shall therefore pass over the subject, and content myself with this remark; that it is absolutely necessary

to the existence of civil society, that for the public good, the individual should resign a part of his natural independence; and bind himself by some common tie or obligation, to the observance of a known and fixed law. As this is the corner stone of all civil institutions, and one of those self-evident propositions which do not admit of a doubt, I shall not further insist upon it; but proceed in my examination of those different branches, which shot forth from the parent stock of Patriarchal Government. At that simple period, the ideas of men were confined within a narrow circle, and to the objects more immediately before them; their present subsistence was almost their only care, and the possession of a fertile pasturage, or a \*spring to water their flocks, employed the petty politicks of this guiltless age. It is not from these men we are to expect the refinements of government; for the nice balance between opposite interests, the discrimination between the right of the Sovereign, the Nobility, and the People, or that equal composition of different parts, which form the perfect whole; and like the symmetry of a well-

\* In the Scriptures we find an instance of a solemn Covenant between Abraham and Abimelech, concerning a well of water.

well-turned arch, mutually prop and support each other. As the patriarchal government was only calculated for the regulation of a small number, when mankind encreased, they found the necessity of an alteration: but as their ideas were too confined to suggest any new mode; as Tyranny was not dreaded where it had never been felt; and the violation of rights, which had never yet existed, could not be guarded against; they contented themselves with that form, to which custom had reconciled them: his authority being extended on a larger scale, the Head of a Family became the Sovereign of a State; and Despotism fixed her throne in Asia and the Eastern World. In those parts we are to search for any knowledge of this kind, as the Western quarter was then immersed, in the ignorance of primitive barbarity. Even Egypt, the source from whence all arts and sciences are derived, the most refined and polished of kingdoms, was subject to a regal government; whose antiquity, by a series of fabulous dynasties, was carried to a ridiculous height. The republican form was first adopted in Greece; and the Aristocracy or Democracy, the different modifications of the same original, prevailed according to the disposition of the people by whom they were.



were to be received. The Spartans, sedate, grave, and accustomed from their earliest youth to pay the most implicit deference to their Laws, submitted themselves to an Aristocracy of a peculiar kind, which has with more propriety been denominated an Oligarchy; for such in effect was the council of the Ephori, which controuled the regal power in such a manner as to render it the mere puppet of their pleasure. The Athenians, lively, impetuous, fond of novelty, and jealous to the extreme of their liberties, rushed into all the turbulence of a licentious Democracy. The Roman Commonwealth widely differed from Sparta and Athens in the form it assumed after the expulsion of Tarquin. As the exact boundaries between the rights of the Patricians and Plebeians were not defined with sufficient precision, they proved a source of endless contention; and the cruel treatment which debtors met with from their creditors, more than once reduced the state to the brink of destruction. Upon reflection it seems an unaccountable circumstance, that a State, which boasted of the liberty of its subjects, and which considered the appellation of a "*Roman citizen*," as the most glorious distinction it could bestow, should permit  
such

such an ignominious badge of slavery to be interwoven in the principles of its constitution; thus to expose those very Citizens who formed the flower of her legions, to the tyranny of a brutal creditor. The reader will pardon me, if I stop a moment to contemplate this wonderful nation; who, by dint of all the virtues which can adorn a rising State, joined to the most unremitting perseverance, became, from the petty asylum of a few wandering robbers, the mistress of the world: who, unnoticed and unobserved, was silently ascending the height she afterwards attained; and amidst discords and divisions, which threatened her very existence, arose only more formidable from her fall; or to use the nervous expression of Horace,

*Per damna, per cædes, ab ipso*

*Ducit opes animumque ferro.*

*Through wounds, through losses, no decay can feel,*

*Collecting strength and spirit from the steel.*

FRANCIS.

This Nation from its infancy seemed destined to the sceptre of the World; and by the imperious dignity of its behaviour, to enforce reverence and awe. The judicious Virgil perceived wherein the real glory of his countrymen consisted; and wisely

wisely rejecting what could not be claimed as their's, boldly stamped the characteristic of his nation.

*Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra,  
 (Credo equidem) vivos ducent de marmore vultus;  
 Orabunt causas melius, cælique meatus  
 Describent radio, et surgentia sidera dicent;  
 Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento  
 Parcere subiectis, et debellare superbos.*  
*Let others better mould the running mass  
 Of metals, and inform the breathing brass;  
 And soften into flesh a marble face;  
 Plead better at the bar; describe the skies,  
 And when the stars descend, and when they rise.  
 But Rome, 'tis thine alone with awful sway  
 To rule mankind, and make the world obey;  
 Disposing peace & war, thy own majestic way.  
 To tame the proud, the fetter'd slave to free;  
 These are imperial arts, and worthy thee.*

DRYDEN.

In these lines the invidious assertion included in "*Orabunt causas melius*," to the prejudice of the truly eloquent Cicero, has been often noticed; and it may be worth remarking, that although Virgil has so freely resigned the superiority in other points, he is silent with respect

to Poetry. Vanity, there arrested his pen, and forbad the confession.—But to return from this digression.

From this short review of the ancient government it may be collected, that neither Greeks nor Romans had any idea of that mixed form, which comprehends the seemingly irreconcilable principles of monarchical despotism, and republican freedom; unless the Kings and Ephori of Sparta may be included in that denomination. The feudal System, which succeeded the downfall of the Roman empire, gave the first rude outlines of the fabric; as appears from the compact between the King and his Barons, and the tenures on which they held their fiefs. We here see an acknowledged Sovereign, and order of Nobility, who stipulate to perform certain services, on consideration of the grant of particular lands or privileges. The King on his side promises to observe these privileges inviolate; and in case of the non-performance of the contract, \*the one side has the liberty of seeking redress by  
force

\* There is a remarkable instance of this in the case of the ancient Spanish Grandees: vide Dr. Robertson's Preface to his History of Charles the Fifth, from whom most of the observations on the feudal System are taken.

force of arms; the other forfeits his fief, as he has not complied with the tenure by which he held it. The Nobles, after the performance of these services, are totally independent; and the Sovereign can be considered in no other light than as the head of a powerful confederacy, united by their common interest. This is only the rude outline of Monarchical and Aristocratical power. The people were then in such a miserable state of bondage, that so far from claiming any right to a share in the legislature, they were considered by their Lords as mere cattle; they had not even the liberty of removing from one country to another, without express permission. After the lapse of some centuries, the King, unable to restrain his factious Barons by his own power, perceived the necessity of counterbalancing their influence by an opposite interest. To this politic scheme we owe the institution of free cities, boroughs, and corporations; which, by diffusing the spirit of liberty, were the original cause of dispelling the darkness which hung over Europe for ages: this too seems the first attempt to distinguish the people as a distinct body under a Monarchy. To mark the different gradations from the first imperfect sketch to the finished

finished plan might fill a volume. To the reader who wishes to be more amply informed on this interesting subject, the author before-mentioned will be a copious source of information. He may convince himself of what has been advanced, by an example existing at this moment; I mean the empire of Germany, whose constitution is still strictly feudal. The Emperor is still Elective, though the crown has been so long secured to the house of Austria; the different Electors and Princes of the Empire are absolute in their own dominions; and the only places where the people have any influence, are in the imperial or free cities.

But here, as on all other occasions, I should wish to avoid the error into which many ingenious men have fallen, too much refinement. Instead of surveying the transactions of past ages calmly and impartially; instead of placing themselves, as far as they are able, in the same situation, and considering the different passions, which influenced them, and thereby judging of the causes which produced their corresponding effects; they behold them through the medium of the prejudices or principles, which education, or  
the

the colour of the times they live in have produced, and attribute the refinements of modern times, to the barbarism of the first ages. It is not to be supposed, that when men first paid a voluntary obedience to him, whom they considered as the father of his family, that obedience resulted from a consideration of the necessity of legal subordination; or that when the Chieftain of a barbarous nation, and his Barons, raised the rude structure of feudal government, they reflected on the balance of power so necessary to the regulation of a well-formed State. The first, by a kind of instinctive veneration obeyed him, whom from his infancy he had been taught to revere as the Father of his race; the latter, interested, and uninfluenced by patriotic principles, knew no other motive than the love of plunder and rapine; he fought not for others, but himself; he exacted the price of his toil with unrelenting vigour; and in pursuing, as he thought, the best means to secure his own possessions, he unknowingly laid the foundations of a better institution. From this reasoning it is not to be concluded, that in a more polished period men did not guard their liberties by laws expressly calculated for that purpose. Holland and England are  
strong

strong instances to the contrary; since the laws of both, were framed at a time, when society was in a more advanced period; and consequently such political refinement might be attributed to them without incurring the charge of absurdity.

From this view we may see, that as \*Monarchy may degenerate into Tyranny, Aristocracy into Oligarchy, and Democracy into Anarchy, that Constitution which can unite the various excellencies of each without the defects, will approach nearest to perfection.

To expatiate on a subject, which has filled volumes, would be useless; and I only wish to add a few remarks, to the number of those which have been already made. England, from the peculiarity of her constitution, is placed in a very singular situation. We have seen the liberties of the nations around us gradually sinking, whilst our own have as gradually been increased and strengthened, from the very blows which seemed to threaten their destruction; they are not the sickly productions of the moment, but the vigorous

• Machiavel.



gorous offspring of time and wisdom. The Kings of France and Spain, by a series of successful efforts, have imposed the yoke of absolute dominion on their subjects; and Sweden has voluntarily resigned her rights: England is at present the only monarchy, where the Regal power is under any limitation. In speaking of our constitution, the fault of too much refinement has frequently been incurred, the antiquity of the Parliament has been carried beyond its due bounds, even to the Saxon æra; and the constitution supposed to have existed almost in its present form, from the date of the Magna Charta. That famous deed it is true, is the grand foundation on which we have built our system; but in its original intent it only secured the privileges of the Barons, without any consideration of the people. The cautious policy of Henry the Seventh first gave any weight to the Commons in this nation; but his imperious Son effectually checked their growing influence, and kept them in the most servile subjection: and Elizabeth, who with the pride, had imbibed the despotic principles of her father, did not allow them a greater latitude. Under the mild and pacific administration of James, the Commons acquired

a greater degree of importance than they had hitherto been accustomed to; but even then it was not usual to assemble the Parliament, as a regular part of the Legislature, except when the King demanded any supplies. In the reign of the Unfortunate Charles, they assumed a bolder tone, denied the King's power of taxation without their consent; and by the famous Petition of Rights, insisted on being regularly assembled once in three years. From this æra we may date the existence of our constitution in its present form. The limits between the Regal prerogative, and popular privileges, were exactly ascertained; the due balance between the three Estates of King, Lords, and Commons was fixed; and no further room for alteration or dispute left. The last and finishing stroke was the Bill of Rights, confirmed by William the Third, after the expulsion of James the Second. These rights and privileges it is our fortune to enjoy unimpaired; and may they be transmitted to future ages, as perfect as we have received them.

I have thus endeavoured to give a short analysis of the progress of Government, in a manner that appeared to me most natural. To the deep read  
politician

politician this Essay may seem trivial, and its contents superficial; I am conscious that the observations have not the force of novelty, or the depth of reflection; but if I have collected in a narrower compass, what before was scattered through volumes, in a manner that may prove beneficial to my fellow-citizens; if I inspire one patriotic sentiment, or kindle one spark of that laudable ambition, which is the source of all great actions: if any of the *future great* shall acknowledge, that he is in the least indebted to the assistance and instructions of GREGORY GRIFFIN, my labours are fully compensated.

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXIV.—MONDAY, April 30, 1787.

*An quodcunque facit Mæcenas te quoque verum est ?*

*Whate'er Mæcenas does must thou do too ?*

 I T is a common observation, with those who observe at all, that those passions, which under the guidance of a strong mind, are most consistent with the dignity of human nature; when they assume absolute dominion over a weak one, tend most effectually to vilify and debase it.

Of these perhaps, speaking comprehensively of its good and evil, there is none so generally beneficial to society as emulation; for there is hardly an eminent character, in whatever line of greatness, but has been originally drawn from indolence and

obscurity, by the example of superior excellence; and the hopes of attaining those heights, to which some daring adventurer has previously led the way.

To avoid mentioning the innumerable instances of this which every day crowd upon our observation, I will rather examine to what pernicious effects this glorious enthusiasm may lead, when operating on a mind incapable of directing it: or intoxicated by habitual success and adulation.

Alexander the Great, whose admiration for the bravery of Achilles, blinded him to the vicious excesses which every where characterize that hero, never sullied his victories more than by his imitation of an action, which the poet has even been censured for attributing to a man in whom he designed to represent the most finished idea of barbarous virtue. At the siege of Gaza, exasperated at the obstinate resistance of Betis, the Eunuch of Darius, he inhumanly insulted that virtue, which even in an enemy claims respect, by dragging him round those walls he had so gallantly defended; quoting the cruel treatment of Hector, though he had not even the plea, insufficient as it was,

was, which palliates this piece of barbarity in his great model of excellence.

But if we turn with horror from this instance of weakness, we cannot but smile at the ridiculous fervility of the famous Pyrrhus, who afterwards carried his imitation of Alexander to such lengths, as to affect even his deformities; and we are told, that a happy similitude to his predecessor, in a wry neck, was no uncommon topic of flattery among his courtiers.

When we see men who are held up as the paragons of human grandeur, upon whose decisions, nay almost ideas, depended the revolutions of empires, so subject to the failings of human nature, we cannot be surprized at finding a faithful transcript of the passions by which they have been biased, in the heroes of our little republic; and a similar imitation of those, whose characters or abilities have procured them the admiration of their fellow-citizens.

When I call it a republic, I speak at random on a subject on which in some future lucubration I may dwell longer; and introduce to the Politicians,

cians of the great world, a system of government which is consistent with none which the power of legislature has hitherto been able to regulate : A government, which though founded on the law of the strongest, is so tempered with the principles of equity, as to have subsisted for centuries without any material revolution : An Aristocracy of such gradual progression from despotism to slavery, as to render the distance less oppressive, though not less awful : And honours and offices of state so equally divided, as to hold out to every individual a certainty of one day enjoying them.

Nor however has this uninterrupted sameness proceeded from a want of geniusses to conduct a revolution ; we too have had our Catilines and Clodii, the daring incendiaries of the most threatening commotions ; and our de Witts and Barneveldts, the patriotic opposers of illegal oppression. Many a Cooke has been employed in the regulation of our birthright navy ; and the order of a Montem given rise to the most interesting debates in our Senate-House.

In this, however, as in all other governments, the character of the community will vary with that  
of

of its most distinguished members. The Gymnasium, the Mall, the Lyceum, and the Dilettanti, have by turns prevailed, and each produced extraordinary originals, whose imitation has for a time been the ambition of their disciples; till in a few generations it has of itself grown obsolete, or been superseded by some new object of fashionable amusement.

Acanthio was of that sect of philosophers which the generality of mankind term oddities; and by nature formed to answer Democritus's idea of a poet. The mad enthusiasm of genius forced him so far from the center of common sense, that his character unconsciously comprehended all those singularities which Horace ascribes to the affectation of the Roman poets. His beard was not cultivated as the badge of wisdom, or testimony of Stoicism; on the contrary, he made frequent attempts to get rid of so unfashionable a companion; and would certainly have effected his purpose, but for the constant interruption of some impertinent idea between the resolution and the operation. When seized with the spouting mania, he gave a loose to the rapture of his imagination, in the oratorical artillery of puffs,



stamps, and roars, with so formidable an action on his natural crabbed severity of phiz, as frequently to entertain the spectators not without some mixture of terror.

It was fortunate for him, when he had full space for the overboilings of this phrenzy; but as he was never entirely secure, very dangerous symptoms of it often attacked him in the narrow compass of his apartment. Upon these occasions, a chorus of Rowley seldom subsided without the demolition of a set of China; the bard of Morven frequently furnished a week's work for a carpenter; and the Dircean swan has been known to commit open acts of hostility against his peaceable neighbours of the shelf, till actually checked in his mid career by the seasonable interposition of a prostrate table.

Being one day earnestly engaged in an argument with Plato, he was so enraged at the obstinate insensibility of a mahogany elbow chair, which was the temporary representative of that Philosopher, that in the height of his resentment, he sprung forward to enforce conviction by the *argumentum baculinum*, and fell over the object of his

his vengeance on the floor. Finding himself grievously discomfited by a violent contusion on the forehead, while his hardheaded antagonist still maintained his point with the same phlegmatic coolness, he began to express his sensations, by dancing round the room, and roaring lustily for wet brown paper, in a yell, between pain, rage, and disappointment. Upon the timely application, however of this remedy, a dispute was settled, which might otherwise have terminated in an open rupture.

These, and many other peculiarities, constituted a character of which Soricius is a professed imitator. But unhappily the affected singularity of the latter, has not the excuse of genius, which palliates the capricious eccentricity of the former. In short, he attempts to effect by art, what nature alone can render agreeable; for an oddity is an animal, whose innate and unconscious qualities are his only recommendation; the moment therefore he has any assumed virtues, he becomes disgusting. Soricius, it is true, has the appearance of absence, but he takes care to inform you that it is real. If you remind him of having forgotten

any thing, he will exclaim with a simper, “*he, he, he, laud I am so forgetful!*” but is sure upon search to find it carefully deposited; and if ever he ventures a fousing or a broken shin in support of his character, has always clean linen and plaisters in readiness for a thorough repair.

But as no part of an oddity’s apparatus is so conducive to his success as his collection of rhapsodies, he has provided himself with a very ample classical budget; and that he may add the recommendation of novelty, has stored it from those treasures of elocution which no dabbler in the art has ever entered on, such as the interesting narrative of Homer’s Catalogue; the glorious extravagancies of Lucan’s battles; and the instructive softness of Virgil’s directions for sowing wheat, and breeding bullocks. Nay, he has even attempted a higher excellence, and undertaken to model the worn-out trifles of Anacreon and Catullus, into novelty, with the assistance of an heroic deep bass; and to deceive the most competent judges, with Pindar’s Olympiads, in a charming *piano*.

Many

Many such portraits might be drawn, and perhaps from the life, of servile imitation; but I should hope it was sufficiently evident to every one, whose reason will tell him that he is an independent being, that the imitation of errors is the most glaring proof of a weak understanding. And that the affectation of that eccentricity which is allowable in true genius alone, is in any thing below mediocrity, like an attempt at the bold animation of a Raphael in the Saracen's-Head; or the venerable gloom of a Salvator, in the foliage of the royal oak. C

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NOTES to CORRESPONDENTS.

ANTISUPERBUS I would advise to lay down the pen he has so hastily assumed; or if the *scribendi cacoethes* has taken such strong hold of him that he finds that impossible, let him throw his abilities into some other channel, as at present, I fear, he has mistaken their bent---The same hint, taken in time, might save the reputation of his unintelligible associate.

Much as I am obliged to A BARRISTER for his elegant extract, as the circumstances wear an air of truth, and my lucubrations might possibly fall into the hands of the parties, I fear it would too deeply wound the feelings of a distressed family for insertion.

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXV.—MONDAY, May 7, 1787.

*Interdum populus rectum videt : est ubi peccat.*

—— — — *the people's voice is odd,  
It is, and it is not, the voice of God.—POPE.*

**P**ROVERBIAL expressions and received opinions, have usually been considered as an abridgement of national wisdom, and are perhaps the best guides to the character or genius of a people. And it is not improbable, that the extension of this method of enquiry, to the established opinions and received ideas of mankind in general, may lead us to a more perfect and general knowledge of them.

That the mind of man is not framed for happiness, is a principle, of the truth of which perhaps the most certain criterion is its popularity.

At

At the revival of learning, the idea of gradual and progressive degeneracy obtained very strongly; and whether it contributed in any measure to the study of the ancients, or what is more probable, was derived from the inferiority visible in their imitators, its prevalence was unlimited, and its authority unquestioned. How far a servile reverence and scrupulous imitation of antiquity is compatible with the efforts of learning and genius, may be seen in the attempts of an age, whose diligence was unequalled, and whose genius ours has no right to suppose inferior to her own. But it may be objected that the qualities of the heart, if not those of the head, may be improved by a converse with antiquity; that if the science of barbarous nations is rude, their morality at least is pure. To fall into errors authorized by the example of a superior, has frequently afforded a despicable gratification to men of inferior abilities; and the scrupulous stickler for obsolete antiquity, may be pleased to find his error common to the ablest politicians of declining Rome. That great empire in a state of decay, has been aptly characterized by her historian, as the theatre in which the scenes of a more virtuous age were acted over again; but without the principle or spirit of the  
real

real personages. This was the error of a Physician, who would treat an infirm patient as if he was in youth and health, as the only means of restoring him to both; and the only circumstances which render the former folly the more excusable, are its greater frequency, and that appearance of earnestness, which the voluntary assumption of more rigid manners carries with it. Perhaps, the result of all serious enquiries on this subject will be, that, in the moral, as well as the physical world, there is a correspondent propriety in every member, as far as its relation to the rest is considered; and that the manners of every age and nation have as much propriety in their designation, as the passions peculiar to the different periods of Life, and the instinctive qualities of the animal world.

The striking analogy which subsists between the two first, may afford matter for a digression, which my readers will the more readily pardon, as it arises immediately from the subject, contributes in some measure to illustrate it, and throws light on a similitude whose leading features seem to have struck every observer; but whose more minute corresponding peculiarities have never been traced  
with

with any degree of accuracy. The first attempts of a rising state, struggling into eminence and observation, the strength of an established constitution, and the weakness of declining empire, have so strong an analogy to the first efforts of infancy, the confirmed vigor of maturity, and the debility of age, that expressions adopted into one from the other are hardly considered as metaphorical; and are to be met with in styles the most unadorned, or even the flow of common conversation.

The progress of national refinement considered as analogous to the improvement of personal taste, may perhaps furnish a less trite, and more interesting subject of discussion.

The objects with which children are most delighted, are such as strike most forcibly upon the senses; the simplest tunes, the sweetest tastes, a fanciful association of the most gawdy colours; are most agreeable to our infancy; and a fondness for similar objects, is a certain indication of a national taste in the first stages of cultivation; an implicit credulity in what they hear, and the utmost deference to the authority of what they read, is another leading characteristic of childhood; in-  
somuch,



so much, that a system of education, which confines its pupils to ignorance, has been grounded on the fear of imbibing early, and mistaken opinions. The grand and fundamental error which makes this system entirely impracticable, is the supposition, that the implicit adherence to superior authority was to be destroyed, not by the researches of Learning, but the advances of Age. Unprejudiced ignorance is always diffident; and to this cause are to be attributed the credulity of childhood, and that readiness with which a barbarous age receives the opinions of a superior genius.

A mind too ignorant or too indolent for reflection, is pleased to repose itself under the shadow of some great authority; and to adopt a set of dogmas implicitly, without hesitation or enquiry. Hence, in our earliest moral writers, almost every sentence is prefaced with an authority for the sentiment it contains; and in Spain, a country some centuries behind the rest of Europe in point of taste and learning, the same species of writing still subsists.

Of all the periods of human life, the passions and opinions of youth are perhaps the most remarkable;

markable; the mind perceives a sensible dilation of its faculties, becomes jealous of an unprejudiced freedom of enquiry, and ashamed of that implicit deference it had formerly entertained for the opinions of others. New systems are daily raised, inveterate prejudices examined and rejected, and we flatter ourselves for a while with the sufficiency of private observation, and unassisted endeavours; the ardor of innovation at length subsides, and we discover in time that a credulous attention to the opinions of others, and a blind confidence in our own, are equally insufficient for the pursuits of truth and wisdom.

If we should trace back the progress of natural science, to the first Dawn that dispelled the clouds of prejudice and error, we should discover a number of circumstances, parrallel to those in the improvement of personal knowledge; the immediate rejection of all received opinions, and the readiness with which a new system is embraced; are circumstances common to both, and highly characteristic.

After the existence of a similitude between the progress of personal and of popular taste has been proved,

proved, it would be needless to vindicate the propriety of either; I shall therefore confine myself to an examination of the reasons from which an idea of modern inferiority has arisen.

Man, though constantly in pursuit of happiness, so seldom appears to be in possession of his object, that his constant failure of success has been attributed to a supposed defect in his formation; a principle that offers to its followers so compendious a protection from the feelings of conscious humiliation, and the agonies of conviction and remorse, could hardly fail of being popular; the invention of lenitives, similar in their effect, though not equally comprehensive in their operation, had long employed the invention of mankind. The narratives of our first adventurers were filled with descriptions of more favoured realms, where the manners of patriarchal life were supposed to exist among a people unenvied, and undisturbed; in a simplicity as happy, as it was innocent: While the volumes of our earliest moralists, were filled with the idea of progressive degeneracy, against which, as it was impossible to succeed, so was it useless to contend.

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The discoveries of navigation, and the lights of reviving learning, were for a time insufficient to convince our ancestors, that there had not been a period in which men were wiser, or a land in which they were happier than themselves. The visionary worlds of Bacon and Sir Thomas More, have a situation assigned them, in some part of the globe then unknown; and Spenser's lines, in which he obviates any objections that might arise to the actual existence of "*his delightfull lond of Faëry,*" are so curious for the subject, and method of reasoning, as to deserve citation.

*Right-well I wote most mighty Soueraine,  
That all this famous antique history,  
Of some th' aboundance of an idle braine  
Will iudged be, and painted forgery,  
Rather than matter of iust memory ;  
Sith none, that breatheth living aire, does know,  
Where is this happy lond of Faëry,  
Which I so much do vaunt, yet no where show,  
But vouch antiquities, which nobody can know.*

*But let that man with better sense advise,  
That to the world least part to vs is red:  
And daily how through hardy enterprize,  
Many great regions are discouered,  
Which to late age were never mentioned.*      *Who*

*Who euer heard of the Indian Peru ?  
Or who in venturous vessell measured  
The Amazons huge riuer now found trew ?  
Or fruitfullst Virginia who did euer view ?*

*Yet all these were, when no man did them know ;  
Yet haue from wisest ages hidden beene :  
And later times things more unknown shall show.  
Why then should witlefs man so much misweene  
That nothing is, but that which he hath seene ?  
What if within the moons faire shining sphere ?  
What if in every other star vnseene  
Of other worldes he happily should heare ?  
He wonder would much more yet such to some appeare.*

An argument of the actual existence of a country, derived from the impossibility of demonstrating the contrary, was so singular, that I could not resist the temptation of offering it to my readers. These visionary obstacles to perfection did not vanish before the morning of science ; on the contrary, from some circumstances before observed, they seem to have gained additional terrors. Milton himself was under apprehensions, that his poem was produced too late for admiration, if not for excellence ; and our Ancestors were long content

to

to believe themselves born in an age too late, or a climate too cold, for the attainment of Perfection. In the first it will be sufficient to observe, that countries, the least polished by literature, or civilized by commercial intercourse, have always been found the most resolute asserters of their ancient dignity; a cause to which we must attribute the prolix catalogue of Scottish monarchs, and the milesian colony of the Irish antiquaries. The second, as the malice of my enquiry does not war with the dead, I shall not examine; the very existence of such an opinion may in time become doubtful.

There are perhaps few popular opinions, so repugnant as the former to truth and reason, which may not be traced to their origin, in an inventive mind, occupied rather in palliating its omissions by ingenious excuses, than in avoiding them by a determined activity; and the most specious are seldom recurred to but as the lenitives of reflection, on the painful retrospect of wasted time, and abilities misapplied.

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXVI.—MONDAY, *May 14, 1787.*

*Fabula nullius veneris, sine pondere, et arte.*—HOR.

*A silly story, without weight, or art.*

 NOVEL-WRITING has by some late authors been aptly enough styled the younger sister of ROMANCE. A family likeness indeed is very evident; and in their leading features, though in the one on a more enlarged, and in the other on a more contracted scale, a strong resemblance is easily discoverable between them.

An eminent characteristic of each is Fiction; a quality, which they possess, however, in very different  
different

different degrees The Fiction of ROMANCE is restricted by no fetters of reason, or of truth; but gives a loose to lawless imagination, and transgresses at will the bounds of time and place, of nature and possibility. The fiction of the other on the contrary is shackled with a thousand restraints; is checked in her most rapid progress by the barriers of reason; and bounded in her most excursive flights by the limits of probability.

To drop our metaphors: we shall not indeed find in NOVELS, as in ROMANCES, the Hero fighting respectfully at the feet of his mistress, during a ten years courtship in a wilderness; nor shall we be entertained with the history of such a tour, as that of *Saint George*; who, mounting his horse one morning in *Cappadocia*, takes his way through *Mesopotamia*, then turns to his right into *Illyria*, and so by way of *Grecia* and *Thracia*, arrives in the afternoon in *England*. To such glorious violations as these of time and place, ROMANCE writers have an exclusive claim. NOVELISTS usually find it more convenient to change the scene of courtship from a desert to a drawing-room; and far from thinking it necessary to lay a ten years siege to the affections of their heroine, they contrive



contrive to carry their point in an hour or two; as well for the sake of enhancing the character of their hero, as for establishing their favourite maxim of *love at first sight*; and their Hero, who seldom, extends his travels beyond the turnpike-road, is commonly content to chuse the safer, though less expeditious, conveyance of a post-chaise, in preference to such a horse as that of *Saint George*.

But these peculiarities of absurdity alone excepted, we shall find, that the NOVEL is but a more modern modification of the same ingredients which constitute the ROMANCE; and that a *recipe* for the one may be equally serviceable for the composition of the other.

A ROMANCE, (generally speaking) consists of a number of strange events, with a Hero in the middle of them; who, being an adventurous Knight, wades through them to one grand design, namely, the emancipation of some captive Princess, from the oppression of a merciless Giant; for the accomplishment of which purpose he must set at nought the incantations of the caitiff magician; must scale the ramparts of his castle; and baffle  
the

the vigilance of the female dragon, to whose custody his heroine is committed.

Foreign as they may at first sight seem from the purposes of a NOVEL, we shall find, upon a little examination, that these are in fact the very circumstances, upon which the generality of them are built; modernized indeed in some degree by the trifling transformations of merciless Giants into austere Guardians, and of she-dragons into Maiden Aunts. We must be contented also that the Heroine, though retaining her tenderness, be divested of her royalty; and in the Hero we must give up the Knight-errant for the accomplished Fine Gentleman.

Still, however, though the performers are changed, the characters themselves remain nearly the same. In the Guardian we trace all the qualities which distinguish his ferocious predecessor; substituting only, in the room of magical incantations, a little plain cursing and swearing; and the Maiden Aunt retains all the prying vigilance, and suspicious malignity; in short, every endowment, but the claws, which characterize her romantic counterpart. The Hero of a NOVEL has  
not

not indeed any opportunity of displaying his courage in the scaling of a rampart, or his generosity in the deliverance of enthralled multitudes; but as it is necessary that a Hero should signalize himself by both these qualifications, it is usual to manifest the one by climbing the garden wall, or leaping the park-paling in defiance of "*steel traps and spring guns*;" and the other, by flinging a crown to each of the post-boys, on alighting from his chaise and four.

In the article of *interviews*, the two species of composition are pretty much on an equality; provided only, that they are supplied with a "*quantum sufficit*" of moonlight, which is an indispensable requisite; it being the etiquette for the Moon to appear particularly conscious on these occasions. For the adorer, when permitted to pay his vows at the shrine of his Divinity, custom has established in both cases a pretty universal form of prayer.

Thus far the writers of NOVEL and ROMANCE seem to be on a very equal footing; to enjoy similar advantages, and to merit equal admiration. We are now come to a very material point, in which ROMANCE has but slender claims to comparative

parative excellence; I mean the choice of *names* and *titles*. However lofty and sonorous the names of *Amadis* and *Orlando*; however tender and delicate may be those of *Zorayda* and *Roxana*, are they to be compared with the attractive alliteration, the seducing softness of *Lydia Lovemore*, and *Sir Harry Harlowe*; of *Frederic Freelove*, and *Clarissa Clearstarch*? Or can the simple “*Don Belianis, of Greece*,” or the “*Seven Champions of Christendom*,” trick out so enticing a title page, and awaken such pleasing expectations, as the “*Innocent Adultery*,” the “*Tears of Sensibility*,” or the “*Amours of the Count de D\*\*\*\*\*, and L—————?*”

It occurs to me, while I am writing this, that as there has been of late years so considerable a consumption of *names* and *titles*, as to have exhausted all the efforts of invention, and ransacked all the alliterations of the alphabet; it may not be amiss to inform all NOVELISTS, male and female, who under these circumstances, must necessarily wish, with *Falstaff*, to know “*where a commodity of good names may be bought*,” that at my WAREHOUSE for WIT, I have laid in a great number of the above articles, of the most fashionable and approved patterns. Ladies may suit themselves with a vast variety,

Vol. II. E riety,

riety, adapted to every composition of the kind ; whether they may chuse them to consist of two Adjectives only, as the "*Generous Inconstant*,"—the "*Fair Fugitive*,"—or the name of a place, as "*Grogram Grove*,"—"*Gander Green*,"—or whether they prefer the still newer method of coupling persons and things with an "or," as "*Louisa ; or, the Purling Stream*,"—"*Estifania ; or, the Abbey in the Dale*,"—"*Eliza ; or, the Little House on the Hill*." Added to these, I have a complete assortment of names for every individual that can find a place in a NOVEL ; from the *Belviles* and *Beverleys* of high life, to the *Humphreyses* and *Gubbinses* of low ; suited to all ages, ranks, and professions ; to persons of every stamp, and characters of every denomination.

In painting the scenes of *low life*, the NOVEL again enjoys the most decisive superiority. ROMANCE indeed sometimes makes use of the grosser sentiments, and less refined affections of the *Squire* and the *Confidante*, as a foil to the delicate adoration, the platonic purity, which marks the love of the Hero, and suits the sensibility of his Mistress. But where shall we find such a thorough knowledge of nature, such an insight into the human heart, as is displayed by our NOVELISTS ; when,

as an agreeable relief from the insipid sameness of polite insincerity, they condescend to pourtray in coarse colours, the workings of more genuine passions in the bosom of *Dolly*, the dairy-maid, or *Hannah*, the house-maid ?

When on such grounds, and on a plan usually very similar to the one I have here endeavoured to sketch, are founded by far the greater number of those NOVELS, which crowd the teeming catalogue of a circulating library ; is it to be wondered at, that they are sought out with such avidity, and run through with such delight, by all those (a considerable part of my fellow-citizens) who cannot resist the impulse of curiosity, or withstand the allurements of a title page ? Can we be surprized, that they look forward, with expecting eagerness, to that inundation of delicious nonsense, with which the press annually overflows ; replete as it is with stories without invention, anecdotes without novelty, observations without aptness, and reflections without morality ?

Under this description come the generality of these performances. There are no doubt, a multitude of exceptions. The paths which a *Fielding*

and a *Richardson* have trodden, must be sacred. Were I to prophane these by impertinent criticism, I might with justice be accused of avowed enmity to wit; of open apostacy from true feeling, and true taste.

But let me hope to stand excused from the charge of presumption, if even here I venture some observations, which I am confident must have occurred to many; and to which almost every-body, when reminded of them, will be ready to give a hearty concurrence.

Is not the NOVEL of *Tom Jones*, however excellent a work in itself, generally put too early into our hands, and proposed too soon to the imitation of children? That it is a character drawn faithfully from Nature, by the hand of a master, most accurately delineated, and most exquisitely finished, is indeed indisputable. But is it not also a character, in whose shades the lines of right and wrong, of propriety and misconduct, are so intimately blended, and softened into each other, as to render it too difficult for the indiscriminating eye of childhood to distinguish between rectitude and error? Are not its imperfections so nearly allied

allied to excellence, and does not the excess of its good qualities, bear so strong an affinity to imperfection, as to require a more matured judgment, a more accurate penetration, to point out the line where virtue ends and vice begins? The arguments urged in opposition to this are, that it is a faithful copy of Nature.—Undoubtedly it is—but is Nature to be held up to the view of childhood, in every light, however unamiable; to be exhibited in every attitude, however unbecoming? The Hero's connexion with *Miss Seagrim*, for instance, and the supposed consequences of it are very natural no doubt; are they therefore objects worthy of imitation? But that a Child must admire the character, is certain; that he should wish to imitate what he admires, follows of course; and that it is much more easy to imitate faults than excellencies, is an observation too trite, I fear, not to be well founded. A character virtuous and amiable in the aggregate, but vicious in particular parts, is much more dangerous to a mind, prone to imitation, as that of youth naturally is, than one wicked and vicious in the extreme. The one is an open assault of an avowed enemy, which every one has judgment to see, and consequently fortitude to resist; the other is the treacherous



attack of an insidious invader; who makes the passions his agents to blind the judgment, and bribes the understanding to betray the heart.—Such is the character of *Jones*. He interests our affections at the moment that his actions revolt against our ideas of propriety; nor can even his infidelity to *Sophia*, however ungrateful, nor his connexion with *Lady Bellafton*, though perhaps the most degrading situation in which human nature can be viewed, materially lessen him in our esteem and admiration. On these grounds therefore, though there cannot be a more partial admirer of the work itself, I cannot hesitate a moment to consider that “faultless monster” *Sir Charles Grandifon*, whose insipid uniformity of goodness it is so fashionable to decry, far the more preferable to be held up to a child as an object of imitation. The only objection urged to this is, that *Grandifon* is too perfect to be imitated with success. And to what does this argument amount? truly this, it tends to prove, that an imitator cannot come up to his original; consequently, the surest way to become a *Jones*, is to aim at being a *Grandifon*: for according to that argument, let a man rate his virtue at the highest price, and the natural bias of his passions will  
make

make him bate something of his valuation.—Hence therefore the character of *Grandison* is assuredly the properer pattern of the two. An attempt at the imitation of that, must necessarily be productive of some attainment in virtue. The character of *Jones* can neither operate as an incitement to virtue, or a discouragement from vice. He is too faulty for the one, and too excellent for the other. Even his good qualities must, on an undiscerning mind, have a bad effect; since, by fascinating its affections, they render it blind to his foibles; and the character becomes the more dangerous, in proportion as it is the more amiable.

But to return from this long digression, to the consideration of NOVELS in general.—Some of my fellow-citizens may perhaps conjecture, that I have affected to undervalue them from interested motives; and that I would wean them from their study of them, for the purpose only of increasing the demand for my own lucubrations. To wipe off any suspicions of the kind, and to prove to them that my only motives are a view to their advantage, I promise, in the course of a few Numbers, to point out to the observation, and commend to the perusal of professed NOVEL

readers, a set of books, which they now treat with undeserved contempt; but from which I will prove, that they may derive at least, as much entertainment, and certainly much more useful instruction, than from the dull details of unmeaning sentiment, and insipid conversation; of incidents the most highly unnatural, and events the most uninteresting.

**B**

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

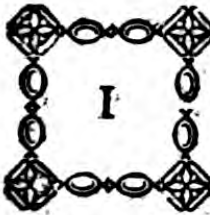
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No. XXVII.—MONDAY, May 21, 1787.

*Virtutem incolumen odimus,  
Sublatam ex oculis quærimus invidi.*—HOR.

*Though living Virtue we despise,  
We follow her when dead with envious eyes.*

FRANCIS.

T has generally been the fate of illustrious merit, to be persecuted and reviled; neglected and oppressed, when living; and exposed to the derision of the ignorant, and the wanton insults of the unfeeling. The brave has been stigmatized as a coward, the patriot has been accused of treachery, the philosopher of atheism, the poet and the historian of plagiarism, infidelity, and partiality.

ality. When dead, it has been loaded with superfluous honours, and the powers of flattery and panegyric exhausted to decorate its tomb. A patron has given a sumptuous burial to him, whom living he suffered to starve in a garret, or rot in a jail; and a nation has erected a monument of her gratitude over the remains of a Statesman or a General, whom she had exiled from his country, or meanly deprived of the just reward of his exertions and abilities. The tide, when too late, takes a different turn; and as extremes are always opposite, a blind adoration is paid to the memory of him who not long before was the object of public hatred or contempt. Let us endeavour to trace to its source the cause of such an impolitic mode of treatment, which seems to throw such an effectual damp on the ardor of ambition; and check, in its rise that desire of glory and emulation of an illustrious predecessor, which is the only source of great actions.

It has been observed, that time alone can decide the degree of estimation to which every man is entitled; the partialities or prejudices of contemporaries exalt or depress every virtue, heighten or palliate every fault, and represent every action in  
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the light that is most favourable to their different purposes of panegyric or invective. It is difficult to find the candid historian of his own times, who, if deeply concerned in the transactions he records, will relate the narrative of contending factions without prejudice or bias; and he who expects to find an impartial account in a *Clarendon*, will most probably search for that which has never yet existed.—By comparing the opposite characters of the same man, and making a due allowance for the exaggerations on either side, by judiciously blending the two extremes, and considering the effects which his measures have had on posterity, his true character is to be delineated. Few possess such clear heads and cool passions, as to resist the torrent of prejudice and party which assails them; and as there is no man who has not sometimes erred in his conduct; to this, as well as to other causes, is the ungrateful treatment of great men to be ascribed. It is the business of malice to point out this error, and mankind is too prone secretly to wish the downfall of those, whose abilities have raised them above the common level. To us, who judge coolly at a distance, whose passions are not immediately interested in the cause, it is a subject of astonishment, that men could ever  
have

have been so blind to their own interests as to have neglected or ill treated the worthy and the great, at the instigation of the profligate and unprincipled; it is an infatuation which is not to be accounted for, unless we consult the emotions of our own hearts. Can the heart fairly say, that it has never conceived a prejudice against any person, either from the principles it has been educated in, from some misrepresentation of any action or speech, or some personal pique? has it never, from any of these motives, felt itself inclined to gratify this malice, tho' conscious of the virtues against which it is exerted? These, it is true, are principles, mean, base, and contracted, which it is our duty to root out; but such is the frailty of nature, that they always have maintained, and I am afraid always will maintain, an undue influence. I do not mean to vindicate such treatment on these grounds, but merely to account for the causes of it.

The great, by the superiority of their abilities, depress and restrain the advancement of others who are hastening to the same goal; and who are equally desirous, tho' not equally capable, of attaining the same heights. These, either consider  
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der them as obstacles to their own promotion, whom they must remove ; or in the fury of blasted ambition, endeavour to revenge themselves on the supposed author of their disappointments. In a democratical state, the multitude are the general instruments of their hatred : by a dexterous application to their fears and passions ; to their fears, in suggesting, that the influence which the glory and splendid actions of an individual has conferred on him is dangerous to the whole, and that his great authority has inspired him with designs destructive of the common weal ; to their passions, by reviving the memory and magnifying the heinousness of every petty incident, or unguided speech ; and by a malicious perversion of every little action, they enflame the giddy populace to the persecution of those, whom they ought to revere as their guardians and protectors. Men of the first abilities, as conscious of their powers, frequently have not that condescension of manners so necessary in a popular state. Those trivial events, which it is beneath the dignity of history to preserve, have, I doubt not, often contributed to decide the fate of the Patriot or General. We who have never experienced the haughty demeanour of *Coriolanus*, the rough reproof of *Cato*, and whose



whose rise the abilities of a *Cicero* have never impeded, or his vanity never offended, pay the due tribute of admiration to these illustrious men; we acknowledge their merits, and admire the wisdom of their conduct, but have never felt the inconveniencies of their defects.

The human mind in general is not sensible of the benefits it enjoys, till it has felt the opposite inconveniencies; as the body knows not the invaluable blessings of health, till it has experienced the miseries of disease. Thus in a state, the short sighted multitude have not a proper esteem for the value of an able Statesman, 'till fatal experience has convinced them of his worth; it is in times of real danger that real merit gains its due authority: hence the deep policy of *Augustus*, who affected a wish to retire from the fatigues of state, that by the subsequent confusion, the *Romans* might have a deeper sense of the blessings of his regular administration.

Thus far on the rewards of public merit.—  
Let us now consider the fate of the literary and philosophical world. That the boldness and novelty of opinions in natural or moral philosophy,

lofophy, fhould often draw down perfecution on the heads of thofe who firft ventured to maintain them; that *Socrates* fhould have been charged with Atheifm, or that the bigotted fuperftition of the Catholics fhould have imprifoned *Galileo*, is not fo furprifing; but I cannot affign an adequate caufe for the neglect or oppreffion of literary merit: though it is a melancholy fact, that in all ages, literature, and poetry in particular, has been expofed to poverty, and all its attendant miferies. That the fame envy which banifhed the Statesman, might in a fmall circle influence the breasts of the rivals for poetic or learned fame; or that the fnarling critic fhould wifh to expofe every little blemifh, or decry every beauty, to gratify his own impotent malice, is naturally to be expected; but that the powerful and the rich fhould fuffer fuch abilities to pine in obfcurity, is to me an inexplicable mystery.

The Poet impedes not their ambition, hinders not their advancement to the higheft honors; on the contrary, he is the moft proper, and I think gratitude would make him the moft willing, to celebrate the laudable ambition, and the well-earned honors of his protector and his patron. Not that  
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the fulsome language of dedication can crown the unworthy head with real glory. The ear is disgusted with the venal flattery of *Boileau* to *Louis*, but the manly address of *Pope* to *Bolinbroke*, reflects mutual honor on both parties: to such an address, flattery and venality would be imputed by ignorance alone; it is the abuse of dedication only, which has brought it into disrepute, since in its original intention, nothing could be more equitable, than that the works of genius should be inscribed to him, to whose fostering care they probably owed their rise.

There is however one species of poetry, which either stands less in need of protection, or from its subject, ensures itself more immediate success. The man who has no relish for the sublime of the Epic, or the terrible of Tragedy, will enter into the spirit of a pointed Satire; fear also often extorts that protection to the satyrift, which liberality refused. The famous *Aretine* boasted, that he not only kept all the European Sovereigns, but even the Sultan himself, in dread of his pen.

It may be worth remarking, that painting has escaped the general fate of her sister art. The  
greatest

greatest painters have been universally honored when living, and admired when dead. From what singular circumstance can this peculiarity originate? is it, that this art, so immediately addressing itself to the senses, we are less liable to be misled and prejudiced by the opinions of others? it is not in every body's power to determine, whether a poet has borrowed a thought from another, either from his not having seen the works of the Poet from whom the thought is said to have been borrowed, or his ignorance of the language in which he wrote; we must therefore in some measure rely on the sagacity and fidelity of the critic for the charge of plagiarism. Every body cannot judge whether the plan of the poem is original or well conducted, or whether the historian relates his facts with accuracy and impartiality; as every body has not leisure to inform himself of the rules for the conduct of poetry, or to examine the authorities whence the Historian derives his information. In these points therefore, and others which depend on the intellectual faculties, we must again trust to the Critic; and the interest he may have in decrying the works of an Author, from envy, personal pique, or other motives, may in some measure account for the temporary

porary neglect of those works: but in those articles which address themselves to the senses, we are our own judges; we are all qualified to decide on what pleases our taste, tho' that taste perhaps may be false. We need not depend upon critic judgment to determine, whether a couplet is harmonious or not; and we need not wait for the decision of the connoisseur, to inform us whether a figure is bold and animated, or the colouring just and natural. It is true, that the critic is an abler judge of the refinements of poetry, the machinery, and other parts, which depend upon skill and judgment; and the connoisseur of the due proportion, the effects of light and shade, the perspective, and nicer subtleties of painting; but still the less skilful and casual observer, is competent to form his opinion on the grand outline of the whole.

It is to be supposed, that there are the same temptations to depress a rising painter, as an eminent poet; but fortunately for the former, he is not exposed to the same disadvantages as the latter. He cannot be accused of obtruding upon the public the works of others as his own; nor is he liable to a spurious copy of his works, by which  
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he may be deprived of the just reward of his labours. Many who have not leisure to peruse a poem, can spare an hour to examine a picture; and to determine the merit of one, requires a less exertion of the mind than of the other. Tho' the price of paintings is comparatively so enormous to that of books, yet as most large collections are open to the public at no expence, numbers have examined, and are good judges of merit in this art, who do not possess a single piece of their own; an advantage which writers are deprived of. Even that scarcity which enhances the value of every thing, contributes to this; as it is beyond a doubt, that good books are more numerous than good paintings, we may esteem them the more, as more difficult to be procured. By the value of paintings, an artist may often acquire such a sum by a single picture, as an author cannot by the sale of a whole work; by this means being raised above want, he is not under the fatal necessity of harrassing his abilities to procure a daily subsistence. Since portrait painting has been so much in vogue, this art, by flattering our vanity, tempts us to encourage it; and surely that vanity will not permit us to deny the abilities of an artist, when those abilities have been exerted

exerted to gratify it. A *Reynolds* may give grace and dignity to fifty insipid faces in the course of a year ; tho' a Poet would find it difficult in his dedications, to furnish half the number with virtues, as imaginary as the graces, in the countenance of the former. But to return,

This review of the unmerited treatment of the illustrious, seems calculated to damp the ardor of those, who even now are panting for fame and glory. Far be it from me to attempt to check one generous emotion, to stifle one spark of rising ambition. Upon those who have a taste for true glory, and strength of mind sufficient to encounter the dangers incident to the pursuit of it, this consideration will have no influence ; they will know what they have to encounter, and despise the efforts of that envy, over which their final triumph is certain. It is better surely that they should be forewarned of the perils of their undertakings, and not be elated with the hopes of an immediate success, in the pursuit of which they will meet certain disappointment ; and in the despair of which disappointment, they may relinquish their hopes at the moment they have surmounted the difficulties they had to struggle with. Let them

them remember, that persecution, tho' it has often been the lot, is not the necessary consequence of merit. It is the boast of *England*, that she has not only raised the monument to *Wolfe* or *Chatham* when dead, but also acknowledged and rewarded their virtues when living.

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T H E


M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXVIII.—MONDAY, *May 28, 1787.*

*Verbum verbo expressum.*—TERENCE.

*Translated word for word.*

 M O N G the several fields which lie open to my fellow-citizens, for the exercise and display of their respective abilities, there is none which seems so generally disregarded as the translation of the classics : whether from its being considered as a mechanical labour, substituted as a relief from the perpetual exercise of the fancy ; or from a contempt

tempt of excelling in a branch of learning which carries with it no mark of distinction.

I shall therefore make it my endeavour to point out a few of the peculiar advantages, which a strict attention to its niceties may be of, in giving the last polish to a classical education. If considered on a general scale, it is undoubtedly the medium through which ancient literature gains a general introduction to modern taste ; and as the mere interpretation of an author's words, without conveying his spirit, nay, as far as a similarity of idiom will allow, his peculiarities of style, tends only to convey to the mind of the reader a disgust for classical writings, by an insipid copy of an expressive original ; it is no easy task to introduce Patroclus chining a porker, or Achates lighting a fire, with that majesty which should attend a hero even in the menial offices of cook and scullion.

The composition of latin verse has always been the characteristic of Eton ; and though it has frequently been attacked as too superficial an accomplishment, to be held up as the first object, it is certain, that without it, the elegancies of the  
language

language are never to be attained; and the very pronunciation is often erroneous from ignorance of accent and quantity. The Archives of our state are filled with the first efforts of expanding genius; and so profusely bountiful is this poetic mania, that there is not a cubic foot in father Thames, but is so ornamented with Naiads, as to force some of them up the neighbouring ditches, for the accommodation of the majority; nor a tree in our *campus martius*, but has at least its brace of Dryads, though there is not a single oak among them. Nay, the learned compiler of the *Musæ Etonenses*, has in his preface, purely for the amusement of passers by, crammed more poets of all sorts and sizes, into a bench, which a dozen starveling sonneteers might fill with ease, than any nine Muses in the world could take care of at once.

A study of this kind, as requiring more genius than judgment, more fancy than application, may be justly supposed more congenial to the pursuits of youth. It is not therefore with an idea of supporting the one against the other, that I have undertaken the defence of Translation; but to prove, that while it is an amusement not unworthy  
of

of genius, it is an employment of the highest utility to persevering industry.

Genius is naturally sympathetic; and so sensitive are the powers of a lively fancy; that wherever we meet with a transcript of our own ideas of perfection, we insensibly glide into the spirit which gave birth to them, and almost compose as we copy. A man of boisterous passions will kindle at the character of Achilles; a humourist will feel a peculiar delight in the sallies of an Aristophanes or a Foote; and a Cynic grind his teeth over the strong misanthropy of a Lucian or a Swift. What the imagination thus cherishes, it will naturally endeavour to bring home to its own ideas; and so far does this often carry us, that I will venture to affirm, that there are few attentive readers of foreign writings, who do not in thought translate every striking idea, as it occurs.

There is besides, a higher gratification reserved for our curiosity than the comprehension of a favourite author. We have, by a closer attention to the niceties of idiom, an opportunity of observing what analogy subsists between the languages and

characters of nations ; and what a strong, though to the vulgar eye invisible link runs through the fundamental principles of all languages, notwithstanding the difference of manner, age, and all the contingencies which have contributed to their formation.

To the man to whom amusement, in competition with knowledge, is a very secondary object, this employment has, by the most able writers on the subject, been recommended ; not only as a more effectual but a more easy method of obtaining a knowledge of language, than grammatical theory, or even practical observation can give. And there can be very little doubt, but that as we are originally taught to form our ideas in our native tongue, any thing which is brought nearest to its level, will be most likely to adhere to our memories, and be rendered most familiar to our conceptions.

But notwithstanding a general similarity, there will still be a peculiar characteristic to every language ; and many writers are so interwoven with the genius of their native tongue, as to sink under a translation, notwithstanding the united efforts of  
learning

learning and genius; and like the tender exotic, when removed from the genial influence of its own soil and climate, to lose their natural vigour, and fade into a vapid insipidity. Tully, even by the sacrifice of his own harmonious flow of language, could not entirely preserve the chaste severity of Aristotle in a Roman habit; Tacitus is no Englishman; and a late attempt to *frenchify* Shakspeare met with the ridicule it deserved.

The chief excellence of Paterculus consists in drawing characters; and so great a master was he considered by the great Clarendon, that he is said to have made him his historical model, and adopted him as the constant companion of his leisure hours. Strong figures and expressive conciseness are the characteristics of his writings; but there is a quaintness in his points, which the English language is not always equal to.—The elegance of Pliny, so genteely introduced to an English acquaintance by Mr. Melmoth, cannot but be striking to every classical reader. Yet a man of genius, who should find a translation flow from his pen with that ease so remarkable in the original, might often be at a loss for expression in the concluding sentence, from the quick turn  

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which

which distinguishes that author; and resembles rather the point of the Epigrammatist, than the unrestrained negligence of the letter writer.

As the most diffuse writers are universally most adapted to a change of language, it is remarkable, that the works of Cicero have been only partially translated by Men qualified for such an undertaking. His Rhetorical, and more particularly, his Philosophical disquisitions, the interesting picture of the efforts of reason unassisted by revelation, are still confined to the admiration of the learned world.

The characters of these writers I have cursorily touched upon, as being those which are most familiar to the pens of my fellow-citizens; and to the junior part of them, whose method of study is not yet fixed, I should wish to recommend this method as the most efficacious introduction to classical knowledge. And now, good-natured reader, that thou may'st see with myself what an unpardonable offence, in the moral as well as literary world, is a negligent translation, I will point out to thee one instance where the mistake of a single expression has given rise to a more barbarous

barous murder, than ever graced the frontispiece of a Newgate Calendar.

Those laudable promoters of Christian merriment, (as themselves profess) Sternhold and Hopkins, either originally tempted by the text which they have adopted for their motto, to torture poor David into doggerel rhyme; or pleased to conceal so inhuman a deed under such unquestionable authority; refer us to the advice of an inspired writer for their justification. And as psalm singing is there prescribed to those who are light of heart, they have taken upon them to provide ample entertainment for all his Majesty's Christian subjects who are inclined to be tuneful.

The passage in the original language stands thus;  
*Κακοπαθεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῶν; προσευχέσθω: ἐνθυμῆι τις;  
 ψαλλέτω.* Epist. Jac. C. 5. V. 13.

This probably is not the expression which would have been made use of, had the apostle intended to characterize sacred music, as there are other words more peculiarly adapted to such a meaning; and this is by the Greek authors promiscuously used for any sort of song; and among them by



Anacreon, whose lyre was seldom tun'd to psalmody, but in honour of deities whose worship did not admit of the serious or sublime. It is probable therefore, that this expression refers only to the effect which harmony is known to produce, in softening the extravagance of joy, as well as the pangs of affliction; and that this may be ranked among those many errata, which in some measure pervert the original intention of these inimitable writings; undoubtedly calculated to unite a simplicity adapted to the meanest capacities, with an elegance capable of pleasing the most refined.

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXIX.—MONDAY, *June 4, 1787.*


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*Vir bonus est quis ?*

*The good man is a Quiz.*

‘TO GREGORY GRIFFIN, ESQ.

‘MR. GREGORY GRIFFIN,

‘ F I N D, most unfortunately for  
‘myself, that I come under the de-  
‘nomination of a *quiz*. As it is  
‘your peculiar province to apply  
‘the lash to the little world out of the library, it  
‘will be totally unnecessary to offer an apology  
‘for this letter, which, it is my most earnest re-  
‘quest, may be circulated, especially through the  
‘lower school, with all possible expedition.

F 4

‘ But

‘ But before I proceed, it may be thought necessary to give some description of a figure which my own conscience but too frequently informs me is not, at first sight, by any means agreeable,

‘ I am now forty-nine years of age, and measure four feet eight inches in height. My usual dress is a dark wig without powder, a round gold laced hat, a light blue coat and waistcoat, a pair of black everlasting breeches, and a large muslin neckcloth, which, indeed, has lately been adopted by, and seems the constant ornament of the macaronies of the age.

‘ In my childhood the nurse who took care, or rather who did not take care of me, let master Jacob (for that is my christian name) fall upon the fender, which circumstance she, of course, concealed from my parents. Some time elapsed before the discovery was made, and all medical assistance was then ineffectual. The family surgeon looked very grave, and emphatically pronounced that the bones were distorted, and, although I was not yet *an adult*, it was by no means a recent injury; and that there would be

‘ a

‘ a *gibbosity*, a preternatural incurvation of the  
 ‘ *spina dorſi* for the remainder of my exiſtence.

‘ Notwithſtanding, to pleaſe my mother, he  
 ‘ gave me a ſteel machine, made to preſs princi-  
 ‘ pally upon the *gibbous* part, and afterwards tried  
 ‘ a *croſs* and ſtrengthening plaifter of *oxycroceum*.  
 ‘ and *opodeldock*, but without effect.

‘ The boys in the village ſoon began to call me  
 ‘ *humpy*, and in a very ſhort time, I was dig-  
 ‘ nified, by general conſent, with the title of *my*  
 ‘ *Lord*. My father, judging perhaps that my  
 ‘ companions at School might banter and make  
 ‘ game of my perſonal defects, procured a cler-  
 ‘ gyman to live in the houſe in the capacity of  
 ‘ tutor; but being himſelf an excellent claſſick,  
 ‘ he gave up much of his time to ſuperintend the  
 ‘ eudcation of his only ſon. Notwithſtanding his  
 ‘ paternal fondneſs and good intentions, I have  
 ‘ but too frequently ſince felt the diſadvantage of  
 ‘ not having early enjoyed a public introduction  
 ‘ into the world. Had my ear been a little  
 ‘ more accuſtomed to the word *quiz*, I ſhould  
 ‘ have no occaſion now to intrude myſelf upon  
 ‘ your notice.

• But for the sake of perspicuity, it will be necessary to finish the description of my person, before I enter into a detail of the grievances it has caused. It has been already prefaced, that I was doomed to have a hump-back; at the age of twenty-four a scrophulous humour disfigured a face not naturally resembling that of Adonis. A little time before I reached my twenty-fifth year, two fore teeth were knocked out by a chambermaid in Yorkshire, whom I, after having drunk too much, attempted to kiss; and what made this circumstance much more painful, she had a little before, patiently, I might say willingly, submitted her lips to be saluted by a young Officer, who was quartered at that time in the town. My nose soon after began to increase to an enormous size, and is now perfectly unnatural. You may see in it all the colours of the rainbow; but red and purple are particularly conspicuous, and like rivals, are plainly seen to contend for the superiority. In short, Sterne's trumpeter, when he entered Strasburgh, had a *snub* to mine in point of size, and an *aquiline* in point of beauty, for I exceed Bardolph, *the Knight of the burning Lamp*.

Riding

‘ Riding through Eton about a week ago, with  
‘ my nose before me,

‘ *Nescio quid meditans, nugarum, et totus in illis.*

‘ Meditating, indeed, on I know not what, I  
‘ was awakened from my reverie by several pro-  
‘ vincial words, the meaning of which were to me,  
‘ at that time, almost unintelligible; although by  
‘ the gestures which accompanied them, it was no  
‘ difficult matter to discover that they were not  
‘ intended by way of compliment, “*There’s a quiz!*  
“ *there’s a good one! my God! what a Gig! what*  
“ *a tough one! Smoke his nose!*”

‘ Notwithstanding I perceived that these ex-  
‘ pressions proceeded from several young Etonians,  
‘ not one of whom had arrived at the age of thir-  
‘ teen, my indignation was foolishly roused. I  
‘ long’d for the trumpeter’s sword, and in the  
‘ first ebullitions of rage, idly made use of some  
‘ very hasty expressions. It was lucky for both  
‘ parties, but more especially for myself, that I  
‘ had nothing in my hand but a small flexible  
‘ switch. However, my anger was momentary;  
‘ I soon collected all my lost philosophy, repeating  
‘ those,

‘ those lines of Horace, to which theorists often  
 ‘ have recourse

————— *animum rege! qui nisi paret*  
*Imperat: hunc frænis, hunc tu compeſce catenâ.*

‘ But it was too late, I had provoked the boys to  
 ‘ resentment. Several now ran to the head of my  
 ‘ beast,

————— *Nex Saxa, nec ullum*  
*Telorum interea ceſſat genus.*

‘ Many pieces of mud and ſome ſtones were  
 ‘ thrown, notwithstanding I advanced ſafe under  
 ‘ cover of my noſe, ſtill *quizzed* and ſtill pelted,  
 ‘ till my quadrupede arrived oppoſite the ſchool-  
 ‘ gate. I looked round for a *maſter* in vain: No  
 ‘ black gown was to be ſeen. At length an arch  
 ‘ boy, with dark brown hair, which hung in ring-  
 ‘ lets down his back, took up a thittle, which un-  
 ‘ fortunately lay in the road, and put it under my  
 ‘ horſe’s tail. Can I with temper deſcribe the fa-  
 ‘ tal cataſtrophe which enfued?—My long-tailed  
 ‘ white ſteed, which is called *Surrey*, nervous and  
 ‘ metteliſome to a degree, immediately began to  
 ‘ plunge, putting his head between his legs,  
 ‘ neighing,

neighing, and doing I know not what besides.  
I strove strenuously to keep my seat—but

————— *Ob! vain boast,  
Who can controul his fate?*

To be brief, my length was measured upon the ground, and I cut a place in the back part of my head, an inch and an half in length; my brown wig was full of blood; and my light blue coat was so stained, that I have never been able to cover my hump with it again. However, my ludicrous appearance was soon forgotten, and I was carried into a neighbouring shop. Many of the scholars crowded about, offering their services, which I knew not how to decline, though at first, I feared to trust them; but the unfeigned humanity and attention that were now conspicuous, soon convinced me their conduct was void of duplicity. Some of the larger boys, and one in particular, lifted up his hand to chastize the young criminal who had applied the thistle, but, upon my intercession, politely desisted. *White Surrey*, after being eased of his burthen, had galloped up Slough-road; however he was brought safe back in a few minutes, my head was



‘ was bound up, I remounted, and proceeded to-  
‘ wards London.

‘ A sight of one of your periodical papers, in-  
‘ duced me to address a letter to you, hoping,  
‘ partly upon a public, and partly upon a private  
‘ motive, that it may be perused within the  
‘ walls of the college.

‘ I am confident that you, Mr. Gregory Grif-  
‘ fin, was not one of the spectators who beheld my  
‘ downfall, or it would not have escaped imme-  
‘ diate censure from so able a pen; not that I  
‘ would be thought one of those starch, uncon-  
‘ scionable gentlemen who expect to see youth  
‘ blessed with all the benefit of experience, well  
‘ knowing that it would be as impossible to pre-  
‘ scribe limits to the winds, as to forbid a second  
‘ form boy now and then to smoke a quiz. All I  
‘ request is, that next time my nose and I come  
‘ through Eton, the thistle may be omitted; and,  
‘ as missile weapons are now out of fashion among  
‘ civilized nations, I particularly deprecate the  
‘ dirt and stones.

‘ Eton has long been the distinguished seat of  
‘ politeness as well as learning. One lash from you  
‘ may

‘ may perhaps have more effect in softening these  
 ‘ last remains of barbarism in your republic, than  
 ‘ all the birch within ten miles of the precincts of  
 ‘ the college. We may all be easily convinced  
 ‘ that external appearance is by no means a just  
 ‘ criterion by which the merit of a man can be  
 ‘ judged. You, Mr. Gregory Griffin, well know,  
 ‘ that Alexander the Great, although conqueror  
 ‘ of the world, had a personal defect; that De-  
 ‘ mosthenes had not an agreeable figure; that Mr.  
 ‘ Pope was awry; that Horace was a short punch-  
 ‘ bellied fellow, in short a *tough one*; that Voltaire  
 ‘ was a *good one*; and that Socrates himself was a  
 ‘ *quiz*.

‘ I have the honour to be,

‘ Sir,

‘ Your most obedient humble Servant,

‘ *London, May 4.*

‘ VIR BONUS.’

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My Correspondent's complaint is by no means without foundation; and as Censor General, it is a subject which would not so long have escaped my animadversion, had I not considered that it would come with more propriety from one who  
 had

had materially suffered from it, and could therefore more *feelingly* point out its ill consequences.

Every nation has its peculiar antipathies, political or religious; which, on the smallest commotion of the body politic, may be observed to take the lead, and in a great measure direct the fury of the multitude; as in the natural body, the constitutional disease is roused from its dormant state, and is the first to evince its malignity, when the irregularity of the blood gives advantage to its attacks.

But these may generally be traced to their origin; a long series of wars; the dissension of families; a bigotted persecution; and frequently natural rivalship, have established the most rooted aversion for each other, in the very genius of nations apparently at peace; and hereditary hostilities have been kept up in the minds of the populace, by connecting them with every idea which naturally has the strongest hold on their feelings. The strange antipathies of our republican to the inoffensive race of *Quizzes* can be attributed to none of these causes; and it is impossible to account for the persecution of these beings

beings, unless we suppose, that non-resistance only sharpens that rage which ugliness originally provoked. The *Quiz*, like the Eskimaux, generally seems contented with his humble lot; he eats, drinks, and sleeps, and has, no doubt, in some respects a reasonable soul, which is a privilege many naturalists have denied to the latter.

But, alas, I fear it is more than a Herculean labour to undertake the justification of a bottle nose; or rescue a suit of Dittos from revilings! the populace will still be what it always was; and in spite of the admonitions of Gregory Griffin, a Jackass and a *Quiz* be persecuted with the same unrelenting severity.

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXX.—MONDAY, *June 11, 1787.*

*Quanto rectius hic.—HOR.*

*How much superior he, &c.*

 FROM the time that I first promised  
 F my fellow-citizens I would point out  
 a set of books to their observation, from  
the perusal of which, if substituted in  
the place of Novels, they might derive at least equal  
advantage and entertainment, there has scarce a  
day passed, in which some attempt has not been  
made by different correspondents, either by letters  
of enquiry or conjecture, to forestall my good ad-  
vice,

vice, and anticipate my intended recommendation. Some have been so good-natured, as to cloak counsel under the garb of conjecture, and under pretence of guessing my intentions, have recommended their own favourite studies to my notice, as fit objects for my recommendation to the notice of my fellow-citizens; and furnished me with arguments for the support of their own propositions. Others have contented themselves with forming a variety of conjectures; and some of them have so far piqued themselves on their sagacity, that they have confidently offered me wagers of *ten to one*, which I can assure my readers, I expect no small applause for not having accepted; when they consider, that had my views been at all mercenary, I might here have taken the opportunity to pick up a very comfortable sum in a very honourable way. Others again have been so conscious of their own unbounded attachment to the study I have laboured to depreciate, as to think themselves particularly pointed at, in that sentence, where I complained of the unmerited contempt with which the objects of my intended recommendation are treated; and have sent me the most affecting assurances of better behaviour for the future. *Historiophilus* cannot help  
being

being surprized that I should know he had never "*read his Bible,*" which he doubts not is the book to which I propose calling his attention; but he promises me faithfully henceforward to read a chapter of it every night going to bed, and never to devour at most above three novels in a month. *Latinus's* conscience has been equally busy in informing him, that the books I mean for his perusal can be no other than the *Classics*, to which, though, he owns, he has hitherto neglected them, to gratify his taste for sentiment, he is now determined, in compliance with my advice, to give the most ardent attention; and as an earnest of his amendment, he tells me, he has already struck out his name from the list of subscribers to the circulating library; for which he adds, rather archly, my bookseller, he believes, will not consider himself under any great obligation to me.

Though I must assure these gentlemen, that all their suppositions are very erroneous; I cannot but confess myself very much pleased, at the above-mentioned salutary, and I will add unforeseen effects of my censorial exertions. Not but I am a little surprized, that any of my correspondents could for a moment suppose me so devoid

void of delicacy, as to propose, as a substitute for sentiment, the dull perusal of the unpolished Ancients, and a study so unfashionable as religion.

There are besides those already mentioned, another set of correspondents, of whom I must take some notice, before I proceed to the discovery of my purpose. These are some who have continued to send me frequent assurances of the little credit they give to my professions of disinterestedness; and who resolve, in spite of my declarations to the contrary, to persevere in believing the studies, to which I wish them to give so much application, to be no other than my own lucubrations. One Gentleman in particular, has taken the trouble to be extremely witty on the subject; and has had the art, by a course of the most apt and pointed observations, to turn my own declaration against me. He adduces the example of a Highwayman, with great success; and tells an interesting and affecting story, (but rather of the longest) extracted as it seems from the "*New-gate Calendar, or Malefactors Bloody Register,*" by which it appears, that this highwayman "denied this murder before he was accused of it, and so got himself found out." This my  
Gentleman



Gentleman considers as exactly a case in point, and proceeds accordingly through a long series of logical divisions, and some very nice and subtle distinctions of "*whys*" and "*wherefores*" to argue, that my disavowal of any sinister view to my own advantage, could have been derived from nothing, but a perfect consciousness of the same; and consequently must be ascribed to precisely the same motives, as the unsolicited protestations of his hero the Highwayman.

Ingenious as are the arguments, and conclusive as are the inferences of my worthy Correspondent, I must beg leave to differ from him very decidedly on the present question; and however sure the grounds of the indictment preferred against me, may appear to him at present, I doubt not, but the very material evidence which I shall produce on my part, will, ere long, induce him to alter his opinion, and to give a verdict in favour of my disinterestedness.

I shall now therefore no longer delay to bring forward, as substantial and satisfactory witnesses of my disinterestedness, the books, which I think so fully capable of supplying the place of those studies

studies which usually engross the attention of our Novel-readers. And these are no other than the instructive and entertaining Histories of Mr. THOMAS THUMB, Mr. JOHN HICKATHRIFT, and sundry other celebrated Worthies ; a true and faithful account of whose adventures and achievements, may be had by the Curious, and Public in general, price two-pence gilt, at Mr. *Newbery's*, *St. Paul's Church-Yard*, and at some other Gentleman's, whose name I do not now recollect, the *Bouncing B. Shoe-Lane*.

I am well aware that full many are the opinions I shall have to combat against in behalf of my recommendation. Many there will be who will ungenerously cavil at the size of my *proteges* ; armed with a sort of cowardly criticism, which though it dares not venture any strictures on a bulky folio, or scan the Merits of even a tolerable corpulent Quarto, yet thinks itself fully competent to give a decided opinion on so small an offspring of literature, and to persecute an unprotected *romo* with the most unrelenting severity.

To shew however the very high estimation, in which I am confident, they deserve to be held by  
the

the literary world, I shall not condescend to compare them with those precious farragos, in the room of which I intend introducing them to my fellow-citizens. Far higher are my ideas of the comparative excellence of Mr. Newbery's little-books—and more especially of the two to which I have before alluded.—In the heroes of these, a candid and impartial critic will readily agree with me, that we find a very strong resemblance to those who are immortalized in *Homeric* song; that in *HICKATHRIFF* we see pourtrayed the spirit, the prowess, and every great quality of *ACHILLES*; and in *THUMB*, the prudence, the caution, the patience, the perseverance of *ULYSSES*. There is however, one peculiar advantage, which the histories of the modern Worthies enjoy over their ancient originals, which is that of uniting the Great and Sublime of Epic grandeur, with the Little and the Low of common life; and of tempering the fiercer and more glaring colours of the Marvellous and the Terrible, with the softer shades of the Domestic and the Familiar. Where, in either of the great originals, shall we find so pleasing an assemblage of tender ideas, so interesting a picture of domestic employments,—as the following sketch of the night preceding that in which *Tom Thumb*

*Thumb* and his brethren were to be purposely lost in the Wood?

“ Now it was nine o’clock, and all the children, after eating a piece of bread and butter, were put to bed. But little *Tom* did not eat his—but put it in his pocket.—And now all the Children were fast asleep in their beds—but little *Tom* could not sleep for thinking of what he had heard the night before—so he got up, and put on his shoes and stockings, &c.”

How forcibly does this passage bring to the mind of every classical reader, the picture which *Homer* draws of *Agamemnon*, in the 10th book of the *Iliad*.

Ἀλλ’ ἐκ Ἀτρεΐδην Ἀγαμέμνονα, ποιμένα λαῶν,  
 ὕπνος εἶχε γλυκερός, πολλὰ φρεσὶν ὀρμαινούϊα, &c.

————— *The Chiefs before their vessels lay  
 And left in sleep the labours of the day ;  
 All but the King ; with various thoughts opprest,  
 His Country’s cares lay rolling in his breast, &c.  
 He rose  
 And on his feet the shining sandals bound, &c.*

This vigilant conduct in brooding a sleepless night over embryo expeditions, and cautiously providing against future necessities by the pocketing of his bread and butter, is at least equal to any trait in the character of ULYSSES.—Nor is it in point of Character only, that the resemblance between this Work and the two great Poems of Antiquity is discernible. Here we find also in their fullest perfection

————— *Speciosa—Miracula rerum,*  
*Antiphaten, Scyllamque, et cum cyclope Charybdin.*  
*Antiphates his hideous feast devours, &c.*

FRANCIS.

To say nothing of the form of the OGRE, which is painted in a style infinitely beyond the POLYPHEME of *Homer*—to pass over the terrible poetic imagery with which his first speech of *Fee, Faw, Fum*, is replete—it must I think be readily allowed, the stratagem by which *Tom* releases himself and his brethren from the Monster's power, (by taking “the crowns of gold from the heads of the little Ogres and Ogresses, and putting them on their own; whereby the Giant comes and kills his own children”) is far more poetical, far more noble, than the pitiful escape of ULYSSES and his companions, under the sheeps' bellies, and the paltry

paltry contrivance of *Ουδεις*.—But there is another circumstance where the fictions of the two poets bear a still nearer resemblance to each other. The learned Reader will easily guess that I mean—the March of the *OGRE*, in the third Chapter of *Tom Thumb*, and that of *NEPTUNE*, in the thirteenth Book of the *Iliad*.—To enable my readers to draw the comparison better, I shall transcribe both.

“*There the OGRE,*” says my author “*called for his seven leagued boots, in which he journeyed, and he put them on; and he took one, two, three steps, and at the third he came to the dark cave where little TOM was.*”

Of *NEPTUNE*'s passage from *Samothrace* to *Troy*, *Homer* says,

Τρὶς μὲν ὀπίξασ' ἰὼν· τὸ δὲ τέτραλον, ἵκετο τέμνω,  
Αἰγᾶς·

*From realm to realm three ample strides he took,  
And at the fourth the distant Egæ shook.*

“Which” says his commentator, “is pretty near a degree at each step.”—But let the Reader candidly examine both the passages, and make

fair allowances for the unavoidable difference in sound, of "*the distant Egeæ*," and "*the dark cave where little Tom was*," and I doubt not but my Author will claim at least an equal share of admiration.

But it would be an endless task to point out every latent beauty, every unnoticed elegance with which these productions are interspersed. Not to enter therefore into a comparative view of the Characters of HICKATHRIFF and ACHILLES; to omit noticing the affecting and solemn invocation of the Princess CINDERELLA to the bean her counsellor, beginning "*Bean, bean, little bean, I charge thee in the name of the fairy Trufio*" (which by the bye justifies the opinion of *Pythagoras* with regard to the reverence due to this vegetable) to omit this, I say, and other innumerable passages, equally worthy of notice, I shall haften to inform my fellow-citizens, that in compliance with my advice, my bookseller proposes very soon substituting in the room of his present Catalogue, a list of all the productions of this kind, which can be procured either at Mr Newbery's or the Bouncing B.

And

And I doubt not but I shall in a very short time have the satisfaction to see the generality of my fellow-citizens, running through them with the most eager avidity, from beginning to end—from “*Once upon a time,*” to “*lived very happy afterwards:*” fully convinced, that such works as could bear a competition with the strains of *Homer*, would be degraded by any comparison with the silly Effusions of nonsense and sentiment—convinced too, if the examples for the purposes of morality be considered, that a Character which gleaned the several excellencies of all the *Edwards*, the *Sir Harry’s*, and the *Pamelas* of Novel-writers—would be but a poor competitor with one that joined in itself the patience and chastity of **CINDERELLA**, the prudence of **THUMB**, and the heroism of **HICKATHRIFT**.

B

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THE



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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXXI.—MONDAY, June 18, 1787.

*Opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum.*—HOR.

*In a long work an Author once may dose.*—NAN.

HAVING an idle hour the other evening, and being in one of those *miscellaneous* humours in which our sole object is to kill time; I happened to fix on a moral essay on human nature, as the most effectual and expeditious means of dispatching him. As I turned over the pages, I could not but remark, how ingeniously its philanthropic

thropic author had endeavoured to put his readers out of humour with themselves, by proving to them, that in spite of their own endeavours, they inevitably must be greater knaves or fools than their grand-fathers.

From the contemplation of these weeping Philosophers, my reflection naturally led me to those ingenious projectors, who with more benevolence, though if possible less effect, have devoted their literary labours to the reformation of a vicious age; and formed such sublime and comprehensive projects for reducing human nature to its primitive state of purity.

The recollection of the deep-laid projects for the abolition of Christianity, the consolidation of Turks, Jews, and Gentiles, the conversion of the grand Signior, the Pope, or the Emperor of China, was so interesting a subject, that it might have kept me awake beyond my usual hour; had I not fortunately recollected, that in the course of thirty numbers I had not had one vision. Alarmed at this idea, I was determined to go to sleep without losing a moment, and dream in full time for the press. I had no sooner put the first part of

my resolution in practice, when lo! whether Morpheus is the professed patron of periodical writers, or is ambitious of removing the imputation of levity from his character, by giving a vision some kind of regularity, from whichever cause it proceeded, my dream was an exact continuation of the subject which had so long employed my thoughts.

It was at the dead of night, when some eccentric being, (whose project had I conceive been hatched long before I had fallen asleep, otherwise, gentle reader, every thing could not have been so exactly prepared,) had made ready the following conspiracy for execution. Tired of continually harassing his mind for the advantage of an ungrateful public, and vexed to the gizzard to find his predictions ridiculed by those butterflies who can so unfeelingly enjoy the happiness of the present hour, amidst luxury, faction, and all the alarming symptoms of a decay in human nature; he had laid a general plot among the orthodox adherents of roast beef and fat ale, for the total extermination of what the world term *men of genius*.

In

In consequence of this agreement, it was concerted, that the massacre should take place at the sound of a steeple bell; this in all conspiracies, real and visionary, is an absolute requisite, for the truth of which I refer my readers to the great authority of the Parisian massacre; besides all Tragedians, whose poetical variations of *incurfions, flourishes, alarms, murders, &c.* have universally originated from the unaffected simplicity of the Bell. At this spirit-stirring sound then, what inundations of countenances, to all appearance inoffensive, rushed out in character of assassins; and in what a ludicrous mixture was the lean haggard eagerness of Grub-street, contrasted with the rosy independence of Cheapside. All however seemed unanimous in the resistless fury with which they persecuted the helpless objects of their vengeance. In their avidity to destroy, the innocent often fell with the guilty; and even news-paper odes on the seasons were sufficient to decide the fate of an unhappy poetaster. It had been before provided, that convivial ballads should be exempted from the common fate; as the destruction of them might materially injure the wine trade. Intermixed with those who were most active in this scene of destruction, I was struck with the

figures of a number of slavish wretches, laden with fetters and instruments of torture, and every where following the conspirators. I was informed by a byestander, that these were chiefly Commentators, whose office it was to bind and torment all those who were destined to be preserved as the laughingstock of their persecutors; that the fetters were critical rules, and the instruments of torture were *Diversæ lectiones*, *occultæ allegoriæ*, and *interpretationes elegantissimæ*, supposed to have been originally invented by the northern barbarians, those destroyers of all literature, as their etymology can scarcely be traced to any civilized language. "Frequently, Sir," continued he, "these executioners seize on a victim whose amazing strength is sufficient to baffle their utmost efforts; a Homer, a Pindar, or a Shakespear may burst the fetters, or defy the ineffectual tortures of this race; but their violence has often maimed and utterly defaced geniusses of a more delicate texture." I was so well satisfied with this account, that my curiosity would have led me to have asked more questions; but that I found myself (as is the nature of dreams,) on a sudden transported to the centre of our little world. A select party had

had been detached here from the main body, and had been joined by several malecontent citizens; but by some unaccountable mistake, they had directed their search to those elms so famed by faithless bards, whose affectionate veneration existed in professions alone. The spot was occupied by cricketers, whose uniform vacancy of countenance secured them from the attacks of this licentious mob. One solitary poet was reclining on the grassy bank; but upon a cross examination it was discovered, that he was composing on the pleasures of a country life; and in the course of his examination, as he betrayed other evident marks of insanity, it was thought proper to dismiss him with a gentle reprimand. In their return however to the Metropolis, this detachment intercepted an epistle from Corydon, of Little Turnstile, to Amaryllis, of Smallbury-Green; it was immediately conveyed to their leader, who supposing it might contain some material information, examined the contents, but on finding a confused jargon of *purling rills, grassy hills, woolly sheep, gentle sleep, &c. &c.* was in doubt how to proceed, when it was suggested by one of the Commentators, that it must be a counterplot, couched in allegorical terms. Their march was accordingly directed

directed to Smallbury-Green, and orders issued to seize any suspicious person or persons who were discovered within an hundred yards of any rill, ditch, gutter, canal, or the like. Many were accordingly apprehended, and some in the very act of composing; but as it appeared they were inoffensive beings, totally incapable of design, and was moreover urged that they by no means fell under the description of men of genius, it was determined to punish the ringleaders, who should be adjudged formidable enemies *in terrorem*. Theocritus, Virgil, Pope, and Shenstone, as they were non-apparent, and no informer could produce their equals, were accordingly burnt in effigy. And here, gentle reader, did fortune again befriend me; for perceiving that I had dreamt a paper, she thought it most adviseable to set the giddy populace to shouting at the spectacle, and by this excellent manœuvre, rouse me from my dream, as she has regularly done my predecessors.

And now, as I foresee, reader, that this is a subject which is likely to call forth thy hidden talent of being facetious, should some plain-dealing body, in the simplicity of his heart, enquire how

Gregory

Gregory escaped among this massacre, and shouldest thou find thyself inclined, under cover of an arch-leer, to answer, that he was perfectly secure; smother the rising joke, and learn, to the utter confusion of thy waggery, that it has been the privilege of all dreamers, from time immemorial, to be uninterested spectators of the visionary scene; except, that in dreams in and about the valley of Bagdad, the Mirzah or Abdallah of the story has usually some obsequious genie at hand to serve a double purpose; that of unfolding to him the hidden meaning of the dream, and pointing out to the reader the correctness of the author's allegory. But as my dream is neither oriental nor allegorical, I shall beg leave on this occasion to plead prerogative.

To conclude, I must entreat thee to take this and all my other naps in good part; and to reflect, that where an Addison has dozed, and a Johnson slept, it is no impeachment, even on the proverbial vigilance of a GRIFFIN, to be sometimes overtaken

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .


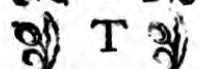


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No. XXXII.—MONDAY, June 25, 1787.

————— *Unus et alter.*

*Affuitur pannus,* ————— HOR.

*'Tis all a Patch-work.*

 O a writer, and especially a periodical  
 T writer, it has justly been observed, that  
 there is no part of his business so dif-  
 ficult as the selection of a subject.

That Traveller will arrive sooner at his place of destination, who pushes on to the end of his journey through a strait and direct road, from  
whence

whence no winding paths allure his feet, no variety of distant scenery diverts his attention; than he, whose way lies through a country diversified with a multitude of objects, which solicit his admiration; who stops to gaze at every opening prospect, to catch the sunshine of every meadow, and enjoy the coolness of every grove.

Nearly the same difference exists between the writer of volumes, who pursues one settled subject, whether of reasoning or narrative, and whose labours, when that subject is fixed, are confined to the detail of facts, or the arrangement of arguments; and the Essayist, whose periodical exertions require a desultory diligence; which unable to pursue an uninterrupted train of thought, must, to avoid a sameness of subject, occasionally adapt itself to every species of composition, and must assume a variety of styles and sentiments, such as may suit a variety of topics, and agree with the different purposes of satire, or commendation, of sprightly wit or speculative solemnity.

It is not therefore from a dearth of subjects, but from a too great abundance of them, that  
 this

this difficulty in selection takes its rise. A man who sits down to a table where there is but one dish, will, if he is hungry, make a hearty meal of that; but if the board be laden with a profusion of different delicacies, he will, however sharp set, make some pause ere he begins, to consider against which the first attack of his appetite shall be directed.

In a situation, much resembling either of the preceding which I have described, do I frequently find myself at the beginning of a paper. For either my attention, like that of the Traveller, is so absorbed in the contemplation of distant images, and so distracted by the multiplicity of surrounding objects, that while I gaze at them all with undeciding admiration, I advance not a step towards the completion of my design;—or, like the gentleman at table, my appetite is solicited by so great a variety of delicacies, all equally tempting, that while I am eager to taste them all, I know not on which to begin;—or (which is as applicable and expressive a simile as either of the foregoing,) my mind, like the coffin of the Prophet of *Mecca*, is so equally assailed on every side by the magnetism of surrounding attractions, that

that it hangs in suspense between them all, without the power to incline to either.

In almost all cases, where the judgement is unable to decide, chance, however little mankind in general may be inclined to confess it, is the best and only arbitrator. The biographer of the great *La Mancha*, freely owns, that in all points of the road which admitted of hesitation, he did not scruple to leave it, according to the laudable custom of knights errant from time immemorial, to chance, or what is nearly the same thing, to the judgement of *Rosinante*. And it is related of some *French Judge*, who was remarked throughout his whole practice for the almost infallible justice of his decrees, that whenever any extraordinary case occurred, the circumstances of which were so perplexed as to render him incapable of giving a decided opinion in favor of either side, with satisfaction to his own conscience, he was accustomed to retire to his closet, and refer it to the final decision of the die. For my own part, so firm is my reliance on the arbitration of chance, that I can assure my readers, many is the good paper, for the subject of which they are indebted to her interference; many are the hints which she has been  
kind

kind enough to throw in my way, by an accidental dip into a poetical miscellany, or an *Ainsworth's* dictionary ; or a casual glance at a newspaper advertisement, or a pamphlet in a bookseller's shop window. Nor indeed is it possible that chance, if trusted to, should suggest any subject, out of which something might not be gathered, capable enough of being rendered serviceable to purposes either of instruction or amusement. This I believe my readers will be ready to allow, when I assure them, that even this paper, totally unconnected as it may appear to them with any use whatever, is calculated to serve as a precept of morality. I intend it indeed as a striking instance of the folly of not confining one's attention to one particular object ; as he who has many objects in view, cannot attend properly to the pursuit of any one of them. Thus there is nothing however inconsiderable, from which morality may not be derived ; whether it be from the contemplation of a broomstick, or of the chubby countenances of tomb-stone Cherubim. " And for a text" ( or a motto ) says the celebrated Author of *Tristram Shandy*—" *Cappadocia, Pontus, and Phrygia*, will answer as well as any sentence out of any book whatever."

There

There are however other circumstances still more embarrassing in the choice of a subject. "That there is nothing new under the sun," was the no less true than lamentable complaint of some ancient philosopher. And if this want of novelty obtained in his time, what can a poor Authorling of the present day expect? when so many hungry followers have been for ages gathering up every crumb of invention which had fallen from the tables of the ancients, and picking the bones of every disputation on every topic, over and over again, with the most industrious eagerness. It could not fail, I am certain, to excite the commiseration of my readers, were I to relate how many bright ideas and brilliant expressions I have rejected, merely because they have been thought and expressed in the same manner a hundred times before; how often, after wandering in vain to find some untrodden path of original invention, I have been tempted to beat the beaten way of imitation; and to take another turn out of the threadbare topics of "Virtue and Vice," or, "The Return of *Ulysses*."

But though to place common objects in new lights, to cloath familiar ideas in unhacknied language,

language, so as to give an air of novelty to conceptions with which every body is acquainted, be a labour requiring the united efforts of ingenuity and judgement; yet even when this is accomplished, the reader must have a certain coincidence of thought, a sympathy of feeling, and must peruse a paper with the same spirit with which it was written, ere he can enter fully into the ideas, and relish the sentiments of the author. Hence, is it, reader, that you and I, have in all probability frequently differed in opinion, during the course of these my lucubrations. Every paper must infallibly borrow its hue from the humour, or the accident of the moment, in which it is written. Now if it has, as it no doubt often has, so happened, that you have taken up in a merry humour, what I have written in a grave one, or *vice versa*, that you have been very solemn when I have been disposed to be very witty, it is ten to one, but both my wit and my gravity have been totally lost upon you; that the sprightliest sallies of the former have been unable to derange the phlegmatic primness of your muscular œconomy; and that instead of receiving with due reverence the precepts of the latter, you have been wickedly

edly inclined to treat me and my morality with most unchristian ridicule.

Hearing the other day that a fellow-citizen of mine had exercised his genius in the composition of a Tragedy, I took the liberty of enquiring the subject of it, and was informed by him, after considerable hesitation, that it was "*on no particular subject.*" This is, I believe, nearly the predicament in which my present paper stands ; for though I flatter myself I have pointed out in it what a paper ought to be, it has been rather by example than precept ; by instancing in an eminent degree what it ought not to be.—But as I have gone on thus far without selecting *any particular subject*, and as I am now too far advanced to *dip* for a new one, in any of the books which lie upon my table, I shall conclude my paper with a letter, in which my fellow-citizens will find such rules laid down, as will, if well observed, contribute no doubt, to render them good and useful citizens of the greater world.—And I flatter myself, my correspondent will forgive my publishing it, with such a view, though contrary to his express desire.

‘ To



‘ TO GREGORY GRIFFIN, ESQ.

‘ DEAR SIR,

‘ “Do what you are bid”—“come when you  
‘ “are called”—“speak when you are spoken to”—  
‘ and “shut the door after you.”—Such were the  
‘ precepts, Mr. Griffin, which in my earlier days,  
‘ I imbibed from the tongue of my grandmother ;  
‘ such was the path of morality chalked out for  
‘ me, by following which I was to become an ho-  
‘ nour to my family, a credit to my country, and  
‘ *Lord Chancellor*. For you must know, Sir, that  
‘ from my infancy, this was the destined goal to  
‘ which my course of glory was to be directed.—  
‘ As I was the darling of my Grandmother, to her  
‘ was left the sole care and superintendence of my  
‘ education. For the furtherance therefore of her  
‘ projects in my favour, it was resolved, when I  
‘ was eight years old, to send me to *Eton*. At my  
‘ setting out her former maxims were reinforced  
‘ by the addition of a few more equally service-  
‘ able exhortations, viz. “to be a good boy”—  
‘ “mind my book”—“never to get on horseback  
‘ “till I could ride”—“nor to venture into the wa-  
‘ “ter ’till I could swim”—and above all,” “not  
‘ “to make myself sick by the too hasty expen-  
‘ “diture of the six pence, which she bestowed on  
‘ “me

“ me at parting.”—All these maxims, Mr. Griffin, comprehensive as they are, I have carefully treasured up in my mind; and I write now, merely to ask your opinion of their efficacy to make me an honour to my family, and every thing else which her fond hopes have cut me out for. At any rate, Mr. Griffin, there are, I am confident, many of our fellow-citizens, who have far inferior precepts for their moral conduct than myself; and I must beg therefore that you will not take advantage of my letter, by betraying my secret assurances of success, to raise me up competitors in my progress to the *Wooljack*.

‘ I am, Sir,

‘ Your’s,

—————

B.

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T H E


M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXXIII.—MONDAY, July 2, 1787.

*Alicæ, nullis hominum cogentibus, ipsæ,  
Sponte suâ veniunt.*—VIRG.

*Some without man's compulsive art,  
Shoot forth self-born.*

 H E philosopher Xanthus, says L'Étrange, going one day, attended by his slave, Æsop, to a garden near the city, was asked by its owner, ( who in course as a classical gardener had an exclusive privilege of philosophizing ) why, notwithstanding the high culture

ture and artificial nourishment he applied to his exotics, the native weeds, under the disadvantages of a barren soil, were stronger in their growth, and more luxurious in their vegetation? Xanthus, who though he could not close with his adversary knew how to parry his thrust, after some reflection turned to Æsop, and with seeming contempt of the question, commanded him to answer it. "All power of vegetation" replied the slave, "is in the hands of nature, who in this instance acts with the usual partiality of a step-mother; depressing the produce of art, and invigorating her own hardy offspring with the profusion of parental fondness."

What was in the instance of the vegetable world so well applied by this self instructed philosopher, may, with equal propriety be observed in the seemingly partial distribution of natural endowments to the human mind; and history does not perhaps furnish us with a more striking instance than his own, of the decided superiority nature will in all her operations maintain over the feeble imitations of art. Even under the complicated discouragements of low origin, depressed condition, and want of education, the naturally quick

conceptions of this unenlightened slave, reflected a brightness, which the artificial polish of acquired knowledge was unable to equal. As we believe that our souls are originally of one substance, and will hereafter universally return to their pristine state, the manifest difference in our powers of mind, can only be referred to the different organization of our bodies; and we may conclude, that the different degrees of susceptibility in those secret channels of connection through which our living agents act, has in some degree the same effect on the mental faculties, which dress has in ornamenting or disfiguring our bodies themselves.

It is evident then, by so remarkable a provision against it, that nature never designed a universal equality in the human species; that she has wisely and impartially divided the orders of mankind, by raising a chosen few to act in a conspicuous sphere, as the objects of laudable emulation, or the melancholy warnings to overbearing ambition; by conducting others, and of these a larger number, by a safer, but less popular road, to honest reputation; and by filling up the vacuum with those, by far the most considerable  
part

part of the species, who glide through "*the calm sequestered vale of Life*" with uninterrupted tranquillity, and have no care of protracting their existence beyond the burial service.

Human ingenuity however, convinced from early experience that nature, though an excellent mother, was too capricious in the distribution of her favours for a good politician, has invented a system, (the best criterion of which is that it has stood the test of so many ages,) not only calculated to restrain the irregular sallies of genius, but even by adscititious knowledge, to render the most barren minds capable of rivalling on some occasions the fertility of original imagination. Education, however differently modelled by capacities endowed with the united advantages of art and nature; however its complexion may vary in the Campus Martius at Eton, and the paved courtyard of a private academy, *originally undertaken at the particular request of a few select friends, by a Clergyman of unquestionable probity, who will pay the strictest attention to the diet, morals, clothes, and improvements of the young gentlemen committed to his care*; is in its object still the same.

Taught by experience that a knowledge of the Belles Lettres is an universal recommendation, without which unpolished virtue may indeed command respect, but can seldom excite esteem, we make an advantageous exchange of the unthinking leisure of childhood, for laying the permanent foundation of a future benefit. But though classical knowledge is an essential part of a liberal education, it by no means comprehends the whole of it; nor does it follow that a man who is totally devoid of it, may not fulfil with the greatest propriety the social as well as moral duties. It must be obvious to the eye of the most superficial observer, that all capacities are not adapted to the same path of study; and on that account the idea of loading the mind indiscriminately with what it can neither relish or digest, is so palpably misconceived, as hardly to require confutation.

Yet how many Quixotic enthusiasts are there, who, unaccustomed to study mankind, otherwise than through the interpretation of the bigotry of the historian, the spleen of the satyrist, or the flattering misrepresentations of the poet, and tinctured with the narrow prejudices of a recluse life, sally forth, in all the terrors of discipline, to  
undertake

undertake the charge of educating *a select number*? Impressed with a veneration for the established mode, their idea of excellence in education is of the same nature with that of Demosthenes\* in oratory; while true genius sickens at the gross surfeit, and fades away into determined indolence, or despairing ignorance: and natural dulness, at too low an ebb to be further depressed by external accidents, is crammed with a crude mass of indigested learning; like a green goose at michaelmas, or a mathematical ignoramus before his examination. Totally unadapted for the world, the self-sufficient pedant naturally looks up to learning as the sole end of life; and expects the same deference among mankind, as his preceptor has hitherto exacted for him, from his less laborious equals. Till spleened at human nature for undeceiving him, he expires a misanthrope; or, as his utmost prospect of exaltation, lives a Bentley, to feel the searching severity of a Swift's contempt.

Let us now examine of what superior efficacy is that milder system, which endeavours more at mixing pleasure with utility; and holds liberality

H 3 of

\* Who on being asked what were the three most essential qualities of an Orator, replied, "Action, Action, Action."



of sentiment, knowledge of mankind, and unassuming politeness, not unworthy the study of a learned man. Whatever may be the established practice of the wise in the great world, of dying as naked as they were born, I affirm, that nobody ever passed through *this world* without being the richer for it. A citizen of this republic has the peculiar advantage of preparing himself for his intercourse with mankind by his own experience. Not to mention the miniature representation of the passions and affections in their most lively colours, which in the course of this work, I have more than once touched upon; the different situations also into which chance in after-life may cast him, are here subjected to his consideration. He has here a practical opportunity of separating obedience from servility, and tyranny from authority; nay, still farther, as his happiness hereafter in a great measure depends on his established character here, his approaching exit requires in some measure the same circumspection, which old age will call for at some future period of existence.

The classics are *our* grand road to reputation; all the honorary distinctions of our political system are confined to excellence in that line. But  
sup-

supposing, as is frequently the case, we are not naturally endowed with a taste for their elegancies, there are still secondary pursuits sufficient to crown with success the different efforts by which our universal ambition prompts us to *be known*. Socrates, though totally unqualified for a general or a politician, was still a great man; and Cæsar, though he preferred an active enjoyment of present good, to the pursuit of abstracted ideas, was the same. But had the blind obstinacy of a parent, or the mistaken pedantry of a master, placed the one in the field of Philippi, the other in the grove at Athens, though the extent of capacity which in their present exalted situations characterizes them, might possibly have extricated them from the *scrape*, in all probability the philosophical and political world would have wanted two excellent topics of conversation.

May we not then with justice conceive, that from the frequent intervention of these casualties, the promising greatness of many a Cæsar has been blasted in the bud? and if so, is not an attention to the bent of Genius, or rather the allowance of a sufficient liberty for its natural luxuriance, a point to be considered in education?

A shoot when grafted on an ungenial stock, will fade and lose its original beauty; whereas, when nature is consulted by the skilful botanist, and admitted to a share in an operation on which she alone has the power of conferring success, the alien plant derives additional strength, from the nutritive powers of a sap congenial to its own.

In like manner, as the human mind is everywhere strongly analogous to the natural system, a cricketer will, in pouring over a page of Horace, lose the trophies which await him as hero of the Hampshire, and bulwark of the White Conduit; and exchange the invigorating commendations of a Small, Shock White, or Lumpy, for the dull drudgery of blundering through ten long years of scholastic labour. The poet will be equally circumstanced in the field; no innate consciousness of knowledge can console him for the ridicule of an unforeseen trip; no Muse on Parnassus secure his wicket; or Minerva, however serviceable she might formerly have been on similar occasions, avert an all-levelling bowl from the nervous arm of his Bæotian adversary.

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXXIV.—MONDAY, *July 2, 1787.*

*NEMO in sese tentat descendere.*—JUV.  
*NOBODY tries himself to scan.*—

‘S I R,

‘T H E peculiar hardships of my situ-  
‘ ation call loudly for your inter-  
‘ ference. As they have hitherto  
‘ escaped the notice of those righters  
‘ of wrongs, and redressers of grievances, your  
‘ periodical predecessors, it remains with you,  
‘ Sir, by the publishing of this letter, to clear  
‘ my injured fame from the aspersions of the ma-  
‘ levolent; and vindicate to the world the im-  
‘ portance of my character.

H 5

‘II

• I shall not detain you, Mr. Griffin, by a long  
• account of my birth, parentage, and education;  
• suffice it only to say, that I never received any  
• education; that I am not indebted to a parent,  
• for my existence; but that, notwithstanding I  
• am thus defective in point of ancestry, I boast a  
• family of wide alliances and extensive relations,  
• and date my birth even prior to the  
• creation.

• In short, Sir, the person, who has now the honor  
• to address you, is no other than **NOBODY**.  
• To prove what I have advanced of my large  
• connexions, I am, you must know, allied to  
• **ANYBODY**, nearly related to **SOMEBODY**, and connected  
• by the closest ties to the family of **EVERY-**  
• **BODY**. Besides these, the various branches of  
• the **WHAT'SHISNAMES**, the **WHATYECALLUMS**,  
• the **SUCHAONES**, and the **THINGUMS** and  
• **THINGUMBOBS**, come, one and all, from the  
• same parent flock.

• From this account you might probably be  
• led to suppose, that my situation is, of all others,  
• the most enviable; that I am growing old, amid  
• the caresses of a diffusive family; and that I am  
• looked

' looked up to with wonder and veneration by the  
 ' rest of the world, as a being pre-existent to the  
 ' common ancestor, and contemporary with every  
 ' generation, of mankind. But alas, Mr. Griffin,  
 ' very widely mistaken would this idea be found.  
 ' —Alas, Sir, the world holds me in contempt,  
 ' and my nearest relations have been taught by  
 ' their example to do the same. I cannot make  
 ' ANYBODY confess his knowledge of me; EVERY-  
 ' BODY shuns the suspicion of being acquainted  
 ' with me ; and SOMEBODY has long ago set him-  
 ' self up in direct opposition to me ; and by de-  
 ' grees attracted to his party all the inferior  
 ' branches of the family, who find their ideas of  
 ' self-consequence much more pleasingly gratified  
 ' in the relationship they bear to him, however  
 ' distant, than in the disgraceful consanguinity of  
 ' NOBODY.

' It has not been always thus. There was a  
 ' time when the name of NOBODY was more re-  
 ' spected.—You cannot but know, Mr. Griffin,  
 ' that in all places where the feudal system ob-  
 ' tained, and even now I believe, in some remote  
 ' parts of *Scotland*, it has been customary for whole  
 ' Clans to take the name of the master under  
 ' whom.

whom they held their several tenures ; in-  
much, that it was nothing unusual for the in-  
habitants of whole districts to be distinguishable  
from each other only by the difference of their  
*prænomens*, or christian name, or by some addi-  
tional *cognomen*, which they adopted for the pur-  
pose of this distinction ; so that had you, Sir,  
lived in those days, there would have been, I  
doubt not, whole provinces peopled with a  
hopeful progeny of *Griffins*. Ah, Sir, these  
were times indeed. Then it was, that I, and my  
old opposer **SOMEBODY**, by mutual compact,  
shared the land between us, and distributed our  
names to our respective adherents. The Barons,  
to be sure, and all principal persons, considered  
themselves as members of his family ; but then  
the tenants and the bulk of the people were of  
necessity contented to rank under my denomi-  
nation. And so very inconsiderable was the  
number of his adherents, compared to that of  
mine, that he might be almost said scarcely to  
have **ANYBODY** on his party ; whilst, compa-  
ratively speaking, **EVERYBODY** sided with  
me.

There

‘ There were then no regular steps of conse-  
‘ quence, no intermediate gradation of ranks be-  
‘ tween the lord and his slave ; but while the im-  
‘ portance of the one was sufficiently gratified in  
‘ the title of *SOMEBODY* ; the other, hugging him-  
‘ self in his own insignificancy, was fully satis-  
‘ fied to herd with the multitude of *NOBODIES*.

‘ How different is my situation, and how much  
‘ lessened is the estimation in which I am held in  
‘ these days ; while *EVERYBODY* is labouring  
‘ with restless ambition to be considered by the  
‘ world as *SOMEBODY*. It is this principle which  
‘ enforces the young heir into expences far beyond  
‘ the limits of his fortune, and melts the accumu-  
‘ lation of years in the extravagance of an hour ;  
‘ that he may by his spirited conduct, persuade  
‘ the admiring world, that he is *SOMEBODY*. On  
‘ what other principle does the spouse of the sub-  
‘ stantial shop-keeper ground her arguments, in  
‘ favor of frosting the cauliflower wig, and roll-  
‘ ing up the round belly in a new red waistcoat,  
‘ but that he may be enabled to display himself on  
‘ a *Sunday’s* terrace, with a dress and a figure,  
‘ which may shew him to be *SOMEBODY*? And  
‘ whence that self-sufficient smile which  
‘ curdles



‘ curdles the fat cheek of his love, but from  
‘ a consciousness of having assumed, together  
‘ with her flowered damask, a degree of import-  
‘ ance, which abundantly rescues her from the dif-  
‘ graceful appellation of a NOBODY ?

‘ But even these desertions, Sir, however dis-  
‘ tressing, and this contempt, however wounding,  
‘ I might perhaps be able to endure without  
‘ complaint ; and console myself with the idea of  
‘ their being but negative misfortunes. But who,  
‘ Mr. Griffin, could forbear to complain of the  
‘ malice of false aspersions, and the railings of  
‘ groundless abuse ? who could bear, without re-  
‘ pining, the imputation of vices, of which he  
‘ was perfectly unconscious ; of outrages, of  
‘ which he was wholly incapable ?

‘ There does not pass a day in which my name  
‘ is not called in a hundred times, as a foil to the  
‘ vices and imperfections of others ; as thus, in  
‘ speaking of any notorious offender, “ NOBODY  
‘ is more wicked,” “ NOBODY more abandoned,”  
‘ “ NOBODY will come sooner to the gallows.”—  
‘ It is, however, some compensation for this,  
‘ you will say, that I am also made use of as a  
‘ com-

‘ comparison for all that is good and great in any  
 ‘ character.—But, alas! when you consider how  
 ‘ far greater is the propensity of most people to ca-  
 ‘ lumny than commendation, you will readily own,  
 ‘ that the being coupled once or twice with the  
 ‘ name of a great or a good man, is but a slender  
 ‘ consolation, for being daily associated with the  
 ‘ name of every thing that is rascally and vil-  
 ‘ lainous under the sun.

‘ It cannot, I think, have escaped your observa-  
 ‘ tion, how often in common life, a suspicion of  
 ‘ being an acquaintance of mine, has been preju-  
 ‘ dicial to many an innocent and well-meaning per-  
 ‘ son; and has served as an excuse for treating  
 ‘ him with the utmost incivility; a hint, that  
 ‘ such a person was a fellow “ who spoke to No-  
 ‘ BODY,” or a “ creature that NOBODY knew,” has  
 ‘ been a cause sufficient to subject him to the most  
 ‘ mortifying rudeness and contempt. But I shall  
 ‘ pass over the consideration of this, and a multi-  
 ‘ tude of other circumstances of the same nature:  
 ‘ nor shall I stop to make a single observation on  
 ‘ that unaccountable malignity with which man-  
 ‘ kind are taught to persecute me in proverbs, and  
 ‘ most maliciously to pronounce that wind “ *An*  
 ‘ *ill wind, which blows NOBODY good.*’—But

‘ I shall proceed without delay to shew the in-  
‘ justice and wickedness of mankind, in laying to  
‘ my charge several enormities which it is actu-  
‘ ally out of my power to perform. The first in-  
‘ stance which occurs to my memory is one of  
‘ very great antiquity, of which, you, Mr. Griffin,  
‘ have in a former paper very properly taken the  
‘ notice it deserved, for which I thank you. I al-  
‘ lude to the paltry contrivance of *Ulysses*, who, to  
‘ shield himself and his party from the resentment  
‘ of *Polypheme*, for the extinction of his eyes, had  
‘ the address to persuade that simple shepherd swain,  
‘ that it was one *Oudeis* (meaning me, Sir,) who was  
‘ perpetrator of the bloody deed. Of this accusation  
‘ you have already had the goodness to acquit me  
‘ to the world. But it were endless to dwell on  
‘ every particular circumstance which has been laid  
‘ hold of, to sully my fair fame with malevolent  
‘ aspersions. I should detain you too long, were I  
‘ to enumerate the many atrocious house-breakings  
‘ of which a confirmed suspicion is said to have  
‘ fallen on **NOBODY**; the many midnight murders  
‘ at which **NOBODY** was thought to have been pre-  
‘ sent; or (to descend to less heinous offences)  
‘ the many strayed tea-spoons and broken china  
‘ basons, the guilt of which a favourite lap-dog,

' a cat, or a fine family of little ones have been  
 ' lucky enough to throw off their own shoulders  
 ' on those of NOBODY. I myself was not a little  
 ' displeas'd the other day, to hear an old gentle-  
 ' man ( who by the bye, has one son of two-and-  
 ' twenty, and several head of younger children,  
 ' living in the house with him ) complain, in the  
 ' double capacity of master of a family, and jus-  
 ' tice of the peace, that he had at that time a pier  
 ' glass shattered to pieces, an arm broken off his  
 ' mahogany easy chair, and a housemaid *in the*  
 ' *Straw*, for all which circumstances he was, as  
 ' far as he could learn, indebted to the kind offi-  
 ' cioufness of NOBODY.

' Now, Mr.Griffin, I have laid my misfortunes  
 ' before you in a manner that I think cannot fail  
 ' to excite your compassion. With you it re-  
 ' mains to mediate between me and the public—  
 ' and by explaining my case to them, to confer on  
 ' me a lasting favour and benefit, and lay a strong  
 ' claim to the gratitude of,

' Sir,

' Your sincere admirer,

' And most humble Petitioner,

' NOBODY.

P. S

‘ P. S. One thing, Sir, I forgot to mention,  
‘ while I was upon the subject of the mischiefs  
‘ laid to my charge, which is, that even my most  
‘ violent accusers have always the justice to own,  
‘ that if NOBODY does perform all these ex-  
‘ ploits, they fully expect NOBODY to make them  
‘ reparation.”

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXXV. — MONDAY, July 9, 1787.

*Sed turpem putat in scriptis, metuitque lituram.*

—— I but forgot,

*The last and greatest art, the art to blot. ———*

HERE are few instances of imper-  
fection more mortifying to human  
T pride, than those incidental ones,  
which occur in the most illustrious and  
distinguished characters. The traces of occasi-  
onal oversight are most frequently discovered  
in those figures, whose outlines have been dashed  
with a gigantic sublimity; of the masterpieces of  
the most celebrated painters few will remain,  
which

which we can declare faultless; after those are excepted, in which some trivial oversight has been discovered, and published with all the efforts of industrious petulance. The errors of *Hannibal* and *Charles the 12th* are such, as an inferior genius would have been preserved from, by the mere frigidity of cautious consideration; however superior the noble daring of a great mind, may be to that cold and faultless mediocrity which is approved without admiration. Though the puns of *Paradise Lost*, the incidental nodding of the *Iliad*, and the *parties quarrées* in *Somerset* place, vanish before the collected splendor of the whole design; they must be regarded as infinitely more mortifying, than a series of continued dullness, or a collection of united deformity.

In such a train of reflections I was interrupted, by an unexpected summons from my Editor; who informed me, that a stranger, of a very extraordinary appearance, had of late made very frequent enquiries for me; and was now at his house, waiting my arrival with considerable impatience. As I am not by nature either incurious, or discourteous, I followed my Editor; who, after a walk of about a quarter of an hour, introduced me to a  
little

little parlour, and a little elderly man, with a very serious countenance, and exceeding foul linen. After smoothing his approaches to my acquaintance by some introductory compliments, he informed me, as indeed I might have guessed, ‘ that he was ‘ by profession an Author; that he had been for ‘ many years a literary projector; that, owing to ‘ a kind of fatality, which had hitherto attended ‘ his attempts, and a firm resolution on his own ‘ side never to indulge the trivial taste of an ill- ‘ judging age, in which it was his misfortune to ‘ be born,—but he would not trouble me with a ‘ detail of the open Hostilities committed on his ‘ works by avowed criticism, or the more secret ‘ and dangerous attempts of tacit malevolence, ‘ and pretended contempt,—that he had lately hit ‘ upon a project, which by its nature must secure ‘ to itself the attention of the public, and which, ‘ if he had not formed a very wrong estimate of ‘ its merit, would draw his former efforts from, ‘ the dust of unmerited oblivion, into general no- ‘ tice, and universal approbation.

‘ It could not have escaped an exact observer, ‘ and such a one he might, without hazarding the ‘ imputation of flattery, pronounce *Mr. Griffin*,  
(whereupon



{whereupon Mr. Griffin bowed) ' that the repu-  
' tation of our great Tragic poet was sinking a-  
' pace ; and that, not so much from any radical or  
' intrinsic defect in his writings, as from some ve-  
' nial errors, and incidental omissions. Our more  
' refined neighbours had never been able to relish  
' the low humour which pervades every scene, or  
' the frequent violation of those unities, which  
' they observe with so religious a regard. Mr. *Vol-*  
' *taire*, with that philosophic candour which so  
' strongly characterized his life and writings, had  
' abandoned his defence ; and, though in some in-  
' stances he had deigned to borrow from him, had  
' condemned him as the poet of a barbarous age,  
' and the favourite of an unenlightened people.  
' Even among a national audience, the most ad-  
' mired of his dramas were received at least with-  
' out that enthusiastic applause, they had for-  
' merly excited ; and we must expect, that, in ano-  
' ther century, the partiality for our favourite po-  
' et will vanish, together with our national anti-  
' pathies against popery and wooden shoes, and  
' frogs and slavery ; and that a taste for *French*  
' criticism will immediately follow a relish for  
' their cookery.

' Something

‘ Something must be done, Mr. *Griffin*, and that  
‘ shortly. The commentators have done little or  
‘ nothing. Indeed what could be expected from  
‘ such a plan? Could any thing be more ridicu-  
‘ lous? They have absolutely confined themselves  
‘ to what *Shakespeare* might possibly have written!  
‘ I am fully sensible that the task of reducing to  
‘ poetic rules, and critical exactness, what was  
‘ written in ignorance or contempt of both, re-  
‘ quires a genius and ability little inferior to that  
‘ of the original composer; yet this is my pro-  
‘ ject; which, however arduous in the under-  
‘ taking, however difficult in execution, I am  
‘ persuaded to attempt; and to whom can I with  
‘ greater propriety———Mr. *Griffin*, who  
‘ himself———so early an age———  
‘ in so extraordinary a manner——— &c. &c.

My friend continued, by remarking, ‘ that the  
‘ people of *Athens* allowed to the judicious critic,  
‘ who should adapt a Tragedy of *Æschylus* to the  
‘ stage, an equal proportion of credit and copy-  
‘ money, with the author of an original Drama.  
‘ Yet he desired me to observe, that the author of  
‘ *Græcian* tragedy was far more strictly observant  
‘ of poetic discipline, than the father of the *En-*  
‘ *glish*

‘ *glisb* Stage. In all *his* tragedies, there is only  
 ‘ one, in which he has ventured to break the unity  
 ‘ of place; an essential point, and, as my friend  
 ‘ declared, highly necessary; though it is very  
 ‘ natural for the spectator to mistake the stage for  
 ‘ a palace, actresses for virgin princesses, &c. yet  
 ‘ it is impossible for him to imagine that he is in  
 ‘ *Bohemia*, when, but the act before he was fully  
 ‘ convinced that he was in *Sicily*.’

He at length concluded by drawing out of a tin  
 box some “*proposals for publication*,” which he de-  
 sired might be communicated to the public  
 through the medium of my paper; at the same  
 time presenting me with a very copious specimen  
 of the work he had undertaken. He reflected on  
 the honour of such a distinction, ‘ but he was natu-  
 ‘ rally partial to rising merit; and *Gregory Griffin*  
 ‘ might see a period when he himself should exist  
 ‘ only in his writings.’

In the course of conversation, my new ac-  
 quaintance became extremely communicative; de-  
 sired my opinion of a preface and dedication,  
 and whether he should prefix it to an improved  
 edition of *Sleidan de quatuor imperiis*, or *Girton's*  
*Complete*

*Complete Pigeon Fancier*; but upon recollection, resolved upon an *Ode* which he had lately composed *On the use of acorns in consumptive cases*.

Having occasion in the course of conversation to remark the number of classical scholars produced in our public seminaries, and the comparative paucity of those who have directed their attention to the cultivation of their native language, my friend regarded the cause as extremely evident; 'there were several assistances which the classical composer enjoyed, which— but all these difficulties I should see obviated in his *New Dictionary of Rhimes*; it was a work, which had cost him considerable labour and study. Those of his predecessors,——*Bysshe*, *Gent*, and others, were mere farragos, in which the sound only was consulted, without any nicety of taste or accuracy of selection. This chaos, this rude and undigested mass, he had reduced to order, by selecting the rhimes proper for every possible subject; and reducing them to systematical arrangement. However, as this scheme must be unavoidably retarded by the prosecution of his former project, he should be peculiarly happy to see his system familiarly ex-

‘plained and illustrated in some of my future lucubrations.’ This request, from an earnest desire I entertained of assisting young practitioners in the pleasing art of poetry, I immediately complied with; however, as I did not fully comprehend his system, I took the liberty of transcribing the following passages from my author’s manuscript.

“ For the eclogue, or pastoral dialogue, let  
 “ the student conclude his lines with the rhimes  
 “ underwritten; always taking care to finish his  
 “ sense with the second rhyme, and at no time to  
 “ suffer his verse to exceed the just measure of ten  
 “ syllables. The rhimes for this purpose be  
 “ these

————— “ *shady brake*  
 ————— “ *Licidas awake.*  
 ————— “ *careless rove*  
 ————— “ *leafy grove.*  
 ————— “ *fruitful field*  
 ————— “ *harvest yield.*  
 ————— “ *tuneful measures,*  
 ————— “ *harmless pleasures.*  
 ————— “ *nymphs and swains,*  
 ————— “ *flowery plains.*  
 “ &c.

“ Should

“ Should our student turn his thoughts to  
“ panegyric, we would advise that he adhere to  
“ the endings we have here prescribed, as

“ *The muse*  
“ *A tributary—refuse*  
“ *good and great*  
“ *ordained by fate*  
“ *noble line*  
“ *race divine*  
“ *great—heir*  
“ *peculiar care*  
“ &c.

“ If the practitioner should perchance be pos-  
“ sessed of a great fund of humour, and be in-  
“ clined to employ his wicked wit in ridiculing  
“ the clergy, we would admonish him to adhere  
“ to the following terminations, in order as they  
“ are appointed, being careful only to confine  
“ his lines to eight syllables.

\_\_\_\_\_ “ *musty*  
\_\_\_\_\_ “ *rusty*  
\_\_\_\_\_ “ *colledge*  
\_\_\_\_\_ “ *knowledge*  
\_\_\_\_\_ “ *Farce on*  
\_\_\_\_\_ “ *Parson*

—————“*vicar*  
—————“*liquor*  
—————“*ease*  
—————“*fees*  
—————“*fire*  
—————“*squire*  
—————“*tale*  
—————“*ale*  
—————“*spouse*  
—————“*carouse*  
—————“*breed*  
—————“*feed.*”

Should the public approve of this specimen of my friend's abilities, I may perhaps in some future paper present them with a sample of his projected publication.

D

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXXVI.—MONDAY, July 16, 1787.

—*Neglectum adhibere clientem.*—JUV.

*A long neglected client to admit.*——DRYDEN.



Feel myself so much obliged by the continued notice of my correspondents, that I should consider myself as highly ungrateful, if I did not sometimes leave wholly to them the weekly entertainment of my readers.



Ἡδὲ Τρίτηγε καὶ ΜΕΣΗ τῶν εἰρημένων δυοῖν  
 Ἀρμονιῶν ἦν ΚΟΙΝΗΝ καλῶ σπανεῖτε κυρία καὶ  
 ΚΡΕΙΤΤΟΝΟΣ Ὀνόματος, σχῆμα μὲν ἴδιον ἕδην  
 ἔχει, κεκέραται δὲ πῶς ἐξ ἐκείνων μετρίως. ΚΑΙ  
 ΕΣΤΙΝ ΕΚΔΟΓΗ ΤΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ἘΚΑΤΕΡΑ  
 ΚΡΑΤΙΣΤΩΝ ΔΙΟΝΤΣ; Περὶ ΣΤΥΘ : Τμ : κδ.

“ But this third, and MIDDLE of the two  
 “ styles already mentioned, which from want of a  
 “ better name I call the *common*, has no peculiar  
 “ dress of its own; but is composed equally of  
 “ both the other, and is, as it were, a *selection* of  
 “ *the beauties of each.*”

‘ TO GREGORY GRIFFIN, ESQ.

‘ SIR,

‘ As being commendably and  
 ‘ successfully engaged in the same track, perhaps  
 ‘ you will accept this VINDICATION of an il-  
 ‘ lustrious predecessor, in the province of a pe-  
 ‘ riodical essayist; the inventor of that happy mode  
 ‘ of imparting knowledge, of cultivating taste,  
 ‘ and of recommending virtue

‘ I

' I therefore make use of the medium of your  
 ' paper to entreat the public clemency in favor of  
 ' an author, who, though more than passable for  
 ' his day, is in danger of being absolutely eclipsed  
 ' by the transcendent radiance of these modern  
 ' luminaries; or, to speak with antiquated sim-  
 ' plicity, whose supposed purity of style is falling  
 ' into contempt, from a comparison with the per-  
 ' fect models exhibited by the Johnsonian School,  
 ' —though of that school the more characteristic  
 ' merit perhaps be "*turgid Eloquence,*" expressed  
 ' in a style which no inferior genius could har-  
 ' monize with *such* eloquence; "*a style refined to a*  
 ' "*degree of immaculate Purity.*" You see, Sir, that  
 ' when deviating into the silly plainness of the un-  
 ' polished days of ANN, I exalt my phrase and  
 ' reinforce my style by calling in auxiliaries of a  
 ' nobler port and gigantic elevation; auxiliaries,  
 ' who, by the union of incompatible qualities may  
 ' consistently be accounted potent beyond the  
 ' limits of possibility. But 'till a perfect uni-  
 ' formity of style be established among men, 'till  
 ' the "*want of a consecutive series of senses in their*  
 ' "*nature collateral, when the radical idea branches*  
 ' "*into parallel ramifications;*" shall be tunefully la-  
 ' mented by the maidens, and significantly recited

' by the lisping babes, the rude and the ignorant,  
 ' in their advancement to an happier cultivation,  
 ' may be permitted to indulge themselves with an  
 ' occasional page of ADDISON. It is indeed for  
 ' this unfortunate writer, that I dare to plead;  
 ' notwithstanding he is convicted of two such  
 ' faults in style, (if one be not rather of the sen-  
 ' timent,) as would render any one who has  
 ' written so long since, and upon such subjects,  
 ' utterly unworthy to be read:—"*feebleness and*  
 ' "*inanity.*" I will not say, that to those who walk  
 ' on stilts a natural walk may appear a feeble one;  
 ' or that where there is nothing gross, nothing  
 ' crowded, nothing out of its place, the medium  
 ' pure, the object of aerial brightness, it may be  
 ' lost to some in the simplicity of its own light;  
 ' like the sky of a summer's evening, without  
 ' clouds or mist. I will not say this, because it  
 ' must occur to critics who are so accomplished,  
 ' as to see ADDISON so far beneath them. But I  
 ' must say something respecting the "MIDDLE  
 ' "STYLE" of which he is ironically accused.  
 ' For the formidable censor, *ex Cathedra*, thus  
 ' pronounces; "*I am not willing to deprive him*  
 ' "*of the Honor implied in Johnson's Testimony, that*  
 ' "*his prose is the model of the Middle Style; but*  
 ' "*if*

“if he be but a **MEDIOCRIST**, he is surely not a subject of imitation; it being a rule, that of examples the best are always to be selected.”

‘Now here I must move in **ARREST** of **JUDGEMENT**, “for that in the record there is manifest error,” and shall contend, with certainty of success, that, upon the face of the indictment, *no crime is charged*; that he is perhaps the only instance in our virtuous days, of a person indicted and convicted of a virtue. But “the **MIDDLE style**,” is first taken as synonymous with “the middling one,” and that being equivalent to *indifferent, low, vulgar, &c.* **ADDISON** is concluded to have been thus an author of the **MIDDLE STYLE**. But, Sir, the word is a word of good fame and honorable estimation.—It shall not, like the innocent Quaker, be brought under the disgrace of prostitution, because another word of very different character appears habited like it.

‘If I were to call my witnesses to its reputation, I could fill the Court with the first literary worthies, from **ARISTOTLE**, to **HARRIS** of **SALISBURY**. *Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Longinus, Her-*

' *mogenes*, *Quintilian*, *Cicero* himself, at once the  
 ' Commender and the great Example—are per-  
 ' petual in its praise. The ΜΕΣΗ, the ΚΟΙΝΗ ΛΕΞΙΣ  
 ' the *æquabile et temperatum dicendi Genus*, has *Ho-*  
 ' *mer*, *Isocrates* in his best productions, *Demosthenes*  
 ' in parts of his most finished compositions; *Plato*  
 ' in a variety of beautiful instances; *Xenophon* in  
 ' his General Character; *Virgil* and *Livy*, for it's  
 ' examples; it is placed, in Literature as the  
 ' GOLDEN MEAN in ETHICS; the VIRTUE be-  
 ' tween the *extremes* of the *austere* and the luxu-  
 ' riant. The SONS of ETON, those who have  
 ' been formed by a BARNARD or a FOSTER;  
 ' those who now listen to a DAVIES,—have this  
 ' Evidence already in their breasts. But, Sir,  
 ' I call no witnesses: I am not moving for a New  
 ' Trial upon a *Verdict by Misdirection and against*  
 ' *Evidence*—though upon that I must proceed, if  
 ' this were denied me:—But I plead in ARREST  
 ' of JUDGEMENT; that there is *no Crime on the*  
 ' *Record*. That the *legal sense* of the MIDDLE  
 ' STYLE is perfectly ascertained in the COURTS  
 ' OF CRITICISM; and were it necessary to cite a  
 ' written authority in affirmance of the common  
 ' Law of good sense and taste in so clear a case, I  
 ' would cite one which would be acknowledged  
 ' by

“by the Judge, who has pronounced this sentence,  
 “to be equal to an ACT OF PARLIAMENT;  
 “though it be but an Ordinance or a PROCLAMA-  
 “TION of the late literary MONARCH.—The  
 “words of JOHNSON himself deciding on ADDI-  
 “SON. “*His Prose is the Model of the MIDDLE*  
 “*STYLE.*” “*On grave subjects not formal; on*  
 “*light occasions not groveling; pure without scru-*  
 “*pulosity, and exact without apparent elaboration.*  
 “*Always equable, and always easy: Without glow-*  
 “*ing words or pointed sentences. ADDISON never*  
 “*deviates from his track to snatch a Grace; he*  
 “*seeks no ambitious ornaments, and tries no hazard-*  
 “*ous innovations. His page is always lumbrous;*  
 “*but never blazes with unexpected splendor;—if hi-*  
 “*language had been less idiomatical (this is his adop-*  
 “*tion of vulgar phrase) it would have lost something*  
 “*of its genuine Anglicism. HE IS NEVER FEEBLE;*  
 “*and he did not wish to be energetic: he is never*  
 “*rapid and he never stagnates. His sentences*  
 “*have neither studied amplitude, nor affected bre-*  
 “*vity. His periods, though not diligently rounded, are*  
 “*voluble and easy. Whoever wishes to attain an*  
 “*ENGLISH STYLE, must give his days and nights*  
 “*to the Volumes of ADDISON.*”

This

' This is the MIDDLE STYLE, for which Ad-  
 ' dison is to be condemned, in the sense of the  
 ' very Author from whom Censure is inferred;  
 ' supposed latent in the use of this expression.  
 ' This the feebleness! and were I to speak to the  
 ' *inanity* imputed, I might cite the fine passage,  
 ' which precedes that which I have transcribed,  
 ' and in which ADDISON is deservedly honoured  
 ' as a Teacher of Moral Wisdom, of Rational Re-  
 ' ligion, in every interesting, every engaging Form,  
 ' which attractive Fiction can lend, or the simple  
 ' Elegance of Truth, present. Of the true, the  
 ' graceful, and the virtuously conciliating in do-  
 ' mestic life, he was not less a Teacher; with a  
 ' persuasive ease, a delicacy, a pathetic mildness  
 ' whose influence can never be entirely without ef-  
 ' fect on the heart of any of his readers. I would  
 ' appeal to his VISIONS of MIRZA; to his *Allegory*  
 ' on the origin of the connection between PAIN  
 ' and PLEASURE extended to a noble conclusion  
 ' from the idea hinted by *Socrates*; to his Essay on  
 ' RELIGION and on PRAYER, for the higher in-  
 ' stances; to his character of *Ruricola* and the  
 ' *Cornelii*; to the serious and sentimental part of his  
 ' inimitable portrait of the good *Old Knight*; and  
 ' a variety of his other compositions, adapted to  
 ' all

‘ all the social offices between individuals, for the  
 ‘ rest. Nor, as a Critic, can he ever be meanly  
 ‘ valued: whether we regard his merit of intro-  
 ‘ ducing MILTON to popular notice, more exten-  
 ‘ sively than would otherwise have been effected  
 ‘ even by the approbation of SOMMERS; or his  
 ‘ Essays on the PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION, to  
 ‘ which modern refinement of investigation may  
 ‘ yet find itself much obliged, and modern ele-  
 ‘ gance of style may be challenged to no easy  
 ‘ Competition. I might appeal again to JOHN-  
 ‘ SON; but to vouch external testimony in proof  
 ‘ of such excellence, borders on the charge of ri-  
 ‘ diculous anxiety,—it is

“ *To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,*

“ *To throw a perfume on the Violet.*”

‘ For one hint, as it is given by JOHNSON, I shall  
 ‘ make no apology. “ ADDISON is now despised  
 ‘ by some, who perhaps never would have seen his de-  
 ‘ fects, but by the light he afforded them.” Yet I hope  
 ‘ it is by some only, and that many retain their  
 ‘ veneration to a name to which our language, our  
 ‘ taste, our manners are singularly indebted; and  
 ‘ who, first of our English writers, presented vir-  
 ‘ tue



'tue to our view, introduced by chearfulness, and  
'attended by the graces..

'I am;

'Sir,

'Your's most respectfully,

'AN ETONIAN..

---

'TO G. GRIFFIN, ESQ.

*Saltantem species, & chironomonta volanti*

*Cultello*—————

————— *Nec minimo sanè discrimine refert,*  
*Quo gestu lepores, & quo gallina secetur.*

————— JUVEN. Sat. 5.

*The carver dancing round each dish surveys,*

*With flying knife, and as his art directs*

*With proper gestures every fowl dissects ;*

*A thing of so great moment to their taste,*

*That one false slip had surely marr'd the feast..*

————— DRYDEN.

'DEAR SIR,

'WARM as I have ever been in my admira-  
'tion of your excellent work, there was a sen-  
'timent in a late paper of your's, which struck me  
'more

'more forcibly than any I had ever seen, as more  
 'perfectly according with my own ideas. "There  
 'is nothing" you say, "however inconsiderable,  
 'from which morality may not be derived."  
 'This, Sir, is an opinion, to which from my  
 'childhood I have been particularly attached.  
 'If the stories of my nurse may be believed, I have  
 'often appeared totally wrapped up in reflections  
 'on my rattle, and sat whole hours in profound  
 'meditation on a saucepan of pap.

'An ingenious friend of mine, whose opinions  
 'are remarkably congenial with my own, who  
 'exercises the laudable profession of a taylor, called  
 'upon me a few days ago with a bundle of papers  
 'in his hand; which he informed me were tracts,  
 'poems, dissertations, tragedies, &c. of his own  
 'composition. I own I was at first preparing to re-  
 'buke my friend for quitting the more honourable  
 'employment of cutting out coats and breeches,  
 'for that of stitching together a parcel of rhimes,  
 'or *cabbaging* materials for a dissertation. In short  
 'I began seriously to expostulate with him on his  
 'temerity, and to recall his exertions from the pen  
 'to the needle. My good friend, smiling with a  
 'look of compassion for my ignorance, informed

' me

' me, " that these two instruments mutually af-  
 " fisted each other; that the same pieces of cloth  
 " furnished him with materials for a new coat, and  
 " a new composition; and, that in short, he stitched  
 " as an author, and wrote as a taylor." I was a  
 ' good deal surpris'd at this account, till upon  
 ' looking over my friend's manuscripts, I found  
 ' among many others, the following titles; " *A*  
 " *treatise on sewing, with a comparison between a*  
 " *pair of sheers and a Lord Chancellor.*" " *Tayloring*  
 " *considered in a moral and philosophical light.*"  
 " *The plot discovered, or HELI. in an uproar,*"  
 " a Tragedy. " *View of men and manners, as taken*  
 " *from a taylor's board.*" " *Directions for cutting*  
 " *out,*" a Didactic poem; and a variety of others  
 ' of the same nature. What a blessing, Mr. Grif-  
 ' fin, would it be for this country, if every Body  
 ' would imitate the example of this gentleman;  
 ' and make either their pleasures, or their business,  
 ' subservient to nobler pursuits. We might then  
 ' expect a generation of poetical green-grocers,  
 ' metaphysical cork-cutters, and philosophical  
 ' tallow-chandlers. We should then all be, like  
 ' the gamester, who to the surprize of a large  
 ' congregation, brought into church a pack of  
 ' cards instead of a prayer book; and on being  
 ' re-

' reprimanded, proved, that the cards, in the light  
 ' he considered them, answered every purpose of  
 ' the liturgy. For if the haberdasher, when  
 ' rolling up his small wares, would consider them  
 ' in an astronomical view, and the cheese-monger,  
 ' when surrounded by *Stilton and double Gloucester*,  
 ' regard his goods as subjects for philosophy;  
 ' there would be nothing wanting to render the  
 ' former a *Newton* and the latter a *Socrates*.

' For my own part, Sir, I have not the hap-  
 ' piness of exercising any of the trades in question,  
 ' and therefore cannot myself apply them to the  
 ' purposes of morality. But you must know, Sir,  
 ' the chief delight of my life is—*good eating*;  
 ' nor am I ashamed to own myself a **GLUTTON**;  
 ' since I can at the same time boast that I am a mo-  
 ' ralizing one. As I swallow with remarkable  
 ' expedition, I have usually done dinner before  
 ' the rest of the company; and in order to fill up  
 ' the vacant time, amuse myself with observing  
 ' the manœuvres of some one who still continues  
 ' eating. An inexperienced person can have no  
 ' idea of the fund of knowledge and improvement  
 ' which such speculation affords; nor can they at  
 ' all conceive the many useful lessons and rules for  
 ' my

‘ my future conduct, which I collect, merely from  
 ‘ observing the knife and fork ranging from one  
 ‘ part of the plate to the other; industriously col-  
 ‘ lecting the different substances, and piling up the  
 ‘ fat on the meat, the fallad on the fat, the gravy  
 ‘ on the fallad, and the salt on the gravy. When I  
 ‘ see this delicious pyramid descend the throat, it  
 ‘ reminds me of a poet, who heaps tropes upon  
 ‘ episodes, similies upon tropes, and catastrophes  
 ‘ on similies; and at last sees the whole fabric de-  
 ‘ stroyed by the tooth of the Critic. If the un-  
 ‘ faithful fork happens to let go his cargo,  
 ‘ just as the mouth is opening for its prey,  
 ‘ what a melancholy picture does this accident  
 ‘ present, of the uncertainty and vicissitude of  
 ‘ all human affairs! How strongly does it bring  
 ‘ to my mind that trite but excellent maxim, of  
 ‘ *πολλα μεταξυ πελει κυλικος και χειλος ακρη;*  
 ‘ “many things happen between the cup and the  
 ‘ “lip?” By this means, Mr. Griffin, you per-  
 ‘ ceive that my fondness for eating is of eminent  
 ‘ advantage to my mind and morals; since the  
 ‘ same ingredients afford wholesome food to my  
 ‘ stomach, and wholesome reflections to my  
 ‘ heart.

‘ If

‘ If this letter should meet with a favourable  
‘ reception, I will, in a short time, send you a  
‘ very elaborate dissertation on carving, which  
‘ was composed “ *intercivivo tempore*,” that is, be-  
‘ tween the first and second course.

‘ I remain,

‘ Your most devoted Servant,

‘ Σοφος Πολυφαγος.’

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#### NOTES to CORRESPONDENTS.

*Semicolon* is received---I will venture to give *Quintus* the piece of advice which Horace gave to his namesake, *ne percuncleris*.

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M.

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No. XXXVII.—MONDAY, *July 23, 1787.*

*O! curas hominum! O! quantum est in rebus inane.*

PERSIUS.

*How anxious are our cares, and yet how vain.*

DRYDEN.

WHEN Philosophy, affecting to exclaim  
thus on the vanity of human pursuits  
and knowledge, and the emptiness of  
human glory, sings the praises of re-  
tirement and seclusion from society, I cannot sup-  
press the smile which arises at the mock solemnity  
of the declaration; and have sufficient ill-nature to  
suspect, that the sentiment has been dictated by  
that very vanity, which it seemingly despises. I  
believe that none are found to be more warmly  
attached

attached to that perishable frailty (as they call it) fame, than those who outwardly neglect it.—They may do it with safety;—by the singularity of affecting to depreciate what others value so highly, they are certain of attracting the attention of mankind. If these men are sincere and speak the real sentiments of their hearts, let them not be disturbed in their favourite retirement; their opinions are harmless, and will have but little influence on the world at large. But let them extend to others that toleration, which is granted to themselves. If their quiet is not envied by the great, let them not impede the more active pursuit of others; if their cottage is left untouched, they should not attempt to destroy the palace which another is rearing; they may rest assured the world will not molest them, if they do not molest the world; in spite of their outcries men will follow their different pursuits with the same ardor, and by endeavoring to deter them, they only betray their own impotence. The truth is, that in the great maze of life each may pursue his own path without fear of interrupting his neighbour; the roads are numerous, and broad enough for us to pass without crowding each other. As each man has his particular turn, his favourite



favourite pursuit, he may follow it. I only wish he would not abuse his neighbour for chusing a different track. There is nothing more common, at the same time nothing more absurd, or a more infallible mark of a narrow understanding, than to condemn every pursuit but your own, and depreciate every study in comparison with some beloved object; surely the disposition, which refuses to mix with any but that of a similar texture, is not only uncharitable and unfociable, but ridiculous.

Every man must be a competent judge of what is most consonant to his own inclinations; and as every man must undoubtedly wish for happiness, it follows, that he will pursue the means which he thinks the most likely to attain it. The philosopher and the active man in their different pursuits must each feel a pleasure, which the other is incapable of tasting. The contented soul of the one shrinks from the dangers and the tempests to which ambition is exposed; and the turbulent spirit of the other sickens at the thought of a calm, wherein all his powers are rendered useless and inert.

The

The question is now reduced to this point, "Of the different means by which we pursue happiness, which is the most likely to gain its end?" I must here observe, that as things are generally in extremes, both the active and inactive have pushed their opinions too far; if the one has too much phlegm the other has too much fire; and as all extremes destroy themselves by too eager a pursuit of a favourite object, we often miss our aim. The man who in chase of pleasure, plunges into the excesses of debauchery, or he who in the rigour of his morality, obstinately rejects all pleasures, and morosely secludes himself from society, lest he should be contaminated, have in the eye of wisdom equally been misled. Him who considers fame as not worth possessing, or him who rests his whole happiness on the gaze of the multitude, such, as having entirely mistaken their ends, I exclude from the question, as wishing to confine it to those, who pursue their inclinations with moderation, and found them on rational principles. On the first view the retired man seems to proceed on the surer grounds. His happiness depends upon himself alone; his resources are contained within himself, and consequently are not exposed to the vicissitudes, which

which a man of the world must inevitably experience. The latter is liable to have his schemes thwarted, and projects defeated, by those whose interests clash with his. His ill fortune, the treachery of a friend, or the ingratitude of his country, may deprive him of the reward of his labours, and leave him destitute in the evening of his days, when his powers are exhausted, and he is no longer able to cope with the difficulties which surround him.

This is all specious, perhaps true: But let us take the reverse of the scene.—The calm contented happiness which is to roll for years, “*in the noiseless tenor of its way*” is, I believe to be found only in the raptures of poetry, what is called philosophy, and enthusiasm. For the first, fiction is its peculiar province; for the second, it is an *Utopian* scheme, which has never been realized; and who regards the mad reveries of an enthusiastic visionary? This calm half-animated existence pleases from novelty in speculation: The man who has been tossed in a tempest, is delighted for a time with the tranquillity of a calm; but who wishes to stagnate in a calm for ever? the same revolution of the same objects in  
eternal

eternal succession, without change or variety, must fatigue at last; our stock of ideas in such a situation are soon exhausted; the mind ceases to dwell with delight on objects, (tho' beautiful in themselves) which she has so often contemplated, and with whose perfections she is minutely acquainted. She is convinced of the truth of the inference she has drawn from those objects; and as she has viewed them in every light they are capable of being viewed in, can we wonder that she wishes for a change? Have we never examined a beautiful prospect till our sight is fatiated, and our curiosity exhausted? The mind in retirement loses much of its elasticity, by wanting that stimulus, which the hopes and fears of a busy life continually supply. It is variety, so entirely lost in retirement, which gives us fresh spirits to proceed; and which serves as a spur to awaken us from satiety and langour.

“*Never less alone than when alone*” is the splendid sentiment of a *Roman Hero*, and has been the universal motto of the advocates of retirement. It is a noble sentiment, and worthy of the great man from whom it fell. But it should be remembered, that this truly illustrious

trious hero was not the mere recluse. *Scipio* was eminent amongst the most eminent, universally acknowledged a Statesman, General, Scholar, and Philosopher; by a felicity rarely attained he blended the opposite qualities of an active life, and a philosophic ease. Perhaps after all this altercation, the dispute, like most others of the same kind, must be settled by a composition; and the man who like *Scipio* can unite such opposite virtues, is the character we ought to imitate.

If the world was entirely filled with the bustling and ambitious, such would be the tumult, that anarchy and confusion must inevitably prevail; if with philosophers only, life would stagnate, and its scenes be rendered insipid. At present they are as a mutual check on each other, by which the proper balance is kept between them; the reproof of the one restrains the licentiousness into which the other, unless so curbed, might be apt to fall; and the supercilious pride, which philosophy is apt to indulge against those who are not of her sect, is checked by the contempt that pride is sure to meet with from the opposite and far more numerous party.—*Cowley*, who had tried the promised felicity of retirement, regretted the loss of  
that

that society which he had voluntarily abandoned.

To regulate but not suppress the efforts of ambition, is a task worthy of true philosophy; but surely to obstruct the growth of knowledge, by inculcating "that all knowledge is vanity," is not so laudable an undertaking. This at once strikes at the root of all desire to exert that mental superiority, which is the attribute of men alone. If we are prepossessed with this notion, who will sacrifice his health, and wear out his abilities in pursuit of that whose end is vanity? For who is willing to labour in vain, or to sow where he has no prospect of reaping? I cannot be persuaded that the desire of knowledge, which is so universally prevalent in man, could be implanted in us only to torment us; only to convince us, that after years of fruitless toil, that toil might have been spared, as no advantage could be derived from it. Those who attend only to the minutiae of science, may with reason be reproved, as directing their attention to trifles, whilst they leave the more important parts unexamined; but surely the discoveries of *Newton*, or the essays of *Locke* are not to be considered as the effusions of igno-

erance under the disguise of knowledge? Has man been declared the lord of this lower world, has he been endowed with all his various faculties, and has nature implanted in him his various passions, that he may be the laughing stock of superior beings? Is it not his duty, rather, as being placed here in a state of probation, to exert, not to bury his talents? To me at least it is plain, that such would be the wish of every rational being.

It is no easy task to trace these pretended philosophers through the different links which connect their system. Even *Socrates* himself, wise and good as he was, is not entirely free from the fault which infected his brethren. The confession "that the summit of his knowledge was, that he knew nothing," was the effect of vanity, concealed under the mask of pretended humility. "I don't know how it is," said *Phryne*, "these men may talk of their wisdom and their temperance, but they knock at my door as often as other men." The exemption from the passions other men are subject to, which they claim as the privilege of their sect, was surely only an empty boast. What *Tacitus* said of *Augustus* refusing the  
empeire,

empire, may be equally applied to their outward neglect of fame, "*Imperium specie recusantis flagrantissime cupiverat,*" "Under the mask of a refusal, he concealed the most eager desire of obtaining the Imperial dignity." "*Of all the cant in this canting world, the cant of hypocrisy*" and false philosophy, which are nearly allied, is not only the worst, but the most tormenting.

A

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXXVIII.—MONDAY, July 23, 1787.

*Mos pro lege.*

*Custom is a second nature.*—MONTAIGNE.

NOTWITHSTANDING I feel  
the disadvantages under which I  
labour, in treating of a subject so  
happily, and so much more ably  
handled by most of my predecessors in this way of  
writing, yet by throwing some new light on the  
old

old materials, I shall hope to engage the attention of my readers. Those females who honour my lucubrations with their perusal, will excuse me, if perchance some lettered beau shall have informed them, that my english motto is not exactly the translation of the latin one, and will, rather than censure me, be candid enough to call the book of proverbs to an account, for not furnishing me with a better.

CUSTOM has been very justly termed the parent of those many absurdities, to which we are every day witnesses, but which, from their frequency become so familiar, that we can look upon them "*siccis oculis*," and with the same indifference as on the most rational occurrences of life. It is the hinge, upon which the manners of the world in general, and the peculiarities of each nation turn. What are termed the laws of honor, have the sanction of CUSTOM only to plead in their behalf. What else could so directly have opposed them to justice? It is by some author, I know not whom, observed, that it is considered as disgraceful in a man who conceives his honour injured, to apply to the laws of his country for redress! and yet if he has recourse to any other expedient, he is punished

by those laws which he has slighted. The HIGH COURT OF CUSTOM has prescribed one remedy, Justice another : This has reason for its support, that violence ; this makes an appeal to the long robe, that to the short cloak. Nay, the very facetious author, from a translation of whose essays I have taken my *English* motto, goes much farther in his assertion of the power of CUSTOM : He would wish to persuade us, that the laws of conscience, which all writers without hesitation seem to agree in attributing to nature, proceed merely from CUSTOM : From the almost innate veneration we feel for the opinions received among our countrymen ; and from which consequently we cannot depart without reluctance, nor adhere to without self-approbation. Nor is CUSTOM alone dictator in the more essential occurrences of life, but even directs the most trivial alterations of dress, phrase, and the etiquette of good breeding. Our very polite neighbours are certainly guilty of *grossieretes* even in their most refined and polished conversation, even in the humanizing society of the fair, which would shock the most rugged *English* ear, and force the blush into the cheek of modesty, especially when unused to the so frequent repetition of them. And yet these same  
people

people would reprobate the idea of the smallest contradiction to the most ridiculous assertions, or of differing in the least from the most prejudiced opinions. It has been observed, that lying and perjury are not vices with the French, but “*only a way of speaking.*”

Perhaps I cannot bring forward a stronger instance of the prejudices arising from custom, than the very extraordinary method of ploughing, known certainly to have been adopted by the *Irish*, who, from a long practice of tying their horses tails to the plough, were so biggotted to the custom, that nothing but an absolute order, (nay I believe an act of parliament) could persuade them of the superior ease and convenience of harness. Mr. *Pennant*, if I am not mistaken, in his tour, mentions a no less singular prejudice of the *Scotch*. The poorer Highlanders were so accustomed to a ground floor only, that it was not, 'till after much obstinate resistance, they could be convinced of the advantage of additional stories; and even then they were so positive in their refusal to ascend a staircase within the house, that it was actually built externally. Every one is acquainted with the dread the *Russians* had of inoculation,

culatation, tho' they saw the ravages of the natural small pox, 'till their Empress, with a courage peculiar to herself, convinced them of its safety, by submitting first herself to the operation. And yet this method was long before practiced with success in *Turkey*, under the name of ingrafting the disease. I cannot but here repeat what I have before observed, how custom familiarizes objects, at first sight the most disgusting to us. And here, gentle and benevolent reader, you will pardon my addressing one of my correspondents in particular, whose case, as censor general of this little world, I think myself in duty bound to consider, and I have given it the consideration it deserves. Let then VIR BONUS frequently repeat his ride through our territories, and in case of molestation, let him plead the promise which I now solemnly ( tho' *exclusively* ) give *him* of the omission of the thistle. Let him take every opportunity of submitting his deformities to the inspection of my very facetious fellow-citizens, and let him be assured that they will gradually wear off; and that even a brown buz-wig, a light blue coat, and (tho' much the most durable stain about him) black everlasting breeches, may at length thro' custom be incorporated into our ideas  
of

of humanity. Let him not however be impatient at the length of the process ; let him not in despair of success put a period to his miserable existence. The little I have seen of this wicked world convinces me, that with a little more experience I shall like it very well ; let him reflect only on the magnitude of his offence,—that he is a *Quiz*, and rather let him console himself with the reflection, that be he at present never such a “*tough one*,” Custom may in course of time render him almost “*perfectus ad unguem*,” as neat as my nail.

*Montaigne* has entertained his readers with a collection of the most laughable, and yet the most opposite customs that he could pick up from this or any other nation, and by placing them in a very ridiculous point of view, he almost extorts from us a resolution, to make use of our own reason, in preference to vulgar prejudice, as our guide thro' life. There have been many, who have eagerly embraced the greatest hardships, merely to discover the extent of their patience ; and to endeavour by practice to lighten and familiarize them. Some have abandoned their riches to exercise themselves in a voluntary poverty ;

verty ; others courted labour, and the austerities of a painful life, to inure themselves to misfortune and fatigue. These, and more than these, merely by a resolute perseverance, they at length overcame; and not only by custom were taught to tolerate, but even to take a pleasure in them. But such men as these are not to be deemed the authors of all the frivolous customs we see daily here and every where dispersed thro' the globe ; customs which have not even the sanction of a mistaken virtue to support them, but which are the effects, either of the capricious whims of the few, or of the impenetrable ignorance of the many. Whoever would disengage himself from these unaccountable prejudices, will, by a little observation discover, how many things are received without scruple among the multitude, which have not the smallest foundation in nature or reason ; and when this mask of prejudice is thrown aside, will be spleened to think, how long he has himself been an accomplice in blinding the eye of his judgement, and in concurring in opinions the most vulgar and contemptible.

To this powerful agent in all human affairs, the *true born Englishman* is indebted for many of  
the

the privileges which he so exclusively enjoys, and which nothing but so absolute an authority as that of custom can justify. Of these not the least is the noble art of SWEARING, which, as I have more fully descanted on it in a former paper, I shall at present leave to reap the benefits of the improvements so liberally laid down by me. Rather than relinquish any one of these rights, the sturdy *Briton* will stand forth the protector of his own and countrymen's liberty, like the old Gascons against Charlemagne, who were so attached to their systematic rudeness and ignorance, that they boldly asserted an exclusive privilege of stupidity, when he first attempted to introduce among them the latin language and imperial laws. Hence also that *remnant of manhood*, the Taylor, upon the revolving festivals of Christmas and Easter, buttons up his knees, draws on his shoes, and descending from the deserted board, puts in a claim for every privilege of humanity, by grinning, in imitation of the rational faculty of laughter, and "*by holding up his head like a man.*" I remember a friend of mine who had so accustomed himself to talk in the horse-dealing phrase, that I really think he could convey his ideas by no other channel. He was once prescribing me



a remedy for a sprained hip, "Aye," said he, "we must fire you on the round bone, and give you a winter's run." Upon my expressing some surprize at this address, he loudly exclaimed against my ignorance, swearing at the same time that he believed I should not know a *snaffle* from a *curb*.

I shall subjoin to these remarks a letter from one of my correspondents, not very foreign from my subject.

'DEAR GREG,

'H A V I N G occasion to travel  
'a few weeks since on the north road, I was not a  
'little surprised at being charged by the post-  
'ilion for twenty miles, when the real distance was  
'but seventeen. Upon my remonstrating, the  
'boy allowed what I said, but they never charged,  
'he said, on that stage by the mile stones, but by  
'the old "*time out of mind*" custom of the house.  
'Upon so barefaced a declaration, I instantly paid  
'him the money, assuring him at the same time,  
'that tho' I was obliged to submit to *his* custom, I  
'never would in future trouble him with *mine*.  
'Your opinion of the repartee, will much oblige,

'Dear GREG,

'Your constant reader and admirer,

'MISOETHUS.'

M.

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The Reader may more easily conceive, than I can express, the extreme sorrow with which I inform the Public, of the indisposition under which Mr. GRIFFIN now labours. It has been, alas! for some time the opinion of the most able Physicians, that he could not outlive forty;—if so, two weeks, “two little weeks, with wings of down” (as the Poet says) will terminate his existence, as the Guardian, the Censor, and the Instructor of the little W<sup>o</sup>rl<sup>d</sup>. He seems indeed, to be fully sensible of his situation; so much so, that he commissioned me to make it known to the Public; and to inform his Correspondents at the same time, that it is his earnest desire, that they would send in to him without delay, their names, and the claims they have to their respective compositions, that he may be able to do them justice in his last will and testament. He is happy that he can attribute his approaching end to no other than natural causes. He had indeed, some time ago, a kind of paralytic affection, which totally deprived him of the use of one half of his body; but to this, (though I cannot indeed pronounce him quite recovered of it,) I can by no means ascribe his alas-I-fear-too-quickly-approaching end. Tant mieux, as the French have it, “so much the better,” we are all mortal men; high and low, rich and poor, all must die one time or another; and of this Mr. GRIFFIN seems well aware; for tho’, for some space of time, one half of his body was of no man-  
ner.

ner of service to him, he always kept up his spirits. Should Mr. GRIFFIN, recover, I may be allowed to exclaim with the poet, "Arma virumque cano,"—but του δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος "if the worst comes to the worst," I shall have the satisfaction to reflect, that I have done my duty in warning the Public of their approaching loss,—and then—but the dejection of my spirits will not suffer me to make any other remarks on so melancholy a subject, than that compleat sets of the MICROCOSM, or any single Number, may be had as usual of

THE EDITOR.

Castle-Street, Windsor,  
July 23, 1787.

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XXXIX.—MONDAY, *July* 30, 1787.

*Non omnis morior*—OVID.

*I die not all.*—GARTH.

EBILITATED as I am with sickness, I feel that I shall not be able to entertain my readers, as usual, with a calm discussion of topics not the most immediately interesting. I feel plainly that I am no longer a Man of *this World*. And that being the case, I think it incumbent on me to leave to my fellow-citizens some knowledge of the Life of one, whose writings have been dedicated to their service.

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A life indeed of so short duration, as that of GREGORY GRIFFIN, cannot be supposed to have been replete with any uncommon incidents; or to have abounded with any surprising adventures. It has, as may be imagined, been checquered rather by a variety of sentiments, than situations; and owes its diversification rather to a succession of ideas, than a series of events.

Yet even in these, I flatter myself, that my fellow-citizens will find themselves interested; and that they will be solicitous to become acquainted even with the most trivial circumstances, which concern one, to whom they are indebted, if not for instruction and entertainment, at least for an earnest desire to instruct and entertain.

Of my birth and parentage I shall say nothing; for, from an account of either no instruction could be gathered. Of my education—the first circumstances, which I have any recollection of, are, that I was, at the age of six years, employed in learning the rudiments of my mother tongue, spinning cock-chafers on corking pins, and longing for bread and butter, at a day school, near  


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 My proficiency here was so great, that

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I actually got through, within a month, by far the greater part of a gingerbread alphabet, and might be literally said to devour my learning with an astonishing avidity. In my hours of relaxation from study, the utmost stretch of my intellects was the acquisition of the aforesaid bread and butter; the highest notion I could conceive of rational amusement, was enjoyment of that delight, which arose from the contemplation of the abovementioned cock-chafer, writhing, or, as I then, in compliance with the custom of my school-fellows, termed it, *preaching*, in the agonies of impalement. And yet, my temper, gentle reader, is not cruel; my disposition, would you believe me, is far from tyrannical. But the abuse of power is equally prevalent among children and men. And when we every day find, by melancholy experience, that the strongest intellects, and the maturest judgments are unable to resist the intoxication of uncontrolled command, and rioting in the plenitude of power, break thro' the laws of reason and of right, can we expect that the senses of childhood should be less frequently fascinated, and less easily overcome; and that, when armed with the ability of distributing life and death to the subject tribes of animals and insects,

it should exercise its dominion with equity, and administer its charge without injustice? Not but, with regard to myself as well as others, the rage of despotism has been checked, and the triumphs of tyranny interrupted, by the admonitions of friendly advice, and the interposition of parental authority. But, alas, how could I regard those admonitions, or revere that authority — when, after being severely chidden for wantonly dismembering a wasp, or knocking down a butterfly, I was often called upon to crush a spider, or trample an earwig to atoms, because forsooth, a lady in the company had conceived a rooted horror to the one, or was endowed with a natural antipathy to the other? Let the parent, who would keep his child pure from the stain of cruelty to animals, beware, how he makes him the executioner of his vengeance on even the most noxious; the crusher of spiders, and the trampler of earwigs. The distinctions of harmless and hurtful, are not to be explained to childhood. Self preservation needs not the admonition.—The child who executes these commands, must, either if he does not reflect at all, be steeled by their repetition against the pleadings of pity: or if he does reflect, in what light can he consider them, but as dictated by the  
lust

lust of destroying, cloaked indeed under the affectation of antipathy!

But to proceed in my narrative: My removal at the age of eight years to a *Grammar School*, at ———, as it changed my method of study, and enlarged my prospects of improvement in the belles lettres, so did it give a totally new turn to the train of my ideas, and open a larger field for the exercise of my adventurous ambition. I set out with becoming a professed admirer, and would-be imitator, of the heroes of the head-clafs; and wearied the good-natured patience of all my friends, relations, intimates, acquaintance, and visitors, during the first six vacations, by relating ten times a day, with a considerable degree of archness, and an infinite quantity of admiration, the tricks of *Tomlinson*, and the wickedness of *Wilkins*; and “how *Spriggins* kicked the Usher’s shins under the table, and then said it was’n’t he.” I called moreover into action my mimetic powers, and before the expiration of my eleventh year, was able to imitate, with no small share of success, the tone and manner of the writing usher, in pronouncing “*Very well, Master Simkins, I’ll sartinly get you vupt for dartying on your breeches.*”—

But



But the time was now arrived, when I was to be no longer the trumpeter of another's fame, the humble admirer of another's achievements. Having attained the "topmost round" of that learning which this seminary was capable of bestowing, and going on, as I was, in my twelfth year, I thought it time to aim at being the pattern of the excellence I had pictured; and to become myself the hero of my own celebration. Like the son of *Fingal*, I now resolved to sing the achievements of myself and my own companions.

——— "*quæque ipse miserrima vidi,*  
"*Et quorum pars magna fui.*"

And if in the ardor of narration, I by chance, had drained the sources of reality, and emptied the stores of truth, I betook myself, without hesitation, to ransacking the riches of fiction; and trusted implicitly to the inexhaustible fertility of my own invention. Many a time have I entertained, or perhaps tired, an indulgent audience, with long accounts of my miraculous escapes from dangers of my own raising; and extricated myself, with admirable address, from situations of my own contriving. Often have I, for the sake of displaying my heroism, and telling a good story,

story, endangered my precious neck, by leaping fancied ditches, and climbing imaginary walls, for the purpose of despoiling fictitious apple-trees, or non-existent gooseberry-trees.

Luckily for my safety, and perhaps for my reputation, I was rescued from the midst of these "imminent deadly" dangers by a removal to *Eton*. From her to have "sucked the milk of science," to have contracted for her a pious fondness and veneration, which will bind me for ever to her interests; and perhaps, (pardon kind reader, the licensed vanity of a Periodical Writer, abandoning himself on his death-bed to the fascination of egotism) to have improved by my earnest endeavours her younger part of the present generation, is to me a source of infinite pride and satisfaction.

But I find myself growing weak, and am unable to proceed any farther. With the rest of my life, and how it has been employed, my fellow-citizens are sufficiently acquainted.—For my own part, I look back upon it with contentment;—but I must resign the pen to my *Publisher*, who will say whatever I have left unsaid—that ought to be made known to my Countrymen.—They will,

I flatter myself, remember, not without esteem, the name of GREGORY GRIFFIN,—they will preserve a regard for his memory.—

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Mr. GRIFFIN could not finish the sentence he was about; this last effort has quite exhausted him, and he has left to me the melancholy office of concluding his life.—Which, by the bye, if printed, with a neat type, in a thin octavo, and adorned with a well looking title page, would cut a very pretty figure in the annals of literature. I should, indeed, be a little in doubt whether to entitle it simply the LIFE OF MR. GRIFFIN, or the CONFESSIONS OF MR. GRIFFIN, or AN APOLOGY FOR THE LIFE AND WRITINGS, &c. but of that hereafter—*Tempus edax rerum.*—I find nothing among Mr. G's papers worthy of meeting the public eye; as I discovered upon searching his breeches pockets since he went to bed, that they consist of, in his right hand pocket, his laundress's bill; in his fob, a piece of brown paper, containing one penny-worth of sugar-candy, of which he was wont to be very fond; and a small note to a friend, containing a positive declaration that he leaves behind him no writings whatsoever unpublished, but  
his

his Will, which he intends enjoining his executors to lay before his fellow-citizens after his decease.

It may be questioned; why, I, who must naturally entertain a veneration for his person, do not, now, that so fair an opportunity offers itself, attempt something, just by way of a character or so; and it may be suspected, that there is some reason for the omission; and to say truth, so there is.—It must be confessed, that I have for some time intended, ( and have collected materials for the purpose, ) as the eyes of the world must infallibly be fixed on his exit, to favour it, after Mr. G's demise, with a collection of *Anecdotes, Stories, Smart Sayings, Witty Repartees, Funny Jokes, and Shining Sentiments*, under the comprehensive title of GRIFFINIANA.—Of this work the following extracts will give a sufficient specimen.

‘ Mr. GRIFFIN was a man of great humour.  
 ‘ Coming one day into the parlour, where *Pompey*,  
 ‘ the *Editor's* little dog, was lying and basking be-  
 ‘ fore the fire, “ I protest, *Pompey*,” said he, “ you  
 ‘ are almost as lazy a dog as myself !!!”

‘ The voluntary fallies of Mr. GRIFFIN’s wit  
‘ were only to be equalled by the readinefs of his  
‘ repartees : of this the two following anecdotes,  
‘ will give evidence.

‘ Mr. GRIFFIN walking one day in the Street,  
‘ was fuddenly accofted by a friend of his, who,  
‘ pulling off his hat, addreffed him with “ How  
‘ do you do, Mr. GRIFFIN ? ” Mr. GRIFFIN,  
‘ without the fmalleft hesitation, or embarrassment,  
‘ infantly retorted “ Pretty well, I thank you,  
‘ Sir ; I hope you are well ? ”

‘ Another time, Mr. GRIFFIN was attacked in  
‘ a large company by a lady, who thinking to  
‘ catch him unprepared, asked him very fharply,  
‘ “ how much two and two made ? ” “ Two and two,  
‘ madam,” faid he, with great quicknefs, and  
‘ without betraying the fmalleft confufion, “ make  
‘ *four.* ”

I will be candid enough to own, that the idea  
of this publication was borrowed from one of a  
fimilar kind, on a man of almoft equal eminence  
with him who is to be the fubject of thefe me-  
moirs. . But tho’ there may be a near refemblance  
between

between the anecdotes here set down, and some which are related of that Gentleman, the reader will, I hope, have fairness enough to think, that it is very possible that both should be original. I have however been once on the point of dropping the design, when it was represented to me by a friend, on whose judgment I had great reliance, “that I should act unworthily as a biographer, “and ungenerously as a friend, in endeavouring to “reduce the name of Mr. GRIFFIN, by such a “publication, to the level of *Joe Miller* and *Tom Brown*; and in rashly bringing to light, such “uninteresting and trifling effusions of momentary “mirth, or occasional levity, as would but detract “from the weight of his other performances; and “such, as from their own intrinsic merit, could “only pass without ridicule, when they passed “without public observation.”

THE EDITOR.

B

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T H E  
M I C R O C O S M .

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No. XL.—MONDAY, July 30, 1787.

*Amicorum munus est, quæ voluerit, meminisse,  
—quæ mandaverit, exequi.—TACIT.*

*It is the office of friends, to remember the re-  
quests of the deceased, and faithfully execute his  
commissions.*

THE melancholy event predicted in a  
T late Number has taken place.—GRE-  
GORY GRIFFIN is no more.

About five minutes, three seconds after nine  
o'clock on *Monday* evening, his friends were  
alarmed by a hasty summons to his bedside. The  
good

good gentleman seemed to be perfectly sensible that the moment of his dissolution drew near.

It has been usually customary with the Biographers of eminent men, when drawing towards the conclusion of their Hero's existence, to make the World acquainted with every little symptom attending his exit. But the effects of a Cathartic, or the operation of an Emetic, have been too minutely investigated, and too frequently discussed, to be any longer interesting; and the various circumstances of this kind which marked the termination of Mr. GRIFFIN'S existence, would be of as little consequence to the literary, as medical World. These therefore we shall omit mentioning.

“ My friends!” (said he, as we stood round him, raising himself a little on his left elbow, while the bookseller's boy placed a pillow under his head, *We knew there was but one way, for his nose was as sharp as a pen*)—“ my friends,” said he, “ I could not quit *this World* satisfactorily to my own conscience, without acknowledging my obligations to you. I die, it is true, at an age, when I might, without presumption, have  
 L 3 “ hoped



“ hoped for the enjoyment of a protracted ex-  
“ istence. But I have long foreseen this event,  
“ and am happy to be prepared to meet it. It  
“ is a great consolation to me, that I leave you  
“ behind me, the defenders of my conduct, in  
“ that official character, which, I have during  
“ my life-time supported. It has been my en-  
“ deavour to blend the instruction of my fellow-  
“ citizens with their entertainment; to temper  
“ my censure with lenity; and to laugh away their  
“ follies, rather than to scourge their vices. If,  
“ in any one of these points, my success has been  
“ equal to my wishes; the end of my existence is  
“ fully answered.

“ It has indeed so happened, that contrary to  
“ my expectations, my name has found its way be-  
“ yond the limits of our little republic. Even  
“ there, cast as I was on the *wide World*, I have  
“ met with such a reception, as to convince me,  
“ that the tendency of my plan has been warmly  
“ approved; however inadequate may have ap-  
“ peared its execution. And if by these means,  
“ I have added one more citizen to our Com-  
“ mon Wealth, or contributed to diffuse a patri-  
“ otic love of *Eton* among its present members,  
“ then

“ then indeed shall I be proud to congratulate my-  
 “ self on the success of my endeavours.—But I  
 “ feel my strength going from me.”—The Pub-  
 lisher pulled out his pocket-handkerchief—  
 “ Adieu!” — the Publisher applied his pocket-  
 handkerchief to his eyes. “ To your care I en-  
 “ trust my will,—you will find, I have not for-  
 “ gotten you, my friends :—you will execute my  
 “ commissions with fidelity.”—“MR. GRIFFIN IS  
 “ dead” said the bookseller,—“Sure enough” said  
 the bookseller’s boy.—The printer’s devil blub-  
 bered.—It was too much.—We were forced to  
 retire to give vent to our feelings—and open the  
 Will.—A copy of it we now lay before the  
 Public.

THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT,  
 O F  
 GREGORY GRIFFIN, ESQ.

‘ *Vicesimo tertio die JULII, anno regni GEORGII*  
 ‘ *Tertii Magnæ Britanniæ, Franciæ, et Hiberniæ Regis,*  
 ‘ *Fidei Defensoris, &c. vicesimo septimo ; Domini,*  
 ‘ *millesimo septingentesimo octogesimo septimo.*

‘ I, GREGORY GRIFFIN, of the College of  
 ‘ ETON, in the County of BUCKS, being  
 ‘ weak

‘ weak in body, but sound in understanding,  
‘ on this twenty-third instant of this July present,  
‘ in the twenty-seventh year of the reign of his  
‘ Majesty GEORGE the third, of Great-Britain,  
‘ France and Ireland, King, Defender of the  
‘ Faith, &c. in the year of our Lord, one thousand  
‘ seven hundred and eighty-seven, do hereby com-  
‘ mit my body to the press, from whence it came ;  
‘ my spirit to the comprehension of my readers.

‘ Of my Worldly Effects, consisting chiefly of  
‘ Essays, Poems, Letters, &c. &c.

‘ IMPRIMIS, I do give and bequeath the  
‘ whole of the aforesaid Essays, Poems, Letters,  
‘ &c. &c. to my much-beloved friends J. SMITH,  
‘ G. CANNING, R. SMITH, and J. FRERE;  
‘ to be among them divided as shall be hereafter  
‘ by me appointed ; excepting only such legacies,  
‘ as shall be hereafter by me assigned to other my  
‘ worthy and approved friends.

‘ And I do further constitute and appoint the  
‘ aforesaid, my much-beloved friends, the Ex-  
‘ ecutors and Administrators of this my last Will  
‘ and Testament, to divide my Effects, according  
‘ to the form appointed therein.

ITEM.

‘ ITEM. I DO GIVE AND BEQUEATH to  
 ‘ Mr. JOHN SMITH, late of the College of  
 ‘ ETON, now of KING’s College, CAM-  
 ‘ BRIDGE, all my Papers, Effays, &c. &c. which  
 ‘ bear the Signature of A.

‘ ITEM. To Mr. GEORGE CANNING, now  
 ‘ of the College of ETON, I DO GIVE AND  
 ‘ BEQUEATH all my Papers, Effays, &c. &c.  
 ‘ signed with B.

‘ ITEM. To Mr. ROBERT SMITH, now of  
 ‘ the College of ETON aforesaid, I DO ASSIGN  
 ‘ all my Papers, &c. &c. ( as aforesaid ) signed C.

‘ ITEM. I DO MAKE OVER to Mr. JOHN  
 ‘ FRERE, now of the aforesaid College of  
 ‘ ETON, all my Papers, &c. ( as beforemen-  
 ‘ tioned ) marked D.

‘ ITEM. To Mr. JOSEPH MELLISH, of  
 ‘ TRINITY College, CAMBRIDGE, in token  
 ‘ of my respect and esteem, I DO ASSIGN the  
 ‘ Paper bearing the signature of M.

‘ ITEM. To Mr. B. WAY, I DO BEQUEATH  
 ‘ the Letter signed MUSIDORUS; to Mr.  
 ‘ LITTLEHALES, the Letter of CÆMETE-  
 ‘ RIUS; to LORD H. SPENCER, the Letter  
 ‘ and Poem of IRONICULUS, with the Letter of  
 ‘ Σοφος Πολυφαγο:.’

‘ The

' The rest of my Papers, &c. &c. here un-  
' disposed of, I DO HEREBY ENJOIN my  
' EXECUTORS, to make over to such of  
' my CORRESPONDENTS as shall severally  
' make good their claims thereunto; DE-  
' CLARING moreover, that all such PAPERS  
' as do not bear any of the aforesaid signatures,  
' A. B. C. or D. are not to be considered as the  
' property of my EXECUTORS.

' Dated this Twenty-third Day of *July* pre-  
' sent, in the Year, &c. &c. 1787,

' Signed

' GREGORY GRIFFIN.'

Witnesses

CHARLES KNIGHT,

PHILIP NORBURY.

And now, in the character of Mr GRIFFIN'S Executors, having first rendered our thanks to the Public, for the great support which that gentleman has experienced from their candour and indulgence ; it would be ungrateful, were we not in his name to express his more particular obligations, to a *World*, which he quits with so much regret.

Long may it flourish, as it has hitherto done, the Nursery of Heroes and Statesmen ; of Poets, and Philosophers ; and may its Citizens, equally qualified to shine in the busy sphere of political eminence, or cultivate with taste the elegancies of literary retirement, ever look back with filial affection on the spot where they were formed for such noble, such elevated purposes.

May the Contemporaries of Mr. GRIFFIN, ever join with him in looking up with gratitude and veneration to the INSTRUCTOR of their youth, whose approbation has been equally the aim of all *their* puerile exertions. To him, as the source, from which their merit, if any, has originated, we now commend

commend the Guardianship of these early efforts, begun under his auspices ; and consequently with peculiar propriety entrusted to the continuance of such distinguished approbation.

B. & C.

F I N I S.







