Mr. *DENNIS*'s

LETTERS

FAMILIAR, MORAL, *and* CRITICAL.

A

ORIGINAL

LETTERS,

FAMILIAR,

MORAL *and* CRITICAL.

By Mr. *DENNIS.*

In TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME *the* FIRST.

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PREFACE.

I Here present the Reader with a Volume of Letters writ upon very different Occasions, at very different Times. They are far from being all of them equal, but I hope their Variety will make amends for their Inequality. I make no doubt but that upon perusal of the Critical part of them, the old Accusation will be brought against me, and there will be a fresh Outcry among Thoughtless People, that I am an Ill-natur'd Man. 'Tis very odd that I should have that Character only from Persons who never knew me, and who never were once in my Company. But there are People in the World who imagine that Criticism must be the Effect of Ill nature. These Persons know not what is meant by either of the Terms, either

Criticiſm or Ill-nature; otherwiſe they would be convinced that a good Criticiſm is the beſt-natur'd thing in the World. For by Goodneſs of Nature muſt be meant ſomething that comes up to the true Nature of Man; elſe it would be a Term of Reproach, inſtead of Commendation. But the true Nature of Man is a Reaſonable and a Social Nature. And a good Criticiſm, is both Reaſonable and Social. It detects Error, illuſtrates Truth, advances Art, and conſequently has a direct Tendency to the Advancement of the national Honour. If this laſt is true of good Criticiſm in general, it muſt be moſt true of a juſt Criticiſm upon the Tragedy of *Cato*. That Tragedy met with Succeſs which never any other did. It was acted for a Month together. It has been tranſlated into *French*, and into *Italian*, which never happen'd to any of our Dramatick Poems before. And 'tis plain to all the Judges of Poetry, that it has a Thouſand ſhameful Faults, and very

few

few natural Beauties. What must the Knowers in *France* and *Italy* say, upon reading these Translations? Must they not Discourse after this Manner? The *English* Nation boast much of their Poetry; they extol to the Skies, their *Shakespear*, their *Ben Johnson*, their *Milton*: But yet they applaud nothing so loudly as this Tragedy of *Cato*. They have got it translated both into *French* and *Italian*, and have sent it to us as a Master-Piece to Insult us. Else why has this Tragedy only been translated? And yet this Tragedy, at the same time that it has a Thousand Faults, and most of them very gross ones; has very few Beauties, and those which it has are perhaps not of *British* Growth, but are deriv'd from *Lucan* and *Seneca*. What then must we think of those other Poets, their *Shakespear*, their *Ben Johnson*, their *Milton*, whom they formerly so much extol'd, but not half so much as *Cato*? Must we not conclude, that these Islanders are

very indifferent Poets, and more indifferent Judges?

I appeal to the reasonable and impartial Reader, if this must not be the Sense of all the knowing *French* and *Italians* who have seen these Translations. Let the reasonable and impartial Reader judge then, if a just Criticism upon *Cato* was not absolutely necessary, both for the Advantage of Dramatick Poetry, to which the undeserv'd Success of this Tragedy has done infinite Harm, and for the Vindication of the National Honour; let the Reader judge, if it was not necessary, that a Man who owns that he admires the noble Genius of *Shakespear*, admires the unparallell'd Sublimity of the *Paradise Lost* of *Milton*, that he is infinitely pleas'd with the Master-Pieces of *Ben Johnson*, and exceedingly delighted with several of our other Comick Poets, should give his Reasons to all the World why he has no Esteem for *Cato*?

If what I have ſaid is not ſufficient to appeaſe the Fury of a Headlong Cabal; but they will ſtill cry out that the Critical Letters in this Volume upon the Tragedy of *Cato*, are the Effects of ill-nature, I muſt beg leave to exclaim in my turn, that thoſe Perſons, let them be who they will, ſhew a deplorable want of publick Spirit, who can prefer the Reputation of one Man, and a Reputation which he does not deſerve to poſſeſs, before the Advantage of a noble Art, and the Honour of their Country.

But perhaps 'tis not the Author of *Cato* that theſe Perſons are ſo much concern'd for, 'tis themſelves. 'Tis themſelves and their own Satisfaction, which they prefer to the Proſperity of the Commonwealth of Learning, and to the Good and Honour of their Country. There are in the World very vain Perſons, who are reſolv'd to maintain the good Opinion which they have of themſelves, at the Expence of every thing, and utterly de-

teſt

rest the Man who shall dare to disturb them in the Possession of it; by shewing them that they have pass'd a very foolish Judgment.

If any are disgusted that these Observations are publish'd after the Death of the Author of that Tragedy, I can assure them, that they were writ in two long Letters to a Friend immediately after the REMARKS which were printed. By what Artifice those two Letters were got out of my Hands, by what Fortune I recovered the Substance of them, and how it came to take the form which it now has, I shall not here declare; not the first, thro' regard to the Memory of the Dead; nor the two latter, thro' Respect to the precious Time of the Living.

Before I take my leave of this Subject I think my self oblig'd to do Justice to the Memory of Mr. ADDISON, who was certainly a Learned and very Ingenious Man: And several of the *Tatlers*

and

and *Spectators* which were writ by him deserv'd the Applause which they met with.

I hope that what I have said will suffice to satisfy every reasonable Impartial Reader, who is a true Lover of His Country. For the rest, I have long since learnt to esteem their Censures according to their just Value.

TA-

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ERRATA.

Page 22. Line 2. read, *for thee.*
Page 58. Line 7. for *Gneores*, read *Gesures*,
Page 199. Line 18. read, *is is.*

LETTERS

Familiar, Moral, and Critical.

Decemb. 5. 1716.

TO

Sir RICHARD BLACKMORE.

On the Moral and Conclusion of an Epick Poem.

SIR,

WHEN I sent you my Observations, upon the Two first Acts of the Play, I sent you so many Reasons which oblig'd me to differ from you, with respect to the Encomium, which you give to that Tragedy, in your *Essay* upon *Epick Poetry*. And whenever you think fit to lay your Commands upon me, I shall lay before you the Reasons, for which I dissent from you, with regard to the Commendation which you give to a *late Translation*. At present I shall pass to Things more general, and consequently of far greater Importance.

IN the Chapter which treats of the Moral, you are pleased to affirm two Things; The first is, That one who writes an Epick Poem, need not in his first Intention, pitch upon some considerable Moral, and then contrive his Fable suitable to that Design; The Second Thing is, That there is no occasion that an Epick Poem should end Fortunately with regard to the Principal Character.

BUT, Sir, before I give my Reasons for dissenting from you, with regard to these Two Points; the first of which is of Consequence, and the Second of the utmost Importance: I desire that you would give me leave to enumerate some Things, in which we perfectly Agree; that by this Method, we may facilitate an Agreement in Things in which we Differ.

We agree then, Sir, in the following Points.

1. That there must be a Fable. *Essay*. p. 37.
2. That there must be an Action. *Ess*. p. 47.
3. That the Action must be one. p. *ibid.*
4. That there must be a Moral. p. 76.
5. That the Fable and the Action must be only for the Moral. *Ibid.* & p. 34.
6. That the Moral must be the genuine Result of the Fable and the Action. p. 77.
7. That Admiration ought to be the predominant Passion in the narration of the Action. p. 33.
8. Nothing that is common or ordinary, can excite Admiration. p. 34 & 35.
9. That there ought to be an Allegory. p. 41.

THESE,

THESE, Sir, are Things in which we agree expresly: There are other Things in which we agree implicitly, because if these last are false, they destroy the Truth even of those in which we agree expresly; as that

1. The Moral must contain an undeniable Truth, or else it cannot be a Moral: For Falshood may delude, but only Truth can instruct.

2. That the Instruction which the Poem gives, must be general; Moral Philosophy being the Law of Nature, and consequently, instructive to Mankind.

3. That the Poetick Action must remain general, even after the Imposition of Names; for if the Action is particular, there can be no general Instruction deduced from it; the Conclusion being false to generals from particulars.

4. That for the same Reason, the Characters at the bottom must be general likewise, even after the Imposition of Names.

5. That the Action and Characters being both general, even after the Imposition of Names, they must be, consequently, both Allegorical.

LET us come now, Sir, to the two foremention'd Particulars.

YOU say, That an Epick Poet is not oblig'd to have the Moral first in his Mind: For, say you, no Author can form the Narration of any great and memorable Action, but some Moral

will arise from it, whether the Writer intends it or not. Suppose this were true, a Poet is to Instruct by his Art and not by Chance. But the very contrary of this is true, a Poet may form the Narration, of a Hundred great and memorable Actions, if these Actions are Particular and Historical, and not one Moral shall arise from them all; as the Battle of *Pharsalia*, the Death of *Brutus* and *Cassius*, the Death of *Cato*, the Death of King *Lear*, the Death of *Hamlet*, the Death of *Harry* the Fourth: And I defie any Poet to form a general Action, and general Characters, but he must form them upon a Moral, and consequently that Moral must be first in his Head. Can any one believe, that *Æsop* first told a Story of a Cock and a Bull, and afterwards made a Moral to it? Or is it reasonable to believe, that he made his Moral first, and afterwards to prove it, contriv'd his Fable? Now I know no difference that there is, between one of *Æsop*'s Fables, and the Fable of an Epick Poem, as to their Natures, tho' there be many and great ones, as to their Circumstances. 'Tis impossible for a Poet to form any Fable, unless the Moral be first in his Head.

You say that since *Homer* and *Virgil* does not expresly draw any Doctrine from their Fables, it is not certain whether they design'd any; and it is still more uncertain, you say, whether they intended those particular Morals, which are generally ascrib'd to them; which is as much as to say, that, tho' we can see a Design, a good, a just, and a great Design in those admirable Poems,

yet

yet the Authors of them ſaw none, and that, perhaps that is not their Deſign, which appears to us and others, but ſomething, which after ſo many Ages, has appeared to no Man. Could *Homer* or *Virgil,* if they had ſtudied a Thouſand Years, have contrived Morals, which would have been more the genuine reſult of all the Parts of their Fables and of their Actions, than thoſe which are generally aſcribed to them? Or can thoſe Morals be made to appear the genuine reſult of any other Poetick Actions, unleſs they are Copies of thoſe?

YOU continue to ſay, That as from Pulpit Diſcourſes on Divine Subjects, many uſeful Inferences may be deduc'd by the Preacher; ſo in theſe ſuperior Poems, *&c.* But here, Sir, you appear not to conſider, that the grand Moral of every Sermon is the Text, which certainly is, or ought to be, firſt in the Mind of every Preacher.

TO conclude my Remarks on this firſt Point; it appears to me evident, that every Man who undertakes any great Action, has the chief Deſign which he propoſes by it, firſt of all in his Head; but you yourſelf are pleaſed to own, p. 34. *That the principal End of an Epick Poet, is to give Pleaſure and Inſtruction*; and p. 76. *That the Pleaſure is only in order to the Inſtruction*; and p. 77. *That the moſt important part of the Inſtruction ought to ariſe from the whole Fable, becauſe the Inſtruction that ariſes from the whole, muſt be more important than that which ariſes from the Parts.* By owning all which

which, it is clear to me that you implicitly own, That the Moral of an Epick Poem muſt be firſt in the Head of the Poet.

I now, Sir, come to the Second Point, concerning which we differ. You are pleas'd to affirm, That it is not neceſſary, that an Epick Poem ſhould end happily, with relation to the Principal Character, but that the Poets and mere Criticks have laid down this Rule, without conſulting Reaſon in the Caſe, being led into it by the *Iliad* and *Odyſſes* of *Homer*, and the *Æneis* of *Virgil:* And here you deplore that ſervile Submiſſion which the Poets and Commentators have made to naked Authority, by which they have advanc'd Maxims out of Reverence to great Names, without any Diſcuſſion of the Subject, or entering upon any Enquiry which ſupports their Aſſertion; becauſe, ſay you, the End of the Epick Poet may be equally attain'd, tho' the Event ſhould be Unfortunate; into which we are now to Enquire.

THE principal Character of an Epick Poem, muſt be either morally good or morally vicious; if he is morally good, the making him end unfortunately, will deſtroy all Poetical Juſtice, and conſequently, all Inſtruction: Such a Poem can have no Moral, and conſequently no Fable, no juſt and regular Poetical Action, but muſt be a vain Fiction and an empty Amuſement. Oh, but there is a Retribution in Futurity! But I thought that the Reader of an Epick Poem was to owe his Inſtruction to the Poet, and not to himſelf:

himſelf: Well then, the Poet may tell him ſo at the latter end of his Poem: Ay, would to God I could ſee ſuch a latter End of an Epick Poem, where the Poet ſhould tell the Reader, that he has cut an honeſt Man's Throat, only that he may have an Opportunity to ſend him to Heaven; and that tho' this would be but an indifferent Plea upon an Indictment for Murder at the Old-Baily, yet that he hopes the good-natur'd Reader will have Compaſſion on him, as the Gods have on his Hero. But Raillery apart, Sir, What occaſion is there for having recourſe to an Epick Poet to tell our ſelves by the bye, and by occaſional Reflection, that there will be a Retribution in Futurity, when the Chriſtian has this in his Heart conſtantly and directly, and the Atheiſt and Freethinker will make no ſuch Reflection? Tell me truly, Sir, would not ſuch a Poet appear to you or me, not to have ſufficiently conſider'd what a Poetical Moral is? And ſhould not you, or I Sir, be oblig'd, in order to make him comprehend the Nature of it, to lay before him that univerſal Moral, which is the Foundation of all Morals, both Epick and Dramatick, and is incluſive of them all, and that is, That He who does good, and perſeveres in it, ſhall always be Rewarded, and he who does ill and perſeveres in it, ſhall always be puniſh'd? Should we not deſire him to obſerve, That the foreſaid Reward muſt always attend and crown good Actions, not ſometimes only, for then it would follow, that ſometimes a perſeverance in good Actions has no Reward, which would take away all Poetical Inſtruction,

and indeed every ſort of Moral Inſtruction, reſolving Providence into Chance or Fate. Should we not, Sir, farther put him in Mind, that ſince whoever perſeveres in good Actions, is ſure to be Rewarded at the laſt, it follows, that a Poet does not aſſert by his Moral, that he is always ſure to be Rewarded in this World, becauſe that would be falſe, as you have very juſtly obſerv'd, *p.* 60. and therefore never can be the Moral of an Epick Poem, becauſe what is falſe may Delude, but only Truth can Inſtruct. Should we not let him know, Sir, that this univerſal Moral only teaches us, That whoever perſeveres in good Actions, ſhall be always ſure to be Rewarded either here or hereafter; and that the Truth of this Moral is prov'd by the Poet, by making the principal Character of his Poem, like all the reſt of his Characters, and like the Poetical Action, at the bottom, Univerſal and Allegorical, even after diſtinguiſhing it by a particular Name, by making this principal Character at the bottom, a meer Poetical Phantom, of a very ſhort duration, thro' the whole extent of which duration we can ſee at once, which continues no longer than the reading of the Poem, and that being over, the Phantom is to us nothing, ſo that unleſs our Senſe is ſatisfy'd of the Reward that is given to this Poetical Phantome, whoſe whole duration we ſee thro' from the very beginning to the end; inſtead of a wholſome Moral, there would be a pernicious Inſtruction, *viz.* That a Man may perſevere in good Actions and not be Rewarded for it thro' the whole ex-

tent

tent of his duration, that is neither in this World nor in the World to come.

BUT tho' the principal Character of an Epick Poem is morally vicious, yet the Poem ought not to end unfortunately with relation to that principal Character. But here, Sir, I think my ſelf oblig'd to explain my ſelf: By a Character morally vicious, I by no means mean a Villainous Character: Becauſe a Villain can never have greatneſs of Mind nor greatneſs of Capacity ſufficient to perform Things deſerving to be admir'd. But Admiration is, as it were, the Inſtrument by which the Poet works his End, which is Inſtruction, as has been acknowledg'd.

BY a Character morally vicious then, I mean ſuch a Character as is compounded of good and bad Qualities, the good at the ſame time overcoming the bad, and Hiding them as the Sun does Mercury, by the greatneſs of their Neighbouring Luſtre: Now a Poet is not to make an Heroick Poem end Unfortunately, with relation to ſuch a Character, becauſe ſuch an end would weaken and deſtroy that Admiration which is requiſite for the Poet's attaining his End, and deſtroy or weaken it in the very place where its Influence is moſt requiſite. For as the greateſt Impreſſion that a Poem is to make, ought to be made at the end of it, the reigning Paſſion of that Poem ought to predominate moſt there. As therefore Terrour and Compaſſion ought to be moſt violently mov'd, at the Cataſtrophe of a Tragedy, and Laughter at that of a Comedy, Admiration ought to be rais'd to its utmoſt height,

at

at the end of an Epick Poem. But if that Poem ſhould end unfortunately, with relation to ſuch a compounded Character, as we have juſt mention'd above, it would cauſe great Indignation in ſome, and great Compaſſion in others: Now as great Indignation and great Compaſſion are always attended with Grief, Admiration is conſtantly accompanied with Joy. An Epick Poet therefore, by exciting Compaſſion or Indignation at the latter end of his Poem, inſtead of Admiration, would make that Poem throw off its Nature and aſſume that of Tragedy, which is as directly contrary to its own, as Grief is to Joy, or as Light is to Darkneſs.

NOR would ſuch a proſperous End, in relation to ſuch a Character, be in the leaſt a violation of Poetick Juſtice, tho' for the moſt part in Tragedy, it would be a very great one; becauſe the Hero of an Epick Poem always carries on ſome good and great Deſign, for the Advantage of that Society, of which he is the chief, or an illuſtrious Member, at leaſt, it has been ſo, in all the Epick Poems I have yet ſeen; tho' this is far from being always the Caſe in Tragedy; now that publick Virtue makes Compenſation for all Faults but Crimes, and he who has this publick Virtue is not capable of Crimes. The ancient *Romans* and *Athenians*, while Liberty flouriſh'd among them, would have look'd very coldly upon a Poet, who ſhould have ſhewn a great Patriot unfortunate, only for being a great Patriot. In order to encourage publick Virtue and publick Spirit, and the Love of their Country,

trey, they oblig'd their Epick Poets, to ſhew thoſe Virtues crown'd with Glory and Felicity. Nay, the Ancients made the very future Happineſs of their Heroes depend upon the Succeſs of their good and great Deſigns for the Welfare of their Country: Witneſs that famous paſſage in the Fragment of *Cicero, De ſomnio Ciceronis Sed, quo ſis, Africane, alacrior ad Tutandam Rempublicam, ſic Habeto: Oomnibus, qui patriam conſervaverint, adjuverint, auxerint, certum eſſe in cælo, ac Definitum locum, ubi Beati ævo ſempiterno fruantur.*

FOR my part, I have no Notion, that a ſuffering Hero can be proper for Epick Poetry. *Milton* could make but very little, even of a Suffering God, who makes quite another Impreſſion with his Lightning and his Thunder in *Paradiſe Loſt,* than with his Meekneſs and his Stoiciſm in *Paradiſe Regain'd*: That great Spirit which Heroick Poetry requires, flows from great Paſſions and from great Actions: If the ſuffering Hero remains inſenſible the generality of Readers will not be much concern'd for one, who is ſo little concern'd for himſelf. The Greatneſs of his Mind may, perhaps, be admir'd by a few, who are themſelves magnanimous, but the Author of an Epick Poem ought to write to Mankind, and not only to the Age wherein he lives, but to remoteſt Poſterity. If the Hero of an Epick Poem ſhould not appear inſenſible in his Sufferings, his Senſibility will be attended with Paſſions, which are not only incompatible with that Admiration, which ought to be mov'd thro

the

the Poem, but which will ſink its Spirit, and debaſe its Majeſty.

LET us then, Sir, leave the Virtues of Patience and long Suffering to be taught by Prieſts: They will not fail to inculcate ſuch Doctrines frequently, as being at once conſiſtent with their Duty and their Craft: But never fear that they will intrench upon your Province, and recommend publick Virtue and publick Spirit, and the Love of their Country, to a People, whom they have ſhewn too clearly, that 'tis their Deſign to enſlave. But for your part, Sir, that you may deſerve more and more of your Country and of Mankind, make Choice of a Hero, whoſe every Action may flow from thoſe noble Principles, and Reform a degenerate Age, which ſeems ſo fond of Slavery. Let his great Actions be crown'd with Glory and Victory, with the Joyful Acclamations of the People, whom he has made happy by his Heroick Conduct and Virtue, and with ſuch tranſcendent Felicity, as may raiſe the higheſt Admiration in the Breaſt of every Reader, inflame every one of them with the love of his Country, and with a burning Zeal to imitate what he admires.

TO

October 11. 1717.

TO

Henry Cromwell, Esq;

On the *Vis Comica.*

SIR,

WHEN I had the favour of a Visit from you the other Day, I was in a great deal of Pain, and had been so for a Day and a Night before you saw me, and continued so for the same space of Time after you left me, and then I voided a Stone about the bigness of a Pea, and so thanks be to God, have been ever since at Ease.

BUT what perhaps may surprize you, is this, That in the midst of all this Misery, I read over four Comedies of *Terence, viz.* The *Eunuch*, the *Heautontimorumenos*, the *Adelphi*, and the *Phormio.* These I read over in the two Evenings of my Illness, in the *Cambridge* Quarto Edition, a very convenient one for a Person of my gravity, in a Winter's Evening, tho' he who had the Care of the Edition, understood nothing of the Stage. In the

the two Mornings of my Illness, I read over Mrs *Dacier's* Comment upon the Four Comedies, and upon the Life of *Terence* writ by *Suetonius*. I have told you more than once, that when the Commentators had sometimes led me into a Bog, my own Common Sense had help'd to guide me out again. You may guess what a deference I pay to the Herd of Commentators, when you will see by what follows, that I have the Assurance to contradict Monsieur *Le Fevre* and Mrs. *Dacier* his Daughter, for whose Learning, Judgment, and fine Discernment I have always had a singular Regard and Esteem.

You know very well, Sir, that *Suetonius* in the latter end of his Life of *Terence*, has mention'd some Verses of *Julius Cæsar*, in which that Emperor calls *Terence* a Demy *Menander*, and complains that the *Vis Comica* was wanting to that Comick Poet.

Tu quoque, Tu in summis, O dimidiate Menander
Poneris, & merito, puri Sermonis Amatôr;
Lenibus atq; utinam scriptis adjuncta foret vis
Comica, ut æquato virtus polleret Honore
Cum Græcis, neq; in hac despectus parte jaceres
Unum hoc maceror, & Doleo tibi deesse Terenti.

Mrs. *Dacier* in her Remarks upon that part of the Life, says, That it was the Opinion of her Father Monsieur *Le Fevre*, that by the *Vis Comica*, *Cæsar* meant the Passions, from which Opinion the Daughter dissents for the two following

lowing Reasons. First, Because the Passions are natural and essential to Tragedy, and but incidental to Comedy. Secondly, Because it is impossible to preserve the Characters, as *Terence* has admirably done, without making them Speak upon occasion with as much Passion as that occasion requires; which is not only justly, but very finely observ'd. And, Indeed we find that the Passions in *Terence*, upon great surprizes are extream lively and strong. And when *Horace* tells us in his Art of Poetry, that Comedy sometimes usurps upon Tragedy, and has Passions which are next to Tragical, He brings his Example from the *Heautontimorumenos* of *Terence*.

Interdum tamen, & vocem Comœdia tollit,
Iratusque Chremes tumido Delitigat ore.

But the Explication which Mrs. *Dacier* her Self, gives of the Words of *Cæsar*, is not a jot better than her Father's. For by *Vis Comica*, says she, *Cæsar* meant the Vivacity of the Action, and the tying and solving the Knot of the Intrigue; which is wrong, for two Reasons. First, Because these both belong to Tragedy as nearly as they do to Comedy. And, Secondly, Because, if *Cæsar* had understood by his *Vis Comica*, what Mrs. *Dacier* thinks he did, he could never have call'd *Terence* a Demy *Menander*. For *Terence*, having the Business of two of *Menander's* Comedies in one of his, and the *Grecian* Comedy being of as great a length as the *Roman*; *Terence* must consequently have more Intrigue, and a greater

greater Vivacity of Action than *Menander*, and consequently, if *Cæsar*, by his *Vis Comica*, had meant the Intrigue, and the vivacity of Action, He would have nominated *Terence*, a Double, instead of a Demy *Menander*.

But since I have Declared my self not at all satisfied with either the Father's or the Daughter's Explication, you may perhaps expect that I should give my own. I shall do it with Submission, but upon this Condition, that if I am in the wrong, you and your Commentators shall set me right.

I am apt to believe both from the Terms, and the Reason of the Thing, that by the *Vis Comica*, must be meant something Comical and peculiar to Comedy. For the chief Force of any kind of Poem, must consist in that which makes the Characteristick of it, and which distinguishes it from all other Poems. As the chief Force of Tragedy must proceed from the moving Compassion and Terror strongly, and the Chief Force of Epick Poetry from the exciting Admiration, Powerfully, so the chief Force of Comedy must consist in exciting Laughter. By the *Vis Comica*, then can never be meant the bare Vivacity of the Action, and the tying and solving the Knot of the Intrigue, which is common to both kinds of Dramatick Poetry, as has been observ'd above, but the lively Ridicule resulting from the Intrigue; the Ridicule of the Incidents, and especially of the Catastrophe, which yet is but a part of the *Vis Comica*, for there is likewise the Ridicule of the Characters proceeding from their several Humours, and the Pleasantry

ſantry of the Sentiments and of the Dialogue. When *Cæſar* therefore ſays, that *Terence* is but a Demy *Menander*, what does he ſay, but that *Terence* had turn'd four or five of *Menander's* Comedies into Latin, and loſt half the Ridicule and the Pleaſantry of that *Athenian* Poet, in Tranſlating him. That this was *Cæſar's* Meaning is plain to me, not only from the Reaſon and the Nature of the Thing, which has been ſhewn above, but from the great Delight which *Cæſar* took in the *Ridiculum*, and the great Encouragement which he gave to the *Mimes* of *Laberius* and *Publius Syrus*, which were low Farces, compos'd on purpoſe only to make People Laugh; as likewiſe from the Method which *Terence* took in his Verſions: For taking two of *Menander's* Plays into one of his, he muſt of Neceſſity leave a great part of his Dialogue behind him, and by conſequence, a great part of his Pleaſantry: So that the ſame thing happen'd to *Menander* formerly, which has befallen *Moliere* in our Days. Several *Engliſh* Authors have tranſlated Parts of him, but not one of them has enter'd into that *naiveté* which is the pureſt Source of his Pleaſantry, (as indeed it is of Pleaſantry in general) for what the *French* call *naiveté*, which is a charming Simplicity, dictated by pure Nature, is almoſt always Original: For there is ſomething in it ſo caſie, ſo free, ſo flowing and ſo natural, as flies the reſtraint of a Copy. I do not pretend to ſay, that there was none of the *naiveté* of

Menander in *Terence*; but I may venture to ſay after *Cæſar*, that there is not above half of it, and conſequently, not above half his Pleaſantry; tho' at the ſame time, I believe that there is more of this Quality in *Terence*, than ever there was in a Copy; and if the God of Laughter does not always attend upon *Terence*, *Venus* and the *Graces* never leave him. 'Tis my humble Opinion, that there is no Dialogue extant in any Language, which has half the Charms of the *Terentian* Dialogue; what comes neareſt to it, is that of *Etherege* in Sir *Fopling Flutter*. I, who have been acquainted with *Terence* above forty Years, am now more delighted with him than ever: And ſure that Beauty muſt be no common Charmer, in whom Time ſhall diſcover new Graces, and whom long poſſeſſion, renders more deſireable.

THUS have I given you my Sentiments: If what I take to be the Senſe of *Cæſar*, be not your own, I deſire you would ſet me right.

I am, *&c.*

TO

TO

N. ROWE, *Esq;*

On his being made Surveyor at the CUSTOM-HOUSE, and His MARRIAGE.

SIR,

I Have been for several Weeks together, endeavouring to wait on you: But I have lately had an Intermitting Feaver, and several Fits of the Stone, which have brought me very low: So that I can only congratulate you thus by Letter upon your New Post in the Custom-House. I was very much surpriz'd when I saw it in the Publick News. For knowing it to be only a Warrant Place, and consequently, a Place which a Man cannot supply by Proxy, I did not understand how it could be compatible either with your Pleasures or with your other Business. However, if you are pleas'd, I am so likewise, and once more I Congratulate you.

BUT, Sir, I had almoſt forgot myſelf; Inſtead of Congratulating you, upon one Office, I ſhould wiſh you Joy of Two. You are become a Husband ſince I ſaw you laſt, as well as a Land Surveyor. Jeſu! What Alteration muſt not thoſe two Offices have made in the Life of a Gentleman, who lov'd to lie in Bed all Day for his Eaſe, and to ſit up all Night for his Pleaſure. I muſt confeſs, you are not ſo much a Novice in the former of theſe Employments, as you are in the latter. I think you were heretofore ſeveral Years in the former. But is not the Buſineſs and Duty of a Husband ſuch, that a Man grows leſs and leſs Qualify'd to Diſcharge it, the longer he has been in the Office? An Office, in which the Incumbent grows incapacitated, by too much, and too long an Experience:

I am,

Sir, Your, *&c.*

Whiteball, Saturday
Octob. 5. 1715.

TO

To His GRACE the Duke of *ARGYLE*,

Written in the Name and at the Requeſt, of Mr. PENKETHMAN the Comedian, when he was a Priſoner in the King's-Bench, and Juſt Recovering from a great Fit of Sickneſs.

MY LORD,

SINCE I had the Honour to play the Fool before your Grace here, it has been my Misfortune in the ſame Place to Act a very Melancholy Part, for which your Grace knows very well that Nature has not adapted me; and for which, I can aſſure your Grace, that I have not the leaſt Inclination. But the Part that I have been forc'd to act to the Life, and almoſt to the Death, has had ſo much Tragedy in it, that the Spectators thought more than once, that I would have gone quite off the Stage in an ill Humour.

I have, may it pleaſe your Grace, paſs'd the beginning of this Winter in *Southwark*, as my old Patron, and your Grace's old Friend *Phœbus*, paſs'd it in *Greenland*. I have never Riſen 'till Twelve, and after I have been up little more than an Hour, have been forc'd to go to Bed again; have, like him, look'd very Pale and Wan, all the Time I have been up, and have been for the moſt part of that Time, as I may ſay, under a Cloud; and it has been conſtantly expected, when like my old Patron, I ſhould have gone under the Horizon for a long time before I roſe again.

BUT while I was thus between Life and Death, and in ſore Tribulation, my old Patron came to me by Night, at the Time when he diſappeared to all the other Mortals of this Hemiſphere? and giving me a ſwinging lug by the Ear, that has made one ſide of my Head Sore ever ſince, *Pinky* quoth he, be of good Cheer, I have found a way to free thee from all thy Troubles. I have put my Old and Valued Friend in Mind of thee, who has promiſed me to talk with Collonel *Churchil*, about Ways and Means to releaſe Thee. What Friend ſaid I, may it pleaſe thy Godſhip? With that, he directly nam'd your Grace to me; he did, my Lord as I hope once more to be a merry Fool, inſtead of a ſour Melancholly Sage, as I at this Inſtant am. My Old and valued Friend, quoth he, has a Kindneſs for all my Domeſticks, who do their Buſineſs

as to pleaſe him and me. His Star and mine, ſhall Shine in benign Conjuction thee, I will heal thee. His Grace and the Collonel will order a Contribution for thee; and thou ſhall ſhortly act a ridiculous Squire in *Drury*, inſtead of a ſullen dying Sophiſter in the *Borough.*

But quoth I, to my old Patron, may I put his Grace in Mind of this, and will not he take it ill? Thou mayſt put him in Mind of it, anſwered he, and I will pawn my Divinity on it, that he will not take it ill.

THUS, my Lord, depending on his Divinity, and on your Grace's Humanity, I have preſum'd to ſend you this; and if your Grace takes it otherwiſe than it was meant, which was to beſpeak your Favour, and to Entertain you, I will never for the future believe in *Phœbus*, and will have no more dependance on him, than has a ſmall Poet, who tires ſucceſſively four Pair of Horſes, to engage Perſons of Quality to come to his third Night.

I am,

My Lord,

Your Grace's

moſt humble and

moſt dutiful Servant,

W. Penkethman.

POSTSCRIPT.

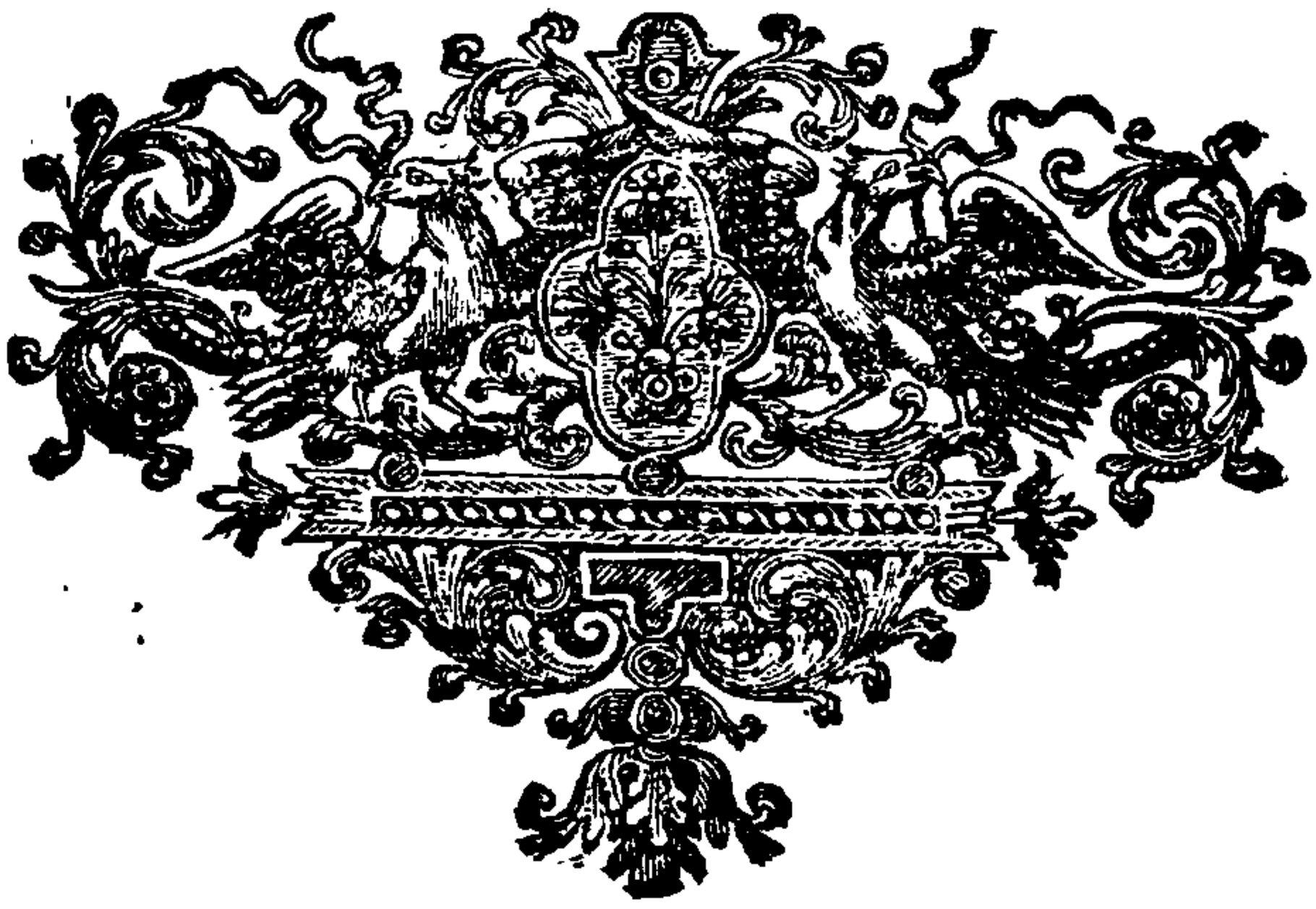
MY LORD,

SINCE I had the Honour to Write what is above, to your Grace, *Phœbus* has appeared again to me, and by another Lug, made t'other ſide of my Head Sore. *Pinky*, quoth he, thou knoweſt that we great Wits, have often bad Memories. I quite forgot to order thee to remind his Grace of the Method which he has reſolv'd to uſe, in working thy Deliverance. His Grace is reſolv'd in a numerous Aſſembly, to put a Guinea into a Green Purſe, and throwing it down upon the Table, to cry, that is for *Pinky*'s Deliverance. That Action and thoſe Words will have Magick in them; for ſtrait upon the Pronuncing them, every Man's Guinea, will, of its own accord, fly from his Pocket to the Table, and will run rowling towards the Green Purſe, 'till it has join'd and Saluted his Grace's, under which, when they are united in a firm Confederacy, they will march in a Body to the *King's Bench*, to deliver *Pinky* from Bondage. Thus will Guineas anſwer the End of their Creation, which was to promote Liberty, as *Louis d'ors* were Coin'd on Purpoſe to work Bondage. The Scoundrel who Arreſt-

ed

ed thee, had two *Louis d'ors* for his Labour. The Mischief that *Lewis* his Image did thee, King *William's* shall undoe. This be assur'd of, and I command thee to send this with my Respects by Way of Postscript to his Grace.

Borough *Southwark*,
Nov. 16. 1714.



T O

To His GRACE the Duke of *Marlborough*.

MY LORD,

ON the 24th of *December* laſt, I had the Honour to Receive a Letter from Your Grace, Directed to Mr. *Walpole*, and inclos'd in one from Mr. *Hodges* to me. I return'd Your Grace that very Night my humble Acknowledgment, for the extraordinary Favour you had done me, and if I have not yet had the Honour to acquaint you with the Effect it had, 'tis becauſe I have been in Daily Expectations of the Event, which is ſtill Depending. But notwithſtanding this Delay, my Lord, I am not yet like a Man without Hope. It ſeems to me impoſſible, that the Duke of *Marlbrough's* Recommendation can ever come in Vain. It would be hard that he who has turn'd the Fortune of *Europe*, ſhould not be able to alter mine, and that

Your

Your Grace ſhould receive that Repulſe from one of your Friends, which a hundred Thouſand of your Enemies aſſembled in a Body, have never been able to give you.

I am, MY LORD,

Your Grace's moſt humble

and moſt obedient Servant,

J. DENNIS.

TO

July 28. 1710.

TO

Captain *STEELE.*

SIR,

I Sent a Letter on the 28th to your Houſe, Directed to Captain *Steele*, and deſiring to ſee himthat Night, that I might have his Advice upon a Buſineſs of Importance, ſoftly intimating at the ſame Time, that it was not in my Power to wait upon him. But having neither ſeen him nor heard from him, I fancy that my old Friend is departed, and ſome Gentleman has ſucceeded him in the old Houſe, with the ſame Name, and the ſame Martial Title; a Chance that happens oftener in the World than ſome People imagine. How ſhould I have been ſurpriz'd, in Caſe I had gone my ſelf, expecting from the Similitude of Name and Title, to have ſeen my old Acquaintance? How ſhould I have been ſurpriz'd to have found a Man with quite another Mind, and quite another Countenance? My old Friend, as I thought at leaſt, had Civility, had Humanity, had a good and enga-

ging

ging Officiousness, and as I did not take him to want good Nature, so he had what the *French* call a good Countenance, that is, the Countenance of one who is pleas'd with him who talks to him. But I suppose I should have found nothing of all this in the noble Captain who succeeds him. You will say, perhaps, that you had no Reason to make a Visit to one whom you know not, and are resolved not to know. But then, Noble Captain, you ought to have sent back my Letter, and to have given me to understand, that you are not the Person that I took you for; that you should have enough to do, if you were obliged to own all the Acquaintance of the Captain, your Predecessor; That I am not the first Man who have made this Mistake, and shall not probably be the last. Had you done this, I had had no Replication to make to so equitable an Answer. I should only perhaps have advis'd you, in order to the preventing some troublesome Visits, and some impertinent Letters, to cause an Advertisement to be inserted in Squire *Bickerstaff*'s next *Lucubrations*, by which the World might be inform'd, That the Captain *Steele*, who lives now in *Bury-Street*, is not the Captain of the same Name, who liv'd there two Years ago, and that the Acquaintance of the Military Person who inhabited there formerly, may go look for their old Friend, e'en where they can find him.

I am Your, *&c.*

TO

THO. SERGEANT, *Esq*;

Upon the Prospect from LEITH-HILL in *Surrey*.

SIR,

I Have ever since I saw you last, been either in Motion, or in Places where Ink is a Liquor more precious than *Tockay*. But tho' I have ever since the Beginning of *July*, been in the Country, I have enjoy'd small Satisfaction, if you except what the sight of the Country itself affords me, which is indeed an Entertainment, of which I can never be weary.

I never in all my Life time left it without Regret, and always return'd to it with Joy. The Sight of a Mountain is to me more agreeable than that of the most pompous Edifice; and Meadows and natural winding Streams, please me before the most beautiful Gardens, and the most costly Canals: So much does Art appear to me to be surpass'd by Nature, and the Works of Men by the Works of God. But here

here I desire you to believe, that I speak of the Mechanick Works of Men. For as to the Productions of Human Mind, the more Art some of them have, as particularly some sorts of Poetry, the more lovely they are, and more estimable; because, the more they have in them of true Art, the more they have of Nature; whereas, in the Mechanick Works of Men, the contrary of this is seen; for the more consummate an Art appears in them, the more they recede from plain and simple Nature.

BUT thither to return from whence I digress'd; as the Sight of the Country has been always more pleasing to me than that of the Town, so, in a late Journey which I took into the Wild of *Sussex*, I pass'd over a Hill which shew'd me a more transporting Sight than ever the Country had shewn me before, either in *England* or *Italy*. The Prospects, which in *Italy* pleas'd me most, were that of the *Valdarno* from the *Apennins*, that of *Rome* and the *Mediterranean*, from the Mountain of *Viterbo*; of *Rome* at Forty, and of the *Mediterranean* at Fifty Miles distance from it, and that of the *Campagne* of *Rome*, from *Tiuoli* and *Frescati*; from which two Places, you see every Foot of that famous Campaigne, even from the Bottom of *Tiuoli* and *Frescati*, to the very Foot of the Mountain of *Viterbo* without any thing to intercept your Sight. But from a Hill which I pass'd in my late Journey into *Sussex*, I had a Prospect more extensive than

than any of these, and which surpass'd them at once in Rural Charms, in Pomp and in Magnificence. The Hill which I speak of is call'd *Leith Hill*, and is about five Miles *Southward* from *Darking*; about six from *Box-Hill*, and near twelve from *Epsom*. It juts its self out about two Miles beyond that Range of Hills which terminates the *North Downs* to the *South*. When I saw from one of those Hills, at about two Miles distance, that side of *Leith Hill* which faces the *Northern Downs*; it appeared the beautifullest Prospect to me I had ever seen. But after we had conquered the Hill it self, I saw a Sight that would transport a Stoick, a Sight that look'd like Enchantment and Vision, but Vision Beatifick. Beneath us, lay open to our View, all the Wilds of *Surrey* and *Sussex*, and a great Part of that of *Kent*, admirably Diversifyed in every Part of them, with Woods, and Fields of Corn, and Pastures; those Fields of Corn and Pastures, being every where adorn'd with stately Rows of Trees.

This beautiful Vale, is about thirty Miles in Breadth, and about sixty in Length, and is terminated to the *South*, by the Majestick Range of the *Southern* Hills and the Sea. And 'tis no easie matter to decide, whether these Hills which appear at thirty, Forty, Fifty, Miles distance, with their Tops in the Sky, appear more Awful and Venerable, or the Delicious Vale between you and them

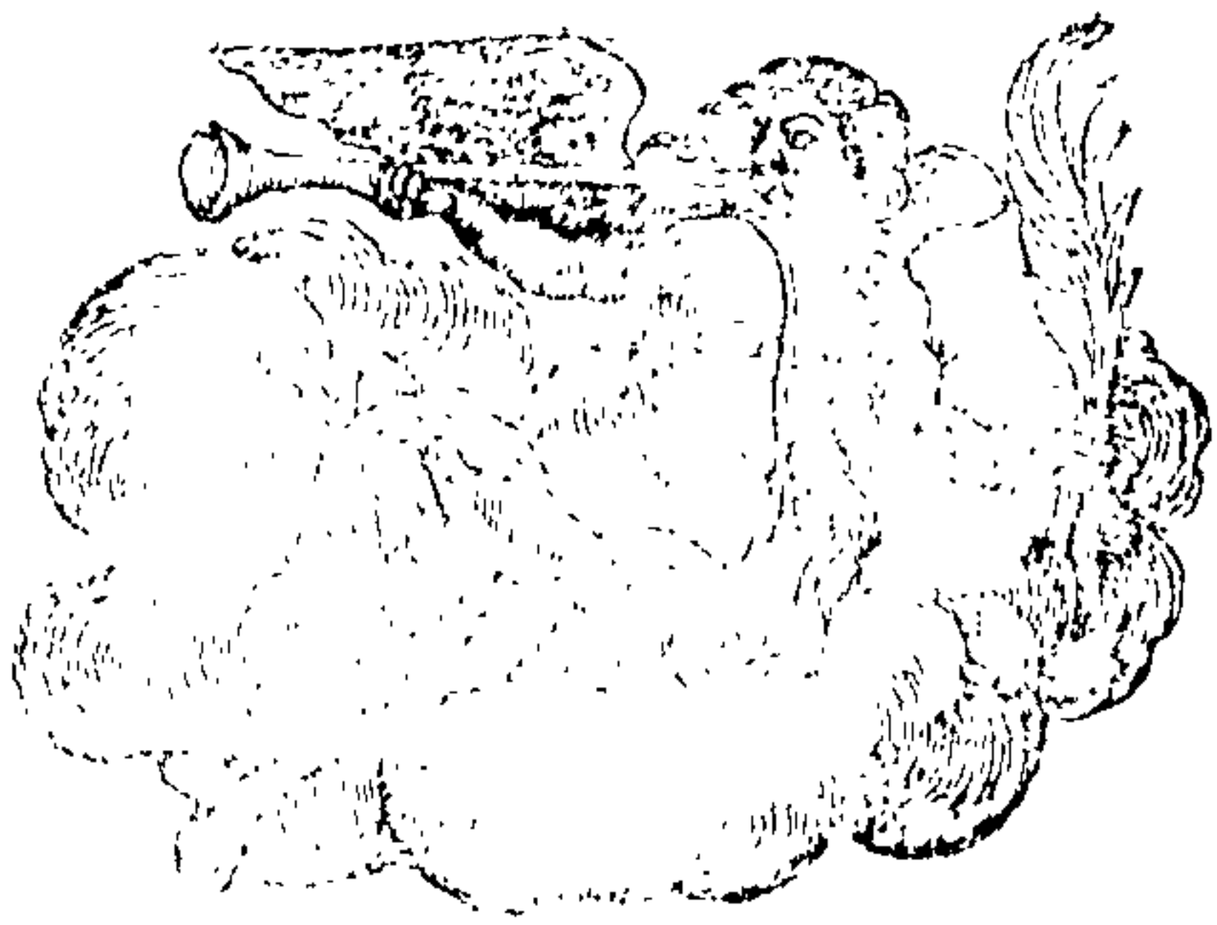
more

more inviting. About Noon in a ſerene Day, you may at thirty Miles Diſtance ſee the very Water of the Sea thro' a Chaſm of the Mountains. And that which above all makes it a noble and a wonderful Proſpect, is, that at the ſame time that at thirty Miles Diſtance you behold the very Water of the Sea; at the ſame time that you behold to the *South* the moſt delicious Rural Proſpect in the World; at that very time, by a little turn of your Head towards the *North*, you look full over *Box Hill*, and ſee the Country beyond it between that and *London*; and over the very Stomacher of it, ſee St. *Paul*'s at five and twenty Miles Diſtance, and *London* beneath it, and *Highgate* and *Hampſtead* beyond it. It may perhaps appear incredible to ſome, that a Place which affords ſo great and ſo ſurpriſing a Proſpect, ſhould have remain'd ſo long in Obſcurity; in ſo great Obſcurity, that 'tis unknown to the very Frequenters of *Epſom* and *Box Hill*. But, alas! we live in a Country more fertile of Great Things, than of Men to admire them. Who ever talked of *Cooper*'s *Hill*, till Sir *John Denham* made it Illuſtrious? How long did *Milton* remain in Obſcurity, while twenty paltry Authors, little and vile if compared to him, were talk'd of and admir'd? But here in *England* nineteen in twenty like by other Peoples Opinions, and not by their

own. That Fools by their Approbation ſhould draw in Fools, as Sheep leap after Sheep, is no great matter of Wonder: But that Fools by their Numbers ſhould prove ſo powerful as to influence Men of Senſe, and engage them to approve of what they would otherwiſe utterly have contemned, is what I have often wonder'd at, but never could yet account for; but ſuch unnatural monſtrous Things as theſe, make the Town more odious and the Country more agreeable.

I am, *&c.*

Hampſtead,
Aug. 27. 1717.



TO

Oct. 3. 1718.

TO

S—— T—— *Esq;*

On the Deceitfulness of RUMOUR.

SIR,

IT was always my Opinion, that Judgment is a cool and a slow Faculty, and no more constantly attends a Man in the warmth of Wine and of Conversation, than in the Fury and Rapture of a Poetical Composition. If I had in the least doubted of this, what past at your House, on the first of this Month, would have perfectly convinced me of it; where, for want of Coolness to consider Things, I betray'd my own Cause and that of my departed Friend Mr. *Wycherly.* I shall say but a Word or two of my own, but I desire to be a little longer about his.

I then declared it to be my Opinion, that *Free-thinking* would at one time or other

endanger our Conſtitution; That it invalidates the very Things which are the greateſt Security both of Princes and People, and thoſe are the Oaths which the Subjects of *Great Britain* take either as Subjects or Witneſſes. To which a Gentleman in the Company anſwer'd, that the Oaths derived their binding Force from the very Law of Nature, as well as from the Chriſtian Religion; with which Anſwer, for want of Coolneſs and Time to conſider, I remain'd at that inſtant ſatisfied.

But as ſoon as I had Coolneſs and Time to conſider, I found that a double Reply might juſtly be made to that Anſwer of your Friend. For in the firſt Place, the *Free-thinkers* are divided into *Atheiſts* and *Deiſts*. Now the former of theſe cannot be at all influenced by the Law of Nature. For to them to whom there is no God, there can be no Law of Nature. And as for the latter, tho' *Theiſts* are influenced by the Law of Nature, yet we ought to conſider, that the Oath which an *Engliſhman* is oblig'd to take as a Subject or a Witneſs derives its moſt binding Force, and its moſt ſacred Solemnity, from that which diſtinguiſhes it from all other Oaths, and that is the laying Hands upon the Bible and kiſſing it; which Ceremonies are certainly not deduceable from the Law of Nature, but are wholly derived from that Revelation

which

which the *Theists* do not believe. *Free-thinking* then is the Cause, why both *Atheists* and *Theists*, by contemning those Ceremonies, and disbelieving the Revelation from whence they are derived, are come slightly to regard the very Oath it self: Yes, *Free-thinking* is the Cause that at this time of day we have so many brave Knights-Errant of the Post, both Spiritual and Secular,

That eat perfidiously their Words,
And swear their Ears thro' two-inch Boards;
Can own the same thing and disown,
And perjure booty pro *and* con;
Can make the Gospel serve their turn,
And help them out to be forsworn,
When 'tis laid Hands upon and kiss'd,
To be betray'd and sold like Christ.

Thus have I spoke to my own Cause in as few Words as I could. I desire to dwell a little longer upon my late Friend Mr. *Wycherly*'s. A Gentleman in the Company was pleased to say, that the Comedy of the *Country Wife* had not a just Foundation, because, said he, it was not practicable for *Horner* to make himself pass for an Eunuch. How! not practicable, when he himself was at the bottom of the Design, and had taken so many Precautions to make

it ſucceed? I am ſo far from being of your Friend's Opinion, that I would lay fifty to one, if I were but capable of ſuborning half a dozen Raſcals, who ſhould warmly and induſtriouſly ſpread the Report, that I would make either you or your Friend paſs for *Free-thinkers*, with a conſiderable part of the Town, in ſpight of your utmoſt Attempts to undeceive them. How can that be, you'll ſay, when there would be neither Truth nor Probability in ſuch a Report? But have Truth or Probability any thing to do with the Entertainments of publick Rumour? When my Lord *Rocheſter* ſaid,

There's not a Thing on Earth that I can name
So Fooliſh and ſo Falſe as Common Fame;

did he banter, do you think? or ſpeak it from a thorough Knowledge of the World and of Mankind? There is another of our Poets, who knew Mankind perfectly well, who will tell you the ſame thing in Terms that are ſomething ſtronger.

The World is naturally averſe
To all the Truth it ſees or hears;
But ſwallows Nonſenſe and a Lie,
With Greedineſs and Gluttony.
Butler. Part 3. Cant. 1.

'Tis

'Tis true indeed, if the Rabble and Scum of Mankind, of whose Voices publick Rumour is compos'd, had but so much true Sense as a sober Beast, why then the Rule that *Horace* has laid down for the Tragick Stage, might do pretty well for the Stage of the World.

Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,
Quam quæ sint oculis subjecta Fidelibus & quæ
Ipse sibi tradit Spectator.

But since the case is far otherwise, and so many Ideots will believe that they See what they only Hear; (where as no Dog, no Horse, nay no Ass is Fool enough to let his external Sense be impos'd upon by his beastly Imagination;) *Butler* has been so far from thinking that *Horace*'s Rule for the Tragick Stage is proper for the Stage of the World, that he has laid down for the Latter, one which is the very Reverse of the other.

For, like the World, Mens Jobber-noles
Turn round upon their Ears, the Poles;
And what they're confidently told
By no Sense else can be controul'd.

What my Lord *Rochester* and the Author of *Hudibras* have declar'd in their Verses,

our Dramatick Poets have endeavour'd to shew upon the Stage, *viz.* That the Eyes of the Rabble of Mankind are downright Cullies to their Ears, and that they easily believe that they actually See what they are only impudently Told of: Witness what passes between *Vindicius* and old *Brutus*, in the *Junius Brutus* of *Lee*; and between *Hamlet* and *Polonius*, in the *Hamlet* of *Shakespear*, which seems to be the original of the other. And has not *Ben*, Learned *Ben*, who is so great a Master of his Art, and consequently of Human life and nature, shewn us the very reverse of this in the Catastrophe of his admirable Alchimist, *viz.* shewn us Persons who what before they had actually seen, are made to believe that they only vainly imagin'd, and for no other Reason but because they are impudently told that they only vainly imagin'd it.

I tell you then again and again, that I would undertake, if I could but be brought to use the Means, to make both you and your Friend pass for Eunuchs, in spight of the Testimony of Twenty Females, who might cry out in Mrs. *Pinchwife*'s Language, they won't see poor Mr. *Horner* abus'd, for to their certain knowledge—— For tho' that perhaps might undeceive a few, the general Opinion would still remain. For why may it not be as practicable to geld you and your Friend, as it has been to burst one of your old

Acquain-

Acquaintance, in ſpight not only of Truth, but of all manner of Probability; in ſpight of his own ſolemn Aſſeverations to the contrary, of the continual vigorous Exerciſes both of Riding and Walking, which he has us'd of late; and laſtly, in ſpight of ocular and manual Proof to the contrary given to eminent Chirurgeons and others? when neither Truth, nor reaſonable and ſtrong Preſumption, nor Evidence of Senſe that has been given to ſeveral, have been able to undeceive the many, but the Rupture has ſtill remained in the empty Heads of a thouſand Fools, who have ſtill endeavour'd to propagate the ſenſeleſs Error.

For Fools are ſtubborn in their way,
As Coins are hardned by th' Allay;
And Obſtinacy's ne'er ſo ſtiff,
As when 'tis in a wrong Belief. Hudib.

If any thing that I have ſaid about this laſt Affair may happen to ſurpriſe you, the Surpriſe I ſuppoſe will ſtill be greater, when you are told that the two Apoſtles of this new Doctrine, like thoſe of *Mahomet*, are downright Aſs and Widgeon.

The groſs of Mankind have infinitely more Propenſity to cenſure than to praiſe. They generally praiſe thro' Intereſt, and they cenſure by Inclination. And yet the Poiſon of falſe Praiſe has more than once

grown

grown epidemically contagious, by the Error and Imbecility of a few, and the Conspiracy of a false Report. You cannot have forgot what happened to that ugly Beau *Bovey* in the Time of King *Charles* the Second:

> Bovey's *a Beauty, if some few agree*
> *To call him so; the rest to that degree*
> *Affected are, that with their Ears they see.*

You may remember that something like this has happen'd upon the Representation of several of our Dramatick Performances, when blundering fustian Tragedies, or trifling insipid Comedies, have, by the Conspiracy of a Cabal, and their concerted Applauses, been cogg'd upon the Town for Master-pieces, to the Dishonour of our Country and Disgrace of the *British* Poetry. Some Persons, who have been in these Conspiracies, knew, or ought to have known, better Things. But one unaccountable Effect of Vanity, among many others, is, that some Persons, tho' they do not want Understanding, yet, at the Expence of the Reputation of their Common-Sense, are fond of shewing their Power; are fond of shewing their Power to Fools, at the Expence of the Reputation of their Common-Sense with the thinking part of the World.

How

How often has ſomething like this happened among our Stateſmen? How often have they topp'd White for Black, and Black for White, upon the thoughtleſs Rabble? How often have they who Yeſterday were thought Heroes, and Patriots, and Demy-gods, to Day been look'd upon as Villains, and Thieves, and Robbers; and they who Yeſterday were held Villains and Traitors, have to Day been regarded as Heroes, and Saints, and Patriots? Have not our Politicians more than once turn'd the Rehearſal out of Ridicule, by turning the whole State topſy turvy in a Morning, only by the Artillery of falſe Reports, without ſo much as ſtriking a real Blow? and by that means proving to all the World, that one might take Mr. *Bays* for a Politician; that Mr. *Bays*'s Politicks were good and ſound, and that his *quondum* Grace of *Bucks* was out, when he pretended to make a Jeſt of them.

But in ſhort, and Raillery apart, the Prevalency of falſe Reports, concerted by five or ſix dark Sophiſters, has more than once made ſome of the beſt and greateſt Men in the Kingdom, who but juſt before were approv'd, applauded, admir'd and cheriſh'd by all the Lovers of their Country, become all at once the very Hatred and Scorn of the Rabble, which I believe neither ever did, or could have happen'd any where

where but in *England*; either as to the Excess of Malice in the Inventors, or the Excess of Credulity in the Believers and Propagators of those false Reports. For that which makes *England* the most splenetick Country in the Universe, makes it the chief and residentiary Seat of Slander. For there never was a very splenetick Man, unless he was a Man of an extraordinary Understanding, but he was at the same time a Slanderer. And the same virulent Humour, that causes so many noble *Britons* to hang, and poison, and drown themselves, causes them likewise to do their utmost to murder the Reputation of their Neighbours; and the same Humour that in some degree caus'd the Invention of the Slander at first, causes likewise the Propagation of it, and the Credulity of its Believers. Judge then, if in such a Country as this, even an improbable false Report be not a just Foundation for a Comedy. But the Report of *Horner*'s Impotency, since he himself invented it, and prepared the Way for it, is so highly probable, that a Man must be very Hypercritical, who, upon that account, censures my late most ingenious Friend. I have a great deal more to say upon this Subject, but I want Time at present.

I am, &c.

To

To the Reverend *Mr.* MANSELL *Rector of* COSGRAVE.

SIR,

YOURS of the 22d of the last Month came to my Hands in due time. I had sooner returned you Thanks for the favour of it, and had sooner congratulated you upon the return of your Health, upon which so many Healths depend, and which under God has been so often the cause of the Recovery of mine; if I had not been engag'd in an Important Business which took up all my Hours. I likewise return you my hearty thanks for setting the Affair between me and my Brother-in-Law in a true light, tho' I perceive by what you write that there are Persons who continue to believe him. But I would fain ask those Persons what Motive they have to restrain them from doing an unjust or a base thing, which I have not in a much greater Degree. They will say,

ſay, perhaps, that they have got a great deal more Money than I have. But, Sir, is not their *getting* a great deal a ſign of their great Love for it? And if I have all my life time had but a little, do they believe it has proceeded from my Incapacity of getting it, or from my Contempt of it? And which is moſt like to ſecure any one from doing Injuſtice; the Love of Money, or the Contempt of it? Have their Purſes been more conſtantly open to the Occaſions of their Friends and Acquaintance? Have they diſcover'd more magnanimous Thoughts, and more exalted above Selfiſhneſs? Have they more Underſtanding to diſcern their true Intereſt, and to know that no Man can live happily without living reputably? Have they had a more liberal Education, or a more generous Converſation? I was till five and forty plung'd in the Converſation of the great World, and was every Day in company with Gentlemen, who are univerſally known to be Men of no ordinary Merit, who wanted no Diſcernment to know me, and who have ſeveral of them given publick proofs of their Eſteem for me. Now if I miſtake not, before the Age of forty five the Manners of Men are unalterably form'd. For theſe laſt fifteen Years I have retir'd from the World, and confin'd my Converſation to three or four of my old Acquaintance who are publickly known to be Men

of

of Men of Honour and Underſtanding. Can any reaſonable Man then believe, that I, who while I was converſant in the World kept my Reputation clear, ſhould retire to be a Villain in Solitude? If I refus'd to anſwer a Demand which my Brother-in-Law pretended he had upon me, 'tis becauſe he had no title to any thing from me but his want of it. If he had ask'd me to give him the Money which he ſaid I ow'd him, I had certainly given it him. But I could not think without Indignation, that an ungrateful Wretch, to whom I had endeavour'd at the expence of my Time and Intereſt to do the moſt Important Services, ſhould pretend to extort it from me by Inſults and Brutality. What thoſe Services are, I ſhall let you know in my next; but I am weary at preſent, and ſo without doubt are you.

I am, SIR,

Your moſt Humble

Faithful Servant,

Aug. 6. 1720.

JOHN DENNIS.

TO

June 23, 1719.

TO

Mr. * * *

In which are some Passages of the LIFE *of Mr.* JOHN CROWN, *Author of Sir* Courtly Nice.

SIR,

I Shall now, in compliance with the repeated Requests you have made to me, say something concerning the Education of Mr. JOHN CROWN, and the most remarkable Passages of his Life. Mr. CROWN was bred under his Father, an Independant Minister, in that part of *Northern America*, which is called *Nova Scotia*. But the Vivacity of his Genius made him soon grow impatient of that sullen and gloomy Education, and soon oblig'd him to get loose from it, and seek his Fortune in *England*. But it was his Fate, at his first Arrival here, to happen on an Employment more formal, if possible, than his *American* Educa-

Education. His Necessity, upon his first Arrival here, oblig'd him to become a Gentleman-Usher to an old Independant Lady. But he soon grew as weary of that precise Office, as he had been before of the Discipline of *Nova Scotia.* One would think that these were but indifferent Preparatives to the commencing polite Author. But neither these nor his Poverty, which was great, could oppress his aspiring Spirit, aspiring to Reputation and Distinction, rather than to Fortune and Power. His Writings soon made him known to the Court and Town: Yet it was neither to the Favour of the Court, nor of *Wilmot* Lord *Rochester,* one of the shining Ornaments of it, that he was indebted for the Nomination which the King made of him for the writing the Mask of *Calypso,* but to the Malice of that noble Lord, who design'd by that Preference to mortify Mr. *Dryden.* Upon the breaking out of the two Parties, after the Discovery of the Popish Plot, the Favour that he was in at Court, the Gayety of his Youth, and his being unacquainted with true political Principles, eng ged him to embrace the Party of the Tories. About that time he writ *The City Politicks,* on purpose to Satyrize and expose the Whigs; a Comedy so agreeable, that it deserv'd to be writ in a much better Cause: But after he had writ

it, he met with very great Difficulties in the getting it acted. *Bennet* Lord *Arlington*, who was then Lord Chamberlain of the King's Houſhold, and who had ſecretly eſpous'd the Whigs, who were at that time powerful in Parliament, in order to ſupport himſelf againſt the Favour and Power of the Lord Treaſurer *Danby*, who was his declared Enemy, us'd all his Authority to ſuppreſs it. One while it was prohibited on the account of its being Dangerous, another while it was laid aſide on the pretence of its being Flat and Inſipid; till Mr. *Crown* at laſt was forc'd to have Recourſe to the King himſelf, and to engage him to give his abſolute Command to the Lord Chamberlain for the acting of it; which Command the King was pleas'd to give in his own Perſon. For that Monarch lov'd a Comedy above all Things, (excepting one Thing) and had no mean Opinion of Mr. *Crown*'s Qualifications to ſucceed in it. While he was thus in Favour with the King and the Court, I have more than once heard him ſay, that tho' he had a ſincere Affection for the King, he had yet a mortal Averſion to the Court. The Promiſe of a Sum of Money made him ſometimes appear there to ſolicit the Payment of it: But as ſoon as he had got it he vaniſh'd, and continued a long time abſent from it, of which, he told me, the

Dutchess

Dutchess of *Portsmouth* took once Occasion to complain to the King; whose way of answering that Complaint, puts me in mind of a Passage in *Boileau's* Epistle to *Lamoignon.*

Hier de vous on parla chez le Roy,
Et d' attentat Horrible on traita la Satire,
Et le Roy que dit il. Le Roy se prit a rire.

It was at the very latter End of King *Charles*'s Reign, that Mr. *Crown* being tyr'd with the Fatigue of Writing, and shock'd by the Uncertainty of Theatrical Success, and desirous to shelter himself from the Resentments of those numerous Enemies which he had made by his *City Politicks*, made his Application immediately to the King himself; and desir'd his Majesty to establish him in some Office, that might be a Security to him for Life. The King had the Goodness to assure him, he should have an Office, but added that he would first see another Comedy. Mr. *Crown* endeavouring to excuse himself, by telling the King, that he plotted slowly and awkwardly; the King replyed, that he would help him to a Plot, and so put into his Hands the *Spanish* Comedy called *Non pued Esser.* Mr. *Crown* was oblig'd immediately to go to work upon it; but, after he had writ three Acts of it, found to his Surprise, that the *Spanish*

Play had ſome time before been tranſlated, and acted, and damn'd, under the Title of *Tarugo's Wiles, or the Coffee-houſe.* Yet, ſupported by the King's Command, he went boldly on and finiſh'd it; and here ſee the Influence of a Royal Encouragement.

Mr. *Crown*, who had once before oblig'd the Commonwealth of Learning with a very agreeable Comedy in his *City Politicks*, yet in Sir *Courtly Nice* went far beyond it, and infinitely ſurpaſſed himſelf. For tho' there is ſomething in the part of *Crack* which borders upon Farce, the *Spaniſh* Author alone muſt anſwer for that. For Mr. *Crown* could not omit the Part of *Crack*, that is of *Tarugo*, and the *Spaniſh* Farce depending upon it, without a downright Affront to the King, who had given him that Play for his Ground-work. But all that is of *Engliſh* Growth in Sir *Courtly Nice* is admirable; for tho' we find in it neither the fine Deſigning of *Ben. Johnſon*; nor the general and maſculine Satyr of *Wycherly*; nor that Grace, that Delicacy, nor that Courtly Air which make the Charms of *Etherege*; yet is the Dialogue ſo lively and ſo ſpirited, and ſo attractively diverſified and adapted to the ſeveral Characters; four of thoſe Characters are ſo entirely new, yet ſo general and ſo important, are drawn ſo truly and ſo graphically, and oppos'd to

each

each other, *Surly* to Sir *Courtly* and *Hothead* to *Testimony*, with such a strong and entire Opposition; those Extremes of Behaviour, the one of which is the Grievance, and the other the Plague of Society and Conversation; excessive Ceremony on one side, and on the other side Rudeness and Brutality, are so finely expos'd in *Surly* and Sir *Courtly*; and those Divisions and Animosities in the two great Parties of *England*, which have so long disturb'd the publick Quiet, and undermined the publick Interest, are so happily represented and ridicul'd in *Testimony* and *Hothead*, that tho' I have more than twenty times read over this charming Comedy, yet I have always read it, not only with Delight but Rapture. And 'tis my Opinion, that the greatest Comick Poet that ever liv'd in any Age, might have been proud to have been the Author of it.

The Play was now just ready to appear to the World; and as every one that had seen it rehears'd was highly pleas'd with it; every one who had heard of it was big with the Expectation of it; and Mr. *Crown* was delighted with the flattering Hope of being made happy for the rest of his Life, by the Performance of the King's Promise; when, upon the very last Day of the Rehearsal, he met *Cave Underhill* coming from the Play-House as he himself was go-

ing towards it: Upon which the Poet reprimanding the Player for neglecting so considerable a Part as he had in the Comedy, and neglecting it on a Day of so much Consequence, as the very last Day of Rehearsal: Oh Lord, Sir, says *Underhill*, we are all undone. Wherefore, says Mr. *Crown*, is the Play-House on Fire? The whole Nation, replys the Player, will quickly be so, for the King is dead. At the hearing which dismal Words, the Author was little better; for he who but the Moment before was ravish'd with the Thought of the Pleasure, which he was about to give to his King, and of the Favours which he was afterwards to receive from him, this Moment found, to his unspeakable Sorrow, that his Royal Patron was gone for ever, and with him all his Hopes. The King indeed reviv'd from his Apoplectick Fit, but three Days after dyed, and Mr. *Crown* by his Death was replung'd in the deepest Melancholy.

Thus, Sir, have I given you a short Account of the Education of Mr. *John Crown*, and of the most remarkable Circumstances of his Life, to the Death of King *Charles* the Second. I shall, as soon as I have Opportunity, continue this Relation from the Death of King *Charles* to the Death of Mr. *Crown*.

I am, SIR,
Your, &c.

To his Grace the *Duke of* BUCKINGHAM.

My LORD,

NOT being able to wait on your Grace by reason of an intolerable Head-ach, I humbly desire that you would order the Letter which you have done me the Honour to write for me, to be delivered to the Bearer.

I humbly desire your Grace to believe, that if you had given me no Caution, I had by no means done any thing, which might cause me to forfeit your good Opinion of me. So far were my Thoughts from that, that I never yet resolv'd to publish those Remarks. 'Tis very likely, that after your Grace, and my Lord *Hallifax*, and Two or Three more have perus'd them, I may send them to the Author, and content my self, with letting him know my Power.

BUT, my Lord, as I would not be thought to do a Barbarous thing, I desire your Grace to believe, that I had powerful

Motives to engage me to write these Remarks. I was attack'd in the ——, in the very second or third, and in several others. Since your Grace is of opinion that the Author of the Tragedy did not write those particular Papers, I am very willing to believe it. But he was in Partnership with those who did. He went share in the Profits, and more than share in the Reputation. And Mr.—— durst not have provok'd me, without his Approbation, or at least his Consent. My Lord, with submission to your Grace's Judgment, I am apt to believe, that what Mr. —— did in this Case was the Action of Mr. —— If a Man who is in Partnership wrongs me in Trade, all the Partners are involv'd in the Guilt, unless they disclaim it, and signify their Abhorrence of it to the Person injur'd. The Law of *England* allows of no Accessaries in Murder; all who are concern'd in it are Principals. And Reason, upon which the Law of *England* is founded, says, that the Case is the same in the assassinating a Man's Reputation. My Lord, I appeal to your Grace, if the attacking me in the ——, was not only an Assassination, but one of the blackest sort. It was done in the dark, no Provocation in the least given, no Name to the Paper, and no Author known; when at the very same Time they openly profest Friendship to me.

I may add to this, that it was done at a time when they basely took advantage of the great Misfortunes I lay under. My Lord, I appeal to your Grace, if mine is not a more generous Proceeding. I do not attack, but retort; I proceed frankly and openly, and I who am in Adversity, engage one who is in high Prosperity.

Yet, after all, my Lord, the Satyr of this Criticism (for Reason is the severest Satyr in the World, when it is terribly against a Man) does not fall most heavily upon the Author of the Tragedy, it falls most severely upon this partial and tastless Town. The writing a foolish Play, is a Piece of Ridicule that we have long been us'd to: But the gaining a general violent Applause to a foolish Play, is something new to us; 'tis the reviving a Farce that had been acted but once before since King *Charles* the Second's Time.

My Lord, I am afraid of tiring your Grace's Patience by too long a Letter, or I would proceed to the other Motives, which prevailed upon me to write these Remarks. But I hope to have the Honour of acquainting you with them another time.

I am,

Whitehall,
June 19. 1713.

My Lord,

Your Grace's, &c.

TO

Mrs. * * *

Written upon the News of the Landing of the Pretender.

Madam,

I Have lately read over the famous Proceſs between the Marquis *De Gueores* and Madamoiſelle *de Maſcranny*, with which I have been agreeably entertain'd, and which I here ſend you by the Bearer, becauſe a Lady of your Apprehenſion may eaſily diſcern, that you may produce an Argument from it ſufficient to convert your Friend Mrs.—— that termagant Stickler for divine, unalienable, indefeaſible Right; for can there be any Right to any Government ſo divine, ſo unalienable, ſo indefeaſible as that of a Husband to the Government of his Wife? Yet if this Monarch,

narch, by Right Divine, appears unqualify'd to govern her well; if he cannot anſwer the Ends of Government; if he keeps not the original Contract, which is on his part the giving due Benevolence, ſhe endeavours to depoſe her Sovereign immediately; that is, ſhe ſues out a Bill of Divorce, and chuſes another King. The original Contract between a limited Monarch and a free People, is, that he ſhall govern them by Laws of their own making, and that they ſhall obey him as long as they are ſo govern'd. Now will your Friend Mrs. —— murmur, at our Sexes enjoying that Privilege, which you have always claim'd your ſelves? We have already depos'd one Popiſh King for breaking this originnl Contract, and can he expect that we will ſet up another, who we know is not able to keep it? Would he accept of one for a Husband, whom he knew beforehand to be in a State of Impotence? How then can ſhe pretend that we ſhould accept of ſuch a Governour? Is not a Popiſh Pretender as much unqualify'd to govern a free-born Proteſtant People, as one in a natural State of Impotence is to give due Benevolence? Are not both Pretenders equally impotent as to what they pretend to? Then pray, Madam, acquaint your Friend Mrs.—— that ſince our Sex is aſſiſtant to yours in throwing off your evil Governours, when you

you find upon Heart-breaking Disappointments that you cannot be happy under them, 'tis altogether unreasonable in her to pretend that we ought to establish any one Ruler over us, who is utterly incapable of rendring his Subjects happy. Desire her to lay aside her Notions of Divine Right and Arbitrary Power. She wrongs her self and her whole Sex by these fantastical Opinions. No Power on Earth but that of Beauty can justly pretend to Right Divine; for Beauty has its Power from Nature, and consequently from God.

I am,

London,
Jan. 10. 171⅝.

Madam,

Yours, &c.

TO

TO

JUDAS ISCARIOT, *Esq;*

On the present State of the Stage.

SIR,

I Have been about to write to you every Post for these ten Days, but one Accident or other has still diverted me; but I shall now make more than amends, for *Ingentem tibi Epistolam Impingam.*

If I had had the greatest Inclination imaginable to accept of the Invitation which you sent me by your Familiar; yet something has happen'd which would have been a Just, tho' a Ridiculous Impediment. For I had given my word to go another way, in order to pull a certain Beast out of a Ditch, who had fal'n into it, thro' a more than Bestial Stupidity, which engag'd him to look upon things above him, instead of grazing and following the Instinct of Nature. But

to

to ſpeak plain *Engliſh*, and return to your Invitation; who could have expected any ſuch thing, from one who had ſo barbarouſly abandon'd his old Acquaintance, who had never ſo much as once in Twenty Years miſs'd an opportunity of ſerving him, and abandon'd him contrary both to Friendſhip and Politicks. For a Man who deſerts his Friend in an Affair in which 'tis reaſonable that he ſhould eſpouſe him, does two Things at once to his own Diſadvantage. For firſt, he ſhews the World that he has no Body's Intereſt at heart but his own, which Indifference the World, as ſoon as it perceives it, will be ſure to return in Kind: Secondly, he gives a pretty convincing Proof, that he has not Capacity enough to underſtand his own Intereſt; for he who in any Point that is reaſonable is deaf to his Friend's Intereſt, is certainly blind to his own. Now what Dependance can I have on a Perſon who makes it evident to me, that he neither cares for my Intereſt, nor underſtands his own? If you had laid aſide the Alteration of *Coriolanus* for better Plays, there had been a plauſible Apology for your Breach of Promiſe. But to ſacrifice me to Fools, was Impudent as 'twas Barbarous. I have read the noble Stuff which you have acted this Winter, all but *Buſiris*, which was not publiſh'd when I left the Town. But ſome

Perſons,

Persons, whom I have seen in this place, tell me there is a Rape in it. If that is true, it has a Fault in it for which nothing can make Atonement. A Rape is the peculiar Barbarity of our *English* Stage. Neither *Greecians* nor *Romans* would suffer it, nor can the *French* at present bear it. The very Apprehension of a Rape, tho' the thing did not follow it, damn'd the *Theodore* of *Corneille*; which, if you will believe Monsieur *Hedelin*, is one of his best Tragedies. I would fain know from you, who have had a twenty Years Experience of the Stage, for what Reason the Women, who will sit as quietly and passively at the Relation of a Rape in a Tragedy, as if they thought that Ravishing gave them a Pleasure, for which they have a just Apology, will start and flinch like unback'd Fillies, at the least Approach of *Rem* to *Re* in Comedy, unless that Approach happens to be made in the House of Bondage. I have been sometimes apt to entertain a Suspicion, that 'tis not the luscious Matter which disturbs them in Comedy, but the secret implicite Satire upon the Sex. For a Woman in Comedy never grants the last Favour to one to whom she is not marry'd, but it proclains the Man's Triumph and her Shame. It always shews her Weakness and often her Inconstancy, and sometimes her Fraud and Perfidiousness. But a Rape in

Tragedy

Tragedy is a Panegyrick upon the Sex: For there the Woman has all the Advantage of the Man. For ſhe is ſuppos'd to remain innocent, and to be pleas'd without her Conſent; while the Man, who is accounted a damn'd Villain, proclaims the Power of Female Charms, which have the Force to drive him to ſo horrid a Violence. But to return to the other Plays, which you acted this laſt Winter. I have read two Comedies without one Jeſt in them. But you will ſay, perhaps, that the Play-Houſe was throng'd for eight or ten Days together at the Repreſentation of theſe Comedies; perhaps ſo. But then, if it was ſo throng'd at the Repreſentation of damn'd Plays, I hope my Ears will no more be ſtunn'd with the Noiſe of the Improvement of a general Taſte, and that for the future no Conſequence will be drawn from the Numbers of an Audience to their Capacity. For the very ſame Reaſon that the Builder's Trade, the Carpenters and the Joyners are ſo very much improv'd; for the very ſame Reaſon that ſo many fine Houſes, ſo many beautiful Streets, ſo many ſtately Squares, and, as it were, whole Towns are building in your North-Weſt Suburbs; for that very ſame Reaſon is your Theatre crowded. A Penetration that comes far ſhort of Conjuration, may ſuffice to ſhew, that the Numbers of the Nobility and Gentry of the

Town,

Town, and consequently of their Dependants, are exceedingly augmented by some great Events which have happen'd of late Years, *viz.* the Revolution, the Union with *Scotland*, the Return of our Armies from the Continent, and the King's Accession to the Crown. But as for the Improvement of a general Taste, 'tis so great a Blunder, that it could never be thought of among considerate People. 'Tis improv'd indeed with a vengeance, 'tis refin'd in a glorious manner! improv'd as the Taste of a Green-sickness Girl, who leaves palatable Meat for Charcoal; refin'd as the Taste of an Hysterick Woman, who is cherish'd by a Stink, and sickens at a Perfume; or as the Taste of a modern Letcher, who, like a Swine, prefers a Sirreverence to the finest thing in the World. The ingenious Diversions, which they follow'd this Winter, their Masquerades, their *Italian* Farces, and their *French* Tumblings, cannot chuse but shew the great Refinement of their Taste. If the general Taste were improv'd, two things would certainly follow, good Plays would be writ, and damn'd ones would not be endured. But *Shakespear*'s Plays you will say were crowded, and *Tom. D'Urfey*'s neglected this Winter. Be it so. I shall shew you in my next, that the Generality of

an Audience, in spight of their Practice, have it both in their Heads and their Hearts, to value *Tom. D'Urfey*, and to despise *Shakespear*.

Hampton-Court,
April 3. 1719.

I am,

Your, &c.

LETTER *written in behalf of one who was lately ruin'd by* Stock-Jobbing, *to his Father-in-Law who would not ſee him.*

SIR,

THIS is the third Letter which I have writ to you, without the Satisfaction of receiving an Anſwer, which has been a great Acceſſion to the Calamity which I labour'd under before; and I have felt the Frowns of Fortune the more ſeverely, becauſe they have been attended with yours. 'Tis hard, that it ſhou'd be in her Power to alienate not only our Poſſeſſions, but even the Hearts and Souls of our deareſt and moſt valued Friends. As we learn from her hourly Inconſtancy, that there is no Man ſecure from her Power, methinks it ſhould be the common Intereſt of Mankind to alleviate her Strokes by uſing their Fellow-Creatures gently, while they are under her Diſgrace; eſpecially ſince long Experience has taught us, that ſhe is often the

moſt barbarous to thoſe who deſerve her Cruelty the leaſt; ſo that her Perſecution being for the moſt part directly contrary to Reaſon, ſhould leaſt of all be abetted by reaſonable Men like you. My Intentions have been very good, tho' the Event has not been anſwerable to them; and methinks when we paſs a Judgment upon our Neighbours, not by their Intentions, but by Events, we paſs a ſevere Law againſt our ſelves, becauſe our Intentions are in our Power, but Events are not; and no Man can foreſee the future. My very Enemies muſt confeſs, that my Calamity has proceeded not from any Extravagance of Temper, or a luxurious Life, but only from the too eager Deſire of Getting; which, if it be a Fault, who at preſent is guiltleſs? Sure no Man ever was juſtly blam'd for catching a Diſtemper, whoſe Infection was epidemical. And yet that very eager Deſire of Getting has not proceeded from any ſordid Avarice, but only from my Exceſs of Love to your Daughter, and an earneſt Zeal to ſecure her Happineſs before I ſhould be prevented by Sickneſs or Death, or that uſual Change which attends on Human Affairs. So that my Eagerneſs to make your Daughter happy, has been the very thing that has made her miſerable by bringing under her Father's Diſpleaſure one for whom ſhe believes it her Duty to be con-

cern'd

cern'd. So that what she suffers by your Displeasure causes it to be more grievous to me, and makes me more passionately and impatiently desire that you would be reconcil'd to me. My Fault has been my Error and not my Crime, and I have Youth, and Health, and Vigour of Mind enough to retrieve my Fortune. And when I have retriev'd her, I have Reason to believe, that she will then be constant to me, because I have seen and experienc'd the only Error which could have oblig'd her to leave me; and therefore as soon as I am re-establish'd, I shall be more happy because more secure than if I had never falln. In the mean while, Sir, to give you a convincing Proof, that I prefer your Daughter's Happiness to my own, I am willing to do any thing to secure her a Competency while my own Condition is doubtful. I am willing to put it as much out of my Power, as it is contrary to my Inclinations, to touch the other two thousand Pounds.

I am,

June 10. 1720. *SIR,*

Your, &c.

TO

JUDAS ISCARIOT, *Esq;*

On the Degeneracy of the Publick Taste.

SIR,

ABout the middle of the last Month I sent you a long Letter, in which I endeavour'd to shew the Extravagance of that Opinion, that there is at this time among us an Improvement of the general Taste, with relation to Poetry and the *Belles Lettres*. And I promis'd in my next to shew the Error or the Falacy of those, who pretend to maintain that Opinion from the crowded Audiences at the Representation of *Shakespear*'s Plays, and the thin ones at those which were writ by Mr. *D——y*. I promis'd to shew that notwithstanding this Practice of the present Frequenters of the Play-House, they have it both in their Heads and their Hearts to value Mr. *D'Urfey* and to despise *Shakespear*, that neither their Approbation nor their Contempt is their own, but assumed and borrowed, and that they approve by

Vogue

Vogue and by Fashion, as a late noble Poet has told us.

Their private Wish obey the publick Voice,
'Twixt Good and Bad Whimsey decides, not Choice;
Fashions grow up for Taste, at Forms they strike,
They know what they would have, not what they like.

I promis'd to shew, that the one of these Authors has been esteem'd, and the other contemn'd by Men of Sense so long, that the Approbation of the one, and the Contempt of the other, is come at last to make an Impression on the Rabble; when I mention that Word, I do not mean such a Rabble as you have sometimes on the Stage at *Julius Cæsar* or at *Coriolanus*, but such a Rabble as is but too often beheld in your Pit and Side-Boxes.

A very great Part of those who pretend to be in Love with *Shakespear*, if he were now living, and his most celebrated Plays were to be acted *De novo*, without a Cabal, without Character or Prepossession, wou'd Hiss and Damn the very Things of which they are now the fashionable Admirers, which seems plain to me from this very Reason, because the modern Plays which they most approve of, are the very Reverse

of *Shakespear's*, with respect either to his Excellencies or his Faults.

Shakespear is very justly celebrated for the Truth and Justness of his Characters, for the Beauty of his Sentiments, for the Simplicity and Dignity of his Dialogue, and for his moving the Passions powerfully by the meer force of Nature. But the present Spectators of Tragedies approve of those most, in which the Passions are mov'd least. They will endure no Modern Tragedy, in whose principal Character Love is not the predominant Quality. Now Love predominating in the principal Character, too often falsifies and confounds those Characters, and by Consequence but too often destroys the Beauty of the Sentiments, because no Sentiment can be beautiful, which is improper in him who speaks it. Besides, there are not three of our modern Tragedies, which have any thing like those Sentiments which abound in *Shakespear*; Sentiments, which, at the same time that they shew Sagacity and Penetration, are easie, just, and natural.

The modern Readers and Spectators of Tragedies will endure no Tragedy which has the Simplicity and *naiveté* of *Shakespear's* Dialogue; a Simplicity, wherever the occasion requires it, attended with Force, and Dignity, and Pomp, and Solemnity: Instead of that noble and natural Dialogue,

alogue; they are for a flatulant Style, in which the Poet puts the Change upon himself, and speaks almost always himself, instead of making his Characters speak.

But as the Readers and Spectators of Modern Tragedies approve of those most, which are the very reverse of *Shakespear*'s with respect to his Beauties and Excellencies, so they declare very loudly against his Faults. The Faults of *Shakespear*, which are rather those of the Age in which he liv'd, are his perpetual Rambles, and his apparent Duplicity in some of his Plays, or Triplicity of Action, and the frequent breaking the Continuity of the Scenes. The present Spectators declare against this, in appearance, but at the same time approve of this Multiplicity of Action in some Modern Plays, concealed by a Jumble and a Confusion which is incomprehensible and altogether unintelligible. Another of *Shakespear*'s Faults is the Length of Time employ'd in the carrying on his Dramatick Action. The present Spectators are extreamly shock'd at this in a modern Tragedy, but at the same time approve of those in which the Unity of Time is preserved by offending all Common Sense.

If a Modern Poet in one of his Tragedies should shew any Thing like *Shakespear*'s Rambles, should introduce a Tragedy upon the Stage, which should begin in *Europe*

rope and end in *Asia*, like the Moor of *Venice*, that Play would be exploded and damn'd with very great Damnation. But the Modern Spectators of Tragedies greatly esteem and are fond of those, in which the Unity of Place is preserv'd, sometimes by whimsical comick Absurdities, and sometimes by dreadful and prodigious Extravagancies.

From all this I conclude, as I said before, that the Spectators of modern Tragedies, having the greatest Esteem for those, which have least of *Shakespear*'s Excellencies, and declaring loudly against his Faults, would damn *Shakespear*, if living.

Nor can I believe that several who pretend to be passionate Admirers of *Milton*, would treat him if living in any other manner for the following Reasons.

Because they are so fond of nothing as of that soft and effeminate Rhyme, which makes the very Reverse of the Harmony, and of the manly, and powerful, and noble Enthusiasm of *Milton*.

Because the Generality of Poets and Wits his Contemporaries did not esteem him, tho' they were by no means inferior in Understanding to his pretended living Admirers. *Willmot* Earl of *Rochester* never so much as mention'd him, in his Imitation of the Tenth Satyr of the first Book of *Horace*. When he came to imitate that

Passage,

Passage, *Forte epos Acer, ut nemo Varius ducit*, instead of *Milton* he names *Waller*. And when that noble Peer was some Years afterwards ask'd by Dr. *Burnet*, since Bishop of *Salisbury*, for which of the Modern Poets he had most Esteem, he answer'd without the least Hesitation, for *Boileau* among the *French*, and *Cowley* among the *English* Poets. Mr. *Rymer* in his first Book of Criticism treated the *Paradise Lost* with Contempt, and the generality of the Readers of Poetry, for twenty Years after it was published, knew no more of that exalted Poem, than if it had been writ in *Arabick*: Mr. *Dryden* in his Preface before *the State of Innocence*, appears to have been the first, those Gentlemen excepted whose Verses are before *Milton*'s Poem, who discover'd in so publick a Manner an extraordinary Opinion of *Milton*'s extraordinary Merit. And yet Mr. *Dryden* at that time knew not half the Extent of his Excellence, as more than twenty Years afterwards he confess'd to me, and as is pretty plain from his writing *the State of Innocence*. For Mr. *Dryden*, in that Poem, which is founded on the *Paradise Lost*, falls so infinitely short of those wonderful Qualities, by which *Milton* has distinguish'd that noble Poem from all other Poems, that one of these two Things must be granted; either that Mr. *Dryden* knew

not

not the Extent of *Milton*'s great Qualities, or that he design'd to be a Foil to him. But they who knew Mr. *Dryden*, know very well, that he was not of a Temper to design to be a Foil to any one.

I hope I have said enough to convince you that the Approbations and Censures of the Generality of an Audience are deriv'd from Sentiments which are not their own, and which are the Effects of Authority, and not of Reason. When Men who are, and are esteem'd, Persons of more than ordinary Judgment, have declar'd themselves from time to time, during a Century, or half a Century, concerning Poems Dramatick or others, those Declarations are the Cause, that other Persons at length, being guided by the Light which is held out to them, fondly imagine that it was kindled by that Particle of Heav'nly Fire which they fancy to be within them. But the numerous and violent Cabals, which are form'd to support or decry Dramatick Writings, may serve instead of a thousand Arguments to convince the most obstinate, that there is no such thing as a general Taste among us. It being absolutely impossible that great Numbers of Persons of a fine Discernment and a true Taste should conspire to extol a Blockhead at the Expence of a noble Art, at the Expence of their own Reputation and the Reputation of their

Country,

ountry, and consequently at the Ex-ence, in a good measure, of that Coun-y's Power and Interest. You and your rethren, who are the present Managers f the Play-House, have of late very justly ewn the extremest Contempt for the ge-eral Taste, pretending to set off damn'd lays, by the glare of new Habits. Which onduct of you, the Emperors, and Kings, nd Princes of the Drama, recalls to my Re-embrance what *Boccalin* says of some rinces of *Parnassus*. They had half ru-n'd themselves, says that merry *Italian*, by he Expence they had been at to preserve nd perfume Sirreverences: Yet still, says e, the more Cost they were at, and the nore Sweets they bestow'd upon them the nore damnably their Conserves stunk in he Nostrils of all who had really Noses. Perhaps, if you take the Word in the most iffusive Sense, there never was a general ood Taste for Poetry, among any People n the World, if you except the *Athenians*. But there never was so general a one n *England* as there was in modern *France* and *Italy*, before the Opera and some other Things debauch'd it in both those Countries.

There has not one great Poet appear'd in *France* since the beginning of Cardinal *Richlieu*'s Ministry, but he has been protected and encourag'd, and his Merit, as

as fast as it could spread, has been generally acknowledg'd. I wish I could as truly affirm the same thing of *England*. The great Qualities of *Milton* were not generally known among his Countrymen till the *Paradise Lost* had been publish'd more than thirty Years. But when that admirable Poet was among the *Italians*, the Greatness of his Genius was known to them in the very Bloom of his Youth, even thirty Years before that incomparable Poem was writ, witness the Epigram of *Selvaggi*, an *Italian* Poet, of which *Dryden*'s Epigram which is under *Milton*'s Picture is nothing but a Paraphrase.

Græcia Mæonidem, jactet sibi Roma Maronem,
Anglia Miltonum, jactat utrique parem.

Nay, *Salsiki*, a *Roman* Poet, sacrifices the very Honour of his Country, that is, of modern *Italy* to him, by preferring the *Italian* Poetry of *Milton* even to that of *Tasso*:

Cede Meles, cedat depressâ Moxéius urnâ
Sebetus Tassum desinatusque loqui.
At Thamesis victor cunctis ferat altior undas,
Nam per Te, Milto, partribus unus erat.

And

And *Giovanni Baptista Manso*, a Noble *Neapolitan*, who had been the intimate Friend of *Tasso*, and the great Patron of *Marino*, while they were living, gives extraordinary Commendations to *Milton*, tho' he was then but a Youth among them, as appears by his *Latin* Verses addrest to that noble *Italian*,

Ergo ego Te Clius, & magni nomine Phœbi
Manse pater, jubeo longum salvere per ævum,
Missus Hyperboreo Juvenis peregrinus ab axe.

Milton had then been so far from writing the *Paradise Lost*, that he had never so much as thought of that Subject, but had at that time determin'd, after his Return to *England*, to write an Epick Poem upon the Exploits of *Arthur* and the Knights of the Round Table, as appears by the same Verses to *Manso*.

Arthurumque etiam sub Terris bella moventem
Dicam, atque invictæ sociali federe mensæ
Magnanimos Heroas, & (o modo spiritus adsit)
Frangam Saxonicas Britonum sub marte phalanges.

Thus, you see, the *Italians*, by his juvenile Essays, discover'd the great and growing

growing Genius of *Milton*, whereas his Countrymen knew very little of him, even thirty Years after he had publish'd among them the noblest Poem in the World.

But as the general Taste of *England* could be never said to be good, it was never so bad as it is at present; a certain Proof of which, is, that Writings both Dramatick and others, were never so infamous as they now are. And Taste and Writing always keep Pace with each other. When *Shakespear* first appear'd among us, the Generality of his Readers and his Spectators were much better able to judge of him than they are at present. Because, as he was a very natural Writer, and they were without Prejudice, without Prepossession, and without Affectation, and without the Influence of a Coxcomical, Senseless Cabal, they were at Liberty to receive the Impressions which Things naturally made on their Minds.

Hampton-Court,
May 25. 1719.

TO

TO

Sir RICHARD STEELE.

Declaring the Reasons for which I publish'd the two Volumes of SELECT WORKS.

SIR,

I Here send you by the Bearer, several Pieces in Verse and Prose, writ formerly by me, and lately printed in two Volumes; but I send them not without a double Design on you. For first, I desire that you wou'd have the Goodness to oblige your Managers to make me some Recompence this Winter for the Wrong which they did me the last. Secondly, I desire that you will give me leave to say something concerning the Pieces contain'd in these two Volumes, and more particularly concerning the Motive which oblig'd me to write the chief of them at the first, and to publish them lately together; which I shall do with Plea-

ſure to one who has done ſo much Good in the ſame Cauſe in which moſt of them were writ.

Several of the Pieces in Verſe and Proſe, and three of the Plays, were writ in the Cauſe of Liberty. The narrative Poems of greater Length were all of them written upon Great and Publick Occaſions, and were deſign'd as ſo many Panegyricks upon thoſe Illuſtrious Perſons whoſe Great and Heroick Actions had made them Benefactors to *Great Britain* and Liberty.

It has always been my Opinion, that a free Nation can never be too zealous in maintaining their Liberties, becauſe we have been taught by too many fatal Events, that they have at laſt been often loſt by the Security and Corruptions of thoſe who had for ſeveral Centuries enjoy'd them. Witneſs the ancient *Grecians* and *Romans*, and the ancient and modern *Spaniards* and *French*. But whenever the Liberties of a great Nation are in manifeſt Danger, there all the ſeveral Members of it, who are not abjectly baſe, will uſe their utmoſt Efforts in defending them. The Liberties of *Great Britain* have in our own Memory been in ſo much Danger, that they have been twice in thirty Years retrieved from immediate Ruin, firſt by the Revolution, and ſecondly by the Acceſſion of King *George* to the Imperial Crown of this Iſland, but even

now

now they by no Means appear to me to be entirely ſecur'd.

Since the Revolution, things appear to have been ſtrangely reverſt in *Great Britain* with regard to Liberty. In four or five Reigns immediately preceding the Arrival of King *William* of Immortal Memory, the Court was for Arbitrary Power, and the People appear'd ſtrenuous for Liberty. But ſince that time, the Court has for the moſt part contended for Liberty, and the People, I mean too great a Part of them, have declar'd for Slavery. Now, if ever we should come to be under a King, who wou'd sacrifice his Proteſtant Diſſenting Subjects to the High-Church Clergy, we ſhould quickly ſee whether the Liberties of a Nation are moſt ſecure, when a conſiderable part of the People (who are their natural Guardians) are reſov'd to defend, or determin'd to reſign them. In the mean time, Sir, it muſt be acknowledg'd, to the immortal Honour of the preſent King, that by endeavouring to ſecure the Diſſenters from ſuch a Treatment in time to come, he is taking the moſt effectual Method to immortalize Liberty.

Thus, Sir, have I acquainted you with the only Motive of writing the chief of theſe Poems, which was the Apprehenſion I had of the Danger, which the Liberties of my Country were in, and conſequently

the Liberties of the Christian World, of which ours are the strongest Bulwark. I wrote them not then as one who espous'd a Party, but as a Lover of my Country, and one zealous to promote the Happiness of *Great Britain*. I have been so far from having any ambitious Aims or any sordid Views of Interest, that I have been contented to see several of the publick Rewards engross'd by some who are luke-warm, and by others who are *Jacobites* in Whig Cloathing, while I have remain'd very poor in a very advanc'd Age. But one Thing indeed I have sometimes been apt to think exceeding hard, and that is, that these lukewarm Persons, and these *Jacobites* in Whig Cloathing, should be suffer'd to make use of the Power which they have acquir'd by their Falshood, to the utter Ruin of one who has behav'd himself all along with the utmost Sincerity in the noblest Cause of Liberty.

Thus, Sir, have I laid before you the Motive which engag'd me to write the greater part of the Pieces which are contain'd in the two Volumes. I shall now shew you, how the same Motive oblig'd me to use my Endeavours to preserve them if they should appear worthy of it, and consequently to publish them in the two foremention'd Volumes. It was in *October* 171

1716, that I desir'd a Bookseller to collect them for me. I thought that after so much Time had pass'd since the writing them, I should be capable of forming as true a Judgment my self of them, as any other Person whatsoever, who has no better Judgment in Poetical Matters than I have, or that the Precept of *Horace*, *nonum prematur in annum*, must be false and vain.

Upon a very slow and deliberate Perusal of them, I could not but conclude, that with all their Faults they were not altogether depriv'd of that noble Fire, which alone can make them pleasing; nor of that Justness and Solidity which alone can make them lasting. I believ'd that if they were publish'd together, they might be able one Day to do some Good to the publick, and no Discredit to me.

And I was the more encourag'd to venture on this Publication, because, Sir, you may be pleas'd to remember, that they had been favourably receiv'd by the most illustrious Persons of both Parties for their Judgment in Poetry, and their Knowledge of the *Belles Lettres*, by the late Earls of *Godolphin* and *Halifax*, Mr. *Maynwaring* and others among the Whigs, and by the present Duke of *Buckingham* and my Lord *Lansdown* among the Tories. And if any Temptation could make me vain, it would

be the favourable Opinions of the last two Noble Persons, because as their Judgments in matters of Poetry are unquestion'd, they can never be suppos'd to be partial to one, who has all his Life-time appear'd very zealous in contrary Principles to those of a Party, which they by some have been suppos'd to favour. My Lord *Lansdown*, by making me a Present so noble, as never has been made by a Subject to any Author now living, sufficiently declar'd that what I had writ had not been altogether displeasing to him. And 'tis to the warm Approbation which the Duke of *Buckingham* gave to the Poem on the Battel of *Blenheim*, that I owe the Honour of being first known to the late illustrious Earl of *Godolphin*, whose good and great Qualities, and the Benefits which *Great Britain* receiv'd from his good and his wise Administration, make me proud to own for the first and greatest of my Benefactors.

Thus, Sir, I found Encouragement to preserve these Pieces, and especially the Poems writ in the Cause of Liberty. But I was convinc'd at the same time, that the only way to preserve them would be to publish them together. They were in a great many different Hands, and some of them in the Hands of such who were mortal Enemies to the Cause in which they were

were written. Some of them had been very incorrectly printed. The very Subject which ought to recommend them to all *Englishmen*, as well as the Harmony without Rhyme in several of the Poems, made some of them for the present less pleasing to above half the Readers of Poetry. Some of them that had once appear'd with Applause seem'd to have been forgot. For all things of late Days have been manag'd by Cabal and Party; and there seems to have been a Conspiracy in the Commonwealth of Learning, among Fools of all Sorts, to exalt Folly at the Expence of Common-sense, and make Stupidity triumph over Merit in the very Dominions of Wit, which has been one of the Causes why Things are reduced to that deplorable State upon our *British Parnassus*. *Apollo* and the Muses seem to have abandon'd it; disdaining that their Divinities should honour a Place with their Songs, where Fools and Pedants, Buffoons, Eunuchs and Tumblers have so often met with Applause.

Who could have thought, if he had been told twenty Years ago, that he should outlive Tragedy and Comedy, that he had been promis'd a Life of not quite twenty Years? Yet 'tis very plain that the Promise had extended no further: such is the Power of Cabal and Party.

I have all along had a great Aversion to the making a Party, or the entring into a Cabal, and have sometimes look'd upon it with Horrour and sometimes with Contempt. Who that has Common-sense can forbear laughing, when he sees a Parcel of Fellows, who call themselves Wits, sit in Combination round a Coffee Table, as Sharpers do round a Hazard Table, to trick honest Gentlemen into an Approbation of their Works, and bubble them of their Understandings?

And yet I have all along known, that nothing in the greater Poetry can grow immediately popular without a Cabal or Party. I have a long time been convinced, that the more sublimely any thing is writ in Poetry, and the nearer it comes to Perfection, the longer it will be before it grows popular, without such a Cabal; because the more sublimely it is writ, and the nearer it comes to Perfection, the more it is rais'd above the Apprehensions of the Vulgar. And yet notwithstanding this Knowledge, I have all along resolv'd to have no Reputation, or to owe it to my Writings.

Thus, Sir, you see the Reasons, why the Writings that make up these two Volumes, or at least the greater Part of them, had been in danger of being lost, if I had not taken Pains during my Life-time to correct and publish them together. There

is one more Reason remaining, and that is, the Malice of those People whom the World calls Poets, whose Hatred I have been proud to incur, by speaking bold and necessary Truths in the behalf of a noble Art, which they have miserably abus'd by their vile Poems, and their more vile Criticisms. And yet 'tis from these People that the foolish Readers of Poetry, which are nine Parts in ten, take their Opinions of Poets and their Works, little believing, or once imagining, that these Persons are of all Mankind the very worst qualify'd to judge of their own Art; as having neither the Capacity, nor the Impartiality which are requisite for the judging truly. For it will be found, generally speaking, that Poets, Painters, and Musicians, are capacitated less than other Men to judge of Poetry, Painting and Musick. This, I must confess, may appear to some to be so bold a Paradox, that I shall endeavour to make it out both by Reason and Authority, tho' I know very well at the same time, that You can make no Doubt of it. The Generality of Poets, Painters and Musicians, are such by the meer Power of a warm Imagination. And 'tis very rarely that a strong Imagination and a penetrating Judgment are found in the same Subject. We need go no further than *Boileau* to hear

that

that a celebrated Poet is often a contemptible Judge.

Tel excelle a Rimer qui Juge sottement,
Et tel s'est fait par ses Vers distinguer par la ville,
Qui jamais du Lucain n'a distingué Virgile.

As for what relates to Painters, I shall content my self with the Citation of a Remark from the ingenious and judicious Author of the Observations upon *Fresnoy*'s Art of Painting, translated by Mr. *Dryden*. 'Tis the Fiftieth Remark, upon these Words of Mr. *Dryden*'s Translation, 'As being the 'Sovereign Judge of his own Art.

This Word, Sovereign Judge or Arbiter of his own Art, pre-supposes a Painter to be fully instructed in all the Parts of Painting, so that being set as it were above his Art, he may be the Master and Sovereign of it, which is no easie Matter. Those of that Profession are so seldom endow'd with that supream Capacity, that few of them arrive to be good Judges of Painting: And I should many times make more account of their Judgment who are Men of Sense, and yet have never touch'd a Pencil, than of the Opinion which is given by the greatest part of Painters. All Painters therefore may be call'd Arbiters of their own Art, but to be

be Sovereign Arbiters belongs only to knowing Painters.

What is ſaid by this ingenious Gentleman of Painters, is exactly true of Muſicians. For which I have the Opinion of more than one Maſter among them; and as to the Truth of this Obſervation with relation to Poets, I have ſaid enough above.

But as Poets are not capable, ſo neither are they impartial Judges. I ſpeak of thoſe who are only Rhimeſters. For a great Maſter is for the moſt part as impartial as he is knowing; but for the reſt, the Readers of Poetry would do well to conſider, that if a Miſtreſs who is courted by a great many paſſionate Rivals, ſhould ask any one of them his Opinion of the reſt, 'tis ten to one that he would prefer him moſt, whom he eſteem'd leaſt, and whom he believ'd leaſt capable of getting that Miſtreſs from him.

Thus, Sir, have I acquainted you with the Motive which oblig'd me to write the greater Part of theſe Treatiſes, and which afterwards engag'd me to publiſh them in the two Volumes, which you will receive with this. I hope I ſhall not be thought troubleſome, if in a ſecond Letter I ſay ſomething in particular of the Pieces both in Verſe and Proſe. However theſe two Letters will at leaſt convince you of the

good

good Opinion which I have a long time entertain'd both of your Discernment and your Impartiality.

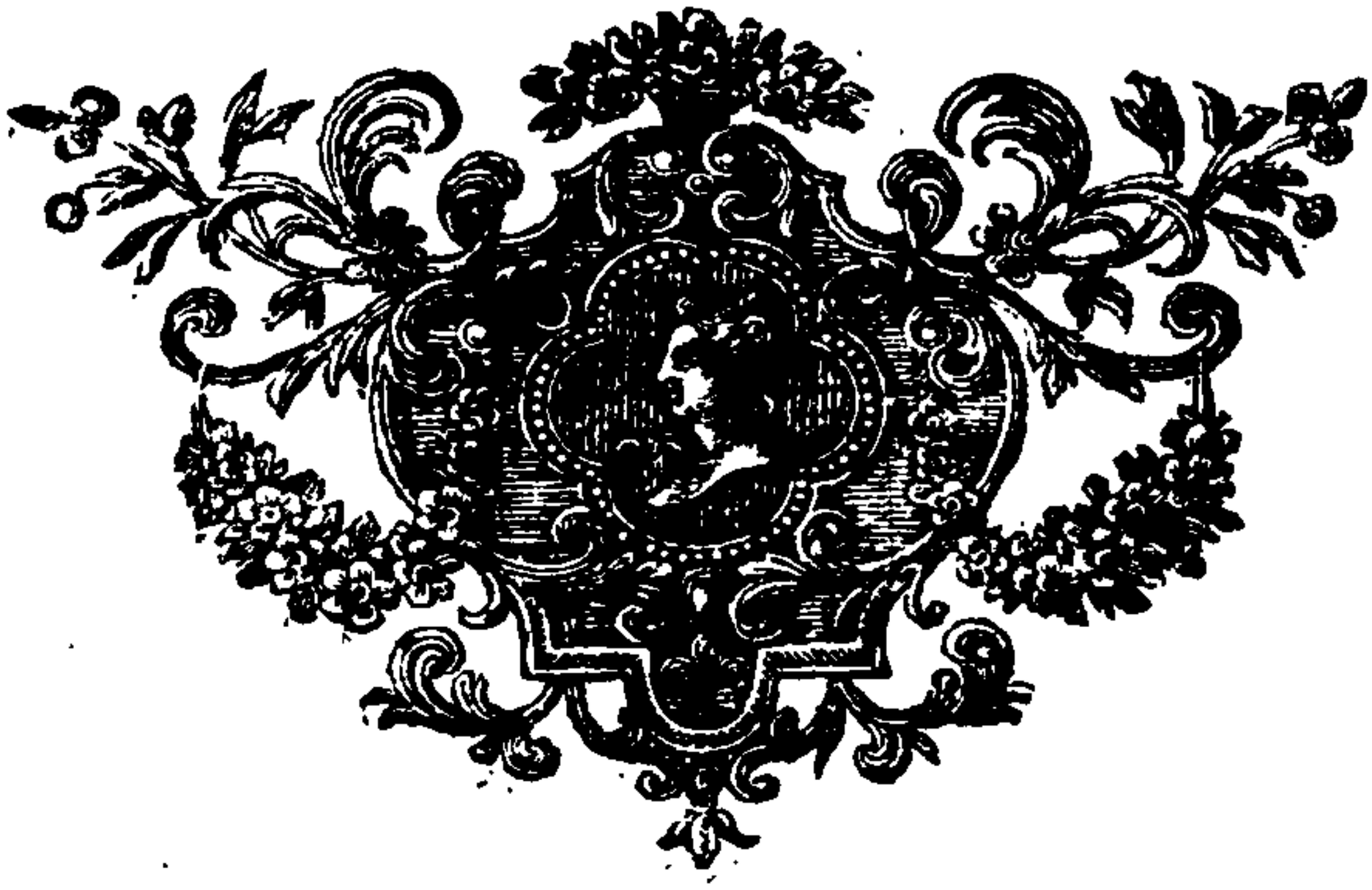
I am, SIR,

Your most Humble and

most Obedient Servant,

Sep. 4. 1719.

JOHN DENNIS.



TO

THO. SERGEANT, *Esq;*

That all Stock-Jobbers are Slaves.

SIR,

I Had sooner returned you my Thanks for the favour of your last, and the good Advice in it, if I had not entertain'd some Thoughts of waiting on you; which I had certainly done before now, if it had not been for the Reflection, that here of late you are scarce any where to be found but in *Exchange-Alley*; and what good Christian would go to a Place where he is sure to meet the Devil at every Turn that he takes there? not indeed with his Infernal Equipage, his Brow-antlers, his Saucer Eyes, his long Tail, and his cloven Feet: He wears nothing of all this in *Exchange-Alley*, except sometimes his Horns. But then I should meet him at every Turn in more frightful and more provoking Appearances, as now in the Shape of a Roguish leering Broker,

Broker, and anon like a ghastly ruin'd Stock-Jobber; sometimes in the Shape of a young Lady who has lost both the Modesty and the natural Desire of her Sex; and sometimes I should see him in the same Shape in which he fell from Heav'n, that is like a Star of the first magnitude shining in an azure Sky. For that old Gentleman, who understands his Interest better than any Mortal living, frequents no one Spot on the *Globe* so much as *Exchange-Alley*: For there he constantly finds new Occasion to exercise his old Talents, his Tempting, Lying, Deluding and Betraying.

I shew'd the Acclamation at the latter end of your Letter to a Friend, who was with me when it came. *Vive la Mer pacifique!* What, says he, does this come from a Sharper? I desir'd to know what made him ask that Question. You know, said he, that there are two constant Hazard Tables or Wheels of Fortune that are establish'd by Authority in this wicked Town, not to mention a third, which is sometimes at *Guild-Hall*, but transitory and occasional; that one of these two is in the neighbourhood of *White-Hall*, establish'd by the Authority of the Court, and the other near the *Royal-Exchange*, establish'd by another Authority. Now the Table in the Neighbourhood of *White-Hall* is a fair and impartial one, at which only Men of Honour

nour play; at least they are Men of Honour while they are there, whatever they may be when they are in other Places. But the Hazard Table near the *Exchange* is frequented by the greatest Sharpers about this tricking Town. There are Bullies to be seen every Day in Crowds with their Boxes and their false Dice; sometimes they make use of High Runners, sometimes of Low Runners, and sometimes of Doctors. And this their Sharping and their Cheating is Christen'd forsooth their Being in the Secret. So that Being in the Secret will shortly come to signifie something more scandalous even than open Infamy.

Well but, said I, even at that tricking Table, my Friend plays upon the Square, and is in no Secret. But then, said he, let me ask you another Question, Is your Friend a Lover of his Country? That is a stranger Question than the other, said I. Every one is a Lover of his Country, or at least every one pretends to be so. But, replyed he, can any one who would be so much as thought to love his Country approve so heartily of a Method, which if 'tis practised much longer will infallibly ruin it? For besides that Strangers run away with vast Sums of our Money, who came in at Seventy perhaps, and go out at Seven Hundred; is not our Trade by this Stock-Jobbing brought to a narrower Compass?

pass? They who are ruin'd by it are unable to carry on their Commerce; and they who have gain'd vast Sums by it, have been apt to think themselves above their Professions, and laugh at the getting ten or twenty *per Cent.* by a long Voyage, when in *Exchange-Alley* they can propose to gain fifty *per Cent.* in a Morning. Now as our Trade decreases, continued he, our Seamen must decrease proportionably, so that at last perhaps it will be impossible upon an exigence to Man our Royal Navy: And then we may happen to become a Prey to the first Invader. So that this Lover of his Country is heartily approving of a Method, which may one Day bring this Island to be a conquered Province, and his own Posterity to be wretched Slaves. As soon as I perceived that he paus'd, I told him that this would have been more *a propos*, if he had spoke it before the late Act of Parliament for the putting down of the Bubbles. But he answer'd they being put down by the Wisdom of the Legislature, for this very Reason, least any Prejudice should acrue to Trade from them, and *Ram*'s and *Onslow*'s Bubbles being establish'd by the same Wisdom, have not the Legislature plainly declared, that Trade could receive no Damage from them; and that we may deliver to the Winds our fears of Conquest and of Slavery? Ought not every one to ac-

acquiesce in what they have done, and can any one be extravagant enough to believe, that they would establish two Bubbles against the Publick Good, only for the sake of a little transitory Pelf, which is to come into particular Hands? Very good, said my Friend; but are not those Gentlemen who constantly frequent *Exchange-Ally* actually Slaves already, as errant, as vile, as miserable Slaves as those who rowe in the Galleys? Say'st thou so, my dear Friend? said I: do but make that out, and thou shalt to me be *Apollo* and all the Muses. But this is a new Paradox. Not so new neither, said he. The whole Sect of the Stoicks embraced it. The Stoicks, I told him, were fantastical People. In some things he allow'd they were so; but that, for the most part, their Morality was more sound than that of any other Sect among the Heathens. *Horace*, who was of no Sect, but who took from each of them what he thought was just and solid, (and by the way he wanted no Judgment, no Discernment that could enable him to make a right Choice,) made this Opinion his own, as you may see by the Sixteenth Epistle of his First Book.

Qui melior Servo, qui Liberior sit Avarus,

Non video. Nam qui cupiet, metuet quoque: porrò
Qui metuens vivet, Liber mihi non erit unquam.

But my dear Friend, ſaid I, the Authority of a *Roman* Poet will hardly bring the Gentlemen in *Exchange-Alley* off from their Stock-Jobbing. This is an Authority, he reply'd, which carries Reaſon along with it. For thus he argues. The Covetous Man deſires; he who deſires, of conſequence fears; but he who lives in continual Fear, muſt, in my Opinion, be always an errant Slave. But, continued he, I will add my own Reaſons to thoſe of *Horace*. There are two ſorts of Liberties, ſaid he, a Civil and a Philoſophical Liberty. What we call Civil Liberty gives us the command of our own Actions: What we call Philoſophical Liberty gives us the command of our own Thoughts. Now neither the Galley-ſlave nor the Stock-Jobbe can be ſaid to enjoy Civil Liberty, that is, neither the one nor the other has the freedom of his own Actions: For a Galley-Slave muſt Row, and a Stock-Jobber muſt Stock-Jobb. And it ſignifies nothing to the purpoſe, that the one, upon his Refuſal or upon his Neglect, is corrected by a Cat of Nine-tayls, and the other by the Stings of his own baſe Paſſion, ſince they are both

equally

equally under Compulsion; and the Stock-Jobber, though never so wealthy, is as much afraid of missing the Hours of *Jonathan*'s or of *Garroway*'s, as the poor Galley-slave s of being wanting to his turn at the Oar. But now to come to Philosophical Liber-y, in that the Galley-slave has infinitely he Advantage of the Stock-Jobber. For hile the former is chain'd to his Oar, is Thoughts may be as free as the Air, is Thoughts may wander o'er the Uni-erse, may wander through Eternity, and hile his Body is in the utmost Agitation, is Mind may be calm and compos'd. But he Stock-Jobber's Thoughts are more con-n'd than the other's Body, confin'd to Dirt, and the sordid means of accumula-ing it, and his Mind is often plagu'd by he most tormentiug Passions. The poor Galley-slave may be a virtuous and an ex-ellent Man, but the wealthy Stock-Job-er must always be in the number of pro-igate Sinners.

Perdidit arma, locum virtutis deseruit, qui
Semper in augenda festinat & obrui-tur re. Ep. 16. Lib. 1.

That is, he who has his Thoughts in-ent upon the Means of heaping up Mo-ey, has thrown away his Buckler, has de-

ſerted his Poſt, the noble Poſt of Virtue where his General placed him, and which it was his Duty to maintain at the Expence of Life it ſelf. He has loſt it, he has been beaten out of it, by his baſe Paſſions and by his abject Vices, by his Fraud, his Deſire, his Hope, his Fear and his Rage. The Galley-ſlave may have it firmly in his Mind and in his Will to do all the Duties of the beſt of Men; to be a faithful Lover of his Country and to ſerve it to the utmoſt of his power; to be a good Father, a good Son, a good Husband, a good Brother, he may be dear to all his Friends and Relations, and have the heartieſt kindeſt Wiſhes of all. But as the miſerable Stock-Jobber cares only for himſelf, he is dear to himſelf alone, and contemptible and hateful to all beſides; and one may ſay to him, in the Words of *Horace*,

Non uxor ſalvum te vult, non filius omnes
Vicini oderunt, noti, pueri, atque puellæ
Miraris, quum tu argento poſt omnia ponas,
Si nemo præſtet, quem non merearis, amorem?

For a true Stock-Jobber will ſacrifice Wife, Father, Child, Brother, and his Country it ſelf, for Gain. He who ſacrifices the

the latter will sacrifice the rest. And have we not a thousand Instances every Day that a Stock-Jobber will sacrifice his Country?

But there is still another thing in which the Galley-slave has by much the Advantage of the Stock-Jobber. The former is redeemable Slave, but the latter is in Chains for his Life. Fortune or Time may release the Slaves who are at *Algiers* or *Tripoli*, but Fortune and Time are both the Stock-Jobbers Foes. Length of Days will certainly augment his Avarice and make his Captivity ruder. And the more Wealth there shall chance to flow in upon him, the more will he desire, the less will he enjoy, and still the more abject a Slave will he be to the base Lust of Gold. But, my dear Friend, said I, who had heard him hitherto with Patience, Thou certainly believ'st that thou art in a Pulpit, for it is there that, right or wrong, a Man has the Priviledge of talking for an Hour without being interrupted. Sir, said he, I stand corrected, but I did not deserve this Remonstrance only for complying with your own Desire. You know very well that 'tis not my custom to talk all, and that I have more than once suffered you to Preach in your turn. No Man, he continued, has a worse Opinion than I have of an eternal Talker. That which makes him so insuf-

ferable, is, that tho' he is for the moſt part a very empty Coxcomb, yet he implicitely declares that, into what Company ſoever he lights, he alone has more Underſtanding than all the reſt of the Company together; that Nature has qualified him to preſcribe to others, and that God who made him created him perpetual Dictator. But as I know you, continued he, to be ſometimes an errant Wag, with a very grave Countenance, I am perhaps very much in the wrong to take what you ſay ſeriouſly. I leave you to ruminate on what I have told you, and ſhall expect to know your Opinion of it the next time I ſee you. So we parted. But before I give him my Opinion I deſire to know yours.

White-Hall, June
22. 1720.

I am, SIR,

Your &c.

TO

Sir RICHARD STEELE,

Patentee of the Theatre in Drury-Lane.

SIR,

THO' at the time of writing this, I am almost overwhelm'd both with Sickness and Grief, yet I cannot forbear making a just Complaint to you for your being the Occasion of both these, either by actually breaking your Word with me, or being perfectly passive while your Managers broke it; which, if it has not reduc'd me to immediate Necessity, yet has brought me within the Danger of it, and consequently within the Apprehension of it, which is as grievous almost as the Thing. And that this Complaint is but too justly grounded, you your self will acknowledge, when I have laid my Case before you, which I shall do in as few Words as I can.

It was upon the 27th of *February*, 171⅞, that I receiv'd a Letter from Mr. *Booth* by your Direction, and the Direction of the Managers under you, desiring me to dine

at your House on the 28th, and after Dinner to read the Tragedy of *Coriolanus* to you, which I had alter'd from *Shakespear*. You cannot but remember, Sir, that upon reading it, the Play with the Alterations was approv'd of, nay and warmly approv'd of, by your self, Mr. *Cibber*, and Mr. *Booth*, (the other Manager was not there) and that Resolutions were taken for the acting it in the beginning of this Winter. Now I appeal to your self, if any Dramatick Performance could be more seasonable in the beginning of a Winter, when we were threatned with an Invasion from *Sweden* on the North, and from *Spain* on the West, than a Tragedy whose Moral is thus expreſt in the last Lines of the Play.

——They who thro' Ambition or Revenge,
Or impious Interest join with Foreign Foes,
T' oppress or to destroy their native Country,
Shall find, like Coriolanus, *soon or late*
From their perfidious Foreign Friends their Fate.

I am sure, Sir, I need not tell one of your Understanding, that this Moral is so apparently the Foundation of the Dramatick Action, and must appear to every Spectator and Reader to be so truly the genuine Result of it, that if I had not said one Word of it, every Reader and Spectator would

would have been able to have suggested so much to himself.

Well, Sir! when the Winter came on, what was done by your Deputies? Why, instead of keeping their Word with me, they spent above two Months of the Season in getting up *All for Love, or the World well lost*, a Play which has indeed a noble first Act, an Act which ends with a Scene becoming of the Dignity of the Tragick Stage. But if *Horace* had been now alive, and been either a Reader or Spectator of that Entertainment, he would have passed his old Sentence upon the Author.

Infelix operis summâ quia ponere totum
Nesciet.

For was ever any thing so pernicious, so immoral, so criminal, as the Design of that Play? I have mention'd the Title of it, give me leave to set before you the two last Lines:

And Fame to late Posterity shall tell,
No Lovers liv'd so great, or dy'd so well.

And this Encomium of the Conduct and the Death of *Anthony* and *Cleopatra*, a Conduct so immoral, and a Self-murder so criminal, is, to give it more Force, put into the Mouth of the High-Priest of *Isis*; tho' that

that Priest could not but know, that what he thus commended, would cause immediately the utter Destruction of his Country, and make it become a Conquer'd and a *Roman* Province. Certainly never could the Design of an Author square more exactly with the Design of *White-Hall*, at the time when it was written, which was by debauching the People absolutely to enslave them.

For, pray Sir, what do the Title and the two last Lines of this Play amount to in plain *English?* Why to this, that if any Person of Quality or other shall turn away his Wife, his young, affectionate, virtuous, charming Wife (for all these *Octavia* was) to take to his Bed a loose abandon'd Prostitute, and shall in her Arms exhaust his Patrimony, destroy his Health, emasculate his Mind, and lose his Reputation and all his Friends, why all this is well and greatly done, his Ruine is his Commendation. And if afterwards in Despair, he either hangs or drowns himself, or goes out of the World like a Rat, with a Dose of Arsenick or Sublimate, why 'tis a great and an envied Fate, he dies nobly and heroically. It is, Sir, with extream Reluctance that I have said all this. For I would not be thought to affront the Memory of Mr. *Dryden*, for whose extraordinary Qualities no Man has a greater Veneration than my self. But

that

that all Considerations ought to give Place to the Publick Good, is a Truth of which you, of all Men, I am sure, can never doubt.

And can you believe then, after having recommended Virtue and Publick Spirit for so many Years to the World, that you can give your Subalterns Authority to preach up Adultery to a Town, which stands so little in need of their Doctrine? Is not the Chastity of the Marriage Bed one of the chief Incendiaries of Publick Spirit, and the Frequency of Adulteries one of the chief Extinguishers of it; according to that of *Horace*

Fœcunda culpæ secula, nuptias
Primum inquinavere, & Genus, & Domos,
Hoc Fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit.

For when Adultery's become so frequent, especially among Persons of Condition, upon whose Sentiments all Publick Spirit chiefly depends, that a great many Husbands begin to believe, or perhaps but to suspect, that they who are called their Children are not their own; I appeal to you, Sir, if that Belief or that Suspicion must not exceedingly cool their Zeal for the Welfare of those Children, and consequently for the Welfare of Posterity.

As I had infinitely the Advantage of *All*

for

for Love in the Moral of *Coriolanus*, I had it by Consequence in the whole Tragedy; for the *Coriolanus*, as I have alter'd it, having a just Moral, and by Consequence at the Bottom a general and allegorical Action, and universal and allegorical Characters, and for that very reason a Fable, is therefore a true Tragedy, if it be not a just and a regular one; but 'tis as just and as regular as I could make it, upon so irregular a Plan as *Shakespear*'s: Whereas *All for Love* having no Moral, and consequently no general and allegorical Action, nor general and allegorical Characters, can for that Reason have no Fable, and therefore can be no Tragedy. 'Tis indeed only a particular Account of what happen'd formerly to *Anthony* and *Cleopatra*, and a most pernicious Amusement.

And as I had the Advantage in the Merit of *Coriolanus*, I had it likewise in the World's Opinion of the Merit and Reputation of *Shakespear* in Tragedy above that of Mr. *Dryden*. For let Mr. *Dryden*'s Genius for Tragedy be what it will, he has more than once publickly own'd, that it was much inferior to *Shakespear*'s, and particularly in those two remarkable Lines in his Prologue to *Aurenge-Zebe*.

And when he hears his Godlike Romans *rage,*
He in a just Despair would quit the Stage.

And

And in the Verses to Sir *Godfrey Kneller.*

Shakespear, *thy Gift, I place before my Sight;*
With Awe, I ask his Blessing ere I write;
With Reverence look on his majestick Face,
Proud to be less, but of his Godlike Race.

And the same Mr. *Dryden* has more than once declar'd to me, that there was something in this very Tragedy of *Coriolanus* as it was writ by *Shakespear*, that is truly great and truly *Roman*; and I more than once answer'd him, that it had always been my own Opinion. Now I appeal to you and your Managers, if it has lost any thing under my Hands.

But what is more considerable than all this, your Deputy Lieutenants for the Stage have ten times the Opinion of the Advantage which *Shakespear* has over Mr. *Dryden* in Tragedy, than either I or the rest of the World have. Ever since I was capable of reading *Shakespear*, I have always had and have always exprest that Veneration for him, which is justly his due; of which I believe no one can doubt, who has read the Essay which I publish'd some Years ago upon his Genius and Writings. But what they express upon all Occasions, is not Esteem, is not Admiration, but flat Idolatry.

And lastly, I had the Advantage of the very Opinion which those People had of their

their own Intereſt in the Caſe. They knew very well that it was but twelve Years ſince *All for Love* had been acted. And they were likewiſe ſatisfied, that from its firſt Run, as they call, to the beginning of this laſt Winter, it had never brought four Audiences together. At the ſame time there was no Occaſion to tell them, that the *Coriolanus* of *Shakeſpear* had not been acted in twenty Years, and that when it was brought upon the Stage twenty Years ago, it was acted twenty Nights together.

And now, Sir, I ſhall be oblig'd to you, if you will acquaint me, for what mighty and unknown Reaſon, the *Coriolanus*, notwithſtanding yours and their warm Approbation of it, notwithſtanding your Words ſolemnly given to act it, as ſoon as it could conveniently be brought upon the Stage this Winter, notwithſtanding the Merit of the Play itſelf, I ſpeak of *Shakeſpear*'s part of it, notwithſtanding the World's and their own Opinion of the ſuperior Merit of *Shakeſpear* to Mr. *Dryden* in Tragedy; and their very Opinion of their own Intereſt in the Caſe, nay notwithſtanding the exact Seaſonableneſs of the Moral for the Service of King *George* and of *Great Britain*, which above all things ought to have been conſider'd by thoſe who call themſelves the King's Servants, and who act under his Authority: I ſay, Sir, I ſhould be extremely oblig'd to

you,

you, if you would tell me what powerful Reason could so far prevail over all those I have mention'd, as to engage them to postpone the *Coriolanus*, not only for *All for Love*, but likewise for that lamentable Tragick Farce *Cæzar Borgia*, from which no Body expected any thing but themselves; and a Comedy after it call'd *the Masquerade*; from which they themselves declar'd they expected nothing.

March 26. 1719. *I am*, &c.

TO

TO

Mr. PENKETHMAN.

I Had certainly call'd upon thee at *Richmond* before now, if it had not been for the Easterly Winds, which made the coming by Water impracticable to one who is indispos'd, by reason of the cold attending them. But thou hast no reason to be concern'd at my Delay. For this is no time to write waggish Letters to his Grace. In the mean while I have thought of a Project for thee, which will certainly do thy Business. Thou shalt e'en turn Author, and write a Play. Thou wilt tell me perhaps that thou art not qualified. For that very Reason thou shalt write one, because for that very Reason thou wilt certainly succeed. But perhaps thou wilt tell me that thou shalt write a very damn'd Play indeed. A stronger Reason still for thy Writing. For the more damnable thy Play happens to be, the

the greater and more flaming will thy Succeſs be. And ſo, like a modern Author, or a modern Female Beggar, thou ſhalt ſupply thy own infinite Wants, by the infinite Wants of thy Offspring. But why art thou not qualified, Friend *Pinky*? There are now-a-days but three Qualifications requiſite for the ſucceeding upon the Stage. The firſt is the want of that ſame. For thou know'ſt the Belly is *Ingenii largitor.* The ſecond Qualification is, that as modern Criticks when they come to a new Play are never without a Cat-call, a modern Poet who writes ſuch a Play ſhould never be without a Fool-call. He muſt have the knack of jugging Fools into a Pit, as a Country Squire does Partridges into a Trammel. The third Qualification, and which is neceſſary for the inforcing the other two, is what they call a Stock, a very great Stock; not a Stock of Silver, nor yet of Gold, but of a Metal more powerful than either, and which commands them both. Now upon the Foot of theſe three Qualifications, who the Devil is half ſo well qualified for the writing a Comedy as thou art? Is it Proctor *John Little-wit*, or *Scribble Daſh* the Inns of *Chancery* Bard? Or the Czar's old Soldier? Friend *Pinky*, thou art never modeſt but in the wrong Place. Why none of theſe are worthy to carry thy Cloak after thee, and hardly worthy to

carry thy Friend *Tom* ———'s. For where as thou art a living breathing Comedy, they are a leash of dull Devils who are Tragedy all over. Their very Jests are deep Tragedy. They never endeavour to make us laugh but they move Terror and Compassion. Their very Offer at a Jest moves Terror, and 'tis no sooner out, but it moves Compassion. But as for thee, thou hast nothing to do but to write a long Part for thy self, and then, if thou hast no Jest in thy *Chit Chat*, thou wilt have a perpetual one in thy Person, and that will do thy Business.

I am,

March 14. 171[illegible],

Thy very Humble.

To RICHARD NORTON *of* Southwick, *Esq; sent to him by Mr.* BOOTH, *when the Players went last down to act at his House.*

SIR,

I take this Occasion of Mr. *Booth*'s going down to *Southwick* to acquaint you, that I have been several times to wait on you this Summer in *Bloomsbury*, with four Acts of *Appius* and *Virginia*, in Obedience to a Summons which I receiv'd from you by Colonel B——. And I would take this Opportunity to wait on you at *Southwick* instead of writing to you, if some Business of Consequence did not absolutely oblige me to be nearer the Town. But as soon as ever I have finish'd this Tragedy, *Appius* shall wait upon you in my stead. You, Sir, have been always one of those whom I have been proud to please. But it would give me a very particular Satisfaction, to find this Tragedy, which was written in the

Cauſe of Liberty, agreeable to one who has always ſhewn himſelf ſo good a Patriot and ſo great a Judge. I make no doubt, Sir, but that you do me the Juſtice to believe, that tho' Fortune denies me the Happineſs of going down to *Southwick*, my Heart and Soul will be there. If we had not a more than common Eſteem and Reſpect for you, we ſhould certainly envy you, for drawing down into the Country the nobleſt Diverſion of the Town. Nature has combin'd with Fortune to make you compleatly happy. You have it in your Power, and you have it in your Will, to ſet before your Eyes, ev'n in the midſt of Solitude, the moſt agreeable Converſation both of the Court and Town; and to join the reaſonable Delights of theſe, with the Sweets of your own charming Retirement. Thus you enjoy the Town in your Abſence from it, free from the Plagues that allay the Delights of it here. And thoſe Fools and Knaves, that are always in our way to perplex us, and diſturb us here, appear at *Southwick* only to give you Joy: While the Calamities of Courts, and the Follies and Villainies of great Towns ſet before you, recommend the Security, the Charms and the Innocence of ſo ſweet a Retreat the more to you. While moſt of the People of great Quality, and of great Eſtates, entertain their Neighbours and their Acquaintance either with unprofit-

able

able empty Amusements, or with pernicious Diversions, which drown their Understandings and debase their Souls; you please them with the noble Delights of Reason, such as, rightly made use of, will enlarge their Understandings, direct their Wills, and exalt their Minds. Good God! How must they blush who spend great Estates, or at least the Incomes of them, in turning Men into Beasts; while you with all the Oeconomy of Conduct have the Satisfaction of improving Beasts into Men! As all Men who are capable of thinking right, approve the Judgment of your Choice, so we who are passionate Friends to the Stage think it our Duty to return you Thanks for the timing it. For at the very time that several Persons, of the greatest Quality and the greatest Interest, have been endeavouring to banish the Drama from this Town and Island, and to introduce instead of it an effeminate Musick to emasculate the Minds of Men, to metamorphose the *British* Nation, and with Songs like those of the Syrens to change our very Kinds; you have generously made Choice of that very Time, to appear the great Encourager of the Dramatick Muses, and to afford them a Refuge, and a Retreat so charming, that while they are at *Southwick* they may not regret *Parnassus*. So generous a Pro-

ceeding has oblig'd all the hearty Friends to the Stage, and has added one more ſenſible Obligation to thoſe which you have been formerly pleas'd to confer upon,

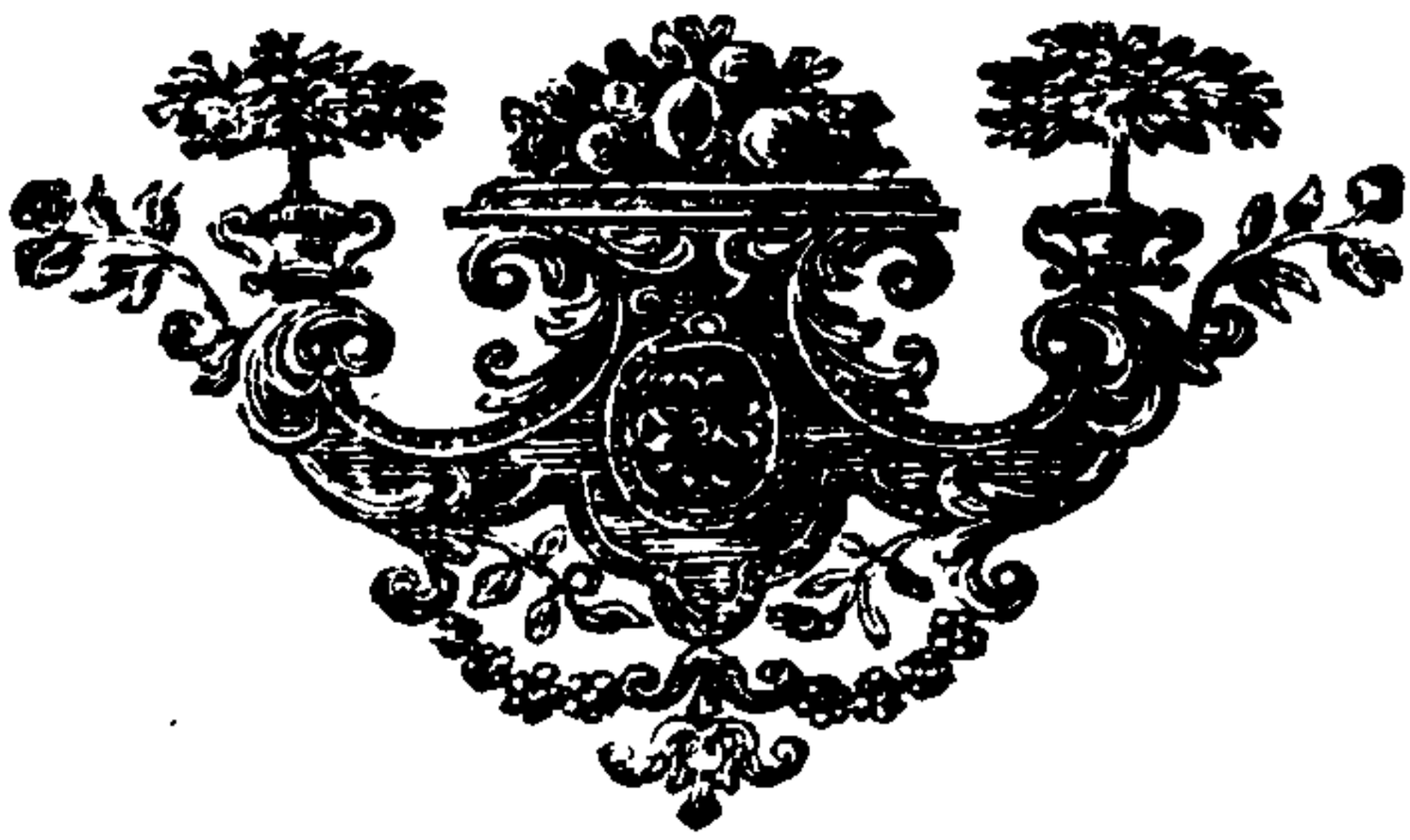
SIR,

Your moſt Humble and

London,
Aug. 10. 1708.

moſt Obedient Servant,

JOHN DENNIS.



TO

To the Right Honourable the Earl of GODOPHIN, *Lord High Treasurer of* GREAT BRITAIN.

Concerning the Proposal for the Security of Commerce.

My LORD,

I Have here the Honour to send Your Lordship the Abstract of that Proposal, which I laid before you about the middle of the last Sessions of Parliament. I did not think fit to remind Your Lordship of it before, because tho' you might have approv'd of it, it was then too late for the Parliament to go through it, and besides I had some Apprehension that that Parliament would not enter into it.

My Lord, at present I humbly conceive, with all imaginable Submission to your Lordship's Judgment, that the bringing this Proposal to Practice would be highly convenient, and perhaps necessary; absolute-

ly neceſſary, if the War is like to be of any long continuance, and highly convenient though it ſhould be like to have a ſpeedy end: Becauſe in this laſt Caſe, I humbly conceive that we ſhould have a better and more ſolid Peace than we ſhould have without it. For nothing, with Submiſſion to your Lordſhip's Judgment, would more alarm the *French* than the reducing this Propoſal to Practice. For ſince they have but two ways of ſucceeding in their Deſigns againſt theſe Nations, which are the Dividing us at Home, and the ruining our Commerce Abroad; they would loſe the very Hope of Succeſs, if they ſhould ſee themſelves prevented in both, to which the bringing this Propoſal to Practice would contribute not a little. I have been told by ſo many underſtanding People, that the general Inſurance, which is a part of this Propoſal, would bring in ſuch conſiderable Sums into the *Exchequer* as would make it equivalent to almoſt any other Tax, that I can hardly doubt of it. My Lord, I humbly conceive that it would have ſome Advantages above all other Taxes. For as far as I am able to make a Judgment upon a four Years ſcrutiny, 'tis a Tax that is very much deſir'd even after ſo long a War, and which is remarkable, it is moſt earneſtly deſir'd by thoſe who are to pay the Money, becauſe by this Tax ſomething would be done for them preferably to the

reſt

the reſt of the People, which cannot be ſaid of any other Tax; and whereas perhaps by all other Taxes both Trade and the ordinary conſtant Revenue are conſiderably diminiſh'd, they would not only be both improv'd and augmented by this, but the national Stock encreas'd, and the whole Confederacy ſtrengthned and bound indiſſolubly. I ſhall have the Honour of waiting on your Lordſhip ſuddenly to know your Pleaſure in this Affair. If your Lordſhip encourages me to lay this Propoſal before the Houſe of Commons, I ſhall prepare an Appendix, by which I believe I can ſatisfie that Honourable Houſe, that the Advantages mention'd both in the Propoſal at large, and in the Abſtract, will really accrue to us from putting that Deſign in Practice.

I am,

June 10. 1706. *My* LORD,

Your Lordſhip's, &c.

TO

TO

Mr. GEORGE SEWEL,

On the Preface to a Comedy call'd the MASQUERADE.

SIR,

I Have lately read over the Preface to a certain comical Rhapsody, with an odd mixture of Laughter and Indignation, upon which I shall here send you some Remarks that were made in a cursory manner. He pretends to turn your own Canon upon you, but he has done it to so fine a purpose that it has recoil'd with violence upon himself, and quite demolish'd the paltry Works he has rais'd. For what confounded Sot will read any thing of an Author who is capable of writing such a Preface? Mr. *Dryden* tells us in his Preface to the *Medal*, that upon his writing *Absalom* and *Achitophel*, he met with just such Adversaries. What Reflections he makes upon that notable way of proceeding, you will find in the

foresaid

foresaid Preface. But to return to that of our Author.

He has very little Inclination, he says, to write Prefaces; because, I suppose, 'tis not so easie to steal Prefaces as Plays. However, as difficult as 'tis, he has brought it about. He has boldly seiz'd upon yours, and boasts of it as Plunder instead of Theft.

He neither commends nor defends the Play; which would be to waste his Breath, in commending *Shirly* and *Taverner*: But he spends his borrow'd Preface in commending the Actors, who vouchsaf'd to be the Receivers and Venders of his stolen Goods. His *Masquerade*, he says, owes all his Success to them. And here the Panegyrick which others bestow upon some one substantial Patron, he is for retailing among a Company of Actors, which he distributes among them at so surprising a rate, that not a Mortal of them can pretend to any Share of it. For first, the Success of this Play is owing to the just Performance of the Players in general; then 'tis particularly owing to the Grace, which, with her usual Excellence, Mrs. *Oldfield* gave to her Part. Indeed no one who has had the Happiness to know Mrs. *Oldfield*, can in the least doubt of her being qualified whenever she pleases to give extraordinary Pleasure by her Parts. But now to shew that Fools as well as Children are for Boys Play,

this

this Person the very next Moment resumes the Commendation which he so very generously granted to the Company in general, and so very justly to Mrs. *Oldfield* in particular; and to shew his old Inclination to Arbitrary Power, pretends to make a fresh Grant of it for the sole use of Master *Robert Wilks*. *The Success of this Comedy*, says he, *is owing entirely to Master* Robert. Well! I have read many a grossfulsome, flattering Fool, but I never read any one before, who was Fool enough to own, that he flatter'd grossly and fulsomly. For when he tells Mr. *Robert Wilks*, that the Success of the Play is entirely due to him, and in the same Breath tells the whole Company 'tis due to them, and in the same Breath tells Mrs. *Oldfield* that 'tis very particularly due to her; what does he do but laugh in Master *Robert*'s Face, and tell him, that he takes him for the errantest Baby that ever was bit at Bob-cherry. But now to shew that this Fellow is more Fool than Knave, and that he does not flatter on this Occasion so much as he thinks he does, and owns that he does, I will venture to bring him off a little; nay I will venture to shew, that when he says the Success of the Play is entirely due to Mr. *Robert Wilks*, he does not flatter at all. For I have heard a grave Bird sing, that if it had not been for him alone, the *Masquerade* had never been

een acted, the reſt of the Managers having he laſt Contempt for it. Some of the layers told a Gentleman of my Acquain-nce, that the Cauſe of this Author's being Maſter *Robert*'s Favourite, is, becauſe he oes carry himſelf like a true Poet to him, ho' not to the reſt of the World. For in rder to pleaſe Maſter *Robert* and entire-y to gain his Affections, he does not fail om time to time to entertain him with ertain quaint Inventions, with certain in-enious Fictions; while Maſter *Robert*, ke other Auditors and Spectators, being illing to be deceiv'd in order to be perfect-y pleas'd, ſuppoſes all this to be true. They dded, that Maſter *Robert* was ſo exceed-ngly delighted with Entertainments of this ature, that the other Managers paid for is Pleaſure of this kind very dearly; it tanding them in, at leaſt, five hundred Pounds a Year. I ſhall tell you things when ſee you which are not fit to be writ.

I am,

Hampſtead,
March 10. 171;.

Your, &c.

TO

TO

THO. SERGEANT, *Esq;*

SIR,

I Remember very well, that before I went out of Town in *June* last, I promis'd in a short time to give you some Account of the late ——————. I make no doubt but that you have long before this time accus'd me of Breach of Promise. But if you did but know what charming Places I have been in, since I saw you last; and what damnable Company, for the most part, I have kept in them; how my Life has been chequer'd between Rapture and Chagrin, and consequently unable to turn it self to Business; did you but know this, I am confident you would not blame me. Besides, I consider'd that Authors as well as Pettifoggers ought to have long Vacation, and that it was but reasonable that the World should once a Year enjoy an Interval from being plagu'd with either; that it was highly expedient, that Minds sometimes should lye

fallow

fallow as well as Fields, as well as those Human Bodies which they inform; that they who are too often in the Act of Generation, produce but weak and puny Offsprings, and peradventure none; and that the Scriblers and common Whores of that vile Town seldom beget any thing, unless something by Chance, that, like a *Dutch Sooterkin*, is at once frightful and contemptible, as all Monsters are. Besides, I thought it a Duty to my self, to recruit those Spirits, by a pleasing Indolence, which a long Misfortune had almost exhausted. And if at any time, in spight of these reasonable Reflections, I resolv'd to set heartily about the Performance of my Promise, I immediately started at the Thought of what I was about to undertake. For to make Remarks upon this —— (Death and Hell!) a Man must read it. And who that has Quails and *Burgundy* before him, would leave them for *Porter* and Ram Mutton? Besides, the Faults in it are so frequent and so gross, that every Fool may find them; and a Man cannot value himself, or expect that the reasonable Part of the World should value him for his Sagacity or Penetration, on the account of exposing them. I flatter my self, that you who have had a fourteen Years Experience of my Sincerity, will believe that I speak my Sentiments; at least I can assure you, that

that I have taken all imaginable Care, and have kept the moſt watchful Guard upon my ſelf, that I might neither endeavour to deceive you thro' Malice, nor be my ſelf deceiv'd thro' Prejudice. But ſince perhaps you, or ſomebody to whom you may ſhew this Letter, may be of another Opinion, I ſhall ſend you in a Day or two ſome Obſervations upon the firſt; which little may be enough to ſhew all the Beaſt. For a Lyon is not better deſcry'd by his Claw, than an Aſs is known by his Ear.

I am,

Hanworth,
Sept. 20. 1716.

SIR,

Your, &c.

TO

TO

THO. SERGEANT, *Esq;*

SIR,

Wrote to you about a Week ago, and design'd to write again by the next Post. ut that Raskal *Appius* has lately taken o so much of my Time, that he will not ffer me to be in good Humour enough entertain my Friends. Besides, the very ouse where I am is sanctified to that de-ee, that 'tis a mortal Enemy to Gayety; nctified to the very Names of the Persons ho inhabit it. The Name of the elder on is *Aminadab*, of the younger *Amos*; of e elder Daughter *Jemina*, of the second *ezia*, and of the youngest *Keren-Hap-uch*, which you know are the Names of e three Daughters of the most patient an. And you may take it on my word, at Master *Aminadab* and Madam *Keren-Happuch* are two very extraordinary Per-ons.

In this House, you must know, Sir, is old Fanatical Pettifogger, who has lately

married a young Wife. There being not Room enough to receive her here, ſhe lives at preſent with her Father, in a Village about ſeven Miles off. And the old Pettifogger ambles to her in his Gambadoes once a Week to pay his natural Tax: And then litterally returns to ſee his Uncle who is the Maſter of the Houſe where we lodge. It happen'd about a Month ago that ſome Buſineſs obſtructed his Journey; but having procured a Barrel of Oyſters, he ordered them with a Letter to be ſent in his ſtead. The Letter was delivered to a Market-Man, who came from the Village; and he was ordered to go to the Stable, and to take a Sack which he ſhould find there, (in which the Oyſters it ſeems were wrapt) which he was order'd to deliver to Spouſe, with the Letter. In the mean while, as the Devil would have it, another Countryman had laid another Sack there, which the former Country-man, who knew nothing of the Freight, took inſtead of that with the Oyſters, carried it to the Village, and delivered it to Spouſe with the Letter, which was to this Effect.

My Dear,

BUſineſs will not permit me to be happy in your Embraces To-night. But I intend to be with you on Monday. *In the mean time I have ſent you ſomething to ſup-*

ply

ply my Place, with which I hope you will enjoy your ſelf in my Abſence.

Your, &c.

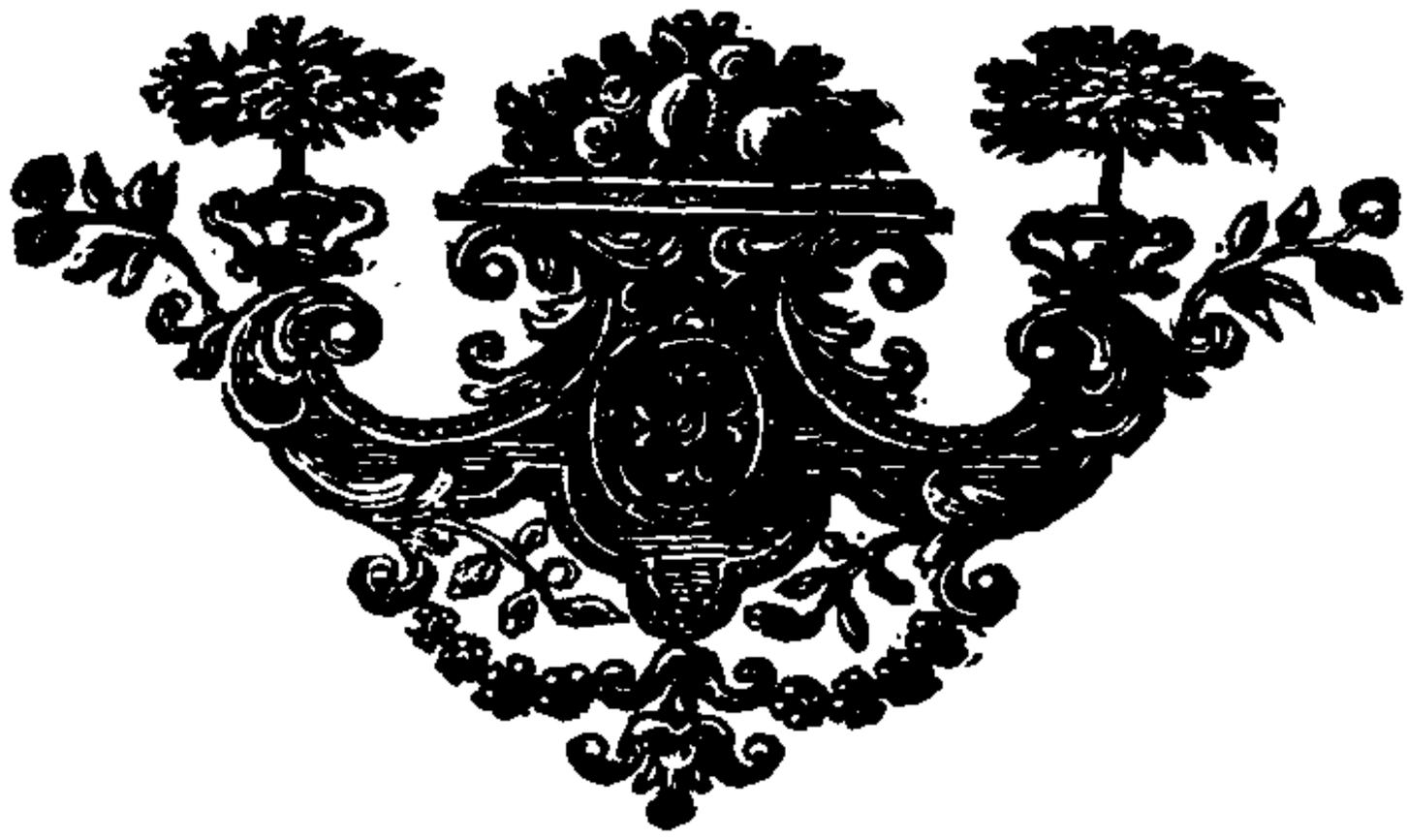
Spouſe was very well pleas'd with the Letter, orders the Sack to be immediately open'd, and greedily pulls out of it —— Half a dozen Bunches of Carrots. And ſo you have the Piece of rural Waggery, which I promis'd you in my laſt.

I am,

Newport,
Oct. 8. 1707.

SIR,

Your, &c.



To Mr. * * *

My good Friend,

I *Who in Town was great as* Cæſar,
Am here reduc'd to Nebuchadnezzar.

That is, I have been for theſe three Weeks at Graſs with meer white Cattle, and have not ſo much as ſeen three reaſonable Creatures, ſince I left the neighbourhood of *Whitehall.* When I arriv'd at this Place, I had the Mortification to find that of my two Landlords in whoſe Houſes I had here formerly paſs'd ſo many delicious Hours, the one was gone to live at *Epſom*, and the other was run quite away. Upon enquiry, I found that there were but two Houſes to lodge at, a common boarding Houſe, or my Barber's. I conſider'd that by going to the common boarding Houſe, I ſhould give up a good part of my Liberty, which is the principal Thing that makes the Country ſo charming. For there might be Women at that Houſe, or they might come the very Day after me, who, tho' old and ugly, might expect as much Cere-

mony

mony as if they were young and beautiful. Now that Ceremony which passes hourly among some People, is founded, like Law, on a mutual Agreement between them, to give up part of their natural Liberty for the Benefit of Society. But tho' there is a sort of Necessity for an Observance of Forms and Ceremonies in great and Capital Towns; yet when a Man retires into the Country, he is desirous to be, for a while at least, like the Woods and Hills which he ranges, in the State of Nature. I must confess that even in great Towns I have always had a very indifferent Opinion of a great deal of Ceremony, and have been always apt to believe, that as *ubi plurimæ leges pessimæ respublica*, so where there is the most Ceremony, there is always the worst Society. Another Reason which inclin'd me to the Barber's, was a Desire to know the Nature of this Place. For tho' I have been ten times here, yet as my former Lodgings had the finest Meadows and Streams in the World behind them, I scarce ever came into the Village, so that till this last Arrival, I knew nothing of the People of *Cobham*; of whom in my next I shall give you some Account.

Cobham,
July 24. 1717.

I am Yours.

TO

Dr. * * * at *Shrewsbury.*

Of Ecclesiastical Quacks.

SIR,

I Return you Thanks for your agreeable Relation of the Progress of the Itinerant Doctor, who travels, it seems, like one of those foolish Fires, which lead People into Bogs and Ditches, whose Misfortune it is to come in the way of their false and delusive Light. Upon the Receipt of your entertaining Letter, I made the following Queries to some of his gross Admirers.

Whether some People who practice Divinity, tho' they are called Doctors, are not really Quacks; and whether Mountebanks Ecclesiastical as well as Secular, are not distinguish'd from true Professors by the following Marks.

First, Whether the true Physician both of Soul and Body is distinguish'd from the Mountebank, not by wearing an Academical

ical Bonnet, but by Wisdom, Learning, nd a long Experience in the Art of Healng; and whether he who thro' want of hese continually mistakes the Distemper of is Patient, and by Consequence administers Poison to him, prescribes Opiates in Lethargy or Brandy in a Calenture, is not ridiculous contemptible Empirick, tho' e has been dubb'd both Batchelor and Door at *Oxford*?

Secondly, Whether the true Physician oth of Soul and Body does not consult the ase, and design the Health of the whole ody politick and the whole Body natural, which 'tis his Fortune or Duty to administer? Whereas the Quack of both kinds ver fails like the Tinker to make two oles, while he is emploied in mending of e. For Example, the true Physician, of e Body natural, purges and cleanses the hole Mass of Blood in order to the healg an Ulcer in the *Pudenda*; whereas the mpirick, by giving a sudden Check to it, rows it up into the nobler Parts: And e Spiritual Physician of the Body Polick, is for saving every Soul of that Body which he happens to be a Member; hereas the Ecclesiastical Empirick, as if were the first Plenipo of Heav'n, is for ving some and damning others with an solute Power.

Thirdly, Whether the true Physician does not keep his Station, and confine his Practice to his Neighbourhood; whereas Folly and Imposture, by remaining constantly with the same People, would suffer too much thro' too long an Inspection. And therefore the Mountebank finds his Account better in being Itinerant. And when he has cheated the Fools of one Majoralty both of their Health and their Money, seeks for fresh Cullies and fresh Idiots in a new Corporation.

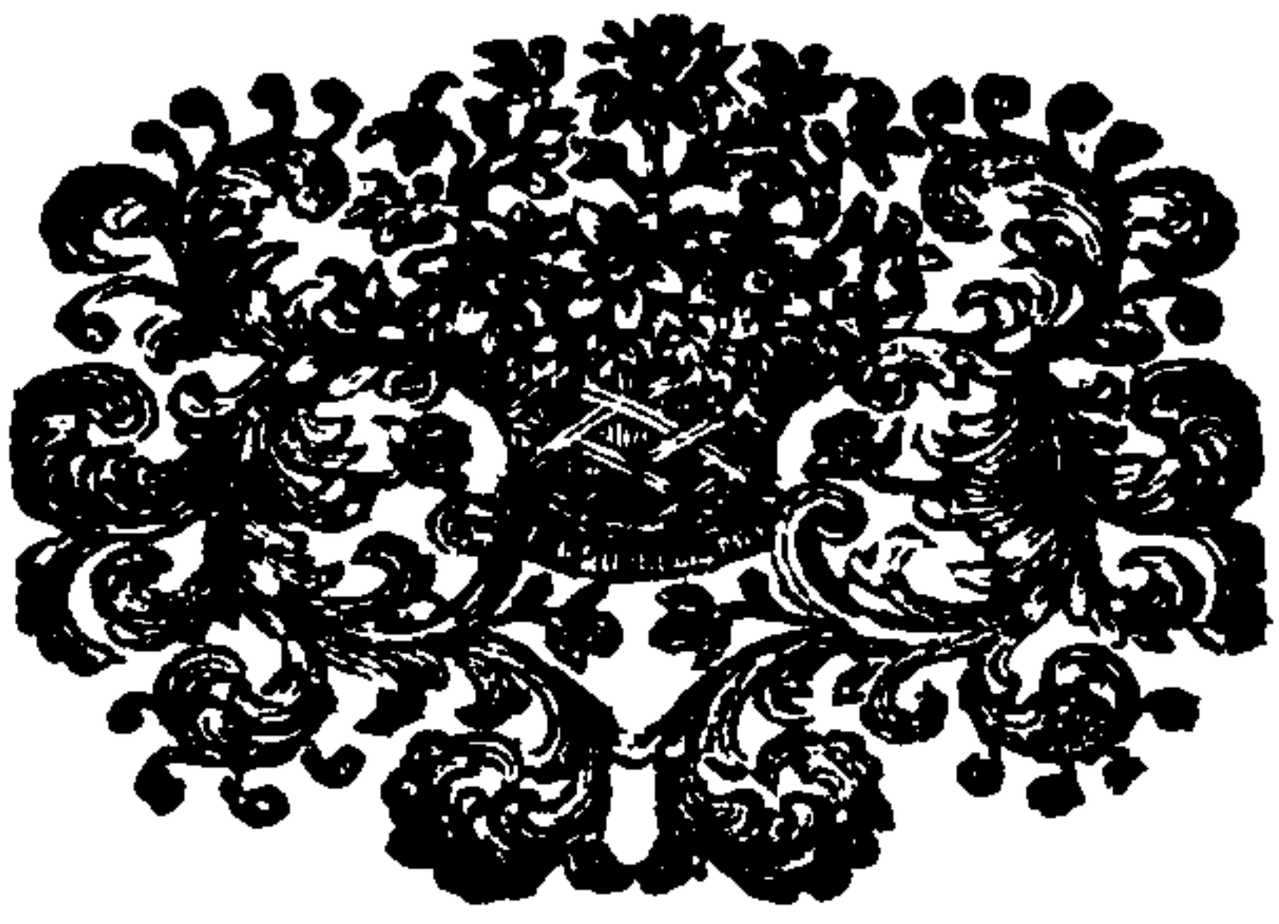
Fourthly, Whether the true and the sound Physician is not satisfied with the Approbation of his own Conscience, and of those who have common Sense? whereas the Mountebank makes it his Business to be the Idol of the Rabble, and therefore has much more numerous Aplauders than the true Physician. For Rabble is a most comprehensive Word, Doctor, and includes not only pitiful poor Mechanicks, and wretched Rogues in Rags, but many, nay very many Persons, who are distinguish'd by Fortune and dignified by Princes. This comprehensive Word, Doctor, includes all who want Understanding and Virtue. And so for Example the Rabble round the *Wrekin* includes not only the Butchers, the Tinkers, the Weavers and the Tailors of the adjacent Towns and Counties, but often likewise, too often, the Mayor, the

Sheriff

Sheriff, the Alderman and the Doctor, I mean the Mountebank both Spiritual and Secular; for every one who seeks the Applause of Rabble is himself most certainly Rabble; but how Emphatically, Doctor, are they Rabble, who are the Admirers and the Applauders of Rabble!

Thus has your Letter drawn Queries from me instead of an Answer; which I hope you will look upon as an Equivalent, and read with Candor and with Indulgence, as coming from

Your, &c.



TO

TO

HENRY CROMWELL, *Esq;*

Of an Expression in Shakespear; *and of the Comedy of the* Nonjuror.

SIR,

I Wrote to you this Morning for your more deliberate Opinion concerning the Passage of *Phædrus*. I now send this to you to consult you about an Expression in the *Othello* of *Shakespear*, which not long ago occasioned a great Dispute at —— Coffee-House, between the Wits there and the Manager of the Play-House who acts the Part of *Othello*. The Wits asked the Player how he lik'd this Expression in his own Part, *Excellent Wretch!* to which the latter answer'd, that he lik'd it so ill, that he always left it out. Upon which they immediately extoll'd it to the Skies, and look'd upon the Player with great Contempt. 'Tho' that Tragedian has no more Judgment in Tragedy than an Ass has in Musick, I am apt to believe that he was this

this once in the right. I know indeed very well, that *miser* and *miſellus* were ſometimes among the *Romans* Terms of Tenderneſs. I find that *miſer* is in that Senſe in the Eunuch of *Terence*, Act the third Scene the laſt, where *Chærea* gives *Antipho* an Account of his enjoying *Pamphila.*

Ch. *Edicit, ne vir quiſquam ad eam adeat;*
et mihi ne abſcedam, imperat,
In interiore parte at maneam ſolus cum
ſolâ. Adnuo,
Terram intuens modeſte. An. Miſer!

Which Madam *Dacier* has tranſlated *pauvre Garçon!* But are there not two ſorts of Tenderneſs, a Comick and a Tragick Tenderneſs? Now tho' *miſer* was ſometimes us'd by the *Romans*, to expreſs both the one and the other Tenderneſs, yet, in my Opinion, it can never be tranſlated into *Engliſh* by the Word *Wretch* in any but the Comick way; *Wretch* in a ſerious Senſe being always, if I am not miſtaken, a Term of Reproach or Contempt: And conſequently the Terms *Excellent Wretch*, being inconſiſtent and contradictory, make the meaning abſurd, and the Expreſſion Nonſenſe. This is my Opinion at preſent, but I know not how long it will be ſo, becauſe I have not as yet heard yours.

But that is not the only Point in which I deſire it. I am told lately by one of my Acquain-

Acquaintance, that I have been too severe upon the Understanding of another of the Managers, and that is of *Cibber*. And the Reason that was given me was, that *Cibber* writ *the Fool in Fashion*, which, says my Friend, you have often said is a good Comedy. To which I answer, that 'tis true, I have often said 'tis a good Comedy, but I had always much ado to believe that *Cibber* writ it, and that since I have seen the *Nonjuror* and the *Heroick Daughter* I do not believe it at all. For which I shall give my Reasons, and afterwards desire to know from you how convincing they appear to you.

When *the Fool in Fashion* was first acted, *Cibber* was hardly twenty Years of Age. Now could he at the Age of twenty write a Comedy with a just Design, distinguished Characters, and a proper Dialogue, who now at forty treats us with *Hibernian* Sense and *Hibernian English*? Could he, when he was an arrant Boy, draw a good Comedy, from his own raw uncultivated Head, who is now at forty able to do nothing but what is poor and mean, when he is supported by two such Masters as *Moliere* and *Corneille*?

I have often observ'd to you, that there is not in his *Heroick Daughter* one Spark of the Force and noble Spirit of *Corneille*. As for *Moliere*, I am satisfied that he knows

nothing

nothing of him, but that he built his *Non-juror* upon some spiritless dull Translation of him. When I heard that a Play with that Title was to be acted, I wish'd it as much Success as *Cibber* did, upon account of the Cause in which it was writ. But I refus'd to see it acted, because knowing *Moliere*'s Play to be a Master-piece, I was afraid I should be ask'd some Questions by my Friends which I should not care to answer. I heard an advantagious Character of it, from some with whom I conversed, and what I heard I imparted to others, but as coming from my Friends and not from my self. After the Play was printed, I wou'd not read it till it had been publish'd a Month, during which time I was ask'd a hundred Questions about it. When I saw that the Curiosity of the World was pretty well over, I sent for the Play and read it. Upon the reading it, I was soon confirm'd in some of my former Thoughts, that Persons of a very good Understanding might be impos'd upon at a Representation by the Livelinesſ and Grace of Action, and that the Excellence of the Actor often makes amends for the Imperfections of the Author. I soon found that there was little in the *English* Comedy of the Beauties of *Moliere*. For *Moliere*'s Characters in his *Tartuffe* are Master-pieces, mark'd, distinguish'd, glowing, bold, touch'd with a fine

yet

yet a daring Hand; all of them ſtamp'd with a double Stamp, the one from Art and the other from Nature: No Phantoms but real Perſons, ſuch as Nature produces in all Ages, and Cuſtom faſhions in ours. His Dialogue too is lively, natural, graceful, eaſie, ſtrong, adapted to the Occaſion, adapted to the Characters. In ſhort, 'tis by this Comedy and by the *Miſantrope* that *Moliere* perhaps has born away the Prize of Comedy from all Perſons in all Ages, except *Ben. Johnſon* alone. But the Characters of the *Engliſh* Comedy are moſt of them daub'd and bungled, and the Dialogue nothing but meer Fribble. Now is it barely poſſible that this bungling Imitator can be the Author of *the Fool in Faſhion?* Is it barely poſſible that he ſhould have known Mankind and the Stage, and the *Engliſh* Tongue when he was an errant Boy, who is groſsly ignorant of them all at forty? But *Cibber*'s Name is prefix'd to *the Fool in Faſhion.* They know nothing of Mr. *Cibber*, who in the leaſt wonder at that. He who, now he is turn'd of Forty, ſets his Name, without any manner of Scruple or Ceremony, to what all the World knows was writ by *Fletcher* and *Dryden*, could not his Vanity, when he was a Boy, prevail upon him to own what an unknown tho' a very ingenious Gentleman writ? Thus have I given you my Reaſons, why I can-

not

not believe that *The Fool in Fashion* was writ by Mr. *Cibber*. But I desire to know, as I told you above, how convincing these Reasons appear to you.

I am,

June 14. 1720.

SIR,

Your, &c.

TO

TO

Mr. * * *

SIR,

YOU desire me to send you some Arguments to convert your Neighbour from *Jacobitism*, who, you say, is a Man of good Sense and a good Christian, and good Protestant. I have sent you the following Queries to present to him, and am of the Opinion, that if he is what you say, they may have some Influence on him.

I. Whether 'tis possible that the Pretender should be settled here, without the Subversion of our present Constitution, and the Establishment of Absolute Power.

II. Whether the Establishment of Absolute Power under a Popish Prince, will not extirpate the Protestant Religion from *Great Britain* and *Ireland.*

III. Whether the Extirpation of the Protestant Religion from these Islands, will not in all Human Appearance be follow'd by the utter Destruction of it throughout the Christian World.

IV. Whe-

IV. Whether the Destruction of the Pro-
estant Religion throughout the Christian
World, will not in all human Appearance
e followed by the utter Destruction of
Christianity it self.

V. Whether, since these Things are
asily prov'd, as I my self will undertake to
rove any of the foresaid Consequences,
ne who professes himself a Christian and
Protestant, can have the Heart to wish
r Conscience to promote a Design which
ill be the Ruin of that Religion, on which
e believes that all his Happiness depends.

ept. 1711. *I am,* &c.

L TO

TO

The Reverend Mr. MANSELL.

SIR,

THE last of *July* I had the Honour to return an Answer to your most obliging and ingenious Letter. I have since had the Curiosity to enquire after the Priests whom you mention, but have been able to get no Intelligence; from which I conclude, that the Priests whom you mention must be two or three scandalous *Jacobite* Curates in your Neighbourhood. But whatever Ill they may say of me, I will presume that they do not call me Fool, which implies all other Infamies. For as *Rochefoucault* says, a Fool has not Stuff enough to be good. I will presume they do not say of me, that every Word, that every Action of my Life is a Contradiction to common Honesty, and to common Sense; that tho' I am most sordidly interested and most ridiculously proud, I am endeavouring with Might and Main to make my self most miserable and most despicable; that I am labouring with all my Might and with all my Strength to bring in a Tyrant in order

order to ſecure Liberty, and the Pope to ſecure Religion and my ſpiritual Property; that I deſire and endeavour nothing ſo vehemently, as to bring my Wife and Children to Infamy and Beggary, and to make of my ſelf either a vile Vagabond or an execrable Apoſtate; and that I have been all along labouring at this ſo ſtrenuouſly, that I have made my ſelf a moſt perjur'd Villain in order to bring it about, and ſcandalous enough to bring freſh Diſgrace upon a Pillory or the Whipping-poſt.

Theſe, Sir, are things which I preſume they do not ſay of me, becauſe theſe are Encomiums which are only worthy of them, and which they have made upon themſelves by their Actions. But becauſe what they do ſay of me, they have in all Likelyhood from that Monſter *J——S——*, I deſire that in my next you will give me Leave, Sir, to ſay a Word concerning that Wretch, to ſhew you how I reſented the Prank which he would have plaid me in *Northamptonſhire*. I took the Will for the Deed, and moſt religiouſly obſerved the Law of Retaliation with him, upon the very firſt Opportunity.

London,
Aug. 14. 1717.

I am, &c.

To the Right Honourable the Lord PARKER, *Lord High Chancellor of* GREAT BRITAIN.

My LORD,

AT a Time when ſo many Perſons are ſhewing, by the Preſents they make your Lordſhip, the Veneration which they have for your great Qualities, and their Acknowledgments for the Benefits which they receive from them, I humbly deſire your Lordſhip to accept of the two Volumes which I here preſent to you, which are no ſmall part of the Labours of thirty Years in the Cauſe of Liberty and of *Great Britain*. In preſenting them to your Lordſhip, I have the Satisfaction of offering them to a juſt and clear-ſighted Judge of Art, as a diſcerning and righteous one of Equity. May your Lordſhip's Glory and Happineſs encreaſe as your Years are multiplied,

tiplied, that the Glory and Happinefs of *Great Britain* may be proportionably augmented with them.

I am,

an. 1. 1719. *My* LORD,

Your Lordfhip's, &c.

TO

J. CHARLTON, *Esq;*

SIR,

THE Honour which I formerly had of being personally known to you, (tho' but a little) gives me Encouragement at this time of *New Year's Gifts*, to make you a trifling Present of the Books which you will receive with this; which are no small Part of the Labour of thirty Years in the Cause of Liberty and of your Country. If I should tell you that I send them without any Design, I am sure, Sir, would not believe me. I will therefore freely own that I have a Design, but 'tis a just and innocent one; which will put you to no Expence, and but to a very little Trouble. I shall beg Pardon for the Trouble, when I acquaint you with the Design, which will be in a few Days. In the mean time, Sir, Inclination as well as Custom engages me to wish so good and so great a Patriot a long and a happy Life. 'Tis the Interest of all the Lovers of their Country, that such a

you

you ſhould long be ſerviceable to it; and in wiſhing for the Happineſs of thoſe few who reſemble you, they certainly wiſh for their own.

I am,

Jan. 2. 1718. *SIR,*

Your, &c.

Written in the Name and at the Request of WILL. PENKETHMAN, *the Comedian, to her Grace the Dutchess of* ——

THE *Humourous Lieutenant* being shortly oblig'd to tread the Stage for the Benefit of your Grace's most humble Servant; to whom ought I sooner to have Recourse to encourage it, than to your Grace, who, upon my last Benefit, made such an Appearance for me, as shew'd your Power to be great as your Goodness or as my Acknowledgments? And I make this humble Request to your Grace with the less Despondence of obtaining it, because am assur'd from your noble Nature, that am far from offending you, in giving you an Occasion to exert your Beneficence. My Success depends in so great a measure upon your Grace's Favour, that without it, *the Humourous Lieutenant* is like to be a sad Fellow; and the Rural Theatre in your Grace's Neighbourhood, is like

like to give a melancholy Lesson to Mortals of the Instability of Humane Affairs, and the short Duration of the Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World. For that very Fabrick which was metamorphos'd from its original Form, and adorn'd for the Entertainment of Nobility, Wit and Beauty, will relapse and dwindle into a Barn, and fodder Cows and Horses.

That your Grace may be always both here and hereafter compleatly happy as those blest Beings, whom you resemble and whose Examples you imitate, is the constant Wish and the zealous Prayer, whenever I do happen to pray, of,

Madam,

Your Grace's Most Humble, and

April 3. 1719. *most Oblig'd, Obedient Servant,*

W. P.

TO

TO

Sir RICHARD BLACKMORE,

On Two Verses in VIRGIL.

SIR,

I Desir'd in my last that you wou'd be Arbitrator in a Dispute, which I lately had with Mr. *Rowe* concerning some Verses of *Virgil.* The Passage is in the 3d Eclogue.

Malo me Galatea petit lasciva puella,
Et fugit ad salices, & se cupit antè videri.

Now, Sir, Mr. *Rowe* affirm'd that the Nymph in acting and the Shepherd in relating, meant nothing but Boys and Girls Play. My Opinion is, that such an Interpretation renders the Passage wholly flat and insipid, and fit to please none but Children; that the Nymph by throwing the Apple, and then running away to the Willows, but at the same time taking care that the Shep-

Shepherd ſhould ſee her before ſhe got to them, deſign'd Mans and Womans Play. Now, Sir, you are left to judge which of the Explications is moſt worthy of *Virgil*, and which comes neareſt up to that *Molle* and that *Facetum* which at that time of Day compos'd the Character of *Virgil*, if we will take the Opinion of a very judicious Critick, and that was his Friend *Horace*;

Molle atque Facetum
Virgilio annuerint gaudentes Rure Camænæ.

For where is the *Molle* and the *Facetum* in theſe Verſes, if the Nymph and the Shepherd, like Boys and Girls, were only at hide and ſeek? I could as ſoon believe that when *Silenus* in the Sixth Eclogue ſays, ſpeaking of *Ægle*, *Huic aliud mercedis erit*, he only intended to preſent her with a Pair of Gloves. I know indeed very well, that *Ruæus* interprets *Laſciva* by *Jocoſa Puella*. But it ought to be conſider'd, that *Ruæus* was a Prieſt and that the Dauphin was young, and that it was the Buſineſs and Duty of the Jeſuit to conceal from his young Pupil the Lubricity of the Poet's meaning. Nor is *Laſciva* us'd upon this occaſion, tho' 'tis taken in the common Senſe ſo very different from *Jocoſa Puella*, if we conſider that *Homer*, whenever he has occaſion to mention *Venus*, calls her the Laughter-

loving

loving Goddeſs. Beſides, my Antagoniſt does not ſeem enough to conſider either the Nature of Women in general, or of the *Italian* Women in particular, or of the Seaſon when this was ſuppos'd to happen, which was High Spring, (which is the Seaſon of High Deſire) as *Palæmon* gives us to underſtand a little before this Paſſage in three Verſes, the two laſt of which are beautiful as their Subject.

Dicite; quandoquidem in molli conſedimus herbâ.
Et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos:
Nunc frondent Sylvæ, nunc formoſiſſimus annus.

Now when we conſider all theſe Things, can we believe that *Virgil*, who was ſo judicious, ſo wiſe, and who follow'd Nature ſo cloſely, meant nothing but *Hide and Seek* by his *ſe cupit antè videri.* That which makes this one of the beautifulleſt Paſſages of all the Eclogues, is, that there is a very wanton Meaning expreſs'd in very modeſt Words, and conſequently occaſion given to the Reader to ſhew his Diſcernment by piercing the Veil which the Poet has thrown over the Nudity; which puts me in mind of a fine Paſſage of *Montaigne. Eſſay Lib.* 3. *Ch.* 5.

The

The Verses of these two Poets (meaning *Lucretius* and *Virgil*) *treating with so much Discretion and so much Reservedness of Lasciviousness, as they treat of it, do, as it were, discover more of it, and shew it in a better and nearer Light. Our Ladies cover their Breasts with a Veil, as our Priests do their sacred Things, and Painters shadow their finest Draughts in order to give them Lustre. They say, likewise, that the Rays of the Sun and the Strokes of the Mind are more forcible by Reflection than when they come directly. It was a wise Answer of the* Ægyptian *to him who ask'd him,* What doest thou carry concealed there under thy Cloak? I carry it conceal'd thus under my Cloak, because thou shouldst not know what it is. *But there are certain other things that are concealed only on purpose to be shewn.* Ovid *is a great deal more bold, but therefore a great deal weaker than the other two. And when he says plainly*

Et nudam pressi corpus adusque meum.

Methinks he makes an errant Capon of me, by his barefaced Lewdness. He who says all satiates and disgusts us; whereas he who expresses himself with Reserve and Caution, draws us in to imagine more, ev'n than he could have express'd. There is, as it were,

were, Treachery in this kind of Modesty, since it slyly opens so inviting a Path to a wanton Imagination.

Thus far *Montaigne*. When he speaks of the Modesty of *Lucretius*, he means, I suppose, that Modesty which he shews in his Invocation, where indeed in very modest Terms he treats of a very wanton Subject.

I could say more upon this Subject, but I am afraid that I have already tired you as well as my self.

Feb. 6. 171½. *I am*, &c.

TO

TO

WALTER MOYLE, *Esq;*

At Bake *near* Loo *in* Cornwall.

SIR,

TWenty tedious Years have now been past, since I had the Honour either to see you, or hear from you, or write to you. Tho' I had many a time done the latter, if you had not prevented it by your unkind Prohibition, when, the last time I saw you, you declared among a great number of your Friends, that you would keep Correspondendence with no one. But tho', by reason of that unkind Declaration, we have a long time reckoned you dead and buried to the World and us, yet we have been far from forgetting you, so very far from it, that we have had the more lively Remembrance of you, because we have seen no body since you left us, who, by resembling you, could put us in mind of you.

Which

Which recalls to my mind something that past at the Funeral Ceremonies of a great Lady in the Time of *Tiberius Cæsar*. The Images of her Ancestors were carried in Procession upon that Occasion, but, says *Tacitus*, *eo præfulgebant Cassius atque Brutus quod eorum Imagines non visebantur.*

At length, after twenty Years Silence, I am oblig'd to write to you, in order to do you Service and my self Justice. *D*—— the Printer was with me Yesterday, and had the Folly or the Impudence to shew me a Letter from you, by which I found that that Scoundrel had arrogated to himself the little Present which I order'd him to make you last *May* was twelve-month, and to make it pass for his own Act and Deed. I order'd him to send you the two Volumes, which he printed for me, before they were published, and to send them in the large Paper, which he ought to have done for his own Sake, because then you wou'd have seen a Book very beautifully printed. I ordered him likewise to send them as handsomly bound as the skilfull'st Workman could bind them. But upon the bringing in his Account, I found that that Wretch, who has not Soul enough to do a handsome thing, tho' he is sure it will cost him nothing, had sent the common Paper without any binding at all.

D——

D——— had as much forgot you, before mentioned you to him, as if he had never known you, unless by Sight and by Chance. But upon his enquiring whose the Anonymous Letters were, which were printed in one of the two Volumes, I said enough to him of the Author, and of the Expectation which I had of the Translation of *Dionysius Halicarnassæus*, to fire his dull Mass with the greedy desire of Gain.

I am interrupted, but I shall the very next Post, without fail, say something to you of that Translation and of the Preface, which is got into the Hands of a Friend of your Brother's and mine, who, I hope and believe, has too much Honour ever to print it without your Consent. I am oblig'd to take my leave of you till the next Post. In the mean time I desire you to judge of the Respect, the Esteem and Affection which I have, and have always had for you, since I had first the Honour to know you, by what I am going to tell you, that for twenty Years together I have never so much as once seen any of our common Acquaintance without mentioning you in such a manner as shew'd that I very sensibly regretted your leaving us. Sir George *Markham* can tell you something of this, and so can Mr. *Congreve*, Mr. *Mein*, and Mr.

Welbye. But moſt of the reſt, alas, are vaniſh'd like a Morning's Dream.

I am, SIR,

Your moſt Humble and

London,
Jan. 16. 1719-20.

Faithful Servant,

JOHN DENNIS.

TO

THO. SERGEANT, *Esq;*

SIR,

I Have been not a little concern'd at my not being able to keep Touch with my Appointment to Day. But *multa cadunt inter calicem supremaque Labra.* Many things have fallen out between my Lips and the Cups of Punch which I design'd to drink with my Friend Mr. *Sergeant* to Day. My only Associates in this Place are the same that the ingenious *Don Quixote* had at the famous *La Manche, viz.* the Barber and the Curate. Now the Disappointment that I had from the former, and the too great Punctuality of the latter, have been the Occasion of my Misfortune. For the Barber, who should have come on *Saturday* at Three, came not till *Sunday* at Eleven, so that there was a Necessity of dining before I went. After Dinner in comes the Curate; and invites me to take part of an Ecclesiastical Collation in the Afternoon.

noon. Now Gentlemen of his Complexion are so hearty and so frank in their spiritual Hospitality, that if you do not comply with their pressing Invitations you disoblige them for ever. The Sorrow which oppress'd me for being disappointed of the Conversation of a Gentleman whom I esteem so much, has been in some measure alleviated by the following Considerations. First, the Author whom I have at present under Consideration has serv'd me as he deserves to be us'd himself, and has nail'd my Ears to his Book so fast, that I could not without Pain unclinch my self. The second Alleviation is the Consideration of my Health. For though the Goddess smiles upon me here, she has as great an Aversion to old *Sodom* as *Hugh Clodpate* of merry Memory, and might for ought I know shake Hands with me at my Entrance into that damn'd Town. I begin to be quite another thing than I was while I staid in the Tower, and there is as much difference between me on my Hill here, and me in my Den at *John Richardson*'s, as there is between a Lyon on a Mountain in *Africa*, and one near the *Spur-Guard*. Another Comfort that I had was the extraordinary Beauty of the Day. For it far'd between me and the Day, without Vanity be it spoken, as it does between a Pimp and a Lady whom he has in

his

his Power. If ſhe is but tolerably handſome he gives her to his Friend, but if ſhe is charmingly fair, he is willing to enjoy her himſelf.

This is the third Letter which I have writ to you ſince I heard from you; I hope the other two came to your Hands. I deſire that you would have the Goodneſs to ſend me word, in what Poſture my Affairs are. I ſhall be unwilling to ſee the Town till the latter end of this Week, unleſs there is a Neceſſity for it.

I am,

Jan. 18. at Night.
1713.

SIR,

Your, &c.

To H— C— *Esq;*

Of Simplicity in Poetical Compositions, in Remarks on the 70th Spectator.

SIR,

BY your last of the 26th you desire to know my Opinion of the notable Critick upon *Chevy Chase* in the *Spectator* of the 21st and that of the 25th of this Instant; that is, you desire to know whether I believe the Author of those two Papers to be in Jest or in Earnest. To which I answer, that he is neither in Jest nor in Earnest; not in Earnest, because he does not believe what he says; nor in Jest, because he does strenuously endeavour to convince the Reader of the Excellence of that old Dogrel. His Design is to see how far he can lead his Reader by the Nose. To give my Reasons for this Opinion, I shall send you an Examen of those two *Spectators* in as little Compass as I can.

When I travelled, says he, *I took a particular Delight in hearing the Songs and Fables*

Fables that are come from Father to Son, and are most in Vogue among the common People of the Countries thro' which I passed; for it is impossible that any thing should be universally tasted and approved by a Multitude, tho' they are only the Rabble of a Nation, which hath not in it some peculiar Aptness to please and gratify the Mind of Man.

Now is there any thing that has the least Air of a Jest? On the other side, do you think that the Author could be capable of meaning and thinking what he pretends to affirm here? Is it not plain by the last Words which I have quoted, *viz. the Mind of Man,* that he intended a Fallacy? For to affirm this of the Mind of Man, as 'tis cultivated and instructed, is not only absurd and ridiculous, but contradictory of himself. Has not he himself observed in the 134th *Tatler*, that there are Exercises and Diversions which universally please the Rabble, which yet Men of Quality or Education either despise or abhor? Such are the *Shrove-Tuesday* and *Bear-Garden* Diversions, which he there particularizes. I have known a Country Fidler who has been the Delight of three Counties, tho' he could never play the Truth of one Tune; and a Sign-Post Painter, who has been the Admiration not only of the Rabble, but even of most of the Squires of the North of *England.*

land. I appeal to the Bookſellers, who in this Caſe ought to be Judges without Appeal, whether more of the common People do not approve of *Quarles* and *Bunyan* than eſteem *Chevy Chaſe*. Therefore 'tis plain that Author could not deſign that the Period above-mentioned ſhould run thus,

For 'tis impoſſible that any thing ſhould be univerſally taſted and approved of by a Multitude, tho' they are only the Rabble of a Nation, which has not in it ſome peculiar Aptneſs to pleaſe and gratify the Minds of Men of Quality and Education.

And leis can he deſign to make it run as follows: *For it is impoſſible that any thing ſhould be univerſally taſted and approv'd of by a Multitude, tho' they are only the Rabble of a Nation, which has not in it ſome peculiar aptneſs to pleaſe and gratify the Minds of the Rabble.* For to mean this would make, not only what he ſays, but what he is, a Jeſt. So that the Author, by *the Mind of Man*, meaning neither the Mind of Man as it is rude and untaught, nor the Mind of Man as 'tis cultivated and inſtructed, can mean nothing in the World but to try how far he can impoſe upon his Reader. But he goes on.

Human Nature is the ſame in all reaſonable Creatures, and whatever falls in with it, will meet with Admirers among Readers of all Qualities and Conditions. Moliere, *as we are told by* Boileau, *us'd*

to read all his Comedies to a little old Woman, who was his House-Keeper, as she sate at her Work by the Chimney Corner, and could foretel the Success of his Play in his Theatre, from the Reception it met at the Fire Side. For he tells us the Audience always follow'd the old Woman, and never failed to laugh in the same Place.

Now can you, Sir, or any Man of good Sense believe that the Author does not know better what belongs to a Jest, than to take false Reasoning for one; and that he does not know better what belongs to false Reasoning than to mean what he says here? Can he be so dull and so absurd as not to know how to distinguish between what Human Nature is, and what Human Nature should be? Human Nature was Human Nature before the Fall, and 'tis Human Nature now 'tis degenerated from that perfect Virtue and that unclouded Knowledge, which it enjoy'd before. 'Tis the Business and Design of Education to endeavour to retrieve in some measure the Loss that Human Nature has sustain'd by the Fall; and to recover some Measure of Knowledge and Virtue. Now Heroick Poetry is an Imitation of Human Nature exalted, and Comedy is an Imitation of Human Nature depraved. What can be more absurd than to conclude, that because the Rabble, that is, such as never had any Education, are tolerable Judges of Human Nature depraved, that therefore they

they are Judges of Human Nature exalted, of which none can be Judges but they who have had the best Education? And therefore not only the Rabble, but an universal Nation has been mistaken in their Judgments of Poets and Poetry, when the Judgments have been made, before that Nation came to be sufficiently cultivated.

Rectè, necne crocum floresque perambulet Attæ
Fabula, si dubitem: clament periisse pudorem,
Cuncti penè patres, ea quum reprehenderem coner,
Quæ gravis Æsopus, quæ doctus Roscius egit;
Vel quia nil rectum, nisi quod placuit sibi, ducunt:
Vel quia turpe putant parere minoribus, & quæ
Imberbes didicere, senes perdenda fateri.

Hor. Ep. 1. L. 2.

So that we see it was the Opinion of *Horace*, that the People of Quality were sometimes mistaken as well as the Rabble; nay, that both Rabble and People of Quality were sometimes mistaken ev'n in their Judgments of Comedy.

At nostri proavi Plautinos & numeros, & Laudavere sales; nimium patienter utrumque

Ne

Ne dicam stultè, mirati: si modò ego & vos
Scimus inurbanum lepido seponere dicto
Legitimumque sonum digitis callemus, & aure.
Horat. de Arte Po.

And to shew you that 'tis impossible the *Spectator* can mean what he says here, *Horace* declares in the very Verse which the *Spectator* has chosen for the Motto of his Paper, that the Multitude is as often mistaken as it is in the Right.

Interdum Vulgus rectum videt, est ubi peccat.

And he says particularly, that they are often mistaken in their Judgments of Verses which have been writ by their Forefathers.

Si veteres ita miratur laudatque poetas,
Ut nihil anteferat, nihil illis comparet, errat.
Si quædam nimis antiquè, si pleraque durè
Dicere credit eos, ignave multa fatetur,
Et sapit, & mecum facit & Jove judicat æquo.

Now is not here a Motto very judiciously chosen? For from these Verses of *Horace*, we may justly make this Observation, that a Man by his real Approbation and Impertinent Commendation of superannuated Rhimes, not only puts himself upon an equal Foot with the Rabble, but ev'n of the

most

most injudicious and foolish part of the Rabble?

In fine, *Horace* was so far from being of Opinion, that the universal Approbation of the Multitude was the Taste and Touchstone of good Poetry, that in the last Satyr of his first Book, he advises the Poet of his Formation to take no manner of Care about pleasing them.

——Neque Te, ut miretur turba labores
Contentus paucis lectoribus.

Now this Advice of *Horace* must either be impertinent and wrong, or the Approbation of the Multitude is a Sign of an ill Poem. But 'tis time to see how this judicious Author goes on.

I know nothing that more shews the essential and inherent Perfection of Simplicity of Thought, above that which I call the Gothick *manner in writing, than this, that the first pleases all kinds of Palates, and the latter only such as have formed to themselves a wrong artificial Taste upon little fanciful Authors and Writers of Epigrams.* Homer, Virgil, *or* Milton, *so far as the Language of their Poems is understood, will please a Reader of plain common Sense, that would neither relish nor comprehend an Epigram of* Martial, *or a Poem of* Cowley; *so on the contrary, an ordinary*

dinary Song or Ballad that is the Delight of the common People, cannot fail to please all such Readers as are not unqualified for the Entertainment by their Affectation or their Ignorance, and the Reason is plain, because the same Paintings of Nature which recommend it to the most ordinary Reader, will appear beautiful to the most refin'd.

Now, Sir, can any thing be more plain, than that the *Spectator* here cannot mean what he says? Because 'tis impossible for a Man of common Sense, much less for one of his notable Parts, to be guilty of so many Absurdities as there are in this little Paragraph. I will make no Objection at present about the *Gothick* Taste. I think I have call'd it somewhere so my self, tho' tis certain that the pointed conceited way of Wit was in Fashion long before the *Goths* were either a Name or a Nation. For you find it not only in *Florus*, in *Martial*, in *Seneca*, in *Tacitus*, but even in some of the Writers of *Augustus Cæsar*'s Age, as *Ovid* and *Paterculus*. But here are more Important Errors to be taken Notice of. For first, the *Spectator* would make us believe that all People are Judges of Simplicity of Thought, and that the Rabble are better Judges of it, than they who have had a generous Education. That more People comprehend the Excellency of *Homer*, and *Virgil*, and *Milton*, than the Beauties of *Martial*

and

and *Cowley*, tho' perhaps there are not ten Persons living who know all the Merit of *Virgil*, and *Milton*'s *Paradise Lost* had been printed forty Years before it was known to the greatest Part of *England*, that there barely was such a Book. He would further insinuate, that all those Songs or Ballads, which are the delight of the Rabble, cannot fail to please all such Readers as are not unqualified for the Entertainment by their Affectation or their Ignorance; as if Men of Education in *Great Britain* were more ignorant than the Rabble, or it requir'd an extraordinary Stock of Knowledge to comprehend the Excellence of old Dogrel. The Reason which he gives for this, and which he says is plain, is, because the same Paintings of Nature which recommend it to the most ordinary Reader, will appear beautiful to the most refin'd; as if some faint and imperfect Touches of Nature might not recommend a thing to those by reason of their Ignorance or their Stupidity, know not how far an Author ought to go in such a Case to express the Truth of Nature, which faint and imperfect Strokes would by no means satisfy those who are able to judge of that Truth.

Sir, the *Spectator* imagines here, that there is nothing contrary to Simplicity of Thought, but that pointed conceited way of

of writing which we mention'd above, whereas Simplicity of Thought, is Thought which naturally arises from the Subject, Ideas which bear a just Proportion to the Things they represent, and which the Subject seems of it self as it were to offer to us, instead of our obtruding them upon that. If we truly consider what Simplicity of Thought in Poetry is, we shall find that there are three things which are equally distant from it, and those are, Imbecility, Affectation and Extravagance; Imbecility, when a Man wants Force to come up to the Truth of Nature; Affectation, when a Man goes beside it, thro' Error, Luxury and Wantonness of Soul; and Extravagance, when a Man goes beyond it, thro' a false and ill-tim'd Effort to shew his Strength and Excellence. We shall find too that Simplicity of Thought is not sufficient to make what we call Metre Poetry; that there must be likewise a Simplicity of Expression; that a Simplicity of Expression is an Expression which is according to Nature, that is an Expression proportion'd to the Ideas, as they are to the Things, and that consequently when the Expression in great Subjects, and in great Thoughts is simple, when it is passionate, figurative, sounding and harmonious; and that an Author, who in great Subjects and in great Thoughts shews an Expression, which comes short of this,

shew

shews not a Simplicity but an Imbecility of Expression. In short, as all the Heroick Virtues are compatible with Simplicity of Heart, so all the Magnificence of the most pompous Eloquence is on some Occasions consistent with Simplicity of Style. But now let us see a little how the *Spectator* goes on.

The old Song of Chevy Chase, says he, *is the favourite Ballad of the common People of* England; *and* Ben Johnson *us'd to say, he had rather have been the Author of it, than of all his Works. Sir* Philip Sidney, *in his Discourse of Poetry, speaks of it in the following Words. I never heard the old Song of* Piercy *and* Douglas, *that I found not my Heart more mov'd than with a Trumpet, and yet it was sung by some blind Crowder with a Voice as rough as his Style, which being so evil apparrelled in the Dust aad Cobweb of that uncivil Age, what would it work trimm'd in the gorgeous Eloquence of* Pindar? *For my own part,* says the *Spectator, I am so professed an Admirer of this antiquated Song, that I shall give my Reader a Critick upon it, without any further Apology for so doing.*

Now, Sir, as I shew'd you before by his Sophistry, that the *Spectator* is not in earnest; so here it may appear by the Authorities he brings that he is not in Jest. I am so

so very well convinced of the solid Judgment of *Ben. Johnson*, that if *Ben.* ever talk'd at that rate, (which I will not absolutely pretend to deny, tho' I very much doubt it) he only did it to laugh, and to ridicule some of the sottish Admirers of that obsolete Song. As for Sir *Philip Sidney*, do but observe the Expression which that noble Gentleman uses; he tells us not that his Heart was moved by the Song of *Piercy* and *Douglas* as often as he read it, or heard it read, but as often as he heard it sung, nay, tho' it was sung by an old Crowder. I shrewdly suspect that there were some martial Notes in this old *Gobick* Tune, which very much contributed to the working that Effect upon Sir *Philip Sidney*. But instead of affirming that Sir *Philip Sidney* has gone too far, he pretends to insinuate that he falls too short; for the *Spectator* vindicates the very Expression of *Chevy Chase*, in which one thing, I must confess, he does seem to me to come something near to a Jest, and to make a fine ironical Ridicule upon Sir *Philip Sidney*. But be these things as they will, besides that thro' the whole Course of this Criticism I have and shall oppose greater Authorities to these, I shall confound them by invincible Reason, before which no Authority could ever stand; and by shewing the Nature of Poetry, and what it is that

conſtitutes the Difference between that and Proſe, ſhall make it appear that the Writer of this old Song, in ſpight of the Applauſe of ſo many Ages, never knew what Poetry was. In order to which, let us give very near the ſame Account of it that we formerly did in the *Grounds of Criticiſm in Poetry*.

Poetry then is an Art, by which a Poet excites Paſſion, (and to that very end entertains Senſe) by a bold and figurative Language, and by meaſur'd harmonious Periods, in order to ſatisfy and improve, to delight and reform the Mind, and ſo to make Mankind happier and better.

Poetry therefore is Poetry, becauſe 'tis more paſſionate and ſenſual than Proſe. A Poet has two ways of exciting Paſſion. The one by the Figurativeneſs, and the other by the Harmony of his Expreſſion; but the Figures contribute more to the exciting of Paſſion than Harmony. A Diſcourſe that is writ in ſmooth and tolerable Numbers, if 'tis not figurative can be but meaſur'd Proſe; but a Diſcourſe that is everywhere bold and figurative, and conſequently every where extremely pathetick, is certainly Poetry without Numbers. Beſide this alone is a convincing Proof that a Figurative Expreſſion is more eſſential to Poetry than Harmony, *viz.* that Harmony itſelf, if 'tis any thing perfect, depends up-

on a figurative Expreſſion; there being no Example among the Antients themſelves of a Raviſhing Poetical Muſick, without figurative Language. But as the Language of Poetry in general is to be bold and figurative, the Language of great and exalted Poetry is to be very bold and figurative. The Doctrine of *Horace* is exactly anſwerable to this.

Primum ego me illorum, dederim quibus eſſe poetas,
Excerpam numero: neque enim concludere versum
Dixeris eſſe ſatis; neque ſiquis ſcribat, uti nos,
Sermoni propiora, putes hunc eſſe poetam.
Ingenium cui ſit, cui mens divinior, atque os
Magna ſonaturum; des nominis hujus honorem.
Idcirco quidam, Comœdia necne poema
Eſſet, quæſivere: quod acer ſpiritus, ac vis,
Nec verbis, nec rebus ineſt: niſi quod pede certo
Differt ſermoni, ſermo merus.

For he tells us here three things in a very conſpicuous manner. Firſt, that poetical Meaſures are not ſufficient to conſtitute a Man a Poet.

——Neque enim concludere verſum
Dixeris eſſe ſatis.

Secondly, that there must be great Passion, and a bold and a figurative Language, nay very bold and very figurative.

Ingenium cui sit, cui mens divinior, atque os
Magna sonaturum: des nominis hujus honorem.

And Thirdly, That it was to be questioned whether any thing but the great and exalted Poetry was properly Poetry.

Idcirco quidam, Comædia necne poema
Esset quæsivere: quod acer Spiritus, ac vis,
Nec verbis, nec rebus inest.

Boileau is exactly of the same Opinion, and has in his Ninth Satyr as it were interpreted part of this Passage of *Horace*.

Mais Repondez un peu, qu'elle verve indiscrete
Sans l'aveu des neuf sœurs vous a rendu Poete?
Senties vous dites moy ces violens transports,
Qui d un Esprit Divin, font mouvoir les ressorts.

And in his Eighth Reflection upon *Longinus*, he tells us plainly that Monsieur *Perrault* having translated the beginning of

of the first Ode of *Pindar* without Figures, has translated it without Poetry.

Rapin is exactly of the same Mind in his Twenty Ninth Reflection upon Poetry in general. For having told us that *Virgil* in the Fourth of his Georgicks, speaks of the Bees every where in the metaphorical Terms of Court, Legions, Armies, Combats, Fields of Battel, Kings, Captains, Soldiers, that by this figurative and lofty manner he may exalt the Lowness of his Matter; he adds,

C'est ainsi qu'un grand Ouvrier comme Virgile, ne dit presque rien dans le propre, & c'est en quoy consiste le grand art de la Poesie, de dire Figurement presque tout ce qu'elle dit. Car d'ordinaire les Figures fournissent des plus grands images que les choses mêmes. Enfin le Poete doit sçavoir sur toutes choses, ce que l' Eloquence a d'art & de methode pour les Figures. Ce n'est que par les Figures qu'il donne de la Force aux Passions, de l'eclat aux Discours, du poids aux Raisons, & de l'agreement a tout ce qu'il dit. Et ce n'est que par les Figures les plus vives de l'Eloquence, que tous les mouvemens de l'ame deviennent ardens & passionnez. Which is in *English* thus.

Thus a great Master like *Virgil* scarce says any thing in plain Language; and the great Art of Poetry consists in saying almost every thing that is said figuratively.

For the Figures generally supply us with Images greater than the Things themselves. In short, a Poet ought to be possessed of all that Art and that Method in which Eloquence is design'd to instruct us with regard to the Figures. They are the Figures that enable him to give Force to the Passions, Brightness to the Diction and to the Periods, Weight to his Arguments, and Charms to all that he says. And 'tis only by the liveliest Figures of Eloquence that all the Motions of the Soul become ardent and pathetick.

As for Simplicity, of which the *Spectator* boasts so much, the foresaid *Rapin* has remarkably told us, in his Twenty Seventh Reflection, that the Simplicity of Thought and even Simplicity of Expression in great Subjects is not incompatible with the greatest Pomp and Magnificence. For Simplicity of Thought and Simplicity of Expression is nothing but such Thought and such Expression, as Nature in such and such Cases voluntarily suggests and dictates to us.

La Troisieme qualité de la Diction, says *Rapin*, *est qu'elle soit naturelle, sans affectations, selon les Regles de la Biensance & du bon sens. Les Phrases trop etudiées, un Style trop fleury, les Manieres trop compassées, les Beaux mots, les termes trop recherchées, & toutes les Expressions extraordinaries, sont insupportable a la veritable Poesie. La seule Simplicité luy convient*

pour-

pourvûme qu'elle soit soutenue de noblesse & de grandeur : mais cette simplicité n'est connue que des grandes ames. C'est le chef d'œuvre de la Poesie, & le caractere de Homere & de Virgile. Les ignorans y cherchent de l'Esprit & des Beaux Sentimens, parce qu'ils sont ignorans. La Diction doit etre relevée & eclatante, c'est sa quatrieme qualité : Car tout ce qui est commun & ordinaire dans les Termes, ne luy est pas propre. Il faut des paroles, qui n'ayent rien de Bas, & de Vulgaire ; une Diction noble & magnifique, des expressions fortes, des couleurs vives, des traits hardis. Enfin, il faut un Discours qui puisse egaler la grandeur des Idées d'un Ouvrier, qui doit etre le Createur de son ouvrage. La cinquieme qualité de la Diction est d'etre ombreuse pour soutenir cet air grand & Majesteux dont se sert la poesie, & pour exprimer toute la Force, toute la Dignité des grandes choses qu' elle dit. Il ne luy faut que des Termes propres a Remplir la Bouche, & a contenter les oreilles, pour venir a ce merveilleux, qu'elle recherche en toutes choses. Mais ce n'est pas assez qu'il y a de la grandeur, & de la magnificence dans l'Expression, il doit y avoir aussi, de la Chaleur, & de la Vehemence, & il faut sur tout, qu'il regne dans les Discours, un certain Air de Grace & de Delicatesse, qui en fasse le principal ornement, & la Beauté

la plus universelle. Which most remarkable Passage is render'd thus.

The Third Quality of the Diction is that it ought to be natural, without any manner of Affectation, according to the Rules of Decorum and of good Sense. Phrases that appear too much studied, a Style that is too florid, a Manner that is too nicely wrought, Things that are finely said, Terms that are too far fetch'd, and all Expressions that are windy and swell Use, are insupportable to the true Poetry. Only Simplicity can agree with it, provided that Simplicity be sustain'd by Nobility and by Greatness. But that is a Simplicity with which only great Souls are acquainted. 'Tis the Master-work of Poetry, and the Character of *Homer* and *Virgil.* The Ignorant look for what they call Wit and fine Thoughts, because they are ignorant. The fourth Quality of the Diction is, that it be exalted and sonorous. For every thing that is vulgar in the Expression is below it. It requires Words which have nothing that is base and common in them, a Diction that is noble and magnificent, Expressions that are strong, and Colours that are lively, and daring and audacious Strokes. It requires to say all, a Discourse that is able to come up to the Greatness of that Workman's Ideas, who ought to be the Maker and Creator of his own Works. The fifth Qua

Quality of the Diction is that it be harmonious, that it may maintain that great and majestick Air, with which Poetry is wont to adorn it self; and may express all the Force and the utmost Dignity of the great Things which it utters. It ought to reject all Terms but those that are proper to fill the Mouth and content the Ear, that it may attain to that Sublime and that Wonderful, which it always and every where aims at. But 'tis not sufficient that there be Greatness and Magnificence in the Expression, there ought to be likewise Ardor and Vehemence, and there ought especially to reign throughout the Discourse, a fine, a graceful, and a delicate Air, which ought to appear its principal Ornament, and its most universal Beauty.

Now what one of these great Qualities has the old Ballad of *Chevy Chase?* Of all the Lines which the Captain has quoted, 'tis remarkable, that there is but one which has any thing like a Figure in it. Now tho' the Subject of that Song is noble, yet there being nothing figurative in it, 'tis plain by consequence that there is nothing great, nothing noble in it; no Magnificence, no Vehemence, no Painting, no Poetry. To compare any of the Passages in it to *Virgil* is ridiculous, and a Man may as well compare a dead Man to a living. For Example,

ple, what manner of Comparison is there between these two Passages.

The Hounds ran swiftly thro' the Wood
The nimble Deer to take,
And with their Cries the Hills and Dales
An Eccho shrill did make.

And that of *Virgil*,

——vocat ingenti clamore Cithæron
Taygetique canes, Domitrixque Epidaurus equorum
Et vox assensu nemorum ingeminata remugit.

What is there in the first but what is vile and trivial? What Ploughman, what Tinker, what Trull is not capable of saying the like? But that of *Virgil*, where he gives Voice to the Mountains, and Voice, Consent and Soul to the Words, is so bold, so figurative, so pompous, so harmonious, that a Man must be *Virgil* himself to say it. What can be more ridiculous, nay more monstrous, than to find any thing resembling in the following abominable Dogrel,

Sir Charles Martell *of* Ratcliffe *too*,
His Sister's Son was he;
Sir David Lamb *so well esteem'd*,
Yet saved could not be.

And

And the following Verſes of *Virgil*,

——Cadit & Ripheus, juſtiſſimus unus
Qui fuit in Teucris & ſervantiſſimus Æqui
Diis aliter viſum.

Where the divine Harmony is the Reſult of uncommon Paſſion, and productive of no vulgar Paſſion. Thus we ſee, that in ſpight of the pretended Reſemblance, the old Dogrel is contemptible, and *Virgil* is incomparable and inimitable. One might with a great deal more Juſtice pretend, that there is a Reſemblance between the 148th Pſalm of *Sternhold*, and that admirable Hymn of *Milton* in the Fifth Book of *Paradiſe Loſt*. And yet we need only tranſcribe them both, and place them together here, to convince the Reader, that the one is bald, and vile, and wretched, and the other great and exalted Poetry. Let us begin with the Pſalm of *Sternhold*.

Give laud unto the Lord
From Heav'n that is ſo high,
Praiſe him in Deed and Word
Above the ſtarry Sky.
And alſo ye
His Angels all,
Armies Royal,
Praiſe joyfully.

Praiſe

Praiſe Him both Sun and Moon,
Which are ſo clear and bright,
The ſame of you be done,
Ye glittering Stars of Night.
And ye no leſs,
Ye Heav'ns fair,
And Clouds o' th' Air,
His Laud expreſs.
For at his Word they were
All formed as we ſee,
At his Voice did appear
All things in their Degree.
Which he ſet faſt,
To them he made
A Law and Trade
Alway to laſt.
Extol and praiſe God's Name
On Earth, ye Dragons fell.
All Deeps do ye the ſame,
For it becomes ye well.
Him magnify,
Fire, Hail, Ice, Snow,
And Storms that blow
At his Decree.
The Hills and Mountains all
And Trees that fruitful are,
The Cedars great and tall
His worthy Praiſe declare.
Beaſts and Cattel,
Yea Birds flying,
And Worms creeping
That on Earth dwell.

Thus

Thus have we laid before the Reader the contemptible Dogrel of *Hopkins*; a Verſion which is deſpicable Dogrel in ſpight of its being figurative. For every Line here is a different Apoſtrophe. But theſe are Figures which are another Perſon's, which the Tranſverſer repeats like a Parrot, without underſtanding them, and without being mov'd by them, and which conſequently have neither Paſſion nor Sublimity to ſuſtain them. For 'tis a juſt Obſervation which is made by *Longinus*, that as the Figures ſupport the pathetick and the ſublime, they are wonderfully ſupported by each of them. Let us now ſee how the Force of *Milton*'s Genius hides and conceals the Aſſiſtance of Art, while theſe lofty Figures, at the very time that they raiſe and tranſport his exalted Soul, are loſt in his Enthuſiaſm and his Sublimity, as the glittering of numberleſs Stars is ſwallow'd and loſt in the blaze of Day, and that golden Deluge of Light which on every ſide overwhelms them. The following Hymn is ſpoken by our firſt Parents, in the Morning, at what time they firſt come out of the Bower in *Paradiſe*, and ſurvey the Works of God which the ſpringing Day has reſtor'd to them.

Theſe are thy glorious Works, parent of Good,
Almighty, Thine this univerſal Frame,

Thus

Thus wondrous Fair, Thy self how wondrous then!
Unspeakable, who sit'st above these Heav'ns
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works, yet these declare
Thy Goodness beyond thought and pow'r divine.
Speak, ye who best can tell, ye Sons of Light
Angels, for ye behold him, and with Songs
And Choral Symphonies, day without night
Circle his Throne Rejoycing, ye in Heav'n;
On Earth joyn all ye Creatures to extol
Him first, Him last, Him midst, and without End.
Fairest of Stars, last in the Train of Night,
If better Thou belong not to the Dawn,
Sure pledge of Day, that crownst the smiling Morn
With thy bright Circlet, praise him in thy Sphere
While Day arises, that sweet Hour of prime.
Thou Sun, of this great World both Eye and Soul,
Acknowledge Him thy Greater, sound his Praise
In thy eternal Course, both when thou climbest,
And when high Noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.
Moon, that now meet'st the orient Sun, now flee'st

With

With the fix'd Stars, fix'd in their Orb that flies,
And ye five other wand'ring Fires, that move
In myſtick Dance not without Song, reſound
His Praiſe who out of Darkneſs call'd up Light.
Air and ye Elements, the eldeſt Birth
Of Nature's Womb, that in Quaternion run
Perpetual circle multiform, and mix
And nouriſh all things, let your ceaſeleſs Change
Vary to our great Maker ſtill new Praiſe:
Ye Miſts and Exhalations, that now riſe
From Hill or ſteaming Lake, duskie or grey,
Till the Sun paint your fleecy Skirts with Gold
In Honour to the World's great Author riſe;
Whether to deck with Clouds th' uncolour'd Skie,
Or wet the thirſty Earth with falling Showers,
Riſing and falling ſtill advance his praiſe:
His praiſe ye Winds that from four Quarters blow
Breath ſoft or loud, and wave your Tops ye Pines
With ev'ry Plant, in ſign of Worſhip wave:
Fountains and ye that warble as ye flow
Melodious Murmurs, warbling tune his Praiſe:
Join Voices all ye living Souls, ye Birds
That ſinging up to Heav'ns Gates aſcend

Bear

Thus wondrous Fair, Thy self how wondrous then!
Unspeakable, who sit'st above these Heav'ns
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works, yet these declare
Thy Goodness beyond thought and pow'r divine.
Speak, ye who best can tell, ye Sons of Light
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With

With the fix'd Stars, fix'd in their Orb that flies,
And ye five other wand'ring Fires, that move
In mystick Dance not without Song, resound
His Praise who out of Darkness call'd up Light.
Air and ye Elements, the eldest Birth
Of Nature's Womb, that in Quaternion run
Perpetual circle multiform, and mix
And nourish all things, let your ceaseless Change
Vary to our great Maker still new Praise:
Ye Mists and Exhalations, that now rise
From Hill or steaming Lake, duskie or grey,
Till the Sun paint your fleecy Skirts with Gold
In Honour to the World's great Author rise;
Whether to deck with Clouds th' uncolour'd Skie,
Or wet the thirsty Earth with falling Showers,
Rising and falling still advance his praise:
His praise ye Winds that from four Quarters blow
Breath soft or loud, and wave your Tops ye Pines
With ev'ry Plant, in sign of Worship wave:
Fountains and ye that warble as ye flow
Melodious Murmurs, warbling tune his Praise:
Joyn Voices all ye living Souls, ye Birds
That singing up to Heav'ns Gates ascend

Bear

Bear on your Wings, and in your Notes his Praise:
Ye that in Waters glide, and ye that walk
The Earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep,
Witness if I be silent Morn or Even,
To Hill or Valley, Fountain or fresh Shades;
Made vocal by my Song, and taught his praise:
Hail universal Lord, be bounteous still,
To give us only Good, and if the Night
Has gather'd ought of evil or conceal'd
Disperse it as now Light dispels the Dark.

Now I think nothing can be more plain than that notwithstanding the same Psalm of *David* is the groundwork both of *Milton* and *Sternhold*, and notwithstanding a vain Appearance which may delude those who are not able to distinguish, there is no more Resemblance between the Hymn of *Milton*, and the Version of *Sternhold*, than there is between Light and Darkness, Heat and Cold, Life and Death, Heaven and Earth, the Graces and Deformity, no notwithstanding they both make use of the very same Figures; but those Figures in *Sternhold* are dead, and he himself seems dead: and while he pretends to give Life and Soul, and Thought, and Spirit, and Motion, even to the insensible and inanimated Parts of the Universe; he is himself without Spirit, or Life, or Soul, or

Thought,

Thought, or Motion; while *Milton*'s matchlefs Genius, animating the feveral Figures, appears to give Life, and Soul, and Motion to their feveral Objects; and feems to equal thefe feveral mighty Objects in their diftinguifhing Qualities, to be lofty as the Heav'n and folid as the Earth, firey as the Sun, and changing as the Moon, fwift as the Winds, and ftrong, and terrible, and fonorous as the Arms and Mouths of the great Deep. Since then there is no manner of Refemblance between the Hymn and the Verfion, which feem to have feveral things in common, what Shadow of Likenefs can there be between *Virgil* and *Englifh* Dogrel, where there is nothing common between them, nor Ground-work, nor Figure, nor Harmony; the Dogrel being utterly deftitute both of Figure and Harmony, and confequently void of the great Qualities which diftinguifh Poetry from Profe.

I am,

Your, &c.

O TO

TO

The Maſter of the REVELS.

Writ upon the firſt acting of a Play call'd, the Succeſsful Pyrate.

SIR,

I Have ſo much Concern for your Reputation, that I think it my Duty to acquaint you, that you have been very ſeverely cenſur'd for licenſing the laſt Play. Never, ſay they, was the Stage proſtituted to ſo vile a degree before. It has more than once been accus'd of promoting Vice, but was never tax'd till now with encouraging Villany. And is the Man, ſay they, who is ſet over it to reſtrain it from encouraging Vice, is he become inſtrumental in its promoting Villany? and ſuch Villany, ſuch a Complication of contemptible Folly, and of dreadful abominable Wickedneſs, as was never beheld upon any Stage before. Good God! ſay they, was any thing wanting to the Extravagance of this dege-

degenerate Age, but the making a Tarpawlin and a Swabber, and a living Tarpawlin and a Swabber, the Hero of a Tragedy? who, at the same time that he is strutting in Buskins here, is lolling at *Madagascar* with some drunken sun-burnt Whore over a Can of Flip. The greatest Rogue and the most detestable Villain that ever the Sun or Moon beheld, banish'd not only from his own but from all Countries, declar'd the Pest of all Human Society, and pursued to Death as a devoted Creature, odious and noxious to Mankind, the Stage of whose Tragedy, if he is caught in *England*, will undoubtedly be at *Wapping*. Men of common Sense are in Amazement, and lifting up their Hands and their Eyes, exclaim, what could this judicious Author mean, by introducing upon the Stage a Hero of *Execution-Dock*, unless that a character might be shewn which should be thought adequate to the Player, and that the Heroe of a Tragedy might at length be produced which might be acted to the very Life. And this Rogue is christen'd forsooth *the Successful Pyrate.* But sure, say they, this pious Christian had most Pagan Godfathers. For is not this Name, say they, a Name of notable Instruction and of Moralitу? Does it not speak plainly to the following Purpose? Men, Brethren, and Children, if any of you have a mind

to puſh on your Fortunes, or ſupply your Luxuries by ſuch vigorous Methods, as Fools call wicked and violent, begin to be Rogues and proſper. We will encourage you to go on, and to diſpel the idle and vain Fears of Providence and Divine Vengeance, by ſhewing a greater Rogue than any of you can pretend to be, and ſhewing him proſperous and ſucceſsful. And we here declare upon our Honours, that if any of you Gentlemen of the Galleries have a mind to turn Robbers upon the high Seas, to plunder our Ships, and to fill our Jayls with our Merchants, and our Hoſpitals with their Wives and Children, we here declare that if he ſucceeds, rather than that fortunate Rogue ſhould not be celebrated we will not only act him, but write him our ſelves according to the beſt of our damnable Talents. This, ſay the Perſons mention'd above, is the bleſſed Moral of this Play, which muſt needs be wonderfully agreeable to a civiliz'd and a trading People. As I ſaid at firſt, I thought it my Duty to acquaint you with this.

I am,

SIR,

Your, &c.

T

TO

THO. SERGEANT, *Esq;*

Sent with a Cicero, *which I had borrow'd of him, in a very small Print.*

SIR,

I Here send you back your *Cicero*; as I would return a Friend's Mistress to him who had entrusted me with her, untouch'd, tho' much desir'd, and tho' very willing. That I have an extream Passion for *Cicero* is but Truth; but if I should say of him, as a Spark did of a fair Lady, that I love him more than my Eyes which made me love him, that would be Hyperbolical. Being willing then to preserve my Eyes for all my Friends, for my mortal Friends in Cloth, and Drugget, and Silk, and Crape, and Linsey Woolsey; and for my immortal Friends in Leather, and for *Cicero* among the rest, tho' last not least belov'd, I here return him to you, and desire you to deliver Sir *John Marsham* into the Hands of

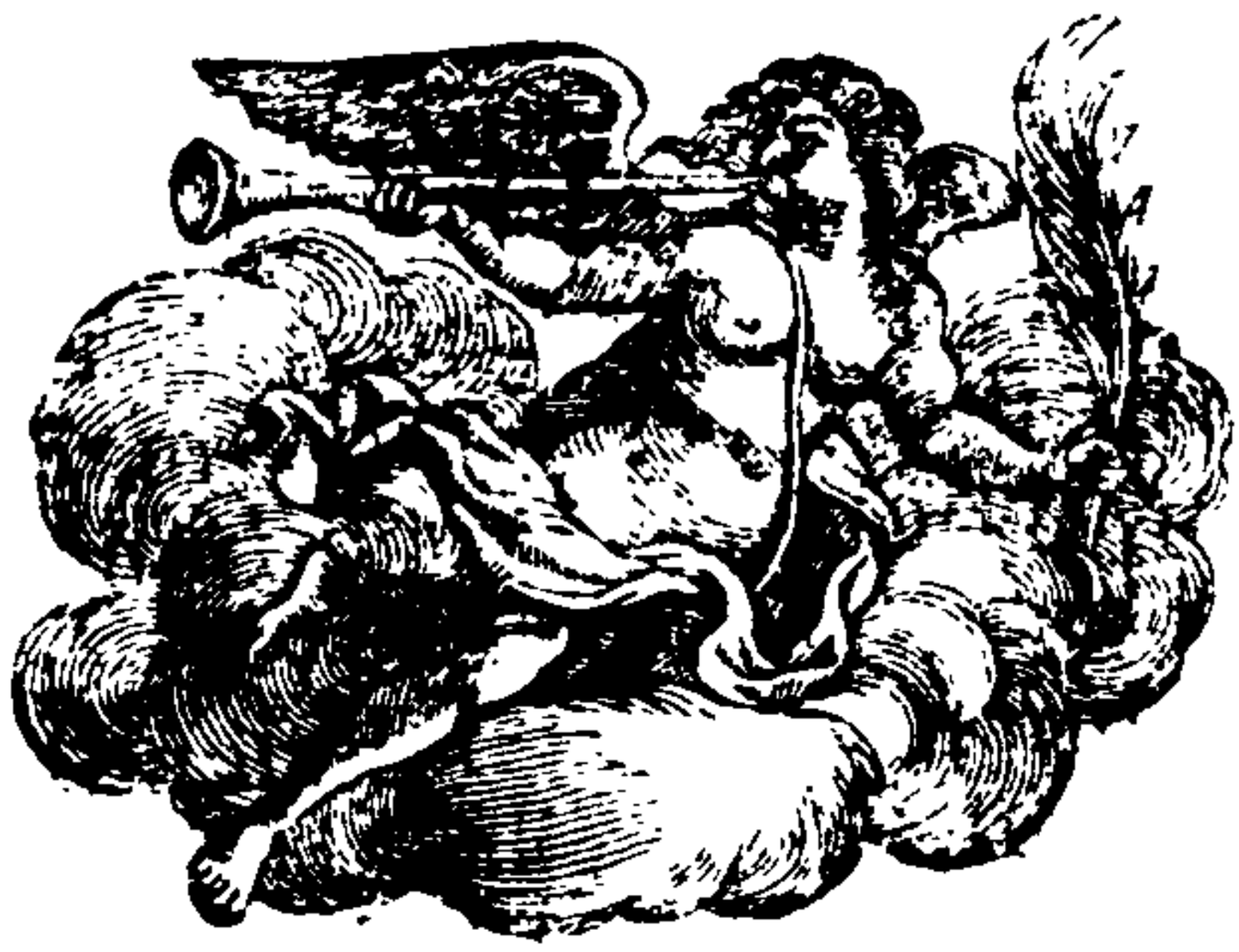
the Bearer. That is, indeed, as the Fable has it, to lay the Body of dead *Sphinx* upon an Aſs. But the Knight was a ſort of an Antiquary, and an Aſs you know was a Beaſt reſpected by Antiquity.

I am,

Tower,
Feb. 10. 1713.

SIR,

Your, &c.



TO

TO

Mr. * * *

SIR,

I Am not able to give you the Directions you desire, to find Mr. *B*—— *R*——, nor have I seen him lately, nor will I ever see him more if I can help it. I hate a Traitor who is always bragging of his Honour and Honesty. The Men of Honour and Honesty never bragg. They let their Actions speak for them. I never in all my Life-time knew a Man who often bragg'd of his Honour, or a Woman who often boasted of her Chastity, but the one was a true bred Whore, and the other a Rascal vile enough to bring a Pillory into fresh Disgrace. When a Man boasts of his own moral Virtues, is a sign for the most part that he is conscious of the contrary Vices, and so has recourse to bragging to blind the Eyes of those with whom he converses. But the very Trick, by which he cheats Fools, discovers him to Men of common Sense; and

ſo his Brains are like the Foxes Heels, by which the Beaſt eſcapes from Mungrils, but is betray'd to the Hounds. The greateſt Coward boaſts moſt of his Courage. The eternal talkative noiſie Fool, of his Senſe. Even talking perpetually is implicit bragging. For why ſhould a Man talk always more than his Company, if he did not believe that Nature had given him a Call for it, and made him a perpetual Dictator? One Hypocrite makes more Noiſe and more Shew of his Zeal than twenty real Saints. There are Bullies in Honour and in Religion as well as there are in Courage. *B*—— *R*—— is a Bully in all three. The Man who wants Gratitude can have no one Virtue whatever.

I am,

Whitehall,
Oct. 3. 1716.

Your, &c.

T O

TO

Mr. BRADLEY.

SIR,

SINCE among the reſt of the Obligations which I have to you, you have been ſo generous as to defend me from that Accuſation of Ill-nature, which has been brought againſt me by ſome who are ſo far from knowing me, that perhaps they never ſaw me; I am animated by ſo friendly a Proceeding to ſend you my Thoughts upon this ſubject, as they have from time to time come into my Mind, as well as I am able to recollect them, in that ill State of Health under which I labour at preſent.

As this Accuſation is brought againſt me by thoſe who are utter Strangers to me, it muſt proceed from the Books which I have publiſh'd, and particularly from the Books of Criticiſm. But if in my Criticiſm I am in the right, my very being ſo muſt be a ſufficient Apology a-

gainſt

gainſt that Accuſation. For he who accuſes a Man of Ill-nature for writing a juſt Criticiſm, knows not what is meant by either of the Terms, either by Ill-nature or Criticiſm. By Ill-nature muſt be meant ſomething that is contrary to the true Nature of Man, as by Good-nature muſt be underſtood ſomething that is agreeable to it, or the one can be no Term of Reproach, nor the other of Commendation. But the true Nature of Man muſt conſiſt in Reaſon, which diſtinguiſhes him from all other Creatures, and therefore no Diſcourſe or Action that is reaſonable can poſſibly denominate him ill-natur'd.

But as the true Nature of Man is reaſonable, it is likewiſe ſocial; and Man is therefore the moſt ſocial of Creatures, becauſe he is the moſt reaſonable. Now a juſt Criticiſm is perfectly agreeable to the Nature of Man conſider'd as 'tis ſocial. For what does the good Critic deſign? he deſigns to detect and diſgrace Errour, to diſcloſe and honour Truth; he deſigns the Advancement of a noble Art, and by it the Intereſt and Glory of his Native Country, which depend in no ſmall meaſure upon the flouriſhing of Arts.

If he has the greateſt Goodneſs of Nature, who has the largeſt ſhare of ſocial Virtue; if he has the largeſt ſhare of ſocial Virtue, who labours moſt for the Happi-

neſs

nefs of the Society in which he lives, and of all his Fellow-Creatures in general; if the Happinefs of ones Native Country, and of Humankind in general, depend more, under God, upon the Maintenance of Liberty, than upon any other thing whatfoever; who can juftly pretend (not only of the Writers of the prefent Age, but of the *Englifh* Writers in general) to a greater Goodnefs of Nature than my felf, who have made it the conftant Bufinefs of my Life to defend and maintain Liberty? Who has taken more delight in praifing her Benefactor, or in branding and defaming her avowed and mortal Enemies? In fhort, Sir, Liberty has been the continual Theme of my Pen, and the conftant Employment of my Life. And have I taken all this Pains for my felf? No. I wanted not common Senfe to difcern that the *Britifh* Liberties would be of longer continuance than my Life. But the growing Corruptions of my Countrymen gave me too juft grounds to apprehend that Liberty in *Great Britain* would not laft many Centuries. I therefore refolv'd to caft in my Mite towards the rendring it perpetual in this Ifland. And yet I knew very well and forefaw, that by this very Endeavour to ferve them, I fhould draw upon me the Hatred of a great part of my Countrymen, and by confequence a

thoufand

thousand different Slanders. They have given me distempers of Body, and defects of Mind, of which I have not the least Knowledge; and the Opinion of my Ill-nature has proceeded as much from my Endeavours to maintain and prolong Liberty, and by consequence to perpetuate Happiness to them and to their Posterity, as from my detecting and exposing successful Poetasters. For which if I am sorry for my self, I am more sorry for my Country, for a People so dispos'd can be free no longer than their Rulers are willing they should be so. I am in so faint and languishing a Condition, that I can proceed no further, tho' I have many things to say. But I will certainly resume this Subject, if I ever retrieve my Vigour.

March 20. 17$\frac{30}{31}$.

I am, &c.

To the Right Honourable the *Lord Treasurer* GODOLPHIN.

My Lord,

I Here send your Lordship a Dramatick Poem, call'd *Liberty Asserted*, which I wrote before I had the Honour to be known to your Lordship, and send upon occasion of its being the first *British* Play that is acted; that is, the first after the Accomplishment of this Happy Union, which has been so nobly brought about by your Lordship's Wisdom, and which has asserted and ensured the Liberties of *Great Britain*. My Lord, that this Play's being accidentally reviv'd at this extraordinary Juncture, may prove of happy Presage to the Prosperity of *Great Britain*, and to your Lordship's Fame, which must flourish Eternally with this Island's Prosperity, is and shall be the zealous and perpetual Wish of,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's, &c.

To his GRACE

The Duke of BUCKINGHAM.

Written in the Name and at the Request of one who design'd to send him the Lives of some of our celebrated English *Poets.*

My LORD,

THE whole Body of *English* Narrative Poets have here the Honour to wait on your Grace, and to desire your Patronage; of whom the most celebrated among such of them as were your Contemporaries, have so often attended upon you separately to implore your Protection. My Lord, those among them who are living look upon themselves as Probationers for Fame, and cannot be assur'd of that Glory to which they aspire, till your Grace has giv'n Judgment concerning them. Few of those who are dead, have been dead long enough for the World to be assur'd

of their real Merit, and whether it will be great and lasting enough to pass to our latest Posterity. The Opinions of the Publick in Things of this nature are variable and uncertain, and the Reputations of Authors are subject to strange Reverses. Never any Poet left a greater Reputation behind him than Mr. *Cowley*, while *Milton* remain'd obscure and known but to few. But your Grace knows very well, that the great Reputation of *Cowley* did not continue half a Century, and that *Milton*'s is now upon the Pinacle of the Temple of Fame. 'Tis hardly possible that so many Ages should have remain'd in the dark with regard to almost every thing that relates to *Homer*, if his Poems had, during his Life time, been receiv'd with that vast, that universal Applause which they met with after his Death. *Fannius*, an impertinent *Roman* Scribbler, yet found so much Success in his own Time, and so general an Approbation, that both his Works and his Picture were set up in the Library, which *Augustus* had consecrated in the Temple of *Apollo Palatine*, while *Horace* complains that he was neither read nor known, and yet your Grace knows very well that this happen'd at a time when the *Roman* Poetry and the *Roman* Taste were in their Heighth of Excellence. But length of Days distinguish'd justly between them, and satisfy'd the World of the

the nice Judgment and the fine Discernment of *Mecænas* and *Augustus Cæsar*: Lengh of Days, my Lord, consign'd *Horace* to eternal Fame, and *Fannius* to eternal Infamy.

The whole Body then of *English* Narrative Poets, considering this Uncertainty and this Inconstancy of the People, proceeding from their Ignorance and their want of Taste, here bring their Causes before your Grace to be tryed by you in the last Appeal, and depend no further on the fallible Decrees of the People, than as they shall be affirmed by your Grace's Judgment, from which they expect an Assurance of Fame and an Earnest of Immortality.

My Lord, it has been the common Custom of Authors on these Occasions to publish a Panegyrick on their Patron's Excellencies, a Custom from which at present I am oblig'd to deviate, because nothing is less entertaining than Stale News, let the subject matter of it be never so great and glorious. If I should relate with how much Bravery in your early Youth you affronted Death in the Cause of your Country, when at the same time you were possess'd of every thing that makes Mortals fond of Life, when at the same time you were crown'd with Honours, laden with Riches, and courted by Pleasure: If I should tell

the

the World how much you were diſtinguiſh'd by your Gallantry and your Politeneſs, in the moſt polite and moſt gallant Court that ever this Iſland ſaw; that you have been always as penetrating and profound in the Cabinet, as you have been active and brave in the Field; that in your Adminiſtration of the great Offices of the Crown, you have ſhewn your ſelf equal to the greateſt and the ſublimeſt Employments, and that you have been always one of the moſt ſhining Ornaments of the moſt auguſt Aſſembly in the World; the Reader would cry that this is reprinting an old *Gazette*, and pretending to inform People of Actions and Qualities that have been many a Year in the Mouths of all the World, and which have been long ſince much better deſcrib'd, by the Pens of thoſe very Gentlemen of whoſe Actions and Writings this Volume is compoſ'd. As I ſhould be confounded with ſo juſt a Reproach, I ſhall confine my ſelf with returning Thanks to your Grace for the Protection which you vouchſafe to grant to this Account of the Lives and Writings of ſo many Men of Merit in Conjunction, and for that Protection and Encouragement, by which you have ſeveral times diſtinguiſhed ſeveral of them. I ſhall content my ſelf with wiſhing that your Grace may long continue to be the ſhining Ornament of your Country, and the Protector of e-

very generous Art; that you may live to ſee the Noble Marqueſs of *Normanby* inherit his Father's great Qualities and copy his bright Example; to ſee him rival in Senſe, in Spirit and in Judgment the immortal Offſpring of your Mind; to ſee him rival your own *Brutus* in defending the Rights of his Country and aſſerting the Liberties of Mankind, but defending the one and aſſerting the other with that glorious Succeſs, and that tranſcendent Happineſs, which ought always to attend the Champions of publick Liberty.

I am,

My LORD,

Your Grace's, &c.

TO

TO

WALTER MOYLE, *Esq;*

Dear SIR,

I Was ſo very much tyr'd the laſt Poſt with ſending away ſeveral Letters, that I was incapable of writing any thing that could have been agreeable to you, tho' it had been never ſo ſhort. I am ſorry to hear of the Complaints you make of the Effects of the Spleen. I deſire you to pardon my plain-dealing, which proceeds purely from that Eſteem and Affection which I have always had for you ever ſince I had the Honour to know you; before I venture to tell you, that a Perſon of your Fortune and Underſtanding need not have the Spleen any longer than he pleaſes. The Spleen is nothing but the Effect of Stagnation, and the Motion of vigorous Exerciſe muſt and will cure it. Take a gentle trotting Horſe, and an honeſt careful Servant, and come up and ſee your old Friends and this wicked Town but for one

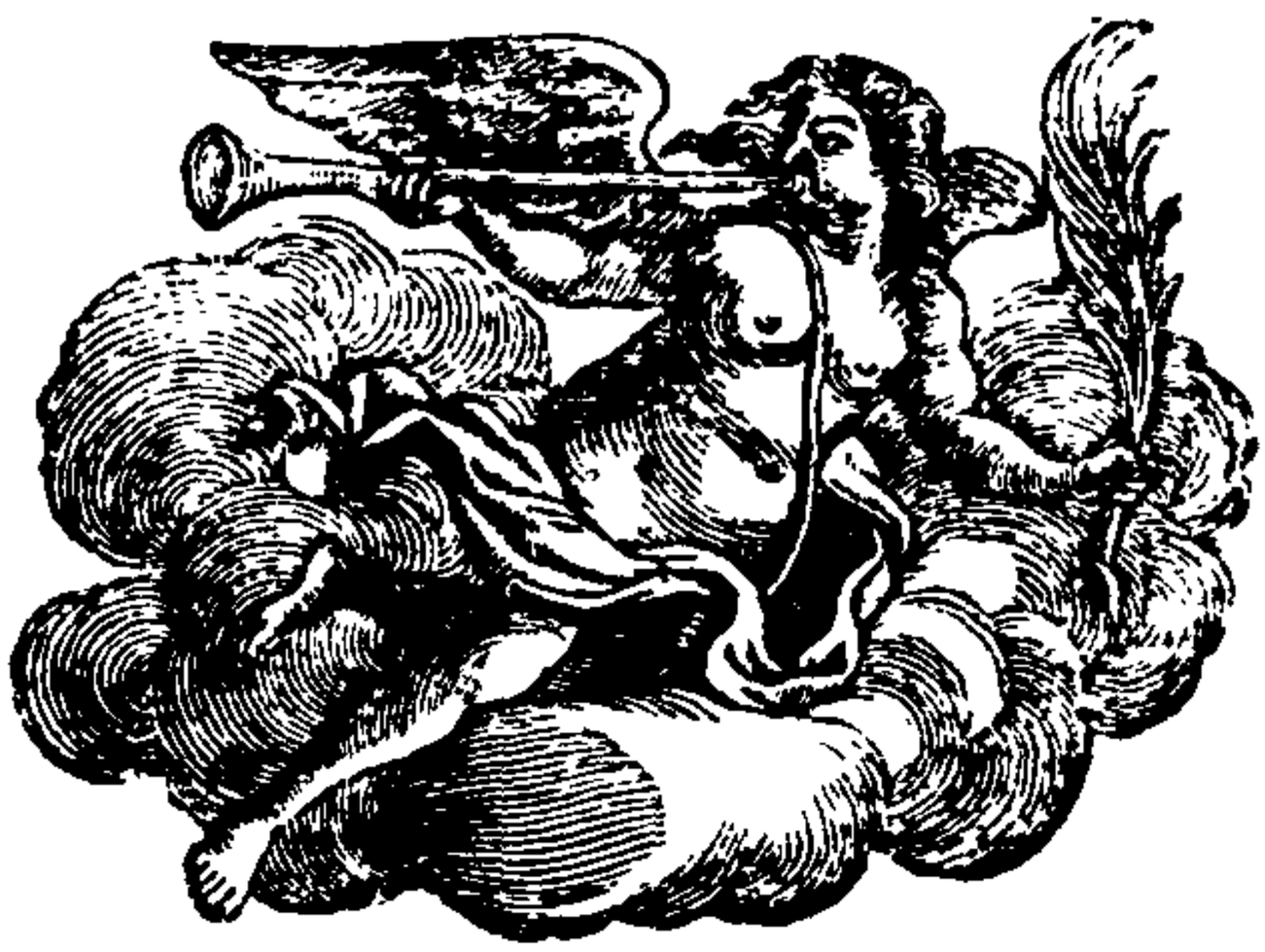
Fortnight, and if the Journey to this Town and back again into *Cornwal*, and the ſtrange Sights which you will ſee here, do not remove the Spleen for one ſix Months, I will be contented to have it for twelve. For you who have now been abſent twenty Years, will find here a Town entirely new; new Buildings, new Men, new Manners; Avarice, and Luxury, and Profuſion joyned in a Triple League, and Liberty, Property and Religion engag'd in a Battel Royal. You will find here entirely new Setts of all Sorts of Men; new Players at Cheſs, who never could yet ſee two Removes before them; new Whigs without one Dram of Publick Spirit; and new Wits and Poets without one Grain of Common Senſe. You will find a new Idol worſhip'd in the midſt of a Chriſtian Country, a baſe, dirty, contemptible Idol, worſhip'd by all that once was thought great and noble and eſtimable. You will find his Temple in the midſt of that Country's Metropolis, a Temple as dirty and deſpicable as its Deity; a Temple without either Roof, or Door, or Desk, or Pew, or Altar, yet its pragmatical Prieſts as proud as they are baſe and ſordid; his Prieſts compos'd of inſolent Cits, and Pe—rs and Pr----es his humble Worſhippers, who humbly worſhip, nay abjectly adore both the Idol and his Prieſts;

you

you will ſee his Worſhippers arrive in Crowds from Morning to the Evening, and mingled in his Temple in as monſtrous a manner as the Elements were in Chaos, where Fire with Water, Earth with Air were blended and confounded. As all theſe Sights will be new, I believe they will be very diverting; and what will be as new and as diverting as all the reſt, you will ſee in this Town old Friends with new Shapes and Faces. For Example, you will find your old Friend Mr. *W*—— dwindled to thoſe narrow Dimenſions in which you formerly beheld me, and your humble Servant enlarg'd to his *quondam* noble Bulk and Proportions.

London, May 24.
1720.

I am, &c.



To the Honourable

Major PACK.

Containing ſome remarkable Paſſages of Mr. WYCHERLEY'S *Life.*

SIR,

I Have lately had the Satisfaction to read over your Memoirs of Mr. *Wycherley*, which I had laſt Week from Mr. C——, and found the Relation very entertaining and the Reflections juſt and pathetick. If I give you Hints of ſome particular Paſſages which ſeem either to have ſlipt from your Memory, or to have eſcaped your Knowledge, I flatter my ſelf that you will receive them kindly, ſince they are only ſent with Intention to give you an Opportunity, whenever you have a mind to retouch your Memoirs, to make them more compleat, tho' they cannot be more agreeable.

And now, Sir, to enter upon the Subject, without any more Ceremony. I never

ver could learn, either from Mr. *Wycherley* himſelf, or from Mr. *Dryden*, or Sir *Harry Sheer*, or Mr. *Walkeden*, or from any of thoſe who had been longeſt acquainted with Mr. *Wycherley*, that he had ever reſided at either of our Univerſities. About the Age of Fifteen he was ſent for Education to the Weſtern Parts of *France*, either to *Saintonge* or the *Angoumois*. His Abode there was either upon the Banks of the *Charante*, or very little remov'd from it. And he had there the Happineſs to be in the Neighbourhood of one of the moſt accompliſh'd Ladies of the Court of *France*, *Madame de Montauſier*, whom *Voiture* has made famous by ſeveral very ingenious Letters, the moſt of which were writ to her when ſhe was a Maid, and call'd *Madamoiſelle de Rambouillet*. I have heard Mr. *W*—— ſay, that he was often admitted to the Converſation of that Lady, who us'd to call him the Little *Hugenot*; and that young as he was, he was equally pleas'd with the Beauty of her Mind, and with the Graces of her Perſon.

Upon the writing his firſt Play, which was *St. James's Park*, he became acquainted with ſeveral of the moſt celebrated Wits both of the Court and Town. The writing of that Play was likewiſe the Occaſion of his becoming acquainted with one of King *Charles's* Miſtreſſes after a very particular manner.

As Mr. *Wycherley* was going thro' *Pall-mall* towards St. *James*'s in his Chariot, he met the foresaid Lady in hers, who, thrusting half her Body out of the Chariot, cry'd out aloud to him, *You*, Wycherley, *you are a Son of a Whore*, at the same time laughing aloud and heartily. Perhaps, Sir, if you never heard of this Passage before, you may be surpris'd at so strange a Greeting from one of the most beautiful and best bred Ladies in the World. Mr. *Wycherley* was certainly very much surpris'd at it, yet not so much but he soon apprehended it was spoke with Allusion to the latter End of a Song in the forementioned Play.

When Parents are Slaves
Their Brats cannot be any other,
Great Wits and great Braves
Have always a Punk to their Mother.

As, during Mr. *Wycherley*'s Surprise, the Chariots drove different ways, they were soon at a considerable Distance from each other, when Mr. *Wycherley* recovering from his Surprise, ordered his Coachman to drive back, and to overtake the Lady. As soon as he got over-against her, he said to her, *Madam, you have been pleased to bestow a Title on me which generally belongs to the Fortunate. Will your Ladyship be at the Play to Night? Well*, she reply'd, *what if I am there?*

there? Why then I will be there to wait on your Ladyship, tho' I disappoint a very fine Woman who has made me an Assignation. *So,* said she, *you are sure to disappoint a Woman who has favour'd you for one who has not.* *Yes,* he reply'd, *if she who has not favour'd me is the finer Woman of the two.* *But he who will be constant to your Ladyship, till he can find a finer Woman, is sure to die your Captive.* The Lady blush'd, and bade her Coachman drive away. As she was then in all her Bloom, and the most celebrated Beauty that was then in *England,* or perhaps that has been in *England* since, she was touch'd with the Gallantry of that Compliment. In short, she was that Night in the first Row of the King's Box in *Drury Lane,* and Mr. *Wycherley* in the Pit under her, where he entertained her during the whole Play. And this, Sir, was the beginning of a Correspondence between these two Persons, which afterwards made a great Noise in the Town.

But now, Sir, I shall proceed to remind you of something more extraordinary, and that is, that the Correspondence between Mr. *Wycherley* and the foresaid Lady was the Occasion of bringing Mr. *Wycherley* into favour with *George* Duke of *Buckingham,* who was passionately in Love with that Lady, who was ill treated by her, and who believed Mr. *Wycherley* his happy Rival.

val. After the Duke had long ſollicited her without obtaining any thing, whether the Relation between them ſhock'd her, for ſhe was his Couſin-Germain, or whether ſhe apprehended that an Intrigue with a Perſon of his Rank and Character, a Perſon upon whom the Eyes of all Men were fix'd, muſt of Neceſſity in a little time come to the King's Ears, whatever was the Cauſe, ſhe refus'd to admit of his Viſits ſo long, that at laſt Indignation, Rage and Diſdain took Place of his Love, and he reſolv'd to ruin her. When he had taken this Reſolution, he had her ſo narrowly watch'd by his Spies, that he ſoon came to the Knowledge of thoſe whom he had reaſon to believe his Rivals. And after he knew them, he never fail'd to name them aloud, in order to expoſe the Lady, to all thoſe who frequented him, and among others he us'd to name Mr. *Wycherley*. As ſoon as it came to the Knowledge of the latter, who had all his Expectations from the Court, he apprehended the Conſequence of ſuch a Report, if it ſhould reach the King. He applied himſelf therefore to *Wilmot* Lord *Rocheſter* and to Sir *Charles Sedley*, and entreated them to remonſtrate to the Duke of *Buckingham* the Miſchief which he was about to do to one who had not the Honour to be known to him, and who had never offended him. Upon their opening

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the Matter to the Duke, he cry'd out immediately, *that he did not blame* Wycherley, *he only accus'd his Cousin. Ay, but,* they reply'd, *by rendring him suspected of such an Intrigue, you are about to ruine him, that is, your Grace is about to ruine a Man with whose Conversation you would be pleas'd above all things.* Upon this Occasion they said so much of the shining Qualities of Mr. *Wycherley*, and of the Charms of his Conversation, that the Duke, who was as much in love with Wit, as he was with his Kinswoman, was impatient till he was brought to sup with him, which was in two or three Nights. After Supper Mr. *Wycherley*, who was then in the Height of his Vigor both of Body and Mind, thought himself oblig'd to exert himself, and the Duke was charm'd to that degree, that he cry'd out in a Transport, *By G—— my Cousin is in the right of it*; and from that very Moment made a Friend of a Man whom he believ'd his happy Rival.

The Duke of *Buckingham* gave him solid sensible Proofs of his Esteem and Affection. For as he was at the same time Master of the Horse to King *Charles*, and Colonel of a Regiment; as Master of the Horse he made him one of his Equeries, and as Colonel of a Regiment he made him Captain Lieutenant of his own Company, resigning to him at the same time his own

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Pay as Captain, and all other Advantages that could be justly made of the Company. I remember that about that time I, who was come up from the University to see my Friends in Town, happen'd to be one Night at the Fountain Tavern in the *Strand*, with the late Dr. *Duke*, *David Loggen* the Painter, and Mr. *Wilson*, of whom *Otway* has made honourable Mention in *Tonson*'s first Miscellany, and that after Supper we drank Mr. *Wycherley*'s Health by the Name of Captain *Wycherley*.

He was not long after this in such high Favour with the King, that that Monarch gave him a Proof of his Esteem and Affection, which never any Sovereign Prince before had given to an Author who was only a private Gentleman. Mr. *Wycherley* happen'd to fall sick of a Feaver at his Lodgings in *Bow-street*, *Covent Garden*, during which Sickness the King did him the Honour to visit him, when finding his Feaver indeed abated, but his Body extremely weaken'd, and his Spirits miserably shatter'd, he commanded him, as soon as he was able to take a Journey, to go to the South of *France*, believing that nothing would contribute more to the restoring his former Vigour, than the gentle salutiferous Air of *Montpelier* during the Winter Season. At the same time the King was pleas'd to assure him, *that as soon as he was ca-*

pable

pable of taking that Journey, he would order five hundred Pounds to be paid him to defray the Expence of it.

Mr. *Wycherley* accordingly went into *France* in the beginning of the Winter of 1678, if I am not mistaken, and returned into *England* in the latter end of the Spring of 1679, entirely restor'd to his former Vigor both of Body and Mind. The King receiv'd him with the utmost Marks of Favour, and shortly after his Arrival told him that he had a Son, who he was resolv'd should be educated like the Son of a King, and that he could make Choice of no Man so proper to be his Governor as Mr. *Wycherley*; that for that Service he should have fifteen hundred Pounds a Year paid him, for the Payment of which he should have an Assignment upon three several Offices, whose Names I have forgot, to which the King added, *that when the Time came that his Office was to cease, he would take care to make such a Provision for him as should set him above the Malice of the World and Fortune.*

And now, Sir, is it not matter of Wonder, that one of Mr. *Wycherley*'s extraordinary Merit, who was esteem'd by all the most deserving Persons of the Court of King *Charles* the Second, and in high Favour with the King himself, should in a little time, after he had received these gra-

cious

cious Offers which ſeem to have made and to have fix'd his Fortune, be thrown into Priſon for bare ſeven hundred Pounds, and be ſuffer'd to languiſh there during the laſt four Years of that Monarch's Reign; forſaken by all his Friends at Court and quite abandon'd by the King? 'Tis no eaſie matter, Sir, to find a more extraordinary Inſtance of the Viciſſitude of Human Affairs, and if the Cauſe of ſo ſtrange an Alteration is unknown to you, I dare promiſe my ſelf that you are very deſirous to hear it.

It was immediately after Mr. *Wycherley* had received theſe gracious Offers from the King, that the Water-drinking Seaſon coming on, he went down to *Tunbridge* to take either the Benefit of the Waters or the Diverſions of the Place, when walking one Day upon the Wells Walk with his Friend Mr. *Fairbeard* of *Grey's-Inn*, juſt as he came up to the Bookſeller's, my Lady *Drogheda*, a young Widow, rich, noble, and beautiful, came to the Bookſeller and enquir'd for *the Plain Dealer*. *Madam*, ſays Mr. *Fairbeard*, *ſince you are for the* Plain Dealer, *there he is for you*, puſhing Mr. *Wycherley* towards her. *Yes*, ſays Mr. *Wycherley*, *this Lady can bear plain Dealing, for ſhe appears to be ſo accompliſh'd, that what would be Compliment ſaid to others, ſpoke to her would be plain Dealing. No, truly, Sir*, ſaid the Lady, *I am not with-*

out

out my Faults any more than the rest of my Sex, and yet notwithstanding all my Faults, I love plain Dealing, and never am more fond of it than when it tells me of my Faults. Then, Madam, said Mr. *Fairbeard, you and the* Plain Dealer *seem design'd by Heaven for each other.* In short, Mr. *Wycherley* walk'd with her upon the Walks, waited upon her home, visited her daily at her Lodgings, while she staid at *Tunbridge*, and after she went to *London*, at her Lodgings in *Hatton Garden*, where in a little time he got her Consent to marry her, which he did, by his Father's Command, without acquainting the King; for it was reasonably suppos'd, that the Lady having a great Independant Estate, and noble and powerful Relations, the acquainting the King with the intended Marriage might be the likeliest way to prevent it. As soon as the News of it came to Court it was look'd upon as an Affront to the King, and a Contempt of his Majesty's Offers. And Mr. *Wycherley*'s Conduct after his Marriage made this be resented more heinously. For seldom or never coming near the Court, he was thought downright ungrateful. But the true Cause of his Absence was not known, and the Court was at that time too much alarm'd, and in too much Disquiet to enquire into it. In short, Sir, the Lady was jealous of him to Distraction, jealous to that degree,

degree, that ſhe could not endure that he ſhould be one Moment out of her Sight. Their Lodgings were in *Bow-ſtreet, Covent-Garden*, over-againſt the *Cock*, whither if he at any time went with his Friends, he was oblig'd to leave the Windows open, that the Lady might ſee there was no Woman in Company, or ſhe would be immediately in a downright raving Condition. Whether this outragious Jealouſy proceeded from the exceſs of her Paſſion, for ſhe lov'd her Husband with the ſame Violence with which ſhe had done her Lover, or from the great Things which ſhe had heard reported of his manly Proweſs, which were not anſwer'd by her Experience, or from them both together, Mr. *Wycherley* thought that he was oblig'd to humour it, and that he could not be too indulgent to a Lady who had beſtow'd both her Perſon and her Fortune on him. This, Sir, was the Cauſe that brought Mr. *Wycherley* all at once into the utmoſt Diſgrace with the Court, whoſe Favour and Affection but juſt before he poſſeſſed in the higheſt Degree. And theſe, Sir, are the Particulars of Mr. *Wycherley*'s Life, which ſeem either to have ſlipt from your Memory, or to have eſcaped your Knowledge.

Sept. 1. 1720. *I am*, &c.

Adver-

ORIGINAL

LETTERS,

FAMILIAR,

MORAL *and* CRITICAL

By Mr. *DENNIS.*

VOLUME *the* SECOND.

LONDON:
Printed for W. MEARS, at the *Lamb* without *Temple-Bar.* MDCCXXI.

ADVERTISEMENT *to the* READER *concerning the following* LETTER.

THE following Letter was writ by me about sixteen Years ago. But that the Reader may enter into it with the greater Ease, and be the better entertain'd with it, it will be convenient to lay before him the Occasion upon which it was writ. It was towards the end of the last Century that Mr. Collier *publish'd a Book call'd,* A short View of the Prophaness and Immorality of the *English* Stage; *in which Book, tho' there were several Things true in particular, yet the Author was manifestly so unfair an Adversary in general, that the latter End of the Book very grossly contradicted the beginning of it, and endeavour'd to decry even a Regulated Stage, which the Author at the beginning of the Book had acknowled'd useful. About four or five Years after that, as near as I can remember, Mr.* Collier *took occasion from the great Storm, which happen'd about that Time, to renew his Attack*

upon the Stage, in a little Pamphlet call'd, A Dissuasive from the Play-House, written by way of Letter to a Person of Quality. *Which Pamphlet, upon the Fast Day that was order'd to be kept by publick Authority immediately after that Tempest, was given to People* gratis *as they came out of the Churches. The Design of it was to make the great Storm a Judgment upon the Nation for the Enormities of our Theatres. The Hypocrisie was here so flagrant and so absurd and extravagant, that it rais'd either the Indignation or Mirth of all discerning Men of Integrity. At the same time it had a wonderful Influence upon the Weak and the Hypocrites; and there was a great Outcry against the Stage; so great a one, that there was a warm Report about the Town, that it had been twice debated in Council, whether the Theatres should be shut up or continued. Then it was that I could bear no longer, but as I had before defended a regulated Stage against the Author's Attack in his* Short View, *I was resolved to expose the Hypocrisie, the Extravagance and the Sophistry of his* Dissuasive. *This Resolution produced the following Letter, which I call'd the* Person of Quality's Answer to Mr. *Collier*'s Letter; *and which was intended to consist of a Mixture of Reason and Raillery, and which was most agreeably receiv'd by some of the best Judges who were*

then

then in England, *and particularly by the late Duke of* Buckingham, *the late Earl of* Halifax, *and the present Lord* Lansdown. *As this Letter has been so long out of Print, that it is as scarce as any Manuscript of which there is but one Copy, I thought it might be as new and as entertaining to most of its Readers as if it had been never publish'd. There remains one thing more with which I must acquaint the Reader, and that is, that I, who have all my Life-time abhorr'd Hypocrisie, and scorn'd to pass for any thing which I am not, tho' in the Title Page I call the Letter* the Person of Quality's Answer, *have yet taken care in the Body of the Letter to acquaint the Reader, that I am only a private Gentleman. But I make no doubt but that I am a much more considerable Person than he to whom Mr.* Collier's *Letter was writ, who perhaps was no Body.*

THE

Perſon of Quality's ANSWER

TO

Mr. COLLIER'S LETTER:

Containing a Defence of a Regulated Stage.

Dear Doctor, Lincolns-Inn-Fields, Jan. *the 1ſt.*

THIS Afternoon, I receiv'd your Edifying, Evangelical *Diſſuaſive*; for which, What Thanks can I return you? What Recompence can be ſufficient? May he, for whoſe ſake you did it, amply reward you.

I had conceived indeed a Zealous concern at the Diſorders of the Play-Houſe, I lamented its having ſo much the aſcendant of the Town, and the Countenance of Figure and Fortune. And I too juſtly preſaged that theſe Nurſeries of Licerſe and Atheiſm, eſpecially

pecially that in our Neighbourhood, wou'd, if unrestrain'd, prove fatal to the Nation; make us ripe for Destruction, and pull down some terrible Vengeance on our Heads; no less than Popery, or Arbitrary Power at the least; and, dear Doctor, what a Day, and what a Sight wou'd that be to you and me?

For this Reason, I resolved that, in my Family, Reformation and the Year should begin together; and for that Reason I called them together as soon as they had dined to-day, determining to read a long and a solemn Lecture out of your *Short View* to them; but a strange Fatality had happen'd; for some audacious Rats had so prophanely gnawn it, that it was no longer legible; a Detachment, in my Conscience, of Play-House Vermin, whom the Devil had enter'd into for that purpose, at his Congregation in the Neighbourhood.

Thus bilk'd of my Homily, I thought I must, to my great Grief, have been forced to dismiss my Flock. For I perceived they were grown *frightfully Nice and Impatient, and were resolved to be cur'd extempore or not at all.*

But then it was that in an auspicious Moment arriv'd your short, but Divine *Dissuasive.* I read it over as it were in a Breath, while they all the while stood gaping to entertain it. But the last incom-

parable Paragraph but one, I pronounced with a more emphatical Voice; laid before them with all the Energy of my Lungs, *the sad Instance of God's Judgment in the terrible Tempest, when we were almost swept into Chaos*, when Nature *seem'd to be in her last Agony, and the World seem'd ready to expire.* And what occasion, said I to my gaping Audience, to have Recourse to Tragedies, when those Rants, that Fustian, and that Bombast, with which deluded Mortals are now-a-days so tickled, are engagingly inserted into our very *Dissuasives*?

And here, Doctor, I made two Remarks to them, upon the Judgment of the late dreadful Tempest. • For first, said I, the Outcries of the Play-House Practices are so aggravating, so horrible, that the Divine Vengeance which they brought down upon us, has invol'd the very Innocent. Not only the poor Inhabitants of *Cologn*, but the very *Hamburgers* and *Dantzickers*, and all the People of the *Baltick*, have suffer'd for the Enormities of our *English* Theatres; tho' I believe in my Conscience they never so much as heard of a Play, and know no more the Difference between a Tragedy and Comedy, than they do the Distance between the Earth and *Saturn*; so that, said I, you may observe from hence, 'tis not enough to keep away from these lewd Entertainments; but you must endeavour with

all your Might to suppress the Conventicles of Satan.

The second Observation that I made was this, that we have reason to be thankful to Heaven, for forbearing us so long. For if the late dreadful Judgment had happen'd in the Reign of King *Charles* the Second, when the Play-Houses were licentious in all their Impunity; when Reformation was so far from being thought of, that the very Name was despised and laught at, what must the dismal Consequence not have been? Then we should certainly have been swallow'd up, since the *Judgment* was so terrible even the other Day, after a five Years Reformation?

What reason have we to be thankful, that we live in an Age in which Light is come into the World. For in what *Ægyptian* Darkness have we liv'd hitherto? And what a poor Reformation was that which was carried on in Queen *Elizabeth*'s time, in Comparison of that which you are gloriously projecting? For with that former Reformation the Play-House began, grew up, and spread, and flourish'd. What a shadow of a Reformation was that? 'Tis true, Popery was driven out, and wholsome Laws were enacted to secure the Rights of the People. But what signified all that, when the Play-House was encourag'd? For tho', as you learnedly observe,

Play-Houſes, in the Reign of that great Queen, were not permitted to be erected in the Liberties of the City, yet in the Suburbs they were not only permitted but encourag'd with a Vengeance; and by whom encourag'd? Why, not only by the People, but by the Court, nay, by the Council, yes, by thoſe poor deluded Wretches *Cecil* and *Walſingham*, who believ'd it to be the Buſineſs, forſooth, of wiſe States-Men, to provide honeſt and reaſonable Diverſions for the People; and at the ſame time were ſo infatuated, ſo intoxicated, as to believe the Entertainments of the Theatre not only to be honeſt and reaſonable, but the only honeſt and reaſonable Diverſions.

Nay, the poor miſtaken Queen her ſelf encouraged Play-Houſes to that degree, that ſhe not only commanded *Shakeſpear* to write the Comedy of the *Merry Wives*, and to write it in ten Days time; ſo eager was ſhe for the wicked Diverſion; but ev'n with that Hand that wielded the Scepter deſcended poorly to tranſlate a Play that was writ by a *Grecian* Poet. She had read, it ſeems, of ſome great Men among the *Romans*, who had ſhewn the way; as *Julius Cæſar* had writ *Adraſtus*; *Auguſtus*, *Ajax*; *Gracchus*, *Thieſtes*; and *Mecænas*, *Octavia*; and ſhe wanted Judgment, alas, poor Woman, to diſtinguiſh between the Obligations of a Heathen and a Chriſtian. 'Tis

true

true she was wise enough in some things, she kept out Popery and Arbitrary Power, she defended us from *Rome* and *Spain*, by the meer Force of her Prudence. But what signified that, you know, Doctor, when she encourag'd the Play-Houses, and wanted Fore-sight in that particular, to presage that these Nurseries of Vice and Atheism wou'd prove fatal to the Nation?

It seems some Fools about her had told her, that at a time when Taxes were frequent and grievous, some honest Diversions would comfort the People, but that it would be unreasonable to deprive them at once of their Money, and of their Pleasure too; this she had been told, and she like an easie Woman believ'd it. But what amazes me most is this, Doctor, that not only that Queen and her Council encouraged Plays, but not so much as one of the famous Prelates in her time said so much as a word against them. 'Tis true, the States-Men defended us against *Spain* very vigorously, and very effectually, and so did the Church-Men against the *Roman* See; but alas their poor and narrow Spirits contented themselves with that. But not so much as one word was said against the Abominations of the Play-Houses. There were Reformers indeed! Were they so senseless that they wanted Discernment to see the *flaming and Outragious Wickedness* of them?

Or

Or so very wicked that they wanted Zeal to discharge their Duty in suppressing them? Ah my dear Doctor, had you but liv'd in those Times, you wou'd have taught that Queen her Lesson, in loyal Libels have told her her Duty, affronted her Authority, defam'd her Servants, and boldly have told her that she countenanc'd them only to debauch her People. You would have open'd the Eyes of those Fools, who believ'd *Shakespear* to be Instructive as well as Innocent. You would have extracted more *Smutt* from his Comedies, than a Chimney does from Seacoal. And what Prophaness and Blasphemy had you not found in his Tragedies? You would have satisfy'd both Queen, and Council, and Clergy too, that their Business was to suppress the Play-Houses, and to let *Spain* and *Rome* alone. That the Danger that they were in was not from *Philip* the Second, and *Sixtus* the Fifth; but from Tyrants who had been many a Year defunct, from *Julius Cæsar* and *Macbeth*; you would have *presaged* the Storm that the latter would have pull'd down upon the Nation, a hundred Years after 'twas writ. You had then been *Histrio Mastix* the first, whereas you are now but the second of that glorious Name; and then had old bungling *Pryn* been cropt for presuming to copy you. Thus, my dear Doctor, we have reason to believe what

you

you would have done, from what we behold you do. For tho' Popery and Slavery are at our Doors, and each Moment are rushing in upon us; and nothing but the Wisdom of one Woman stands between us and them, yet you still retain your commendable Passive Principle, appear as unconcern'd as if you had sworn to be a Foe to neither, are found to be as little alarm'd for the Church, as if you had thrown off its Cause, as you have cast off its Habit; and instead of crying out Slavery, Popery, do nothing but cry out the Play-House, the Play-House, with as much Fury as if you were afraid it should contribute to the keeping them out.

But my dear Doctor, by the leave of your Modesty, I must exalt your Glory to a higher Pitch. When Queen *Elizabeth* died, King *James* succeeded her; and among the eminent Reformers of his Reign there was no talk of the Stage. Nay, on the contrary, to their Shame be it spoken, that King and his Court appear'd to be infinitely delighted with Plays. And in his Visits to the two Universities, Plays were the chief of his Entertainment. But what would we have, Doctor? as the Education is, so is the Youth. And he had been tutor'd by old *George*, a notorious Reformer, but a notorious Playwright. For the Sot believ'd, it seems, that the *Drama* could contribute to the Reformation of Mankind.

To

To King *James* succeeded King *Charles* the First; and then arose another famous Reformer, *John Milton* by Name, who not only left a Tragedy behind him, the Story of which he impiously borrow'd from the Bible, written, to leave him without Excuse, in his mature, nay declining Years, but has left a fine Encomium on *Shakespear*; has shewn an extraordinary Esteem for *Johnson*; and among all the Things that he thought fit to reform, so far had Prejudice laid hold of his Understanding, it never so much as came into his Head that the Stage was one of them.

But then about that time, Doctor, there arose a Reformer indeed, Brother *Pryn* of Illustrious Memory; a Person indeed of an *amazing* Boldness. For to the Fervency of his furious Spirit, Ruine and Reformation were all one. With these Zealot's Thoughts he set about reforming the Church as well as the Stage; and by preparing the Downfal of one made way for the Ruine of the other. 'Tis true, he lost some part of himself in the Cause. But happy the Ears that were so lost! How much happier than those that stand pricking up daily at the Ribaldry of our Modern Comedies? I know, dear Doctor, under the Rose, that you have the same Design, and that you will never leave off writing as long as there is left either a Prelate or Poet in *England*;

or

or if you do condescend to admit of Bishops, you will at least suffer no such Bishops as have a Tang of the Stage; I mean no swearing, prophane Bishops, but such whose meek and Christian Communication is only Yea and Nay.

As you have the same noble Design, may you find better Fortune, as you well deserve. For he, my dear Doctor, was but a Type of your more excellent self, tho' indeed an illustrious Type. And he but anticipated in a cold and a gloomy way, the very things that Fate had designed to be said with Fire and Flame by you. He indeed overthrew but for a time the Church and Stage together. But may you with a more propitious Fate——. But hold!—— No Man, you know, is able to tell into whose Hands a Letter may fall.

Thus, Doctor, the blessed Work of Reformation went on; and down went the Bishops and the Stage together; but after they had lain for some time in the Dust, were restor'd together, and with them the banish'd King.

And there are not People wanting, who believe, that the restoring the Stage, was one of the Motives to the restoring the banish'd King; for, say they, the People of *England* were at last grown weary of a nasty, gloomy, sullen, Fanatical Government, and began to long for their Pleasures. How, my

my dear Doctor? The restoring the Stage was one of the Motives to restoring the banish'd King? Ah, my dear Doctor, if you had but flourish'd in that auspicious Juncture! How happy would you have esteem'd your self to have been the Instrument of suppressing the Stage, only on purpose to see it restor'd with such a glorious Attendant?

Well! the King, the Bishops, and the Stage were restored together, and a long time flourish'd together, without any talk of reforming the Play-Houses, much less of suppressing them. For the merry Ministers of that happy Prince laugh'd at a Reformation. And even the foremost Ministers of the Church at that time, among whom were certainly some of the greatest Men that the Christian World has produc'd, appear'd by no means to be so terribly alarm'd at the Entertainments of the Stage.

You your self, I remember, Doctor, were then at Years of Discretion; and yet with passive Ears and Tongue, endur'd the Filth of *Epsom* Wells, the Bawdy of the *Soldier's Fortune*, and the Beastliness of *Limber-Ham*. But the time of your Prophetick Mission it seems was not yet come, or perhaps you thought it improper to fall out with the Play-Houses, before you had fallen out with the Government. But you have at last, to the wonder of the World, declar'd your

ſelf, and we may ſay of you what *Lucretius* ſaid of his ador'd *Epicurus*, Pardon the Compariſon, I beſeech you, Doctor,

That you in Wit ſurpaſs Mankind as far,
As does the Midday Sun, the Midnight Star.

For what in the beginning of the Reformation was never ſeen, neither by *Jewell*, nor *Ridley*, nor *Cranmer*, nor *Latimer*; nor was afterwards hardly ſo much as thought of by the judicious, the penetrating, the ſagacious *Hooker*; nor what in this latter end of it, (as under the Roſe we ſweetly hope Doctor) has not been found out neither by *Wilkins* nor *Tillotſon*, who have ſhown ſo much Underſtanding and ſo much Judgment; as well by the Force of their invincible Arguments, as of their clear, chaſte, noble, and maſculine Styles; What none of theſe have been able to find, you have plainly convinc'd the World of; that the Play-Houſe would bring all to Ruin; O Miracle of boundleſs Sagacity! O Prodigy of Penetration! The late Archbiſhop was certainly a Man of as undoubted Probity, of as much Integrity, as ever liv'd in the World; nor was his Zeal and his Boldneſs in the Cauſe of Virtue leſs; witneſs that noble, that intrepid Spirit, with which he appear'd againſt Popery, even in the moſt dangerous times, when the Jeſuits us'd

ſharp

ſharp deciſive Arguments, and made nothing of cutting a Man's Throat out of Zeal to confute his Doctrine; the late Archbiſhop, I ſay, Doctor, who had ſo much Boldneſs, as well as Zeal and Integrity, and who in the late Reign had ſo much Power; never ſaw this dreadful Danger from Plays, which you have ſo plainly diſcover'd. * For if he had ſeen it, he would have prevail'd upon the late Queen to ſuppreſs them. He either foreſaw none of this Danger, or if he did, the good miſtaken Man thought there would be more in going about to prevent it. An infallible Sign that he wanted your Fore-ſight and your Sagacity. He look'd upon himſelf to be indiſpenſably bound in a double Reſpect to reform the Corruptions of the times. For he was both Head of the Church, and firſt Counſellor of State. And no Man knew better than that judicious Prelate, that Corruptions of Manners are moſt pernicious both to Church and State. And no Man ever diſcover'd more Zeal for the preſent Eſtabliſhment both in Church and State. And yet poor Man, with all his Underſtanding, and all his Zeal, he was ſo far deluded in this Particular, that he never medled

* *There is ſomething in the Eleventh Volume of his Sermons againſt* Plays, *which I had not ſeen when this was writ: but* Mr. Collier *has prevaricated vilely in the Quotation.*

medled with these Nurseries of License and Atheism. As many admirable Sermons as he left behind him, against the Vices and the Errors of the Times; I believe you will hardly find that he has mentioned the Play-Houses with Bitterness in them all. He left that part of Reformation for your sublimer Prudence, and more Heroick Charity. Indeed the Concern that he had himself both in Church and State was so apparent, that perhaps he might fear that a violent Endeavour to reform our Theatres in him might look like Interest; and might perhaps imagine that the Work would be kindlier received, if it were carried on by one who cared not a Farthing either for Church or State.

And here, Doctor, give me leave to admire the Glory, or to speak in your own Diviner Language, the *Meridian Blaze of your mysterious Charity. 'Tis of an amazing Size and Brightness*, and our weak Eyes are dazled at it. For that you, dear Doctor, who appear so extremely nice and scrupulous, that you dare not so much as take an Oath to defend our Sovereign Lady and us, against our Mortal Enemies; you who are so over cautious that you dare not so much as hold any Communion with us, that you should take up this extream Concern for our Souls, that you should be so violent for our Salvation, is beyond Ex-

preſſion wonderful. When I conſider that all who are engaged by Duty, are either dumb or very cold in the matter, while you are declaiming with ſo much Fervour, with ſo much Zeal, againſt the Diſorders of our Theatres, you who have nothing to do with the Matter; I can never ſufficiently admire the Exceſs of your Zeal, which is too high and too heavenly to be comprehended by a Mortal.

I can only ſay, that 'tis a thouſand pities 'tis confin'd to ſo narrow a Sphere. But, alas! good Man, it is none of your Fault that it is not more univerſal. For we have reaſon to be ſenſible, that if you were not reſtrain'd by the Apprehenſion of brutal and beaſtly Force, you would not fail to declaim with the ſame Heat and the ſame Bitterneſs againſt both Church and State.

This amazing Brightneſs of your Charity, has drawn upon you the Envy of ſome good Men; has made you become the Hatred of Libertines, and the Jeſt and Scorn of Buffoons. I, Doctor, am your Champion againſt them all; and I have many a bickering in your Behalf, even with my moderate Friends; who are indeed for reforming the Licentiouſneſs of the Stage, but are by no means for a Suppreſſion of the Play-Houſes. Mr. *Collier*, ſays one of them, is too ſevere. He does not conſider the Times that we live in. Theſe are not

the

the Primitive Apoſtolical Times, but the laſt and corrupt Ages of the World. The Capital of a great Kingdom muſt have Meetings for publick Pleaſure. If Mr. *Collier* is for pulling down Plays; let him name a more harmleſs and reaſonable Diverſion to be eſtabliſh'd in the room of them. What, would he have us always at our Devotion? Or does he expect that we ſhould be all devout? Would he have Devotion a Mode and Faſhion, as it is in *France?* where the Rake is as devout as the Archbiſhop, the Whore-maſter as the Monk, and the moſt inconſiderable Punk at *Verſailles*, as the moſt glorious Madam *de Maintenon.* 'Tis true, ſaid he, there are things in ſome of our Plays that I could heartily wiſh were out, but Mr. *Collier* is too rigid, too harſh, and out of all meaſure ſevere. He does not bear with the leaſt Faults, and ſeems to have no Indulgence for Human Frailty. Thus, Doctor, you were attack'd the other Day by a Friend of mine, and you ſhall ſee how I defended you.

Lord, Sir, ſays I, you are the moſt miſtaken Man in the World. Mr. *Collier* is no ſuch Perſon as you imagine. He is a good-natur'd, ſweet temper'd Man as lives, and will bear as far as any Man whatever. And as for your ſaying that he has no Indulgence for Human Frailty, why 'tis a ſign that you don't know him. 'Tis true, he has taken a fatal Averſion to the Play-

House; and he will down with it. We have all of us an Aversion for something or other. And why should you be so much concern'd for that *Rendezvous of Rakes and Strumpets?* But yet Mr. *Collier* has Indulgence enough for them too, any where but in the Play-House. And where's the mighty Hardship then upon them? Are there no places for them to assemble at, but there? Are there not Taverns, Brandy-Shops, Coffee-Houses, Chocolate-Houses, Gaming-Houses for the Rakes; and *Indian*-Houses, Musick-Houses, Bawdy-Houses, either for Strumpets solitary, or Strumpets and Rakes in Conjunction according as they please? Has Mr. *Collier* writ one Word for five Years together against any of these Places? For Godsake what do you call want of Indulgence then? Is not every Coffee-House in Town grown a Gaming-House? May not we go every Hour of the Day into several of them, and see and hear twenty fellows swearing and blaspheming, and one surrounded by that horrid Crew,

Shaking with bloody Oaths the Box,
And calling upon Plague and Pox
T' assist him?

Why, there they may swear and be damn'd for all Mr. *Collier*. He troubles himself with swearing no where but in the Play-

House;

House? But what do you mean by Human Frailty? When People are wicked in earnest that's something. He has nothing to say against such. But to be vicious in Jest, to play the fool with the Devil, to counterfeit Sin forsooth on pretence of decrying it, why these are *dreadful Provocations, this is flaming and outragious Wickedness*; and Wickedness which he is positively and absolutely resolv'd that he will not endure.

Come, come, says he, I begin to be sensible of the Matter. Mr. *Collier* is now declining in Years; and the Affairs of the World go not according to his Wishes: And Age and Disappointments have sower'd his Blood, and made him lose the relish of Sports and gay Diversions. Once more, said I, you are the most mistaken Man in the World; Mr. *Collier* is far from being a Foe to the gayest Sports and Pastimes; but then he is for having those who frequent them take the Consent and Approbation of the *Nonjuring* Clergy along with them, who you know are '*Persons of Sobrity and Conduct.* He'll tell you, that the Sports that good Bishop *Laud* appointed for the Sabbath, were not only safe but commendable. That for Example, Cricket when it came to be so recommended, immediately became Canonical, Foot-ball Orthodox, and Juggle-Cat *Jure Divino.* But for the Layety to be so impertinent as to

chuſe Diverſions for themſelves; and particularly for the Ladies to believe that they have Capacities enough to judge between right and wrong, and to diſtinguiſh Decency from what is not *Decorum*, he takes to be an Enormity that is never to be allow'd of in any Chriſtian Country.

The Play-Houſe, ſaid I, is one of thoſe Diverſions which Mr. *Collier* believes to be too luſcious a Paſtime for the Layety. To ſee and to read Plays, he thinks is enough for one of his eſtabliſh'd Virtue. And it muſt be own'd, that he has read or ſeen more than any Perſon in *Chriſtendom*. As for the Layety, leſs vigorous Diverſions may ſerve them. The Men may take a Game at Bowls in the Summer, and a Game at Whisk in the Winter. The Women in Winter may viſit their grave Relations, and in Summer Evenings may take a Boat to cool themſelves. * For as for the *Park*, he ſays, that is a place that *is too much frequented by Rakes and Strumpets. He does not mean*, he ſays, *that all the Company there are ſo; but this he may affirm*, he ſays, *that ſcarce any Quarter is ſometimes ſo plentifully ſtock'd. Now who*, ſays Mr. *Collier, would truſt his Health in a Place of Mortality, or go to the Peſthouſe for Recreation?* Thus Mr. *Collier*, like a Perſon of

* *The ſame Company for the moſt that frequents the* Park *frequents the* Play-Houſe.

of Conduct and Sobriety, treats the Layety with the same Circumspection, that a *Romish* Priest does his Congregation at high Mass, who only delivers the Wafer to the People, and reserves the Wine for himself.

But, Doctor, I had almost forgot one Thing, that I urg'd among the rest in your Defence, and that was the Reason why you stick so close to the Play-House, and let some other flaming Vices alone, which he was pleased to enumerate; and that was, that you took this way of proceeding, to be laying the Ax to the Devilish Root of the accursed Branches, that the Play-House was the undoubted Cause of all the Iniquity in the Nation; and that if we could but down with that, a sudden Reformation would follow among all sorts of People. That Porters would no longer be drunk with Belch. That vigorous Captains would be tilting no more at handsome Drawers in Taverns. That losing Gamesters would no more Blaspheme: And my Lady *Dabcheek*'s Basset Bank would be immediately broke.

These are the things that I have said in your behalf to several of the Enemies of your *Short View* and *Defence*. I now come to tell you what has happen'd upon the receiving your *Dissuasive*; tho' 'tis scarce three Hours since its Arrival. Immediately upon the reading it, my eldest Son *Jack* told me that he was perfectly satisfied that

Plays were abominable; and taking his Hat, his Sword and his Cloak, went away for St. *James*'s. My eldeſt Daughter *Suſan* is gone to take a Walk in the Garden, to meditate there in the dark; that ſhe may have the Arguments in Readineſs, by which ſhe ſays ſhe deſigns to convert her Siſter. But my younger Son *Charles* made ſome Objections, and ſo did my Daughter *Harriet*, which I here ſend you as well as I can recollect them; becauſe I know, Doctor, that you are able to anſwer them better than I can.

Sir, ſays *Charles*, I have promis'd my Lady *Freelove* to Day, to wait upon her to the Play, and ſo has my Siſter *Harriet*; but for the future I promiſe you to keep away, and ſo I dare ſay will my Siſter, if you will but anſwer ſome Objections that we have to make againſt Mr. *Collier*'s Diſcourſes.

I know no Reaſon, why Mr. *Collier* ſhould pretend to meddle with our Diverſions. If he is really offended at Plays himſelf, in the name of God let him keep away, I know no body who is fond of his Company there. But ſince we don't pretend to oblige him to come, why ſhould he preſume to oblige us to keep away?

If Mr. *Collier* is really offended at Play-Houſes, I would fain know how long he he has been ſo, or what is the Reaſon that he did not write againſt them when he was

young:

young: For the Stage was really then more licentious than it is now. Since he forbore writing against them till he was old, we humbly desire that we may not leave them till we are old. And then perhaps we may have some natural or some politick Considerations that may oblige us to rail as much as he does.

How comes this Man to take up so much Concern for us? Is it Christian Charity, and a tender Care for our Souls? I would fain ask him one Question, Is not true Religion that which is chiefly necessary for the Salvation of Souls? If he says it is, why then let me ask him another Question: Is the Religion which we of the present establish'd Church of *England* profess the true one, or is it not? If it is, why does not he hold Communion with us? If it is not, why does not he set us right? Has he a Concern for our Souls, or not? If he has, why does he not mind the main thing? If he has not, why does he pretend to make us uneasie, and set us together by the Ears about Trifles?

Is it a Concern for the State that makes him take up his Pen? because perhaps he believes that the Corruptions of the Stage may prove of dangerous Consequence to the Government. But if he has that extream Concern for it, Why does he not take an Oath to be true to it? Why does he not Abjure the Gentleman who dwells at St. *Ger-*

Germains? He believes us Schiſmaticks, and he believes us Rebels, and takes no Notice of the Matter. But if we talk of going to a Play, the Man's Zeal grows flaming and outragious upon it. Certainly his is a very nice, and very extraordinary Charity!

But if he is offended at Plays, ſo much as he pretends, why does he ſee them, why does he read them ſo much? Why ſhould he be ſo ridiculouſly conceited, and ſo ſpiritually proud, as to think that he can ſtand under Temptations, under which we muſt fall?

If he has ſo much Averſion for Plays as he pretends, if they are ſo very horrible, why has he read ſo many, why has he done Evil that Good may come of it? If he really loves them, and they are not ſo abominable, Why has he writ againſt them? If he has writ againſt Plays that he loves, How comes it that he ſays nothing againſt the Church and State which he hates?

What Reaſon can be given for that, unleſs that he waits for his Opportunity, which by ſetting us at Variance about Trifles, he hopes in ſome Meaſure to haſten; or unleſs, while in the Face of the World he is bombarding the Stage, he is diligently in private undermining the Church and the State?

In this Age of univerſal Toleration, when Nonſenſe of every Sort and Size is tolerated,

ed, not only that gloomy, sullen, lifeless Nonsense, which is to be heard at *Quakers* and *Anabaptist* Meetings; but that sparkling, spirited, fiery Fustian which is to be found in our *Dissuasives*; in an Age in which Schism it self is tolerated, Heresie is tolerated; nay, when Mr. *Collier*'s Jacobite Congregation is tolerated; in this Age of universal Toleration for Hypocrisie and Nonsense, shall we suffer an Inquisition to be set up for Wit, and Sense and Pleasure?

We are willing to have all the Indulgence in the World, for the Errors and Frailties of our Fellow Creatures; and tho' we may believe some of them Schismaticks, believe some of them Hereticks, yet we are not for reforming them against their Wills, nor saving them out of Malice. And we thought we might have hop'd, at least that the Government might have hop'd, that at the same time that it indulges some of them, not only in different ways of Worship, but ways which are disagreeable, and some of them prejudicial to it, and ways which neither are, nor were, nor ever will be tolerated in any other Kingdom of *Europe*; we thought, I say, that the Government might have hop'd that these very Persons would have born with a Diversion, which is establish'd by that, and which is not only protected by each of the Governments of the

the most considerable Kingdoms in *Europe*; but which has had always the Allowance of publick Authority in the most flourishing Nations; and has been believed by them all to be the fittest Entertainment that can be allow'd by publick Authority. At a time when the Government has shewn so much Indulgence for them; might it not be expected that they should shew some Regard for that, and not demand with furious Clamours, the Suppression of an Entertainment, establish'd by its Authority? For are not these Clamours against the Queen whose Servants the Players are? Is it not her that they attack thro' them? And may not we reasonably fear, that as they begin this Reformation as they did that in Forty, so if they are suffer'd to go on, they will end it like that, and bring all things into Confusion.

Pray, Sir, consider, have we spent so much Blood and Treasure in the Defence of our Liberties, and shall we suffer an Inquisition to be set up for that which is the very Life and Soul of Liberty, and that is harmless Pleasure? for 'tis for harmless Pleasure we only contend. Let the Corruptions of the Stage be banish'd, but let the rest remain. Yet at the same time it must be allowed that it is not Mr. *Collier* who is a proper Judge of their Innocence or their Guilt. One would judge my Lord Chamberlain

berlain and the Maſter of the Revels have common Senſe to diſtinguiſh right from wrong. Is Mr. *Collier* a Perſon fit to be appeal'd to from them? And ſhall we not dare to go to a Play till his Licenſe-Office is open? Shall we ſuffer our ſelves to be led by the Noſe by a Declamator, till we are brought into ſuch a Condition that we ſhall long for Slavery? How long ſhall we ſuffer Hypocriſie to paſs upon us for exact and ſcrupulous Virtue, Tropes for Reaſon, and Foppiſh Affectation for fine Language?

Shall we not only ſuffer an Inquiſition to be ſet up for Pleaſure, but as it were by univerſal implicit conſent permit his Diſciples to ſet up themſelves for Inquiſitors? When the Government of *England* pretends to give no Laws to the People, but by vertue of their own Election, and their own Conſent; Shall the Rabble erect themſelves into Legiſlators, and preſume to give Laws to the Queen her ſelf, and all the Nobility and Gentry of *England*, whether they will or no?

What has Mr. *Collier* to do with our Diverſions? Let him prove the Authority of his Miſſion to Preach up the aboliſhing of that heathen Invention a Play-Houſe. Cannot we meet together in a Play-Houſe, where we have no manner of Deſign upon Mr. *Collier*, without alarming him; and raiſing his Paſſions as he calls it to *Combuſtion*;

ſtion; when at the ſame time we have ſuffer'd him ſo long to meet in his ſeparate Congregations, where we reaſonably believe that he has a Deſign upon us. Certainly his is a pleaſant Charity, who in the very Hour of Death can abſolve an Impenitent Traytor, and damn a poor Fellow with Abſolute Power only for going to the Play-Houſe. What can he mean at this time of Day, when our Religion and Laws and Liberties are in the utmoſt Danger, from the Deſigns of *France* and *Rome* abroad, and a baſe perfidious Party at home, thus to divert Men from looking after their All, by ſcaring them with ridiculous Preſages from the Corruptions of the Stage? If Corruptions contrary to the Queen's Knowledge have crept into our Theatres, and Corruptions too enormous to be born by his ſcrupulous Virtue, why did he not, as his Loyalty oblig'd him to do, humbly Petition her Majeſty to redreſs them, inſtead of making uſe of the Licentiouſneſs of the Preſs, to raiſe ſeditious Clamours againſt her Conduct to the People?

It muſt be acknowledg'd there are Corruptions which are crept into our Theatres, for into what Human Inventions will not Corruptions creep, ſince it is plain that they inſenſiby creep into Religion which is of Divine Eſtabliſhment; but 'twould be a monſtrous Concluſion, that becauſe of the

the Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, reveal'd Religion ought to be suppressed, and Men to turn Deists or Atheists.

'Tis true, there are Passages in several of our Plays, which I could heartily wish were out. But neither do I see a quarter so many as Mr. *Collier* does, nor do I look upon those which I do see thro' his magnifying Opticks, The long View that he has taken of Smutt, as he very quaintly calls it, in his *Short View of the Stage*, puts me in mind of a *Dutch* Grotesque that is at my Lady *Freelove*'s; where there is an Antick Frier who has cast off his Frock, squinting thro' a Microscope at a wanton Nun who has thrown off her Petticoat. But Mr. *Collier* is mistaken, if he thinks that to discern some certain matters, he has need of a magnifying Glass. He has a Hawks, nay an Eagles Eye of his own at them; and I dare say, can see as clearly and as distinctly through two Petticoats and a Smock, as *Eustace Cummins*, of Immortal Memory, could swear through a two Inch Board.

'Tis very true, Sir, as I observed before, that there are several things in our Comedies which I could wish had been left out; and there are particularly some Bawdy Passages in them, which I wish the Authors had had more respect for the Audience in general, and for the Fair Sex in parti-

particular, than to have inserted in them. But does he think our Virtue so very weak, either the Ladies or the Gentlemens, that we cannot give them a transitory Hearing without being debauch'd by them, while his it seems is so very strong, that he can dwell for Months upon them, and make a full Collection of them, a Collection which has taught several of our Ladies more Bawdy in two Hours, than they could have learn'd in so many Years at the Play-House? Does he believe that no body ought to entertain them obscenely but himself? Or does he pretend to erect a Monopoly for Bawdy, to retail it to his Stationers as oft as his Occasions require? 'Tis true, there are Corruptions which have crept into our Theatres, and these Corruptions ought to be reformed; but therefore ought the Stage to be ruin'd? Is not the Corruption of the Stage an evident Proof of its original Goodness? since what is originally wicked never can be corrupted: But in what Human Conversation is there not Corruption?

Does Mr. *Collier* really believe that there is no swearing in Gaming-Houses? No Intriegues at *India* or Chocolate-Houses? No Lying, and no Sharping in Coffee-Houses? no beastly Lewdness at Musick-Houses, and Bawdy-Houses? If he believes that these Places are guilty of the Crimes imputed to them, Why does he not Preach to them, which

which have a great deal more Occasion for Reformation than the Play-House? For in most of them you have Venom without Preservative; but the Play-House carries, or should carry, the Antidote with the Poison. If Mr. *Collier* has seen any of these Places, as 'tis hard to believe that one of his Experience should not have been at some of them, methinks he should be convinc'd, that by correcting of them, he would begin with the Head, whereas now he but pleases and tickles Corruption, by catching Reformation by the Tail. A little common Sense may serve to convince a Man, that the reforming the Stage would never reform the Town; but the reforming the Town would certainly reform the Stage.

What is the Reason then that Mr. *Collier*, neglecting the Vices of the Town, keeps such a Bustle at those of the Stage? Why? because it is not his Design or Business to correct or reform any thing. His only Business is to set up himself. To erect an obscure Schismatical Parson into a Saint of the first Magnitude. To pass for a Man of more Sanctity than all the Bishops, and of more Discernment than all the Ministers of State. His Business is not to correct and reform, but to amuse, to puzzle, to make a Noise and a Party; to make the Stage the Apple of Dissention, to set us at untimely Variance at this dangerous

Juncture. He has Experience enough of the World, to know that a Noise and a Party is not to be made by barely attacking of Vice. For by doing that he would oblige only the Virtuous. And, alas! they are but few; and a silent, a modest, and an humble Party. But by attacking the Stage, he obliges the Vitious too; and they are numerous, and pert, and arrogant, and noisie, and tumultuous. 'Tis true, the Virtuous are Enemies to the Vices and Corruptions of the Stage. But only the Guilty and the Hypocrites are Enemies to a Stage reform'd; because a Stage reform'd would be Enemies only to them. When Mr. *Collier* began to write his *short View*, he designed to oblige only the first; for in the beginning of that Book, his Intent is plainly to reform the Stage. But then afterwards he wisely consider'd, that the obliging the Virtuous would not do his Business. They are not enough to cry up their Champion, and bring him into Reputation. But if he appear'd an Enemy to the Stage it self, and attempted to destroy it instead of reforming it, why then he would oblige all the doubty Hectors in Virtue, a numerous Multitude of false Braves, who would infallibly stand Buff for him, and be his Bully Backs on occasion. He knew of old the Catalogue of those who were Enemies to Satyr, and he knew that all the

Enemies

Enemies to Satyr, were so to the *English* Stage.

Sunt, quos genus hoc minime juvat, utpote plures
Culpari dignos. quemvis media erue turba:
Aut ob avaritiam, aut miserâ ambitione laborat.
Hic nuptarum insanit Amoribus, hic puerorum:
Hunc capit Argenti splendor: stupet Albius ære:
Hic mutat merces surgente à Sole ad eum, quo
Vespertina tepet regio: quin per mala præceps
Fertur, ut i pulvis collectus turbine; ne quid
Summa deperdat metuens, aut ampliet ut rem,
Omnes hi metuunt versus, odere poetas.

I know, Sir, that you understand the Original very well, and therefore I will not pretend to interpret *Horace* to you litterally, but I desire your leave to make some Observations upon him by way of Paraphrase, which will set his Sense in a clearer Light, and convince you of this important Truth, that all who would appear what they are not, are mortal Enemies to Comedy, because the Comick Poet is perpetually upon the hunt for Originals; and every one would

be glad to play the Fool or the Knave in quiet, without being ſingled from the Herd.

Sir, I ſhall at preſent trouble you but with two of theſe Characters of *Horace*, not only becauſe I am ſenſible that I begin to tire you, but for Reaſons which I ſhall hint to you anon; but thoſe two Characters I deſire that I may ſet before you with the ſame Additions, with which Time has tranſmitted them to us, and by altering them made them modern.

The Firſt is he, *Qui ob avaritiam laborat.* A gogling, ſnarling, groaning, praying Rogue; though at the ſame time an Uſurer and an Extortioner; a Fellow ſo notoriouſly given to cheating, that he defrauds even himſelf of Neceſſaries; who can dine on a Prayer, as Sir *John Denham* ſays, and ſup on an Exhortation; one who makes a Stalking-Horſe of Religion, and lies ſculking behind it with no other Purpoſe than to draw Wild-Geeſe within his Reach.

The other, Sir, is he; *Qui mutat merces*, &c. A biggotted Stock-Jobber, or a Fanatick Monopolizer, a Fellow that devoutly calls up his Family to Repetition on *Sundays*, and as devoutly makes them his Tools to ſmuggle and cheat the Queen on the Week-Days. A Perſon who will ſtick at no manner of Villany, but is kindly contented to be damn'd, only that his great boobily Boy may get half a dozen Claps,

half

half a ſcore Surfeits, loſe half his Eſtate at the Groom-Porters, be cheated of the other half by Sharpers who are Under Spur-Leathers, and jog on to the Devil a little more gayly than his Father. In the mean time this good-natur'd Father leads a moſt exemplary Life. In the Morning while his Servants are buſie at the Water-ſide, he walks about the City to pull down Play-Bills, cheat thoſe who deal with him, to cauſe all the Beggars that he finds in his way to be whip'd, tho' at that very time he is going to augment the Number of them; to viſit Watch-Men, Headboroughs and Petty-Conſtables, and charge them that if they find any handſome Whore upon their Watch, they ſhould bring her to him the next Morning; and leaſt the Conſtable or the Watch ſhould have a wambling to her themſelves, for ſuch things he remembers have been formerly done, he reads a long Lecture to them againſt Concupiſcence, and then goes home and gravely dines with his Family. The Afternoon he paſſes in walking from Tavern to Tavern, in which he drinks above twenty Nipperkins, in as many ſeveral Kitchens, to ſee that there is no Swearing nor no Prophaneſs there, but that People, as he thinks it behoves good Chriſtians, get devoutly and religiouſly drunk; till growing more and more inflam'd with Canary and Zeal, and being full of them

both, he is oblig'd at laſt to diſembogue himſelf, which he does of each, by ſpewing and preaching in turns. And after he has thus performed his Duty to the Publick; and fortified himſelf for the better Performance of private Duties, he goes home like a good Man, to faſt and pray with his Family: I ſay to faſt, Sir, not out of Covetouſneſs or Superſtition, but that he may ſecure the Chaſtity of his Daughters by mortifying the Old Man in them, and the Youths of his Family.

But, Sir, by your ſhaking your Head, and your biting your Lip, I am to believe you miſtake me. I am not here for making a Satyr upon the City. I know very well that this City is the only true and ſolid Foundation of the *Engliſh* Strength. Nor am I ſuch a Fool as to believe that Senſe or Honour are confined to Place. I am my ſelf acquainted with a great many Citizens, who are very eſtimable Members of the Commonwealth; I know ſeveral among them who are not only Men of Senſe and Honour, but of Wit and Pleaſantry. I know ſeveral of them, whoſe true Zeal for Religion is ſhewn by all that engaging Charity, that attractive Humility, and lovely Meekneſs, which are the only Signs of a good Chriſtian. And for ſuch true Chriſtians, whether they may belong to the Church or Meeting-Houſe, no Man has a

greater

greater Respect than I have; who judge of Mens Devotion, not by the Errors of their Understandings, but by the Sincerity of their Hearts. But every Hypocrite, to talk in Mr. *Collier*'s extraordinary Dialect, is the Displeasure and Disease of my Eyes. I hunt him, as *Boileau* says, as a Dog does his Game, and as soon as ever I smell him, I bark immediately. And, with Submission to you, Sir, I believe I am in the right of it; and that the Hypocrites in Christian Warfare ought to be more severely handled, than a Strumpet or a Libertine, as we treat an open declar'd Enemy less rigorously than a Spy. That the number of Hypocrites in the City is very great, the Men of true Devotion there will be the first to acknowledge. 'Tis to the Level of them that Mr. *Collier* has particularly writ: Every thing in his *short View*, his *Defence*, and his *Dissuasive* appears to be adapted to them; the Sophistry of his Deductions, the equivocating and prevaricating of his Citations, the Finicalness of his Language, and the Pharisaical Arrogance of his Zeal. By gaining of these he knew he should compass both the Ends, for the which he writ. The first of which was, that he should engage a numerous Party to make a Noise and to bully for him; of which he did not fail.

For it is notoriously known, that in the late Reign, several Persons of the foremen-

tion'd Stamp, who pretended to meet together for the ſupport of the Laws and the Government, diſcharg'd their Malice in a publick manner againſt ſeveral Gentlemen of known Loyalty and *Engliſh* Principles; only that they might do an acceptable thing to a Man whom they knew to be a mortal Enemy to the preſent Eſtabliſhment.

The other End that Mr. *Collier* probably propos'd to himſelf, by exaſperating the noiſie and clamorous Part of the City againſt the Theatres, might be to animate them againſt the People of Quality whoſe Preſence ſupports them, and the Court whoſe Authority protects them. That this is no chimerical Conjecture, may be thought by any one who takes a ſhort View of Mr. *Collier*'s Principles. For from this Proceeding he might eaſily foreſee one of theſe two Conſequences. For upon theſe Clamours and Outcries, either the Play-Houſes would be ſuppreſs'd, or they would be protected. If they were ſuppreſs'd, he eaſily ſaw the Gentry would be diſoblig'd, and that would be a pretty handſome Step towards ſome farther Reformations and Alterations. But if upon theſe Clamours they were not ſuppreſs'd, why then he had a great deal of Reaſon to hope that the City would grow ſullen and ſower. And if their being out of Humour was of ſuch dangerous Conſequence in the Days of Brother

Pryn

Pryn of bleſſed Memory, when the Court appear'd to have ſo little Occaſion for them; he believ'd that it might be of greater Moment now, when he knew that by the Neceſſity of the Times, the Court was oblig'd to demand their Aſſiſtance frequently.

Sir, you have often told me with extream Goodneſs, that you requir'd no Obedience to any Commands that you laid upon us, if they did not appear to be reaſonable; becauſe God himſelf, you have been pleaſed to tell us, required only our reaſonable Service. But, Sir, can you believe it reaſonable, that I ſhould be of another Man's Opinion againſt my own Sentiments, when it appears ſo plainly that he is not of his own? For, Sir, can any thing be more evident than that Mr. *Collier* is moved to write againſt the Stage by another Motive than that which he pretends? His Motive perhaps may be human Policy, but it can never be Charity; or perhaps 'tis Spleen, or Covetouſneſs, or Pride, or Arrogance, or Fear. I ſay Fear, Sir. For has not Mr. *Collier* Reaſon to apprehend the Stage as well as Hypocrites of the forementioned Characters? For is it not evident, that at the ſame time that he is ſetting up for a Firſt-Rate Reformer, he has ſhewn to the World, that he is but a Fifth-Rate Comedian? And while he pretends to condemn Acting upon the Stage, is Acting a Part

upon

upon the Stage of the World so aukwardly and so ridiculously, that all who are furnish'd with common Sense have found it to be Comedy? For, whom does he pretend to reform? Is it not the People, as I observed before, whose Religion he abhors, and whose Government he hates? And does he not know very well, that by reforming our Manners, he would run Counter to his own Designs and Wishes? because Reformation of Manners would confirm the present Establishment both in Church and State; and can he then really design to reform us? But how does he propose to himself, to bring this about? Why, not by suppressing Vice, but the Stage, that scourges and exposes it. For he meddles not with that Vice that is in the World, let it be never so *flaming and outragious*. For Example, the crying Sin of *England*, next to Hypocrisie, at this time, is Gaming; a Sin that is attended with several others, both among Men and Women, as Lying, Swearing, Perjury, Fraud, Quarrels, Murders, Fornication, Adultery. Has not Gaming done more Mischief in *England*, within these last five Years, than the Stage has done in Fifty? For when Women have lost vast Sums at Play, which they have been afraid to own to their Fathers or Husbands, have they not often been known to pay them after a shameful way? How can the most inveterate Big-

got

got pretend that Gaming is fomented or encouraged by the Stage? Muſt he not on the contrary be obliged to own, that it is cenſur'd and corrected by it? What is the Reaſon then, that Mr. *Collier*, neglecting ſo important and ſo dangerous a Vice, againſt which no Body has ſaid one Word, reſerves all his Rage for the Play-Houſe? And takes an Occaſion from the late Tempeſt to threaten us with ſome terrible Vengeance from Heaven, if it is not immediately ſuppreſt. Can any thing be more ridiculous than this from him? For does not he wiſh for the greateſt Vengeance that Heaven can ſend down upon us? Can any Vengeance be inflicted on a Proteſtant and Free People more terrible than Slavery and Idolatry? Is not the late Tempeſt, though dreadful in it ſelf, yet a very Trifle compared to thoſe? Tho' the late Storm ſhould return, *and Nature ſhould once more appear to be in her laſt Agony, and the World be ready to expire*; would not every one, who has Noble *Engliſh* Principles, chuſe rather to ſee it periſh, than to loſe his Religion and his Liberty? Beſides, Has the late Tempeſt any thing to do with the Buſineſs of the Play-Houſe? What can Mr. *Collier* mean then by threatening us with terrible Vengeance, at the ſame time that he wiſhes it; and by engaging us in frivolous and groundleſs Diſſentions, endeavours all

that

that he can to bring it on us at the very time he pretends to avert it?

If Mr. *Collier*'s Zeal were ſincere; he would neither go about to frighten us with things, which it is plain that he is not afraid of; nor, neglecting more dangerous Crimes, would he attack the leſs. Beſides, it is plain that he himſelf has not that Opinion of the Stage, into which he would fool and delude us. For if the Cauſe of the Stage were ſo bad as he would make us believe, or if it were out of Charity that he attack'd it, what need he make uſe of notorious Falſhood to decry it? 'Tis a pleaſant Charity that engages a Man to be damn'd himſelf to reform others. Beſides, what Occaſion has Truth to have Recourſe to Falſhood, which may ſometimes indeed ſupport Falſhood, but muſt always to diſcerning Eyes render Truth ſuſpected.

You know, Sir, that it is eaſie for me to prove, that in this ſhort Letter addreſt to you, Mr. *Collier* has Recourſe to Falſhood. For can any thing be more plain, even from the Artifice of his Addreſs to you? Does not he here, to make the World believe that he has the *Countenance of Figure and Fortune*, Palm you upon the Town for a Perſon of Quality, who are only a private Gentleman?

If Mr. *Collier* is mov'd by Charity to exclaim thus loudly againſt the Stage, let me

ask

ask him one Question, Who are the Persons whom he designs to reform? They who never come to a Play-House, methinks should have no Occasion for his Corrections. If his Design is on those who come thither, why does he not insinuate himself into their Affections, by the Meekness and Humility of his Expressions, and the attractive Language of Charity? Why has he Recourse to such presumptuous Arrogance, as justly renders him the Aversion of some, and the Scorn of others? With him, an Audience which you very well knew, Sir, is often one of the most venerable and awful Assemblies that can any where be found, is an Assembly of Rakes and Strumpets: Buffoons are the Poets, and the Players Libertines. Does he believe that such Language is proper to work upon these People, or to provoke them and exasperate them, and render them deaf to Argument and Persuasion?

Besides, there is something in Mr. *Collier*'s Style with which Truth is almost incompatible, and that is Affectation, which is always false. Truth is plain, and simple, and natural, and, as she can have no Defect in her, is but hid by Ornament. 'Tis true, when we convey her to the Understanding by the Passions, we sometimes give her Ornament. But then that Ornament must be in Nature, and consequently

true

true. But Affectation is always falſe, and can no more conſiſt with Truth than Darkneſs can with Light. What I have obſerved of Man in general, may be ſaid of Writers, That Affectation is a certain Sign in them of want of Sincerity, or of Underſtanding, and very often of both.

But Mr. *Collier*'s is the moſt affected, moſt foppiſh Style that ever I met with in Ancient or Modern Authors; of which I will undertake to convince any impartial Man, if he is but a tolerable Judge of Writing.

But to return from Words to Things: I have not time enough to diſplay the perpetual Sophiſtry of his Inferences, or rather his no Inferences; for a Metaphor or an Allegory is with him an Argument, and ſo is often an Hyperbole. But I ſhall ſay a Word of his more than Jéſuitical prevaricating in his Authorities. I ſhall only inſiſt upon two, the one of which he brings from Old, and the other from Modern *Rome*.

Pray, Sir, let me ſee Mr. *Collier*'s Letter: Ay, here the Authorities are.

The Republick of Rome, *before* Julius Cæſar, *ſtopt the building of a Theatre; being fully convinc'd, that this Diverſion would bring in Foreign Vice, that the old* Roman *Virtue would be loſt, and the Spirits of the People emaſculated.*

To

To prove this, he refers his Reader to his *Defence of the ſhort View.* That is, he endeavours to ſupport the Sham which he puts upon the World now, by that which he put upon it five Years ago. 'Tis true, after all, Mr. *Collier* ſpeaks the Truth here, but 'tis daſh'd and brew'd with a Vengeance. 'Tis true, the *Romans* did ſtop the building of a Theatre, before the Time of *Caſar.* But would he paſs this upon us for one Act of the *Roman* People, or for their conſtant Senſe? If for their conſtant Senſe, their conſtant Practice proves that it was quite contrary. If for one Act, of what Validity can that poſſibly be againſt their conſtant Senſe?

Is not Mr. *Collier* now a moſt ſhameful Hypocrite? For does not he know that the *Romans* had the higheſt Veneration for Plays imaginable? Is not every School-Boy who has read *Terence* convinc'd of it? Do not his Comedies tell us by their Titles that they were part of the Religion of that People? That they were all acted at their Funeral Ceremonies, or at the Feſtivals of their Gods?

That which he has ſaid of Q. *Elizabeth* is another pious Fraud, a meer religious Banter. But I know that you, who are ſo well acquainted with the Hiſtory of our Nation, muſt be already ſatisfied of it.

But

But the Pope has lately shut up the Theatres in *Italy*: Can any thing be more absurd than this? Has the Pope lately shut up the Bawdy-Houses? Or does he continue to lay a Tax upon Sin, and to give them Spiritual Licenses? 'Tis very certain he does. What then would Mr. *Collier* conclude from this, that the Government here ought to license Bawdy-Houses, and to suppress Play-Houses, because the Pope takes the same Method?

I think, Sir, I have made it plainly appear, that Mr. *Collier* is one who has Reason to be afraid of Theatres, and therefore to hate them. For he is one of those with a Vengeance who endeavour to appear what they are not. And tho' now-a-days a Priest is not suffer'd to be brought upon the Stage, yet I question whether he is to be regarded as a Priest, who wears a Sword of five Foot long, and a Peruke of three, and goes about reforming in the same Habit, in which the *French* Dragoons are at this very Juncture piously reforming the *Cevennois*.

Thus, Sir, I desire that I may have leave to continue to be a Friend to our Theatres, since I have clearly shewn that Mr. *Collier* is not from his Heart their Enemy; especially since I am convinc'd that the Play-Houses, with all their Immorality and with

ll their Faults, may be inſtrumental to the eforming ſo profligate an Age as this.

Thus, Doctor, I have ſent the ſum of he Objections which were made by *Charles*, o which I deſire your Anſwer, that the Boy, who is hot and opinionated, may not un on in his Error.

As ſoon as he had done, I took *Harriet* o task. Daughter, ſaid I, you ſee the Caſe is very hard upon you and the reſt of your Sex, for thus the Doctor puts it, *Either the Ladies are pleas'd with the Indecencies of the Stage, or they are not. If hey are pleas'd, 'tis a hard Imputation on heir Virtue. If they are not pleas'd, 'twill e enquir'd why they come there:* For his Part, *He confeſſes that he has not Logick nough to diſengage you.*

While I ſpoke this, I perceived ſome reat Alteration in her; you would have worn, *her Imagination had been ſhock'd, er Averſion put into a Fit, and that ſhe nderwent much Fatigue of Fancy and Mortification.* To ſpeak more vulgarly, the lood began to ſpring up into her Face, er little Breaſts began to heave, and ſhe arted a Frown that made her awful ev'n o me her Father. He wants Logick to iſengage us, (ſaid ſhe, with a diſdainful ir, after I had juſt repeated thoſe very ords) why then he ſhall find that I have ore than he has, and that I who have not

yet reach'd my ſeventeenth Year, am able to make a very juſt Apology in behalf of my ſelf and all the Women of Condition in *England*, whom he has ſo baſely affronted. Tho' we are not pleas'd with the Indecencies or Immoralities of Plays, yet notwithſtanding that we frequent them, becauſe ſome Diverſion is abſolutely neceſſary for us, and becauſe perhaps ev'n modern Plays, with all the Faults imputed to them, are the moſt innocent of the Diverſions which the Town affords.

The Diverſions that the Town affords, are chiefly reduc'd to four, 1. Gaming, 2. Muſick-Meetings. 3. Balls and Meetings for Dancing. 4. Going to Plays. Now of all theſe, I am apt to believe that Plays are the moſt innocent, for the following Reaſons. They raiſe the Paſſions only to correct them, whereas the others raiſe 'em merely for the ſake of inflaming them. The Plays, and more eſpecially Tragedies, inſtruct us in Virtue, which the other Diverſions do not. They improve us in lawful innocent Knowledge, which in ſome meaſure ſupplies the want of Education in our Sex. They form our Language, and poliſh our Minds, and ſo capacitate us, when we come to marry, to engage and endear our Husbands to us. For we every Day ſee that only Fools are conſtant long to Fools. Sir in ſhort, the Caſe is thus. Diverſions the

Ladies

Ladies of a great Metropolis muſt have. I have particulariz'd the ſeveral Diverſions which this Town affords. All the Danger, and all the Temptation which this judicious Perſon ſuppoſes to be at the Play-Houſe, are really in all the other Diverſions, which have none of the Advantages that may be reap'd from Tragedies, for the Improvement either of our Virtue or Knowledge. Why then would this mighty Reformer have us leave Plays for them? Would he have us have no Diverſion, or would he have us make choice of thoſe which have the moſt Temptation?

True, Sir, there are Paſſages in ſome of our Plays, which I could heartily wiſh were out. But does he think the Virtue of the Ladies, who frequent Play-Houſes, is ſo very weak, as to be o'erthrown by the Luſciouſneſs, as he calls it, of a Scribler's *Double Entendre?* What, have ſo many great Examples as we find on the Stage, ſo many noble and generous Sentiments, ſo many accompliſh'd Patterns of Virtue; have all theſe no manner of Power to rouze, to ſtrengthen and inflame our Virtue; and ſhall two or three wretched Equivocals, three or four miſerable *Double Entendres* have the force to corrupt us?

If any of my Sex happen to find themſelves ſo infirm, as this worthy Reformer appears to own that he is; if two or three ridiculous

diculous double meanings have Strength enough to undo them, in ſpight of thoſe exalted Heroick Characters, which in my Opinion ſhould be enough to fix our Affections to that degree, that nothing that we meet with abroad in the World ſhould have the Power to move us; if any of my Sex are ſo infirm, let them, in God's Name, keep away from our Theatres. But I find no ſuch ſcandalous Weakneſs about me. I can deſpiſe a Fool who thinks to entertain me with his ſordid playing on Words; but at the ſame time can be entertain'd with Wit and good Senſe, and more with the Innocence of true writ Humour; and I can be both pleas'd and mov'd with the excellent Scenes of an Inſtructive Tragedy: Does this judicious Perſon really believe, that the Converſations which we find in the World are Virtue and Purity all? The Food of the Mind, like that of the Body, is not all of it fit for Nouriſhment. But ſtrong Virtue, like ſtrong Nature, knows how to diſcern and ſeparate, to reject the Bad, to aſſimulate the Good, by which it is fed and ſupported. If any of my Sex have the ſcandalous Weakneſs to have their Virtue and their Honour endanger'd by the Folly of *Double Entendres*, I would adviſe them to take their leaves of the Play-Houſe. But at the ſame time I would adviſe Mr. *Collier* to perſuade his noble Patrons of the Re-

Reforming Club to erect a Proteſtant Nunnery for them, for nothing leſs can ſecure them. For they who are found ſo ſtrangely weak as to be warm'd by a meer painted Fire, how can they ever ſtand againſt the real Flames of Love?

How many extraordinary Women may *England* boaſt of, ſince Plays were introduc'd among us? Among whom are three of the greateſt Queens that ever the World produc'd; and all of them took delight in Plays: How many Ladies of inferior Rank have frequented, and ſtill frequent 'em, who yet in Proportion are fam'd for every Virtue? What does this charitable Perſon believe of our Mothers, our Aunts and Grandmothers? Does he believe them Adultereſſes all, becauſe they frequented the Play-Houſe? But you, Sir, have Juſtice to believe better. You knew my Mother true to your Bed, as ſhe was dear to your Arms. And I beſeech you to have the Goodneſs to believe, that tho' like her I frequent our Theatres, I will be always Heir to her Virtue, as I am to her Likeneſs.

This, Doctor, was the Sum of what *Harriet* ſaid before ſhe went to the Play. News is juſt now brought me that ſhe is come back from that horrid Place, and is gone with *Charles* to my Lady *Freeloves*, and that her Ladyſhip has ſent for me——

Ah, dear Doctor, let me see you To-morrow, to receive some Consolation from you. For here have happen'd two of the most unfortunate things in the World. For News is brought me from *Piccadilly* that *Jack* has lost a thousand Pound at Picket; and *Susan* who went into the Garden forsooth to meditate, tho' she went out as black as a Raven, being in Mourning for her Great Aunt, yet, as I hope for Mercy, the Jade is return'd as white and as powder'd as if she had been hard at work in a Bolting-House. So that I could wish that for this one Night they had both been with *Harriet* and with *Charles* at the Tabernacle of the Wicked.

I am, Dear Doctor,

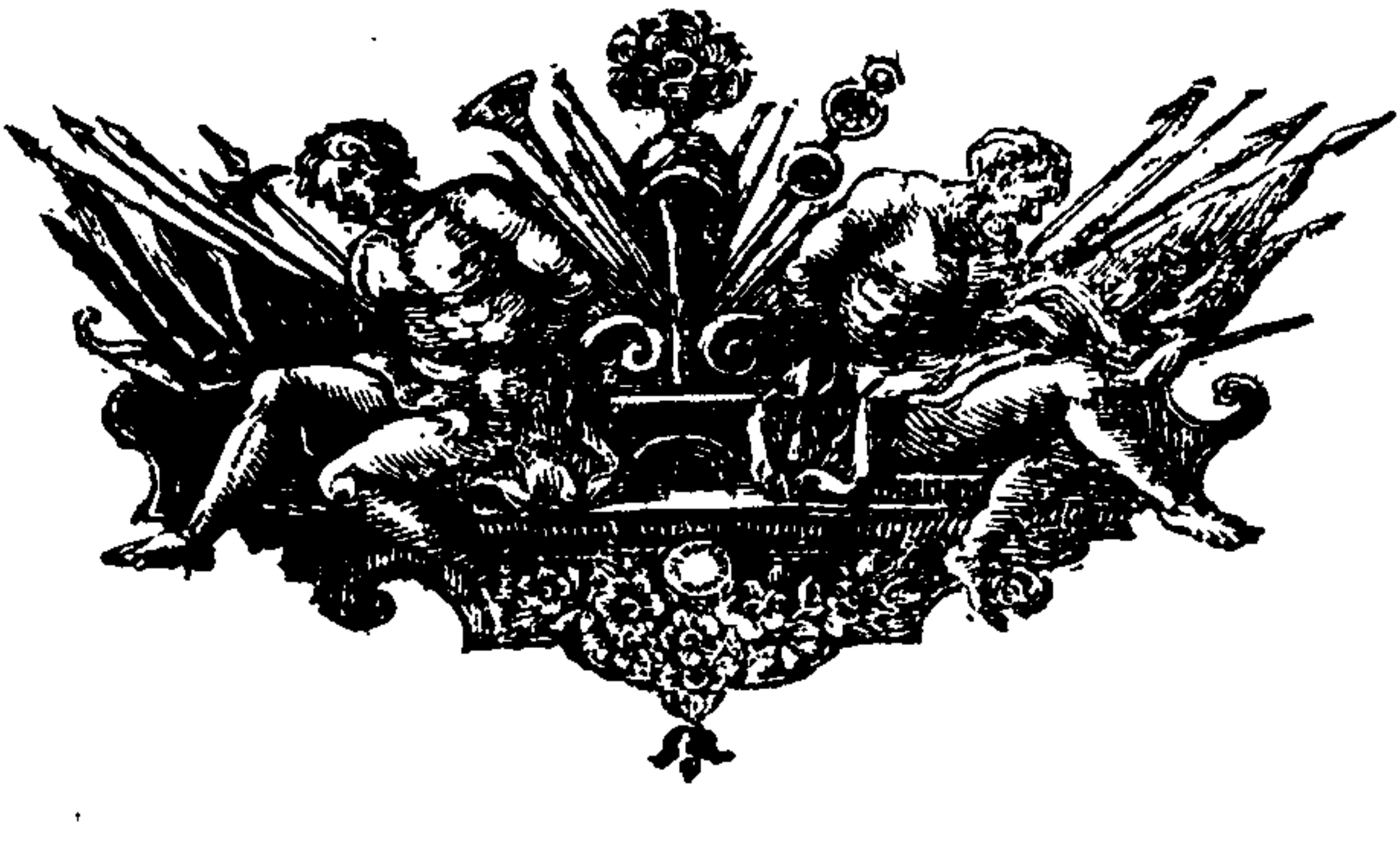
Yours, &c.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE I writ this, I have seen a Letter written by you, tho' without Name, to Mrs.—— She designs to return you an Answer as soon as some little Affairs will give her leave. In the mean while she says, that in the hurry in which your Letter seems

to

to be writ, you overlook'd the first part of the Passage which you quoted from Doctor *Tillotson*, and therefore she desir'd me to transcribe it, and to send it you with this; which, in Obedience to her Commands, I have done, and it is as follows. Tillot. *Serm.* Vol. 11. *To speak against them* (*viz.* Plays) *in general, may be thought too Severe, and that which the present Age cannot so well brook, and would not perhaps be so just and reasonable, because it is very possible they might be so fram'd, and governed by such Rules, as not only to be innocently diverting, but instructing and useful; to put some Vices and Follies out of Countenance, which cannot perhaps be so decently reprov'd, nor so effectually expos'd and corrected any other way.*



TO

Mr. HUNGERFORD.

SIR,

I Desire you not to give your self the Trouble to send any Boat from the Country to-morrow for your Humble Servant. If I find my self in a Condition to make you a Visit, I will rise betimes in the Morning and walk. But I am afraid to venture the cold of the Water so early in the Morning. Next to the cold of the Water I dread the Heat after I come on Shore. I dread the Company which you too often keep there who are apt to be excessively warm in a false and foolish Cause.

If any one has a mind to be satisfy'd of this, he need only repair to a certain Mansion, where they meet about three times a Week to endeavour to talk wisely together and where they never fail to discover greater Weakness than they were capable of when they were Boys. For which of them when they were but ten Years of Age

would

would not have chosen at any time to have plaid, rather than to have been under the Lash at School? It was Nature's Voice that made them prefer gay Liberty to mournful Slavery. When they were Boys it was with great Reluctance that they were obedient to Age and Gravity, that govern'd them for their Good; and now the Sots are growing old, they long to have a Younker who will certainly ruine them, for their absolute Master. They are every Day endeavouring to prove that they are Beasts, and belong to that Younker as his unalienable and indefeasible Chattels, that he has even a Right Divine, that is a Commission sign'd by God, to use them like errant Dogs; not like *English* Bull-Dogs, for they are generous Creatures, and will fly in the Face of any one who dares to use them ill; but like errant Spaniels, who the more they are beaten the more they crouch and the more they fawn upon their Tyrannick Masters. I will say nothing of the Business concerning which you wrote to me till I wait on you, and am

London,
March 18. 171$\frac{4}{5}$.

Your, &c.

TO

TO

Mr. R * * *

SIR,

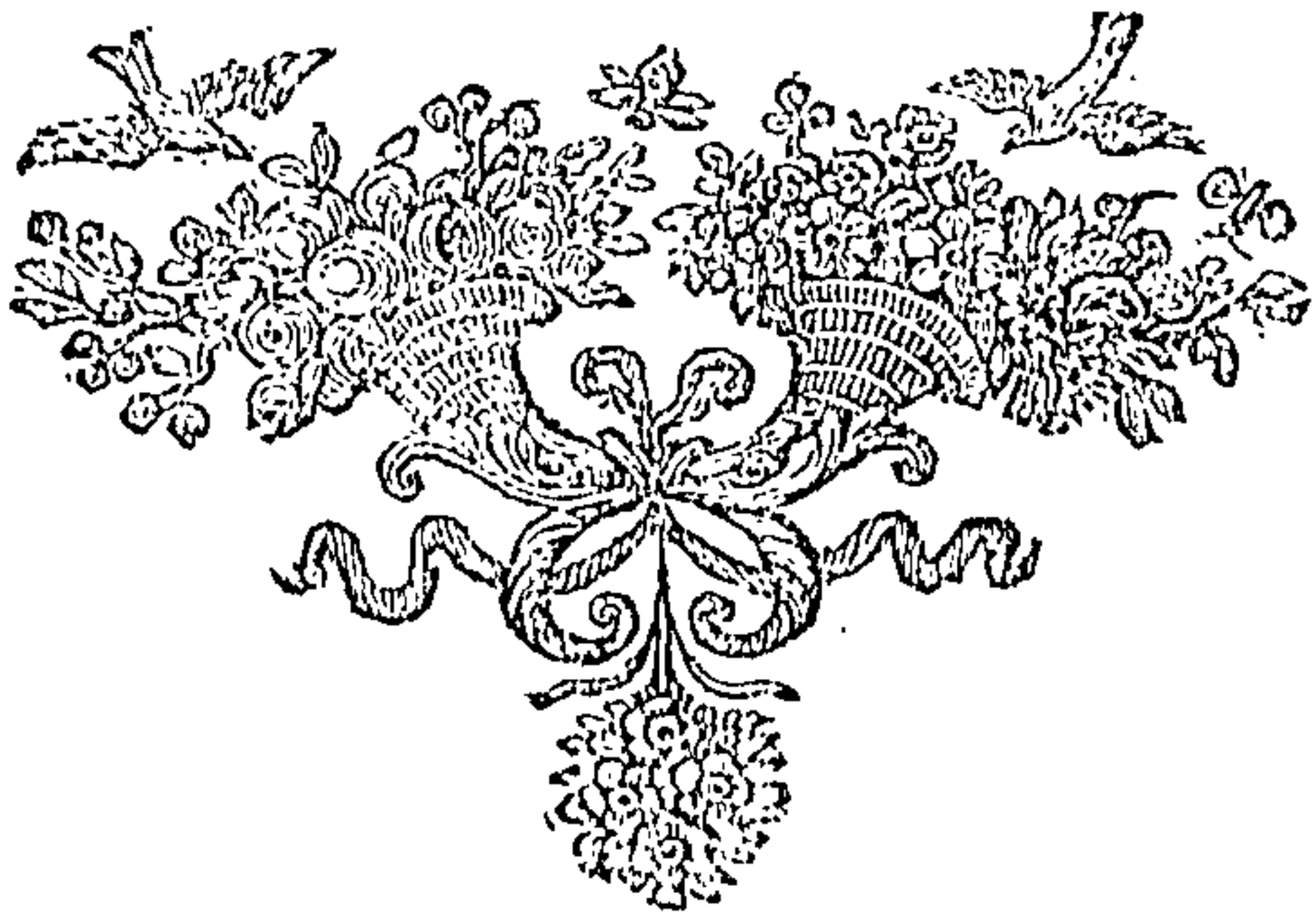
I Desire that you would give your self no trouble about the drinking Quaker. For I find upon Reflection, that since I voluntarily gave up the Note, 'tis below me to demand the Debt.

'Tis true indeed, the Note was given up when there was little Hope of his paying the Money; and he has now, beyond all Expectation, an Estate left him. 'Tis true likewise, that the Money was lent in his pressing Necessity, and lent in order to do him a signal Kindness, which it actually did; and 'tis as true that I, who lent him the Money, had often before and have often since, both fed him hungry and cloath'd him naked. The Note was given up with a Promise that he should pay the Money if ever he came to be able; for which I then told him, that I depended on his Honour and his Integrity. But notwithstanding all this, if he has not one Spark of Conscience

ſcience or common Honeſty, which may oblige him to pay this Money of his own Accord, I ought to have Generoſity enough not to demand the Debt. 'Tis true, this would vex ſome People in my Caſe. But I conſider that perhaps the poor Wretch cannot help it, for as 'tis in my Nature to oblige, 'tis in his to be ungrateful. But then on the other ſide, as 'tis in his Nature to know no Friend, to own no Benefactor, and to ſerve no God but Intereſt, 'tis in mine heartily to ſcorn ſuch a Raſcal, and the vile God whom he ſerves.

May 4. 1719. *I am,*

Your, &c.



TO

To * * * * *Esq;*

Upon the first publishing the Guardians.

NOT being able to come, I write to you, resolving to be with you one way or other. As soon as you left me Yesterday I sent for all the *Guardians* which are publish'd; and while the Messenger was gone for them, I was trying to divine what sort of scribbling Fit had seiz'd upon *Teague* this Bout, whether it might be a *Quotidian* as in the *Spectator*, or a *Tertian* as in the *Tatler*, for I pray'd to Heav'n to defend us from a *Quartan*, because that might make Dulness lasting. Upon the Arrival of the Papers I found that it was a *Quotidian*, not without Joy; for old *Hippocrates* tells us somewhere, that tho' a *Quotidian* proceeds for the most part from Phlegm, yet is it of no long Continuance. I perceive by the Beginning of the second Paper, that *Teague* has chang'd both his Name and his Country, being, as I suppose, asham'd of the latter. But the Mischief of it is, that he shews the true one by the adopted one, the

he latter being almoſt as ridiculous a one is the former. He was born, he tells us, n a lone Houſe within half a Mile of the Metropolis of the two Kings of *Brentford.* make no doubt but that the more he di-covers himſelf, the more he will verify the ld Saying, *Regis ad exemplum*, or, Like So-vereigns like Subjects. And now a Word o his adopted Name too; *Neſtor Iron-ſide*, Eſq; For what Reaſon he took hat Chriſtian Heathen Name *Neſtor*, I can-not imagine, unleſs he thought that that wiſe Name would ſet off his Folly and make it look more ridiculous. But *Teague* apparently ook the Sir-name from his real *Hyberni-an* Appellation, or the inflexible Obſtinacy f his own Temper. As I have the extra-ordinary Honour to be acquainted with im, I am about to write a learned Letter o him; in which I deſign to reproach him little for his too conſtant Gravity in his ew Production, and to let him know that quire *Ironſide* is too grave and too ſerious n Offspring of his ludicrous Anceſtors, hat the Reader complains that he meets vith nothing at all to divert him in it, no Consort of Muſical Inſtruments playing up-n one another, not ſo much as a Couple f Pipes broke by the violent Agitation of Jig at his Neighbour's Houſe, nor any aggiſh Enumeration of the ſeveral Bran-es of the Noble Family of the *Sides*, as

that

that fine facetious Person his Grandfather number'd, but with a wonderful deal of Wit I must needs say, the several Branches of the *Staffian* Race, which Neglect, or which Delay I shall boldly tell him that his numerous Relations take very ill; that Sir *Hector Backside* makes a Noise about it; that that old Tarpawlin *Bully Broadside* roars at it; Mr. *Humphrey Wrongside* grumbles at it; Mr. *Abraham Weakside* is much dissatisfied; even waggish *Jack Fireside* takes it amiss, and his own Namesake *Nestor Blindside* will never be Friends with him more. I shall let him know that even the Females of his adopted Race resent it; that the courteous Lady Mrs. *Cheapside* receives no small Disquiet from it; that that well-dispos'd Lass Mrs. *Bedside* very much complains of it; that that obstreperous Carrion *Moll Waterside* stuns the Ears of all that approach her with it; and that that impudent Jade *Doll Commonside* has her Back as high as her Belly about it.

But you must know, Sir, that this arduous Undertaking is not carryed on by *Teague* alone, but by a Triple League. I shall give you an Account of the two other Confederates by the first Opportunity.

I am, SIR,
Your, &c.

TO

TO

Mr. WALTER WEST.

SIR,

I Return you my hearty Thanks for your friendly Endeavours to serve me on *Saturday*, but am amaz'd at the Brutality of that Captain of Farce ———; who not only refus'd to witness the Receipt, but to open my Letter; saying, that it was out of his Sphere. I must confess a Brute acts in a narrow Sphere, and Civility and Humanity are out of that Sphere. If it were any other Person but Captain ———, one would find him out, after this Affront, serve him as *Hudibras* did *Whachum*, and attack the Apartment of Honour in him.

Whachum *his Sea-Coal Prong threw by,*
And basely turn'd his Back to fly;
But Hudibras *gave him a twitch*
As quick as Lightning in the Breech,
Just in the Place where Honour's lodg'd
As wise Philosophers have judg'd;

Because

Becauſe a Kick in that part more
Hurts Honour than deep Wounds before.

But the Captain is a privileg'd Perſon, and what he does, like what he ſays, is only fit to be laugh'd at. But as his Folly and infinite Baſeneſs are only fit for Contempt; Your Generoſity and Humanity merit all my Eſteem, and have oblig'd me to be always,

SIR,

March 31.
1714.

Your moſt Humble Servant,

JOHN DENNIS.

TO

TO

Mr. JAC. TON. Sen.

On the Conspiracy against the Reputation of Mr. DRYDEN.

SIR,

WHEN I had the good Fortune to meet you in the City, it was with Concern that I heard from you of the Attempt to lessen the Reputation of Mr. *Dryden*; and 'tis with Indignation that I have since learnt that that Attempt has chiefly been carried on by small Poets, who ungratefully strive to eclipse the Glory of a great Man, from whom alone they derive their own faint Lustre. But that Eclipse will be as Momentary as that of the Sun was lately. The Reputation of Mr. *Dryden* will soon break out again in its full Splendor, and theirs will disappear. It was upon hearing of this Attempt that I reflected with some Amazement, that I

ſhould have got the Reputation of an ill-natur'd Man, by expoſing the Abſurdities of living Authors; and Authors for the moſt part of great Mediocrity, tho' I have always done it openly and fairly, and upon juſt and perſonal Provocations; and that theſe ſhould baſely arraign the Reputation of a great Man deceas'd, who now can make no Anſwer for himſelf, and upon whom they fawn'd while living, and ſhould yet eſcape uncenſur'd. But when I heard that that Attempt was in favour of——, 'tis impoſſible to expreſs to what a height my Indignation and Diſdain were rais'd. Good God! was there ever any Nation in which (I will not ſay a falſe Taſte, for we never had a true one, but in which) a wrong Senſe and a fatal Deluſion ſo generally prevail'd! For have not too many of us lately appear'd to contemn every thing that is great and glorious, and to praiſe and exalt every thing that is baſe and infamous? Have not too many of us ſhewn to all the World, by a manifeſt execrable Choice, that they prefer Weakneſs to Power, Folly to Wiſdom, Poverty to Wealth, Fury and Madneſs to Moderation, Infamy to Glory, Submiſſion to Victory, Slavery to Liberty, Idolatry to Religion, the Duke of *O.* to the D. of *M* the Pretender to the Royal *George* our only rightful King, and Mr.—— to Mr *Dryden?* If I appear too warm, I hope you will

will excuſe my Affection for the Memory, and my Zeal for the Reputation of my departed Friend, whom I infinitely eſteem'd when living for the Solidity of his Thought, for the Spring, the Warmth, and the beautiful Turn of it; for the Power, and Variety, and Fulneſs of his Harmony; for the Purity, the Perſpicuity, the Energy of his Expreſſion; and (whenever the following great Qualities are requir'd) for the Pomp and Solemnity and Majeſty of his Style.

You may now ſee, Sir, by this Letter, how little moſt Men know one another, who converſe daily together. How many were there in Mr. *Dryden*'s Life-time, who endeavour'd to make him believe, that I ſhould be the foremoſt, if I ſurviv'd him, of all his Acquaintance to arraign his Memory; whereas I am he of all his Acquaintance, who, tho' I flatter'd him leaſt while living, having been contented to do him Juſtice both behind his Back and before his Enemies Face, am now the foremoſt to aſſert his Merit, and to vindicate his Glory.

If Mr. *Dryden* has Faults, (as where is the Mortal who has none?) I by ſearching for them perhaps could find them. But whatever the miſtaken World may think, I am always willing to be pleas'd, nay, am always greedy of Pleaſure as any *Epicurean* living; and whenever I am naturally touch'd, I give my ſelf up to the firſt Impreſſion, and

never look for Faults. But whenever a cried-up Author, upon the first reading him, does not make a pleasing Impression on me; I am apt to seek for the Reason of it, that I may know if the Fault is in him or in me. Wherever Genius runs thro' a Work, I forgive its Faults, and wherever that is wanting no Beauties can touch me. Being struck by Mr. *Dryden*'s Genius, I have no Eyes for his Errors; and I have no Eyes for his Enemies Beauties, because I am not struck by their Genius.

I am,

SIR,

Your, &c.

June 4. 1715.

T

To Mr. * * *

SIR,

AS I came Home in the Coach on *Friday* Night, I ruminated upon the Passage in Mr. *Waller*'s Verses to my Lord *Roscommon*, and found indeed that the Words are not strictly reconcileable to Purity of *English* and *Grammar*; but then there are several Passages in *Virgil* and *Horace*, which are as little in the compass of a regular Construction; for Example, that in the Eclogues,

Et certamen erat Corydon cum Thyrside magnum.

And that Passage in the fifth of the *Æneis*, where *Nisus* says to *Æneas*

——————*Quæ munera Niso Digna dabis? primam merui qui laude coronam;*

Ni me, quæ Salium, Fortuna inimica, tulisset.

Where *merui* is certainly for *meruissem*, and so *Virgil* makes bold not only with the Mood but the Tense. For my Part, I am for preserving the Purity of Language ev'n in the boldest Flights of Poetry, but then I am apt to be indulgent to the Faults of great Masters, not only because they are few, but in Consideration of the Pleasure which they have otherwise given me. He would be but an ill-natur'd Man, who after having had the Pleasure of enjoying a fine Woman, should fall to finding Fault with her Moles, or some other Blemishes, which perhaps after all, are only so many Shadows to set off her ravishing Beauties.

I was not a little surpriz'd at the Question, whether Mr. *Waller*'s Verses to *Amoret* mov'd me. What if they dont? Is there not the *pulchrum* as well as the *dulce* in Poetry? But *Horace*, perhaps, you'll say, is for having them both in the same Poem.

Non satis est pulchra esse Poemata dulcia sunto,
Et quocunque volunt animum Auditoris agunto.

But

But then he is certainly ſpeaking of Tragedy, otherwiſe he muſt damn moſt of his own Odes. For ev'n of thoſe which are writ to Women, there is but one which has a great deal of Tenderneſs; and yet moſt o; the reſt are undoubtedly very fine. After all, the *pulchrum* in Poetry moves as certainly as the *dulce*, but then the firſt moves the Enthuſiaſtick Paſſions, as the latter does the vulgar ones. Yet to come at laſt cloſe to the Queſtion, the Verſes to *Amoret* move even the vulgar Paſſions in me, as they ought to do: It being impoſſible to take a Survey in them of Mr. *Waller*'s Good-nature, and his Gratitude, without pitying and loving him.

Oct. 1. 1717.

I am

Your moſt obedient Servant,

John Dennis.

To the EXAMINER.

Upon his wise Paper of the Tenth of January, 1711.

IT was upon the fourth of this instant *February* that I was persuaded by some of my Acquaintance to peruse thy Paper of the tenth of *January*, in which, as they told me, it was surmis'd by several, that you pretended to father upon me the Letter called *the* Englishman's *Thanks to the Duke of* Marlborough. It was the second of thy Papers that I ever read, tho' I have handled several of them. Thou seem'st to have a great Genius for Water Language, and to be aiming at the Post and Reputation of Water Orator, which thou wilt fill as worthily, as *Taylour* did that of Water Poet. But tell me truly, what does thy Execrability mean? From whence this Pride, this Insolence, this Arrogance? What hast thou said, what hast thou writ, what hast thou done, to give thee the least Shadow of a Pretence to it? Art thou such an Idiot to be of Opinion, that thou art the only foul-mouth'd Fellow in *England?* Is it so hard

hard a matter, think'ſt thou, to cry *Block-head, ſtupid Head*, the moſt inſipid and contemptible of Mankind? Is there any Thought, any Invention, any Underſtanding of thine requiſite for the making uſe of theſe Flowers of Rhetorick? Is not a Joker in a long party-colour'd Coat as capable of all this as a Joker in a long black Coat? Thou ſay'ſt that I ſhall die without knowing that I am the moſt inſipid and contemptible of all Human Creatures. Thou art in the right of it; I ſhall die without knowing any thing of this, tho' I live to the Age of *Methuſalem*, if I hear it from none but thee and ſuch ſcribling Slaves as thou art. But thou, before thou dieſt, wilt know a great deal worſe than this of thy ſelf. Before thou dieſt, thou wilt know that thou art the moſt inſipid, the vileſt and moſt contemptible, I will not ſay of all Human Creatures, for Reaſon thou never hadſt, and Humanity thou haſt long diſclaim'd, but the vileſt and moſt contemptible of all Dogs; for tho' the reſt of thy Species bark like thee at the worthieſt of Men who are Strangers to them, and crouch and fawn like thee upon the vileſt of Men whom they know, yet no Dog but thy ſelf did ever firſt fawn and crouch, and afterwards bark, and bite, and betray; no, never any Dog was ſo vile before as to fawn upon a Maſter thro' two Kingdoms, and afterwards to fly at his Throat.

Thus

Thus have I ſhewn thee what thou art, and while thou art reading each Period of this, thy Conſcience will be thy Check, and will heartily cry *Amen* to it. As for me, thou art not to be told, that I have the Approbation, and Applauſe, and Eſteem of thy Maſters; thy Maſters, who uſe thee like a common Whore, abhor and deteſt thee while they uſe thee, and will command their Servants to kick thee out of Doors as ſoon as the Luſt of their Ambition is ſatisfied.

I thank my God I am altogether a Stranger to thy Perſon, but give me leave to ſhew thee, how inſipid and contemptible thou art as an Author. Inſipid Panegyriſts are they who praiſe with general Compliments and thread-bare Commendations, Compliments which are equally applicable to all Subjects, and ſo uſe which demanded neither Imagination nor Judgment. And 'tis theſe Panegyriſts that have been chiefly the Marks of *Boileau*'s judicious and generous Satyrs. Inſipid Libellers are they who uſe general Injuries and *Billinſgate* Defamations, and which the erranteſt Fool may ſpeak of the moſt illuſtrious Perſon, as eaſily as a Dog can bark at the Moon. Thou art one of thoſe inſipid Libellers, and art by ſo much more odious and more deſpicable than an inſipid Panegyriſt, by how much a Blockhead with Ill-nature is more

hateful

hateful and more contemptible than a Fool with good Humour.

The insipid Reproaches which thou usest, have been utter'd a thousand times by thy self of a thousand different Persons. But I shall say that of thee, which every one cannot say, and shall say what can be said of none but thy execrable self alone; and when I have dragg'd thee from the lurking Hole, to which thy base Fears have condemn'd thee, (for thou never hadst Sense enough to have Shame) and expos'd thee to the open Light, that is to eternal Infamy, then let the World judge who is the insipid and who the contemptible.

By thy Impudence, thy Ignorance, thy sophistical arguing, thy pedantick declamatory Style, and thy brutal *Billinsgate* Language thou canst be none but some illiterate Pedant, who has liv'd twenty Years in an University; by thy being a turbulent hot-brain'd Incendiary, a hot-brain'd Incendiary with a cool Heart, one may easily guess at the University which gave thee thy Education. By thy wonderful Charity, thou canst be nothing but a scandalous Priest, hateful to God and detestable to Men, and agreeable to none but Devils, who makest it thy Business to foment Divisions between Communities and private Persons, in spight of that Charity which is the fundamental Doctrine of

that

that Religion which thou pretendſt to teach. How amazing a Reflection is it, that, in ſpight of that Divine Doctrine, the Chriſtian World ſhould be the only part of the Globe embroil'd in endleſs Diviſions. From whence can this proceed, but from Prieſts like thee, who are the Peſts of Society and the Bane of Religion. But 'tis not enough to ſay thou art a Prieſt, 'tis time to point out what Prieſt thou art. Thou art a Prieſt then who mad'ſt thy firſt Appearance in the World like a dry Joker in Controverſy, a ſpiritual Buffoon, an Eccleſiaſtical *Jack Pudding*, by publiſhing a Piece of waggiſh Divinity, which was writ with a Deſign to banter all Chriſtianity; yes, thou nobly began'ſt, as *Judas Iſcariot* ended; began'ſt by crucifying thy God afreſh, and ſelling him to *John Nutt* for ten Pound and a Crown, and ſo under-ſelling half in half thy execrable Predeceſſor. Hadſt thou but had half his common Senſe, thou hadſt had his Remorſe and conſequently his Deſtiny; inſtead of which thou fell'ſt from ſelling and betraying thy God to ſelling and betraying thy old Friends. So that hadſt thou liv'd in the time of *Judas*, thou wouldſt infinitely have ſurpſs'd him in Villany, thou wouſt have betray'd both Chriſt and all his Apoſtles, nay, wouldſt have undermin'd, and underſold, and betray'd even *Judas* the Betrayer himſelf.

When

When thou wert come piping hot from betraying both Friends and God, thou wert often heard to cry most impudently, but most truly, out, that the Church was in Danger.' Any one may swear, when it has such Priests, that 'tis not in Danger, but upon the very brink of Ruine; and that if it were not supported by God himself, it would immediately tumble.

Yet 'tis hard to be angry with such a Miscreant, when I reflect, that he who has us'd me so, has us'd his God worse. For thou hast denyed his very Being; which is to degrade him below the meanest of his own Creatures, not only below Fools and Ideots, but even below Vermin, Insects, Mites, and all the Creatures of the material invisible World, even below the *Examiner*. For Nothing must always be less than Something, let Something be never so little.

Thou hast fall'n upon me with the Rage of a mad Dog or a Mohock; not because thou hadst any Provocation, but because thy Madness made thee believe that the first thing that came in thy way, was the Cause of thy Uneasiness. Nothing is more certain than that I knew nothing of the Letter to the Duke of *Marlborough* till the fourteenth of this instant *February*, which, according to thy own Account, was five Weeks after it was publish'd. I shall live to see thee cry Penny Papers, before thou wilt

wilt ſee me write them. Yet if I had writ that Paper I would boldly have own'd it, in ſpight of thee and of all thy Abettors. What, ſhall I be afraid or aſham'd to commend the greateſt Man upon Earth, when thou art neither afraid nor aſham'd moſt baſely to calumniate him? But go on in the Courſe thou art in, I cannot wiſh thee a greater Curſe. Go on to calumniate and to vilify all that is truly great and illuſtrious, and to flatter and to extoll all that is vile and deſpicable. Whatever Thoughts thou either haſt, or wouldſt ſeem to have, of me, I would have thee to know, that God and Nature have placed me infinitely above doing thy baſe Drudgery, and being the contemptible execrable Tool of any Party whatever. If it be true that a Kingdom divided againſt it ſelf ſhall not ſtand, if inteſtine Diviſion be the Flaw that lets in Death to a mighty Nation, what Damnation muſt that wholeſale Cut-throat deſerve, who makes it the ſole Buſineſs of his Life to incenſe one miſerable Half againſt the unfortunate other? Yet this I'll ſay for thee, that tho' thou art the worſt of Murderers in thy Heart, yet Thanks to thy Impotence thy Hands are entirely free; and what *Dryden* maliciouſly ſaid of *Shadwell*, is truly applicable to none but thee. And ſo I bid thee heartily farewell.

LET

LETTERS *upon the Sentiments of the two first Acts of* CATO.

To Mr. C——

LETTER I.

SIR,

AFter I had endeavour'd to ſhew the abſurd Conduct of the Tragedy of *Cato*, by the *Remarks* which were printed by *Bernard Lintott*, the numerous Idolizers of that Tragedy, whoſe unparallell'd Zeal was the Child of their unparallell'd Ignorance, ſhelter'd themſelves under the Beauty of the Sentiments of that Poem. Upon which I, who knew the Sentiments to be at leaſt as abſurd as the Conduct, wrote two long Letters to a learned and judicious Friend, by which I endeavour'd to ſhew the Sentiments as incongruous as the Conduct. When I acquainted you with this at Mr. *W*——'s Houſe, you were pleas'd to declare, that you deſir'd to ſee a Copy of thoſe Letters. And when, upon that,

I acquainted you by what poor Artifice I had been depriv'd of the Copy of those Letters, as my Friend had been of the Original, you seem'd desirous to see as many of the lost Remarks as I could recollect, which, in compliance with your Desires, I shall send you, from time to time, as I can recollect them; hoping that they may appear solid to one who has shewn so much Justness in all the Judgments you have made of things of this nature; but desiring, at the same time, that you would not expect any thing ev'n of that little Force and that little Grace of Expression which they might have in the two forementioned Letters, for which I have not time, and for want of which I promise to make what Amends I can, by the Solidity of my Remarks, and by the Shortness of my Letters.

First then, I desire to know, whether the exclaiming against *Pharsalia* so often in this Tragedy, two Years after that Battle had been fought in a different and distant part of the World, and but two Days after the Battel of *Thapsus*, which was fought at the very Gates of *Utica*, and by the loss of which the present Danger of the People in *Utica* was occasion'd, is not as absurd as it would have been in the Marshal *de Villeroy* to have cryed out after the Defeat at *Ramelies*, *Blenheim*, *Blenheim*, oh *Blenheim!* And we have the more reason to

ask

ask this Question, if we consider that it was *Pompey* who commanded at *Pharsalia*, but it was *Cato* who commanded at *Thapsus*. If any one happens to answer here, that the Defeat at *Pharsalia* destroy'd the Flower of the Republican Army, and consequently was the occasion of the Defeat at *Thapsus*; to that I answer, that the Defeat at *Thapsus* was not occasion'd by the Overthrow at *Pharsalia*. For at that rate much more might the Overthrow which happen'd afterwards in *Spain*, be attributed to the two Defeats at *Thapsus* and *Pharsalia*; whereas 'tis very plain, that in *Spain*, notwithstanding the two former Defeats, *Caesar*'s Army had been defeated by young *Pompey*'s, if young *Pompey* had not been vanquish'd by *Caesar*. For it was the invincible Spirit of *Caesar* which got the Day, which his Army had certainly lost if they had fought under any other General. Besides, suppose that we were oblig'd to own, that the Defeat at *Thapsus* was occasion'd by that at *Pharsalia*, yet the Author could draw nothing from that but a false Politick Reflection; for as great Passion is occasion'd by great Surprize, it always dwells upon the last Disaster. But I begin to run into length, which I would industriously avoid. You shall have more by the first Opportunity.

Nov. 4. 1718. *I am, SIR, Your, &c.*

On the Sentiments of CATO.

LETTER II.

SIR,

IN ſending theſe Remarks upon the Sentiments of *Cato* to you, I ſhall rather endeavour to entertain you with frequent Letters than to fatigue you with long ones, that you may ſtill leave off, if not with an Appetite, yet without that Diſguſt which attends great Satiety.

To come then to the Matter, without any more ceremony, I deſire to know whether that Sentiment of *Marcus* in the firſt Scene of the Play,

Love is not to be reaſon'd down, or loſt
In high Ambition, or a thirſt of Greatneſs

is not falſe in it ſelf, according to the Reflection of *Rochefoucault*, *On paſſe ſouvent de l'Amour a l' Ambition, mais on revient gueres, de l'Ambition a l'Amour*, and whether 'tis not moſt abominable in one, who juſt before had profeſs'd himſelf

a Stoick? which Sect of Philosophers pretended by the Force of Reason to extirpate all the Passions.

The first Speech of *Sempronius* to *Portius* begins thus,

Good Morrow, Portius! *let us once embrace,*
Once more embrace; whilst yet we both are free.

Now are not these formal Embraces, between two People who saw one another every Hour, something upon the Comique? But what *Portius* says to this is still more whimsical:

My Father has this Morning call'd together
To this poor Hall, his little Roman *Senate,*
(The Leavings of Pharsalia.)

Still starping upon *Pharsalia.*

Now, to whom does he tell this extraordinary piece of News? why, to the only Senator who makes any figure in that Assembly, ridiculous or not ridiculous? so that if the Senate was called together that Morning, he had been certainly summon'd. But this Senate methinks was very early summon'd. 'Tis now not above half an Hour after Day-break.

But why the Leavings of *Pharsalia*? why still harping upon *Pharsalia*? when 'tis evi-

dent from History, that this mock Senate, this Senate in Burlesque, was compos'd of a Parcel of Scoundrels who had never seen *Pharsalia*. For can you or any one believe, that if they had been of real Senatorian Rank, *Cæsar* would have us'd them as he did, who hang'd up as many of them as fell into his Hands? But let us now see what *Sempronius* is pleas'd to reply to *Portius*.

Not all the Pomp and Majesty of Rome
Can raise her Senate more than Cato's *Presence.*
———*O, my* Portius!
Could but I call that wond'rous Man my Father,
Would but thy Sister Marcia *be propitious*
To thy Friend's Vows, I might be blest indeed.
Port. *Alas,* Sempronius! *would'st thou talk of Love*
To Marcia, *while her Father's Life's in danger?*
Thou might'st as well court the pale trembling Vestal,
When she beholds the Holy Flame expiring
Sempr. *The more I see the Wonders of thy Race,*
The more I'm charm'd. Thou must take heed, my Portius,
The World has all its Eyes on Cato's *Son.*
Thy Father's Merit sets thee up to View,

An

And shews thee in the fairest Point of Light,
To make thy Virtues or thy Faults conspicuous.
Port. *Well dost thou seem to check my ling'ring here*
On this important Hour.

Now was ever such a Consequence drawn from such an Antecedent? For let us consider the genuine Meaning of what was said before by *Portius*, and what was answer'd by *Sempronius*.

Port. *Alas,* Sempronius! *would'st thou talk of Love*
To Martia, *while her Father's Life's in danger?*
Thou might'st as well court the pale trembling Vestal,
When she beholds the Holy Flame expiring.
Semp. *The more I see the Wonders of thy Race*
The more I'm charm'd—— Thou must take heed, my Portius,
The World has all its Eyes on Cato's *Son.*
Thy Father's Merit sets thee up to View,
And shews thee in the fairest Point of Light,
To make thy Virtues or thy Faults conspicuous.

Now, what were these Wonders of *Cato's* Race? why, their Stoicism, their Apathy, their curbing their Passions by the Force

of their Reason. For what occasion'd this Speech of *Sempronius*, and this Caution which he gives to *Portius*? Why, what but *Portius*'s declaring the Resolution of his Sister *Martia* not to admit of any effeminate unworthy Passion while her Father's Life is in danger. So that methinks *Portius* might reasonably have interpreted this Caution of *Sempronius*, as a Reprimand for his own extravagant and unreasonable Passion, and not have construed it as a Design to send him on an *April* Errand to harangue a poor Parcel of drunken Sots before they were out of their first Sleep. But, as we observ'd in the printed Remarks, the Author wanted to be rid of *Portius* to make Room for *Syphax*, and so thrust him out with as little Ceremony as *Manly* did my Lord *Plausible*.

I am,

Your, &c.

O

On the Sentiments of CATO.

LETTER III.

SIR,

TO enter into Matter without Ceremony, I ſhould be glad to know your Opinion of what *Syphax* tells *Sempronius* in the Beginning of the Scene between them in this firſt Act.

Syph. Sempronius, *all is ready;*
I've ſounded my Numidians *Man by Man,*
And find them ripe for a Revolt: They all
Complain aloud of Cato's *Diſcipline,*
And wait but the Command to change their
Maſter.

Now where's the Policy or the Prudence of founding them Man by Man? The common Soldiers obey their Commanders, and 'tis dangerous to truſt a Conſpiracy with too many. But when did *Syphax* do this? 'Tis but half an Hour after Day-break, when he ſays this: If he had done the Day before, methinks *Sempronius* his

Fellow-Conſpirator ſhould have known it over-night, ſince *Cæſar* was ſo ſoon expected, and *Sempronius* himſelf ſeems to be of that Opinion.

Believe me, Syphax, *there's no time to waſte;*
Ev'n while we ſpeak our Conqueror comes on.
And gathers Ground upon us ev'ry Moment.
Alas! thou knoweſt not Cæſar's *active Soul,*
With what a dreadful Courſe he ruſhes on
From War to War. In vain has Nature form'd
Mountains and Oceans to oppoſe his Paſſage;
He bounds o'er all, victorious in his March,
The Alpes *and* Pyreneans *ſink before him,*
Thro' Winds and Waves and Storms he
works his Way,
Impatient for the Battel: One Day more
Will ſet the Victor thundring at our Gates.

ſo that according tô this 'tis plain, that *Syphax* ought to have acquainted *Sempronius* over-night, with the Inclination which his *Numidians* had to revolt, provided he had founded them the Day before; and how he could found them Man by Man, by Night, in a Town of War, as *Utica* was, is ſomething hard to conceive. But to dwell no longer on this: If all the *Numidians* were thus at the Command of *Syphax*, how comes *Sempronius* ſo earneſt about the gaining *Juba* as he is in the Remainder of this Speech?

Bu

But tell me, haſt thou yet drawn o'er young
Juba?
That ſtill wou'd recommend thee more to
Cæſar,
And challenge better Terms.

But, Sir, how comes *Sempronius* in the foregoing Speech to uſe this Language to *Syphax*,

Alas! thou know'ſt not Cæſar's *active Soul?*

when 'tis plain from the Scene in the firſt Act betwen *Syphax* and *Juba*, that the former is ſo very well acquainted with the Character and Manners of the preſent *Romans* in general; and when 'tis plain from the Scene between *Juba* and *Syphax* in the ſecond Act, that *Syphax* was ſo very well acquainted with the Manners and Actions of their remoteſt Anceſtors.

Juba. *Wouldſt thou degrade thy Prince into a Ruffian?*
Syph. *The boaſted Anceſtors of theſe great Men,*
Whoſe Virtues you admire, were all ſuch Ruffians.
This Dread of Nations, this almighty Rome,
That comprehends in its wide Empire's Bounds

All

All under Heav'n, was founded on a Rape.
Your Scipio's, Cæsar's, Pompey's *and your* Cato's,
(These Gods on Earth) are all the spurious Brood
Of violated Maids, of ravish'd Sabines.

Now is it possible that a Man who talks at this Rate, should be unacquainted with the Character of *Cæsar*, who was the greatest Captain that ever had been in the World, and whose Actions had made so much noise in the World for so many Years together? Is it possible that any one now alive should be acquainted with the Manners and Actions of the very first Princes of the *Savoy* Family, and should be a Stranger to the Character and the Actions of Prince *Eugene*?

But, Sir, I cannot imagine, for what Reason *Sempronius* should appear thus solicitous for the drawing over *Juba* into this Conspiracy,

But tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young Juba?
That still would recommend thee more to Cæsar
And challenge better Terms———

when 'tis plain from the Soliloquy of *Sempronius* in the sixth Page of this first Act *(Edit.* 1.*)* that the principal Motive that engag'd

engag'd *Sempronius* in this Conspiracy was the possessing *Marcia?*

Cato *has us'd me Ill: He has refused*
His Daughter Marcia *to my ardent Vows.*
Besides, his baffled Arms, and ruined Cause
Are Barrs to my Ambition. Cæsar's *Favour,*
That show'rs down Greatness on his Friends, will raise me
To Rome's *first Honours. If I give up* Cato,
I claim in my Reward his Captive Daughter.

Now *Juba* was not only *Sempronius* his Rival, but *Sempronius* knew that he was so, as 'tis plain from *p.* 31. of the first Edition, *Act* 2.

Semp. Syphax, *I now may hope, thou hast forsook*
Thy Juba's *Cause, and wishest* Marcia *mine.*

Now 'tis evident that since *Sempronius* expected to possess the Daughter, by betraying the Father to *Cæsar*, how comes he to appear so earnest to reconcile his Rival to *Cæsar?*

Semp. *Be sure to press upon him every Motive.*
Juba's *Surrender, since his Father's Death,*
Would give up Africk *into* Cæsar's *Hands,*
And make him Lord of half the burning Zone.

Now

Now, Sir, did you ever hear of a duller Lover, or a more ſtupid Plotter than this *Sempronius*, who being engag'd in a Conſpiracy againſt *Cato* by the Motives of Love and Ambition, appears zealous to reconcile a pow'rful Rival to *Cæſar*, who, being reconcil'd, would infallibly traverſe him in his Paſſion, and conſequently in his Ambition? Can any thing be more plain, than that *Cæſar*, who ſacrific'd ev'ry thing to his Intereſt and his Ambition, would ſacrifice both the Paſſion and Ambition of *Sempronius* to him who was able

To make him Lord of half the burning Zone,

And can any thing be more manifeſt than that *Juba*, if once reconcil'd to *Cæſar*, would, unleſs he were more ſtupid than *Sempronius*, uſe all his Intereſt with *Cæſar*, to hinder his Rival from mounting, as he propos'd to himſelf, to the firſt Honours of *Rome*, leaſt thoſe Honours ſhould be as it were ſo many ſteps towards his ſucceeding in his Paſſion for *Marcia?* But I have exceeded the Bounds to which I propos'd to confine my ſelf in ev'ry Letter, and am, till the next Opportunity,

SIR,

Yours, &c.

On the Sentiments of CATO.

LETTER IV.

SIR,

I Come now to the Scene between *Juba* and *Syphax*, being the fourth Scene of the first Act, which you have heard so extravagantly commended. When I come to shew you that the Author has manag'd Matters with so much Dexterity, that the whole Scene is one gross Fault, that *Syphax* is very much in the wrong in his Invectives against the *Romans*, that *Juba* is more in the wrong in his Defence of them, what shall we say of the Taste and Judgment of its Admirers? shall we forbear to cry out with Indignation, *Quantum est in rebus inane?*

First then I come to shew that *Syphax* is very much in the wrong in his general Invective against the *Romans*. For do but consider what the Design of *Syphax* was in this Conversation with *Juba?* his Design was to draw over *Juba* to the Party of *Cæsar*, according to the Request which

Sempronius

Sempronius made him, no less than twice, in the foregoing Scene.

But tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young
Juba?
That still wou'd recommend thee more to
Cæsar,
And challenge better Terms.
p. 7. Edit. 4.

and in the next Speech but one,

Be sure to press upon him ev'ry Motive.
Juba's *Surrender, since his Father's Death,*
Would give up Africk *into* Cæsar's *Hands,*
And make him Lord of half the burning
Zone.

And as soon as *Syphax* remains alone, he says,

I'll try if yet I can reduce to Reason
This head-strong Youth, and make him spurn
at Cato.
The Time is short, Cæsar *comes rushing on*
us——
But hold! young Juba sees *me, and approa-*
ches.

Now the first Speech of *Syphax*, in this Scene between him and *Juba*, contains a general Invective against the *Romans*.

Syph.

Syph. *'Tis not my Talent to conceal my Thoughts,*
Or carry Smiles and Sun-shine in my Face,
When Discontent sits heavy at my Heart.
I have not yet so much the Roman *in me.*

Now, Sir, the Question is, whether an Invective against the *Romans* in general, is a probable Method to induce *Juba* to espouse that part of them, which either was, or at least pass'd for, the most profligate part of them with all the impartial World, and more particularly with *Juba*? The Question is, whether an Invective against the *Roman* Fraud and Hypocrisie was likely to make *Juba* desert *Cato*, whom all the World allowed to be sincere, and to bring him over to *Cæsar* who was renown'd for the Artifice of his Dissimulation?

But as *Syphax* is very much in the wrong in this general Invective against the *Romans* in general, *Juba*'s infinitely more so in his Defence of them. For *Syphax* is not in the wrong absolutely, but only with relation to the Design with which he speaks, for absolutely speaking, he is so far from saying too much against them, that he does not speak a hundredth Part of the Truth. And what *Juba* says in Defence of them, does by no means belong to the *Romans* who liv'd in *Juba*'s Time; but to those who liv'd in the

Vigour

Vigour of the Common-wealth. The *Romans*, who liv'd in *Juba*'s Time, were the most profligate Race of People that ever liv'd in the World; which will easily appear by the Account that is given of their Manners by their own discerning and impartial Historian *Sallust*, in his History of the *Catilinarian* War. As you have the Works of that Prince of Historians by Heart, there is no Occasion for repeating the Passage. I appeal to you therefore, if 'tis not manifest, from the Account which *Sallust* gives of them, that the Reflection of *Syphax* in the foregoing Speech is not the hundredth Part of what his Contemporary *Romans* deserv'd, and whether it does not appear likewise from the same Account that the following Sentiments of *Juba* are not only false but base.

Jub. *Why dost thou cast out such ungen'rous Terms*
Against the Lords and Sovereigns of the World?
Dost thou not see Mankind fall down before them,
And own the Force of their superior Virtue?
Is there a Nation in the Wilds of Africk,
Amidst our barren Rocks, and burning Sands,
That does not tremble at the Roman *Name?*

But let us see what *Syphax* replies to this Speech of *Juba*.

Syph.

Syph. *Gods! where's the Worth that sets this People up*
Above your own Numidia's *tawny Sons!*
Do they with tougher Sinews bend the Bow?
Or flies the Javelin swifter to its Mark,
Launch'd from the Vigour of a Roman *Arm?*
Who like our active African *instructs*
The fiery Steed; and trains him to his Hand?
Or guides in Troops th' embattled Elephant,
Loaden with War? These, these are Arts, my Prince,
In which your Lama *does not stoop to* Rome.

The Preheminence over other Nations to which the *Romans* ow'd the Extent of their Empire, did not proceed so much from the superior Strength or Address of their Individuals, consider'd as Individuals, as from their publick and military Discipline. However, what *Syphax* says here would not be so very impertinent, if the Design of *Syphax* were to draw *Juba* off from the *Romans* in general; but as I said before, I cannot imagine how he can pretend by these means to draw *Juba* off from that Party of the *Romans* which he believ'd the juster, and to make him espouse that part of them, of the Justice of whose Cause he had no manner of Opinion.

But now, Sir, let us come to what *Juba* replies to *Syphax* in the Defence of his *Romans*.

Juba. *These all are Virtues of a meaner Rank,*
Perfections that are plac'd in Bones and Nerves.
A Roman *Soul is bent on higher Views:*
To civilize the rude unpolish'd World,
And lay it under the Restraint of Laws;
To make Man mild, and sociable to Man;
To cultivate the wild licentious Savage,
With Wisdom, Discipline, and lib'ral Arts
Th' Embellishments of Life: Virtues like these,
Make Human Nature shine, reform the Soul
And break our fierce Barbarians into Men.

Now, Sir, are you able without a just Indignation to behold in *Juba* this base Admiration of a Nation, which in its Progress to universal Monarchy endeavour'd to enslave the very Kings of *Africa*, as it had done those of *Europe* and *Asia* before? The truth of it is, that wherever the *Romans* at this time of day carried their Arms, they taught the Nations their Luxury, their Repines, their Frauds, their civil Dissentions, and in short, all the deplorable Corruptions of their Manners; and *Syphax* might have answer'd him a thousand Times more fully than he does in the following Speech.

Syph. *Patience kind Heav'ns!—Excuse an old Man's warmth.*

Wh

What are these wond'rous civilizing Arts,
This Roman *Polish, and this smooth Behaviour,*
That render Man thus tractable and tame?
Are they not only to disguise our Passions,
To set our Looks at variance with our Thoughts,
To check the Starts and Sallies of the Soul,
And break off all its Commerce with the Tongue;
In short, to change us into other Creatures,
Than what our Nature and the Gods design'd us.

Here are not above two or three of the Sentiments which are found in the foremention'd Account of *Sallust*, whereas that admirable Historian employs wholè Pages in describing the prodigious Corruption of the *Roman* Manners.

In the following Speech, *Juba* pretends to convince *Syphax* of the Virtue of the *Romans* in general, I mean of the *Romans* who were his Contemporaries, by the Virtue of *Cato*; as if there were any Conclusion from the Virtue of one Man to the Virtue of a whole Nation; one might as reasonably conclude from the Understanding of one Man to the Understanding of a whole Nation: one might as reasonably conclude that the *Thebans* were the brightest People of *Greece*, because *Pindar*

was the greateſt of the Lyrick Poets, as that they were naturally the braveſt People of *Greece*; becauſe *Pelopidas* and *Epaminondas* were perhaps the greateſt Captains of their Time. We have ſhewn already, that the *Romans* of thoſe Times were ſo far from being more virtuous than other People, that they were more profligate in their Manners than any other Nation whatever.

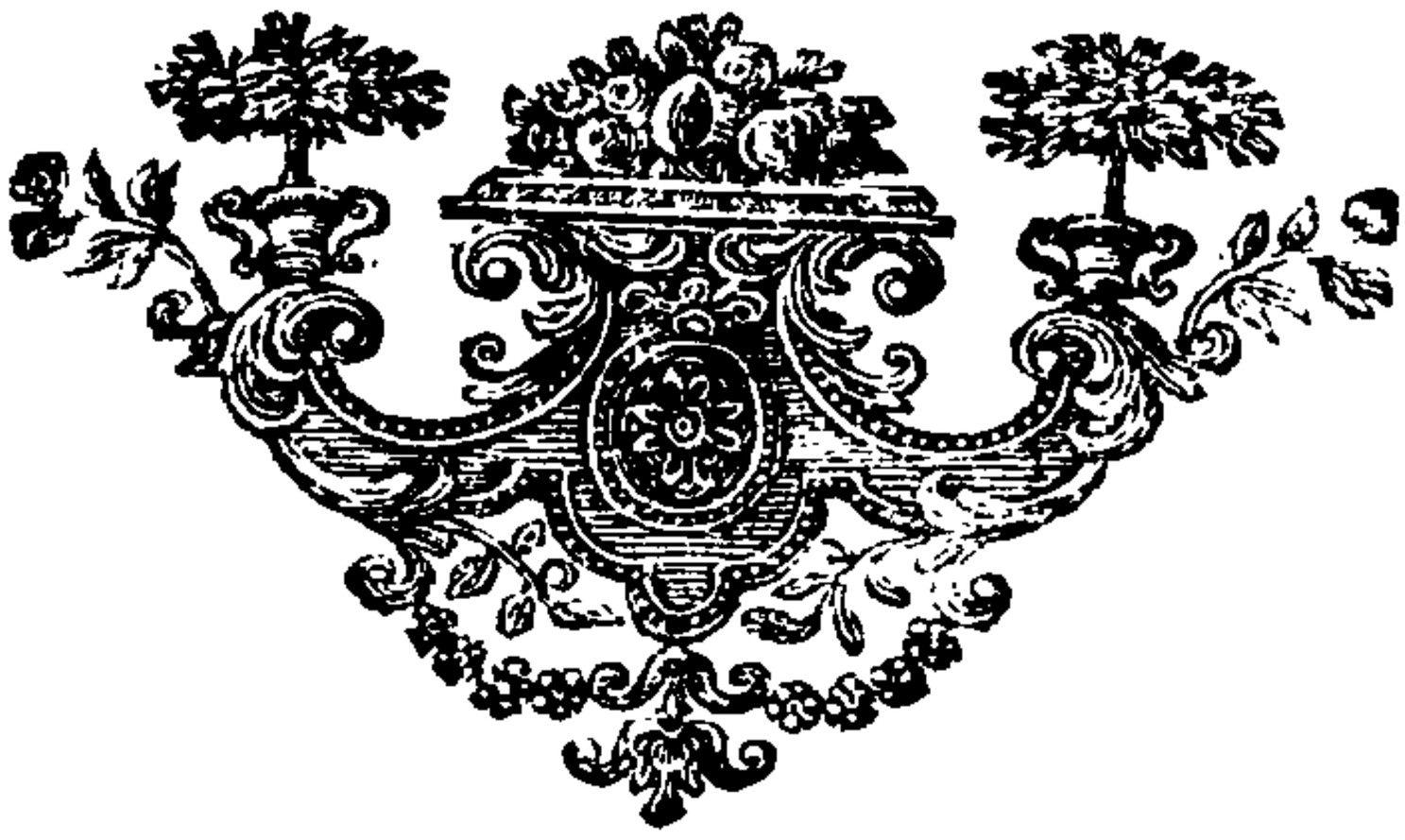
The Virtue of *Cato* therefore, ſuch as it was, muſt have been owing to ſomething elſe than the national Virtue of his Cotemporary *Romans*. It was owing perhaps to an Affectation of the auſtere Virtue of his Anceſtors, to *Grecian* Philoſophy, to an over-grown monſtrous Pride, which appears ev'ry where throughout his Character, to the Obſtinacy of an inflexible Temper, and perhaps I might add to likewiſe invincible Ignorance; I mean an utter Ignorance of the Condition and Conſtitution of his Country, and of the Changes that had been made in it, by the Alteration of their Manners, by the loſs of their *Agrarian*, and by prolongation of Magiſtracy; ſo that the *Roman* Liberty in *Cato*'s Time was in a deſperate Condition, and was irretrievable unleſs by abſolute Power.

It was never to be recover'd by *Cato*; *Cæſar* alone could reſtore it. *Cato* had only the impotent Will, but *Cæſar* alone had the

the Power. The merry way of reasoning in this Scene, puts me in Mind of an Observation which *Rapin* makes upon the *French* Poets his Contemporaries, that Logick was so much neglected in their Poems, that they were for the most part either Fustian or Nonsense, but I forget my Promise, and transgress my Bounds. The Remainder of this Scene must make the Subject of another Letter, which I promise to send you as soon as I have leisure to think of it.

I am, SIR,

Your, &c.



On the Sentiments of CATO.

LETTER V.

SIR,

THE last time I had the Satisfaction to write to you, I was oblig'd to break off my Remarks in the middle of the Scene between *Syphax* and *Juba*, which is the fourth of the first Act. Being encourag'd by your Approbation of what I have already sent you, I shall now examine the Remainder of that Scene.

In the 11th Page *Syphax* urges *Juba* to abandon *Cato*, as you may see in the following Dialogue.

Juba. *What would'st thou have me do?*
Syph. *Abandon* Cato.
Juba. Syphax, *I should be more than twice an Orphan*
By such a Loss.
Syph. *Ay, there's the Tie that binds you.*
You long to call him Father. Marcia's *Charms*
Work in your Breast unseen, and plead for Cato.
No Wonder you are deaf to all I say.

Juba,

Juba. Syphax, *your Zeal becomes importunate:*
I've hitherto permitted it to rove,
And talk at large; but learn to keep it in,
Leaſt it ſhould take more Freedom than I'll give it.

Now, Sir, can you ſee here, without ſmiling, that *Syphax* makes a Propoſal to his Prince, which the latter believes to be downright villainous, and yet does not provoke him; but as ſoon as the other touches upon his Love for *Marcia*, the Milkſop takes Fire, and ſhews that he cannot bear it.

But now, Sir, let us ſee what *Syphax* ſays upon this Reſentment of *Juba*.

Syph. *Sir, your great Father never us'd me thus.*

That is as much as to ſay, that his Father never reprimanded him for his Inſolence and his Preſumption; but ſee how he proceeds.

Alas! he's dead; but can you e'er forget
The tender Sorrow, and the Pangs of Nature,
The fond Embraces, and repeated Bleſſings
Which you drew from him, in your laſt Farewel?
Still muſt I cheriſh the dear ſad Remembrance,

At once to torture and to please my Soul.
The good old King at parting wrung my Hand,
(His Eyes brim full of Tears) then sighing cry'd,
Prithee be careful of my Son! His Grief
Swell'd up so high, he could not utter more.

Now, Sir, 'tis plain from this Speech, that *Syphax* was present at the last parting between the Son and the Father. Let us see now, whether *Syphax* can make mention of this last parting between the Son and the Father, for any other reason than to work upon the Weakness of his young Master, and to put him out of his princely Senses. Not considering that the mention of that parting, if he supposes his Younker had common Sense, would render the Insolence and the Presumption which *Syphax* shews, by urging *Juba* to abandon *Cato* inexcusable and insupportable; because at that parting, at which we have just now shewn that *Syphax* was present, the Father strictly charges the Son never to abandon *Cato*.

This is evident from what *Juba* says in the Scene between him and *Cato* in the second Act, where *Juba* gives the other Relation of what happen'd at the last parting between his Father and himself in the following Words.

My Father, when, ſome Days before his Death,
He order'd me to march to Utica,
(Alas, I thought not then his Death ſo near!)
Wept o'er me, preſs'd me in his aged Arms,
And as his Grief gave way, My Son, ſaid he,
Whatever Fortune ſhall befall thy Father,
Be Cato's *Friend, he'll train thee up to great*
And virtuous Deeds: Do but obſerve him well,
Thou'lt ſhun Misfortunes, or thou'lt learn to bear them.

But now the Son in this Scene between him and *Syphax* in the firſt Act, upon the Mention which *Syphax* makes of this Parting, ſeems entirely to have forgot that Admonition of his Father, of which he makes ſo circumſtantial a Relation to *Cato* in the 2d Act. To be convinc'd of this, let us ſee what he anſwers to what *Syphax* ſaid laſt to him.

Juba. *Alas, thy Story melts away my Soul! That beſt of Fathers! How ſhall I diſcharge That Gratitude and Duty which I owe him?*
Syph. *By laying up his Counſels in your Heart.*
Juba. *His Counſels bad me yield to thy Directions.*

What?

What? when those Directions were point blank contrary to his own, as they apparently are here? But what follows?

Then Syphax *chide me in severest Terms,*
Vent all thy Passion, and I'll stand its Shock
Calm and unruffled as a Summer's Sea,
When not a Breath of Wind flies o'er its Surface.

Thus *Juba*, as I said above, has either entirely forgot that Admonition of his Father, of which he makes so circumstantial a Relation to *Cato* in the 2d Act; or has not Capacity enough to know, that what *Syphax* brings as an Excuse for his Insolence ought to render it insupportable. But now, Sir, let us see what *Syphax* says upon this melting Tenderness of *Juba*.

Syph. *Alas, my Prince, I'd guide you to your Safety.*
Jub. *I do believe thou would'st; but tell me how?*
Syph. *Fly from the Fate that follows* Cæsar's *Foes.*
Juba. *My Father scorn'd to do it.*
Syph. *And therefore died.*
Juba. *Better to die ten thousand, thousand 'Deaths*
Than wound my Honour.
Syph. *Rather say your Love.*

Juba.

Juba. Syphax, *I've promis'd to preſerve my Temper;*
Why wilt thou urge me to confeſs a Flame
I long have ſtifled, and would fain conceal.

Now, Sir, I deſire to know how *Syphax* and *Sempronius* ſhould come to know of this Flame, if *Juba* had long ſtifled it, and would fain conceal it. For as *Sempronius* tells us in the third Act, no one had Acceſs to *Marcia* but *Juba* and her Brothers. And if *Juba* had never confeſs'd any Paſſion, the Brothers ſure would not talk of any ſuch thing, before they were certain of it, tho' perhaps they might have gueſs'd at it; and certain they could not be, before the Declaration of *Juba*.

For what remains, tho' this Character of *Juba* is not ſo faulty with relation to the Rules, as ſome which I mentioned in the *Remarks* which were formerly publiſh'd by *Lintott*, yet is it more faulty, abſolutely and conſider'd in it ſelf. For *Juba* is a Character that is not only ſhocking and contemptible to Men of Senſe, at the ſame time that the Author endeavours to render him eſtimable and agreeable, but he is ſhocking and contemptible by the very ſame Qualities by which the Author endeavours to render him eſtimable and agreeable, and theſe are his Eſteem and Admiration of *Cato* and of the *Romans*. For in admiring the

the *Romans* who were his Contemporaries, he not only admir'd the most profligately wicked of all Nations, as we have shewn above by the Testimony of their noblest Historian, but a Nation who, in their Progress to universal Monarchy, were about to ruin and enslave *Numidia*, and the rest of *Africa*, as they had done *Europe* and part of *Asia* before. And as to that Esteem and Veneration and almost Adoration which he shews for *Cato*, we have this one Remark to make; that he thinks and acts directly counter to him, even in those very Qualities for which he pretends to admire him. For the most shining Qualities in *Cato*'s Character were the Love of his Country, and the Command which he had of his Passions.

Now, Sir, for the first of these Qualities give me leave to observe, that *Cato* was a Lover of his own Country, and not of *Numidia*; and he and his *Romans* design'd to subdue *Numidia* to *Rome*, and not *Rome* to *Numidia*. If *Syphax* had been a loyal Subject and a true Friend to his Prince, and not a false Traitor and a Friend to *Rome*, he would have advis'd his Prince to have defied both *Cæsar* and *Cato*, and the *Romans* in general, and taking this Advantage of their civil Dissensions to have retreated into his own *Numidia*, and to have rows'd up all the Nations between the Tropicks against those accursed Plagues of Human

man Race, who design'd to sacrifice the Happiness and the Virtue of Mankind to their insatiable Avarice, and their detestable Ambition. And *Juba* had follow'd that Advice, if he had been wise or magnanimous enough to have had any Regard for his own Royalty and his Independency, or had been a true Patriot enough to have had half so much concern for the Liberty and Happiness of *Numidia* as *Cato* had for that of *Rome*.

Now as for the other Quality of *Cato*, the Command of his Passions; *Juba* is so far from commanding his own, that thro' an unparallell'd Impotence of Mind, he chuses that very Day to make a Declaration of his Passion for *Marcia*, and to gain her Father's Consent, which is apprehended to be the very last both of *Roman* Liberty, and of her Father's Life. And this Weakness of his is exposed the more, and render'd the more contemptible ev'n by what *Portius* says to *Marcus* in his Praise in the first Scene of the Play.

Behold young Juba *the* Numidian *Prince,*
With how much Care he forms himself to Glory,
And breaks the Fierceness of his native Temper,
To copy out our Father's bright Example.
He loves our Sister Martia, *greatly loves her!*

His

His Eyes, his Looks, his Actions all betray it.
But still the smother'd Fondness burns within him.
When most it swells and labours for a Vent,
The sense of Honour and desire of Fame
Drive the big Passion back into his Heart.

So that *Juba*, it seems, after having for some time stifled his Passion, chuses that very Day to declare and divulge it, on which Reason and Decency oblig'd him most of all to conceal it.

By the way, Sir, I desire leave to observe, that for *Portius* to declare that *Juba* loves his Sister *Marcia*, and not only loves her, but greatly loves her; that his Eyes, that his Looks, that his Actions all betray that Love, that tho' he is silent the smother'd Fondess burns within him, even when it labours most for a Vent, and that he is restrain'd from divulging it, by the sense of Honour and the desire of Fame, I say, for *Portius* to declare all this, when it appears that *Juba* has not only made no mention of it before that Day, but declares it upon the only Day in which the sense of Honour and desire of Fame forbid such a Declaration, are Sentiments that appear to me to be visionary and fantastick. It seeming to me to be equally self-evident, that nothing could make such a Declaration in *Juba* dishonourable before that Day, and that nothing could

have

have hinder'd it from passing for Infamous then.

Thus, Sir, have I given you an Account of the Absurdities and the Inconsistencies which are to be found in the Sentiments of the first Act of the Tragedy of *Cato.* I shall proceed to the second Act with the first Opportunity,

I am, SIR,

Your, &c.

On

On the Sentiments of the ſecond Act of CATO.

LETTER VI.

SIR,

YOU could not have us'd a more prevailing Argument to oblige me to continue my Remarks upon the Sentiments of *Cato*, than the aſſuring me that thoſe which I have already ſent you upon the Sentiments of the firſt Act have not been diſpleaſing to you. I ſhall proceed then to the ſecond Act, and entring upon the Subject without any more Ceremony, I ſhall deſire to know from you, whether the firſt Scene of the ſecond Act, that is the Scene which ſhews the Senate aſſembled, deſerves the Applauſe which it met with at firſt from the Reader and the Spectator. In order to the anſwering this Queſtion, let us conſider the Deſign, with which *Cato*, who preſides o'er it, ſummon'd this Aſſembly. Let us conſider next the Manner of ſpeaking in it, and laſtly the Speeches themſelves.

The

The Design of *Cato* is to consult this Assembly about Peace or War; which he does, without so much as once consulting them, about the Means of carrying it on, or so much as once asking their Advice about it. And yet *Cæsar* was expected in a few Hours at the Gates of *Utica*, a Town not maintainable against *Cæsar*'s Army, as we may learn by the very first Lines of the Play.

The Dawn is overcast, the Morning low'rs,
And heavily in Clouds brings on the Day,
The great, th' important Day; big with the Fate
Of Cato *and of* Rome.

For how could that Day be big with the Fate of *Cato* and of *Rome*, if *Utica* were in a Capacity to hold out a Siege against the Arms of *Cæsar*?

But, Sir, let us consider the Manner of speaking in this Assembly. As soon as *Cato* proposes the Business of Peace or War, *Sempronius* rises, and declares for the latter; when *Cato* immediately contradicts him without staying to see if the rest of the Senators were of his Opinion; which is contrary to the Method of all Councils, either those of *Parnassus* or those of the World, because such a Proceeding is not consonant to Reason nor to the Design of convening such Assemblies.

For the very Design of convening such Assemblies, and of asking their Advice, is, that every Man who is ask'd it, should give it sincerely and without Prepossession. Now is it not plain, Sir, that if he who has the supream Authority in a Council declares his Opinion before the rest, they who speak after him are in some measure byass'd?

But now let us come to the Speeches themselves, and let us begin with *Cato's*.

Fathers, we once again are met in Council;
Cæsar's *Approach has summon'd us together;*
And Rome *attends her Fate from our Resolves:*
How shall we treat this bold aspiring Man?
Success still follows him, and backs his Crimes:
Pharsalia *gave him* Rome; Egypt *has since*
Receiv'd his Yoke, and the whole Nile *is* Cæsar's.
Why should I mention Juba's *Overthrow,*
And Scipio's *Death?* Numidia's *burning Sands*
Still smoak with Blood. 'Tis time we should decree
What Course to take. Our Foe advances on us,
And envies us ev'n Libya's *sultry Desarts.*
Fathers, pronounce your Thoughts, are they still fixt
To hold it out, and fight it to the last?

Or

Or are your Hearts subdu'd at length, and wrought
By Time and ill Success to a Submission?

We will begin to examine this Speech by the Tayl; for 'tis not till the four last Lines that *Cato* puts the Question to this mock Senate, whether they were for Peace or War, which is putting a wrong Question. For as long as they had a Ressource, and the Affairs of the Commonwealth were not desperate, as appears by what *Cato* and *Juba* say in the sequel, all true Patriots ought to be for War; and the only Question which could be put properly to them, was, since *Cæsar* approached, and *Utica* was not maintainable by their Forces, against his numerous and victorious Army, to what Places they should immediately retreat, and where they might best and soonest recruit their Forces. All the first part of the Speech is Declamation, and telling his Hearers, tho' neither he nor they had a Minute to lose, *Cæsar* being expected every Hour, what either was not true, or what they must every one of them know every Jot as well as himself. Besides, could any thing be so little to his Purpose, as that at this extraordinary Juncture, which required that he should use all his Art and all his Force to animate them, he should remind them thus of the Felicity and the constant Success of *Cæsar*,

and enumerate the Battels he had gain'd, and the Countries he had conquered, which was enough to make them lose all Courage and incline them to a base Submission? If it has not that Effect on *Sempronius*, 'tis because he is a Traitor, and does not speak his Mind; that by persuading *Cato* to hold out, he may have the Merit of delivering him up to *Cæsar*. Being ordered then by *Cato* to declare his Opinion, he delivers it in the following Speech, which is intended by the Author as a *Gasconnade*.

Semp. *My Voice is still for War.*
Gods! can a Roman *Senate long debate*
Which of the two to chuse, Slav'ry or Death!
No, let us rise at once, gird on our Swords,
And, at the Head of our remaining Troops,
Attack the Foe, break thro' the thick Array
Of his throng'd Legions, and charge home upon him.
Perhaps some Arm, more lucky than the rest,
May reach his Heart, and free the World from Bondage.

This, as I said before, is design'd by the Author as a *Gasconnade*. But 'tis only its being in the wrong Place that makes it so. For if this Speech had been spoke after *Cato* had declar'd against both making Peace and retreating, it had been great and reasonable, and *Roman*. For this Advice of

Sem-

Sempronius is wrong, becauſe the Forces in *Utica* could before the Arrival of *Cæſar* make a Retreat and recruit. But after Refuſal to make Peace and to make a Retreat, there remain'd but two things, either to go out and fight, or to ſtay there till they were coop'd up by *Cæſar*. To ſtay there was fooliſh and deſperate; for *Cæſar* might be certain to reduce them by Famine, without ſuffering them ſo much as to ſtrike a Stroke. If they went out and fought, they had a Chance for it, tho' the odds was very great againſt them.

Perhaps ſome Arm, more lucky than the reſt,
May reach his Heart, and free the World
from Bondage.

So that *Cato* having reſolved neither to make Peace nor to retreat, was oblig'd by Reaſon to follow this Advice of *Sempronius*. Let us now ſee what Reaſons he gives for his not doing it.

Cato. *Let not a Torrent of impetuous Zeal*
Tranſport thee thus beyond the Bounds of
Reaſon.
True Fortitude is ſeen in great Exploits
That Juſtice warrants, and that Wiſdom
guides;
All elſe is tow'ring Frenzy and Diſtraction.
Are not the Lives of thoſe, who draw the
Sword

In Rome's *defence, entrusted to our Care?*
Should we thus lead them to a Field of Slaughter,
Might not th' impartial World with Reason say,
We lavish'd at our Deaths the Blood of thousands,
To grace our Fall, and make our Ruine glorious?

Why no: The World could not with reason say, that he lavish'd at his Death the Blood of thousands, for doing a reasonable thing, that is by leading them out to fight against the Enemies of their Country, by which they had a Chance for the Victory, after he had resolv'd within himself neither to make Peace nor retreat. The World might reasonably say, that

He lavish'd at his Death the Blood of thousands
To grace his Fall, and make his Ruine glorious,

by basely deserting them; that is, by dying alone, by dying by his own Hand, without making a fair Retreat with them, or making any Terms for them, or fighting bravely at the Head of them. If he had fall'n in the Field at the Head of them, and the Deaths of thousands had attended on his,

his, it would have been so far from making his Ruine glorious, that it would have obscur'd it, and would have render'd the Fall of *Cato* a vulgar Fall, and common to those numerous Chiefs, who in the several Ages of the World have been known to fall in Battel. *Cato* knew very well, that to grace his Fall, and render his Ruine glorious with the unthinking part of the World, both with his Contemporaries and with Posterity, that the Singularity of his Fall was requisite; that in order to this there was a Necessity for his falling alone, for his falling by his own Hand, after having twice read over *Plato*'s Treatise of the Immortality of the Soul.

But now, Sir, as *Sempronius* is in the wrong in declaring for War, before he knew that *Cato* had resolv'd neither to make Peace nor make a Retreat; as *Cato* is more in the wrong in answering him; let us now shew that *Lucius* is still more in the wrong in the Harangue which he makes for Peace; and *Cato* still more in the wrong than he, in the Answer which he makes to that Harangue.

Lucius. *My Thoughts, I must confess, are turn'd on Peace.*
Already have our Quarrels fill'd the World
With Widows and with Orphans. Scythia *mourns*

Our guilty Wars, and Earth's remoteſt Regions
Lie half unpeopled by the Feuds of Rome:
'Tis time to ſheath the Sword, and ſpare Mankind.
It is not Cæſar, *but the Gods, my Fathers,*
The Gods declare againſt us, and repel
Our vain Attempts: To urge the Foe to Battel,
(Prompted by blind Revenge and wild Deſpair,)
Were to refuſe th' Awards of Providence,
And not to reſt in Heav'ns Determination.
Already have we ſhewn our Love to Rome,
Now let us ſhew Submiſſion to the Gods.

The firſt ſix Lines of this Speech contain nothing but a meer poetical Flouriſh. And for theſe two that follow;

It is not Cæſar, *but the Gods, my Fathers,*
The Gods declare againſt us, and repel
Our vain Attempts.

May we not reaſonably ſay, that they are the Language of Baſeneſs, that it would be more Philoſophical as well as more *Roman* to ſay, that the Gods have only tryed them all this while, to try with what Conſtancy they would bear their Sufferings and endure their Loſſes, and whether they were worthy

worthy to be made the Deliverers of their Country. But let us proceed,

To urge the Foe to Battel,
(Prompted by blind Revenge and wild Despair)
Were to refuse th' Awards of Providence,
And not to rest in Heav'ns Determination.

Thus is this Fool in the other Extream, as if there were no medium, between urging the Foe to immediate Battel, and a base Submission. *Cato* will tell him in his Answer that there is that medium, but will tell it him after such a manner, that he had better have said nothing.

Cato. *Fathers, I cannot see that our Affairs*
Are grown thus desp'rate. We have Bulwarks round us;
Within our Walls are Troops enured to Toil
In Africk's *Heats, and season'd to the Sun;*
Numidia's *spacious Kingdom lies behind us,*
Ready to rise at its young Prince's Call.

Thus *Cato* is sensible, that there is a medium between urging the Foe to immediate Battel, and a base Submission. There is a retreat into *Numidia*, where they may repair and recruit their Forces, and then it

it will be time to offer Battel, and there-fore this Stoick justly cries out,

While there is Hope, do not distrust the Gods.

But what Inference does he draw from hence? why, the strangest one in the World.

While there is Hope, do not distrust the Gods;
But wait at least till Cæsar's *near Approach*
Force us to yield.

That is as much as to say, Since we have so fair a Retreat into *Numidia*, whose spacious Kingdom does as it were extend its Arms to receive us; why in the Name of all the Gods e'en let us stay here. But let us suffer him to go on,

'Twill never be too late
To sue for Chains, and own a Conqueror.
Why should Rome *fall a Moment ere her time?*
No, let us draw her Term of Freedom out
In its full Length, and spin it to the last.

But now, Sir, is that the way to spin the Freedom of *Rome* to the last, to stay till they are coop'd up in *Utica*, instead of retreating into *Numidia*, where they may raise another Army, with which they may once

once more contend for the Liberties of their Country. But let him make an end of this bleſſed Harangue.

So ſhall we gain ſtill one Day's Liberty;
And let me periſh, but, in Cato's *Judgment,*
A Day, an Hour of virtuous Liberty,
Is worth a whole Eternity in Bondage.

Why let it be ſo; but then if a Day, if an Hour of virtuous Liberty be of ſuch immenſe Value, ſure an Age, or many Ages of it are infinitely more to be eſteem'd. And why they ſhould talk of adding a Day to the Liberties of *Rome*, when they may reaſonably hope to add whole Ages, by retreating into a vaſt Kingdom, which lyes open to receive them, is I muſt confeſs above my Apprehenſion.

But, Sir, tho' I have not quite done with this Scene of the Senate, yet give me leave here to inſert a Paſſage of the following Scene between *Cato* and *Juba*, in order to ſhew that whereas thoſe old Staggers, *Sempronius* and *Lucius*, made, the one of them an extravagant Propoſal, and the other a baſe one; young *Juba*, who in all likelihood was never in the Sight before, yet gives very reaſonable Advice to *Cato* in the following Lines.

Had

Had we not better leave this Utica,
To arm Numidia *in our Cause, and court*
Th' Assistance of my Father's pow'rful
Friends?
Did they know Cato, *our remotest Kings*
Wou'd pour embattled Multitudes about him;
Their swarthy Hosts wou'd darken all our
Plains,
Doubling the native Horrour of the War,
And making Death more grim.

To which reasonable Advice we shall see immediately, that *Cato* gives a most unreasonable Answer.

Cato. *And canst thou think*
Cato *will fly before the Sword of* Cæsar?
Reduced like Hannibal, *to seek Relief*
From Court to Court, and wander up and
down,
A Vagabond in Africk!

Which is as much as to say, I confess that 'tis true, by retreating immediately from *Utica*, I may have an opportunity of recruiting my little Army in *Numidia*, and rendring it still more pow'rful than it was at *Thapsus*, and that consequently I may have yet another opportunity of consulting the Safety of my Friends, and retrieving their Interest, and their Pow'r; and may yet once more

more be in a Condition of contending for the Liberties of *Rome*, and of Mankind; yet rather than make this Retreat, which may look little in the Eyes of the unthinking Part of the World; I, who pretend so much concern for my Friends, and so much Love for my Country, will rather suffer my Country to sink, and my Friends to perish. But for God sake, Sir, why this Aversion now from flying before the Sword of *Cæsar*? Who was it that flew from *Pharsalia* to *Africa* before the Sword of *Cæsar*? Was it not this very *Cato*? But pray, Sir, what does he, what can he mean by

Reduced like Hannibal, *to seek Relief*
From Court to Court?

Could he not have brought a nearer, and a *Roman* Example, to justifie and to sustain his Retreat? Did not the Great *Pompey* after his Flight from *Pharsalia* seek Relief in *Africa*, and seek Relief which he was not sure to find? Shall *Cato* after this refuse to seek certain Relief in *Numidia*, a Relief so necessary for the Preservation of his Friends, and for the Support of sinking Liberty? But what can be the meaning of

wander up and down,
A Vagabond in Africk!

Did

Did not the Great *Pompey* wander more like a Vagabond from *Pharsalia* to *Ægypt*, being accompanied but by few, as Vagabonds are often accompanied? whereas *Cato* might be attended by Thousands, by all the remains of the Forces in *Utica*, whose Lives he might secure by his Retreat, and whose Deaths he would certainly lavish by his Stay. Which is prov'd by Fact, and by the Event, for *Cæsar* hang'd as many of these worthy Senators as afterwards fell into his hands.

But now 'tis time to go back to the Senate, and to shew that, upon the arrival of *Decius*, *Cato* makes a more unreasonable and extravagant Proposal, than either *Lucius* or *Sempronius* made before him.

Decius. Cæsar *is well acquainted with*
your Virtues,
And therefore sets this Value on your Life
Let him but know the Price of Cato's *Friendship,*
And name your Terms.
Cato. *Bid him disband his Legions,*
Restore the Common-wealth to Liberty,
Submit his Actions to the publick Censure,
And stand the Judgment of a Roman *Senate*
Bid him do this, and Cato *is his Friend.*

Now here, Sir, give me leave to ask one Question; Did *Cato* believe that *Cæsar* would

would comply with this Propoſal, or did he certainly know that he would reject it? If he believ'd that he would comply with it, muſt not this Stoick be Weakneſs it ſelf? If he certainly knew that he would reject it, why then is this a Brave and a *Roman* Propoſal, or a Frantick and Extravagant one? May not we here retort upon *Cato*, what he himſelf ſaid before to *Sempronius*?

Let not a Torrent of impetuous Zeal
Tranſport thee thus beyond the Bounds of Reaſon:
True Fortitude is ſeen in great Exploits
That Juſtice warrants, and that Wiſdom guides.

Is this a Propoſal that Wiſdom guides? And does not *Decius* in the following Line very juſtly reproach him, with acting ſo contrary to his known Character?

Decius. Cato, *the World talks loudly of your Wiſdom*——

Is not this ſo far from being Wiſe, that it is downright Ridiculous in one, who will do nothing to obtain his Demands, neither fight bravely, nor Retreat prudently, nor propoſe any probable Conditions of Peace? Thus, Sir, in compliance with your Deſire, I have recollected, and ſent you, the chief

chief Things which I had formerly remark'd upon the Sentiments of the two first Acts of *Cato*. What was chiefly to be observ'd upon the Sentiments of the other three Acts, fell in with the Method of the Remarks, which I formerly publish'd on that Tragedy.

I should now go back to the Scene in the first Act, between *Juba* and *Syphax*, and say something concerning that Pride which *Syphax* objects against *Cato*. But this Letter being already swell'd to too great a Bulk, I shall omit it 'till the next Opportunity.

I am,

SIR,

Your, &c.

On

On the Sentiments of CATO.

LETTER VII.

SIR,

I Shall now, according to my Promise, make an end of these Remarks, by going back to the Scene in the first Act between *Juba* and *Syphax.* In that Scene, *Juba* boasts to *Syphax* of the Pow'r that *Cato* has to resist Pleasure; *Syphax* answers that the Abstinence of his *Numidian* Hunters is as extraordinary as that of *Cato*; to which *Juba* replies.

Juba. *Thy Prejudices,* Syphax, *won't discern*
What Virtues grow from Ignorance, and Choice,
Nor how the Hero differs from the Brute.
But grant that others could with equal Glory
Look down on Pleasures, and the Baits of Sense;
Where shall we find the Man that bears Affliction,

Great and Majestick in his Griefs, like Cato?
Heav'ns with what Strength, what Steadiness of Mind,
He triumphs in the midst of all his Suff'rings!
How does he rise against a Load of Woes,
And thank the Gods that throw the Weight upon him!

Now here I desire leave, Sir, to make one Observation by the bye. The Author makes this young *African* affirm implicitely here, that 'tis harder to bear Affliction than to resist Pleasure; whereas there are two Principles innate in us, the one of which enables us to bear Affliction, and the other inclines us to submit to Pleasure; the one of which is Pride, and the other the ardent Desire of Happiness; and therefore *Rochefoucault* is in the right in his 29th Reflection *Il faut des plus grand Virtus pour soutenir la bonne Fortune que la mauvaise.* But now, Sir, I come to the chief thing of which I design'd to treat in this Letter, and that is the Pride of *Cato.* Let us see then what *Syphax* says to *Cato*'s Firmness under Affliction.

Syph. *'Tis Pride, rank Pride, and Haughtiness of Soul.*

Now

Now here I would ask the Author one Question. Did he design this Assertion of *Syphax* for Truth or Slander? If he design'd it for Truth, there is an end at once of all his Heroe's Virtue; *if he design'd it for* Slander, why then I desire leave to tell him, that he has drawn his Hero so unhappily, that what he design'd for Slander is apparently true, for in the latter end of that Scene of the second Act where *Decius* appears, *Cato* does not only think himself the greatest and most deserving of Mankind, but is so foolishly vain and so intolerably insolent as to declare it to all about him.

Dec. *Does* Cato *send this Answer back to* Cæsar,
For all his generous Cares and proffer'd Friendship?
Cato. *His Cares for me are insolent and vain:*
Presumptuous Man! The Gods take Care of Cato.
Wou'd Cæsar *shew the Greatness of his Soul?*
Bid him employ his Care for these my Friends,
And make good use of his ill-gotten Pow'r,
By sheltring Men much better than himself.

Which is as much as to say, *Cæsar* shews Insolence and Vanity in taking Care of me, but he would shew the Greatness of his Soul

in taking care of these Scoundrels here about me, who are as much better than him, as I am better than they are. Now is not this to say in plain *English*, As long as the Gods take care of me, let the Devil take care of my Friends here. For has not he painted *Cæsar*, but six lines before this, as black as any modern can paint the Devil?

Didst thou but view him right, thou'dst see him black
With Murder, Treason, Sacrilege, and Crimes,
That strike my Soul with Horror but to name 'em.

And so much for the Pride of *Cato*; at least at present. And now, Sir, let us return to what *Juba* said a little above, and take Occasion from it to make one more Remark.

Where shall we find the Man that bears Affliction,
Great and Majestick in his Griefs, like Cato:
Heav'ns with what Strength, what Steadiness of Mind,
He triumphs in the midst of all his Suff'rings
How does he rise against a Load of Woes
And thank the Gods that throw the Weight upon him!

Now

Now the Truth of the Matter is, that *Cato* ſhew'd leſs Strength and Steadineſs in his Affliction, than any of the conquer'd *Romans* who fled to *Spain*, that they might reſerve themſelves for better Times, and have one glorious Trval for Liberty more. He was ſo far from riſing under the Load, that he impiouſly threw down the Burden, and by poorly dying before the Word of Command, acted the Part of a cowardly Soldier, who flies from the Poſt where his General has plac'd him, and leaves his Buckler behind him.

Thus, Sir, have I ſent you what remain'd to be ſaid concerning the Sentiments of *Cato*. Some of my Friends have importun'd me to ſay ſomething of the Expreſſion and the Harmony; which I ſhall do my utmoſt Endeavour to decline,

I am, SIR,

Jan. 15. 1717.

Your, &c.

To the Right Honourable the

Earl of *HALIFAX*.

My LORD,

WHEN I heard of the new Honours with which the King had diſtinguiſh'd your Merit and acknowledg'd your Services, there was not one of your Lordſhip's humble Servants who receiv'd the happy Tidings with more Joy than my ſelf. If any thing temper'd that Joy, it was the Concern that I was not able to wait on your Lordſhip to congratulate you, ſo ſoon as the reſt.

If ever I can be able to do important Service to my Country, which has been all along the darling Paſſion of my Life, it muſt be under your Lordſhip's Adminiſtration. For I never yet could attend upon any Miniſter of State with Inclination and Pleaſure but your ſelf. If your Lordſhip will grant me the Honour, from time to time

to let me write my Thoughts freely to you, I ſhall endeavour to manage that Privilege with ſo much Diſcretion, that your Lordſhip ſhall not repent of it; and I ſhall not be utterly in Deſpair of doing ſome Service to the Publick.

I am,

Oct. 28. 1714.

My LORD,

Your Lordſhip's moſt Oblig'd, and

moſt Humble, Faithful Servant.

LETTERS

ON THE

Genius *and* Writings

OF

SHAKESPEAR.

To the Right Honourable

GEORGE GRANVILLE, *Esq;*

Secretary at WAR.

SIR,

AN Address of this nature, made upon your Advancement to one of the principal Employments of the State, and made by one who has had the Honour to be known to you so many Years, might be pretended by malicious People to be a Homage rather to your Fortune and Power, than a due Respect to your Merit and Virtue; if it were not publickly known, that I formerly applied my self to you in the same manner, when you were much more distinguished by Merit and Virtue, than by Fortune and Power.

But if any one farther maliciously urges, that, even when I formerly applied my self to you, by the distinguishing Qualities of your Mind and Person, I foresaw your Fortune and Power; to him I answer, in order to vindicate the Reputation of my Sincerity and my Disinterestedness, that tho' I saw

very

To the Right Honourable

GEORGE GRANVILLE, *Esq;*

Secretary at WAR,

SIR,

AN Address of this nature, made upon your Advancement to one of the principal Employments of the State, and made by one who has had the Honour to be known to you so many Years, might be pretended by malicious People to be a Homage rather to your Fortune and Power, than a due Respect to your Merit and Virtue; if it were not publickly known, that I formerly applied my self to you in the same manner, when you were much more distinguished by Merit and Virtue, than by Fortune and Power.

But if any one farther maliciously urges, that, even when I formerly applied my self to you, by the distinguishing Qualities of your Mind and Person, I foresaw your Fortune and Power; to him I answer, in order to vindicate the Reputation of my Sincerity and my Disinterestedness, that tho' I saw

very

very well that those great Qualities fitted Mr. Granville *for the most illustrious Employments; yet who could have ever imagin'd that any Man living had Merit enough to raise him in spight of so many unfortunate Virtues with which that Merit was attended, in spight of not only a true Poetical* Genius, *but a Frankness, a Probity, a matchless Integrity, a Sincerity worthy of Heroick Times, and a most untainted Honour?*

But tho' your Character were less conspicuous, and what I had formerly done were intirely forgot, the numerous and powerful Obligations I have to you, would more than justify this Address; and the omitting the first Opportunity of making you a publick Acknowledgment would look like black Ingratitude. You have taken such Care of my Interest with others at a most seasonable Conjuncture, and have your self made me a Present so noble, and so extraordinary, at a time when I stood most in need of it, that how few alive have Spirit and Magnanimity to do any thing like it? At least I defy any one to name that living Man, who in a private Capacity has done any thing like it.

I know very well indeed that you are very far from desiring such a publick Acknowledgment, that you aim at nothing by doing daily good, but the God-like Pleasure which results from your Actions; and that others per-

perhaps may censure me for sacrificing your Modesty to my own Vanity. For to publish to the World that I have been oblig'd in an extraordinary manner by a Person so universally esteem'd and distinguish'd, that one of the very few Things in which the most violent of both Parties agree, is the Character of Mr. Granville, *will be thought to be the Result of uncommon Vanity, by those who have not Goodness enough to believe it to be the Effect of a lively Gratitude.*

But tho', Sir, I had no Obligation to you, and you had no other Merit but that of perfectly understanding an Art which you have perfectly practis'd, viz. *the Art which is the Subject of the following Treatise, that Treatise would be by Right of Nature yours. For to whom can an Essay upon the Genius and Writings of* Shakespear *be so properly address'd, as to him who best understands* Shakespear, *and who has most improv'd him? I would not give this just Encomium to the* Jew of Venice, *if I were not convinc'd from a long Experience of the Penetration and Force of your Judgment, that no Exaltation can make you asham'd of your former noble Art; that you know it to be a Weakness barely to imagine, that the most noble and most exalted of all Arts, and the most difficult to excel in, can render a Man less qualified for publick Business, or*

for

for the first Employments of the State; that all the great Statesmen who have best succeeded in Affairs of Government, have either writ Poems, or Treatises concerning Poetry. The most ancient of Historians and Legislators, Moses, *at least of those whose Laws and Histories remain, has given us a pathetick and a lofty Poem upon the Passage of the* Red Sea.

The Athenian *Legislator* Solon *thought it not in the least below his Dignity to render Moral Virtue lovely by the Ch- -of Verse. And* Lacedemonian Lycurgus, *n the rigid and the austere* Lycurgus, *thought it an Employment worthy of his Wisdom and Virtue, to restore and publish the immortal Works of* Homer: *Having the same Opinion of that Prince of Poets that* Horace *afterwards had; that his Poems would better instruct Mankind in Virtue than they could be possibly taught by Prose. The most illustrious Writers of Politicks among the* Grecians, Plato *and* Aristotle; *one of them had a figurative, a lofty and a Poetick Prose; and the other, who may be call'd the Legislator of* Parnassus, *wrote the Laws of Tragedy so exactly and so truly in Reason and Nature that succeeding Criticks have writ justly and reasonably upon that Art no farther than they have adhered to their great Master's Notions.* Tacitus, *the very Oracle of*

Mo-

Modern Statesmen, has a Stile that is warm, and daring, and figurative, that is to say Poetick. Machiavel *the Prince of Modern Politicians, if we except but one of our own Country-men, wrote more than one Comedy; and more than one Poem has been attempted by our* British *Politician* Harrington. *The two Princes of Poets may easily be proved to've been great Statesmen;* Homer *particularly made choice of a Moral, which in his Time, when* Greece *with the Islands of the* Ægæan *was divided into petty Sovereignties, was the fundamental Maxim of their Politicks and their true Interest; which Moral was, as* Sallust *afterwards express'd it,* Concordiâ res parvæ crescunt, Discordiâ maxima dilabuntur; *from whose noblest Poem you formerly gave us a Tragedy, in which, in Imitation of* Homer, *you are daring yet just, fiery yet regular, sublime yet natural and perspicuous, chast yet alluring, and easie yet strong and powerful.*

But to come to the more active Part of Government, the greatest Monarchs and Captains and Ministers of State that ever were known in the World, either were or would have been great Poets. When Athens *flourish'd in all her Glory, their Poets and their famous Writers were they who directed their Counsels, and led their Armies*

to

to Battel. Alexander *read nothing but the Works of* Homer *while he conquer'd the Orient. In* Rome, *the greatest Captain that flourish'd in the Time of the Commonwealth vouchsafed his Assistance to a Comick Poet: And the two first* Cæsars *were proud to write Tragedies with those fatal Hands that were victorious over the Universe.* Mecænas, *at the Time that he was first Minister to the Emperor of the World, was not only the greatest Patron of the Muses that ever was, but endeavour'd to be himself a Poet. If we descend to Mordern Times,* Richlieu, *who laid the Foundation of the* French *Greatness, wrote more than one Dramatick Poem, with that very right Hand which dictated to the Cabinets of so many Sovereign Princes, and directed the successful Motions of so many conquering Commanders. And that Greatness, which upon a* French *Poetick Foundation was in the Space of less than one Century rais'd to an insupportable Height, was in less than twenty Years sapp'd and undermin'd and overturn'd by a* British *Poetick Ministry: It being undeniable, that several of the Persons who made the chief Figures in both the old and the new Ministry were Poets. I make no doubt, Sir, but the time will come when you will be distinguish'd by the*

Wisdom

Wisdom and Reach of your Counsels, as much as you were formerly by the Spirit and Justness of your Writings. For the very Virtues which we once were afraid would hinder your Advancement even in the most virtuous Court, are now like to preserve and support your Interest since you have had an Opportunity of publickly practising them so long. 'Tis impossible to behold that Ardor, that Sincerity and that Alacrity, with which you every Day endeavour to do good to your Fellow-Creatures, without loving you, and without wishing, as well as hoping, that you may be the peculiar Care of Providence, which by advancing you to one of the most eminent Stations would provide for Thousands. But when we behold that Ardor, and that Alacrity, attended with such an attractive Sweetness, and such a manly Grace, and with a Nobility which God and Nature seem to have imprinted both on your Mind and Person, we have no longer Power over our selves, but give up all our Affections to you; and not only wish, but firmly believe that since God and Nature have given you those several Excellencies which were the undoubted Original of all Political Nobility, they have determin'd you to succeed to the most extensive Fortunes and Titles of your Noble An-

 cestors;

cestors; which is warmly desir'd and earnestly expected by all who have the Honour to know you, but more especially by,

SIR,

Your most Oblig'd,

most Humble, and

most Faithful Servant,

JOHN DENNIS.

On the Genius and Writings of SHAKESPEAR.

To Mr. ——

LETTER I.

SIR, *Feb.* 1. 17$\frac{10}{11}$.

I Here ſend you the Tragedy of *Coriolanus*, which I have alter'd from the Original of *Shakeſpear*, and with it a ſhort Account of the Genius and Writings of that Author, both which you deſired me to ſend to you the laſt time I had the good Fortune to ſee you. But I ſend them both upon this condition, that you will with your uſual Sincerity tell me your Sentiments both of the Poem and of the Criticiſm.

Shakeſpear was one of the greateſt Genius's that the World e'er ſaw for the Tragick Stage. Tho' he lay under greater Diſadvantages than any of his Succeſſors, yet had he greater and more genuine Beauties than the beſt and greateſt of them. And what makes the brighteſt Glory of his Cha-

racter, those Beauties were entirely his own, and owing to the Force of his own Nature; whereas his Faults were owing to his Education, and to the Age that he liv'd in. One may say of him as they did of *Homer*, that he had none to imitate, and is himself inimitable. His Imaginations were often as just, as they were bold and strong. He had a natural Discretion which never cou'd have been taught him, and his Judgment was strong and penetrating. He seems to have wanted nothing but Time and Leisure for Thought, to have found out those Rules of which he appears so ignorant. His Characters are always drawn justly, exactly, graphically, except where he fail'd by not knowing History or the Poetical Art. He has for the most part more fairly distinguish'd them than any of his Successors have done, who have falsified them, or confounded them, by making Love the predominant Quality in all. He had so fine a Talent for touching the Passions, and they are so lively in him, and so truly in Nature, that they often touch us more without their due Preparations, than those of other Tragick Poets, who have all the Beauty of Design and all the Advantage of Incidents. His Master-Passion was Terror, which he has often mov'd so powerfully and so wonderfully, that we may justly conclude, that if he had had the Advantage of Art and Learning

ing, he wou'd have surpass'd the very best and strongest of the Ancients. His Paintings are often so beautiful and so lively, so graceful and so powerful, especially where he uses them in order to move Terror; that there is nothing perhaps more accomplish'd in our *English* Poetry. His Sentiments for the most part in his best Tragedies, are noble, generous, easie and natural, and adapted to the Persons who use them. His Expression is in many Places good and pure after a hundred Years; simple tho' elevated, graceful tho' bold, and easie tho' strong. He seems to have been the very Original of our *English* Tragical Harmony; that is the Harmony of Blank Verse, diversifyed often by Dissyllable and Trissyllable Terminations. For that Diversity distinguishes it from Heroick Harmony, and bringing it nearer to common Use, makes it more proper to gain Attention, and more fit for Action and Dialogue. Such Verse we make when we are writing Prose; we make such Verse in common Conversation.

If *Shakespear* had these great Qualities by Nature, what would he not have been, if he had join'd to so happy a Genius Learning and the Poetical Art. For want of the latter, our Author has sometimes made gross Mistakes in the Characters which he has drawn from History, against the Equality

and Conveniency of Manners of his Dramatical Persons. Witness *Menenius* in the following Tragedy, whom he has made an errant Buffoon, which is a great Absurdity. For he might as well have imagin'd a grave majestick *Jack-Pudding*, as a Buffoon in a *Roman* Senator. *Aufidius* the General of the *Volscians* is shewn a base and a profligate Villain. He has offended against the Equality of the Manners even in his Hero himself. For *Coriolanus* who in the first part of the Tragedy is shewn so open, so frank, so violent, and so magnanimous, is represented in the latter part by *Aufidius*, which is contradicted by no one, a flattering, fawning, cringing, insinuating Traytor.

For want of this Poetical Art, *Shakespear* has introduced things into his Tragedies, which are against the Dignity of that noble Poem, as the Rabble in *Julius Cæsar*, and that in *Coriolanus*; tho' that in *Coriolanus* offends not only against the Dignity of Tragedy, but against the Truth of History likewise, and the Customs of Ancient *Rome*, and the Majesty of the *Roman* People, as we shall have occasion to shew anon.

For want of this Art, he has made his Incidents less moving, less surprizing, and less wonderful. He has been so far from seeking those fine Occasions to move with which an Action furnish'd according to Art would have furnish'd him; that he

seems

ſeems rather to have induſtriouſly avoided them. He makes *Coriolanus*, upon his Sentence of Baniſhment, take his leave of his Wife and his Mother out of ſight of the Audience, and ſo has purpoſely as it were avoided a great occaſion to move.

If we are willing to allow, that *Shakeſpear* by ſticking to the bare Events of Hiſtory, has mov'd more than any of his Succeſſors, yet his juſt Admirers muſt confeſs, that if he had had the Poetical Art, he would have mov'd ten times more. For 'tis impoſſible that by a bare Hiſtorical Play he could move ſo much as he would have done by a Fable.

We find that a Romance entertains the generality of Mankind with more Satisfaction than Hiſtory, if they read only to be entertain'd; but if they read Hiſtory thro' Pride or Ambition, they bring their Paſſions along with them, and that alters the caſe. Nothing is more plain than that even in an Hiſtorical Relation ſome Parts of it, and ſome Events, pleaſe more than others. And therefore a Man of Judgment, who ſees why they do ſo, may in forming a Fable, and diſpoſing an Action, pleaſe more than an Hiſtorian can do. For the juſt Fiction of a Fable moves us more than an Hiſtorical Relation can do, for the two following Reaſons: Firſt, by reaſon of the Communication and mutual Depen-

dence of its Parts. For if Passion springs from Motion, then the Obstruction of that Motion or a counter Motion must obstruct and check the Passion: And therefore an Historian and a Writer of Historical Plays passing from Events of one nature to Events of another nature without a due Preparation, must of necessity stifle and confound one Passion by another. The second Reason why the Fiction of a Fable pleases us more, than an Historical Relation can do, is, because in an Historical Relation we seldom are acquainted with the true Causes of Events, whereas in a feign'd Action which is duly constituted, that is, which has a just beginning, those Causes always appear. For 'tis observable, that both in a Poetical Fiction and an Historical Relation, those Events are the most entertaining, the most surprizing, and the most wonderful, in which Providence most plainly appears. And 'tis for this Reason that the Author of a just Fable, must please more than the Writer of an Historical Relation. The Good must never fail to prosper, and the Bad must be always punish'd: Otherwise the Incidents, and particularly the Catastrophe which is the grand Incident, are liable to be imputed rather to Chance, than to Almighty Conduct and to Sovereign Justice. The want of this impartial Distribution of Justice makes the

Coriolanus

Coriolanus of *Shakespear* to be without Moral. 'Tis true indeed *Coriolanus* is kill'd by those Foreign Enemies with whom he had openly sided against his Country, which seems to be an Event worthy of Providence, and would look as if it were contriv'd by infinite Wisdom, and executed by supreme Justice, to make *Coriolanus* a dreadful Example to all who lead on Foreign Enemies to the Invasion of their native Country; if there were not something in the Fate of the other Characters, which gives occasion to doubt of it, and which suggests to the Sceptical Reader that this might happen by accident. For *Ausidius* the principal Murderer of *Coriolanus*, who in cold Blood gets him assassinated by Ruffians, instead of leaving him to the Law of the Country, and the Justice of the *Volscian* Senate, and who commits so black a Crime, not by any erroneous Zeal, or a mistaken publick Spirit, but thro' Jealousy, Envy, and inveterate Malice; this Assassinator not only survives, and survives unpunish'd, but seems to be rewarded for so detestable an Action; by engrossing all those Honours to himself which *Coriolanus* before had shar'd with him. But not only *Ausidius*, but the *Roman* Tribunes, *Sicinius* and *Brutus*, appear to me to cry aloud for Poetick Vengeance. For they are guilty of two Faults, neither of which ought to go unpunish'd: The first in procuring the Banishment

nishment of *Coriolanus*. If they were really jealous, that *Coriolanus* had a Design on their Liberties, when he stood for the Consulship, it was but just that they should give him a Repulse; but to get the Champion and Defender of their Country banish'd upon a pretended Jealousy was a great deal too much, and could proceed from nothing but that Hatred and Malice which they had conceiv'd against him, for opposing their Institution. Their second Fault lay in procuring this Sentence by indirect Methods, by exasperating and inflaming the People by Artifices and Insinuations, by taking a base Advantage of the Open-heartedness and Violence of *Coriolanus*, and by oppressing him with a Sophistical Argument, that he aim'd at Sovereignty, because he had not delivered into the Publick Treasury the Spoils which he had taken from the *Antiates*. As if a Design of Sovereignty could be reasonably concluded from any one Act; or any one could think of bringing to pass such a Design, by eternally favouring the Patricians, and disobliging the Populace. For we need make no doubt, but that it was among the young Patricians that *Coriolanus* distributed the Spoils which were taken from the *Antiates*; whereas nothing but caressing the Populace could enslave the *Roman* People, as *Cæsar* afterwards very well saw and experienc'd. So that this Injustice of the Tribunes was the original

original Cause of the Calamity which afterwards befel their Country, by the Invasion of the *Volscians*, under the Conduct of *Coriolanus*. And yet these Tribunes at the end of the Play, like *Aufidius*, remain unpunish'd. But indeed *Shakespear* has been wanting in the exact Distribution of Poetical Justice not only in his *Coriolanus*, but in most of his best Tragedies, in which the Guilty and the Innocent perish promiscuously; as *Duncan* and *Banquo* in *Mackbeth*, as likewise Lady *Macduffe* and her Children; *Desdemona* in *Othello*; *Cordelia*, *Kent*, and King *Lear*, in the Tragedy that bears his Name; *Brutus* and *Porcia* in *Julius Cæsar*, and young *Hamlet* in the Tragedy of *Hamlet*. For tho' it may said in Defence of the last, that *Hamlet* had a Design to kill his Uncle who then reign'd; yet this is justify'd by no less than a Call from Heaven, and raising up one from the Dead to urge him to it. The Good and the Bad then perishing promiscuously in the best of *Shakespear*'s Tragedies, there can be either none or very weak Instruction in them: For such promiscuous Events call the Government of Providence into Question, and by Scepticks and Libertines are resolv'd into Chance. I humbly conceive therefore that this want of Dramatical Justice in the Tragedy of *Coriolanus*, gave occasion for a just Alteration, and that I was oblig'd to sacrifice to that Justice

Aufidius

Aufidius and the Tribunes, as well as *Coriolanus*.

Thus have we endeavour'd to shew, that for want of the Poetical Art, *Shakespear* lay under very great Disadvantages. At the same time we must own to his Honour, that he has often perform'd Wonders without it, in spight of the Judgment of so great a Man as *Horace*.

Naturâ fieret laudabile carmen, an arte,
Quæsitum est: ego nec studium sinè divite venâ, [*rius sic*
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium; alte-
Altera poscit opem res, & conjurat amicè.

But from this very Judgment of *Horace* we may justly conclude, that *Shakespear* would have wonderfully surpass'd himself if Art had been join'd to Nature. There never was a greater Genius in the World than *Virgil*: He was one who seems to have been born for this glorious End, that the *Roman* Muse might exert in him the utmost Force of her Poetry: And his admirable and divine Beauties are manifestly owing to the happy Confederacy of Art and Nature. It was Art that contriv'd that incomparable Design of the *Æneis*, and it was Nature that executed it. Could the greatest Genius that ever was infus'd into Earthly Mold by Heaven, if it had been unguided and unassisted by Art

have

have taught him to make that noble and wonderful Use of the *Pythagorean* Transmigration, which he makes in the Sixth Book of his Poem? Had *Virgil* been a circular Poet, and closely adher'd to History, how could the *Romans* have been transported with that inimitable Episode of *Dido*, which brought a-fresh into their Minds the *Carthaginian* War, and the dreadful *Hannibal*? When 'tis evident that that admirable Episode is so little owing to a faithful observance of History, and the exact order of Time, that 'tis deriv'd from a very bold but judicious Violation of these; it being undeniable that *Dido* liv'd almost 300 Years after *Æneas*. Yet is it that charming Episode that makes the chief Beauties of a third Part of the Poem. For the Destruction of *Troy* it self, which is so divinely related, is still more admirable by the Effect it produces, which is the Passion of *Dido*.

I should now proceed to shew under what Disadvantages *Shakespear* lay for want of being conversant with the Ancients. But I have already writ a long Letter, and am desirous to know how you relish what has been already said before I go any farther: For I am unwilling to take more Pains before I am sure of giving you some Pleasure. I am,

SIR,

Your most humble, faithful Servant.

On the Genius and Writings of SHAKESPEAR.

LETTER II.

SIR, Feb. 6. 17$\frac{10}{11}$.

UPON the Encouragement I have receiv'd from you, I ſhall proceed to ſhew under what Diſadvantages *Shakeſpear* lay for want of being converſant with the Ancients. But becauſe I have lately been in ſome Converſation, where they would not allow, but that he was acquainted with the Ancients, I ſhall endeavour to make it appear that he was not; and the ſhewing that in the Method in which I pretend to convince the Reader of it, will ſufficiently prove, what Inconveniencies he lay under, and what Errors he committed for want of being converſant with them. But here we muſt diſtinguiſh between the ſeveral kinds of Acquaintance: A Man may be ſaid to be acquainted with another who never was but twice in his Company; but that is at the beſt a ſuperficial Acquaintance, from

from which neither very great Pleasure nor Profit can be deriv'd. Our Business is here to shew, that *Shakespear* had no familiar Acquaintance with the *Græcian* and *Roman* Authors. For if he was familiarly conversant with them, how comes it to pass that he wants Art? Is it that he studied to know them in other things; and neglected that only in them, which chiefly tends to the Advancement of the Art of the Stage? Or is it that he wanted Discernment to see the Justness, and the Greatness, and the Harmony of their Designs, and the Reasonableness of those Rules upon which those Designs are founded? Or how come his Successors to have that Discernment which he wanted, when they fall so much below him in other things? How comes he to have been guilty of the grossest Faults in Chronology, and how come we to find out those Faults? In his Tragedy of *Troylus* and *Cressida*, he introduces *Hector* speaking of *Aristotle*, who was born a thousand Years after the Death of *Hector*. In the same Play mention is made of *Milo*, which is another very great fault in Chronology. *Alexander* is mention'd in *Coriolanus*, tho' that Conqueror of the Orient liv'd above two hundred Years after him. In this last Tragedy he has mistaken the very Names of his Dramatick Persons, if we give Credit to *Livy*. For the Mother of *Coriolanus* in the *Roman* Historian

ſtorian is *Vetturia*, and the Wife is *Volumnia*. Whereas in *Shakeſpear* the Wife is *Virgilia*, and the Mother *Volumnia*. And the *Volſcian* General in *Shakeſpear* is *Tullus Aufidius*, and *Tullus Attius* in *Livy*. How comes it that he takes *Plutarch*'s Word, who was by Birth a *Græcian*, for the Affairs of *Rome*, rather than that of the *Roman* Hiſtorian, if ſo be that he had read the latter? Or what Reaſon can be given for his not reading him, when he wrote upon a *Roman* Story, but that in *Shakeſpear*'s time there was a Tranſlation of *Plutarch*, and there was none of *Livy*? If *Shakeſpear* was familiarly converſant with the *Roman* Authors, how came he to introduce a Rabble into *Coriolanus*, in which he offended not only againſt the Dignity of Tragedy, but the Truth of Fact, the Authority of all the *Roman* Writers, the Cuſtoms of Ancient *Rome*, and the Majeſty of the *Roman* People? By introducing a Rabble into *Julius Cæſar*, he only offended againſt the Dignity of Tragedy. For that part of the People who ran about the Streets upon great Feſtivals, or publick Calamities, or publick Rejoicings, or Revolutions in Government, are certainly the Scum of the Populace. But the Perſons who in the Time of *Coriolanus*, roſe in Vindication of their just Rights, and extorted from the Patricians the Inſtitution of the Tribunes of the Peo-

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ple, and the Persons by whom afterwards *Coriolanus* was tried, were the whole Body of the *Roman* People to the Reserve of the Patricians, which Body included the *Roman* Knights, and the wealthy substantial Citizens, who were as different from the Rabble as the Patricians themselves, as qualify'd as the latter to form a right Judgment of Things, and to contemn the vain Opinions of the Rabble. So at least *Horace* esteems them, who very well knew his Countrymen.

Offenduntur enim, quibus est equus, aut pater, aut res,
Nec siquid fricti ciceris probat aut nucis emptor,
Æquis accipiant animis donantve Corona?

Where we see the Knights and the substantial Citizens are rank'd in an equal Degree of Capacity with the *Roman* Senators, and are equally distinguish'd from the Rabble.

If *Shakespear* was so conversant with the Ancients, how comes he to have introduc'd some Characters into his Plays, so unlike what they are to be found in History? In the Character of *Menenius* in the following Tragedy, he has doubly offended against that Historical Resemblance. For first whereas *Menenius* was an eloquent Person, *Shakespear* has made him a downright Buffoon.

And how is it possible for any Man to conceive a *Ciceronian Jack-pudding?* Never was any Buffoon eloquent, or wise, or witty, or virtuous. All the good and ill Qualities of a Buffoon are summ'd up in one Word, and that is a Buffoon. And secondly, whereas *Shakespear* has made him a Hater and Contemner and Villifier of the People, we are assur'd by the *Roman* Historian that *Menenius* was extremely popular. He was so very far from opposing the Institution of the Tribunes, as he is represented in *Shakespear*, that he was chiefly instrumental in it. After the People had deserted the City, and sat down upon the sacred Mountain, he was the chief of the Delegates whom the Senate deputed to them, as being look'd upon to be the Person who would be most agreeable to them. In short, this very *Menenius* both liv'd and dy'd so very much their Favourite, that dying poor he had pompous Funerals at the Expence of the *Roman* People.

Had *Shakespear* read either *Sallust* or *Cicero*, how could he have made so very little of the first and greatest of Men, as that *Cæsar* should be but a Fourth-rate Actor in his own Tragedy? How could it have been that seeing *Cæsar*, we should ask for *Cæsar*? That we should ask, where is his unequall'd Greatness of Mind, his unbounded Thirst of Glory, and that victorious Eloquence

with

with which he triumph'd over the Souls of both Friends and Enemies, and with which he rivall'd *Cicero* in Genius as he did *Pompey* in Power? How fair an Occasion was there to open the Character of *Cæsar* in the first Scene between *Brutus* and *Cassius*? For when *Cassius* tells *Brutus* that *Cæsar* was but a Man like them, and had the same natural Imperfections which they had, how natural had it been for *Brutus* to reply, that *Cæsar* indeed had their Imperfections of Nature, but neither he nor *Cassius* had by any means the great Qualities of *Cæsar*: neither his Military Virtue, nor Science, nor his matchless Renown, nor his unparallell'd Victories, his unwearied Bounty to his Friends, nor his Godlike Clemency to his Foes, his Beneficence, his Munificence, his Easiness of Access to the meanest *Roman*, his indefatigable Labours, his incredible Celerity, the Plausibleness if not Justness of his Ambition, that knowing himself to be the greatest of Men, he only sought occasion to make the World confess him such. In short, if *Brutus*, after enumerating all the wonderful Qualities of *Cæsar*, had resolv'd in spight of them all to sacrifice him to publick Liberty, how had such a Proceeding heighten'd the Virtue and the Character of *Brutus*? But then indeed it would have been requisite that *Cæ-*

far upon his Appearance ſhould have made all this good. And as we know no Principle of human Action but human Sentiment only, *Cæſar* who did greater Things, and had greater Deſigns than the reſt of the *Romans*, ought certainly to have outſhin'd by many Degrees all the other Characters of his Tragedy. *Cæſar* ought particularly to have juſtified his Actions, and to have heighten'd his Character, by ſhewing that what he had done, he had done by Neceſſity; that the *Romans* had loſt their *Agrarian*, loſt their Rotation of Magiſtracy, and that conſequently nothing but an empty Shadow of publick Liberty remain'd. That the *Gracchi* had made the laſt noble but unſucceſsful Efforts, for the reſtoring the Commonwealth, that they had fail'd for want of arbitrary irreſiſtible Power, the Reſtoration of the *Agrarian* requiring too vaſt a Retroſpect to be done without it; that the Government, when *Cæſar* came to publick Affairs, was got into the Hands of a few, and that thoſe few were factious, and were contending among themſelves, and if you will pardon ſo mean an Expreſſion, ſcrambling as it were for Power: That *Cæſar* was reduc'd to the Neceſſity of ruling, or himſelf obeying a Maſter; and that apprehending that another would exerciſe the ſuprem Command, without that Clemency and Moderation which he did, he had rather cho

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en to rule than to obey. So that *Cæsar* was faulty not so much in seizing upon the Sovereignty, which was become in a manner necessary, as in not re-establishing the Commonwealth, by restoring the *Agrarian* and the Rotation of Magistracies, after he had got absolute and uncontroulable Power. And if *Cæsar* had seiz'd upon the Sovereignty only with a View of re-establishing Liberty, he had surpass'd all Mortals in Godlike Goodness as much as he did in the rest of his astonishing Qualities. I must confess, I do not remember that we have any Authority from the *Roman* Historians which may induce us to believe, that *Cæsar* had any such Design. Nor if he had had any such View, could he, who was the most secret, the most prudent, and the most discerning of Men, have discover'd it, before his *Parthian* Expedition was over, for fear of utterly disobliging his Veterans. And *Cæsar* believ'd that Expedition necessary for the Honour and Interest of the State, and for his own Glory.

But of this we may be sure, that two of the most discerning of all the *Romans*, and who had the deepest Insight into the Soul of *Cæsar*, *Sallust* and *Cicero*, were not without Hopes that *Cæsar* would really re-establish Liberty, or else they would not have attack'd him upon it; the one in his Ora-

tion for *Marcus Marcellus*, the other in the Second Part of that little Treatise *De Republicâ ordinandâ*, which is address'd to *Cæsar*. *Hæc igitur tibi reliqua pars*, says *Cicero*, *Hic restat Actus, in hoc elaborandum est, ut Rempublicam constituas, eâque tu in primis compositâ, summa Tranquillitate & otio perfruare.* *Cicero* therefore was not without Hope that *Cæsar* would re-establish the Commonwealth; and any one who attentively perusses that Oration of *Cicero*, will find that that Hope was reasonably grounded, upon his knowledge of the great Qualities of *Cæsar*, his Clemency, his Beneficence, his admirable Discernment; and that avoidless Ruine in which the whole Empire would be soon involv'd, if *Cæsar* did not effect this. *Sallust* urges it still more home to him and with greater vehemence; he has recourse to every Motive that may be thought to be powerful over so great a Soul. He exhorts him by the Memory of his matchless Conquests, not to suffer the invincible Empire of the *Roman* People to be devour'd by Time, or to be torn in pieces by Discord; one of which would soon and infallibly happen, if Liberty was not restor'd.

He introduces his Country and his Progenitors urging him in a noble Prosopopeia by all the mighty Benefits which they had conferr'd upon him, with so little Pains of

his

his own, not to deny them that just and easy Request of the Restoration of Liberty. He adjures him by those Furies which will eternally haunt his Soul upon his impious Refusal: He implores him by the foresight of those dismal Calamities, that horrible Slaughter, those endless Wars, and that unbounded Devastation, which will certainly fall upon Mankind, if the Restoration of Liberty is prevented by his Death, or his incurable Sickness: And lastly, he entreats him by his Thirst of immortal Glory, that Glory in which he now has Rivals, if he has not Equals; but which, if he re-establishes Liberty, will be acknowledg'd by consenting Nations to have neither Equal nor Second.

I am apt to believe that if *Shakespear* had been acquainted with all this, we had had from him quite another Character of *Cæsar* than that which we now find in him. He might then have given us a Scene something like that which *Corneille* has so happily us'd in his *Cinna*; something like that which really happen'd between *Augustus*, *Mecænas* and *Agrippa*. He might then have introduc'd *Cæsar*, consulting *Cicero* on the one side, and on the other *Anthony*, whether he should retain that absolute Sovereignty, which he had acquir'd by his Victory, or whether he should re-establish and immortalize Liberty. That would have been a

Scene, which might have employ'd the finest Art and the utmost force of a Writer. That had been a Scene in which all the great Qualities of *Cæsar* might have been display'd. I will not pretend to determine here how that Scene might have been turn'd; and what I have already said on this Subject, has been spoke with the utmost Caution and Diffidence. But this I will venture to say, that if that Scene had been manag'd so, as, by the powerful Motives employ'd in it, to have shaken the Soul of *Cæsar*, and to have left room for the least Hope, for the least Doubt, that *Cæsar* would have re-establish'd Liberty, after his *Parthian* Expedition; and if this Conversation had been kept secret till the Death of *Cæsar*, and then had been discover'd by *Anthony*, then had *Cæsar* fall'n, so belov'd and lamented by the *Roman* People, so pitied and so bewail'd even by the Conspirators themselves, as never Man fell. Then there would have been a Catastrophe the most dreadful and the most deplorable that ever was beheld upon the Tragick Stage. Then had we seen the noblest of the Conspirators cursing their temerarious Act, and the most apprehensive of them, in dreadful expectation of those horrible Calamities, which fell upon the *Romans* after the Death of *Cæsar*. But, Sir, when I write this to you, I write with the utmost Deference to the extraordi-

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nary Judgment of that great Man, who ſome Years ago, I hear, alter'd the *Julius Cæſar*. And I make no doubt but that his fine Diſcernment, and the reſt of his great Qualities have amply ſupply'd the Defects which are found in the Character of *Shakeſpear's Cæſar*.

I ſhould here anſwer an Argument, by which ſome People pretend to prove, and eſpecially thoſe with whom I lately conver's'd, that *Shakeſpear* was converſant with the Ancients. But beſides that the Poſt is about to be gone, I am heartily tir'd with what I have already writ, and ſo doubtleſs are you; I ſhall therefore defer the reſt to the next opportunity, and remain

Your, *&c.*

On

On the Writings and Genius of SHAKESPEAR.

LETTER III.

SIR, *Feb.* 8.

I Come now to the main Argument, which ſome People urge to prove that *Shakeſpear* was converſant with the Ancients. For there is, ſay they, among *Shakeſpear*'s Plays, one call'd *The Comedy of Errors*, which is undeniably an Imitation of the *Menechmi* of *Plautus*. Now *Shakeſpear*, ſay they, being converſant with *Plautus*, it undeniably follows that he was acquainted with the Ancients; becauſe no *Roman* Author could be hard to him who had conquer'd *Plautus*. To which I anſwer, that the Errors which we have mention'd above are to be accounted for no other way, but by the want of knowing the Ancients, or by downright want of Capacity. But nothing can be more abſurd or more unjuſt than to impute it to want of Capacity. For the very Sentiments of *Shakeſpear* alone

lone are ſufficient to ſhew, that he had a great Underſtanding: And therefore we muſt account ſome other way for his Imitation of the *Menechmi.* I remember to have ſeen among the Tranſlations of *Ovid's* Epiſtles printed by Mr. *Tonſon*, an Imitation of that from *OEnone* to *Paris*, which Mr. *Dryden* tells us in his Preface to thoſe Epiſtles was imitated by one of the Fair Sex who underſtood no *Latin*, but that ſhe had done enough to make thoſe bluſh who underſtood it the beſt. There are at this day ſeveral Tranſlators, who, as *Hudibraſs* has it,

Tranſlate from Languages of which
They underſtand no part of Speech.

I will not affirm that of *Shakeſpear*; I believe he was able to do what Pedants call conſtrue, but that he was able to read *Plautus* without Pain and Difficulty I can never believe. Now I appeal to you, Sir, what time he had between his Writing and his Acting, to read any thing that could not be read with Eaſe and Pleaſure. We ſee that our Adverſaries themſelves acknowledge, that if *Shakeſpear* was able to read *Plautus* with Eaſe, nothing in Latinity could be hard to him. How comes it to paſs then, that he has given us no Proofs of his familiar Acquaintance with the Ancients,

ents, but this Imitation of the *Menechmi*, and a Verſion of two Epiſtles of *Ovid*? How comes it that he had never read *Horace* of a ſuperiour Merit to either, and particularly his Epiſtle to the *Piſo's*, which ſo much concern'd his Art? Or if he had read that Epiſtle, how comes it that in his *Troylus* and *Creſſida* [we muſt obſerve by the way, that when *Shakeſpear* wrote that Play, *Ben Johnſon* had not as yet tranſlated that Epiſtle] he runs counter to the Inſtructions which *Horace* has given for the forming the Character of *Achilles*?

Scriptor: Honoratum ſi forte reponis Achillem,
Impiger, Iracundus, Inexorablis, Acer,
Jura neget ſibi nata.

Where is the *Impiger*, the *Iracundus*, or the *Acer*, in the Character of *Shakeſpear*'s *Achilles*? who is nothing but a drolling, lazy, conceited, overlooking Coxcomb; ſo far from being the honour'd *Achilles*, the Epithet that *Homer*, and *Horace* after him give him, that he is deſervedly the Scorn and the Jeſt of the reſt of the Characters, even to that Buffoon *Therſites*.

Tho' *Shakeſpear* ſucceeded very well in Comedy, yet his principal Talent and his chief Delight was Tragedy. If then *Shakeſpear* was qualify'd to read *Plautus* with Eaſe,

Eaſe, he could read with a great deal more Eaſe the Tranſlations of *Sophocles* and *Euripides*. And tho' by theſe Tranſlations he would not have been able to have ſeen the charming colouring of thoſe great Maſters, yet would he have ſeen all the Harmony and the Beauty of their great and their juſt Deſigns. He would have ſeen enough to have ſtirr'd up a noble Emulation in ſo exalted a Soul as his. How comes it then that we hear nothing from him, of the *OEdipus*, the *Electra*, the *Antigone* of *Sophocles*, of the *Iphigenia's*, the *Oreſtes*, the *Medea*, the *Hecuba* of *Euripides*? How comes it that we ſee nothing in the Conduct of his Pieces, that ſhews us that he had the leaſt Acquaintance with any of theſe great Maſter-pieces? Did *Shakeſpear* appear to be ſo nearly touch'd with the Affliction of *Hecuba* for the Death of *Priam*, which was but daub'd and bungled by one of his Countrymen, that he could not forbear introducing it as it were by Violence into his own *Hamlet*, and would he make no Imitation, no Commendation, not the leaſt Mention of the unparallell'd and inimitable Grief of the *Hecuba* of *Euripides*? How comes it, that we find no Imitation of any ancient Play in Him but the *Menechmi* of *Plautus*? How came he to chuſe a Comick preferably to the Tragick Poets? Or how comes he to chuſe *Plutus* prefera-

preferably to *Terence*, who is so much more just, more graceful, more regular, and more natural? Or how comes he to chuse the *Menechmi* of *Plautus*, which is by no means his Master-piece, before all his other Comedies? I vehemently suspect that this Imitation of the *Menechmi*, was either from a printed Translation of that Comedy which is lost, or some Version in Manuscript brought him by a Friend, or sent him perhaps by a Stranger, or from the original Play it self recommended to him, and read to him by some learned Friend. In short, I had rather account for this, by what is not absurd than by what is, or by a less Absurdity than by a greater. For nothing can be more wrong than to conclude from this that *Shakespear* was conversant with the Ancients; which contradicts the Testimony of his Contemporary, and his familiar Acquaintance *Ben Johnson*, and of his Successor *Milton*;

Lo Shakespear, *Fancy's sweetest Child,*
Warbles his native Wood-notes wild.

and of Mr. *Dryden* after them both; and which destroys the most glorious Part of *Shakespeur*'s Merit immediately. For how can he be esteem'd equal by Nature, or superior to the Ancients, when he falls so far short of them in Art, tho' he had the Advantage

vantage of knowing all that they did before him? Nay it debases him below those of common Capacity, by reason of the Errors which we mention'd above. Therefore he who allows that *Shakespear* had Learning and a familiar Acquaintance with the Ancients, ought to be look'd upon as a Detractor from his extraordinary Merit, and from the Glory of *Great Britain.* For whether is it more honourable for this Island to have produc'd a Man, who without having any Acquaintance with the Ancients, or any but a slender and a superficial one, appears to be their Equal or their Superiour by the Force of Genius and Nature, or to have bred one who knowing the Ancients, falls infinitely short of them in Art, and consequently in Nature it self? *Great Britain* has but little Reason to boast of its Natives Education, since the same that they had here, they might have had in another place. But it may justly claim a very great share in their Nature and Genius; since these depend in a great measure on the Climate; and therefore *Horace* in the Instruction which he gives for the forming the Characters, advises the noble *Romans* for whose Instruction he chiefly writes to consider whether the Dramatick Person whom they introduce is

Colchus

Colchus an Assyrius, Thebis nutritus an Argis.

Thus, Sir, I have endeavour'd to shew under what great Disadvantages *Shakespear* lay, for want of the Poetical Art, and for want of being conversant with the Ancients.

But besides this, he lay under other very great Inconveniencies. For he was neither Master of Time enough to consider, correct, and polish what he wrote, to alter it, to add to it, and to retrench from it, nor had he Friends to consult upon whose Capacity and Integrity he could depend. And tho' a Person of very good Judgment, may succeed very well without consulting his Friends, if he takes time enough to correct what he writes; yet even the greatest Man that Nature and Art can conspire to accomplish, can never attain to Perfection, without either employing a great deal of time, or taking the Advice of judicious Friends. Nay, 'tis the Opinion of *Horace*, that he ought to do both.

Siquid tamen olim
Scripseris, in Metii descendat Judicis aures,
Et Patris, & nostras; nonumque prematur
in Annum.

Now we know very well that *Shakespear* was

was an Actor, at a time when there were seven or eight Companies of Players in the Town together, who each of them did their utmost Endeavours to get the Audiences from the rest, and consequently that our Author was perpetually call'd upon, by those who had the Direction and Management of the Company to which he belong'd, for new Pieces which might be able to support them, and give them some Advantage over the rest. And 'tis easie to judge what Time he was Master of, between his laborious Employment of Acting, and his continual Hurry of Writing. As for Friends, they whom in all likelihood *Shakespear* consulted most, were two or three of his Fellow-Actors, because they had the Care of publishing his Works committed to them. Now they, as we are told by *Ben Johnson* in his *Discoveries*, were extremely pleas'd with their Friend for scarce ever making a Blot; and were very angry with *Ben*, for saying he wish'd that he had made a thousand. The Misfortune of it is, that *Horace* was perfectly of *Ben*'s mind.

——— Vos O,
Pompilius sanguis, carmen reprehendite, quod non
Multa dies, & multa litura coercuit, atque
Præsectum decies non castigavit ad unguem.

And so was my Lord *Roscommon.*

Poets lose half the Praise they should have got,
Could it be known what they discreetly blot.

These Friends then of *Shakespear* were not qualify'd to advise him. As for *Ben Johnson*, besides that *Shakespear* began to know him late, and that *Ben* was not the most communicative Person in the World of the Secrets of his Art; he seems to me to have had no right Notion of Tragedy. Nay, so far from it, that he who was indeed a very great Man, and who has writ Comedies, by which he has born away the Prize of Comedy both from Ancients and Moderns, and been an Honour to *Great Britain*; and who has done this without any Rules to guide him, except what his own incomparable Talent dictated to him; This extraordinary Man has err'd so grossly in Tragedy, of which there were not only stated Rules, but Rules which he himself had often read, and had even translated, that he has chosen two Subjects, which, according to those very Rules, were utterly incapable of exciting either Compassion or Terror for the principal Characters, which yet are the chief Passions that a Tragick Poet ought to endeavour to excite. So that *Shakespear* having neither had Time to correct, nor

Friend

Friends to consult, must necessarily have frequently left such faults in his Writings, for the Correction of which either a great deal of Time or a judicious and a well-natur'd Friend is indispensably necessary.

Vir bonus & prudens versus reprehendet inertes,
Culpabit duros, incomptis allinet Atrum
Transverso calamo signum, ambitiosa recidet,
Ornamenta, parum claris lucem dare coget,
Arguet ambigue dictum, metanda notabit.

There is more than one Example of every kind of these Faults in the Tragedies of *Shakespear*, and even in the *Coriolanus*. There are Lines that are utterly void of that celestial Fire, of which *Shakespear* is sometimes Master in so great a Degree. And consequently there are Lines that are stiff and forc'd, and harsh and unmusical, tho' *Shakespear* had naturally an admirable Ear for the Numbers. But no Man ever was very musical who did not write with Fire, and no Man can always write with Fire, unless he is so far Master of his Time, as to expect those Hours when his Spirits are warm and volatile. *Shakespear* must therefore sometimes have Lines which are neither strong nor graceful: For who ever had Force or Grace that had not Spirit? There are in his *Coriolanus*, among a

great many natural and admirable Beauties, three or four of those Ornaments which *Horace* would term ambitious; and which we in *English* are apt to call Fustian or Bombast. There are Lines in some Places which are very obscure, and whole Scenes which ought to be alter'd.

I have, Sir, employ'd some Time and Pains, and that little Judgment which I have acquir'd in these Matters by a long and a faithful reading both of Ancients and Moderns, in adding, retrenching and altering several Things in the *Coriolanus* of *Shakespear*, but with what Success I must leave to be determin'd by you. I know very well that you will be surpriz'd to find, that after all that I have said in the former Part of this Letter, against *Shakespear*'s introducing the Rabble into *Coriolanus*, I have not only retain'd in the second Act of the following Tragedy the Rabble which is in the Original, but deviated more from the *Roman* Customs than *Shakespear* had done before me. I desire you to look upon it as a voluntary Fault and a Trespass against Conviction: 'Tis one of those Things which are *ad Populum Phaleræ*, and by no means inserted to please such Men as you.

Thus, Sir, have I laid before you a short but impartial Account of the Beauties and Defects of *Shakespear*, with an Intention to make these Letters publick if they are approv'd

prov'd by you; to teach ſome People to diſtinguiſh between his Beauties and his Defects, that while they imitate the one, they may with Caution avoid the other [there being nothing of more dangerous Contagion to Writers, and eſpecially to young ones, than the Faults of great Maſters] and while with *Milton* they applaud the great Qualities which *Shakeſpear* had by Nature, they may follow his wiſe Example, and form themſelves as he aſſures us that he himſelf did, upon the Rules and Writings of the Ancients.

Sir, if ſo candid and able a Judge as your ſelf ſhall happen to approve of this Eſſay in the main, and to excuſe and correct my Errors, that Indulgence and that Correction will not only encourage me to make theſe Letters publick, but will enable me to bear the Reproach of thoſe, who would fix a Brand, even upon the juſteſt Criticiſm, as the Effect of Envy and Ill-nature; as if there could poſſibly be any Ill-nature in the doing Juſtice, or in the endeavouring to advance a very noble and a very uſeful Art, and conſequently to prove beneficent to Mankind. As for thoſe who may accuſe me of the want of a due Veneration for the Merit of an Author of ſo eſtabliſh'd a Reputation as *Shakeſpear*, I ſhall beg leave to tell them, that they chuſe the wrongeſt time that they could poſſibly take for ſuch

an Accusation as that. For I appeal to you, Sir, who shews most Veneration for the Memory of *Shakespear*, he who loves and admires his Charms and makes them one of his chief Delights, who sees him and reads him over and over and still remains unsatiated, and who mentions his Faults for no other Reason but to make his Excellency the more conspicuous, or he who pretending to be his blind Admirer, shews in Effect the utmost Contempt for him, preferring empty effeminate Sound to his solid Beauties and manly Graces, and deserting him every Night for an execrable *Italian* Ballad, so vile that a Boy who should write such lamentable Dogrel, would be turn'd out of *Westminster*-School for a desperate Blockhead, too stupid to be corrected and amended by the harshest Discipline of the Place.

I am,

SIR,

Yours, &c.

To

To the SPECTATOR, *upon his Paper on the* 16*th of* April.

YOU know, Mr. *Spectator*, that Esquire *Bickerstaff* attack'd the Sharpers with Success; but *Shadwell* is of Opinion that your Bully with his Box and his false Dice is an honester Fellow than the Rhetorical Author, who makes use of his Tropes and Figures, which are his High and his Low-runners, to cheat us at once of our Money and of our Intellectuals.

I would not have you think, Mr. *Spectator*, that this Reflection is directed to you: 'Tis only intended against one or two of your Correspondents, and particularly the *Inns-of Court*-man, who, as you told us in your Second Paper, supplies you with most of your Criticism: who seems to me so little to understand the Province that he has undertaken, that you would do well to advise him to do by you as he has done by his Father, and make a Bargain in the gross with some honest Fellow to answer all your Occasions. Which wholesome Advice if he proves too obstinate or too proud to take; I am confi-

dent at leaſt that he is too gallant a Perſon to take it ill if once a Week or once a Fortnight I ſhould ſhew ſo much Preſumption as to cauſe a Writ of Error to be iſſued out to reverſe his *Temple*-Judgment.

I cannot wonder that Criticiſm ſhould degenerate ſo vilely at a time when Poetry and Acting are ſunk ſo low. For as *Hobbes* has obſerv'd, that as often as Reaſon is againſt a Man, a Man will be againſt Reaſon; ſo as often as the Rules are againſt an Author, an Author will be againſt the Rules. Men firſt write fooliſh ridiculous Tragedies, which ſhock all the Rules of Reaſon and Philoſophy, and then they make fooliſh extravagant Rules to fit thoſe fooliſh Plays. 'Tis impoſſible that your Gentleman of the Inns-of-Court could have ſent you ſo much wrong Senſe as there is in your Paper of the 16*th*, if he had not formerly writ an abſurd Tragedy. There are as many Bulls and Blunderrs, and Contradictions in it almoſt as there are Lines, and all deliver'd with that inſolent and that bluſt'ring Air, which uſually attends upon Error, and Deluſion, while Truth, like the Deity that inſpires it, comes calmly and without noiſe.

To ſet a few of his Errors in their proper Light, he tells us in the beginning of that Paper, *That the Engliſh Writers of Tragedy are poſſeſs'd with a Notion, that when they repreſent a virtuous or innocent*

Perſon

Person in Distress, they ought not to leave him till they have deliver'd him out of his Trouble, and made him triumph over his Enemies.

But, Mr. *Spectator*, is this peculiar to the *English* Writers of Tragedy? *Have not the* French *Writers of Tragedy the same Notion? Does not* Racine *tell us, in the Preface to his* Iphigenia, *that it would have been horrible to have defil'd the Stage with the Murther of a Princess so virtuous and so lovely as was* Iphigenia.

But your Correspondent goes on, *This Error*, says he, with an insolent and dogmatick Air, *they have been led into by a ridiculous Doctrine in modern Criticism, that they are oblig'd to an equal Distribution of Rewards and Punishments, and an impartial Execution of poetical Justice.*

But who were the first who establish'd this Rule he is not able to tell. I take it for granted, that a Man who is ingenuous enough to own his Ignorance, is willing to be instructed. Let me tell him then, that the first who establish'd this ridiculous Doctrine of modern Criticism, was a certain modern Critick, who liv'd above two thousand Years ago; and who tells us expressly in the thirteenth Chapter of his critical *Spectator*, which Pedants call his Poetick, *That since a Tragedy, to have all the Beauty of which it is capable, ought to be Implex and not Simple*, (by the way, Mr. *Spectator*, you

must

muſt bear with this critical Cant, as we do with your Speculations and Lucubrations) *and ought to move Compaſſion and Terror; for we have already ſhewn that the exciting theſe Paſſions is the proper Effect of a tragical Imitation, it follows neceſſarily, that we muſt not chooſe a very good Man, to plunge him from a proſperous Condition into Adverſity, for inſtead of moving Compaſſion and Terrour, that on the contrary would create Horrour, and be deteſted by all the World.*

And does not the ſame deluded Philoſopher tell us in the very ſame Chapter, that the Fable to which he gives the ſecond Preference, is that which has a double Conſtitution, and which ends by a double Cataſtrophe; a Cataſtrophe favourable to the Good and fatal to the Wicked. Is not here, Mr. *Spectator*, a very formal Recommendation of the impartial and exact Execution of poetical Juſtice? Thus *Ariſtotle* was the firſt who eſtabliſh'd this ridiculous Doctrine of modern Criticiſm, but Mr. *Rymer* was the firſt who introduc'd it into our native Language; who notwithſtanding the Rage of all the Poetaſters of the Times, whom he has exaſperated by opening the Eyes of the Blind that they may ſee their Errors, will always paſs with impartial Poſterity for a moſt learned, a moſt judicious, and a moſt uſeful Critick. Now is not your Correſpondent a profound and a learned Perſon? and ought he

he not to own himſelf oblig'd to me for this notable piece of Erudition?

But he goes on in his dictatorian way: *This Rule*, ſays he, *whoever eſtabliſh'd it, has, I am ſure, no Foundation in Nature, in Reaſon, and in the practice of the Ancients.* But what will this dogmatick Perſon ſay now, when we ſhew him that this contemptible Doctrine of poetical Juſtice is not only founded in Reaſon and Nature, but is it ſelf the Foundation of all the Rules, and ev'n of Tragedy itſelf? For what Tragedy can there be without a Fable? or what Fable without a Moral? or what Moral without poetical Juſtice? What Moral, where the Good and the Bad are confounded by Deſtiny, and periſh alike promiſcuouſly. Thus we ſee this Doctrine of poetical Juſtice is more founded in Reaſon and Nature than all the reſt of the poetical Rules together. For what can be more natural, and more highly reaſonable, than to employ that Rule in Tragedy, without which that Poem cannot exiſt? Well! but the Practice of the Ancients is againſt this poetical Juſtice! What always, Mr. *Spectator!* will your Correſpondent have the Aſſurance to affirm that? No, but ſometimes: Why then ſometimes the Ancients offended againſt Reaſon and Nature. And who ever believ'd that the Ancients were without Fault, or brought Tragedy to its Perfection? But I ſhall take another Opportunity to ſhew

that

that the Practice of the Ancients, in all their Master-pieces, is exactly according to this fundamental Rule. I have no time to do that in this short Letter because that would necessarily oblige me to shew that poetical Justice is of a much larger Extent than this profound Critick imagines; but yet I shall give the discerning Reader a hint of it in that which follows.

Poetical Justice, says your Correspondent, *has no Foundation in Nature and Reason, because we find that good and evil happen alike to all Men on this side the Grave.* In answer to which he must give me leave to tell him, that this is not only a very false but a dangerous Assertion, that we neither know what Men really are, nor what they really suffer.

'Tis not always that we know Men's Crimes, but how seldom do we know their Passions, and especially their darling Passions? And as Passion is the Occasion of infinitely more Disorder in the World than Malice, [for where one Man falls a Sacrifice to inveterate Malice a thousand become Victims to Revenge and Ambition; and whereas Malice has something that shocks human Nature, Passion is pleasingly catching and contagious.] Can anything be more just, than that that Providence which governs the World should punish Men

or indulging their Paſſions, as much as for obeying the Dictates of their moſt envenom'd Hatred and Malice?

Thus you ſee, for ought we know, Good and Evil does not happen alike to all Men in this ſide the Grave. Becauſe 'tis for the moſt part, by their Paſſions, that Men offend; and 'tis by their Paſſions, for the moſt part, that they are puniſh'd. But this is certain, that the more Virtue a Man has the more he commands his Paſſions; but the Virtuous alone command them. The Wicked take the utmoſt Care to diſſemble and conceal them; for which reaſon we neither know what our Neighbours are, nor what they really ſuffer. Man is too finite, too ſhallow, and too empty a Creature to know another Man throughly, to know the Creature of an infinite Creator; but dramatical Perſons are Creatures of which a Poet is himſelf the Creator. And tho' a Mortal is not able to know the Almighty's Creatures, he may be allow'd to know his own; to know the utmoſt Extent of their Guilt, and what they ought to ſuffer; nay, he muſt be allow'd not only to know this himſelf, but to make it manifeſt and unqueſtionable to all his Readers and Hearers. The Creatures of a poetical Creator have no Diſſimulation and no Reſerve. We ſee their Paſſions in all their Height, and in all their Deformity;

formity; and when they are unfortunate, we are never to ſeek for the Cauſe.

But ſuppoſe I ſhould grant that there is not always an equal Diſtribution of Affliction and Happineſs here below. Man is a Creature who was created immortal, and a Creature conſequently that will find a Compenſation in Futurity for any ſeeming Inequality in his Deſtiny here. But the Creatures of a poetical Creator are imaginary and tranſitory; they have no longer Duration than the Repreſentation of their reſpective Fables; and conſequently, if they offend, they muſt be puniſh'd during that Repreſentation. And therefore we are very far from pretending that poetical Juſtice is an equal Repreſentation of the Juſtice of the Almighty.

We freely confeſs that 'tis but a very narrow and a very imperfect Type of it; ſo very narrow, and ſo very imperfect, that 'tis forc'd by temporal to repreſent eternal Puniſhments; and therefore when we ſhew a Man unfortunate in Tragedy, for not reſtraining his Paſſions, we mean that every one will for ſuch Neglect, unleſs he timely repents, be infallibly puniſh'd by infinite Juſtice either here or hereafter.

If upon this Foot we examine the Tragedies of *Sophocles* and *Euripides*, we ſhall find that in their moſt beautiful Pieces, they are impartial Executors of Poetick Juſtice. And

'tis

'tis upon this Foot that *Aristotle* requires that we ſhould examine them. Your Correſpondent I muſt confeſs is in the right when he ſays that that Philoſopher declares for Tragedies, whoſe Cataſtrophes are unhappy with relation to the principal Characters. But then what Inſtructions does he give us for the forming thoſe principal Characters? We are neither to make them very virtuous Perſons on the one ſide, that is Perſons who abſolutely command their Paſſions, nor on the other ſide Villains who are actuated by inveterate Malice, but ſomething between theſe two, that is to ſay Perſons who neglecting their Paſſions ſuffer them to grow outragious, and to hurry them to Actions which they otherwiſe would abhor. And that Philoſopher expreſsly declares, as we have ſhewn above, that to make a virtuous Man unhappy, that is a Man who abſolutely commands his Paſſions, would create Horror inſtead of Compaſſion, and would be deteſted by all the World. And thus we have ſhewn that *Ariſtotle* is for Poetical Juſtice, notwithſtanding that he is for unhappy Cataſtrophes. And ſo one would think was your Correſpondent. For when he enumerates and commends ſome *Engliſh* Tragedies, which have unfortunate Cataſtrophes; there are not two of thoſe which he commends, whoſe principal Characters can be ſaid to be innocent, and conſequently

ſequently there are not two of them where there is not a due Obſervance of poetical Juſtice.

Thus, Mr. *Spectator*, I have diſcuſſed the Buſineſs of poetical Juſtice, and ſhewn it to be the Foundation of all Tragedy; and therefore whatever Perſons, whether ancient or modern, have writ Dialogues which they call Tragedies, where this Juſtice is not obſerv'd, thoſe Perſons have entertain'd and amus'd the World with romantick lamentable Tales, inſtead of juſt Tragedies, and of lawful Fables.

'Tis not my Buſineſs at preſent to take any farther Notice of the Errors of your Correſpondent; perhaps I no more approve of Tragi-Comedies, or Tragedies with double Plots, than he does; But I hope he will not take it ill if I put him in mind that ſeveral of the Plays which he recommended before are Tragi-Comedies, and that moſt of them have double Plots. But he is vilely miſtaken if he thinks that Tragi-Comedy is of the Growth of our *Engliſh* Theatres.

I ſhall take another Opportunity to ſhew him that he is as much miſtaken in what he has ſaid of Humours, as in what he dictates concerning poetical Juſtice.

I am

Your very humble, &c.

To

To the SPECTATOR *upon his Paper on the 24th of* April.

SIR,

I Have read over your Paper of the *24th* with a great deal of Satisfaction, and here return you my Acknowledgments for the Honour you have done me in quoting two of my Verſes with Applauſe. I think my ſelf oblig'd in Gratitude, my worthy Friend, to do as much Honour to your Judgment as you have done to my Imagination; and as you have the Goodneſs to allow me to be an humorous Poet, I am bound in Juſtice to celebrate you for a wonderful Critick; and to make it appear that, contrary to the Obſervation of the Author of a late Rhapſody, one who has ſhewn himſelf no great Poet may be a prodigious Judge. Indeed the Obſervation of that Author is ſo far from being true, that moſt of the Criticks Ancient and Modern have been no Poets, and moſt of the Poets Ancient and Modern have been no Criticks. I cannot find out that any but *Homer*, and *Virgil*, and *Horace*, and *Sophocles*, and *Euripides* among the

Ancients were great Criticks. For who can believe, that has read them, that *Apollonius Rhodius*, *Nonnus*, *Lucan*, *Statius*, and *Silius Italicus* ever so much as heard that Nature, and the Philosophers her Interpreters and Commentators, had laid down Rules for an Epick Poem? And who that has read the Moderns could imagine, that most of their Dramatick Poets had ever so much as heard that there were such things as the Rules? As *Boileau* has observ'd of the *French*, that some Persons among them had distinguish'd themselves by their Rhymes, who never knew how to distinguish *Lucan* from *Virgil*; so some among our own Rhimers have been renown'd for versifying, who never so much as knew that *Horace* and *Milton* were good Poets. And I can on the other side name several who never distinguished themselves by Poetry, who yet have oblig'd the World with Criticisms which have been Non-pareillo's, and the very Top-Critick of all those Criticks is my worthy Friend the *Spectator*.

Tho' who the Devil could have ever expected to have found my worthy Friend a Critick, after he had treated Criticks with so much Contempt in two or three of his Immortal *Tatlers*, and particularly in the 29*th* and the 246*th*, where they are pronounc'd to be the silliest of Mortals, Creatures, forsooth, who profess

Judgment;

Judgment; tho'by the way, Mr. *Spectator*, he who professes or practises Poetry, and does not profess Judgment in it, professes himself an Ass. It was from those *Tatlers*, and one or two more, Mr. *Spectator*, that I guess'd that you had a mortal Aversion to Criticism; but now I find plainly that they were none of your own, but were sent you by two or three damn'd Poets, who are a sort of Offenders that have not half the Charity which other Malefactors are wont to shew, but bear eternal Malice to their Executioners.

Thus the Invectives against Criticks and Criticism were other Peoples; you were too wise to write any such thing, as knowing that Tast which declines so fast is only to be restor'd and maintain'd by Criticism. And therefore instead of writing Invectives against it, you have oblig'd the World with the thing it self, with Criticism upon Criticism, and such Criticism.——As those *Tatlers* were the Off-spring of some certain Poets, which is manifest by their insipid Satyr, like the faint Eagerness of Vinegar decay'd: nothing is more clear than that the Criticisms could be none but yours. For as you may discover *ex ungue Leonem, & ex pede Hercules*, so in this Case the prodigious Off-spring speaks and confesses the Gigantick Father.

In your very Folio of the 24*th* of *April*, how have you shewn the Fineness of your

Discernment, and the Profundity of your Penetration, by your Encomium of two Verses of my Translation of the Fourth Satyr of *Boileau*? 'Tis now thirty Years since I translated that Satyr, and consequently was a very Boy at the Time of that Translation; yet from that Time to this the stupid Age has been ignorant of the Beauty of that Couplet. How very flegmatick a Wretch have I been, and how illegitimate an Offspring of Mr. *Bays*, not to know any thing of my own Excellence till I heard of it from you?

How little did I imagine when I translated that Couplet, that the great Critick was then in Embrio who thirty Years afterwards should declare it to be a charming Couplet, by giving it a place in his never-dying Speculations.

I am perfectly convinc'd, my most worthy and most ingenious Friend, that we Authors are as blind and as partial Judges of our own Works, as we are unrighteous ones of other Peoples. I was apt to imagine, before I submitted my own Opinion to the decisive Authority of your Judgment; that you would have done more for the Credit of my Genius and of your own Discernment by commending the following Verses of the Fourth Book of the Poem upon the Battle of *Ramelies*, when you had so fair an occasion of taking notice of them, as you had a

th

the writing the *56th Tatler.* If I begin the Verſes a little higher than the couching of the Cataracts which is the Subject of the *56th Tatler,* I am confident you will have the Goodneſs to pardon me, and the rather becauſe you diſcover'd more than a common Satisfaction when you were preſent with your Friend Mr. *A.* at the reading thoſe Verſes in Manuſcript. A celeſtial Spirit viſits the Duke of *Marlborough* in a Viſion the Night before the Battel of *Ramelies,* and after he has ſaid ſeveral other things to him, goes on thus.

A wondrous Victory attends thy Arms,
Great in it ſelf, and in its Sequel vaſt;
Whoſe echoing Sound thro' all the Weſt ſhall run
Tranſporting the glad Nations all around,
Who oft ſhall doubt, and oft ſuſpend their Joy,
And oft imagine all an empty Dream;
The Conqueror himſelf ſhall cry amaz'd,
'Tis not our Work, alas we did it not,
The Hand of God, the Hand of God is here!
For thee, ſo great ſhall be thy high Renown,
That Fame ſhall think no Muſick like thy Name;
Around the circling Globe it ſhall be ſpread,
And to the World's laſt Ages ſhall endure;
And the moſt lofty, moſt aſpiring Man,
Shall want th' Aſſurance in his ſecret Pray'rs

To ask such high Felicity and Fame,
As Heav'n has freely granted thee; yet this
That seems so great, so glorious to thee now,
Would look how low, how vile to thy great Mind,
If I could set before thy astonish'd Eyes,
Th' Excess of Glory, and th' Excess of Bliss,
That is prepar'd for thy expiring Soul
When thou arriv'st at everlasting Day.
O could embodied Mind but comprehend
The Glories of the Intellectual World,
Or I the blissful Secret were allow'd,
But Fate forbids, to Mortals to reveal:
O I could lay a Scene before thy Eyes
Which would distract thee with transporting Joy,
Fire the rich Blood in thy illustrious Veins,
Make ev'ry Nerve with fierce Convulsions start,
Blast all thy Spirits, and thy Life destroy;
Thou could'st not taste th' Ecstatick Bliss and live.
As one who has liv'd thirty tedious Years,
And ever since his wretched Birth been dark;
His visual Orbs with cloudy Films o'ercast,
And in the Dungeon of the Body dwelt
In utter Ignorance of Nature's Works
And Wonders of this vast material World,
And has no Notion e'er conceiv'd of Light
Or Colours, or the verdant flowry Earth,
Or the stupendous Prospect of the Sky;
If then he finds some Artist whose nice Hand

Couches

Couches the Cataracts and clears his Eyes,
And all at once a Flood of glorious Light,
And this bright Temple of the Universe,
The crystal Firmament, the blazing Sun,
All the amazing Glories of the Heav'ns,
All the Great Maker's high Magnificence
Come rushing thro' his Eyes upon his Soul;
He cannot bear th' astonishing Delight,
But starts, exclaims, and stamps, and raves, and dies:
So the vast Glories of the upper World,
If they were set before embodied Mind,
Would oppress Nature and extinguish Life.

These are the Verses, my most discerning Friend, that I thought might have been preferr'd to the forementioned Couplet, especially since they would as it were have introduced themselves, whereas the Couplet is dragg'd in by extreme Violence. But I submit to your infallible Judgment, not in the least suspecting that my worthy Friend can have any Malice in this Affair, and insert that Couplet in his immortal Speculations only on purpose to expose me; no, far be it from me to entertain any such Jealousie of my dearest Friend, who is so good, so kind, so beneficent, and who has so often given himself the glorious Title of the Lover and Benefactor of Mankind. Who could imagine that one who hath

given himſelf that glorious Appellation, could e'er be prompted by Malice, or Paſſion, or Intereſt thus ſlily and hypocritically to abuſe one whom he had call'd his Friend?

I have been apt to believe likewiſe, my worthy Friend, that you would have been kinder to your ſelf and to me, if inſtead of commending the forementioned Couplet you had taken ſome notice of the following Verſes which are in my Paraphraſe upon the *Te Deum*; eſpecially when you had ſo fair an occaſion to mention them as you had at the writing the 119*th Tatler*. The Couplet of the tranſlated Satyr was introduced by Violence: But how very naturally would the following Verſes of the Paraphraſe have been mentioned either before or after the laſt Paragraph of the forementioned Paper, where a Spirit is introduc'd, who after he has ſpoke of that part of the Creation which is too little for human Sight, comes afterwards to ſpeak of the immenſe Objects of Nature after this manner.

I muſt acknowledge for my own Part, that altho' it is with much Delight that I ſee the Traces of Providence in theſe
Tat. 119. *Inſtances, I ſtill ſee greater Pleaſure in conſidering the Works of the Creation in their Immenſity, than in their Minute-*

Minuteneſs. For this Reaſon, I rejoice when I ſtrengthen my Sight ſo as to make it pierce into the moſt remote Spaces, and take a view of thoſe Heavenly Bodies, which lye out of the reach of Human Eyes tho' aſſiſted by Teleſcopes; what you look upon as one confus'd White in the milky way, appears to me a long Tract of Heav'ns, diſtinguiſh'd by Stars, that are ranged in proper Figures and Conſtellations: While you are admiring the Sky in a ſtarry Night, I am entertain'd with a variety of Worlds and Suns plac'd one above another, and riſing up to ſuch an immenſe Diſtance that no created Eye can ſee an end of them.

Upon the writing this Paragraph, how could you avoid the making mention of Verſes which had the very ſame Ideas, and Verſes which you had formerly mention'd with Applauſe in private Converſation? I know you will anſwer that you had intirely forgot them, and therefore I take the Liberty here to refreſh your Memory. The Angels are introduc'd in that Paraphraſe ſpeaking to God, and ſaying, after other things, that which follows.

[*Eyes,*
Where-e'er at utmoſt ſtretch we caſt our
Thro' the vaſt frightful Spaces of the Skies;
Ev'n there we find thy Glory, there we gaze
On thy bright Majeſty's unbounded Blaze;

Ten

Ten thousand Suns, prodigious Globes of Light
At once in broad Dimensions strike our sight;
Millions behind in the remoter Skies,
Appear but Spangles to our wearied Eyes;
And when our wearied Eyes want farther strength
To pierce the Void's immeasurable Length,
Our vigorous tow'ring Thoughts still farther fly,
And still remoter flaming Worlds descry;
But ev'n an Angel's comprehensive Thought
Cannot extend so far as thou hast wrought,
Our vast Conceptions are by swelling brought,
Swallow'd and lost in Infinite to nought.

How glad am I that the forementioned Verses were writ before the above-nam'd *Tatlers*? Otherwise I should have been thought to have borrow'd from my worthy Friend, without making any manner of acknowledgment, only adding or endeavouring to add to what I borrow'd a little of that Spirit, and Elevation and Magnificence of Expression which the Greatness of the Hints requir'd.

'Tis for this Reason that I am glad the Verses were printed some Years before the Prose. For you know, my dear Friend, that a Plagiary in general is but a scandalous Creature, a sort of a spiritual Outlaw, and ought to be treated as such by all the

the Members of the Commonwealth of Learning. But a Plagiary from living Authors is most profligately impudent, and in so slow and splenatick a Nation as ours most unjust and barbarous. For among us any thing that is admirably good is twenty or thirty Years before it comes to be understood. And how infinitely base is it in the mean while to deprive an Author of any thing that is valuable in him, and to intercept his coming Praise? As Laws are made for the Security of Property, what pity 'tis that there are not some enacted for the Security of a Man's Thoughts and Inventions, which alone are properly his? For Land is alienable, and Treasure is transitory, and both must at one time or other pass from him, either by his own voluntary Act, or by the Violence and Injustice of others, or at least by Fate. And therefore nothing is truly and really a Man's own.

——Puncto quod mobilis Horæ
Nunc prece, nunc precio, nunc vi, nunc sorte supremâ
Permutet Dominos, & cedat in altera Jura.

'Tis only a Man's Thoughts and Inventions that are properly his: being alone Things that can never be alienated from him, neither by Force nor Persuasion, nor by Fate it self; and tho' another may basely usurp the

the Honour of them, yet they muſt for ever rightfully belong to their firſt Inventor. Thus even the richeſt and the happieſt of Men have nothing that is truly and really their own, but their Thoughts and Inventions. But Authors for the moſt part, and eſpecially Poets, have nothing that can ſo much as be call'd their own but their Thoughts. 'Tis for thoſe alone, and the Glory which they expect from thoſe, that they entirely quit their Pretenſions to Riches, and renounce the Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World; and therefore to endeavour to deprive them of thoſe is exceedingly inhuman. What a Joy 'tis to think that the Precedence of Times ſets me free from the Imputation of this Injuſtice? Had I been capable of doing this, and doing it to my worthy Friend, of wronging my deareſt Friend in this manner, who knows how far that Barbarity might have extended it ſelf? I might have proceeded to have upbraided him with ſome weak place in his never-dying Folio's; and having forcibly depriv'd him of his Silver and his Gold, have pelted him with his Braſs and his Copper, out of counterfeit Anger or pretended Scorn, becauſe they were of no richer Metal.

But the Caſe of my dear Friend is vaſtly different. You have that Reputation, and the World has that Opinion of your Merit, that

that they will be so far from believing that you have Obligations to a living Author which you have not, that tho' you had really made thus bold with me, it would have been impossible to have convinc'd above forty or fifty People of it. And here, my dear Friend, at the same time that I acknowledge your uncommon Merit, I cannot but congratulate your incomparable Felicity, it being plain that you have got more Reputation in three Years time than *Milton* has done in fifty Years, or than *Shakespear* has in an hundred. I shall therefore judiciously conclude with the generality of your Readers, that you have a Merit paramount to that of all *British* Authors both living and dead, and that you have not only more Merit than any one Moralist either Ancient or Modern, but that if you continue your Paper three Years longer, you will have as much Merit as they have all together.

I am, my dear Friend,

With great Respect and Fidelity,

Your, &c.

To

To Matthew Prior, *Esq*; *upon the* Roman *Satirists.*

SIR,

WHen you seem'd to approve of the Translation of the seventh Satire of the second Book of *Horace*, which was translated by one of my Friends, that Approbation was the more pleasing to me, because it confirm'd me in my own Opinion of it, and oblig'd me to acquiesce in the Judgments which some of my Friends have given of it, whom I have always chiefly consulted in my Doubts about poetical Matters. And now, Sir, I come according to my Promise to consult you about the Preference which several Partizans of the *Roman* Satirists have given to their respective Favourite Authors, and to know from you which of them are in the right, or rather whether they are not all in the wrong. You know very well, Sir, that *Rigaltius*, *Scaliger* the Elder, *Lipsius* and *Holiday* prefer *Juvenal* to *Horace* and *Persius*; That *Dacier*, *Heinsius*, Monsieur *de la Bruyere*, and several others, prefer *Horace* to

to *Persius* and *Juvenal*; that Mr. *Dryden* endeavours to divide the Palm between *Horace* and *Juvenal*, and to prefer *Horace* for Instruction, and *Juvenal* for Delight; that he gives *Horace* the Preference for Instruction, because, says he, he is the more general Instructor; but that he gives the Priority to *Juvenal* for Delight, because he is most delighted with him, and so makes his own Taste the Argument for preferring him. But tho' we shou'd grant, Sir, that the Generality of Readers are more delighted with *Juvenal* than they are with *Horace*, because *Dryden* is more delighted with him; yet is it not very much to be question'd, whether the Author who gives the most general Delight is the most delightful Author? Now Sir, your old Friend Monsieur *Despreaux*, tho' 'tis evident that he was more pleas'd with *Horace* than he was with *Juvenal*, because he has imitated him more, yet he had more Judgment than expresly to prefer the one to the other, because he knew very well, that there can be no true Preference where there can be no just Comparison, and that there can be no just Comparison between Authors whose Works are not *ejusdem generis*, and that the Works of those two Satirists are not *ejusdem generis*. For do not you believe, Sir, that Mr. *Dryden* is in the wrong where he affirms that the *Roman*

man Satire had its Accomplishment in *Juvenal*? For is there not Reason to believe that the true *Roman* Satire is of the Comick kind, and was an Imitatiou of the old *Athenian* Comedys, in which *Lucilius* first signaliz'd himself, and which was afterwards perfected by *Horace*, and that *Juvenal* afterwards started a new Satire which was of the Tragick kind? *Horace*, who wrote as *Lucilius* had done before him, in Imitation of the old Comedy, endeavours to correct the Follies and Errors, and epidemick Vices of his Readers, which is the Business of Comedy. *Juvenal* attacks the pernicious outragious Passions and the abominable monstrous Crimes of several of his Contemporaries, or of those who liv'd in the Age before him, which is the Business of Tragedy, at least of imperfect Tragedy. *Horace* argues, insinuates, engages, rallies, smiles; *Juvenal* exclaims, apostrophizes, exaggerates, lashes, stabbs. There is in *Horace* almost every where an agreeable Mixture of good Sense, and of true Pleasantry, so that he has every where the principal Qualities of an excellent Comick Poet. And there is almost every where in *Juvenal*, Anger, Indignation, Rage, Disdain, and the violent Emotions and vehement Style of Tragedy. Can there then be a just Comparison made between these two Satirists, any more than there can be between a Tragick

and

and a Comick Poet? If Mr. *Dryden* were now living, would he compare *Nat Lee* with *Etherege*, the former of which never touch'd upon Comedy, and the other never attempted Tragedy? would he prefer *Nat Lee* to *Etherege*, as he does *Juvenal* to *Horace*, becauſe the Thoughts of *Lee* are more elevated than thoſe of *Etherege*, his Expreſſions more noble and more ſonorous, his Verſe more numerous, and his Words more ſublime and lofty? would he not have believ'd, that if *Etherege* had writ Sir *Fopling* in the ſame Style, that *Nat Lee* wrote *Alexander*, he would have been as merry a Perſon as *Penkethman* was when he acted *Alexander?* Would he not in all probability have judg'd that *Lee* is more delightful to thoſe who are more pleas'd with Tragedy than they are with Comedy, and that *Etherege* is more delightful to thoſe who are better entertain'd with Comedy than they are with Tragedy? Now, Sir, ought not we to make the ſame Judgment of *Horace* and *Juvenal*, and to affirm *Horace* to be more delightful to thoſe who are more pleas'd with Comedy than they are with Tragedy, and that *Juvenal* is more delightful to thoſe who are better entertain'd with Tragedy than they are with Comedy? And that perhaps for that very reaſon he was more pleaſing than

Horace to Mr. *Dryden*? Will not the Tragick Satire, which like Tragedy fetches its Notions from Philosophy and from common Sense, be in all probability more acceptable to Universities and Cloisters, and all those Recluse and Contemplative Men, who pass most of their time in their Closets, all which Persons are suppos'd to have Philosophy from Study, and common Sense from Nature? And will not the Comick Satirist, who owes no small Part of his Excellence to his Experience, that is to the Knowledge of the Conversation and Manners of the Men of the World, be in all likelihood more agreeable to the discerning Part of a Court, and a great Capital, where they are qualify'd to taste and discern his Beauties, by the same Experience which enabled their Authors to produce them? And above all things, must it not be most agreeable to a Polite Court, where that dexterous Insinuation, that fine good Sense, and that true Pleasantry, which are united in the *Horatian* Satire, are the only shining Qualities which make the Courtier valuable and agreeable? And will he not take more delight in the *Horatian* Satire than in the Tragick Eloquence of *Juvenal*, not only because he is qualified by Nature and Experience to relish the Beauties of it, but because the Pleasure which he receives from it, is subsen-

vien

vient to his Interest, which is always his main Design, and Improves and Cultivates those Talents which are chiefly to recommend him to those who are to advance him?

It will be needless, Sir, to detain you any longer, by enquiring into the Preference which *Casaubon* has so injudiciously given to *Persius* above *Horace* and *Juvenal*, or into the Preference which he particularly gives to the fifth Satire of *Persius* before this of *Horace*, the Translation of which has occasion'd the Trouble which I now give you, and which, you know, Sir, is writ upon the same Subject. Your Friend, Monsieur *Dacier*, tells us that *Casaubon* by this Opinion prefers the University to the Court. I appeal to you, Sir, if the Satire of *Horace*, the Translation of which comes after this Letter, does not speak for it self, and justifie the Assertion of Monsieur *Dacier*.

I am,

SIR,

Your, &c.

HORACE.

LIB. II. SAT. VII.

HORACE

LIB. II. SAT. VII.

JAmdudum auſculto, & cupiens tibi dice ſervus
Pauca, reformido. Davúſne? ita Davus, am cum
Mancipium domino, & frugi, quod ſit ſatìs: hoc e
Ut vitale putes. age, libertate Decembri,
(Quando ita majores voluerunt) utere: narra.
Pars hominum vitiis gaudet conſtanter, & urge
Propoſitum, pars multa natat, modò recta cap ſens,
Interdum pravis obnoxia. ſæpe notatus

C

HORACE.

BOOK II. SAT. VII.

DAVUS and *HORACE.*

I'VE liſten'd long, and now wou'd Silence break,
If your poor timerous Slave had leave to ſpeak.
What, Davus, *is it thou?* The very ſame;
And, if the trueſt Services may claim
The juſt Return of a kind Maſter's Care,
Methinks that I of yours deſerve a Share.
Why then, ſince ancient Cuſtom has ordain'd
Thy Tongue at this time ſhould be unreſtrain'd,
Of this Saturnian *Feaſt th' Advantage take,*
And what thou would'ſt deliver, freely ſpeak.
Part of Mankind on Vice are firmly bent,
Their conſtant Pleaſure and their ſole Intent;
While a large part are fluctuating ſtill,
And now inclin'd to Good, and now inclin'd to Ill.

Cum tribus annellis, modò lævâ Priſcus inani,
Vixit inæqualis: clavum ut mutaret in horas,
Ædibus ex magnis ſubitò ſe conderet, unde
Mundior exiret vix libertinus honeſté.
Jam mœchus Romæ, jam mallet doctus Athenis
Vivere, Vertumnis, quotquot ſunt, natus iniqui
Scurra Volanerius, poſtquam illi juſta chiragra
Contudit articulos, qui pro ſe tolleret, atque
Mitteret in pyrgum talos, mercede diurnâ
Conductum pavit. quanto conſtantior idem
In vitiis, tanto leviùs miſer, ac prior ille,
Qui jam contento, jam laxo fune laborat.
Non dices hodie, quorſum hæc tam putida tendunt
Furcifer? ad te, inquam. quo pacto, peſſime? laud
Fortunam & mores antiquæ plebis; & idem

For ſuch Inconſtancy was *Priſcus* known,
Twice in an Hour he chang'd his darling Gown,
To-day three Rings he wears, to-morrow none;
From his own pompous Palace oft he ſtole,
And to ſome lurking Place ſo vile wou'd ſtrole,
Ev'n cleanly Slaves wou'd ſcorn the naſty Hole.
One Day, he wiſhes it may be his Doom,
To paſs his Life in Lewdneſs and in *Rome*;
The next, that *Athens*, Virtue's learned Seat,
May prove his Quiet and his laſt Retreat:
From Object thus to Object would he range,
As if poſſeſs'd by all the Gods of Change.
Volnerius, juſtly lam'd in both his Hands,
Keeps one in Pay, that at his Elbow ſtands,
Merely to throw the gouty Gameſter's Dice;
So perſevering is he in his Vice.
Leſs wretched thus, in conſtantly purſuing
An obvious, certain, but a pleaſing Ruin,
Than t'other ſtruggling with ſtrong Inclination,
And ſure to ſhock his Reaſon or his Paſſion.
Sirrah, what's all this Stuff? to what Intent?
And what's by all theſe muſty Morals meant?
As muſty, Sir, as you are pleas'd to find 'em,
Ev'n for your Worſhip's Service I deſign'd 'em.
How ſo, you Dog? Our Ancients, Sir, you praiſe,
Their temperate Life, their plain, their frugal ways;
When

Si quis ad illa Deus ſubitò te agat, uſque recuſes,
Aut quia non ſentis, quod clamas, rectius eſſe;
Aut quia non firmus rectum defendis, & hæres,
Nequicquam cœno cupiens evellere plantam.
Romæ rus optas, abſentem ruſticus urbem
Tollis ad aſtra levis. ſi nuſquam es fortè vocatus
Adcœnam, laudas ſecurum olus; ac, velut uſquam
Vinctus eas, ita te felicem dicis, amáſque,
Quòd nuſquam tibi ſit potandum. Juſſerit ad ſe
Mæcenas ſerum ſub lumina prima venire
Convivam; nemón' oleum feret ocyùs? ecquis
Audit? cum magno blateras clamore, furíſque.
Milvius et ſcurræ tibi non referenda precatè
Diſcedent. etenim fateor me, dixerit ille,
Ducè ventre levem: naſum nidore ſupinor.

Imbe-

When in an inſtant, ſhould ſome Pow'r Divine
Pronounce aloud, That Antique Life be thine,
You wou'd refuſe the Grant, nor have the Heart
From your dear, darling Vices e'er to part;
Either becauſe you feel not what you ſpeak,
Or elſe your Mind's inconſtant ſtill and weak:
Thus while one Foot you labour to retire,
Your other plunges deeper in the Mire.
When you're in *Rome*, you're all on fire to prove
The Solitary Pleaſures of your Grove;
But ſcarce you're to your Country Seat got down,
When to the Skies y'extol the abſent Town.
If uninvited and at home you eat,
How quiet is the Morſel, and how ſweet!
And you ſo pleas'd, that one wou'd ſurely think,
Abroad unwillingly you eat or drink;
But let *Mæcenas* ſend for you next Day,
How eager you the Summons to obey!
Who's there? who waits? where are my Raskals all?
What ho! my Eſſence: frantickly you bawl;
When with light Bellies and with heavy Heart
Your ſpunging Scoundrels, curſing you, depart.
I grant that I my Belly love full well;
That each good Diſh allures me by the Smell;

That

Imbecillus, iners; si quid vis, adde, popino.

Tu cùm sis, quod ego, & fortassis nequior, ultro

Insectere velut melior, verbisque decoris

Obvolvas vitium? quid, si me stultior ipse

Quingentis emto drachmis deprenderis? aufer

Me vultu terrere; manum, stomachúmque teneto,

Dum, quæ Crispini docuit me janitor, edo.

Te conjux aliena capit, meretricula Davum.

Peccat uter nostrûm cruce dignius? acris ubi me.

Natura incendit, sub clarâ nuda lucernâ

Quæcunque excepit turgentis verbera caudæ,

Clunibus aut agitavit equum lasciva supinum,

Dimit-

That indolent and idle, and a Sot,
I'm hardly driven to forſake my Pot;
But yet that you who ſtill are worſe ſometimes,
Tho' ſpecious Words may colour o'er your Crimes,
That You ſhould reprimand me ev'ry Hour,
Only becauſe you have me in your Pow'r,
When this poor Slave, whom for ten Pounds you bought,
Better and wiſer too perhaps is thought——
Nay, againſt all Reſentment I declare;
Both Frowns and Blows and angry Words I bar;
While what I learnt from my Converſe of late
With *Criſpin*'s Porter, I ſhall now relate.
No leſs, forſooth, than ſome fine marry'd Dame
Can raiſe your Fancy and provoke your Flame;
While honeſt *Davus*, humble as he's poor,
Pretends no higher than his little Whore.
If then the Caſe ſtands thus between us two,
Am I the greater Criminal or you?
When Nature keen incites Love's fierce Deſires,
To ſome convenient Place to quench thoſe Fires,
Forthwith, defying Scandal, I repair,
And ſome kind ſhe, whom Luſt has painted fair,
I take, and in her looſe, commodious Dreſs,
The willing, wanton Baggage I careſs;

Dimittit neque famosum, neque sollicitum, ne
Ditior, aut formæ melioris meiat eodem.
Tu cùm projectis insignibus, annulo equestri,
Romanóque habitu, prodis ex judice Dama
Turpis, odoratum caput obscurante lacernâ;
Non es, quod simulas? metuens induceris, atque
Altercante libidinibus tremis ossa pavore.
Quid refert, uri virgis, ferróque necari
Auctoratus eas; an turpi clausus in arcâ,
Quò te demisit peccati conscia herilis
Contractum genibus tangas caput? éstne marito
Matronæ peccantis in ambos justa potestas?
In corruptorem vel justior? illa tamen se
Non habitu, mutátve loco, peccátve supernè,
Cùm te formidet mulier, neque credit amanti.

Ibis

But after having well my ſelf diverted,
I'm in no Pain, for being ſoon deſerted,
Nor care if, when my preſent Paſtime's over,
Her next a finer be, or richer Lover.
When you aſide your Marks of Honour fling,
Your *Roman* Robe and your *Equeſtrian* Ring;
When you, whom *Cæſar* made a Judge ſo grave,
Sculk, in the filthy Habit of a Slave,
To blind ſome Cuckold, and his Wife t'obtain;
Are you not really what you think you feign?
Trembling you're introduc'd, tho' all on fire,
Fear in your Breaſt conflicting with Deſire;
What Gladiator, hack'd and hew'd all o'er
For wretched Suſtenance, can ſuffer more?
Witneſs, when Neck and Heels together preſt,
You're cram'd for Refuge in ſome naſty Cheſt.
Is not Revenge the Injur'd Husband's Due,
Both on the Wife and her Corrupter too?
What Favour can the latter hope or claim,
Induſtrious to offend—Not ſo the Dame.
She ne'er ſteals out to meet you in Diſguiſe,
Nor to your active Ardor e'er replies,
But dully paſſive in your Arms ſhe lies.
Not but ſhe'd meet you with an equal Guſt,
If to your amorous Vows ſhe dar'd to truſt,
Nor fear'd you'd ſcorn her for her rampant Luſt.

Yet

Ibis sub furcam prudens, dominóque furenti
Committes rem omnem, & vitam, & cum corpore famam.
Evâsti? credo metues, doctúsque cavebis.
Quæres, quando iterum paveas, iterúmque perire
Possis, ô toties servus! quæ bellua ruptis,
Cùm semel effugit, reddit se prava catenis?
Non sum mœchus, ais. neque ego hercule fur, ubi vasa
Prætereo sapiens argentea. tolle periclum,
Jam vaga prosiliet frenis natura remotis.
Túne mihi dominus, rerum imperiis hominúmque
Tot tantísque minor; quem ter vindicta quatérque
Imposita haud unquam miserâ formidine privet?
Adde suprà dictis, quod non leviùs valeat. nam
Sive vicarius est, qui servo paret, utì mos

Vester

Yet on to Bondage willingly you go,
Round your ownNeck the galling Yoke you throw,
While to your Cuckold, in his raging Fit,
Your Honour, Life and Fortune you commit.
Have you escap'd? 'Tis hop'd, that Danger past,
May teach you Caution and more Wit at last,
No—still you long your former Risques to run;
And fresh Occasions seek to be undone.
Oh, Slave confirm'd! who can so often fall
Into repeated Bonds, and willing Thrall!
What Beast's so stupid, when he breaks his Chain,
As ever to return to it again?
You're no Aldult'rer—Right—No Thief am I;
Your Plate I pass with vast Discretion by,
But set the legal Penalties aside,
And Nature breaks thro' all Restraints beside.
You can I justly then my Master call,
You, whom so many Lusts and Men enthrall,
Whom shou'd the Prætor's Wand strike thrice, or more,
Your native Freedom it cou'd ne'er restore,
And ne'er expel the Fear that tyranniz'd before?
As one, who to Commands Obedience pays,
Which some Superior Slave upon him lays,
(For such a Custom here I find you have)
Calls that Superior still his Fellow Slave;

Vester ait, seu conservus; tibi quid sum ego? nempe
Tu, mihi qui imperitas, aliis servis miser, atque
Duceris, ut nervis alienis mobile lignum.
Quisnam igitur liber? sapiens, sibíque imperiosus:
Quem neque pauperis, neque mors, neque vincula terrent:
Responsare cupidinibus, contemnere honores
Fortis, & in seipso totus teres, atque rotundus;
Externi ne quid valeat per læve morari:
In quem manca ruit semper fortuna. potésne
Ex his, ut proprium, quid noscere? quinque talenta
Poscit te mulier, vexat, foribúsque repulsum
Perfundit gelidâ. rursus vocat. eripe turpi
Colla jugo: liber, liber sum, dic age. non quis.
Urget enim dominus mentem non lenis, & acres
Subjectat lasso stimulos, versátque negantem.

Ve

So ſince you ſtill unactive are alone,
And move by Springs, like Puppets, not your own;
Since your mad Paſſions rule both you and me,
Pray what but wretched Fellow Slaves are we?
At this Rate who is free? The wiſe Man's free;
That Sovereign of his Mind, 'tis only he
Who can be ſaid t'enjoy true Liberty;
Who ſpight of Death, of Poverty and Chains,
And Pleaſures, o'er himſelf ſerenely reigns;
Who ſtands collected in himſelf, and whole,
A Match for all the Tyrants of the Soul;
Who ſcorning Titles, of himſelf is great,
Of Fortune independant and of Fate.
This is the Picture of the Man that's free;
Now here what Feature of your own do' you ſee?
Your coſtly Whore, who has your Weakneſs found,
Preſſes and plagues you for a thouſand Pound:
Refus'd, in Rage ſhe turns you out of Doors,
And a ſalt Show'r upon your Head ſhe pours.
Yet when ſhe calls again, you're at her beck.—
From this vile Yoke, for Shame, withdraw your Neck;
Come, ſay *I'm Free*— Alas! you have no Pow'r
To quit the Tyrant Paſſion, that each Hour
Subjects your Mind, and will no Mercy ſhow,
But ſpurs you tir'd and jaded as you go.

Or

Vel cùm Pausiacâ torpes, insane, tabellâ,
Quî peccas minùs, atque ego, cùm Fulvî, Rutubaque,
Aut Placideiani contento poplite miror
Prœlia rubricâ picta aut carbone: velut si
Re verâ pugnent; feriant, viténtque moventes
Arma viri. nequam, & cessator Davus: at ipse
Subtilis veterum judex, & callidus audis.
Nil ego, si ducor libo fumante. tibi ingens
Virtus, atque animus cœnis responsat opimis.
Obsequium ventris mihi perniciosius est: cur?
Tergo plector enim; quî tu impunitior, illa,
Quæ parvo sumi nequeunt, opsonia captas?
Nempe inamaresount epulæ sinè fine petitæ,
Illusique pedes vitiosum ferre recusant
Corpus. an hic peccat, sub noctem qui puer uvam
Furtivâ mutat strigili? qui prædia vendit,
Nil servile gulæ parens habet? adde, quòd idem

Non

Or when in foolish Rapture long you stand,
Admiring some fam'd Piece of *Pausia*'s Hand,
How is your Conduct less a Fault than mine,
When gaping at some brawny Fencer's Sign,
Bungl'd in Chalk or Coal, I think it fine?
And lag a while to view the painted Show,
And how they seem to give and ward the Blow
Davus however is the loit'ring Ass,
While for a plaguy Judge of Art you pass.
If I'm provok'd by a hot smoaking Pye
To Demolition, what a Rogue am I?
While you, the Man of Virtue and high Mind,
Disdain the Dishes of the nicest kind.
For my good Cheer you'll say I dearly pay,
Since with my Back my Belly I defray.
But can you draw a just Conclusion hence,
That you're luxurious at a less Expence?
When choicest Viands in Excesses cloy,
And endlessly debauching, you destroy,
That Strength, that should your faultring Limbs supply,
Which now to bear your pamper'd Corps deny.
If the young liquorish Rogue, who swaps for Trash
The Toys he stole, most justly feels the Lash;
Shall he escape the Scourge, who, to supply
His Luxury, makes Lands and Lordships fly?

Non horam tecum esse potes; non otia rectè
Ponere: téque ipsum vitas fugitivus & erro;
Jam vino quærens, jam somno fallere curam.
Frustra: nam comes atra premit, sequiturque fugacem.

Unde mihi lapidem? quorsum est opus? unde sagittas?
Aut insanit homo, aut versus facit. ocyùs hinc te
Nî rapis; accedes opera agro nona Sabino.

Now add to what I've ſaid, you want the Pow'r
T'endure your ſelf alone one ſingle Hour,
You want the Pow'r your Leiſure to enjoy,
But ev'ry precious Moment miſemploy.
Still from your ſelf a Fugitive you run,
And ſeek by Wine and Sleep your Care to ſhun,
Care on its dusky Wings purſues its Prey,
Or lies in Ambuſcade upon your way,
Haunts you by Night and ruffles you by Day.
Oh that a Stone— Oh that a Dart I had!
The Man is raving ſure or rhiming mad.
Sirrah, this Moment vaniſh from my Sight.
For if thou doſt not urge thy ſpeedy Flight,
To my Plantation, Wretch, thou goeſt once more,
T'encreaſe the Number I've ſent there before.

To Mr. GREENWOOD.

SIR,

THIS Morning, in order to perform my Promiſe, I caus'd two Parcels to be put into the General Penny-Poſt-Office for you, in one of which was *The Invader of his Countrey*, and in the other, the four Letters to Sir *John Edgar*; I hope both Parcels will come ſafe to your Hands, and wiſh they may entertain you.

Since I have been in Town, I have conſider'd the Paſſage in *Phædrus*, *Sed hoc feretis pro Judicio præmium.* I find that *Virgil* and *Horace* have us'd the Word *Judicium* in three or four ſeveral Senſes. They have both us'd it for the intellectual Faculty, which we call Judgment. *Horace* has us'd it in this Senſe in his Art of Poetry; as in this Paſſage

Tu nihil invitâ dicas faciesve Minervâ
Id tibi judicium eſt, ea mens.

And in the Epiſtle to *Auguſtus*, ſpeaking of *Alexander* the Great,

Quod

——— Quod si
Judicium subtile videndis artibus illud
Ad Libros et ad hæc. Musarum dona vocares

Virgil has us'd it in his fifth Eclogue for Opinion;

Judicio nostro tantum tibi cedit Amyntas.

In the first Epistle of the first Book, *Horace* uses *Judiciis* for Opinions.

Quod si me populus Romanus forte rogat, cur
Non, ut porticibus, sic Judiciis fruar iisdem;
Nec sequar, aut fugiam, quæ diligit ipse vel odit,
Olim quod vulpes, &c.

Horace in the first Satire of the second Book uses it for a Prosecution or a Tryal at Law:

Si mala condiderit in quemquis carmine, jus est
Judicium que

And in the fourth Satire of the first Book,

——— Admiror quo pacto Judicium illud
Fugerit.

But lastly, *Judicium* is sometimes taken for a definitive Sentence, as

——— manet

——————manet altâ mente repostum
Judicium Paridis.

Now as Penalty or Punishment is the consequence of an antecedent Sentence, and no Figure is more commonly us'd either by Poets or Orators, than the Effect for the Cause, or the Consequence for the Antecedent; *Phædrus* in the Passage in Question uses the word *Judicium* for Punishment; as he uses *Præmium* to signifie *Pœnam*, and so the Sense of the above-cited Verse is, *But this shall be your Punishment according to the Sentence pronounc'd against you.* And thus much to the Passage of *Phædrus.*

I design to come as soon as the Weather is settled, and to pass two or three Days at the House where I breakfasted yesterday Morning; but I shall hardly care to make a longer Stay among so many Jacobites, a Sort of People whom I so much abhor, and who so much hate me. I can compare them, for Malice, Credulity and Obstinacy, to no Sort of People so nearly as to the *Jews*, who have been so many Years in a foolish Expectation of that Messiah who is already come. But of all the Jacobites I detest none so much as the Jacobite Parsons, and of all the Parsons none so much as those who are for dethroning a Prince to whom they have taken an Oath to be Loyal, and for setting up a Pretender whom they have

sworn

ſworn to renounce. I have a great deal more Regard, or more Charity at leaſt, for the Nonjurors among them, I mean that Part of them who live modeſtly and humbly in Retirement, and never meddle with the Government. Theſe People ſeem to refuſe the Oaths thro' Conſcience, but a Conſcience erroneous and ill-guided. But as for that Part of the Nonjurors who make it the conſtant Buſineſs of their Lives, to plot, to cabal, to ſet the People againſt their King, and one Part of the People againſt the other, they are apparently Nonjurors thro' Intereſt and not Conſcience; they refuſe the Oaths thro' the Hope of another Reſtoration, and the Gain that may attend it: It being impoſſible that any thing ſo uncharitable and immoral as their Practice, can be the Effect of a Chriſtian Conſcience. Yet ev'n theſe are nothing near ſo wicked as the ſwearing Jacobite Parſons. What I ſaid of Dr. *Fauſtus*, if you took it rightly, was deſign'd againſt them; for the Perſon who lives in conſtant, repeated, daily Perjury upon the account of Intereſt, ſeems to me to be capable of any Villany whatſoever, and to have done in effect what ſome credulous Perſons believe that Dr. *Fauſtus* did foremrly, that is, to have given Bond and Judgment to the Devil to ſurrender their Perſons to him after a Term of Time.

I am, Sir, Yours, &c.

To Sir Richard Blackmore.

SIR,

I Have lately, with a great deal of Satisfaction, read twice over the political Letters to the Author of the *London* Journal. Several of them seem to come from no ordinary Hands, being writ with great Strength and Spirit. The great Occasion certainly call'd for all the Strength and Spirit that could be supplied by Man. 'Tis indeed so extraordinary, that it has no Parallel in any Nation or any Age: For that a great Number of the chief Inhabitants of the Metropolis of a powerful Kingdom, who were so far from having any Cause of Discontent, that they had in their Power all the Felicity that Mortals can enjoy; that they actually possess'd more than ever they dar'd to hope for, nay more than ever they dar'd to wish for, ev'n in their most sanguine Hours, but a few Months before; That Persons who were esteemed by all their Fellow-Citizens, respected by all their Fellow-Subjects, regarded and highly favour'd by the Government, and honour'd

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and distinguish'd by the whole Legislature; that a Number of these should enter into an execrable Conspiracy, irretrievably to ruin their Fellow-Subjects, to distress the Government that had so highly favour'd them, and to afflict and perplex the whole Legislature that had so highly honour'd them; and all this only thro' the infinitely base and foolish Desire of accumulating Riches, of which they had before more than they could ever use, is what has never been transmitted to us by Tradition, or read of in ancient or modern History.

This Conspiracy, so new and unheard-of that it cannot be equal'd by any Nation in any Age, must necessarily have a Cause as monstrous and as unparallel'd; and that is an antecedent Conspiracy among a great number of People, some by conversing and by writing, and some by encouraging these Conversations and Writings, to overthrow the Religion of their native Countrey, and by that means to let in Corruption upon us like a Deluge. And this they have endeavour'd with all their Might to do, upon a Pretence the most extravagant that was ever heard of, upon a Pretence to advance the Publick Good. For their Design was to overthrow the Christian Religion, in order to destroy Priestcraft; at the same Time they make no Offer to establish any other Religion in the Room of that which they

they would destroy. Now Priestcraft may trouble and perplex a State, but a general Want of Religion must be attended with its utter Ruin. For the Religion of every Countrey in which the Natives and their Forefathers have been educated, and which is antecedent or coæval to most of its Laws and Customs, that Religion, whether true or false, is certainly the Basis of that Country's Constitution; and may indeed, when Corruptions flow in upon it, be reform'd, and reduc'd to its first Principles; but can never be totally abolish'd, without unavoidable Ruin. For that national Religion is, to that Countrey, the only Fountain both of general publick and private Virtue, and of general publick Siprit; and that being abolish'd, or very much weaken'd, even natural Religion must lose its Force, and consequently there can be no general Morality. For tho' our Antichristian Authors may make several of their Readers Atheists, they can never hope to make the Generality of a Nation Theists, without pretending to infuse more Understanding into them than God and Nature ordain'd for them. For the Bulk of Mankind in any Nation, that is the Peasants, the Mechanicks, and the Rabble of Gentry, are not capable of Theism, that is of worshipping, without a sensible visible Mediator, a Spirit who fills infinite Space; or of being convinc'd of their Duty by Arguments form'd by right-

right Reason, and drawn from the Laws of Nature. The Bulk of Mankind are entirely sway'd by their Passions, and especially by those two pow'rful ones, Hope, and Fear, for which Reason all those fam'd Politicians, who have had the greatest Knowledge of Mankind, have advis'd the Rulers of Nations to govern them by those two Passions, *viz.* by the Hope of Reward, and by the Fear of Punishment; and here I cannot forbear reciting the memorable Words of the great Cardinal *Richlieu.* He begins the first Chapter of the second Part of his political Testament thus:

'Tis a common but true Saying, and therefore the more true, because it has been always in the Mouths and Minds of all Mankind, that Punishment and Reward are the two most important things to be observ'd in the Government of any State.

Nay 'tis most certain, that tho' no other Maxim should be made use of in the Government of States, than that of being inflexible in chastising those who disserve them, and religious in recompensing those who procure for them any considerable Advantage, they could not be ill govern'd; there being no Man whatever who is not capable of being kept within the Bounds of his Duty by Fear and by Hope

'Tis after the same manner that Religion works upon the Minds of Men. The Religion

ligion of the Old Teſtament ſpeaks ſtrongly to theſe two Paſſions, propoſing mighty temporal Rewards to thoſe who obſerve the Rules of it, and to thoſe who tranſgreſs them grievous temporal Puniſhments. The Religion of the New Teſtament ſpeaks much more pow'rfully to them, by cauſing Men to hope for everlaſting Happineſs, and dread eternal Miſery.

Now when the Generality of Mankind break looſe from that Hope and that Fear, they remain abſolutely without Religion, and are prepar'd to diſſemble themſelves of any that may gratify their Ambition, their Intereſt, or their Revenge; which was the Cauſe that in the two or three laſt Years of Queen *Anne*, ſo many cry'd out that they had rather turn Papiſts than be Preſbyterians. Now by declaring that they had rather be of a Religion which differs from us in Fundamentals, than of one which agrees with us in Doctrine, they ſeem'd to renounce all Chriſtianity.

'Tis for this Reaſon that ſome Perſons, who are call'd Whigs, by writing and encouraging Antichriſtian Books have ſhewn themſelves to be only nominal Whigs, but really and effectually Tories; for by endeavouring to root out the Chriſtian Religion in general from the Minds of Men, and by leaving them conſequently at Liberty to profeſs themſelves of any Branch of it for

their Interest; they have for thirty Years together been making their utmost Efforts for the bringing back Popery, Slavery and the Pretender; because during all that long Space of Time, they have been endeavouring, with all their Strength, and with all their Might, to remove the most invincible Obstacle to their Return.

Consonant to all that has been said above, is what *Machiavel* has declar'd in *Chap.* 12. *Lib.* 1. of his Discourses on *Livy*. He tells us in the Beginning of that Chapter, *That all States, whether Kingdoms or Republicks, which would keep themselves from Ruin, ought above all things whatever to preserve the Ceremonies of their Religion uncorrupted, and maintain it always venerable; for there is no greater Sign,* says he, *of a Country's going to Ruin, than to see in it the Contempt of divine Worship.* And a litttle lower he adds, *for this Reason the chief Magistrates of a Kingdom or Commonwealth ought to maintain the Grounds of the Religion they hold, and this being done, they shall easily keep their Commonwealth religious and consequently virtuous and united.* Which is a just and wise Observation of that fam'd Politician; for Faction, which naturally tends to the Dissolution of Governments, and even of the Constitutions of States, proceeds for the most part from a violent Desire of possessing the publick Offices, that

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Desire from Necessity, and that Necessity from Luxury, and Luxury and all manner of Vice and Corruption from a Decay of the publick Religion.

I have many things more to say to you upon this Occasion. But having already transgress'd the usual Bounds of a Letter, I shall reserve the rest to another Opportunity, which I hope shortly to have. In what I have to say, as well as in what I have said, I shall declare my Sentiments, not as a Bigot, but as a faithful Lover of my Countrey. There is no Man alive who is less a Friend to Priestcraft than my self, or to the temporal ambitious Designs of Priests: But I shall never endeavour to destroy Religion in order to hurt Priestcraft: I know the Balance of right Reason better, and am amaz'd at the Conduct of some Statesmen, who to shew themselves forsooth notable Metaphysicians, prove to all Men of common Sense, that they are very damn'd Politicians; for as has been said above, tho' Priestcraft may disturb a State, a general Decay of the publick Religion must utterly destroy it. And 'tis for this Reason that, in the tenth Chapter of the first Book of his Discourses, *Machiavel* has these remarkable Words: *Infamous are they, and execrable, who are the Perverters of Religion, the Overthrowers of Kingdoms and Commonwealths,* &c.

I am, SIR, &c.

TO

Sir RICHARD BLACKMORE.

SIR,

THE Approbation which you gave to my former, incourages me to proceed. I affirmed in that, that the Religion of every Country, the eſtabliſh'd ancient Religion, is the Baſis of the Conſtitution of that Country. I make no doubt but that if any Religion except the *Mahometan* were eſtabliſhed in *Turkey*, that abſolute Monarchy would be ſpeedily ruin'd. That mighty Empire will certainly decay, as the Influence of the *Mahometan* Religion grows weaker. But what is here affirm'd of Kingdoms and States in general, may be ſaid more particularly of Free States. Their Liberty and their Greatneſs equally depend upon the Influence of the Religion eſtabliſhed in them. When once the various Sects of Philoſophers at *Athens* had generally weaken'd the Influence which the *Græcian* Religion before had had on the Minds of the *Athenians*, they were no longer that brave and

that

that noble People who fought for the common Liberty of *Greece* at *Salamis* and at *Marathon*: They were no longer that great People who were all on fire with the Thirst of Glory, and were fonder of Liberty than of Life; the sordid Love of Gold took the Place in their Souls of those two noble Passions. And they who in the Days of *Miltiades* and *Themistocles* scorn'd to submit to the most formidable Power on Earth, as soon as their Philosophy had got the better of their Religion were ready to submit and betray their Countrey to a petty upstart Invader. If we look among the *Romans*, we shall find still more illustrious Proofs of the Influence that Religion has upon the Publick Welfare. *Machiavel* attributes all the Felicity of that State to the Religion established among them by *Numa, who finding*, says *Machiavel, a very fierce People, and being desirous to reduce them to civil Obedience by peaceable ways, applied himself to Religion, as a thing wholly necessary to preserve civil Society, and ordered it in such a manner, that for many Ages there was not such a Fear of God as in that Commonwealth, which facilitated much any Enterprize whatsoever, which either the Senate or those brave* Roman *Courages did undertake. Disc. on* Livy. Lib. 1. ch. 11. And a little lower in the same Chapter he adds, *If a Man considers well the* Roman *History,*

he shall find of how much Efficacy their Religion was for the commanding of Armies, for the reconciling the Senate and People, for the preserving good Men, and for mortifying the lewd. So that if we were to dispute to which of the two Princes Rome *was more oblig'd, to* Romulus *or* Numa, *I believe* Numa *would be preferred; for where Religion is, military Discipline is easily introduced; and where they have no Religion and are already warlike, this hardly follows.*

The Authority of *Machiavel* is so very great in political Matters, that I cannot forbear the quoting him once more in this very Chapter, who a little lower has these Words; *Wherefore having well consider'd all, I conclude, that the Religion introduced by* Numa, *was one of the principal Occasions of that City's Happiness, for that caus'd good Orders, good Orders brought good Fortune, and all the happy Successes of their Enterprizes; and as the Observance of Divine Worship occasions the Greatness of a Commonwealth, so the Contempt of it destroys it. For where the Fear of God is wanting, it must needs be that either that Kingdom goes to Ruine, or that it be supported by the Awe it stands in of the Prince, who may supply the Defects of Religion; and because Princes are but short-liv'd, that*

King-

Kingdom must needs have an End quickly, according as the Virtue thereof fails.

But now, Sir, if the Religion which *Numa* eſtabliſh'd among the *Romans*, was the principal Cauſe of the Felicity of that Commonwealth, I deſire to know whether any thing which had a direct and natural Tendency to the weakening and overturning that Religion, had not as direct and natural a Tendency to the weakening and deſtroying the Commonwealth. There are particularly three things in the *Roman* Religion, which ſeem to me to have had a peculiar Influence upon the Happineſs of that Commonwealth. The firſt is, the pretended Apparition of *Romulus* to *Proculus*, when he informed him of his Apotheoſis, and aſſur'd him, if his *Romans* applied themſelves to Arms, they ſhould become the Maſters of the Univerſe. Now as you know very well, Sir, that the *Romans* firmly believ'd this, what cou'd infuſe more Confidence and Spirit into them in their Battels than that Belief?

But, Sir, you know very well, that the ſecond thing which had a peculiar Influence upon the Felicity of the *Roman* Republick, was their Divinations by the Flight of Birds, the Entrails of Beaſts, and the pecking of Chickens, &c. *The Soothſayings*, ſays *Machiavel*, Ch. the 1ſt. Lib. the 1ſt. of his Diſcourſes, *were not only for*

the most part (as we have before observ'd) the Ground of the ancient Pagan Religion, but they were also the Occasion of the Roman *Republick's Welfare. For which Reason the* Romans *had more Regard to them than to any Order besides, and made use of them in their Consular Assemblies, in the Beginnings of their Enterprises, in drawing forth their Armies into the Field, in fighting of pitch'd Battels, and in any other important Action either Civil or Military. Nor ever would they undertake any Expedition till they had first assur'd the Soldiers that the Gods had promis'd them the Victory. For,* says he, at the end of this same Chapter, speaking of the Divination by the pecking of Chickens, *there was no other end of this manner of Soothsaying than to encourage the Soldiers to fight, for Boldness always wins the Victory.*

But, Sir, a third thing which more than any thing had an Influence upon the Felicity of that Commonwealth was what we find in the *Somnium Scipionis* of *Cicero. Sed, quo sis, Africane, alacrior ad tutandam Rempublicam, sic habeto: Omnibus qui patriam conservaverint, adjuverint, auxerint, certum esse in cœlo ac de finitum Locum, ubi beati, ævo sempiterno fruantur.* Is it not probable, Sir, that most of their great Actions proceeded from a Belief of this, or else that some of them were downright

Fanati-

Fanaticism? We find by *Dionysius Hallicarnassæus*, that the Belief of this was the chief Motive that determined *Vetturia*, the Mother of *Coriolanus*, to endeavour, among so many discouraging Circumstances, to prevail upon her Son to draw off his Army from the Walls of *Rome*, and not to destroy his Country.

If I carry back to Rome, says she to her Son, *the hope of a speedy Peace, if I return to it with the Assurance that you are reconciled to it, with what Transports of Joy shall I not be receiv'd by our Fellow Citizens? The small Remainder of time which I am predestin'd by the Gods to pass upon Earth, will be attended with unparallell'd Glory. And when the Gods put an end to my Life, my Happiness will have no end. And if it be true, that there are different Mansions doom'd for us after we are dead, I shall have no Reason to fear those dark and dismal Places prepared for the Souls of the wicked; even the* Elisian *Fields, those charming Retreats predestin'd for the Souls of the Just, will be too poor a Recompence to reward Desert like mine. After I shall have preserved* Rome, *this City so dear to* Jupiter, *I shall be encourag'd to expect a Place in that pure and sublime Region of the Air, which, we are told, is inhabited by the Children of Gods.*

These,

These, Sir, were the three Points of the *Roman* Religion, which had the greatest Influence on the Publick Success and the Prosperity of their Commonwealth. But when at length the *Græcian* Philosophy was brought into *Italy*, and the *Romans* began to think, what the Moderns call freely, *the System of* Epicurus, which most prevailed with the Men of Letters and the Men of Vanity, appear'd to be directly levell'd at the three forementioned Points of their Religion, and to have a direct Tendency to the rooting the Belief of them from the Minds of Men. For whereas the fundamental Maxim of *Epicurus*'s *System* is, that the Gods never in the least concern themselves about the Affairs of the World, they who receive it, must refuse all Credit to the Apparition of *Romulus* to *Proculus*, after the former's pretended Apotheosis. And whereas 'tis a Maxim of *Epicurus*, that the World is absolutely govern'd by Chance, and that the very Pretence to Divination is nothing but a solemn Foppery; this alone was sufficient to destroy the Influence of their Aruspicy and their Augury. And then, how is the Expectation of a blissful and a glorious distinguish'd Immortality, consistent with that third *Epicurean* Maxim, that the Soul dies with the Body?

Thus, Sir, did the Free-thinking of the *Romans* weaken their Belief of those Points of

of their Religion, which were the three principal Sources of their Virtue and their Magnanimity, and fatally prepar'd the way for unheard-of Luxury and all manner of Vice and Corruption. I know very well indeed that this Luxury and this Corruption is attributed by their Historians to their *Asiatick* Triumphs, and that fatal Security into which they were lull'd by the Destruction of *Carthage.* But let us consider the Words which one of them uses upon that Occasion. 'Tis *Velleius Paterculus* in the beginning of his second Book. *Potentiæ Romanorum prior Scipio viam aperuerat, Luxuriæ posterior aperuit. Quippe remoto Carthaginis metu, sublatâque imperii æmulâ, non gradu, sed præcipiti cursu, a virtute Descitum, ad vitia Transcursum; vetus Disciplina deserta, nova inducta; in somnum a vigiliis, ab armis ad voluptates, a negotiis in otium conversa civitas.*

You see, Sir, that the Historian here observes, that upon the Destruction of *Carthage,* the *Romans* did not pass gradually from Virtue to Vice, but took a Headlong Leap from the former to the latter. Now if 'tis truly said of particular Persons, that *Nemo repente fit turpissimus,* as I make no doubt but that it is very true, 'tis certainly more unquestionably true of a whole and a great People. If therefore the *Romans* upon the Destruction of *Carthage,* precipitately

pitately broke out into all manner of Vice and Corruption; there is no way in Nature to account for this but by truly affirming, that their Inclinations were debauch'd long before the Destruction of *Carthage*, and that the Ruin of that Rival City did nothing but take off that Restraint which had been upon them before; that their Principles of Religion and Virtue had been attack'd and weaken'd for a whole Century before, by the loose Philosophy of *Greece*, which had been introduced among them about the beginning of the *Carthaginian* War.

I could bring Instances from several other Kingdoms and States to shew the Influence which Religion has upon their good or their evil Fortune. But enough has been said upon a Subject of which the reasonable part of Mankind is satisfied, and especially all the great Men who have lived in every Age. For all the great Legislators who have been famous among the Nations for the wise Laws they established, have either been really religious, or have pretended to be so. *For never*, says *Machiavel, was there any Maker of extraordinary Laws in a Nation, who had not his Recourse to God, for otherwise his Laws had not been received. For several things that are good and expedient are known to a wise Man, which have not such Evidence in them-*

themselves, that he by Discourse can easily make others conceive them. Therefore, says he, *the wise Men who would get over this Difficulty, have Recourse to a God, so had* Lycurgus, *so* Solon, *so many others whose Design was the same with theirs.* All the great Founders of Kingdoms and States have been either really or appearingly religious. And therefore as Empire is maintain'd by the same Methods by which it was at first establish'd, there is no Precept that *Machiavel* instills with so much Care into the Prince of his Formation, as that he should at least appear religious; as any one may be satisfied, who has Recourse to the 13*th* Chapter of his Prince. All the Conquerors of the World have brought about their Designs by Religion. Ev'n *Cæsar* himself, tho' a manifest *Epicurean,* pretended to be of divine Extraction, and in order to animate his Souldiers by that Belief, the very Word which he gave at the decisive Battel of *Pharsalia* was *Venus Victrix.*

But as the Legislators, and Founders, and Conquerors of Empires have had Recourse to Religion for the establishing or encreasing their Empire; all the wise establish'd Princes that have ever reign'd, and all the great Ministers who have serv'd them, have thought Religion necessary for the preserving that Empire which had been at first establish'd by it.

Cardinal

Cardinal *Richlieu* in the beginning of the sixth Chapter of the first Part of his Political Testament, addresses himself thus to *Lewis* the 13*th*.

Dieu etant le Principe des toutes choses, le Souverain Maître des Rois, et celuy seul qui les fait regner heureusement, si la Devotion D. V. M. n'etoit connue de tout la Monde; je commencerois ce chapitre qui concerne sa Personne, en lui representant, que si elle ne suit les voluntes de son Createur, et ne se soumet a ses voix; elle ne doit point esperer de faire observer les siennes, ni de voir ses Sujets obeissans a ses Ordres.

And thus, Sir, have I endeavoour'd to shew that the respective Religion of ev'ry Country is the Basis of the Constitution of that Countrey, which as I have endeavour'd to prove by Reason in the former Letter, I have pretended to confirm it in this by infallible Experience and Matter of Fact, by the Authority of *Machiavel*, who is generally regarded as the Prince of Political Writers; by the Sentiments of wise Legislators, of the great Founders of Empires and great Conquerors; by the Practice of all wise establish'd Princes, and the Sentiments and Practice of all

all the great Miniſters, who have ſerv'd them. There is no manner of Occaſion to tell a Gentleman of your good Senſe, that by Religion, all along in theſe Letters, is meant not only reveal'd Religion, but the Religion eſtabliſhed in every Country: But I thought fit to give at leaſt a Hint of this for the Sake of others, into whoſe Hands this Letter may come.

And now, Sir, what ſhall we ſay of a certain Sett of Perſons, who for theſe laſt thirty Years have made it the ſole Buſineſs of their Lives, not only to ſhew all the World that they are irreligious themſelves, and vainly value themſelves upon it, but to endeavour to root out the eſtabliſh'd Religion from the Minds of others; and at the ſame Time to pretend that they do this for the publick Good, and to ſtrengthen the Revolution; which ſuch a Proceeding has a natural Tendency to deſtroy, as we ſhew'd in our former Letter. Some of theſe are the very Perſons who cry out with the greateſt Vehemence againſt thoſe who have been guilty of that deplorable Corruption, and that fatal Villany, which have almoſt undone a great and powerful Nation. And yet I pretend to ſhew in a third Letter that that prodigious Villany

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and Corruption is the necessary Consequence of their own Conversations and Writings, and the natural Effect of their undermining the Christian Religion.

Feb. 28. 1720.

I am, SIR, &c.

TO

TO

Sir RICHARD BLACKMORE.

SIR,

I Asserted in my two former Letters, that the establish'd Religion in ev'ry Country, is the Basis of the Constitution of that Country, and the Fountain of publick Morality. And I endeavour'd to prove that Assertion by Reason, by the Authority of the most allow'd Political Writers, and by constant Experience, and matter of Fact. I promis'd to shew in this third Letter, that the frequent Attacks that have been made for these lost forty Years upon the Christian Religion by Atheists, and Deists, have been the Cause of the present national Calamity, which is like to prove so fatal to us; in order to which give me leave to

 observe

obſerve that as the eſtabliſh'd Religion in every Country is the Baſis of the Conſtitution of that Country, ſo no Religion that ever was in the World ever made it ſo much its Deſign as the Chriſtian Religion does, to extirpate Avarice and all worldly Intereſt out of the Minds of Men. The Founder of this Religion has more than once declared that his Kingdom is not of this World, and that they who will be his Subjects, whoſe Hearts and Affections he abſolutely requires, muſt renounce the Prince of this World, and ev'ry thing that is his; and he has taken the utmoſt Care both by his Example, and by his Doctrine, to baniſh Avarice and all worldly Intereſt from the Minds of his Followers; for which Reaſon, his whole Life was one continu'd Example of a contented and willing Poverty. *The Foxes have Holes*, ſays he, *and the Birds of the Air have Neſts, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head. Matthew* Chap. 8. V. 20. He made this his principal Care in his Doctrine, and eſtabliſh'd his Religion upon this Foundation. *Mat.* 14. Chap. 14. V. 21. Jeſus *ſaid unto him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and ſell what thou haſt, and give to the Poor; and thou ſhalt have Treaſure in Heaven, and*

come

come and follow me. And when the young Man, to whom this was said, went away sorrowful, because he had great Possessions; *Jesus* said, *Ibid.* V. 26. *It is easier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle, than for a Rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of God.* That is, It is easier for a Camel to go thro' the Eye of a Needle, than for a Man who loves the Riches of this World to become a Subject of such a Soveraign of another World, as requires all his Affections.

The Apostles by their Lives gave the same Example that their Master did. *Matthew* 19. V. 23. *Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee.* As they gave the same Example, they preach'd the same Doctrine. St. *Paul* has declar'd Avarice to be Idolatry, that is, 'tis setting those Affections upon sordid Dirt, whose rightful Object is God alone. As the End of the Christian Religion is to restore Man to that blissful Immortality, from which the Fall degraded him; this can be done no other way than by restoring those Affections to God, which Man at his Fall withdrew from his Creator, and fix'd upon the Creature. And therefore the whole Tenour of the Christian Religion, the whole Spirit and Soul

Soul of it, declare this End aloud. The three Cardinal Virtues of this Religion are utterly incompatible with Avarice and Worldly-mindedness. 'Tis impossible but that any one who has a lively Faith, and a lively Hope in the Promise of a blissful Immortality, must set his Affections on things above, and not on things below; and as for the greatest of the three Virtues Charity, that and Avarice must be the very Contradictions of each other, in their Natures, their Designs, their Effects, and their very Terms.

I believe, Sir, that it is pretty plain, that where a Religion thus constituted flourishes, it must be attended with great Disinterestedness and with publick Virtue. When upon the Resurrection of *Jesus Christ* it was in its full Power, we read of the greatest Disinterestedness that ever was heard of, *Acts* the *4th*. And ev'n here among us when it was reduc'd to its first Principles upon the Reformation, there was a good deal of publick Virtue and publick Spirit, and there never has been so little publick Spirit among us, as since the Return of King *Charles* the Second, and never so fierce and frequent Attacks against the Christian Religion; and as those Attacks have been more frequent and more audacious within these last thirty Years, the national Virtue and publick Spirit

Spirit have declin'd proportionably, and Avarice and Corruption increas'd. And now they are arriv'd at their fatal Height, we find that they who are believ'd to be most guilty of them, are they who have been the great and the constant Favourers of those who made the Attacks.

But now, Sir, as I have shewn that the undermining the Christian Religion has had a natural Tendency to the weakning the national Virtue and the distressing the Government; what Acknowledgments shall we make to you who have been for so many Years a Champion for the establish'd Religion, and who by endeavouring all that lay in your single Power to stemm this Torrent of impolitick Impiety, have like a true Patriot been employ'd in the Service of your Country, and making a generous Effort for the restoring publick Virtue and publick Spirit. And as one of the noblest Branches of the publick Worship, by the Disadvantage of a barbarous Translation, lay but too much expos'd to the Scorn and Contempt of Libertines; you have bravely rescu'd it from that Oppression; and by giving us a new Translation confin'd to the old Tunes and Measures, (a Translation valuable to the Knowing, and intelligible to the Ignorant) have put it in our Power to establish an Uniformity of Praise in our Worship, as we have done of

Prayer.

Prayer. Whereas at present, one Parish differing from another in Psalmody, the Sojourner and the Traveller, when they occasionally come into our Churches, are but too often excluded from joyning in the most sublime Branch of our Worship. For Prayer is too often a poor self-interested thing in Comparison of Praise. For Prayer is too often the Effect of Fear and of a mean Opinion of the Deity, sometimes supposing him to be mutable, and sometimes unjust. But Praise proceeds from nobler Motives, and from nobler Passions; from a ravishing View of his Excellence, from Gratitude, from Admiration, from Joy divine and from Seraphick Love. Thus, Sir, have I sent you a simple Sketch of what I intended to say upon this Subject. For the Spirits will tire as well as the Limbs, and mine are already weary.

I am,

SIR,

Your, &c.

FINIS.