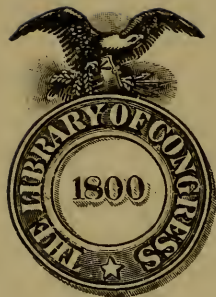


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From Basire's engraving of the painting by William Hogarth

Athenæum Press Series

SELECTED ESSAYS
OF
HENRY FIELDING

EDITED

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

GORDON HALL GEROULD, B.LITT. (OXON.)

PRECEPTOR OF ENGLISH IN PRINCETON
UNIVERSITY

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PREFACE

This selection of the essays of Henry Fielding is designed to introduce him as an essay writer rather than as a novelist. It is an attempt to show his mastery of prose style and vigorous thought, quite apart from his yet more extraordinary mastery of narrative. It may serve, I hope, to give a practical acquaintance with the man and his work to some readers who for reasons of youth, or distaste, or the force of tradition have not yet learned their Fielding in his novels. Some may be genuinely surprised to find these essays unexceptionable in delicacy, not unfit reading *virginibus puerisque*; though lovers of Fielding's art do not need to be told that his coarsest passages are less liable to do harm than much of the meretricious work that young misses and growing boys are nowadays permitted to read unblushingly and unthinkingly. This little book certainly contains nothing improper, and it has been made with the one idea of giving a representative selection of the essays. It contains by no means all of Fielding's work in this field, though perhaps the cream of it. In order to avoid the danger of scarpiness, the essays have been arranged not chronologically but with an attempt at logical sequence. Reference to the chronological list at the end of the volume will show instantly whence any given selection is taken.

The text is based on first or second editions in most cases, though Murphy's edition of 1762 has been used for the extracts from *The Covent-Garden Journal* and the *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*. Murphy's text of the *Works* has been reprinted over and over again by subsequent editors, though except

perhaps for the posthumous works it has no real authority. As a consequence, the current editions abound in readings that, to say the best for them, almost certainly were not Fielding's own. It has seemed to me better, therefore, as I have not had access to all the editions published in the author's lifetime and so have been unable to make a critical text, to give a reprint of some one specified edition in each case. Thus we can read the words as Fielding once wrote them in any case, which is better than reading what the careless Murphy chose to print, even if we miss a few changes made by the author himself. The only liberty I have taken with the text has been to modernize the capitalization. A very few omissions are indicated in the notes, and three or four words necessary for the sense have been supplied in brackets. Changed titles are also indicated by brackets. It is difficult to annotate Fielding without making the comment burdensome ; but I have tried to do it as briefly as is consistent with the proper elucidation of the text.

Grateful acknowledgment is due several friends and colleagues who have answered cheerfully the numerous questions propounded to them from time to time, to the general editors of the series, and also to Mr. W. C. Lane for permission to use the library of Harvard University.

G. H. G.

BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

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INTRODUCTION

I

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

“Our immortal Fielding,” wrote Gibbon,¹ “was of the younger branch of the Earls of Denbigh, who drew their origin from the Counts of Hapsburgh. The successors of Charles V may disdain their brethren of England: but the romance of *Tom Jones*, that exquisite picture of humour and manners, will outlive the palace of the Escorial and the imperial Eagle of Austria.” In contrast to the splendor of this panegyric may be set the circumstances of Fielding’s life. Like most citizens of the republic of letters, of which he wrote so pleasantly,² he knew early and well both struggle and disappointment. His descent from the houses of Hapsburgh and Denbigh did not save him from poverty or the consequences of his own reckless youth.

Undoubtedly Fielding was of excellent birth. He was the son of Edmund Fielding, a soldier who served under Marlborough and who rose before his death to the grade of major general. Edmund was the grandson of George, Earl of Desmond, who came to that title by a curious bargain made in his favor by his uncle, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, at the time when the earldom of Desmond was created.³ This George Fielding was the second son of the first Earl of Denbigh, so that the novelist was a scion of the cadet branch of

¹ *Miscellaneous Works*, I, 415.

² *The Covent-Garden Journal*, no. xxiii (see pp. 72-78 of this volume).

³ *The Dramatic Works of Sir William D’Avenant* (ed. Maidment and Logan), I, 311, 312.

that house. Edmund Fielding married for his first wife Sarah, daughter of Sir Henry Gould, Knt., of Sharpham Park, Somerset. It has been conjectured with some probability¹ that the match was a secret one. At all events, Sarah Fielding continued to live at Sharpham Park, and there on April 22, 1707, their first son, Henry, was born.

After the death of Sir Henry in 1710, Captain Fielding removed with his family to East Stour, Dorsetshire, where in November of the same year was born Sarah Fielding, who became the author of *David Simple* and numerous other works which were regarded by a rather limited circle as only less excellent than those of her illustrious brother. Of Henry's childhood, as is natural, we know next to nothing. For his early education he was intrusted to "a certain Mr. Oliver," who was probably the clergyman of a neighboring village. The unenviable portrait of Parson Trulliber in *Joseph Andrews* is said² to have been fashioned from recollections of this teacher; but whether or not such was the case there is no means of knowing.

In 1718 Mrs. Fielding died. It was shortly after this event, probably, that Henry was sent to Eton College. Of his career at school we are not better informed than of his childhood. Certainly he must have acquired there the knowledge of the classics which he was perhaps too fond of parading in later days. As certainly he made friends with at least two men who were to achieve distinction in public life,—George Lyttelton and Charles Hanbury, the former of whom became a statesman of acknowledged worth³ and the latter, as Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, a famous wit and a useful if not altogether reputable politician. From his later life we can imagine what

¹ Dobson, *Henry Fielding* (revised and enlarged ed.), 4.

² Murphy, *Essay on the Life and Genius of Henry Fielding, Esq.*

³ He was created Baron Lyttelton in 1756.

he was as a schoolboy, robust and lively, fully as much interested in sport as in study, and not averse to madcap pranks. Indeed, in *Tom Jones* he describes with the vigor of feeling recollection the "birchen altar" where he has sacrificed "with true *Spartan* devotion." How long he remained at Eton we do not know, but probably till he was seventeen or eighteen years of age. About this time, according to the most accurate of his biographers,¹ he fell desperately in love with a young lady of Dorsetshire and wooed her with an assiduity that was altogether displeasing to her friends. She was soon removed to another county, however; and the young man, apparently not long after, was sent off to Leyden.

Of his career at the University of Leyden little or nothing is known. It has usually been stated² that he studied law there under "the learned Vitriarius" and that he remained abroad until late in the year 1727 or the early part of 1728.³ According to the tradition, his return was finally hastened by the failure of remittances from his father.⁴ But an entry in the great register of the university, which has apparently been read very carelessly hitherto,⁵ gives us some definite information on this point. For the year 1728, "Rectore Johanne Wesselio,"⁶ in the list of students admitted "in membrum Academiae,"⁷ we read: "Mar. 16 Henricus Fielding Anglus. 20, L." This indicates that on March 16, 1728, Fielding was granted his degree by the Faculty of Letters, being then twenty years of age. As a matter of fact, he reached his majority in

¹ Dobson, p. 6.

³ Dobson, 12.

² Murphy, I, 11; Dobson, 11.

⁴ Dobson, 11.

⁵ Dobson states in a footnote, 12, that Peacock's *Index to English-speaking Students who have graduated at Leyden University*, 1883, p. 35, says that "Fielding's name occurs under date of 16 March, 1728"; but Peacock or Dobson failed to note the school.

⁶ *Album Studiosorum Academiae Lugduno Batavae*, MDLXXV-MDCCCLXXV.

⁷ vi.

the following month. This disposes of the old belief that he studied law at Leyden, for the Faculty of Letters was a part of the School of Liberal Arts. It likewise explains the reason for his return—he had finished his course of study. Unfortunately it does not explain all the chronological difficulties, since, as we shall soon see, his first play was produced in London a month before he took his degree. It is more probable, however, that the play was put on the stage before his return than that the degree was granted *in absentia*. In default of further evidence we may conclude that he went back to England soon after the 16th of March, 1728. That his literary activity was justified by the nature of his studies at the university is an interesting fact that follows from the notice quoted above. He had evidently already made literary plans and had tried his hand at satire and play writing before he took his plunge into the troubled waters of London.

Although his return to England cannot longer be regarded as due to the failure of remittances, the young author soon knew the pinch of poverty. His father made him an allowance of two hundred pounds a year, but he seems to have been singularly remiss about paying it.¹ Presumably the fact that about this time he married again² made him entirely unable to give his eldest son anything beyond occasional gifts. However that may be, here was young Fielding in London, robust and pleasure-loving, full of high spirits and fond of good clothes, good fare, and good society. To satisfy his wants he had to choose, in his own phrase, between the professions of “hackney-coachman and hackney-writer.” What so natural as that he should turn to the form of literature which then

¹ This allowance was continued during the following years, but, as Fielding once said, “anybody might pay it that would.”

² The most notable son of the marriage was John, later Sir John Fielding.

offered the greatest prospects of gain and reputation to an ambitious young man, and become a playwright?

There were at that time four theatres in London, which divided popular patronage among them,—the Opera House in the Haymarket, built by Van Brugh for a playhouse but subsequently the home of Italian opera ; the New-Theatre or French House in the Haymarket ; the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields which had long been in the hands of the Riches, father and son ; and finally the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. It was at the last-named house that Fielding's first comedy, *Love in Several Masques*, was produced during February, 1728. The play was well received, though somewhat eclipsed by Gay's *Beggar's Opera* which happened to be brought out at nearly the same time.

In spite of this measured success the young author did not immediately follow up the play with another. It was not till 1730 that he wrote a second comedy, and then probably because he was badly in debt and in urgent need of money. From this time, however, he was definitely wedded to the stage and wrote with the ardor which was characteristic of him to the day of his death. In the year 1730 alone he produced *The Temple Beau*, a double piece called *The Author's Farce and The Pleasures of the Town*, *The Coffee-House Politician*; or, *The Justice caught in his own Trap*, and the burlesque *Tom Thumb* in its first form. The first of these, like the earlier comedy, was an imitation of Congreve. The second, with its disregard for stage convention and its sharp satire of contemporary conditions, doubtless embodied much of Fielding's experience with literary men and publishers ; and it showed in clearer light the originality of conception which in later years, when he came to his own as a writer of essays and novels, shone so brilliantly. *The Coffee-House Politician* was a clever farce in the same vein, but *Tom Thumb* outdid both

and may be regarded without exaggeration as a masterpiece of burlesque. It was reproduced the following year in enlarged form as *The Tragedy of Tragedies; or, the Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great*. In the same year were brought out *The Letter Writers; or, A New Way to Keep a Wife at Home*, *The Grub-Street Opera*, and *The Lottery*. The overflowing high spirits of *Tom Thumb* and the brisk wit of the other pieces captured the town, and for the time being undoubtedly relieved their author from the pressure of want.

In 1732 Fielding produced four plays,—*The Modern Husband*, *The Debauchees; or, The Jesuit Caught*, *The Covent Garden Tragedy*, and an adaptation of Molière's *Médecin malgré lui* which he called *The Mock-Doctor; or, The Dumb Lady Cur'd*. Such a number of plays argues hasty and even careless writing; but they served their immediate purpose,—to fill Harry Fielding's yawning pockets. To them was added, early in 1733, *The Miser*, an adaptation of Molière's *L'Avare*, which replaced the earlier versions in English and was somewhat grudgingly praised by Voltaire. According to the old tradition, Fielding was so hard pressed for money during this year that he kept a theatrical booth at St. Bartholomew's Fair. This has been shown¹ to be a slander, due to the confusion of Henry Fielding with one Timothy Fielding, a second-rate actor who had a minor part in *The Miser* and was the proprietor of a booth at the great festival. Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence that in spite of his earnings as a playwright, Henry Fielding, the brilliant young scion of the house of Denbigh, led a kind of life at this time which was both precarious and unedifying. There is no use in burking the facts. He plunged into excesses which he repented in all sincerity² later on. He was both a rake and a spendthrift. He was also very lazy. A curious

¹ By F. Latreille, *Notes and Queries*, 1875, 5th series, III, 502.

² See, for example, *A Journey from this World to the Next*.

burlesque *Author's Will*, quoted by Mr. Austin Dobson,¹ shows that he was regarded by his contemporaries as guilty of both carelessness and haste :

“ I give and bequeath to my very *negligent* Friend *Henry Drama*, Esq., all my INDUSTRY. And whereas the World may think this an unnecessary Legacy, forasmuch as the said *Henry Drama*, Esq., brings on the Stage *four Pieces* every Season ; yet as such Pieces are always wrote with uncommon *Rapidity*, and during such fatal Intervals only as the *Stocks* have been on the *Fall*, this Legacy will be of use to him to revise and correct his Works. Furthermore, for fear the said *Henry Drama* should make an ill Use of the said *Industry*, and expend it all on a *Ballad*, it's my Will the said Legacy should be paid him by equal Portions, and as his Necessities may require.”

Quite to the same purport is the portrait in the anonymous *Seasonable Reproof*, 1735 :²

F—g, who *yesterday* appear'd so rough,
Clad in *coarse Frize*, and plaister'd down with *Snuff*,
See how his *Instant* gaudy Trappings shine ;
What *Play-house* Bard was ever seen so fine !
But this, not from his *Humour* flows, you'll say,
But mere *Necessity* ; — for last Night lay
In *Pawn*, the *Velvet* which he wears to-Day.

Yet there is no doubt that tradition has done him wrong, and that even his great admirer and disciple, Thackeray, did him wrong in his immortal sketch.³ At his worst Fielding was, after all, no common Grub-Street sot. He had the training and the instincts of a gentleman, added to which he possessed a mind of gigantic mold. It can be asserted with confidence that he never did a mean act or loved vice *qua* vice.

¹ 36, 37.

² Dobson, 35.

³ In *English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century*.

After a rather idle year Fielding produced early in 1734 *The Intriguing Chambermaid*, a comedy adapted from Regnard. This he followed by *Don Quixote in England*, which he had begun while yet at Leyden. The former he wrote for "the distressed actors in Drury Lane," who had been deserted by the Cibbers. Chiefly to ridicule the latter he also revived *The Author's Farce* (played with *The Intriguing Chambermaid*), and from this time he never ceased to make war on the bumptious poet laureate. Early in the year 1735 he produced two more plays at Drury Lane,—a farce called *The Virgin Unmasked* and a comedy, *The Universal Gallant*. The latter was an utter failure, and deservedly so.

To the spring of this year, when Fielding was in his twenty-eighth year, has been assigned his marriage to Miss Charlotte Cradock, a beauty of Salisbury, who is considered with some show of probability to have been the original of both Sophia Western and Amelia. The fact that he had been in love with her for some years previous to 1735¹ leads one to discount largely the stories of his wild life in London. From the descriptions in *Tom Jones* and *Amelia*, along with sufficient testimony by less interested parties, we know that Miss Cradock was a young woman of exceptionally fine character as well as beauty. The young couple retired to a small estate at East Stour, Dorset, which had perhaps² been bequeathed to the author by his mother, to come into his possession at marriage. In any case, the bride brought him £1500 as dowry, with which to establish himself as a gentleman farmer. The tales of his wild extravagance during the next few months are to some degree corroborated by the confessions of Captain Booth in *Amelia*, which are assumed to be autobiographical. There can be no doubt that he kept open house and lived beyond

¹ See the love poems in the *Miscellanies* of 1743.

² According to Murphy he received it at the death of his mother.

his means, though the story that he set up a coach with servants in yellow liveries has been shown by Sir Leslie Stephen¹ to be the result of confusion with the notorious Robert Feilding. Possibly, too, the remorse which he felt in later life for his early career may have led him to exaggerate the account of his misdoings found in *Amelia*. Certainly he was never a pusillanimous fool like Captain Booth.

Early in 1736 Fielding returned to London, still possessed of sufficient money to rent the so-called French Theatre in the Haymarket, which he opened with a group of actors styled the "Great Mogul's Company of Comedians." The first play which he presented was a burlesque of his own, entitled *Pasquin: a Dramatick Satire on the Times: being the Rehearsal of Two Plays, viz., a Comedy call'd the Election, and a Tragedy call'd the Life and Death of Common Sense*. This work, which was of the same class as *The Rehearsal* by Buckingham, Sprat, and Butler, had what was for that time an extraordinary run, continuing for "more than forty nights" and assuring the success of the company. The profits of the play to the author-manager must have been very considerable and must for the time have placed him in easy circumstances. He followed up his advantage by another dramatic satire entitled *The Historical Register for the Year 1736*; this had less vogue than *Pasquin* but attacked Sir Robert Walpole's ministry and political corruption generally with even more severity than did that piece. Troubles now began to collect about Fielding's head. The unbounded license of the stage was attracting the attention of the government; and efforts were made to restrain it. The history of the affair is obscure, but it seems that Giffard, the manager of Goodman's Fields, sold to Walpole a scurrilous play called *The Golden Rump*, portions

¹ See articles *Robert Feilding* and *Henry Fielding*, in *Dictionary of National Biography*.

of which the minister read in the House of Commons. There is no better evidence than Horace Walpole's tittle-tattle¹ to show that Fielding was in any way concerned with this piece, but his name was prominent in the discussion which it aroused. The upshot of the whole matter was that a new and very drastic licensing act received the royal assent on June 21, 1737. Meanwhile, early in the year, Fielding had brought out three hasty and inconsequential farces, one of which he printed with good-natured effrontery, "as it was d-mned at the Theatre-Royal in Drury Lane."

With the passage of the Licensing Act, Fielding's connection with the stage ended. He soon retired from the management of his theatre and wrote no more plays, though two early works were afterward produced, — *The Wedding Day*, 1743, and posthumously *The Good-Natured Man*, 1779. In November of 1737 he entered as a student of the Middle Temple and applied himself seriously to the study of law. How he supported himself during this period, where his family lived, and how he conducted himself, we have little knowledge, though a superfluity of gossip. The famous "wet towel" and "inked ruffles" with which he has been decorated by Thackeray² find their origin in stories about his life as a templar. At all events, he acquired a good knowledge of the law. Doubtless he may have done much anonymous writing during these years, and in November, 1739, he joined with an able hack writer, James Ralph, who attained the dignity of a couplet in *The Dunciad*, in founding a newspaper called the *Champion*, which was continued until the day before he was called to the bar on June 20, 1740. Fielding's contributions to this journal cannot uniformly be identified, and none of them is of much interest except for references to enemies like Cibber or friends like Hogarth.

¹ *Memoirs of the Last Ten Years of the Reign of George II*, I, 12.

² *English Humourists*, and *Pendennis*, chap. xxix.

As an advocate Fielding met with little success, though from this time to the end of his life he labored unremittingly to maintain his family and mend his fortunes. He joined the western circuit and is said to have attended the Wiltshire sessions with great regularity. Meanwhile, though he had forsworn periodical writing for the time, he occasionally appeared as an anonymous pamphleteer and poet. In November of 1740, however, appeared a work which was to furnish him the opportunity to show his great talent in its best vein. This was Richardson's *Pamela*. The mawkish sentimentalism of the novel both amused and disgusted Fielding. Perhaps its great vogue may also have piqued his robust intellect with something like envy of its author, for whom personally he had never anything but the profoundest contempt. Accordingly, he proceeded to write a parody, but a parody which in the course of its composition developed into a masterpiece of narrative art. In February, 1742, he published *The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews, and of his Friend Mr. Abraham Adams written in imitation of the Manner of Cervantes, author of Don Quixote*. According to the assignment to the publisher, Andrew Millar, which is preserved in the Forster Library at South Kensington, he received for the work £183 11s.

The book was well received, though its early popularity by no means equaled that of *Pamela*. A second edition was not called for till six months had passed. Yet it set all London agog and served the very useful purpose, apart from its own merits, of showing the author where lay his true field as a writer. Perhaps the only man who failed to recognize its merit was Richardson himself. I cannot refrain from quoting Mr. Austin Dobson's discussion of the matter :

“With Richardson, as might be expected, it was never popular at all, and to a great extent it is possible to sympathize with his annoyance. The daughter of his brain, whom

he had piloted through so many troubles, had grown to him more real than the daughters of his body, and to see her at the height of her fame made contemptible by what in one of his letters he terms 'lewd and ungenerous engraftment,' must have been a sore trial to his absorbed and self-conscious nature, and one which not all the consolations of his consistency of feminine flatterers — 'my ladies,' as the little man called them — could wholly alleviate. But it must be admitted that his subsequent attitude was neither judicious nor dignified. He pursued Fielding henceforth with steady depreciation, caught eagerly at any scandal respecting him, professed himself unable to perceive his genius, deplored his 'lowness' and comforted himself by reflecting that, if he pleased at all, it was because he had learned the art from *Pamela*." ¹

To all this Fielding made no retort, doubtless feeling that he had said all that was necessary and rather more than was courteous in the book itself.

In 1742 were published *A Full Vindication of the Duchess Dowager of Marlborough*, from Fielding's pen; the farce *Miss Lucy in Town*, in which he had some part; and a translation from Aristophanes entitled *Plutus, the God of Riches*, which he executed in collaboration with the Reverend William Young, who is supposed to have been the original of Parson Adams in *Joseph Andrews*. This last was the first of a series of works projected by the translators, which through lack of support went no further than one volume. This can scarcely be regretted.

Meanwhile, we know that infirmities had already begun to attack Fielding's vigorous frame. In the winter of 1742-1743 he had an attack of gout, and writes of himself ² as being laid up "with a favourite Child dying in one Bed, and my Wife in

¹ 117.

² Preface to *Miscellanies*.

a Condition very little better, on another, attended with other Circumstances, which served as very proper Decorations to such a Scene," The passage well illustrates the vicissitudes of his life,—the reference in the last clause doubtless being to bailiffs. Yet he was struggling on in his profession and at the same time writing copiously. Some time before the middle of 1743 were issued three volumes of *Miscellanies* by Henry Fielding, Esq. They were published by subscription and according to the estimate of Sir Leslie Stephen¹ must have yielded their author about £450. The list of subscribers included numerous representatives of the aristocracy of birth as well as of intellect. Nor were the volumes disappointing. Along with a good deal both in verse and prose that was the work of his early manhood and somewhat that was simply republished, there was included much new and valuable material. Of the more important works such as *An Essay on Conversation*, *A Journey from this World to the Next*, and *The History of the Life of the late Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great*, I shall have occasion to speak later. These three are of themselves sufficient to remove the *Miscellanies* from mediocrity.

Towards the end of the same year Fielding's wife died after a long illness. That she had remained loyally attached to him through the whole of a married life which had brought her much trouble and perhaps occasional privation, we cannot doubt any more than we can the faithful devotion of her somewhat difficult husband. After her death, according to Murphy, he was so broken-hearted that his friends feared lest he lose his reason. Of the children of this marriage we know the name of but one, Eleanor Harriot, who accompanied her father on that "voyage to Lisbon" which ended his life. A son and one or two daughters seem to have died while very young.

¹ *Dictionary of National Biography.*

During the next two years Fielding must have been engaged for the most part in the practice of his profession. In 1744 he published nothing except a preface to the second edition of his sister's *David Simple*, in which he took occasion to retract the promise which he had made in the preface to the *Miscellanies* to print nothing thenceforward except over his own signature, since in the face of it he had been subjected to the scandal of "putting forth anonymous work." This was doubtless a reference to a stupid and anonymous satire, the *Causidicade*, which had been attributed to him. In November, 1745, when the rebellion under the pretender Charles Edward broke out, he doubtless was thankful that he had made the declaration, for he once again became a journalist, this time in defense of the government. For about two years he wrote the periodical known as *The True Patriot*, and for nearly another,—till November, 1748,—*The Jacobite's Journal*. His papers in both of these were largely political and of no lasting value, but by means of them he had the opportunity of expressing his strong feelings and doubtless of gaining the livelihood which for some reason or other he never found at the bar. That he was called a "pension'd scribbler" for his pains was only natural and not of necessity at all discreditable.

Meanwhile, on the 27th of November, 1747,¹ he had married Mary Daniel, who had been his first wife's maid. Lady Louisa Stuart says of her: "The maid had few personal charms, but was an excellent creature, devotedly attached to her mistress, and almost broken-hearted for her loss. In the first agonies of his own grief, which approached to frenzy, he found no relief but from weeping along with her; nor solace, when a degree calmer, but in talking to her of the angel they mutually regretted. This made her his habitual confidential associate,

¹ The date was first discovered by Mr. Austin Dobson. See p. 157 of his biography.

and in process of time he began to think he could not give his children a tenderer mother, or secure for himself a more faithful housekeeper and nurse. At least this was what he told his friends; and it is certain that her conduct as his wife confirmed it, and fully justified his good opinion." To this account nothing need be added save that, according to Fielding's own statements, particularly in the *Voyage to Lisbon*, he never found reason to repent his choice. Of this union were born four children,—William, who became a barrister and magistrate; Allen, who became a clergyman and who cared for his mother in her old age;¹ and two daughters, one of whom died in infancy.

In December, 1748, through the interest of his lifelong friend Lyttelton with the Duke of Bedford, Fielding was appointed a justice of the peace for Westminster. He then took a house in Bow Street and a little later had the county of Middlesex added to his commission. In this office he labored very earnestly and to good purpose. Nor, we may be sure, did he find his position "humiliating" — to use good Sir Walter Scott's phrase with reference to a silly story² circulated by Horace Walpole — so long as he did his work honestly and well. To be sure, the magistrates of that time had brought themselves into disrepute by their corrupt practices, but so had most public officers for that matter. It was not a position of great dignity, but it offered a steady income, if not one sufficient for his lavish nature; and it made him independent of friends such as Lyttelton and Allen, who had undoubtedly given him much occasional pecuniary assistance hitherto. He was assisted in the duties of the office by his half-brother,

¹ She probably died at his house in Canterbury in 1802.

² Telling how two young sparks intruded on his private life, were treated with scant courtesy, and came away to spread tales of his squalid housekeeping.

John Fielding,¹ who, though blind from his birth, had acquired a legal education and was a man of parts.

Apparently for a considerable length of time before his appointment as justice Fielding had been engaged in the composition of a new novel. This was *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*. It was published by Andrew Millar on February 28, 1749, only two months after the author became a justice. The book had an immediate and immense success. So great, indeed, was its vogue that the publisher added one hundred pounds to the six hundred which he had originally agreed to pay. Even Richardson found that his devoted correspondents² were filled with rapt admiration for the masterpiece, though he himself continued to heap petty abuse on its author and apparently could not find time to read the book. This was in contrast to Fielding's reception of *Clarissa*, which he had good-naturedly puffed in the fifth number of *The Jacobite's Journal*. *Tom Jones* was dedicated to Lyttelton in a long panegyric which is supportable only because the gratitude which the writer expresses is unmistakably genuine. Nor could the modest Lyttelton have resented the public way in which his virtues were lauded, since thereby his name was linked to an acknowledged masterpiece. The verdict of that day has never been reversed. The novel has appeared in almost innumerable English editions and has been translated into most of the European languages.

In the somewhat limited leisure of his life as a justice Fielding now began a new novel, which was to be his last. On the 19th of December, 1751, Andrew Millar issued *Amelia*, though

¹ After Fielding's death his brother succeeded to his office, was knighted in 1761, and died in 1780. Unhappily, though he displayed remarkable energy, it is not clear that his conduct as magistrate was always above reproach.

² See letters in Dobson, 189 ff.

by anticipation the title-page was dated 1752. For this work the publisher paid £1000, but certainly lost no money by the venture since a second edition was called for on the day of publication. To admit that this extraordinary demand was stimulated by skillful advertising is merely to give due credit to the astute Millar. He is said to have refused the ordinary discount to his agents on the plea of the enormous demand for the work, thereby creating such a demand. The book was simply and briefly dedicated to Ralph Allen, Esq., whose regard for the author and material assistance to him were gratefully remembered. Samuel Johnson was only one of the people of discrimination who found the work absorbing. In spite of his preference for Richardson, "he read it through without stopping"¹ and pronounced *Amelia* "the most pleasing heroine of all the romances." The professional critics, to be sure, treated the novel rather harshly, but as usual their adverse comments had little influence on its popularity.

Almost immediately after the publication of *Amelia*, Fielding started a new biweekly paper, *The Covent-Garden Journal*, in which he assumed the title of Sir Alexander Drawcansir, Censor of Great Britain. Notwithstanding the increasing burdens of his office as magistrate and in spite of obstinate ill health,² he kept continually at work in his laudable endeavor to make a comfortable provision for his family against the time when he could no longer support them. Indeed, he may have foreseen that he was not destined to a long life. The new journal contained much of his best work in this kind of writing, a good deal for that matter which was above and outside journalism. It was as witty as his earlier ventures and much wiser. Here and there one can put his finger on a little essay and say,

¹ Boswell, April 12, 1776.

² An attack of "fever aggravated by gout" towards the end of 1749 for some time seemed likely to prove fatal.

“That is literature.” For Fielding, though only forty-five years of age, had become an old man and had acquired the mellow wisdom of old age without losing his good spirits or his literary skill. In *Amelia* he already shows this. As Mr. Austin Dobson says¹ in comparing the book with *Tom Jones*: “The robust and irresistible vitality, the full-veined delight of living, the energy of observation and strength of satire which characterize the one give place in the other to a calmer retrospection, a more compassionate humanity, a gentler and more benignant criticism of life.” Though in the conduct of *The Covent-Garden Journal* he was involved in several quarrels which he fought with customary vigor, his energy was waning. In the last number, issued in November, 1752, he took leave of his readers, saying with much gravity: “I solemnly declare that, unless in revising my former Works, I have at present no Intention to hold any further Correspondence with the gayer Muses.”

The fact was that he became increasingly engaged in his judicial duties and in publishing treatises on legal cases or plans for the promotion of public morality. In May, 1749, he was unanimously elected chairman of quarter sessions at Clerkenwell, and in the following month he delivered a very earnest and serious charge to the Westminster grand jury, which was regarded as a model of exposition. That same year — the year of *Tom Jones*, be it remembered — he published a pamphlet justifying the execution of Bosavern Penlez, a sailor who had been convicted of riot and plunder. In January, 1751, he distributed *An Enquiry into the Causes of the late Increase of Robbers*, in which after two years of experience on the bench he gravely discussed the prevalent vices of the time and proposed means of remedying them. He was especially earnest in his denunciation of gin drinking; and his efforts, together with his friend Hogarth’s terrible engraving of *Gin Lane*, were

¹ 212.

a potent factor in the passage of a "Bill for restricting the Sale of Spirituous Liquors," which was enacted in June of that year. The Fielding of that day was certainly far removed from the thoughtless young playwright of twenty years before, but he was no less whole-souled and far more useful. During 1752 he frequently advertised in *The Covent-Garden Journal*, requesting that notices of thefts and burglaries be sent him at his house in Bow Street. In April of the same year he published a curious little treatise entitled *Examples of the Interposition of Providence, in the Detection and Punishment of Murder*, which he distributed in his court with the evident intention of restraining crime. In January, 1753, he published *Proposals for Making an Effectual Provision for the Poor*, — an elaborate plan for the care of paupers, which shows careful thought, though it came to nothing. He now became involved in the case of Elizabeth Canning, a servant who was accused of murder and finally transported. London was divided into two parties by the matter, and Fielding, who believed in the innocence of the girl, published a pamphlet in her defense. Whether or not he was right does not particularly concern us, but the fact that he felt it his duty to write the pamphlet is of interest in studying his character. During all this time he was very active in the discharge of his judicial duties. In spite of the state of his health, we learn that in March, 1753, at four o'clock in the morning, he made a raid on a house in the Strand where he believed that some robbers were concealed.

As a matter of fact, his health was rapidly becoming worse. Against his old enemy, the gout, he fought a losing battle. He employed various physicians and a good many quack medicines without getting any permanent relief. In 1751¹ he had given a testimonial to the curative qualities of a spring which had been discovered near Glastonbury, but, we may suppose, was

¹ *Gentleman's Magazine* for September of that year.

not long deceived. In the *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* he himself has given us an account of his life from August, 1753, to within a couple of months of his death, which, because of its candor and display of kindly fortitude, needs little supplement or comment. After he "had taken the Duke of Portland's medicine, as it is called, near a year, the effects of which had been the carrying off the symptoms of a lingering imperfect gout," he was persuaded by his physicians to go immediately to Bath. Accordingly, he took lodgings there and was about to leave London when he was summoned by the Duke of Newcastle to advise with him concerning the suppression of murder and robbery. Though "fatigued almost to death with several long examinations," he put off his journey and threw himself into the work with accustomed energy. He submitted a plan to the Privy Council, the essential feature of which was the employment of an informer. After some delay this was approved. His "distemper was now turned to a deep jaundice, in which case the Bath waters" were "generally reputed to be almost infallible"; yet so great was his desire "of demolishing this gang of villains and cut-throats" that he gave up all thought of going to Bath and devoted himself during the following months to the problem. At the expense of infinite fatigue and increasing ill health he finally so far succeeded that during the dark months of the early winter "not only no such thing as a murder, but not even a street-robbery" took place in London. Thereupon he went into the country, probably to Fordhook, near Ealing, where he had a house.

Fielding was too honest to attribute his endeavors entirely to philanthropy, however, and freely acknowledged that he "rejoiced greatly in seeing an opportunity . . . of gaining such merit in the eye of the public" that if he died, his family might be provided for through gratitude. Indeed, his private affairs were involved, and he had begun to despair of leaving

them a competency, in spite of the returns of his later works and a pension from the government. Through his unwillingness to conform to the ordinary habits of contemporary justices, he had "reduced an income of about five hundred pounds a-year of the dirtiest money upon earth to little more than three hundred pounds." To a less extravagant and generous man his total earnings might have seemed ample, but they scarcely enabled him to live in comfort.

Meanwhile his gout and asthma, now combined with dropsy, were becoming more desperate. In February, 1754, he returned to town, where he was saved from immediate death by Dr. Ward, a quack of some skill. When spring finally came, after an unusually severe winter, he went back to Fordhook, where a reperusal of Bishop Berkeley's *Siris* induced him to try the famous tar water. This gave him some relief, but it was evident that he must seek a warmer climate. Accordingly, after some discussion, he finally set sail on June 26 for Lisbon, accompanied by his wife and eldest daughter. At this point begins the wonderful record of his last voyage, which he wrote day by day to relieve the tedium of his idle hours. Mr. Austin Dobson rightly calls¹ it "one of the most unfeigned and touching little tracts in our own or any other literature." He knew that he was dying, yet he endured the delays and fatigues of the embarkation and the positive discomforts of the voyage with the greatest kindness and good spirits. He laughs at the wonder of the captain, who could not understand his fortitude under the operation of tapping for dropsy, "that is attended with scarce any degree of pain." He is tenderly concerned for Mrs. Fielding's toothache. He draws with his inimitable hand the portrait of a disobliging landlady at Ryde and describes with gusto "the pleasantest and the merriest meal" in a barn at the same place. He discourses on the

¹ 236.

fish supply of London and the extortions of boatmen. Throughout he fills the pages with wisdom, pathos, and mellow wit. He arrived at Lisbon on August 13 and closed his record with these words:

“Here we regaled ourselves with a good supper for which we were as well charged as if the bill had been made on the Bath-road between Newbury and London.

“And now we could joyfully say,

Egressi optata Troes potiuntur arena.

Therefore, in the words of Horace,

—hic Finis chartaeque viaeque.”

Such it proved to be, for Henry Fielding died at Lisbon on October 8, 1754, and was buried in the English cemetery.

In judging the character of Fielding the man, if judge him we must, it is necessary to guard carefully against exaggeration. A man who lived so much in the space of forty-six years is peculiarly liable to misinterpretation, because now this side and now that of his vigorous personality is lighted up. Thackeray's portrait of him is worth quoting as being drawn by his most famous disciple and as embodying the traditional view:

“I cannot offer or hope to make a hero of Harry Fielding. Why hide his faults? Why conceal his weaknesses in a cloud of periphrases? Why not show, like him as he is, not robed in a marble toga, and draped and polished in an heroic attitude, but with inked ruffles, and claret-stains on his tarnished laced coat, and on his manly face the marks of good-fellowship, of illness, of kindness, of care, and wine. Stained as you see him, and worn by care and dissipation, that man retains some of the most precious and splendid human qualities and endowments. He has an admirable natural love of truth, the keenest instinctive antipathy to hypocrisy, the happiest satirical

gift of laughing it to scorn. His wit is wonderfully wise and detective ; it flashes upon a rogue and lightens up a rascal like a policeman's lantern. He is one of the manliest and kindest of human beings : in the midst of all his imperfections, he respects female innocence and infantine tenderness, as you would suppose such a great-hearted, courageous soul would respect and care for them. He could not be so brave, generous, truth-telling as he is, were he not infinitely merciful, pitiful, and tender. He will give any man his purse — he can't help kindness and profusion. He may have low tastes, but not a mean mind ; he admires with all his heart good and virtuous men, stoops to no flattery, bears no rancour, disdains all disloyal arts, does his public duty uprightly, is fondly loved by his family, and dies at his work.”¹

But is not the man who repents his disordered youth and toils earnestly to support his family by means of a laborious profession, who writes great novels and wise essays, and who in the face of physical decay gives himself heart and soul to the suppression of vice and the care of the poor, is not such a man, after all, something of a hero? At his worst he was never so bad as he has been pictured. In his vice he was never mean, and his hatred of hypocrisy is as manifest in his early satires as in his great novels. He never was prudent, it is true, and he learned wisdom in a bitter school. Yet he had all the larger virtues. He loved his family, was loyal to his friends and generous to his enemies, was fond of little children, and did his work manfully. To be sure, he would have laughed merrily at any characterization of himself as a hero, but what real hero would not? As Mr. Austin Dobson says :²

“ If any portrait of him is to be handed down to posterity, let it be the last rather than the first — not the Fielding of the green-room and the tavern, of Covent Garden frolics and

¹ *English Humourists.*

² 260, 261.

‘Modern conversations’; but the energetic magistrate, the tender husband and father, the kindly host of his poorer friends, the practical philanthropist, the patient and magnanimous hero of the *Voyage to Lisbon*.”

In person he was more than six feet in height, and exceptionally robust. In the *Champion* he refers to himself playfully as a “tall man” who refuses to part with “half his chin” at the request of Merçury. This is an allusion to his length of nose and chin, which were unusually pronounced, as is evident from the only authentic portrait which we have of him, a sketch made by his lifelong friend Hogarth, from memory, when a frontispiece was wanted for his collected works. This represents him at a time when he had lost his teeth and was in every way altered from the handsome youth who came to London in 1728. Yet the face of the picture is a striking one, with the fine forehead and rather deep-set eyes, the strong lines of the nose and jaw, and the faintly ironical curl of the short upper lip — the face of a man who, to quote the motto of *Tom Jones*, “saw the manners of many men.”¹

II

FIELDING’S WORKS

The dates and subjects of Fielding’s works have been mentioned briefly in the account of his life. It is necessary, however, to consider the more important ones in greater detail, to describe their contents, and to show how and where the author succeeded in reaching an achievement worthy of his powers. The fact that until he was thirty years of age he was known entirely as a poet and dramatist makes it natural to discuss first his efforts in these two directions.

¹ Horace, *Ars Poetica*, v, 142.

POEMS AND PLAYS

Though they were not published in collected form, and, indeed, though many of them never saw the light at all till the appearance of the three-volume *Miscellanies* in 1743, Fielding's poems were almost all the work of his early manhood. They are chiefly interesting from the fact of their authorship, possessing of themselves little intrinsic worth. Though sometimes graceful and almost always vivacious, they are of their time, the work of a young man who wrote verse in the prevailing style for the same reason, generally obscure, that causes most young men of literary tendency to turn poets for a little. He himself characterizes¹ the verses which he chose to print as "Productions of the Heart rather than of the Head." That being so, it is scarcely worth our while to examine them very closely or criticise them very severely. In his prologues and the occasional verses found in his plays he is happier, though this success was perhaps due rather to high spirits than to poetic inspiration. It was seldom that he compassed such a line as that which begins the hunting song in *Don Quixote in England*:

The dusky night rode down the sky.

With his plays the case is far different. All of them were hasty productions, to be sure, and some were as ephemeral as the work of the sorriest playwrights of the time; yet a few deserve reading for their own sake, and several cannot properly be neglected in any adequate account of Fielding's career. They are all satires, whether comedies, farces, or burlesques, for young Harry Fielding was not less alive to the follies of his kind — to say nothing of himself — than was the creator of Jonathan Wild and the despicable Captain Booth. These

¹ Preface to *Miscellanies*.

plays, it must be remembered, were the work of his early manhood, — of a time when he had neither found his proper field of work nor taken up the reins of self-government. They are full of high spirits, of slashing criticism, of broad humor, and of rollicking parody. They are marred by a hundred defects of carelessness, coarseness, and bad taste. Yet at their best — and their best is in burlesque — they are very good indeed. According to their kind and in the way of their kind, *Tom Thumb* and *Pasquin* have scarcely been excelled.

Fielding's first two plays, *Love in Several Masques* (1728) and *The Temple Beau* (1730), are nothing more than imitations of Van Brugh and Congreve, — pale reflections of that "comedy of manners" which was only excellent when polished of phrase and delicate of wit. Indeed, they bear more resemblance to the "wit-traps" of the laureate Colley Cibber than to *The Way of the World*. They show surprisingly little observation of life, even though one remembers that the author was not much past his majority.

The two plays next produced, however, evidence a decided advance in every way. These were *The Author's Farce* and *The Pleasures of the Town* (March, 1730), which together made up the bill at the Haymarket Theatre. The latter is described as a "puppet-show," — apt name for a clever farce which portrays and satirizes the pantomime makers and nostrum venders of the metropolis. The former piece, however, was the better and in its revised form will be described below. Similar in general character to these farces was *The Coffee-House Politician*, which appeared in the same year. As in most such pieces the whole interest of the reader — if not of the spectator — is absorbed by one figure, the tradesman who busies himself with matters that are too weighty for him, with ludicrous results.

It is a clear indication of the rapidity with which Fielding could turn out these satirical dramatic sketches — for the pieces above named are little more — that he was able in the same year to produce a play which was at once even less serious than they and yet his most important contribution to drama. I refer, of course, to *Tom Thumb the Great*. Its merit was at once recognized, indeed, and in the following year an altered form appeared. After having a successful run, this was published, with an admirable preface and notes by “H. Scriblerus Secundus,” one of those delightful pedants whom authors have been creating as foils to their own imaginations from the seventeenth century down to Scott and Lowell. If the writers of mock-heroic tragedy were well ridiculed in the text, the scholars of the day were as well laughed at in the annotations. In the preface, in praise of the “tragedy,” he says: “It hath, among other languages, been translated into Dutch, and celebrated with great applause at Amsterdam (where burlesque never came) by the title of Mynheer Vander Thumb, the burgomasters receiving it with that reverent and silent attention which becometh an audience at a deep tragedy.” Or witness his erudite remarks on the final scene, where all the important characters are successively killed: “No scene, I believe, ever received greater honours than this. It was applauded by several encores, a word very unusual in tragedy. And it was very difficult for the actors to escape without a second slaughter. This I take to be a lively assurance of that fine spirit of liberty which remains among us, and which Mr. Dryden, in his essay on Dramatick Poetry,¹ hath observed: ‘Whether custom,’ says he, ‘hath so formed them to fierceness, I know not; but they will scarcely suffer combats and other objects of horror to be taken from them.’

¹ *Of Dramatick Poesie, An Essay*, 1668. Fielding’s quotation is not altogether accurate, but it gives the sense of the passage.

And indeed I am for having them encouraged in this martial disposition; nor do I believe our victories over the French have been owing to anything more than to those bloody spectacles daily exhibited in our tragedies, of which the French stage is so intirely clear."

Yet the notes are but the sauce to the feast. For three acts of the most turgid blank verse, Tom Thumb, Lord Grizzle, the princess Huncamunca, and other fantastic creatures rage and rant in a fashion not very unlike that of the tragedies which the audiences of those days somehow found supportable. Their utterances, indeed, are for the most part excellent parodies of speeches found in the plays of Dryden, Lee, Otway, Rowe, "Jemmy" Thomson, and lesser lights of drama. The passages copied from these authors, or, as he puts it, the matter imitated by them from *Tom Thumb*, are carefully indicated by the excellent Scriblerus Secundus. So Grizzle cries out,

Oh! Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!

and we have the note: "This beautiful line, which ought, says Mr. W——,¹ to be written in gold, is imitated in the *New Sophonisba* :²

Oh! Sophonisba; Sophonisba, oh!"

So the giantess Huncamunca exclaims of the valiant dwarf, her lover :

Oh Tom Thumb! Tom Thumb! wherefore art thou Tom Thumb?
a parody of Otway's

Oh! Marius, Marius, wherefore art thou Marius?

It is interesting to note that, in spite of the fact that he was a lover of Shakespeare, Fielding apparently did not recognize that this verse, like most of *Marius*, was nothing but a solemn travesty of *Romeo and Juliet*.

¹ For Warburton.

² By Thomson.

One other example, which is a burlesque of the now forgotten "heroic" style rather than of the particular absurdity of any one passage, must suffice to illustrate the play. In Act III a ghost appears to King Arthur and among other deliverances remarks :

Thy subjects up in arms, by Grizzle led,
 Will, ere the rosy-finger'd morn shall ope
 The shutters of the sky, before the gate
 Of this thy royal palace, swarming spread.
 So have I seen the bees in clusters swarm,
 So have I seen the stars in frosty nights,
 So have I seen the sand in windy days,
 So have I seen the ghosts on Pluto's shore,
 So have I seen the flowers in spring arise,
 So have I seen the leaves in autumn fall,
 So have I seen the fruits in summer smile,
 So have I seen the snow in winter frown.

All in all, *Tom Thumb* has seldom been equaled in its way. It is certainly one of the best pieces of dramatic satire in English or, perhaps, in any language. It stands between *The Rehearsal* and Sheridan's *Critic* in point of time and is surpassed by neither in unfailing flow of spirits and what Fielding himself in another connection¹ called "surprizing absurdity." Such burlesque can perhaps best be written by young men, and the youthfulness of it adds to its charm. It is not the finest form of satire, it lays a somewhat heavy hand on its victims, it is both boisterous and obvious; but what man with any sense of humor can resist its wholesome current of fun?

Of Fielding's plays which appeared in 1732 and 1733,² only two need detain us, since all the others are quite unworthy of their author as well as objectionable according to any standard

¹ See remarks on burlesque in preface to *Joseph Andrews*, No. IV of this volume.

² See p. xiv.

of morality and art. The two exceptions are the adaptations from Molière, — *The Mock-Doctor* and *The Miser*. In the former he followed *Le Médecin malgré lui* fairly closely, though he added much to the dialogue as well as to the complications of the plot and changed the conclusion in order to avoid the romantic climax of the original. His rendering is spirited in every part, though it scarcely need be said that he lacks the delicate brilliancy of Molière's style. Yet the play well deserved the enthusiastic reception which it obtained; nor was *The Miser* a less successful adaptation. Here again Fielding caught the spirit of the French comedy and transferred it with little loss to the English stage. He was not a translator simply, but presented anew the clearly defined characters of the original, perhaps with the more ease because they were not of one nation nor of one time, but drawn broadly and without superfluous strokes. It is an interesting commentary on Fielding's career as a playwright that he never succeeded in writing regular comedy of any value except in these adaptations. He appreciated what was good in his predecessors but could not, or did not, fashion his original work on the same sound principles. Perhaps his immaturity prevented, perhaps the hasty composition to which his necessities drove him. Yet we cannot sincerely regret that he gave up the attempt to write comedy when he did, since in his novels he turned his ripened powers to a use as good.

The Author's Farce, which was revived in 1734 in the same bill as *The Intriguing Chambermaid*, — itself a lively adaptation from Regnard, made for Mrs. Clive, — is far and away the best of Fielding's efforts in this sort. Even now, when the personal satire which it contains has lost its point, it furnishes the reader with excellent entertainment. To some extent the farce is probably autobiographical, — the account of the adventures of a young author, Luckless, with two bailiffs, two

managers, a publisher, and his landlady. At least, Fielding undoubtedly had experiences which furnished him with material for it. The gay young writer in "laced clothes" who found friends more easily than money to pay his landlady, who was hounded by bailiffs, and who had to do with purveyors of machine-made literature, has all the superficial characteristics of the author himself. Marplay senior and his foppish son are copies of the two Cibbers, with whom for one reason or another Fielding was continually at war. Unjust though the sketches be, they are sufficiently amusing even now.

Marplay sen. Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. jun. What do you think of the play?

Mar. sen. It may be a very good one, for aught I know : but I am resolved, since the town will not receive any of mine, they shall have none from any other. I'll keep them to their old diet.

Mar. jun. But suppose they won't feed on 't?

Mar. sen. Then it shall be crammed down their throats.

Mar. jun. I wish, father, you would leave me that art for a legacy, since I am afraid I am like to have no other from you.

Mar. sen. 'T is buff, child, 't is buff — true Corinthian brass ; and, heaven be praised, tho' I have given thee no gold, I have given thee enough of that, which is the better inheritance of the two. Gold thou might'st have spent, but this is a lasting estate that will stick by thee all thy life.

Mar. jun. What shall be done with that farce which was damned last night?

Mar. sen. Give it them again to-morrow. I have told some persons of quality that it is a good thing, and I am resolved not to be in the wrong : let us see which will be weary first, the town of damning, or we of being damned.

Mar. jun. Rat the town, I say.

Mar. sen. That's a good boy ; and so say I : but, prithee, what didst thou do with the comedy which I gave thee t' other day, that I thought a good one?

Mar. jun. Did as you ordered me ; returned it to the author, and told him it would not do.

Mar. sen. You did well. If thou writest thyself, and that I know thou art very well qualified to do, it is thy interest to keep back all other authors of any merit, and be as forward to advance those of none.

Mar. jun. But I am a little afraid of writing ; for my writings, you know, have fared but ill hitherto.

Mar. sen. That is because thou hast a little mistaken the method of writing. The art of writing, boy, is the art of stealing old plays, by changing the name of the play, and new ones, by changing the name of the author.

Mar. jun. If it was not for these cursed hisses and catcalls —

Mar. sen. Harmless musick, child, very harmless musick, and what, when one is but well seasoned to it, has no effect at all : for my part, I have been used to them.

Mar. jun. Ay, and I have been used to them too, for that matter.

Mar. sen. And stood them bravely too. Idle young actors are fond of applause, but, take my word for it, a clap is a mighty silly, empty thing, and does no more good than a hiss ; and therefore, if any man loves hissing, he may have his three shillings worth at me whenever he pleases.

*Exeunt.*¹

The scenes in which Bookweight, the bookseller, appears are equally lively. He is a capital caricature of the unlettered and purely commercial publisher. With great good humor he is shown in his circle of hack writers, — Index, Scarecrow, Blot-page, and the rest, — whom he employs at starvation wages in his own shop, giving them as he says “good milk porridge, very often twice a day, which is good wholesome food and proper for students.” His interview with Scarecrow illustrates his method excellently.

¹ Act II, sc. ii.

Scarecrow. Sir, I have brought you a libel against the ministry.

Bookweight. Sir, I shall not take anything against them;— for I have two in the press already. *Aside.*

Scare. Then, sir, I have an Apology in defence of them.

Book. That I shall not meddle with neither; they don't sell so well.

Scare. I have a translation of Virgil's *Æneid*, with notes on it, if we can agree about the price.

Book. Why, what price would you have?

Scare. You shall read it first, otherwise how will you know the value?

Book. No, no, sir, I never deal that way — a poem is a poem, and a pamphlet a pamphlet with me. Give me a good handsome large volume, with a full promising title-page at the head of it, printed on a good paper and letter, the whole bound and gilt, and I'll warrant its selling. You have the common error of authors, who think people buy books to read. No, no, books are only bought to furnish libraries, as pictures and glasses, and beds and chairs, are for other rooms. Look ye, sir, I don't like your title-page: however, to oblige a young beginner, I don't care if I do print it at my own expence.

Scare. But pray, sir, at whose expence shall I eat?

Book. At whose? Why, at mine, sir, at mine. I am as great a friend to learning as the Dutch are to trade: no one can want bread with me who will earn it; therefore, sir, if you please to take your seat at my table, here will be everything necessary provided for you: good milk porridge, very often twice a day, which is good wholesome food and proper for students; a translator too is what I want at present, my last being in Newgate for shop-lifting. The rogue had a trick of translating out of the shops as well as the languages.

Scare. But I am afraid I am not qualified for a translator, for I understand no language but my own.

Book. What, and translate Virgil?

Scare. Alas! I translated him out of Dryden.

Book. Lay by your hat, sir — lay by your hat, and take your seat immediately. Not qualified! — thou art as well versed in thy trade as if thou hadst laboured in my garret these ten years. Let me tell you, friend, you will have more occasion for invention than learning here. You will be obliged to translate books out of all languages, especially French, that were never printed in any language whatsoever.

Scare. Your trade abounds in mysteries.

Book. The study of bookselling is as difficult as the law: and there are as many tricks in the one as the other. Sometimes we give a foreign name to our own labours, and sometimes we put our names to the labours of others. Then, as the lawyers have John-a-Nokes and Tom-a-Stiles, so we have Messieurs Moore near St. Paul's and Smith near the Royal Exchange.¹

Perhaps the best thing in the farce, however, is the portrait of Mrs. Moneywood, the landlady, who is nearly related to Mrs. Tow-wouse of *Joseph Andrews* and the keeper of the inn on the Bristol road in *Tom Jones*. Her regard for a laced coat and still more for a full purse, her irascible sordidness, and her frank animalism are depicted with the sure touch which was to distinguish the author's later efforts in the field of contemporary manners. Here again Fielding showed his capability of doing really sterling work within the limits of ordinary human nature.

The only other plays by Fielding that need detain us are *Don Quixote in England* (1734), *Pasquin* (1736), and *The Historical Register for the Year 1736*. The first of these was an early work, which he furbished up to help out the "distressed actors in Drury Lane" but finally produced at the Haymarket. It is chiefly interesting because it shows that Cervantes' masterpiece was already known to him and loved as genuinely as in later days when he owned his indebtedness

¹ Act II, sc. v.

to it in the formation of his narrative style. The farce itself possesses few dramatic qualities. The adventures, save the election scenes, are closely modeled on those in *Don Quixote*, and the characters, with the exception of Squire Badger, whom Mr. Austin Dobson calls¹ "a rudimentary Squire Western," are either adaptations or lay figures. *The Historical Register* also has only fortuitous interest, partly as the successor of *Pasquin*, partly from the consequences which the vigorous political satire of the piece brought upon Fielding.²

Pasquin itself is of more consequence and ranks with *The Author's Farce* and *Tom Thumb* as the most important of Fielding's dramatic works. Like *Tom Thumb* it is written in the manner of *The Rehearsal*, though it burlesques politicians as broadly as it does authors. The scheme of the play is as follows. Trapwit and Fustian undertake the preliminary rehearsals of their plays, respectively a comedy called *The Election* and a tragedy called *The Life and Death of Common Sense*, on the stage of the same theatre. The comedy occupies three acts and the tragedy two. The former describes a contested election in the country with much boldness and shows little consideration for either party, since though the candidates of the "country party" bribe more openly, those of the "court party" do so with better effect. The remarks of Trapwit and Fustian furnish a witty byplay and indicate that Fielding was well aware of his contemporaries' weakness in drama, if not of his own. With the conclusion of *The Election* begins the rehearsal of the tragedy, which details the strife between Queen Common Sense and Queen Ignorance, with the ultimate destruction of the former. As Fustian himself says:³ "I believe I may defy all the poets who have ever writ, or ever will write, to produce its equal: it is, sir, so crammed with drums and trumpets, thunder and lightning, battles and ghosts,

¹ 47.

² See p. xvii.

³ Act V, sc. i.

that I believe the audience will want no entertainment after it: it is as full of shew as Merlin's cave itself; and for wit — no rope-dancing or tumbling can come near it." The burlesque is not so purely literary as that of *Tom Thumb*, less boisterous indeed, but more pungent and more concerned with the faults of contemporary life. The dying soliloquy of Common Sense in the last scene, and the subsequent remarks of her slayer Firebrand, may serve to illustrate the play.

Queen Common Sense.

Oh, traitor! thou hast murder'd Common Sense.
 Fairwel, vain world! to Ignorance I give thee,
 Her leaden sceptre shall henceforward rule.
 Now, priest, indulge thy wild ambitious thoughts;
 Men shall embrace thy schemes, till thou hast drawn
 All worship from the Sun upon thyself:
 Henceforth all things shall topsy-turvy turn;
 Physick shall kill, and Law enslave the world;
 Cits shall turn beaus, and taste Italian songs,
 While courtiers are stock-jobbing in the city.
 Places requiring learning and great parts
 Henceforth shall all be hustled in a hat,
 And drawn by men deficient in them both.
 Statesmen — but oh! cold death will let me say
 No more — and you must guess *et cetera*.

Dies.

Firebrand.

She's gone! but ha! it may beseem me ill
 T' appear her murderer. I'll therefore lay
 This dagger by her side; and that will be
 Sufficient evidence, with a little money,
 To make the coroner's inquest find self-murder.
 I'll preach her funeral sermon, and deplore
 Her loss with tears, praise her with all my art.
 Good Ignorance will still believe it all.

Exit.

NOVELS

One is tempted to say that it was characteristic of Henry Fielding that he should have come into his literary heritage almost by chance. Whatever his merit as a writer of burlesque and of essays, it is first, last, and always as a novelist that he chiefly merits our honor. Yet his choice of the narrative form was not at all deliberate. When he began to write *Joseph Andrews* he certainly intended to produce nothing more than a parody of Richardson's *Pamela*, and though by the irresistible impulse of his genius he was carried far beyond the bounds of his original design, he never quite forgot his purpose. In the course of its composition he discovered the kingdom which he was to rule and announced as much in beginning *Tom Jones*.¹ That was all.

We can, I think, understand the attitude which he took toward Richardson's work if we remember the characters of the two men and the adulation with which *Pamela* was greeted. Samuel Richardson, excellent man, was little in many qualities of mind as well as in body. He lived a placid, rather humdrum life, attentive to his business as bookseller, gifted with marvelous powers of minute observation, finicky in private matters as in prose style, and compact of sensibility, to use the old phrase. Henry Fielding was his opposite in almost every particular. He was cast in a larger mold, was a man to give and to take hard knocks without flinching. He had seen at thirty-three years a good many ways of life, and within the bounds which he never tried to cross he knew human nature as thoroughly as man ever does. He was impatient of the restraints of his life, but thoroughly in love with life itself and the good material world. From his nature and training alike he was not very sensitive about the niceties of morals, though he had a fine

¹ See Book II, chap. i, No. V of this volume.

contempt for what was mean and, in spite of his early wrongdoing, for what was morally bad. He was tender without being sentimental, generous to a fault, brave to rashness, and as full of high spirits and humor as Richardson was deficient in those qualities.

On the publication of *Pamela* in November, 1740, he probably read the book, as did everybody else, — dukes and duchesses, maids and footmen. He heard the author praised as one of the great men of Europe, undoubtedly he heard of the complacency with which the little bookseller received the homage of devoted females, and he certainly was aware of his full-blown conceit. He must have been amused by all this, as well as somewhat disgusted. He appreciated the merits of Richardson's work, it is to be hoped, — his elaborate analysis of motives and his careful art; but he was moved to Jovian laughter by the mawkishness of it all, its conventionality and its essential untruthfulness.

So he conceived the idea of burlesquing *Pamela* as he had burlesqued degenerate tragedy. Though it cannot be believed that he felt the essential immorality of the novel as a man of more delicate constitution would have done, he struck at the heart of it by taking Pamela's brother as his hero and subjecting him to temptations similar to those which assailed the heroine of his model. Just when and how he made this plan we neither know nor greatly care. We can be reasonably sure that he went through with some such mental process, and we know that in February, 1742, *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews, and of his Friend Mr. Abraham Adams* was given to the world. In the course of the writing, to his great honor and to the eternal profit of English readers, he had far overstepped the limits of his original design, though I think that we should be wrong in saying that he ever abandoned it. Instead of composing a burlesque, as he intended, he made a novel, the first

novel of its kind, and some would say of any kind, in English. While he was ridiculing Richardson he was unable to resist the creator's impulse to clothe his puppets in flesh and blood and to breathe life into them. He must have done this knowingly, since he appended to the title of the published work, "written in the manner of Cervantes, author of Don Quixote," and in the author's preface expressly declared that he had written not burlesque but "comic romance."

Indeed, *Joseph Andrews* is much greater than its ostensible purpose and much more than a tentative venture into a new field of fiction. Though it has the faults natural to its method of composition, it is a masterly novel. The plot, to be sure, is simple. Joseph, a handsome young footman in the service of Lady Booby, incurs the displeasure of his mistress and her maid by resisting their advances. He sets out for the country, is robbed and beaten by highwaymen on the road, and at the inn whither he is taken, meets Mr. Adams, the curate of his parish, who after Joseph's recovery starts homeward in his company. Before their arrival they meet Fanny, Joseph's sweetheart, who had set out to relieve her lover on hearing of his misfortune. After encountering a good many adventures by the way, they arrive at their destination just as Lady Booby returns to Booby Hall. Thither comes Squire Booby with his bride, who is the supposed sister of Joseph. In a series of rapidly shifting scenes, however, it is discovered that in reality Fanny and Pamela are sisters, while Joseph is the son of Mr. Wilson, a gentleman whom Parson Adams had met on the road. Joseph and Fanny are married and settle on an estate near his father's, while Lady Booby consoles herself with the society of London.

Such is the bald outline of the novel, but the summary gives no notion whatever of its qualities. The reader is interested in the plot only in so far as it serves to illustrate the characters,

and he is grateful to the author for subordinating it. For here are men and women of several stations in life, each of whom has a well-marked individuality and each of whom lives in the memory as do persons whom one has met and known. They move and speak in such fashion that we cannot doubt their existence, but feel only gratitude that their personalities are shown by the masterly hand of their discoverer. They are realistically portrayed, to speak the language of criticism, but with such care in selection that the average reader understands them better than he does his own acquaintance. The hand of the artist is everywhere present but nowhere obtrusive. This, I take it, represents the highest triumph of the novelist's art as distinguished from the dramatist's,—the subjective presentation of living men and women.

The judgment of more than five generations has sustained the favorable verdict with which *Joseph Andrews* was received. The poet Gray, who did not like the book as a whole, wrote to his correspondent West, "Parson Adams is perfectly well ; so is Mrs. Slipslop, and the story of Wilson." Every one must agree with this, though most of us would add to the list of characters who are "perfectly well." The portrait of Adams is certainly the best thing in the book, and his name was very properly coupled with that of Joseph Andrews in the title. Whether or not Fielding copied him, with differences, from his friend, the Reverend William Young, he succeeded in creating what Mr. Dobson calls "a noble example of primitive goodness and practical Christianity." Adams is submitted to almost as many hard knocks as Don Quixote himself, but he retains his native dignity through everything. Full of queer contradictions, having the knowledge of a scholar with the simplicity of a child, forgetful of the most ordinary matters but keeping constantly in mind his honest purposes, the man is never laughable though his actions seldom fail to raise a smile. He wields his crab-tree

cudgel with the heartiest vigor, but he shows a higher kind of courage in combating Lady Booby at the risk of his twenty-three pounds per annum.

Joseph himself, in spite of the disabilities under which he labors as the counterpart of Pamela, is an interesting young man. As for that lady, though she plays only a small part in the story, she is as fully alive as in Richardson and does not suffer from the touch of satire with which she is treated, as when, for example, she comments on Joseph's sweetheart and her own position. "She was my equal, answered Pamela; but I am no longer Pamela Andrews; I am now this gentleman's lady, and, as such, above her. — I hope I shall never behave with an unbecoming pride: but, at the same time, I shall always endeavour to know myself, and question not the assistance of grace to that purpose." As for the rest, — the reformed Mr. Wilson, the clerical farmer Trulliber, Mrs. Slipslop, the landlady Mrs. Tow-ouse and her maid Betty, Mr. Adams, and Lady Booby, — he who knows them cannot fail to pay their creator the tribute of gratitude.

Nor is the book destitute of other merits. Throughout there is a constant flow of high spirits and rich humor. When we remember that it was written, as Fielding himself says, while his wife and child whom he tenderly loved were both dangerously ill and his affairs were in a desperate state, we realize somewhat the indomitable courage of the man and his natural fund of cheerfulness. Not a trace of care appears in the novel, though the author's personality is impressed on every page. The work is not perfect truly, — little can be said for the intrusive episodes of *The Unfortunate Jilt* and the long story of Wilson; but it shows in an excellent light the qualities of the first great English novelist, — his marvelous power of depicting men and women and his no less marvelous command of English prose.

Fielding's next¹ efforts in fiction were less ambitious, and, on the whole, less successful than *Joseph Andrews*. They were the *Journey from this World to the Next* and the *History of the Life of the late Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great*, which appeared in the *Miscellanies* of 1743. The former is a fragment, perhaps designedly so, but more probably a work which grew wearisome to the author. The introduction begins: "Whether the ensuing pages were really the dream of some very pious and holy person; or whether they were really written in the other world, and sent back to this, which is the opinion of many (though I think too much inclining to superstition); or lastly, whether, as infinitely the greatest part imagine, they were really the production of some choice inhabitant of New Bethlehem, is not necessary nor easy to determine." It is then recounted how the fragment was found in the hands of a bookseller in the Strand, who would take "no consideration farther than the payment of a small bill I owed him, which at that time he said he looked on as so much money given him." The work itself consists of twenty-five chapters of the first book and one of the nineteenth. It belongs with that long series of writings to which Lucian gave the impulse, a form still beloved in the eighteenth century though now out of favor. In spite of his love for Lucian this was hardly the kind of thing best suited to Fielding's talent. After the first ten chapters, with their whimsical satire and lively portrayal of souls on their way to the other world, the author enters upon a long-winded account of the transmigrations of Julian the Apostate and ends his book with a biography of Anne Boleyn. All of it is readable, but the latter part is singularly ineffective.

¹ Though it is possible that *Jonathan Wild*, like other works first printed in the *Miscellanies*, may be earlier than *Joseph Andrews*, there is no reason, in the lack of evidence, to consider them otherwise than in the published order.

This need not destroy our pleasure in the ironical descriptions of the newly liberated souls who still retain the passions and prejudices of their former state, in the quaint conceits which mark the chapters dealing with the allotment of fortunes to souls destined to live other lives on earth, and in the justice of the whimsical punishments imposed on the guilty by King Minos. Here we have Lord Scrape condemned to furnish all comers with money because he had been miserly ; a poet commended for a single kind deed rather than for his dramatic works ; the spirit of a poor man who had been hanged for stealing eighteenpence admitted to Elysium because he had ruined himself for his family and a friend ; and, not to prolong the list, a wise and witty scene in which certain famous authors discourse of things literary.

Jonathan Wild, the other narrative of the *Miscellanies*, is a far more important work. Indeed, in its way, it is well-nigh perfect. Taking as his text the career of a notorious rogue who was hanged in 1725, Fielding has depicted with savage satire "the Progress of a Rogue to the Gallows," constantly reminding the reader of the slight difference between this man's deeds and those of most great men of history. From beginning to end his satire never fails or even flags. Throughout, this thief, this monstrous embodiment of human selfishness and depravity, is commended for his elevation of spirit and the perfection of his villainy. His *greatness* is insisted on. He learns to steal, robs his associates in crime, organizes a band of thieves and murderers over whom he rules with unscrupulous tyranny, indulges his lust as he does his avarice with the coolest calculation, and ends his career on the gallows, — "a death," says the author, "which hath been alone wanting to complete the characters of several ancient and modern heroes, whose histories would then have been read with much greater pleasure by the wisest in all ages."

The book is not altogether a pleasant one to read. The irony is too searching, too unrelieved, too perfect. Many good people have shrunk from it with a shudder. The gentle soul of Sir Walter Scott apparently found the satire unbearable and spoke of the book as a "picture of complete vice, unrelieved by anything of human feeling." There can be no hesitation, however, in saying that Sir Walter's generous humanity caused him to overlook the fundamental conception of *Jonathan Wild*. Fielding was careful to say in his introductory chapter that greatness and goodness have often been confounded, "whereas no two things can possibly be more distinct from each other. For greatness consists in bringing all manner of mischief on mankind, and goodness in removing it from them." His whole attempt, then, is to shatter the towers of false greatness; not once is his artillery turned on virtue. The book is a "picture of complete vice" to be sure, but it is really instinct with human feeling, to turn Scott's phrase another way. The touching story of Heartfree, though it is made to fit the setting perfectly, furnishes a necessary contrast to the life of Wild. Without it the irony would perhaps be too unrelieved for any but the most sardonic moods. The shades are deep enough as it is. The narrative is certainly not *virginibus puerisque* nor for any one who is unable to distinguish the underlying difference between right and wrong, between virtue and success.

In turning from *Jonathan Wild* to *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* (1749), reader and critic alike must feel a sense of relief. The tension of the former work is almost too severe; the latter introduces us to a healthy, hearty world, where good as nearly balances evil as it does in real life, and where the only sins to be castigated are the fruits of animalism and hypocrisy. It is the legitimate successor of *Joseph Andrews* and greater than the earlier novel in a good many ways. By common consent it is regarded as Fielding's masterpiece, nor

is it likely to be cast down from that proud eminence. If he had written only this one book, Fielding would still be regarded as a member of that inner circle of novelists to which but few have attained. Here he shows his powers at their best, — his unflagging vigor of thought, imagination, and phrase, his splendid flow of satirical and vitalizing humor, and, in spite of certain critics like Dr. Johnson, who regarded Fielding as a ruffian, and Taine, who rather unamiably spoke of him as an “amiable buffalo,” his tender appreciation of the delicate shades of nobility and virtue. *Tom Jones* has the advantage of *Joseph Andrews* in its very clear and definite plan. It is more mature, though youthful in the same delightful way, more coherent, and more solid.

The novel, indeed, is constructed on a generous scale. It recounts the lives of the titular hero and his circle of acquaintance. Skillfully welded, they are unfolded to the reader in a complex series of events which for the most part are not of themselves very extraordinary but which never fail of interest. Tom Jones, the foundling, is informally adopted by Mr. Allworthy, a country gentleman of great wealth and goodness. He is educated with the son of his foster father's sister, young Blifil. His innocent and frolicsome boyhood is delightfully painted. Later, as the result partly of his own misconduct but more by the malice and treachery of Blifil, he is cast off by Allworthy, sets out from home with no definite purpose, and meets with many adventures on the roads of western England. Before this happens, however, he has fallen in love with the beautiful Sophia Western, the only daughter of a neighboring squire, and is beloved by her in turn. After his departure she is urged to marry Blifil against her will and flees from home with her maid, Mrs. Honour. There follows a complicated series of adventures in which most of the personages of the story are involved. Finally Sophia meets her cousin, Mrs. Fitz

Patrick, and goes with her to London, where she makes her home with Lady Bellaston. Thither Jones follows her and is involved in a new series of adventures which are creditable neither to his brain nor his morals, though he honestly tries to live righteously and to rescue Sophia from the clutches of her enemies, who number not only the despicable Lady Bellaston and a nobleman who wishes to marry her, but her aunt and her father, who speedily come to town. Thither also come Squire Allworthy and the villainous Blifil. Poor distressed Sophia is ground between the upper and nether millstones of the conflicting wishes of her relatives and her love for Jones. She believes her lover to be more guilty than he is and nearly succeeds in stifling her regard for him. He too meets with misfortunes, though not in proportion to his deserts, and is finally arrested on the charge of murdering a man in a street quarrel. From this he is released, partly through the efforts of various persons whom he has befriended and partly by the discovery of Blifil's unspeakable villainy, for that young man eventually overreaches himself. In the event Jones is proved to be the son of Allworthy's sister and is acknowledged as such at the very time when Blifil is disgraced. Sophia, in spite of resolutions of spinsterhood, forgives him readily — all too readily — and consents to an immediate marriage. The many characters of the story who stand in need of forgiveness are duly forgiven or disposed of by death or disappearance, while all those who have any claims to sympathy are rewarded with good fortune and happiness. So the curtain falls on a scene of domestic bliss in which the beautiful Sophia and the reformed Thomas Jones are the central figures.

As to the stupendous achievement of the novel there can be no question. Beyond all cavil it is supremely great. By the very might of its revelation of human nature it disarms criticism and tempts to the use of the superlative. Indeed, where

Gibbon and Scott and, with reservations, Thackeray have so indulged themselves, there is excuse for us. Yet for that reason the book needs no praise, but only the explanation of its virtues and the enumeration of its defects. The merit of it consists in the performance of what Fielding in his prefatory chapter promised to give the reader: "The provision then which we have here made is no other than HUMAN NATURE. — In like manner, the excellence of the mental entertainment consists less in the subject than in the author's skill in well dressing it up." In other words, *Tom Jones* is great because it pictures real men and women, and because its craftsmanship is marvelous.

As to the characters, the most various opinions have been expressed, though no one has yet arisen to say that they are not truly flesh and blood. Fielding, said Thackeray in his preface to *Pendennis*, was the last English novelist who was "permitted to depict to his utmost power a man"; and Fielding, we might add, has suffered from his frankness in painting certain characters and certain scenes which no right-thinking man can commend. In spite of stains upon their reputations, however, the men and women of *Tom Jones* are, almost without exception, gloriously alive. As for Tom himself, though by no means a hero in the conventional sense, he is a most interesting young person. His lack of moral stamina in conflict with his really excellent principles, his selfishness oddly mixed with extraordinary generosity, his cowardly weakness combined with vigorous manliness of body and soul, — all these things present that painful contrast which is always present to some degree in the undeveloped man. Pendennis and Richard Feverel have many of the same characteristics. From one point of view all three got more than they deserved, yet all three are in the main sound and good. Tom's bad qualities need not be condoned, nor should he be absolutely condemned. He became, one cannot doubt, a useful citizen, a faithful and unselfish husband, and

a good Christian. He was one of those scapegraces who repent sincerely and are spared by fate as far as the world can see.

The lovely Sophia is not less persuasive, while she gains the unreserved respect and sympathy of all who know her. What man ever read *Tom Jones* without becoming for the nonce her admirer? Times have changed, it is true, and our ideals of womanhood are not altogether those of Fielding's day. Most of us find Sophia excessively passive and absurdly plastic, but we are taken captive by her goodness and beauty all the same. She is vastly the superior of poor Tom in every way, and because she is the embodiment of the eternal virtues of womanhood she can never lose her freshness of appeal. That the author's first wife sat for the picture as well as for the portrait of Amelia is of no special importance to us — except as it makes us honor Henry Fielding — in view of the greater fact that the two are types of womankind such as the world could ill spare.

It is almost sacrilege to speak of Blifil after Sophia. Here, one cannot but feel, hatred of cant and hypocrisy carried Fielding too far. Blifil is too perfect a villain. He overacts the part and becomes a monster, — a thing to shudder at but not to believe in. On the other hand, we do not altogether believe in Mr. Allworthy because he is too good, or rather because his humanity is too thin. He is an excellent eulogy but not always a man. Of the other characters of this multiplex tableau it would not be profitable to speak at length. They are all living and breathing creatures, neither better nor worse than the average of their generation. Bluff Squire Western, stubborn, tyrannical, unspeakably foul-mouthed, yet not without redeeming traits, is probably but a composite of many country gentlemen. The sisters of the two squires, the one prim and not impeccable, the other obstinate and conceited, are as well done as their brothers. Mrs. Honour and the landladies

need no commendation, especially the excellent Mrs. Miller, who is a good and true woman though not very wise. As for Lady Bellaston, cynical and passionate, Mrs. Fitz Patrick, foolish and deceptive, let us, while we wonder at their creator's art, hope that such types do not exist to-day. Square and Thwackum, twin representatives of philosophy and piety, who are equally destitute of true religion; poor Partridge, immortal representative of masculine weakness; young Nightingale, as ready to give good advice and to follow the wrong path as Jones himself; the Seagrim family and Mrs. Waters — what other novel can show a wider range of perfectly individualized characters?

In *Tom Jones* Fielding has attained the maturity of his art. He handles his material with consummate skill, never allows the unessential to obtrude, yet wisely permits himself the utmost latitude of space in developing his theme. Such art is unhasting and unresting. The phrase fits the thought, the thought the situation, the situation the general plan. It is altogether probable that the author's early training as a playwright helped him to an easy mastery of narrative form. The very haste and profusion of his dramatic work must have given him an eye for situation and a nice sense for the arrangement of material. How to make such episodes as the *Man of the Hill's* story accord with this praise is difficult to see, to be sure. Indeed, in spite of the historical reasons for their introduction, allying the work with the Picaresque novel, one cannot help feeling that their insertion is a weakness. Yet the very fact that they have nothing to do with the plot and are easily skipped, renders them less obnoxious. Certain other faults which are inherent in the author rather than in the book can best be discussed in another connection. As a whole, *Tom Jones* is a picture of eighteenth-century life and manners drawn with unflinching vigor and unflinching insight, — so wonderful a

picture indeed that it transcends the limits of time and takes its place in universal literature.

It could scarcely be expected, perhaps, that Fielding's next novel should be in all ways so great as *Tom Jones*. *Amelia* was published less than two years after the work which, as he said in the dedication, represented "the labours of some years of my life." In that he had employed his experience of life — "all the wit and humour of which I am master," as he says — while *Amelia* was rather the deliberate product of eighteen months. Consequently it is less grandiose though scarcely less masterly, — more subdued though just as vigorous. It could not well be spared from the list of his works, because it shows certain sides of his talent which had not before found expression. It is more tender, more delicate in its appreciation of the finer shades of human nature than were the earlier novels. In short, it represents the ripe and mellow wisdom of a great man's full maturity, and even if not so packed with riches as *Tom Jones*, it shows a soberer realization of life and truth. The reason for this difference between two works so little separated in time has often been sought, but it is really no mystery. Henry Fielding's education was completed by his experiences as a police magistrate, of that there can be no doubt. He published *Tom Jones* only two months after his induction into the office; in *Amelia* for the first time he gave his new self expression. Thereafter he put his best efforts into the cause of righting wrong and helping the unfortunate. That he laughed at his own philanthropy made it no less valuable, and we like him the better because he did so. That he found no more time to write novels would be a cause for regret if he had not already run the gamut of experience and feeling so thoroughly in the series of works which culminated in *Amelia*.

The novel is well named, for in the heroine it centers and has life. The other characters, though a splendid company,

are but planetary. They come and go, but they interest us chiefly because of their relations to Amelia. That we find her husband, Lieutenant William Booth, in prison on a false charge in the beginning of the story, that he meets there Miss Mathews, a former acquaintance and a much-abused if erring woman, who is accused of murder, and that they tell each other their stories, interests us very much till the door is flung open and Amelia rushes into her husband's arms. From that time on her adventures — the alternation of joy and despair into which Booth's imprudence and misfortune bring her — are our chief concerns. She had made a runaway marriage with a penniless lieutenant, had followed him to Gibraltar on campaign, had been defrauded of her fortune by a sister, had suffered with her Booth when he experimented as a farmer, and now in London lived a most precarious life. That at the end of a series of new complications, in which she is pursued by a noble lord and harassed by the frequent imprisonment of her husband, she is restored to her fortune and is permitted to live the rest of her days in prosperity, gives us unalloyed satisfaction.

“To have invented Amelia,” says Thackeray,¹ “is not only a triumph of art, but it is a good action.” Like Sophia, she was modeled after Fielding's first wife, even to the unfortunate accident which rendered her nose more charming than it would have been if perfect. She is, nevertheless, highly individualized, — not merely a Sophia of maturer age, — which shows that the husband mixed his colors with imagination, to quote the familiar story. There is but one fault to find with Amelia. She carries her amiability towards her husband too far. Gentle Sophia was of sterner stuff and would have given her husband much less rope, I fancy, had he ever forgotten his duty as a husband and a reformed character. Yet in spite of this, Amelia is very human. In a memorable conversation which

¹ *English Humourists.*

she held with Mrs. Atkinson,¹ the latter said: “ ‘ Indeed, I believe the first wish of our whole sex is to be handsome.’ Here both the ladies fixed their eyes on the glass, and both smiled.” She can be very bitter, too, against her husband’s enemies. As for intellect, she is greatly the superior of Booth, though she reverences his gifts. Perhaps he was not altogether insensible of this. Certainly he never said a wiser thing than when he remarked² that “ she was the safest treasurer.”

Indeed, Captain Booth is a despicable weakling in spite of his handsome person and his bravery in the wars. Compared with him Tom Jones is a hero of the first magnitude. His truth to nature and his real love for his wife are the only redeeming features of the portrait. He is vain, he is imprudent, he lacks constancy and application. Probably no reader of the novel has ever forgiven him for allowing poor Amelia’s supper to grow cold while he was losing his money at a gaming table, not even when he gained her forgiveness by his abject repentance. He is a far less interesting figure than are the two colonels, Bath and James. The former, with his temper always cocked and primed against fancied insults, with his extraordinary mixture of bravado and real bravery, is something too theatrical; but he delights us all the same. His duel with Booth is a master stroke of pure comedy. James is no less interesting, though in a quieter way. He is thoroughly unprincipled, yet a very good gentleman in his feelings and actions. He would not do wrong except in his own interest, and he is not incapable of acting the part of a true friend when he cannot possibly gain anything by it.

Dr. Harrison, who is the *deus ex machina* throughout the story, is, like Allworthy in *Tom Jones*, rather too far removed from the turmoil of human life, though he gains in truth by his innocent vanity and liability to errors of judgment. He

¹ Book VII, chap. iii.

² Book XI, chap. viii.

persecutes and rescues the Booths with unfailing regularity whenever the plot takes a turn this way or that. Yet, all in all, he is a noble and lofty character without whom Fielding's gallery would not be complete. Indeed, it is a little strange that the novelist had such consummate power in drawing clergymen. Parson Adams is certainly the finest man that he created, and Dr. Harrison is far from the least successful. The shadowy peer, on the other hand, is not well done. The eighteenth century dearly loved a lord, but it could not picture one, at least nobody but Swift succeeded in doing so. Sergeant Atkinson is better executed, though he is scarcely so interesting as his learned and unfortunate wife. More interesting than either is Miss Mathews, who, like Letitia in *Jonathan Wild*, is a victim of circumstances. One wishes that she had come to an equally desirable end. The minor characters, Trent, the gambler Robinson, the keeper, Mrs. Ellison, and the rest, are all well done with that minute care and lavishness of creative energy which is characteristic of Fielding. Even the slightest sketches are individualized and never show haste or lack interest. Indeed, if *Amelia* can be said to surpass the earlier novels in any way, it is in the sympathy and appreciation which it shows for the finer distinctions of character.

In most respects, indeed, *Amelia* scarcely equals *Tom Jones*. It possesses less variety and at times almost drags, though one can hardly believe that Richardson was telling the truth when he said that he "could only get through the first volume," especially when we recall that Johnson sat up all night over it. As a matter of fact, it probably suffers from the author's growing interest in humanitarian affairs. There is a tendency to emphasize ideas and opinions at the expense of the story, — a course which almost invariably weakens a piece of fiction. Yet even so, *Amelia* is a great novel as well as a great book. It is both wise and good, full of the riches of observation and

experience no less than of imagination. Like all of Fielding's work, despite the coarse passages which we regret, it is thoroughly healthy and, to well-balanced and mature minds, thoroughly wholesome. Its wit is as sparkling as ever and its humor as captivating. It is vigorous, sane, well constructed, and written in the style which is and must be the despair of all but the chosen few, who are found only once or twice in a generation.

Though Fielding's last work, the *Voyage to Lisbon*, is not fiction, but only the record of a few months told without conscious art in the style of a journal, it cannot be ignored in any study of his narrative writings, since it shows him off his guard and furnishes almost unexampled proof of his genius. The contents of the book have already been sufficiently described, but a word may be said concerning the extraordinary power which it displays in the depiction of men and things. Leaving out of account the interest which it possesses as autobiography, it has qualities that give it a permanent and lofty place in literature. Every scene and every person described is vividly presented to the reader. There is no sign of effort, no suggestion of labor, yet the effects intended are accomplished as surely as in the most elaborate work. In the accommodation of simple means to a given purpose Fielding never did better, which is equivalent to saying that nobody else has done so. The captain was merely an accessory of the voyage, but he cannot be forgotten much more easily than Amelia herself.

“What a wonderful art!” exclaims Thackeray in beginning a very exclamatory but glorious appreciation of Fielding. “What an admirable gift of nature was it by which the author of these tales was endowed, and which enabled him to fix our interest, to waken our sympathy, to seize upon our credulity, so that we believe in his people — speculate gravely upon their faults or their excellencies, prefer this one or that, deplore

Jones's fondness for drink and play,¹ Booth's fondness for play and drink, and the unfortunate position of the wives of both gentlemen — love and admire those ladies with all our hearts, and talk about them as faithfully as if we had breakfasted with them this morning in their actual drawing-rooms, or should meet them this afternoon in the Park! What a genius! what a vigour! what a bright-eyed intelligence and observation! what a wholesome hatred for meanness and knavery! what a vast sympathy! what a cheerfulness! what a manly relish of life! what a love of human kind! what a poet is here! — watching, meditating, brooding, creating! What multitudes of truths has that man left behind him! What generations he has taught to laugh wisely and fairly! What scholars he has formed and accustomed to the exercise of thoughtful humour and the manly play of wit! What a courage he had! What a dauntless and constant cheerfulness of intellect, that burned bright and steady through all the storms of his life, and never deserted its last wreck! It is wonderful to think of the pains and misery which the man suffered; the pressure of want, illness, remorse which he endured; and that the writer was neither malignant nor melancholy, his view of truth never warped, and his generous human kindness never surrendered.”²

ESSAYS

Though Fielding's fame deservedly rests for the most part on his novels, they have overshadowed rather unfairly his essays and other discursive writings. Many biographers and critics have bewailed the precious time which he wasted as a journalist on

¹ It may be remarked that Jones is nowhere represented as indulging in play.

² *English Humourists*.

productions of only ephemeral value. Because he had almost unexampled power as an analyst and painter of humanity, there has been a natural tendency to lament that he did not give himself up entirely to such work, and a disposition to regard his labors in other fields as interesting only because they throw light on the development of the novelist. Yet at their best his essays are almost as wonderful in their way as his novels, and they deserve a higher place in the history of English discourse than has generally been assigned them. They show his style in all its simple beauty; they are full of wit and wisdom, quaint fancy and solid thought; they display the matchless vigor of idea and phrase which is Fielding's charm. Though they represent no such new departure in the field of letters as do the novels, they nevertheless entitle their author to an honorable place in the ranks of English essayists, along with Dryden, Steele, Addison, Christopher North, Lamb, and Macaulay.

They are singularly uneven, it is true, both in value and interest. Inevitably so, indeed, since they were written at various times and for many different purposes. They often betray the haste of their composition, as the novels never do, for many of them were composed to meet the demands of the hour in politics and social life, and — there can be no harm in adding — to supply their author with ready money. They are sometimes barren enough, — bits of journalistic writing that fulfilled their purpose and have no longer any excuse for being, save as they illustrate the career of a man of genius. The journalism of a great writer ought not to be allowed to rise up against his literary work, as is so often the case. Yet it must be remembered with regard to the most fugitive of Fielding's works that ideas which seem to us dreary commonplaces were often novel in his time, and so, historically speaking, they are of much greater interest than at first appears. We may be

excused for not reading these essays, but we should be careful not to cavil overmuch at their substance.

By far the greater part of Fielding's writing in the essay style was done for one or another of the four journals with which he was at different times connected. The success of the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* had made such series of papers very popular with writers as with readers. Consequently Fielding turned to it almost as a matter of course when he had quitted the stage and had not yet found means of support. In some ways he was well fitted for the task. He had learned how to turn a phrase and outline a situation by writing a long series of plays; at thirty-two years he had had as much experience with the vicissitudes of human life as most men have at twice that age; he was abundantly gifted with humor and the power of satire. So he might well feel assurance of success in such a venture when in 1739 he joined Ralph in the publication of the triweekly *Champion*. Yet for some reason, in this first series of papers he never did anything better than could be expected of a well-equipped journalist. The very fact that it is almost impossible to distinguish the numbers which he contributed from those of his collaborator, who was merely a moderately clever hack writer, is convincing proof that the *Champion* is best left to oblivion. Not but what it contains some things that have a good deal of interest and are unmistakably the work of Fielding's pen. There is much humor in the papers and a good deal of sense, but the form was not yet so familiar to him that he could turn off this taskwork easily. Perhaps, too, his severe studies in the law at this time temporarily exhausted his best energies and made the production of light-hearted essays peculiarly irksome. The journal is now chiefly interesting because here and there can be detected slight sketches of characters and ideas which he afterward used in maturer form in his novels.

His next venture in the same style was the *True Patriot*, which with its successor, the *Jacobite's Journal*, ran for about three years. Unlike the *Champion*, the main concern of these papers was with politics. The immediate occasion for beginning them was the Stuart rebellion of 1745; and when that occasion had passed they were continued in the interest of the Whigs. For this reason, though they are far better than the earlier series—it must be remembered that *Joseph Andrews* had already appeared—and though they do not leave the same feeling of taskwork unwillingly performed, they have scarcely greater permanent interest. They give a valuable picture of the state of the public mind at that time, and they have a vigorous play of humor, but they could not be seriously considered in a history of the English essay. It is interesting to note, however, that Parson Adams was revived and figures as a correspondent with all his familiar characteristics of body and mind.

Fielding's last journalistic effort, the *Covent-Garden Journal*, which ran through the greater part of the year 1752, was far more pleasing and valuable. By this time he had published both *Tom Jones* and *Amelia*, and he had acquired a mastery over language which must have made the task of writing very light. Indeed, it does not seem improbable that he looked upon the composition of the journal as a relaxation from his useful but rather mean and disagreeable duties as a police magistrate. Certainly he entered upon it with at least his customary zeal and, as Sir Alexander Drawcansir, proceeded to castigate the follies of his countrymen with as clear an eye and as steady a hand as in any of his satires. His interest in social reform is very marked, though his sketches show a broad sympathy and a good-natured humor which is characteristic of only his later years. Much of the work is ephemeral, of course, but the solid learning and delightful wit of some of it remain undimmed

after a century and a half have passed. Hypocrisy in its many guises comes in for its customary lashing at his hands, but other vices are not spared, while the good and the partly good receive their due meed of praise. A fund of learning, wide in range though not very deep, diversifies but does not burden the pages. Kindliness everywhere breathes from them, even when the sins of the age are held up to scorn. It is noticeable that many of the best essays have a literary flavor, as in No. 10 on reading, No. 23 on the monarchy of letters, and No. 31 on emendations of Shakespeare.

Of the essays printed in the *Miscellanies* of 1743, — *On Conversation*, *On the Knowledge of the Characters of Men*, *On Nothing*, and *Of the Remedy of Affliction for the Loss of our Friends*, — the first and the third are perhaps best worthy of remembrance, though all of them contain passages of much sense and genuine humor. That entitled *On the Knowledge of the Characters of Men* is, in reality, an unmeasured diatribe against Fielding's pet aversion, the vice of hypocrisy. Nowhere else does he lash the sin with such fullness of exposition, though he was always vigorous in his expression of contempt for it. Whether he was quite fair is open to doubt, but he had the best of intentions. It is impossible to believe, for example, that a man of his frank nature was so insensible to the advances of friendship as he advises his readers to be, yet the maxim is wise. Against the profession of censorious piety he becomes eloquent: "But, to say the truth; a sour, morose, ill-natured, censorious sanctity, never is, nor can be sincere. Is a readiness to despise, to hate, and to condemn, the temper of a Christian? Can he, who passes sentence on the souls of men with more delight and triumph than the devil can execute it, have the impudence to pretend himself the disciple of One who died for the sins of mankind? Is not such a sanctity the true mark of that hypocrisy, which in many places of Scripture,

and particularly in the twenty-third chapter of St. Matthew, is so bitterly inveighed against?" The man who should try to guide himself in his relations with his fellows by the rules laid down in this essay would doubtless find himself led into the most unjust actions; but that fact does not detract from its interest as a document for the study of the author's mind, which is its true value. The same may be said of the essay on the *Loss of Friends*, which reminds one of Parson Adams' discourse on the same subject in *Joseph Andrews*,¹ where the difficulty of practicing in contrast to preaching such philosophy is well illustrated when Adams hears of the supposed death of his little son.

The *Essay on Conversation* is, on the whole, a much more successful piece of work. The title scarcely indicates the scope of the essay, which is in reality a treatise on the essential nature of good breeding. It is both wise and witty, and can be read to-day with as much profit as in the eighteenth century. Good breeding he defines as "the art of pleasing, or contributing as much as possible to the ease and happiness of those with whom you converse." He illustrates his position by referring to the various situations in which man as a "social animal" is placed, and gives lively examples both of good and ill breeding in each case. The essay should be read to be appreciated, but the conclusions with which it ends may be quoted to show the gentle wisdom of its teaching.

"First, that every person who indulges his ill-nature or vanity, at the expence of others; and in introducing uneasiness, vexation, and confusion into society, however exalted or high-titled he may be, is thoroughly ill-bred.

"Secondly, that whoever, from the goodness of his disposition or understanding, endeavours to his utmost to cultivate the good-humour and happiness of others, and to contribute

¹ Book IV, chap. viii.

to the ease and comfort of all his acquaintance, however low in rank fortune may have placed him, or however clumsy he may be in his figure or demeanour, hath, in the truest sense of the word, a claim to good-breeding."

The wit of the essay is genuine and spontaneous. "With what envy," Fielding exclaims, "must a swine, or a much less voracious animal, be survey'd by a glutton!" In describing the duties of a host, he says: "Lastly; in placing your guests, regard is rather to be had to birth than fortune: for though purse-pride is forward enough to exalt itself, it bears a degradation with more secret comfort and ease than the former, as being more inwardly satisfied with itself, and less apprehensive of neglect or contempt." One is tempted to wonder whether the author himself had not felt the sting. Again, he argues with delightful gravity that if clothes are to be admitted as evidence of good breeding, a well-dressed monkey has an excellent chance of social success. Much of the comment in the essay seems a little trite to-day, perhaps, but such things have never been said with better grace or more lively humor.

The *Essay on Nothing*, as the name implies, is simply a bit of fooling, but it is rich in satire and contains many excellent observations. If the verbal quibbles grow a little tiresome to the reader, they are overbalanced by the dry sententiousness with which the essay abounds. To quote these things out of their setting would be an ungracious task, and it is entirely unnecessary since the whole can be read and appreciated with little effort — by an expenditure of time and energy which, as the author might have said, amounts to nothing.

We must now pass to the consideration of those essays which, though never hitherto published separately, form the most valuable contributions of Fielding to English discursive writing, namely the introductory and incidental disquisitions in *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*. Their interest and value

have never been denied by the discerning, though they have been too much neglected. In spite of the fact that in the French translation of *Tom Jones*, for example, they are entirely omitted, they are as necessary to the artistic unity of that novel as are most of the events narrated. Mr. Austin Dobson writes with full appreciation of this when he says of *Amelia*:¹ "The absence of the initial chapters, which gave so much variety to *Tom Jones*, tends to heighten the sense of impatience which, it must be confessed, occasionally creeps over the reader of *Amelia*." But it is not simply variety that is added to the novels by means of the essays, important as that is. Of even greater value is the opportunity which they afford the author of expressing with the greatest freedom his own personality and the principles of literary art which he followed. The usefulness of this in so subjective a form of literature as the novel of manners is not to be denied. Without clogging the progress of the story they enable the author to make those comments on life and art which connect the novel with the world of thought. In the excursions of some authors, where the comment is interspersed with the narrative, the reader is disagreeably reminded that the characters are but puppets after all. In Thackeray, though his remarks are always delightful of themselves, one sometimes feels this unpleasant sense of sudden transition from the world of imagination to the author's study. Fielding found a better way in *Tom Jones*. Accordingly he lavished upon these essays all the rich fund of his imagination and experience, warning² his successors, however, that they would adopt the same course at their peril. Indeed, a form which, as Henry Fielding confessed, cost him the "greatest pains" is not one to be adopted lightly by men of weaker brain.

¹ 212.

² Book IX, chap. i, No. IX of this volume.

Quite apart from the question of their value to the novel, the introductory chapters in *Tom Jones* and the discursive sections in Fielding's other works form a series of most delightful little essays, which show his genius in its best light. Their wisdom is so tempered with humor that though he professes¹ to be "laboriously dull," they are never wanting in the highest interest. Their good nature is so contagious that the most morose must feel its effect. They display the keenest insight into the secrets of mankind, yet never betray a tendency either to petty pessimism or equally cheap optimism. They deal lightly with trivial subjects, yet show the tempered wisdom and the Olympian outlook of their author. They are not without mannerisms of thought and style, but that is no reproach, since mannerisms are only despicable when adopted to cover a writer's nakedness. In few other authors can be found such a combination of high spirits with excellent sense and sound workmanship as in Fielding, and nothing in Fielding shows this combination to better advantage than these essays.

The subjects are most various. There are grave discourses on the style and conduct of fiction, not without an underplay of mockery that cautions the reader against taking things too seriously. There are satirical accounts of current literary fashions and of critics. Nice distinctions are drawn between "what is to be deemed plagiarism in a modern author and what is to be considered as lawful prize."² Authors are advised of the fact that they will do better for "having some knowledge of the subject" on which they write.³ Satire is continually used, but with such good humor and such generous appreciation of real worth that no one could properly feel hurt by the strictures made. Nowhere else in all Fielding's work is the

¹ Book V, chap. i, No. X of this volume.

² No. XIV of this volume.

³ No. XV of this volume.

dangerous weapon of irony more gently used or more surely. There is nothing savage in these mature reflections of a man of genius. Their temper is well illustrated by a fine passage in the introduction to the seventh book.¹

“Upon the whole then, the man of candour and of true understanding, is never hasty to condemn. He can censure an imperfection, or even a vice, without rage against the guilty party. In a word, they are the same folly, the same childishness, the same ill-breeding, and the same ill-nature, which raise all the clamours and uproars both in life, and on the stage. The worst of men generally have the words *rogue* and *villain* most in their mouths, as the lowest of all wretches are the aptest to cry out *low* in the pit.”

I shall not discuss the quality and scope of Fielding's literary essays further. The present volume gives an opportunity to read and judge them in a fairly representative selection; and careful reading, whether or not any formulated opinions are the result of it, is worth more than much criticism. Of his legal and philosophical treatises some account has been given in the first part of the introduction. They do not directly concern us here, though it may properly be said that, whatever their merits as discussions of the problems treated, they are written in a simple, clear, luminous style which might well be imitated by all writers on technical subjects. One could expect nothing else from the author of *Jonathan Wild* and *Tom Jones*, to be sure, but it is certainly unusual for men of such literary gifts to write legal reports. The case of Elizabeth Canning becomes truly interesting when recounted by the pen of the “father of the English novel.”

¹ No. XXIII of this volume.

III

FIELDING'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE AND HIS
PROSE STYLE

There can be no doubt that if Fielding had been asked to outline his philosophy of life, he would have made merry and have answered that to his knowledge he possessed no such commodity. No man was ever less self-conscious, less concerned with abstractions. He had a good many enemies in his time and was called several hard names, but he was never accused of being either a prig or a hypocrite. In that freedom from suspicion of cant he must have gloried, if he thought of it at all; but indeed, though his mind was trained to observation and gifted with intuitive perception of character, he was not at all introspective. He was exceptionally virile both mentally and physically, the kind of man that gives and takes hard knocks without flinching. Living as he did in the world of things rather than of feelings, he never elaborated for himself any system of thought or of ethics, but took life as he found it, sometimes unwisely but always bravely.

This leads us to a consideration of the morality of his work, —a question which cannot be ignored and which will not down. Indeed, it challenges discussion not only because it has been much debated but because it concerns the least squeamish of his readers. In the first place, he was healthy, and, as I have said, he was always brave. While in the first flush of his manhood he was led by these excellent qualities in their lower forms of animal vigor into the reckless indulgence of his appetites. He reflects this loose living in many of his plays, those which are unobjectionable being entirely unmoral, —ebullitions of high spirits or satires on such untruths of art or life as appeal to the healthy and rather thoughtless young man.

His political conscience seems first to have awaked, and he attacked the corruption of the day with unsparing hand. At about the same time, and very possibly as a result of his union with a virtuous woman whom he fervently loved, he seems to have experienced a genuine conversion in the best sense of the word. Thenceforward he was a moralist in all his writing and a lover of the good in his life, though in neither was he stainless. He had never been deliberately wicked; he had never been guilty of the sins of meanness; but like a good many other young men he had given way to the thoughtless and selfish lusts of the flesh, to the sins of extravagance and prodigality, of eating and drinking and making merry. In short, he had never been the villain that he has sometimes been pictured, — the ruffian that Richardson and Johnson thought him.

Yet he had to pay the penalty for his misdeeds, and he paid it in his art as well as in his life. He himself would have been the last to complain of this, though he furnishes sufficient evidence in his later works that he recognized the consequences of his sowing. Indeed, he paid dearly for his excesses. Not only did he weaken a constitution naturally very robust, but he wasted his little fortune and entangled his affairs to such an extent that all his later efforts — and he labored hard and well — were insufficient to provide properly for his family. More than that, he dulled his sensibilities by excess and coarsened his moral fiber. This he shows in all his work, in spite of the lofty genius and true feeling which characterize it. He describes with too much gusto the scenes of brutality which he introduces into his novels, and he shows too little disapproval for the moral lapses of his heroes. For indeed, this strain of coarseness is by no means confined to his treatment of the relations between men and women. The tender, brave, and good moralist of *Tom Jones* and *Amelia* could not see

that certain scenes of prison life, for example, were disgusting rather than amusing. If he had, he would have cut them out, since his manly art was not in any way designed to feed the taste of filth-loving readers.

If it be urged that the coarseness of Fielding's work is due to the time in which he lived, that the moral standards of the eighteenth century were not those of the twentieth, the answer is ready. Many of his contemporaries actually did regret the stains on his pages. The opinion of Richardson doesn't matter much, because Richardson was a vindictive enemy and in his own work showed a prurient sentimentalism which in its own way was worse than Fielding's frank portrayal of vice; but there is no doubt that Dr. Johnson, who was certainly not particularly squeamish, held the same view. The fine ladies and gentlemen of the time, to be sure, were no better than they should have been. The country gentry were sometimes Squire Westons and the parsons Trullibers. Yet the sounder members of society, the Squire Allworthys, the Atkinsons, the Joseph Andrewses if you will, could scarcely have regarded Tom Jones and Lady Bellaston with unmixed approval. There is this difference between Fielding's coarse descriptions and the scenes which his friend Hogarth painted, that the latter represents vice with such repulsiveness that each of his pictures and plates is obviously didactic, while the former describes it at times with ill-suppressed delight. The trend of his works, take them all in all, is as moral as it is healthy, but certain episodes in them come perilously near being vicious. This lack of moral refinement in a man whose principles and habits, as far as we know, were thoroughly good may be thought with good reason the harvest of the wild oats which he had recklessly sowed.

Yet we must be on our guard against overstatement, for it is not to the credit of any one to belong to the number of

Fielding's traducers. His love of good finds constant expression in his books. They are thoroughly healthy in purpose and method, and, I am convinced, far less likely to do harm to the immature mind than very many of the "problem" novels that are devoured to-day, a considerable number of which are written by women — to their shame be it said. Coleridge's summation of the matter in his discussion of *Tom Jones* may well be pondered by those who take the opposite view.

"Therefore this novel is, and, indeed, pretends to be, no exemplar of conduct. But, notwithstanding all this, I do loathe the cant which can recommend Pamela and Clarissa Harlowe as strictly moral, though they poison the imagination of the young with continued doses of *tinct. Lyttæ*, while Tom Jones is prohibited as loose. I do not speak of young women; — but a young man whose heart or feelings can be injured, or even his passions excited, by aught in this novel, is already thoroughly corrupt. There is a cheerful, sun-shiny, breezy spirit, that prevails everywhere, strongly contrasted with the close, hot, day-dreamy continuity of Richardson. Every indiscretion, every immoral act, of Tom Jones, (and it must be remembered that he is in every one taken by surprise — his inward principles remaining firm —) is so instantly punished by embarrassment and unanticipated evil consequences of his folly, that the reader's mind is not left for a moment to dwell or run riot on the criminal indulgence itself. In short, let the requisite allowance be made for the increased refinement of our manners, — and then I dare believe that no young man who consulted his heart and conscience only, without adverting to what the world would say — could rise from the perusal of Fielding's Tom Jones, Joseph Andrews, or Amelia, without feeling himself a better man; — at least, without an intense conviction that he could not be guilty of a base act."¹

¹ *Miscellaneous Notes on Books and Authors.*

This was the deliberate judgment of a man who was not inclined to mince matters when it came to plain speaking of any sort, and it is corroborated by the evidence of many good people who have read Fielding and dared to speak their minds. Take him for all in all, though he was of too broad an intellect to be a didactic moralist, he never went wrong on any of the great principles of morality. His art is based upon them, indeed, as any art must be which deals primarily with human beings in the relations of ordinary life. Though he had his limitations and never quite passed from the world of the partially obvious to the world of the universal, within his province he was supreme. He thus can endure no comparison with Shakespeare, even if the poetry of the latter be left out of account; but in a smaller way he had a similar comprehension of humanity and created men and women who, like Shakespeare's characters, are universal in that they are ever-living. By such means he was a teacher and a moralist.

There is no more striking characteristic of all Fielding's work than its cheerfulness. He has considerable kinship to Chaucer in his capacity for getting entertainment from the most unpromising materials. Though he lacked Chaucer's imagination, he had the same tolerance, the same quizzical good humor in picturing the follies of mankind, and the same bright touch of irony in treating serious events. An "amiable buffalo," one fancies, must at times become morose, but Fielding never loses his imperturbable good nature. Indeed, his work would lose much of its sense of reality did it not display this quality, since thereby it is consistently held down to solid facts.

This leads me to speak of the honesty of his work, not simply that negative and rather unintelligent honesty which consists in photographing scenes with fidelity to detail, but that higher form of the virtue which insists on being true to

the spirit as well as the letter of reality. He tells the truth with a smiling face and does not try to dodge the logic of a situation as he saw it. Blifil is seen to have a bad heart from the moment when he maliciously gives Sophia's bird its freedom, and Blifil is allowed to go his own way to perdition. Black George has stolen a small sum from Thomas Jones and struggles hard with fear in the hope that his conscience will let him keep the five hundred pounds, but he is mastered by his cowardice. So in the general conduct of the novels the same consistency is observable. They proceed steadily from start to finish. Given the conditions, the conclusions can scarcely be questioned. Very few novelists show an equal mastery of their materials, scarcely one the same generous and fair-minded spirit. Excluding the episodes, which can always be skipped, *Tom Jones* and *Amelia* are not loosely woven narratives in which a partial unity is secured by consistency in the portraiture of the leading characters. They move, slowly perhaps, but evenly, towards the final chapters. Accordingly, their claim to consideration on the score of technical excellence is scarcely to be disputed. As stories they are well conceived and well balanced.

"What a wonderful art!" exclaims Thackeray in the passage cited above. Indeed, it is a wonderful art, and in no way more so than in the medium employed. Fielding's mastery over English prose is only less extraordinary than his knowledge of human nature. His style has all the solid excellence of his method of marshaling events. It seldom glitters and glows, though there are few more eloquent passages in the language than the invocation at the beginning of the thirteenth book of *Tom Jones*.¹ In general it flows with an even current, clear, warm, and unlabored, ever and anon sparkling with wit, often quaintly satirical, but always adequate for the purpose in

¹ No. II of this volume.

hand. It never becomes pedestrian on the one hand and never tires the reader by over-indulgence in ornament and unbridled fancy on the other. This sobriety and balance is characteristic of Fielding's whole art, but it is not gained at the expense of qualities which are more vitalizing if not more essential to a good prose style. The happiness of phrase, the flash of wit, lead the reader from page to page. At times, as in the battle in the churchyard, we are treated to prodigious burlesque. Again, we find the heat of passion or the tenderness of strong affection faithfully reflected in scenes where phrase matches thought. The conversational tone employed so frequently is strengthened by a large and well-chosen vocabulary. The style is never without dignity. Indeed, perhaps its most obvious fault is a certain lack of suppleness, a tendency to use stiff constructions and sonorous words of Latin origin. It has not the academic grace of Addison's work on the one hand, nor the studied simplicity of Steele's on the other.

When submitted to the ultimate test, however,—its adaptation to the purpose for which it is used,—Fielding's style leaves little to be desired. It is vigorous, varied, and instinct with humor, it reflects the passing mood or the immediate design of the author, it is without affectation or display, it is altogether genuine. In all this it is thoroughly characteristic of Fielding himself, a man not without reproach, but tender, generous, warm-hearted, and manly all his days, and in his better years earnest, sober, and unselfish.

IV

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following list includes only such editions of Fielding's works as mark the constant esteem in which he has been held by readers since his own time, or as are readily accessible to-day. It includes only such biographical and critical works as the student or the general reader is likely to find useful. An exhaustive bibliography would be quite beyond the scope of the present volume.

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SELECTED ESSAYS OF FIELDING

I

OF PROLOGUES

I have heard of a dramatic writer who used to say, he would rather write a play than a prologue; in like manner, I think, I can with less pains write one of the books of this history, than the prefatory chapter to each of them.

To say the truth, I believe many a hearty curse hath been 5 devoted on the head of that author, who first instituted the method of prefixing to his play that portion of matter which is called the prologue; and which at first was part of the piece itself, but of latter years hath had usually so little connexion with the drama before which it stands, that the pro- 10-logue to one play might as well serve for any other. Those indeed of more modern date, seem all to be written on the same three topics, *viz.* an abuse of the taste of the town, a condemnation of all contemporary authors, and an elogium on the performance just about to be represented. The sentiments in 15 all these are very little varied, nor is it possible they should; and indeed I have often wondered at the great invention of authors, who have been capable of finding such various phrases to express the same thing.

In like manner I apprehend, some future historian (if any 20 one shall do me the honour of imitating my manner) will, after much scratching his pate, bestow some good wishes on my memory, for having first established these several initial chapters; most of which, like modern prologues, may as properly

be prefixed to any other book in this history as to that which they introduce, or indeed to any other history as to this.

But however authors may suffer by either of these inventions, the reader will find sufficient emolument in the one, as
5 the spectator hath long found in the other.

First, it is well known, that the prologue serves the critic for an opportunity to try his faculty of hissing, and to tune his cat-call to the best advantage; by which means, I have known those musical instruments so well prepared, that they
10 have been able to play in full concert at the first rising of the curtain.

The same advantages may be drawn from these chapters, in which the critic will be always sure of meeting with something that may serve as a whetstone to his noble spirit; so that he
15 may fall with a more hungry appetite for censure on the history itself. And here his sagacity must make it needless to observe how artfully these chapters are calculated for that excellent purpose; for in these we have always taken care to intersperse somewhat of the sour or acid kind, in order to
20 sharpen and stimulate the said spirit of criticism.

Again, the indolent reader, as well as spectator, finds great advantage from both these; for as they are not obliged either to see the one or read the others, and both the play and the book are thus protracted, by the former they have a quarter
25 of an hour longer allowed them to sit at dinner, and by the latter they have the advantage of beginning to read at the fourth or fifth page instead of the first; a matter by no means of trivial consequence to persons who read books with no other view than to say they have read them, a more general
30 motive to reading than is commonly imagined; and from which not only law books, and good books, but the pages of *Homer* and *Virgil*, of *Swift* and *Cervantes* have been often turned over.

Many other are the emoluments which arise from both these, but they are for the most part so obvious that we shall not at present stay to enumerate them ; especially since it occurs to us that the principal merit of both the prologue and the preface is that they be short.

5

II

AN INVOCATION

Come, bright love of fame, inspire my glowing breast: not thee I call, who, over swelling tides of blood and tears, dost bear the hero on to glory, while sighs of millions waft his spreading sails ; but thee, fair, gentle maid, whom *Mnesis*, happy nymph, first on the banks of Hebrus didst produce. 10 Thee, whom Mæonia educated, whom Mantua charm'd, and who, on that fair hill which overlooks the proud metropolis of Britain, sat, with thy *Milton*, sweetly tuning the heroic lyre ; fill my ravished fancy with the hopes of charming ages yet to come. Foretel me that some tender maid, whose grandmother 15 is yet unborn, hereafter, when, under the fictitious name of *Sophia*, she reads the real worth which once existed in my *Charlotte*, shall, from her sympathetic breast send forth the heaving sigh. Do thou teach me not only to foresee, but to enjoy, nay, even to feed on future praise. Comfort me by a 20 solemn assurance that when the little parlour in which I sit at this instant, shall be reduced to a worse furnished box, I shall be read, with honour, by those who never knew nor saw me, and whom I shall neither know nor see.

And thou, much plumper dame, whom no airy forms nor 25 phantoms of imagination clothe : whom the well-seasoned beef, and pudding richly stained with plumbs, delight. Thee, I call ; of whom in a *trachtchugt* in some Dutch canal the fat ufrow gelt, impregnated by a jolly merchant of Amsterdam,

was delivered: in *Grubstreet*-school didst thou suck in the elements of thy erudition. Here hast thou, in thy maturer age, taught poetry to tickle not the fancy, but the pride of the patron. Comedy from thee learns a grave and solemn air; 5 while tragedy storms loud, and rends th' affrighted theatres with its thunder. To sooth thy wearied limbs in slumber, Alderman History tells his tedious tale; and again to awaken thee, Monsieur Romance performs his surprizing tricks of dexterity. Nor less thy well-fed book seller obeys thy influence. By thy 10 advice the heavy, unread, folio lump, which long had dozed on the dusty shelf, piece-mealed into numbers, runs nimbly through the nation. Instructed by thee some books, like quacks, impose on the world by promising wonders; while others turn beaus, and trust all their merits to a gilded outside. 15 Come, thou jolly substance, with thy shining face, keep back thy inspiration, but hold forth thy tempting rewards; thy shining, chinking heap; thy quickly-convertible bank-bill, big with unseen riches; thy often-varying stock; the warm, the comfortable house; and, lastly, a fair portion of that bounteous 20 mother, whose flowing breasts yield redundant sustenance for all her numerous offspring, did not some too greedily and wantonly drive their brethren from the teat. Come thou, and if I am too tasteless of thy valuable treasures, warm my heart with the transporting thought of conveying them to others. 25 Tell me, that through thy bounty, the prattling babes, whose innocent play hath often been interrupted by my labours, may one time be amply rewarded for them.

And now this ill-yoked pair, this lean shadow and this fat substance, have prompted me to write, whose assistance shall 30 I invoke to direct my pen?

First, genius; thou gift of heaven; without whose aid, in vain we struggle against the stream of nature. Thou, who dost sow the generous seeds which art nourishes, and brings to

perfection. Do thou kindly take me by the hand, and lead me through all the mazes, the winding labyrinths of nature. Initiate me into all those mysteries which profane eyes never beheld. Teach me, which to thee is no difficult task, to know mankind better than they know themselves. Remove that mist 5 which dims the intellects of mortals, and causes them to adore men for their art, or to detest them for their cunning in deceiving others, when they are, in reality, the objects only of ridicule, for deceiving themselves. Strip off the thin disguise of wisdom from self-conceit, of plenty from avarice, and of glory from 10 ambition. Come thou, that hast inspired thy *Aristophanes*, thy *Lucian*, thy *Cervantes*, thy *Rabelais*, thy *Molière*, thy *Shakespeare*, thy *Swift*, thy *Marivaux*, fill my pages with humour; 'till mankind learn the good-nature to laugh only at the follies of others, and the humility to grieve at their own. 15

And thou, almost the constant attendant on true genius, humanity, bring all thy tender sensations. If thou hast already disposed of them all between thy *Allen* and thy *Lyttleton*, steal them a little while from their bosoms. Not without these the tender scene is painted. From these alone proceed the noble, 20 disinterested friendship, the melting love, the generous sentiment, the ardent gratitude, the soft compassion, the candid opinion; and all those strong energies of a good mind, which fill the moistened eyes with tears, the glowing cheeks with blood, and swell the heart with tides of grief, joy and benevolence. 25

And thou, O learning, (for without thy assistance nothing pure, nothing correct, can genius produce) do thou guide my pen. Thee, in thy favourite fields, where the limpid, gently-rolling Thames washes thy Etonian banks, in early youth I have worshipped. To thee, at thy birchen altar, with true Spartan 30 devotion, I have sacrificed my blood. Come, then, and from thy vast, luxuriant stores, in long antiquity piled up, pour forth the rich profusion. Open thy Mæonian and thy Mantuan

coffers, with whatever else includes thy philosophic, thy poetic, and thy historical treasures, whether with Greek or Roman characters thou hast chosen to inscribe the ponderous chests : give me a-while that key to all thy treasures, which to thy
5 *Warburton* thou hast entrusted.

Lastly, come experience long conversant with the wise, the good, the learned, and the polite. Nor with them only, but with every kind of character, from the minister at his levee, to the bailiff in his spunging-house ; from the dutchess at her
10 drum, to the landlady behind her bar. From thee only can the manners of mankind be known ; to which the recluse pedant, however great his parts, or extensive his learning may be, hath ever been a stranger.

Come all these, and more, if possible ; for arduous is the
15 task I have undertaken : and without all your assistance, will, I find, be too heavy for me to support. But if you all smile on my labours, I hope still to bring them to a happy conclusion.

III

[THE BILL OF FARE TO THE FEAST]

An author ought to consider himself, not as a gentleman who gives a private or eleemosynary treat, but rather as one
20 who keeps a public ordinary, at which all persons are welcome for their money. In the former case, it is well known, that the entertainer provides what fare he pleases ; and tho' this should be very indifferent, and utterly disagreeable to the taste of his company, they must not find any fault ; nay, on the contrary,
25 good-breeding forces them outwardly to approve and to commend whatever is set before them. Now the contrary of this happens to the master of an ordinary. Men who pay for what they eat, will insist on gratifying their palates, however

nice and whimsical these may prove ; and if every thing is not agreeable to their taste, will challenge a right to censure, to abuse, and to d—n their dinner without controul.

To prevent therefore giving offence to their customers by any such disappointment, it has been usual, with the honest and well-meaning host, to provide a bill of fare, which all persons may peruse at their first entrance into the house ; and, having thence acquainted themselves with the entertainment which they may expect, may either stay and regale with what is provided for them, or may depart to some other ordinary better accommodated to their taste. 5 10

As we do not disdain to borrow wit or wisdom from any man who is capable of lending us either, we have condescended to take a hint from these honest victuallers, and shall prefix not only a general bill of fare to our whole entertainment, but shall likewise give the reader particular bills to every course which is to be served up in this and the ensuing volumes. 15

The provision then which we have here made is no other than HUMAN NATURE. Nor do I fear that my sensible reader, though most luxurious in his taste, will start, cavil, or be offended, because I have named but one article. The tortoise, as the alderman of Bristol, well learned in eating, knows by much experience, besides the delicious calibash and calipee, contains many different kinds of food ; nor can the learned reader be ignorant, that in *human nature*, tho' here collected under one general name, is such prodigious variety, that a cook will have sooner gone through all the several species of animal and vegetable food in the world, than an author will be able to exhaust so extensive a subject. 25

An objection may perhaps be apprehended from the more delicate, that this dish is too common and vulgar ; for what else is the subject of all the romances, novels, plays and poems, with which the stalls abound. Many exquisite viands might 30

be rejected by the epicure, if it was a sufficient cause for his contemning of them as common and vulgar, that something was to be found in the most paultry alleys under the same name. In reality, true nature is as difficult to be met with in authors, as
 5 the Bayonne ham, or Bologna sausage is to be found in the shops.

But the whole, to continue the same metaphor, consists in the cookery of the author ; for, as Mr. *Pope* tells us, —

True wit is nature to advantage drest ;
 What oft' was thought, but ne'er so well exprest.

10 The same animal which hath the honour to have some part of his flesh eaten at the table of a duke, may perhaps be degraded in another part, and some of his limbs gibbeted, as it were, in the vilest stall in town. Where then lies the difference between the food of the nobleman and the porter, if
 15 both are at dinner on the same ox or calf, but in the seasoning, the dressing, the garnishing, and the setting forth. Hence the one provokes and incites the most languid appetite, and the other turns and palls that which is the sharpest and keenest.

In like manner, the excellence of the mental entertainment
 20 consists less in the subject, than in the author's skill in well dressing it up. How pleased therefore will the reader be to find, that we have, in the following work, adhered closely to one of the highest principles of the best cook which the present age, or perhaps that of *Heliogabalus*, hath produced.
 25 This great man, as is well known to all polite lovers of eating, begins at first by setting plain things before his hungry guests, rising afterwards by degrees, as their stomachs may be supposed to decrease, to the very quintessence of sauce and spices. In like manner, we shall represent human nature at first to the
 30 keen appetite of our reader, in that more plain and simple manner in which it is found in the country, and shall hereafter hash and ragout it with all the high French and Italian

seasoning of affectation and vice which courts and cities afford. By these means, we doubt not but our reader may be rendered desirous to read on for ever, as the great person, just above mentioned, is supposed to have made some persons eat.

Having premised thus much, we will now detain those, who 5
like our bill of fare, no longer from their diet, and shall proceed directly to serve up the first course of our history, for their entertainment.

IV

[THE COMIC EPIC IN PROSE]

As it is possible the mere English reader may have a different idea of romance with the author of these little volumes ; 10
and may consequently expect a kind of entertainment, not to be found, nor which was even intended, in the following pages ; it may not be improper to premise a few words concerning this kind of writing, which I do not remember to have seen hitherto attempted in our language. 15

The EPIC, as well as the DRAMA, is divided into tragedy and comedy. HOMER, who was the father of this species of poetry, gave us the pattern of both these, tho' that of the latter kind is entirely lost ; which Aristotle tells us, bore the same relation to comedy which his Iliad bears to tragedy. And per- 20
haps, that we have no more instances of it among the writers of antiquity, is owing to the loss of this great pattern, which, had it survived, would have found its imitators equally with the other poems of this great original.

And farther, as this poetry may be tragic or comic, I will 25
not scruple to say it may be likewise either in verse or prose : for tho' it wants one particular, which the critic enumerates in the constituent parts of an epic poem, namely, metre ; yet, when any kind of writing contains all its other parts, such

as fable, action, characters, sentiments, and diction, and is deficient in metre only, it seems, I think, reasonable to refer it to the epic; at least, as no critic hath thought proper to range it under any other head, nor to assign it a particular
5 name to itself.

Thus the *Telemachus* of the archbishop of Cambrai appears to me of the epic kind, as well as the *Odyssey* of Homer; indeed, it is much fairer and more reasonable to give it a name common with that species from which it differs only
10 in a single instance, than to confound it with those which it resembles in no other. Such are those voluminous works, commonly called *Romances*, namely, *Clelia*, *Cleopatra*, *Astræa*, *Cassandra*, the *Grand Cyrus*, and innumerable others which contain, as I apprehend, very little instruction or entertainment.

15 Now, a comic romance is a comic epic-poem in prose; differing from comedy, as the serious epic from tragedy: its action being more extended and comprehensive; containing a much larger circle of incidents, and introducing a greater variety of characters. It differs from the serious romance in
20 its fable and action, in this; that as in the one these are grave and solemn, so in the other they are light and ridiculous: it differs in its characters, by introducing persons of inferiour rank, and consequently of inferiour manners, whereas the grave romance sets the highest before us; lastly in its sentiments and diction; by preserving the ludicrous instead of
25 the sublime. In the diction I think, burlesque itself may be sometimes admitted; of which many instances will occur in this work, as in the description of the battles, and some other places not necessary to be pointed out to the classical reader;
30 for whose entertainment those parodies or burlesque imitations are chiefly calculated.

But tho' we have sometimes admitted this in our diction, we have carefully excluded it from our sentiments and characters;

for there it is never properly introduced, unless in writings of the burlesque kind, which this is not intended to be. Indeed, no two species of writing can differ more widely than the comic and the burlesque: for as the latter is ever the exhibition of what is monstrous and unnatural, and where our delight, if we examine it, arises from the surprizing absurdity, as in appropriating the manners of the highest to the lowest, or *à converso*; so in the former, we should ever confine ourselves strictly to nature, from the just imitation of which, will flow all the pleasure we can this way convey to a sensible reader. And perhaps, there is one reason, why a comic writer should of all others be the least excused for deviating from nature, since it may not be always so easy for a serious poet to meet with the great and the admirable; but life everywhere furnishes an accurate observer with the ridiculous.

I have hinted this little, concerning burlesque; because I have often heard that name given to performances, which have been truly of the comic kind, from the author's having sometimes admitted it in his diction only; which as it is the dress of poetry, doth like the dress of men establish characters, (the one of the whole poem, and the other of the whole man), in vulgar opinion, beyond any of their greater excellences: but surely, a certain drollery in style, where characters and sentiments are perfectly natural, no more constitutes the burlesque, than an empty pomp and dignity of words, where everything else is mean and low, can entitle any performance to the appellation of the true sublime.

And I apprehend, my Lord Shaftesbury's opinion of mere burlesque agrees with mine, when he asserts, "There is no such thing to be found in the writings of the antients." But perhaps I have less abhorrence than he professes for it: and that not because I have had some little success on the stage this way; but rather as it contributes more to exquisite mirth

and laughter than any other; and these are probably more wholesome physic for the mind, and conduce better to purge away spleen, melancholy, and ill affections, than is generally imagined. Nay, I will appeal to common observation, whether
 5 the same companies are not found more full of good-humour and benevolence, after they have been sweetened for two or three hours with entertainments of this kind, than soured by a tragedy or a grave lecture.

But to illustrate all this by another science, in which, perhaps, we shall see the distinction more clearly and plainly: let us examine the works of a comic history-painter, with those performances which the Italians call *Caricatura*, where we shall find the greatest excellence of the former to consist in the exactest copy of nature; insomuch, that a judicious eye
 15 instantly rejects anything *outré*; any liberty which the painter hath taken with the features of that *alma mater*. Whereas in the *Caricatura* we allow all licence. Its aim is to exhibit monsters not men; and all distortions and exaggerations whatever are within its proper province.

Now what *Caricatura* is in painting, *Burlesque* is in writing; and in the same manner the comic writer and painter correlate to each other. And here I shall observe, that as in the former, the painter seems to have the advantage; so it is in the latter infinitely on the side of the writer: for the Mon-
 25 strous is much easier to paint than describe, and the Ridiculous to describe than paint.

And tho' perhaps this latter species doth not in either science so strongly affect and agitate the muscles as the other; yet it will be owned, I believe, that a more rational and useful pleasure arises to us from it. He who should call the ingenious Hogarth a burlesque painter, would, in my opinion,
 30 do him very little honour: for sure it is much easier, much less the subject of admiration, to paint a man with a nose, or

any other feature of a preposterous size, or to expose him in some absurd or monstrous attitude, than to express the affections of men on canvas. It hath been thought a vast commendation of a painter to say his figures *seem to breathe*; but surely it is a much greater and nobler applause, *that they appear to think*. 5

But to return. The Ridiculous only, as I have before said, falls within my province in the present work. Nor will some explanation of this word be thought impertinent by the reader, if he considers how wonderfully it hath been mistaken, even by 10 writers who have profess'd it: for to what but such a mistake, can we attribute the many attempts to ridicule the blackest villanies; and what is yet worse, the most dreadful calamities? What could exceed the absurdity of an author, who should write the comedy of Nero, with the merry incident of ripping 15 up his mother's belly; or what would give a greater shock to humanity than an attempt to expose the miseries of poverty and distress to ridicule? And yet, the reader will not want much learning to suggest such instances to himself.

Besides, it may seem remarkable, that Aristotle, who is so 20 fond and free of definitions, hath not thought proper to define the Ridiculous. Indeed, where he tells us it is proper to comedy, he hath remarked that villany is not its object: but that he hath not, as I remember, positively asserted what is. Nor doth the Abbé Bellegarde, who hath written a treatise on 25 this subject, tho' he shows us many species of it, once trace it to its fountain.

The only source of the true Ridiculous (as it appears to me) is affectation. But tho' it arises from one spring only, when we consider the infinite streams into which this one branches, 30 we shall presently cease to admire at the copious field it affords to an observer. Now affectation proceeds from one of these two causes; vanity, or hypocrisy: for as vanity puts us on

affecting false characters, in order to purchase applause ; so hypocrisy sets us on an endeavour to avoid censure by concealing our vices under an appearance of their opposite virtues. And tho' these two causes are often confounded, (for they
5 require some distinguishing;) yet, as they proceed from very different motives, so they are as clearly distinct in their operations : for indeed, the affectation which arises from vanity is nearer to truth than the other ; as it hath not that violent repugnancy of nature to struggle with, which that of the hypocrite hath. It may be likewise noted, that affectation doth
10 not imply an absolute negation of those qualities which are affected : and therefore, tho', when it proceeds from hypocrisy, it be nearly allied to deceit ; yet when it comes from vanity only, it partakes of the nature of ostentation : for instance, the
15 affectation of liberality in a vain man, differs visibly from the same affectation in the avaricious ; for tho' the vain man is not what he would appear, or hath not the virtue he affects, to the degree he would be thought to have it ; yet it sits less awkwardly on him than on the avaricious man, who is the very
20 reverse of what he would seem to be.

From the discovery of this affectation arises the Ridiculous — which always strikes the reader with surprize and pleasure ; and that in a higher and stronger degree when the affectation arises from hypocrisy, than when from vanity : for to discover
25 any one to be the exact reverse of what he affects, is more surprizing, and consequently more ridiculous, than to find him a little deficient in the quality he desires the reputation of. I might observe that our Ben Johnson, who of all men understood the Ridiculous the best, hath chiefly used the hypocritical
30 affectation.

Now from affectation only, the misfortunes and calamities of life, or the imperfections of nature, may become the objects of ridicule. Surely he hath a very ill-framed mind, who can

look on ugliness, infirmity, or poverty, as ridiculous in themselves: nor do I believe any man living who meets a dirty fellow riding through the streets in a cart, is struck with an idea of the Ridiculous from it; but if he should see the same figure descend from his coach and six, or bolt from his chair 5 with his hat under his arm, he would then begin to laugh, and with justice. In the same manner, were we to enter a poor house and behold a wretched family shivering with cold and languishing with hunger, it would not incline us to laughter, (at least we must have very diabolical natures, if it would): 10 but should we discover there a grate, instead of coals, adorned with flowers, empty plate or china dishes on the side-board, or any other affectation of riches and finery either on their persons or in their furniture; we might then indeed be excused, for ridiculing so fantastical an appearance. Much less are 15 natural imperfections the object of derision: but when ugliness aims at the applause of beauty, or lameness endeavours to display agility; it is then that these unfortunate circumstances, which at first moved our compassion, tend only to raise our mirth. 20

The poet carries this very far;

*None are for being what they are in fault,
But for not being what they would be thought.*

Where if the metre would suffer the word Ridiculous to close the first line, the thought would be rather more proper. Great 25 vices are the proper objects of our detestation, smaller faults of our pity: but affectation appears to me the only true source of the Ridiculous.

But perhaps it may be objected to me, that I have against my own rules introduced vices, and of a very black kind into 30 this work. To this I shall answer: first, that it is very difficult to pursue a series of human actions and keep clear from them.

Secondly, that the vices to be found here, are rather the accidental consequences of some human frailty, or foible, than causes habitually existing in the mind. Thirdly, that they are never set forth as the objects of ridicule, but detestation.
 5 Fourthly, that they are never the principal figure at that time on the scene ; and lastly, they never produce the intended evil.

V

SHEWING WHAT KIND OF A HISTORY THIS IS ;
WHAT IT IS LIKE, AND WHAT IT IS NOT LIKE

Tho' we have properly enough entitled this our work, a history, and not a life ; nor an apology for a life, as is more in fashion ; yet we intend in it rather to pursue the method of
 10 those writers who profess to disclose the revolutions of countries, than to imitate the painful and voluminous historian, who to preserve the regularity of his series, thinks himself obliged to fill up as much paper with the details of months and years in which nothing remarkable happened, as he employs upon
 15 those notable æras when the greatest scenes have been transacted on the human stage.

Such histories as these do, in reality, very much resemble a news-paper, which consists of just the same number of words, whether there be any news in it or not. They may likewise
 20 be compared to a stage-coach, which performs constantly the same course, empty as well as full. The writer, indeed, seems to think himself obliged to keep even pace with Time, whose amanuensis he is ; and, like his master, travels as slowly through centuries of monkish dulness, when the world seems to have
 25 been asleep, as through that bright and busy age so nobly distinguished by the excellent Latin poet. —

“*Ad configendum venientibus undique Pænis ;
 Omnia cum belli trepido concussa tumultu
 Horrida contremuere sub altis ætheris auris :
 In dubioque fuit sub utrorum regna cadendum
 Omnibus humanis esset, terraque marique :*”

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Of which, we wish we could give our reader a more adequate translation than that by Mr. *Creech*.

“When dreadful *Carthage* frightened *Rome* with arms,
 And all the world was shook with fierce alarms ;
 Whilst undecided yet, which part should fall,
 Which nation rise the glorious lord of all.”

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Now it is our purpose in the ensuing pages, to pursue a contrary method. When any extraordinary scene presents itself (as we trust will often be the case) we shall spare no pains nor paper to open it at large to our reader ; but if whole years 15 should pass without producing any thing worthy his notice, we shall not be afraid of a chasm in our history ; but shall hasten on to matters of consequence, and leave such periods of time totally unobserved.

These are indeed to be considered as blanks in the grand 20 lottery of Time. We therefore who are the registers of that lottery, shall imitate those sagacious persons who deal in that which is drawn at Guild-Hall and who never trouble the public with the many blanks they dispose of ; but when a great prize happens to be drawn, the news-papers are presently filled with it, 25 and the world is sure to be informed at whose office it was sold : indeed, commonly two or three different offices lay claim to the honour of having disposed of it ; by which I suppose the adventurers are given to understand that certain brokers are in the secrets of Fortune, and indeed of her cabinet-council. 30

My reader then is not to be surprized, if in the course of this work, he shall find some chapters very short, and others altogether

as long ; some that contain only the time of a single day, and others that comprise years ; in a word, if my history sometimes seems to stand still, and sometimes to fly. For all which I shall not look on myself as accountable to any court of critical
5 jurisdiction whatever : for as I am, in reality, the founder of a new province of writing, so I am at liberty to make what laws I please therein. And these laws, my readers, whom I consider as my subjects, are bound to believe in and to obey ; with which that they may readily and chearfully comply, I do hereby
10 assure them that I shall principally regard their ease and advantage in all such institutions : for I do not, like a *jure divino* tyrant, imagine that they are my slaves or my commodity. I am, indeed, set over them for their own good only, and was created for their use, and not they for mine. Nor do I doubt,
15 while I make their interest the great rule of my writings, they will unanimously concur in supporting my dignity, and in rendering me all the honour I shall deserve or desire.

VI

MATTER PREFATORY IN PRAISE OF BIOGRAPHY

Notwithstanding the preference which may be vulgarly given to the authority of those romance-writers who entitle their books,
20 the History of *England*, the History of *France*, of *Spain*, &c. it is most certain that truth is only to be found in the works of those who celebrate the lives of great men, and are commonly called biographers, as the others should indeed be termed topographers, or chorographers : words which might well mark the
25 distinction between them ; it being the business of the latter chiefly to describe countries and cities, which, with the assistance of maps, they do pretty justly, and may be depended upon : but as to the actions and characters of men, their writings

are not quite so authentic, of which there needs no other proof than those eternal contradictions, occurring between two topographers who undertake the history of the same country : for instance, between my Lord *Clarendon* and Mr. *Whitlock*, between Mr. *Echard* and *Rapin*, and many others ; where, facts 5 being set forth in a different light, every reader believes as he pleases, and indeed the more judicious and suspicious very justly esteem the whole as no other than a romance, in which the writer hath indulged a happy and fertile invention. But tho' these widely differ in the narrative of facts ; some ascrib- 10 ing victory to the one, and others to the other party : some representing the same man as a rogue, while others give him a great and honest character, yet all agree in the scene where the fact is supposed to have happened ; and where the person, who is both a rogue, and an honest man, lived. Now with us biog- 15 raphers the case is different, the facts we deliver may be relied upon, tho' we often mistake the age and country wherein they happened : for tho' it may be worth the examination of critics, whether the shepherd *Chrysostom*, who, as *Cervantes* informs us, died for love of the fair *Marcella*, who hated him, was ever 20 in *Spain*, will any one doubt but that such a silly fellow hath really existed? Is there in the world such a sceptic as to disbelieve the madness of *Cardenio*, the perfidy of *Ferdinand*, the impertinent curiosity of *Anselmo*, the weakness of *Camilla*, the irresolute friendship of *Lothario* ; tho' perhaps as to the time 25 and place where those several persons lived, that good historian may be deplorably deficient : but the most known instance of this kind is in the true history of *Gil Blas*, where the inimitable biographer hath made a notorious blunder in the country of Dr. *Sangrado*, who used his patients as a vintner doth his wine- 30 vessels, by letting out their blood, and filling them up with water. Doth not every one, who is the least versed in physical history, know that Spain was not the country in which this doctor lived?

The same writer hath likewise erred in the country of his archbishop, as well as that of those great personages whose understandings were too sublime to taste anything but tragedy, and in many others. The same mistakes may likewise be observed in 5 *Scarron*, the *Arabian Nights*, the History of *Marianne* and *Le Paisan Parvenu*, and perhaps some few other writers of this class, whom I have not read, or do not at present recollect; for I would by no means be thought to comprehend those persons of surprizing genius, the authors of immense romances, or the 10 modern novel and *Atalantis* writers; who without any assistance from nature or history, record persons who never were, or will be, and facts which never did nor possibly can happen: whose heroes are of their own creation, and their brains the chaos whence all their materials are selected. Not that such writers 15 deserve no honour; so far otherwise, that perhaps they merit the highest: for what can be nobler than to be as an example of the wonderful extent of human genius. One may apply to them what *Balzac* says of *Aristotle*, that they are a *second nature*; for they have no communication with the first; by 20 which authors of an inferiour class, who cannot stand alone, are obliged to support themselves as with crutches; but these of whom I am now speaking, seem to be possessed of *those stilts*, which the excellent *Voltaire* tells us in his letters *carry the genius far off, but with an irregular pace*. Indeed, far out of 25 the sight of the reader,

Beyond the realm of Chaos and old Night.

But, to return to the former class, who are contented to copy nature, instead of forming originals from the confused heap of matter in their own brains; is not such a book as 30 that which records the achievements of the renowned *Don Quixotte*, more worthy the name of a history than even *Mariana's*: for whereas the latter is confined to a particular

period of time, and to a particular nation ; the former is the history of the world in general, at least that part which is polished by laws, arts, and sciences ; and of that from the time it was first polished to this day ; nay and forwards, as long as it shall so remain.

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I shall now proceed to apply these observations to the work before us ; for indeed I have set them down principally to obviate some constructions, which the good-nature of mankind, who are always forward to see their friends' virtues recorded, may put to particular parts. I question not but several of my readers will know the lawyer in the stage-coach, the moment they hear his voice. It is likewise odds, but the wit and the prude meet with some of their acquaintance, as well as all the rest of my characters. To prevent therefore any such malicious applications, I declare here once for all, I describe not men, but manners ; not an individual, but a species. Perhaps it will be answered, Are not the characters then taken from life ? To which I answer in the affirmative ; nay, I believe I might aver, that I have writ little more than I have seen. The lawyer is not only alive, but hath been so these 4000 years, and I hope G—— will indulge his life as many yet to come. He hath not indeed confined himself to one profession, one religion, or one country ; but when the first mean selfish creature appeared on the human stage, who made self the centre of the whole creation ; would give himself no pain, incur no danger, advance no money to assist, or preserve his fellow-creatures ; then was our lawyer born ; and whilst such a person as I have described, exists on earth, so long shall he remain upon it. It is therefore doing him little honour, to imagine he endeavours to mimick some little obscure fellow, because he happens to resemble him in one particular feature, or perhaps in his profession ; whereas his appearance in the world is calculated for much more general and noble

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purposes ; not to expose one pitiful wretch, to the small and contemptible circle of his acquaintance ; but to hold the glass to thousands in their closets, that they may contemplate their deformity, and endeavour to reduce it, and thus by suffering
 5 private mortification may avoid public shame. This places the boundary between, and distinguishes the satirist from the libeller ; for the former privately corrects the fault for the benefit of the person, like a parent ; the latter publicly exposes the person himself, as an example to others, like an
 10 executioner.

VII

OF WRITING LIVES IN GENERAL, AND PARTICULARLY OF PAMELA ; WITH A WORD BY THE
 BYE OF COLLEY CIBBER AND OTHERS

It is a trite but true observation, that examples work more forcibly on the mind than precepts : and if this be just in what is odious and blameable, it is more strongly so in what is amiable and praise-worthy. Here emulation most effectually
 15 operates upon us, and inspires our imitation in an irresistible manner. A good man therefore is a standing lesson to all his acquaintance, and of far greater use in that narrow circle than a good book.

But as it often happens that the best men are but little
 20 known, and consequently cannot extend the usefulness of their examples a great way ; the writer may be called in aid to spread their history farther, and to present the amiable pictures to those who have not the happiness of knowing the originals ; and by communicating such valuable
 25 patterns to the world, may perhaps do a more extensive service to mankind than the person whose life originally afforded the pattern.

In this light I have always regarded those biographers who have recorded the actions of great and worthy persons of both sexes. Not to mention those antient writers which of late days are little read, being written in obsolete, and as they are generally thought, unintelligible languages ; such as PLUTARCH, 5 NEPOS, and others which I heard of in my youth, our own language affords many of excellent use and instruction, finely calculated to sow the seeds of virtue in youth, and very easy to be comprehended by persons of moderate capacity. Such as the history of *John* the Great, who, by his brave and heroic 10 actions against men of large and athletic bodies, obtained the glorious appellation of the Giant-Killer ; that of an Earl of *Warwick*, whose Christian name was *Guy* ; the lives of *Argalus* and *Parthenia*, and above all, the history of those seven worthy personages, the Champions of Christendom. In 15 all these, delight is mixed with instruction, and the reader is almost as much improved as entertained.

But I pass by these and many others, to mention two books lately published, which represent an admirable pattern of the amiable in either sex. The former of these, which deals in 20 male-virtue, was written by the great person himself, who lived the life he hath recorded, and is by many thought to have lived such a life only in order to write it. The other is communicated to us by an historian who borrows his lights, as the common method is, from authentic papers and records. The 25 reader, I believe, already conjectures, I mean the lives of Mr. *Colley Cibber* and of Mrs. *Pamela Andrews*. How artfully doth the former, by insinuating that he *escaped* being promoted to the highest stations in Church and State, teach us a contempt of worldly grandeur ! how strongly doth he incul- 30 cate an absolute submission to our superiors ! Lastly, how completely doth he arm us against so uneasy, so wretched a passion as the fear of shame ; how clearly doth he expose the emptiness and vanity of that fantom, reputation !

What the female readers are taught by the memoirs of Mrs. *Andrews*, is so well set forth in the excellent essays or letters prefixed to the second and subsequent editions of that work, that it would be here a needless repetition. The authentic history
 5 with which I now present the public, is an instance of the great good that book is likely to do, and of the prevalence of example which I have just observed : since it will appear that it was by keeping the excellent pattern of his sister's virtues before his eyes, that Mr. *Joseph Andrews* was chiefly enabled to preserve
 10 his purity in the midst of such great temptations ; I shall only add, that this character of male-chastity, tho' doubtless as desirable, as becoming in one part of the human species, as in the other, is almost the only virtue which the great apologist hath not given himself for the sake of giving the example to
 15 his readers.

VIII

CONTAINING FIVE PAGES OF PAPER

As truth distinguishes our writings from those idle romances which are filled with monsters, the productions, not of nature, but of distempered brains ; and which have been therefore recommended by an eminent critic to the sole use of the
 20 pastry-cook : so, on the other hand, we would avoid any resemblance to that kind of history which a celebrated poet seems to think is no less calculated for the emolument of the brewer, as the reading it should be always attended with a tankard of good ale.

25 While—history with her comrade ale,
 Sooths the sad series of her serious tale.

For as this is the liquor of modern historians, nay, perhaps their Muse, if we may believe the opinion of *Butler*, who

attributes inspiration to ale, it ought likewise to be the potation of their readers ; since every book ought to be read with the same spirit, and in the same manner, as it is writ. Thus the famous author of *Hurlothrumbo* told a learned bishop, that the reason his lordship could not taste the excellence of his piece, was, that he did not read it with a fiddle in his hand ; which instrument he himself had always had in his own, when he composed it. 5

That our work, therefore, might be in no danger of being likened to the labours of these historians, we have taken every occasion of interspersing through the whole sundry similes, 10 descriptions, and other kind of poetical embellishments. These are, indeed, designed to supply the place of the said ale, and to refresh the mind, whenever those slumbers which in a long work are apt to invade the reader as well as the writer, shall 15 begin to creep upon him. Without interruptions of this kind, the best narrative of plain matter of fact must overpower every reader ; for nothing but the everlasting watchfulness, which *Homer* hath ascribed only to *Jove* himself, can be proof against a news paper of many volumes. 20

We shall leave to the reader to determine with what judgment we have chosen the several occasions for inserting those ornamental parts of our work. Surely it will be allowed that none could be more proper than the present ; where we are about to introduce a considerable character on the scene ; no 25 less, indeed, than the heroine of this heroic, historical, prosaic poem. Here, therefore, we have thought proper to prepare the mind of the reader for her reception, by filling it with every pleasing image, which we can draw from the face of nature. And for this method we plead many precedents. First, this is 30 an art well known to, and much practised by, our tragic poets ; who seldom fail to prepare their audience for the reception of their principal characters. Thus the heroe is always introduced

with a flourish of drums and trumpets, in order to rouse a martial spirit in the audience, and to accommodate their ears to bombast and fustian, which Mr. *Lock's* blind man would not have grossly erred in likening to the sound of a trumpet. Again, when lovers are coming forth, soft music often conducts them on the stage, either to sooth the audience with all the softness of the tender passion, or to lull and prepare them for that gentle slumber in which they will most probably be composed by the ensuing scene.

10 And not only the poets, but the masters of these poets, the managers of playhouses, seem to be in this secret; for, besides the aforesaid kettle drums, &c. which denote the heroe's approach, he is generally ushered on the stage by a large troop of half a dozen scene-shifters; and how necessary these are
15 imagined to his appearance, may be concluded from the following theatrical story.

King *Pyrrhus* was at dinner at an alehouse bordering on the theatre, when he was summoned to go on the stage. The heroe, being unwilling to quit his shoulder of mutton, and as unwilling
20 to draw on himself the indignation of Mr. *Wilks*, (his brother manager) for making the audience wait, had bribed these his harbingers to be out of the way. While Mr. *Wilks*, therefore, was thundering out, "Where are the carpenters to walk on before King *Pyrrhus*," that monarch very quietly ate his mut-
25 ton, and the audience, however impatient, were obliged to entertain themselves with music in his absencè.

To be plain, I much question whether the politician, who hath generally a good nose, hath not scented out somewhat of the utility of this practice. I am convinced that awful magis-
30 trate my lord mayor contracts a good deal of that reverence which attends him through the year, by the several pageants which precede his pomp. Nay, I must confess, that even I myself, who am not remarkably liable to be captivated with

show, have yielded not a little to the impressions of much preceding state. When I have seen a man strutting in a procession, after others whose business hath been only to walk before him, I have conceived a higher notion of his dignity, than I have felt on seeing him in a common situation. But there is one instance which comes exactly up to my purpose. This is the custom of sending on a basket-woman, who is to precede the pomp at a coronation, and to strew the stage with flowers, before the great personages begin their procession. The antients would certainly have invoked the goddess *Flora* for this purpose, and it would have been no difficulty for their priests or politicians to have persuaded the people of the real presence of the deity, though a plain mortal had personated her, and performed her office. But we have no such design of imposing on our reader, and therefore those who object to the heathen theology, may, if they please, change our goddess into the above-mentioned basket-woman. Our intention, in short, is to introduce our heroine with the utmost solemnity in our power, with an elevation of stile, and all other circumstances proper to raise the veneration of our reader. Indeed we would, for certain causes, advise those of our male readers who have any hearts, to read no farther, were we not well assured, that how amiable soever the picture of our heroine will appear, as it is really a copy from nature, many of our fair countrywomen will be found worthy to satisfy any passion, and to answer any idea of female perfection, which our pencil will be able to raise.

IX

OF THOSE WHO LAWFULLY MAY, AND OF THOSE
WHO MAY NOT WRITE SUCH HISTORIES AS
THIS

Among other good uses for which I have thought proper to institute these several introductory chapters, I have considered them as a kind of mark or stamp, which may hereafter enable a very indifferent reader to distinguish, what is true and genuine in this historic kind of writing, from what is false and counterfeit. Indeed it seems likely that some such mark may shortly become necessary, since the favourable reception which two or three authors have lately procured for their works of this nature from the public, will probably serve as an encouragement to many others to undertake the like. Thus a swarm of foolish novels, and monstrous romances will be produced, either to the great impoverishing of booksellers, or to the great loss of time, and depravation of morals in the reader; nay, often to the spreading of scandal and calumny, and to the prejudice of the characters of many worthy and honest people.

I question not but the ingenious author of the Spectator was principally induced to prefix Greek and Latin mottos to every paper from the same consideration of guarding against the pursuit of those scribblers, who, having no talents of a writer but what is taught by the writing master, are yet nowise afraid nor ashamed to assume the same titles with the greatest genius, than their good brother in the fable was of braying in the lion's skin.

By the device therefore of his motto, it became impracticable for any man to presume to imitate the Spectators, without understanding at least one sentence in the learned languages. In the same manner I have now secured myself from the imitation of those who are utterly incapable of any degree of reflection, and whose learning is not equal to an essay.

I would not be here understood to insinuate, that the greatest merit of such historical productions can ever lie in these introductory chapters; but, in fact, those parts which contain mere narrative only, afford much more encouragement to the pen of an imitator, than those which are composed of observation and reflection. Here I mean such imitators as *Rowe* was of *Shakspear*, or as *Horace* hints some of the Romans were of *Cato*, by bare feet and sour faces.

To invent good stories, and to tell them well, are possibly very rare talents, and yet I have observed few persons who have scrupled to aim at both; and if we examine the romances and novels with which the world abounds, I think we may fairly conclude, that most of the authors would not have attempted to shew their teeth (if the expression may be allowed me) in any other way of writing; nor could indeed have strung together a dozen sentences on any other subject whatever. *Scribimus indocti doctiq; passim,** may be more truly said of the historian and biographer, than of any other species of writing: for all the arts and sciences (even criticism itself) require some little degree of learning and knowledge. Poetry indeed may perhaps be thought an exception; but then it demands numbers, or something like numbers; whereas to the composition of novels and romances, nothing is necessary but paper, pens and ink, with the manual capacity of using them. This, I conceive, their productions shew to be the opinion of the authors themselves; and this must be the opinion of their readers, if indeed there be any such.

Hence we are to derive that universal contempt, which the world, who always denominate the whole from the majority, have cast on all historical writers, who do not draw their materials

* — Each desperate blockhead dares to write,
Verse is the trade of every living wight.

from records. And it is the apprehension of this contempt, that hath made us so cautiously avoid the term romance, a name with which we might otherwise have been well enough contented. Though as we have good authority for all our
5 characters, no less indeed than Doomsday Book, or the vast authentic book of nature, as is elsewhere hinted, our labours have sufficient title to the name of history. Certainly they deserve some distinction from those works, which one of the wittiest of men regarded only as proceeding from a pruritus,
10 or indeed rather from a looseness of the brain.

But besides the dishonour which is thus cast on one of the most useful as well as entertaining of all kinds of writing, there is just reason to apprehend, that by encouraging such authors, we shall propagate much dishonour of another kind ; I mean
15 to the characters of many good and valuable members of society : for the dullest writers, no more than the dullest companions, are always inoffensive. They have both enough of language to be indecent and abusive. And surely if the opinion just above cited be true, we cannot wonder, that works so nastily derived should be nasty themselves, or have a tendency to
20 make others so.

To prevent therefore for the future, such intemperate abuses of leisure, of letters, and of the liberty of the press, especially as the world seems at present to be more than usually threat-
25 ened with them, I shall here venture to mention some qualifications, every one of which are in a pretty high degree necessary to this order of historians.

The first is genius, without a rich vein of which, no study, says *Horace*, can avail us. By genius I would understand that
30 power, or rather those powers of the mind, which are capable of penetrating into all things within our reach and knowledge, and of distinguishing their essential differences. These are no other than invention and judgment ; and they are both called

by the collective name of genius, as they are of those gifts of nature which we bring with us into the world. Concerning each of which many seem to have fallen into very great errors : for by invention, I believe, is generally understood a creative faculty ; which would indeed prove most romance writers to have the highest pretensions to it ; whereas by invention is really meant no more, (and so the word signifies) than discovery, or finding out ; or to explain it at large, a quick and sagacious penetration into the true essence of all the objects of our contemplation. This, I think, can rarely exist without the concomitancy of judgment : for how we can be said to have discovered the true essence of two things, without discerning their difference, seems to me hard to conceive ; now this last is the undisputed province of judgment, and yet some few men of wit have agreed with all the dull fellows in the world, in representing these two to have been seldom or never the property of one and the same person.

But tho' they should be so, they are not sufficient for our purpose without a good share of learning ; for which I could again cite the authority of *Horace*, and of many others, if any was necessary to prove that tools are of no service to a workman, when they are not sharpened by art, or when he wants rules to direct him in his work, or hath no matter to work upon. All these uses are supplied by learning : for nature can only furnish us with capacity, or, as I have chosen to illustrate it, with the tools of our profession ; learning must fit them for use, must direct them in it ; and lastly, must contribute part at least, of the materials. A competent knowledge of history and of the *belles lettres*, is here absolutely necessary ; and without this share of knowledge at least, to affect the character of a historian, is as vain as to endeavour at building a house without timber or mortar, or brick or stone. *Homer* and *Milton*, who, though they added the ornament of numbers to their

works, were both historians of our order, and masters of all the learning of their times.

Again, there is another sort of knowledge beyond the power of learning to bestow, and this is to be had by conversation. So necessary is this to the understanding the characters of men, that none are more ignorant of them than those learned pedants, whose lives have been entirely consumed in colleges, and among books : for however exquisitely human nature may have been described by writers, the true practical system can only be learnt in the world. Indeed the like happens in every other kind of knowledge. Neither physic, nor law, are to be practically known from books. Nay, the farmer, the planter, the gardener, must perfect by experience what he hath acquired the rudiments of by reading. How accurately soever the ingenious Mr. *Miller* may have described the plant, he himself would advise his disciple to see it in the garden. As we must perceive, that after the nicest strokes of a *Shakespear*, or a *Johnson*, of a *Wycherly*, or an *Otway*, some touches of nature will escape the reader, which the judicious action of a *Garrick*, of a *Cibber*, or a *Clive*,* can convey to him ; so on the real stage, the character shows himself in a stronger and bolder light, than he can be described. And if this be the case in those fine and nervous descriptions, which great authors themselves have taken from life, how much more strongly will it hold when the writer himself takes his lines not from nature, but from books ! Such characters are only the faint copy of a copy, and can have neither the justness nor spirit of an original.

* There is a peculiar propriety in mentioning this great actor, and these two most justly celebrated actresses in this place ; as they have all formed themselves on the study of nature only ; and not on the imitation of their predecessors. Hence they have been able to excel all who have gone before them ; a degree of merit which the servile herd of imitators can never possibly arrive at.

Now this conversation in our historian must be universal, that is, with all ranks and degrees of men : for the knowledge of what is called high-life, will not instruct him in low, nor, *è converso*, will his being acquainted with the inferior part of mankind, teach him the manners of the superior. And though 5 it may be thought that the knowledge of either may sufficiently enable [him] to describe at least that in which he hath been conversant ; yet he will even here fall greatly short of perfection : for the follies of either rank do in reality illustrate each other. For instance, the affectation of high-life appears more glaring 10 and ridiculous from the simplicity of the low ; and again the rudeness and barbarity of this latter, strikes with much stronger ideas of absurdity, when contrasted with, and opposed to the politeness which controuls the former. Besides, to say the truth, the manners of our historian will be improved by both these 15 conversations : for in the one he will easily find examples of plainness, honesty, and sincerity ; in the other of refinement, elegance, and a liberality of spirit ; which last quality I myself have scarce ever seen in men of low birth and education.

Nor will all the qualities I have hitherto given my historian 20 avail him, unless he have what is generally meant by a good heart, and be capable of feeling. The author who will make me weep, says *Horace*, must first weep himself. In reality, no man can paint a distress well, which he doth not feel while he is painting it ; nor do I doubt, but that the most pathetic 25 and affecting scenes have been writ with tears. In the same manner it is with the ridiculous. I am convinced I never make my reader laugh heartily, but where I have laughed before him, unless it should happen at any time, that instead of laughing with me, he should be inclined to laugh at me. Perhaps this 30 may have been the case at some passages in this chapter, from which apprehension I will here put an end to it.

X

OF THE SERIOUS IN WRITING; AND FOR WHAT
PURPOSE IT IS INTRODUCED

Peradventure there may be no parts in this prodigious work which will give the reader less pleasure in the perusing, than those which have given the author the greatest pains in composing. Among these probably may be reckoned those initial
5 essays which we have prefixed to the historical matter contained in every book; and which we have determined to be essentially necessary to this kind of writing, of which we have set ourselves at the head.

For this our determination we do not hold ourselves strictly
10 bound to assign any reason; it being abundantly sufficient that we have laid it down as a rule necessary to be observed in all prosai-comi-epic writing. Who ever demanded the reasons of that nice unity of time or place which is now established to be so essential to dramattick poetry? What critic hath ever
15 been asked why a play may not contain two days as well as one, or why the audience (provided they travel like electors, without any expense) may not be wafted fifty miles as well as five! Hath any commentator well accounted for the limitation which an antient critic hath set to the drama, which he will have
20 contain neither more nor less than five acts; or hath any one living attempted to explain, what the modern judges of our theatres mean by that word *low*; by which they have happily succeeded in banishing all humour from the stage, and have made the theatre as dull as a drawing-room? Upon all these
25 occasions, the world seems to have embraced a maxim of our law, viz. *cuicumq; in arte sua perito credendum est*: for it seems, perhaps, difficult to conceive that any one should have had enough of impudence, to lay down dogmatical rules in any art

or science without the least foundation. In such cases, therefore, we are apt to conclude there are sound and good reasons at the bottom, tho' we are unfortunately not able to see so far.

Now, in reality, the world have paid too great a compliment to critics, and have imagined them men of much greater profundity than they really are. From this complaisance, the critics have been emboldened to assume a dictatorial power, and have so far succeeded that they have now become the masters, and have the assurance to give laws to those authors, from whose predecessors they originally received them. The critic, rightly considered, is no more than the clerk, whose office it is to transcribe the rules and laws laid down by those great judges, whose vast strength of genius hath placed them in the light of legislators in the several sciences over which they presided. This office was all which the critics of old aspired to, nor did they ever dare to advance a sentence, without supporting it by the authority of the judge from whence it was borrowed.

But in process of time, and in ages of ignorance, the clerk began to invade the power and assume the dignity of his master. The laws of writing were no longer founded on the practice of the author, but on the dictates of the critic. The clerk became the legislator, and those very peremptorily gave laws, whose business it was, at first, only to transcribe them. Hence arose an obvious, and perhaps an unavoidable error : for these critics being men of shallow capacities, very easily mistook mere form for substance. They acted as a judge would, who should adhere to the lifeless letter of law, and reject the spirit. Little circumstances which were, perhaps, accidental in a great author, were, by these critics, considered to constitute his chief merit, and transmitted as essentials to be observed by all his successors. To these encroachments, time and ignorance, the two great supporters of imposture, gave authority ; and thus, many rules for good writing have been established, which have

not the least foundation in truth or nature ; and which commonly serve for no other purpose than to curb and restrain genius, in the same manner ; as it would have restrained the dancing-master, had the many excellent treatises on that art, laid it down as an essential rule, that every man must dance in chains.

To avoid, therefore, all imputation of laying down a rule for posterity, founded only on the authority of *ipse dixit* ; for which, to say the truth, we have not the profoundest veneration ; we shall here waive the privilege above contended for, and proceed to lay before the reader, the reasons which have induced us, to intersperse these several digressive essays, in the course of this work.

And here we shall of necessity be led to open a new vein of knowledge, which, if it hath been discovered, hath not, to our remembrance, been wrought on by any antient or modern writer. This vein is no other than that of contrast, which runs through all the works of creation, and may probably have a large share in constituting in us the idea of all beauty, as well natural as artificial : for what demonstrates the beauty and excellence of any thing, but its reverse ? Thus the beauty of day, and that of summer, is set off by the horrors of night and winter. And I believe, if it was possible for a man to have seen only the two former, he would have a very imperfect idea of their beauty.

But to avoid too serious an air : can it be doubted, but that the finest woman in the world would lose all benefit of her charms, in the eyes of a man who had never seen one of another cast ? The ladies themselves seem so sensible of this, that they are all industrious to procure foils ; nay, they will become foils to themselves ; for I have observed, (at *Bath* particularly,) that they endeavour to appear as ugly as possible in the morning, in order to set off that beauty which they intend

to shew you in the evening. Most artists have this secret in practice, tho' some, perhaps, have not much studied the theory. The jeweller knows that the finest brilliant requires a foil; and the painter, by the contrast of his figures, often acquires great applause.

5

A great genius among us, will illustrate this matter fully. I cannot, indeed, range him under any general head of common artists, as he hath a title to be placed among those

Inventas, qui vitam excoluere per artes.

Who by invented arts have life improv'd.

10

I mean here the inventor of that most exquisite entertainment, called the English pantomime.

This entertainment consisted of two parts, which the inventor distinguished by the names of *the serious* and *the comic*. The serious exhibited a certain number of heathen gods and heroes, 15 who were certainly the worst and dullest company into which an audience was ever introduced; and (which was a secret known to few) were actually intended so to be, in order to contrast the *comic* part of the entertainment, and to display the tricks of Harlequin to the better advantage. This was, perhaps, 20 no very civil use of such personages; but the contrivance was, nevertheless, ingenious enough, and had its effect. And this will now plainly appear, if instead of *serious* and *comic*, we supply the words *duller* and *dullest*; for the *comic* was certainly 25 duller than anything before shewn on the stage, and could only be set off by that superlative degree of dulness, which composed the serious. So intolerably serious, indeed, were these gods and heroes, that Harlequin (tho' the English gentleman of that name is not at all related to the French family, for he is of a much more serious disposition) was always wel- 30 come on the stage, as he relieved the audience from worse company.

Judicious writers have always practised this art of contrast, with great success. I have been surprised that *Horace* should cavil at this art in *Homer*; but indeed he contradicts himself in the very next line.

5 *Indignor quandoque bonus dormitat* Homerus,
 Verum operi id in longo fas est obripere somnum.

I grieve if e'er great *Homer* chance to sleep,
 Yet slumbers on long works have right to creep.

For we are not here to understand, as, perhaps, some have,
 10 that an author actually falls asleep while he is writing. It is true that readers are too apt to be so overtaken; but if the work was as long as any of *Oldmixon*, the author himself is too well entertained to be subject to the least drowsiness. He is, as Mr. *Pope* observes,

15 *Sleepless himself to give his readers sleep.*

To say the truth, these soporific parts are so many scenes of
serious artfully interwoven, in order to contrast and set off the
 rest; and this is the true meaning of a late facetious writer,
 who told the public, that whenever he was dull, they might be
 20 assured there was a design in it.

In this light then, or rather in this darkness, I would have the
 reader to consider these initial essays. And after this warning,
 if he shall be of opinion, that he can find enough of serious in
 other parts of this history, he may pass over these, in which
 25 we profess to be laboriously dull, and begin the following books,
 at the second chapter.

XI

CONTAINING INSTRUCTIONS VERY NECESSARY
TO BE PERUSED BY MODERN CRITICS

Reader, it is impossible we should know what sort of person thou wilt be : for, perhaps, thou may'st be as learned in human nature as *Shakespear* himself was, and, perhaps, thou may'st be no wiser than some of his editors. Now lest this latter should be the case, we think proper, before we go any farther together, to give thee a few wholesome admonitions ; that thou may'st not as grossly misunderstand and misrepresent us, as some of the said editors have misunderstood and misrepresented their author. 5

First, then, we warn thee not too hastily to condemn any of the incidents in this our history, as impertinent and foreign to our main design, because thou dost not immediately conceive in what manner such incident may conduce to that design. This work may, indeed, be considered as a great creation of our own ; and for a little reptile of a critic to presume to find fault with any of its parts, without knowing the manner in which the whole is connected, and before he comes to the final catastrophe, is a most presumptuous absurdity. The allusion and metaphor we have here made use of, we must acknowledge to be infinitely too great for our occasion, but there is, indeed, no other, which is at all adequate to express the difference between an author of the first rate, and a critic of the lowest. 10 15 20

Another caution we would give thee, my good reptile, is, that thou dost not find out too near a resemblance between certain characters here introduced ; as for instance, between the landlady who appears in the seventh book, and her in the ninth. Thou art to know, friend, that there are certain characteristics, in which most individuals of every profession and 25

occupation agree. To be able to preserve these characteristics, and at the same time to diversify their operations, is one talent of a good writer. Again, to mark the nice distinction between two persons actuated by the same vice or folly is another; and
 5 as this last talent is found in very few writers, so is the true discernment of it found in as few readers; though, I believe, the observation of this forms a very principal pleasure in those who are capable of the discovery: every person, for instance, can distinguish between Sir *Epicure Mammon*, and Sir *Fopling*
 10 *Flutter*; but to note the difference between Sir *Fopling Flutter* and Sir *Courtly Nice*, requires a most exquisite judgment: for want of which, vulgar spectators of plays very often do great injustice in the theatre; where I have sometimes known a
 15 poet in danger of being convicted as a thief, upon much worse evidence than the resemblance of hands hath been held to be in the law. In reality, I apprehend every amorous widow on the stage would run the hazard of being condemned as a servile imitation of *Dido*, but that happily very few of our play-house critics understand enough of Latin to read *Virgil*.

20 In the next place, we must admonish thee, my worthy friend, (for, perhaps, thy heart may be better than thy head) not to condemn a character as a bad one, because it is not perfectly a good one. If thou dost delight in these models of perfection, there are books enow written to gratify thy taste;
 25 but as we have not, in the course of our conversation, ever happened to meet with any such person, we have not chosen to introduce any such here. To say the truth, I as little question whether mere man ever arrived at this consummate degree of excellence, as well as whether there hath ever
 30 existed a monster bad enough to verify that

— *nulla virtute redemptum*
A vitiis — *

* Whose vices are not allayed with a single virtue.

in *Juvenal*: nor do I, indeed, conceive the good purposes served by inserting characters of such angelic perfection, or such diabolical depravity, in any work of invention: since from contemplating either, the mind of man is more likely to be overwhelmed with sorrow and shame, than to draw any good uses from such patterns; for in the former instance he may be both concerned and ashamed to see a pattern of excellence, in his nature, which he may reasonably despair of ever arriving at; and in contemplating the latter, he may be no less affected with those uneasy sensations, at seeing the nature, of which he is a partaker, degraded into so odious and detestable a creature.

In fact, if there be enough of goodness in a character to engage the admiration and affection of a well-disposed mind, though there should appear some of those little blemishes, *quas humana parum cavit natura*, they will raise our compassion rather than our abhorrence. Indeed, nothing can be of more moral use than the imperfections which are seen in examples of this kind; since such form a kind of surprize, more apt to affect and dwell upon our minds, than the faults of very vicious and wicked persons. The foibles and vices of men in whom there is great mixture of good, become more glaring objects, from the virtues which contrast them, and show their deformity; and when we find such vices attended with their evil consequence to our favourite characters, we are not only taught to shun them for our own sake, but to hate them for the mischiefs they have already brought on those we love.

And now, my friend, having given you these few admonitions, we will, if you please, once more set forward with our history.

XII

A CRUST FOR THE CRITICS

In our last initial chapter, we may be supposed to have treated that formidable set of men, who are called critics, with more freedom than becomes us ; since they exact, and indeed generally receive, great condescension from authors. We shall
5 in this, therefore, give the reasons of our conduct to this august body ; and here we shall perhaps place them in a light, in which they have not hitherto been seen.

This word critic is of Greek derivation, and signifies judgment. Hence I presume some persons who have not under-
10 stood the original, and have seen the English translation of the primitive, have concluded that it meant judgment in the legal sense, in which it is frequently used as equivalent to condemnation.

I am the rather inclined to be of that opinion, as the great-
15 est number of critics hath of late years been found among the lawyers. Many of these gentlemen, from despair, perhaps, of ever rising to the bench in Westminster-hall, have placed themselves on the benches at the play house, where they have exerted their judicial capacity, and have given judgment, *i.e.*
20 condemned without mercy.

The gentlemen would perhaps be well enough pleased, if we were to leave them thus compared to one of the most important and honourable offices in the commonwealth, and if we intended to apply to their favour we would do so ; but as
25 we design to deal very sincerely and plainly too with them, we must remind them of another officer of justice of a much lower rank ; to whom, as they not only pronounce, but execute their own judgment, they bear likewise some remote resemblance.

But in reality there is another light in which these modern critics may with great justice and propriety be seen; and this is that of a common slanderer. If a person who prys into the characters of others, with no other design but to discover their faults, and to publish them to the world, 5 deserves the title of a slanderer of the reputation of men; why should not a critic, who reads with the same malevolent view, be as properly styled the slanderer of the reputation of books?

Vice hath not, I believe, a more abject slave; society pro- 10 duces not a more odious vermin; nor can the devil receive a guest more worthy of him, nor possibly more welcome to him, than a slanderer. The world, I am afraid, regards not this monster with half the abhorrence which he deserves, and I am more afraid to assign the reason of this criminal lenity shown 15 towards him; yet it is certain that the thief looks innocent in the comparison; nay, the murderer himself can seldom stand in competition with his guilt: for slander is a more cruel weapon than a sword, as the wounds which the former gives are always incurable. One method, indeed, there is 20 of killing, and that the basest and most execrable of all, which bears an exact analogy to the vice here disclaimed against, and that is poison. A means of revenge so base, and yet so horrible, that it was once wisely distinguished by our laws from all other murders, in the peculiar severity of 25 the punishment.

Besides the dreadful mischiefs done by slander, and the baseness of the means by which this is effected, there are other circumstances that highly aggravate its atrocious quality: for it often proceeds from no provocation, and seldom promises 30 itself any reward, unless some black and infernal mind may propose a reward in the thoughts of having procured the ruin and misery of another.

Shakespear hath nobly touched this vice, when he says,

Who steals my cash steals trash, 't is something, nothing;

'T was mine, 't is his, and hath been slave, to thousands :

But he that filches from me my good name,

5 *Robs me of that WHICH NOT ENRICHES HIM,*

BUT MAKES ME POOR INDEED.

With all this my good reader will doubtless agree ; but much of it will probably seem too severe, when applied to the slanderer of books. But let it here be considered, that both
10 proceed from the same wicked disposition of mind, and are alike void of the excuse of temptation. Nor shall we conclude the injury done this way to be very slight, when we consider a book as the author's offspring, and indeed as the child of his brain.

15 The reader who hath suffered his muse to continue hitherto in a virgin state, can have but a very inadequate idea of this kind of paternal fondness. To such we may parody the tender exclamation of *Macduff*, *Alas ! thou hast written no book*. But the author whose muse hath brought forth, will feel the
20 pathetic strain, perhaps will accompany me with tears (especially if his darling be already no more) while I mention the uneasiness with which the big muse bears about her burden, the painful labour with which she produces it, and lastly, the care, the fondness, with which the tender father nourishes his
25 favourite, till it be brought to maturity, and produced into the world.

Nor is there any paternal fondness which seems less to savour of absolute instinct, and which may so well be reconciled to worldly wisdom as this. These children may most
30 truly be called the riches of their father ; and many of them have with true filial piety fed their parent in his old age ; so that not only the affection, but the interest of the author may

be highly injured by these slanderers, whose poisonous breath brings his book to an untimely end.

Lastly, the slander of a book is, in truth, the slander of the author : for, as no one can call another bastard, without calling the mother a whore, so neither can any one give the names of 5 sad stuff, horrid nonsense, &c. to a book, without calling the author a blockhead ; which tho' in a moral sense it is a preferable appellation to that of villain, is perhaps rather more injurious to his worldly interest.

Now however ludicrous all this may appear to some, others, 10 I doubt not, will feel and acknowledge the truth of it ; nay, may, perhaps, think I have not treated the subject with decent solemnity ; but surely a man may speak truth with a smiling countenance. In reality, to depreciate a book maliciously, or even wantonly, is at least a very ill-natured office ; 15 and a morose snarling critic, may, I believe, be suspected to be a bad man.

I will therefore endeavour in the remaining part of this chapter, to explain the marks of this character, and to shew what criticism I here intend to obviate : for I can never be under- 20 stood, unless by the very persons here meant, to insinuate, that there are no proper judges of writing, or to endeavour to exclude from the commonwealth of literature any of those noble critics, to whose labours the learned world are so greatly indebted. Such were *Aristotle*, *Horace*, and *Longinus* among 25 the ancients, *Dacier* and *Bossu* among the French, and some perhaps among us ; who have certainly been duly authorised to execute at least a judicial authority in *foro literario*.

But without ascertaining all the proper qualifications of a critic, which I have touched on elsewhere, I think I may very 30 boldly object to the censures of any one past upon works which he hath not himself read. Such censurers as these, whether they speak from their own guess or suspicion, or from the

report and opinion of others, may properly be said to slander the reputation of the book they condemn.

Such may likewise be suspected of deserving this character, who, without assigning any particular faults, condemn the whole
 5 in general defamatory terms; such as vile, dull, da—d stuff, &c. and particularly by the use of the monosyllable *low*; a word which becomes mouth of no *critic* who is not RIGHT HONOURABLE.

Again, tho' there may be some faults justly assigned in the
 10 work, yet if those are not in the most essential parts, or if they are compensated by greater beauties, it will savour rather of the malice of a slanderer, than of the judgment of a true critic, to pass a severe sentence upon the whole, merely on account of some vicious part. This is directly contrary to the
 15 sentiments of *Horace*.

*Verum ubi plura nitent in carmine non ego paucis
 Offendor maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
 Aut humana parum cavit natura ———*

But where the beauties, more in number, shine,
 20 I am not angry, when a casual line
 (That with some trivial faults unequal flows)
 A careless hand, or human frailty shows.

MR. FRANCIS.

For as *Martial* says, *aliter, non fit, avite, liber. No book can be otherwise composed.* All beauty of character, as well
 25 as of countenance, and indeed of every thing human, is to be tried in this manner. Cruel indeed would it be if such a work as this history, which hath employed some thousands of hours in the composing, should be liable to be condemned, because some particular chapter, or perhaps chapters, may be obnoxious to very just and sensible objections. And yet nothing
 30 is more common than the most rigorous sentence upon books

supported by such objections, which if they were rightly taken (and that they are not always) do by no means go to the merit of the whole. In the theatre especially, a single expression which doth not coincide with the taste of the audience, or with any individual critic of that audience, is sure to be hissed ; 5 and one scene which should be disapproved, would hazard the whole piece. To write within such severe rules as these, is as impossible, as to live up to some splenetic opinions ; and if we judge according to the sentiments of some critics, and of some Christians, no author will be saved in this world, and no 10 man in the next.

XIII

A WONDERFUL LONG CHAPTER CONCERNING
THE MARVELLOUS

As we are now entering upon a book, in which the course of our history will oblige us to relate some matters of a more strange and surprizing kind than any which have hitherto occurred, it may not be amiss in the prolegomenous, or intro- 15 ductory chapter, to say something of that species of writing which is called the marvellous. To this we shall, as well for the sake of ourselves, as of others, endeavour to set some certain bounds ; and indeed nothing can be more necessary, as criticks * of different complexions are here apt to run into very 20 different extremes ; for while some are, with *M. Dacier*, ready to allow, that the same thing which is impossible may be yet probable, † others have so little historic or poetic faith, that they believe nothing to be either possible or probable, the like to which hath not occurred to their own observation. 25

* By this word here, and in most other parts of our work, we mean every reader in the world.

† It is happy for *M. Dacier* that he was not an Irishman.

First then, I think, it may very reasonably be required of every writer, that he keeps within the bounds of possibility; and still remembers that what it is not possible for man to perform, it is scarce possible for man to believe he did perform. This conviction, perhaps, gave birth to many stories of the antient heathen deities (for most of them are of poetical original). The poet, being desirous to indulge a wanton and extravagant imagination, took refuge in that power, of the extent of which his readers were no judges, or rather which they imagined to be infinite, and consequently they could not be shocked at any prodigies related of it. This hath been strongly urged in defence of *Homer's* miracles; and it is, perhaps, a defence; not, as Mr. *Pope* would have it, because *Ulysses* told a set of foolish lies to the *Phæacians*, who were a very dull nation; but because the poet himself wrote to Heathens, to whom poetical fables were articles of faith. For my own part, I must confess, so compassionate is my temper, I wish *Polypheme* had confined himself to his milk diet, and preserved his eye; nor could *Ulysses* be much more concerned than myself, when his companions were turned into swine by *Circe*, who shewed, I think, afterwards, too much regard for man's flesh to be supposed capable of converting it into bacon. I wish, likewise, with all my heart, that *Homer* could have known the rule prescribed by *Horace* to introduce supernatural agents as seldom as possible. We should not then have seen his gods coming on trivial errands, and often behaving themselves so as not only to forfeit all title to respect, but to become the objects of scorn and derision. A conduct which must have shocked the credulity of a pious and sagacious Heathen; and which could never have been defended, unless by agreeing with a supposition to which I have been sometimes almost inclined, that this most glorious poet, as he certainly was, had an intent to burlesque the superstitious faith of his own age and country.

But I have rested too long on a doctrine which can be of no use to a Christian writer : for as he cannot introduce into his works any of that heavenly host which make a part of his creed ; so is it horrid puerility to search the heathen theology for any of those deities who have been long since dethroned 5 from their immortality. Lord *Shaftesbury* observes, that nothing is more cold than the invocation of a muse by a modern ; he might have added that nothing can be more absurd. A modern may with much more elegance invoke a ballad, as some have thought *Homer* did, or a mug of ale with the author of 10 *Hudibras* ; which latter may perhaps have inspired much more poetry as well as prose, than all the liquors of Hippocrene or Helicon.

The only supernatural agents which can in any manner be allowed to us moderns are ghosts ; but of these I would advise 15 an author to be extremely sparing. These are indeed like arsenic, and other dangerous drugs in physic, to be used with the utmost caution ; nor would I advise the introduction of them at all in those works, or by those authors to which, or to whom a horse-laugh in the reader, would be any great 20 prejudice or mortification.

As for elves and fairies, and other such mummery, I purposely omit the mention of them, as I should be very unwilling to confine within any bounds those surprizing imaginations, for whose vast capacity the limits of human nature are too 25 narrow ; whose works are to be considered as a new creation ; and who have consequently just right to do what they will with their own.

Man therefore is the highest subject (unless on very extraordinary occasions indeed) which presents itself to the pen of 30 our historian, or of our poet ; and, in relating his actions, great care is to be taken, that we do not exceed the capacity of the agent we describe.

Nor is possibility alone sufficient to justify us, we must keep likewise within the rules of probability. It is, I think, the opinion of *Aristotle*; or if not, it is the opinion of some wise man, whose authority will be as weighty when it is as old ;
 5 “that it is no excuse for a poet who relates what is incredible, that the thing related is really matter of fact.” This may perhaps be allowed true with regard to poetry, but it may be thought impracticable to extend it to the historian: for he
 10 may be of so extraordinary a nature, as will require no small degree of historical faith to swallow them. Such was the successless armament of *Xerxes*, described by *Herodotus*, or the successful expedition of *Alexander* related by *Arrian*. Such
 15 of later years was the victory of Agincourt obtained by *Harry* the Fifth, or that of *Narva*, won by *Charles* the Twelfth of Sweden. All which instances, the more we reflect on them, appear still the more astonishing.

Such facts, however, as they occur in the thread of the story ; nay, indeed, as they constitute the essential parts of it, the
 20 historian is not only justifiable in recording as they really happened ; but indeed would be unpardonable, should he omit or alter them. But there are other facts not of such consequence nor so necessary, which tho’ ever so well attested, may nevertheless be sacrificed to oblivion in complaisance to the scepticism
 25 of a reader. Such is that memorable story of the ghost of *George Villiers*, which might with more propriety have been made a present of to Dr. *Drelincourt*, to have kept the ghost of Mrs. *Veale* company, at the head of his Discourse upon
 30 Death, than have been introduced into so solemn a work as the History of the Rebellion.

To say the truth, if the historian will confine himself to what really happened, and utterly reject any circumstance, which, tho’ never so well attested, he must be well assured is false,

he will sometimes fall into the marvellous, but never into the incredible. He will often raise the wonder and surprize of his reader, but never that incredulous hatred mentioned by *Horace*. It is by falling into fiction therefore, that we generally offend 5 against this rule, of deserting probability, which the historian seldom if ever quits, till he forsakes his character, and commences a writer of romance. In this, however, those historians, who relate publick transactions, have the advantage of us who confine ourselves to scenes of private life. The credit of the former is by common notoriety supported for a long time ; 10 and public records, with the concurrent testimony of many authors bear evidence to their truth in future ages. Thus a *Trajan* and an *Antoninus*, a *Nero* and a *Caligula*, have all met with the belief of posterity ; and no one doubts but that men so very good, and so very bad, were once the masters of 15 mankind.

But we who deal in private characters, who search into the most retired recesses, and draw forth examples of virtue and vice, from holes and corners of the world, are in a more dangerous situation. As we have no public notoriety, no concurrent 20 testimony, no records to support and corroborate what we deliver, it becomes us not only to keep within the limits of possibility, but of probability too ; and this more especially in painting what is greatly good and amiable. Knavery and folly, though never so exorbitant, will more easily meet with assent : 25 for ill-nature adds great support and strength to faith.

Thus we may, perhaps, with little danger, relate the history of a *Fisher* ; who having long owed his bread to the generosity of Mr. *Derby*, and having one morning received a considerable bounty from his hands, in order to possess himself of what 30 remained in his friend's scrutoire, concealed himself in a public office of the Temple, through which there was a passage into Mr. *Derby's* chambers. Here he overheard Mr. *Derby* for

many hours solacing himself at an entertainment which he that evening gave his friends, and to which *Fisher* had been invited. During all this time, no tender, no grateful reflections arose to restrain his purpose; but when the poor gentleman had let his company out through the office, *Fisher* came suddenly from his lurking-place, and walking softly behind his friend into his chamber, discharged a pistol-ball into his head. This may be believed, when the bones of *Fisher* are as rotten as his heart. Nay, perhaps, it will be credited, that the villain went two days afterwards with some young ladies to the play of *Hamlet*; and with an unaltered countenance heard one of the ladies, who little suspected how near she was to the person, cry out, Good God! if the man that murdered Mr. *Derby* was now present! Manifesting in this a more seared and callous conscience than even *Nero* himself; of whom we are told by *Suetonius*, "that the consciousness of his guilt after the death of his mother became immediately intolerable, and so continued; nor could all the congratulations of the soldiers, of the senate, and the people, allay the horrors of his conscience."

But now, on the other hand, should I tell my reader, that I had known a man whose penetrating genius had enabled him to raise a large fortune in a way where no beginning was chalked out to him: that he had done this with the most perfect preservation of his integrity, and not only without the least injustice or injury to any one individual person, but with the highest advantage to trade, and a vast increase of the public revenue: that he had expended one part of the income of this fortune in discovering a taste superior to most, by works where the highest dignity was united with the purest simplicity, and another part in displaying a degree of goodness superior to all men, by acts of charity to objects whose only recommendations were their merits, or their wants: that he was most industrious in searching after merit in distress, most eager to relieve it, and then as careful (perhaps too careful) to conceal

what he had done : that his house, his furniture, his gardens, his table, his private hospitality, and his public beneficence all denoted the mind from which they flowed, and were all intrinsically rich and noble, without tinsel, or external ostentation : that he filled every relation in life with the most adequate 5 virtue : that he was most piously religious to his Creator, most zealously loyal to his sovereign ; a most tender husband to his wife, a kind relation, a munificent patron, a warm and firm friend, a knowing and a cheerful companion, indulgent to his servants, hospitable to his neighbours, charitable to the poor, 10 and benevolent to all mankind. Should I add to these the epithets of wise, brave, elegant, and indeed every other amiable epithet in our language, I might surely say,

— *Quis credit? nemo Hercule! nemo;
Vel duo, vel nemo.*

15

And yet I know a man who is all I have here described. But a single instance (and I really know not such another) is not sufficient to justify us, while we are writing to thousands who never heard of the person, nor of any thing like him. Such *raræ aves* should be remitted to the epitaph-writer, or to some 20 poet, who may condescend to hitch him in a distich, or to slide him into a rhyme with an air of carelessness and neglect, without giving any offence to the reader.

In the last place, the actions should be such as may not only be within the compass of human agency, and which human 25 agents may probably be supposed to do ; but they should be likely for the very actors and characters themselves to have performed : for what may be only wonderful and surprizing in one man, may become improbable, or indeed impossible, when related of another.

30

This last requisite is what the dramatic critics call conservation of character, and it requires a very extraordinary degree of judgment, and a most exact knowledge of human nature.

It is admirably remarked by a most excellent writer, that zeal can no more hurry a man to act in direct opposition to itself, than a rapid stream can carry a boat against its own current. I will venture to say, that for a man to act in direct contradiction to the dictates of nature, is, if not impossible, as improbable and as miraculous as any thing which can well be conceived. Should the best parts of the story of *M. Antoninus* be ascribed to *Nero*, or should the worst incidents of *Nero's* life be imputed to *Antoninus*, what would be more shocking to belief than either instance; whereas both these being related of their proper agent, constitute the truly marvellous.

Our modern authors of comedy have fallen almost universally into the error here hinted at: their heroes generally are notorious rogues, and their heroines abandoned jades, during the first four acts; but in the fifth, the former become very worthy gentlemen, and the latter, women of virtue and discretion: nor is the writer often so kind as to give himself the least trouble, to reconcile or account for this monstrous change and incongruity. There is, indeed, no other reason to be assigned for it, than because the play is drawing to a conclusion; as if it was no less natural in a rogue to repent in the last act of a play, than in the last of his life; which we perceive to be generally the case at Tyburn, a place which might, indeed, close the scene of some comedies with much propriety, as the heroes in these are most commonly eminent for those very talents which not only bring men to the gallows, but enable them to make an heroic figure when they are there.

Within these few restrictions, I think, every writer may be permitted to deal as much in the wonderful as he pleases; nay, the more he can surprize the reader, if he thus keeps within the rules of credibility, the more he will engage his attention, and the more he will charm him. As a genius of

the highest rank observes in his 5th chapter of the *Bathos*,
 “The great art of all poetry is to mix truth with fiction ; in
 order to join the credible with the surprizing.”

For though every good author will confine himself within
 the bounds of probability, it is by no means necessary that his 5
 characters, or his incidents, should be trite, common, or vul-
 gar ; such as happen in every street, or in every house, or
 which may be met with in the home articles of a news-paper.
 Nor must he be inhibited from shewing many persons and
 things, which may possibly have never fallen within the knowl- 10
 edge of great part of his readers. If the writer strictly
 observes the rules above-mentioned, he hath discharged his
 part ; and is then intitled to some faith from his reader, who
 is indeed guilty of critical infidelity if he disbelieves him. For
 want of a portion of such faith, I remember the character of a 15
 young lady of quality, which was condemned on the stage for
 being unnatural, by the unanimous voice of a very large assem-
 bly of clerks and apprentices ; tho’ it had the previous suf-
 frages of many ladies of the first rank ; one of whom very
 eminent for her understanding, declared it was the picture of 20
 half the young people of her acquaintance.

XIV

SHEWING WHAT IS TO BE DEEMED PLAGIARISM
 IN A MODERN AUTHOR AND WHAT IS TO
 BE CONSIDERED AS LAWFUL PRIZE

The learned reader must have observed, that in the course
 of this mighty work, I have often translated passages out of
 the best antient authors, without quoting the original, or with-
 out taking the least notice of the book from whence they were 25
 borrowed.

This conduct in writing is placed in a very proper light by the ingenious Abbé *Bannier*, in his Preface to his *Mythology*, a work of great erudition, and of equal judgment. "It will be easy," says he, "for the reader to observe, that I have frequently had greater regard to him, than to my own reputation : for an author certainly pays him a considerable compliment, when, for his sake, he suppresses learned quotations that come in his way, and which would have cost him but the bare trouble of translating."

To fill up a work with these scraps may indeed be considered as a downright cheat upon the learned world, who are by such means imposed upon to buy a second time in fragments and by retail what they have already in gross, if not in their memories, upon their shelves; and it is still more cruel upon the illiterate, who are drawn in to pay for what is of no manner of use to them. A writer who intermixes great quantity of Greek and Latin with his works, deals by the ladies and fine gentlemen in the same paultry manner with which they are treated by the auctioneers, who often endeavour so to confound and mix up their lots, that, in order to purchase what you want, you are obliged at the same time to purchase that which will do you no service.

And yet as there is no conduct so fair and disinterested, but that it may be misunderstood by ignorance, and misrepresented by malice, I have been sometimes tempted to preserve my own reputation, at the expense of my reader, and to transcribe the original, or at least to quote chapter and verse, whenever I have made use either of the thought or expression of another. I am indeed in some doubt that I have often suffered by the contrary method; and that by suppressing the original author's name, I have been rather suspected of plagiarism, than reputed to act from the amiable motive above-assigned by that justly celebrated Frenchman.

Now to obviate all such imputations for the future, I do here confess and justify the fact. The antients may be considered as a rich common, where every person who hath the smallest tenement in Parnassus hath a free right to fatten his muse. Or, to place it in a clearer light, we moderns are to the antients what the poor are to the rich. By the poor here I mean, that large and venerable body which, in English, we call the mob. Now, whoever hath had the honour to be admitted to any degree of intimacy with this mob, must well know that it is one of their established maxims, to plunder and pillage their rich neighbours without any reluctance; and that this is held to be neither sin nor crime among them. And so constantly do they abide and act by this maxim, that in every parish almost in the kingdom, there is a kind of confederacy ever carrying on against a certain person of opulence called the squire, whose property is considered as free-booty by all his poor neighbours; who, as they conclude that there is no manner of guilt in such depredations, look upon it as a point of honour and moral obligation to conceal, and to preserve each other from punishment on all such occasions.

In like manner are the ancients, such as *Homer*, *Virgil*, *Horace*, *Cicero*, and the rest, to be esteemed among us writers, as so many wealthy squires, from whom we, the poor of Parnassus, claim an immemorial custom of taking whatever we can come at. This liberty I demand, and this I am as ready to allow again to my poor neighbours in their turn. All I profess, and all I require from my brethren, is to maintain the same strict honesty among ourselves, which the mob shew to one another. To steal from one another, is indeed highly criminal and indecent; for this may be strictly styled defrauding the poor (sometimes perhaps those who are poorer than ourselves) or, to see it under the most opprobrious colours, robbing the spittal.

Since therefore upon the strictest examination, my own conscience cannot lay any such pitiful theft to my charge, I am contented to plead guilty to the former accusation ; nor shall I ever scruple to take to my self any passage which I shall find
5 in an ancient author to my purpose, without setting down the name of the author from whence it was taken. Nay, I absolutely claim a property in all such sentiments the moment they are transcribed into my writings, and I expect all readers henceforwards to regard them as purely and entirely my own.
10 This claim however I desire to be allowed me only on condition, that I preserve strict honesty towards my poor brethren, from whom if ever I borrow any of that little of which they are possessed, I shall never fail to put their mark upon it, that it may be at all times ready to be restored to the right
15 owner.

The omission of this was highly blameable in one Mr. *Moore*, who having formerly borrowed some lines of *Pope* and company, took the liberty to transcribe six of them into his play of the *Rival Modes*. Mr. *Pope* however very luckily
20 found them in the said play, and laying violent hands on his own property, transferred it back again into his own works ; and for a further punishment, imprisoned the said *Moore* in the loathsome dungeon of the *Dunciad*, where his unhappy memory now remains, and eternally will remain, as a proper
25 punishment for such his unjust dealings in the poetical trade.

XV

AN ESSAY TO PROVE THAT AN AUTHOR WILL
WRITE BETTER, FOR HAVING SOME KNOWLEDGE
OF THE SUBJECT ON WHICH HE WRITES

As several gentlemen in these times, by the wonderful force of genius only, without the least assistance of learning, perhaps, without being well able to read, have made a considerable figure in the republic of letters; the modern critics, I am told, have lately begun to assert, that all kind of learning is entirely 5
useless to a writer; and, indeed, no other than a kind of fetters on the natural spriteliness and activity of the imagination, which is thus weighed down, and prevented from soaring to those high flights which otherwise it would be able to reach.

This doctrine, I am afraid, is, at present, carried much too 10
far: for why should writing differ so much from all other arts? The nimbleness of a dancing-master is not at all prejudiced by being taught to move; nor doth any mechanic, I believe, exercise his tools the worse for knowing how to use them. For my own part, I cannot conceive that *Homer* or *Virgil* would 15
have writ with more fire, if, instead of being masters of all the learning of their times, they had been as ignorant as most of the authors of the present age. Nor do I believe that all the imagination, fire, and judgment of *Pitt* could have produced those orations that have made the senate of England in these 20
our times a rival in eloquence to Greece and Rome, if he had not been so well read in the writings of *Demosthenes* and *Cicero*, as to have transfused their whole spirit into his speeches, and with their spirit, their knowledge too.

I would not here be understood to insist on the same fund 25
of learning in any of my brethren, as *Cicero* perswades us is necessary to the composition of an orator. On the contrary,

very little reading is, I conceive, necessary to the poet, less to the critic, and the least of all to the politician. For the first, perhaps, *Bysse's Art of Poetry*, and a few of our modern poets, may suffice; for the second, a moderate heap of plays; and
5 for the last, an indifferent collection of political journals.

To say the truth, I require no more than that a man should have some little knowledge of the subject on which he treats, according to the old maxim of law, *Quam quisque norit artem in eâ se exerceat*. With this alone a writer may sometimes do
10 tolerably well; and indeed without this, all the other learning in the world will stand him in little stead.

For instance, let us suppose that *Homer* and *Virgil*, *Aristotle* and *Cicero*, *Thucydides* and *Livy*, could have met all together, and have clubbed their several talents to have com-
15 posed a treatise on the art of dancing; I believe it will be readily agreed they could not have equalled the excellent treatise which Mr. *Essex* hath given us on that subject, entitled, *The Rudiments of genteel Education*. And, indeed, should the excellent Mr. *Broughton* be prevailed on to set fist
20 to paper, and to complete the abovesaid rudiments, by delivering down the true principles of athletics, I question whether the world will have any cause to lament, that none of the great writers, either ancient or modern, have ever treated about that noble and useful art.

25 To avoid a multiplicity of examples in so plain a case, and to come at once to my point, I am apt to conceive, that one reason why many English writers have totally failed in describing the manners of upper life, may possibly be, that, in reality they know nothing of it.

30 This is a knowledge unhappily not in the power of many authors to arrive at. Books will give us a very imperfect idea of it; nor will the stage a much better: the fine gentleman formed upon reading the former will almost always turn

out a pedant, and he who forms himself upon the latter, a coxcomb.

Nor are the characters drawn from these models better supported. *Vanbrugh* and *Congreve* copied nature ; but they who copy them draw as unlike the present age, as *Hogarth* would 5 do if he was to paint a rout or a drum in the dresses of *Titian* and of *Vandyke*. In short, imitation here will not do the business. The picture must be after nature herself. A true knowledge of the world is gained only by conversation, and the manners of every rank must be seen in order to be known. 10

Now it happens that this higher order of mortals is not to be seen, like all the rest of the human species, for nothing, in the streets, shops, and coffee-houses : nor are they shewn, like the upper rank of animals, for so much a piece. In short, this is a sight to which no persons are admitted, without one or other 15 of these qualifications, viz. either birth or fortune ; or what is equivalent to both, the honourable profession of a gamester. And very unluckily for the world, persons so qualified, very seldom care to take upon themselves the bad trade of writing ; which is generally entered upon by the lower and poorer sort, 20 as it is a trade which many think requires no kind of stock to set up with.

Hence those strange monsters in lace and embroidery, in silks and brocades, with vast wigs and hoops ; which, under the name of lords and ladies, strut the stage, to the great 25 delight of attornies and their clerks in the pit, and of citizens and their apprentices in the galleries ; and which are no more to be found in real life, than the centaur, the chimera, or any other creature of mere fiction. But to let my reader into a secret, this knowledge of upper life, though very necessary 30 for preventing mistakes, is no very great resource to a writer whose province is comedy, or that kind of novels, which, like this I am writing, is of the comic class.

What Mr. *Pope* says of women is very applicable to most in this station, who are indeed so entirely made up of form and affectation, that they have no character at all, at least, none which appears. I will venture to say the highest life is much
5 the dullest, and affords very little humour or entertainment. The various callings in lower spheres produce the great variety of humorous character; whereas here, except among the few who are engaged in the pursuit of ambition, and the fewer still who have a relish for pleasure, all is vanity and servile
10 imitation. Dressing and cards, eating and drinking, bowing and curtesying, make up the business of their lives.

Some there are however of this rank, upon whom passion exercises its tyranny, and hurries them far beyond the bounds which decorum prescribes; of these, the ladies are as much
15 distinguished by their noble intrepidity, and a certain superior contempt of reputation, from the frail ones of meaner degree, as a virtuous woman of quality is by the elegance and delicacy of her sentiments from the honest wife of a yeoman or shop-keeper. Lady *Bellaston* was of this intrepid character; but
20 let not my country readers conclude from her, that this is the general conduct of women of fashion, or that we mean to represent them as such. They might as well suppose, that every clergyman was represented by *Thwackum*, or every soldier by Ensign *Northerton*.

25 There is not indeed a greater error than that which universally prevails among the vulgar, who borrowing their opinion from some ignorant satyrists, have affixed the character of lewdness to these times. On the contrary, I am convinced there never was less of love intrigue carried on among persons
30 of condition, than now. Our present women have been taught by their mothers to fix their thoughts only on ambition and vanity, and to despise the pleasures of love as unworthy their regard; and being afterwards, by the care of such mothers,

married without having husbands, they seem pretty well confirmed in the justness of those sentiments ; whence they content themselves, for the dull remainder of life, with the pursuit of more innocent, but I am afraid more childish amusements, the bare mention of which would ill suit with the dignity of this history. In my humble opinion, the true characteristick of the present *beau monde*, is rather folly than vice, and the only epithet which it deserves is that of frivolous. 5

XVI

[A LITERARY CONVERSATION IN ELYSIUM]

We pursued our way through a delicious grove of orange-trees, where I saw infinite numbers of spirits, every one of whom I knew, and was known by them : (for spirits here know one another by intuition). I presently met a little daughter whom I had lost several years before. Good Gods ! what words can describe the raptures, the melting passionate tenderness, with which we kiss'd each other, continuing in our embrace, with the most extatic joy, a space which if time had been measured here as on earth, could not be less than half a year. 15

The first spirit, with whom I entered into discourse was the famous *Leonidas* of *Sparta*. I acquainted him with the honours which had been done him by a celebrated poet of our nation ; to which he answered, he was very much obliged to him. 20

We were presently afterwards entertained with the most delicious voice I had ever heard, accompanied by a violin, equal to Signior *Piantanida*. I presently discovered the musician and songster to be *Orpheus* and *Sappho*. 25

Old *Homer* was present at this consort (if I may so call it), and Madam *Dacier* sat in his lap. He asked much after Mr. *Pope*, and said he was very desirous of seeing him: for that he had read his *Iliad* in his translation with almost as much
5 delight, as he believed he had given others in the original. I had the curiosity to enquire whether he had really writ that poem in detached pieces, and sung it about as ballads all over *Greece*, according to the report which went of him. He smiled at my question, and asked me whether there appeared any connection
10 in the poem; for if there did, he thought I might answer myself. I then importuned him to acquaint me in which of the cities, which contended for the honour of his birth he was really born? To which he answered. . . . Upon my soul I can't tell.

Virgil then came up to me, with Mr. *Addison* under his
15 arm. Well, sir, said he, how many translations have these few last years produced of my *Æneid*? I told him, I believed several, but I could not possibly remember; for that I had never read any but Dr. *Trapp's*. . . . Ay, said he, that is a curious piece indeed! I then acquainted him with the discovery
20 made by Mr. *Warburton* of the *Eleusinian* mysteries couched in his 6th book. What mysteries? said Mr. *Addison*. The *Eleusinian*, answered *Virgil*, which I have disclosed in my 6th book. How! replied *Addison*. You never mentioned a word of any such mysteries to me in all our acquaintance. I thought
25 it was unnecessary, cried the other, to a man of your infinite learning: besides, you always told me, you perfectly understood my meaning. Upon this I thought the critic looked a little out of countenance, and turned aside to a very merry spirit, one *Dick Steele*, who embraced him, and told him, He
30 had been the greatest man upon earth; that he readily resigned up all the merit of his own works to him. Upon which, *Addison* gave him a gracious smile, and clapping him on the back with much solemnity, cried out, *Well said, Dick*.

I then observed *Shakespeare* standing between *Betterton* and *Booth*, and deciding a difference between these two great actors, concerning the placing an accent in one of his lines : this was disputed on both sides with a warmth, which surprized me in *Elysium*, till I discovered by intuition, that every soul 5 retained its principal characteristic, being, indeed, its very essence. The line was that celebrated one in *Othello* ;

Put out the Light, and then put out the Light,

according to *Betterton*. Mr. *Booth* contended to have it thus ;

Put out the Light, and then put out the Light. 10

I could not help offering my conjecture on this occasion, and suggested it might perhaps be,

Put out the Light, and then put out thy Light.

Another hinted a reading very *sophisticated* in my opinion,

Put out the Light, and then put out thee, Light ; 15

making light to be the vocative case. Another would have altered the last word, and read,

Put out thy Light, and then put out thy Sight.

But *Betterton* said, if the text was to be *disturbed*, he saw no reason why a word might not be changed as well as a letter, 20 and instead of *put out thy Light*, you might read *put out thy Eyes*. At last it was agreed on all sides, to refer the matter to the decision of *Shakespeare* himself, who delivered his sentiments as follows : “ Faith, gentlemen, it is so long since I wrote the line, I have forgot my meaning. This I know, 25 could I have dreamt so much nonsense would have been talked, and writ about it, I would have blotted it out of my works : for I am sure, if any of these be my meaning, it doth me very little honour.”

He was then interrogated concerning some other ambiguous passages in his works ; but he declined any satisfactory answer : saying, if Mr. *Theobald* had not *writ about it* sufficiently, there were three or four more new editions of his plays coming out, 5 which he hoped would satisfy every one : concluding, “ I marvel nothing so much as that men will gird themselves at discovering obscure beauties in an author. Certes the greatest and most pregnant beauties are ever the plainest and most evidently striking ; and when two meanings of a passage can 10 in the least ballance our judgements which to prefer, I hold it matter of unquestionable certainty, that neither of them are worth a farthing.”

From his works our conversation turned on his monument ; upon which, *Shakespeare*, shaking his sides, and addressing 15 himself to *Milton*, cried out ; “ On my word, Brother *Milton*, they have brought a noble set of poets together, they would have been hanged erst have convened such a company at their tables, when alive.” “ True, Brother, answered *Milton*, “ unless we had been as incapable of eating then as we are now.”

XVII

COMMENTS UPON AUTHORS

As *Booth* was therefore what might well be called, in this 20 age at least, a man of learning, he began to discourse our author on subjects of literature. “ I think, sir,” says he, “ that Doctor *Swift* hath been generally allowed by the critics in this kingdom, to be the greatest master of humour that ever wrote. 25 Indeed, I allow him to have possessed most admirable talents of this kind ; and if *Rabelais* was his master, I think he proves the truth of the common *Greek* proverb — That the scholar is

often superior to the master. As to *Cervantes*, I do not think we can make any just comparison ; for, tho' Mr. *Pope* compliments him with sometimes taking *Cervantes'* serious air." "I remember the passage," cries the author ;

" *Oh thou, whatever Title please thy Ear,*
Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff or Gulliver ;
Whether you take Cervantes' serious Air,
Or laugh and shake in Rabelais' easy Chair."

5

"You are right, sir," said *Booth* ; "but tho' I should agree that the Doctor hath sometimes condescended to imitate 10 *Rabelais*, I do not remember to have seen in his works the least attempt in the manner of *Cervantes*. But there is one in his own way, and whom I am convinced he studied above all others — you guess, I believe, I am going to name *Lucian*. This author, I say, I am convinced he followed ; but I think he 15 followed him at a distance ; as, to say the truth, every other writer of this kind hath done in my opinion : for none, I think, hath yet equalled him. I agree, indeed, entirely with Mr. *Moyle*, in his Discourse on the Age of the Philopatris, when he gives him the epithet of the incomparable *Lucian* ; and 20 incomparable I believe he will remain as long as the language in which he wrote shall endure. What an inimitable piece of humour is his *Cock*." — "I remember it very well," cries the author, "his story of a Cock and a Bull is excellent." *Booth* stared at this, and asked the author what he meant by the 25 Bull? "Nay," answered he, "I don't know very well upon my soul. It is a long time since I read him. I learnt him all over at school, I have not read him much since. And pray, sir," said he, "how do you like his *Pharsalia*? Don't you think Mr. *Rowe's* translation a very fine one?" *Booth* replied, 30 "I believe we are talking of different authors. The *Pharsalia*, which Mr. *Rowe* translated was written by *Lucan* ; but I have

been speaking of *Lucian*, a *Greek* writer, and in my opinion the greatest in the humorous way, that ever the world produced." "Ay!" cries the author, "he was indeed so, a very excellent writer indeed. I fancy a translation of him would sell very
 5 well." "I do not know, indeed," cries *Booth*. "A good translation of him would be a valuable book. I have seen a wretched one published by Mr. *Dryden*, but translated by others, who in many places have misunderstood *Lucian's* meaning, and have no where preserved the spirit of the original." "That is
 10 great pity," says the author. "Pray, sir, is he well translated into *French*?" *Booth* answered, he could not tell; but that he doubted it very much, having never seen a good version into that language, out of the *Greek*. "To confess the truth, I believe," said he, "the *French* translators have generally
 15 consulted the *Latin* only; which, in some of the few *Greek* writers I have read, is intolerably bad. And as the *English* translators, for the most part, pursue the *French*, we may easily guess, what spirit those copies of bad copies must preserve of the original."

20 "Egad, you are a shrewd guesser," cries the author, "I am glad the booksellers have not your sagacity. But how should it be otherwise, considering the price they pay by the sheet? The *Greek*, you will allow, is a hard language; and there are few gentlemen that write, who can read it without a
 25 good lexicon. Now, sir, if we were to afford time to find out the true meaning of words, a gentleman would not get bread and cheese by his work. If one was to be paid, indeed, as Mr. *Pope* was for his *Homer*. Pray, sir, don't you think that the best translation in the world?"

30 "Indeed, sir," cries *Booth*, "I think, tho' it is certainly a noble paraphrase, and of itself a fine poem, yet, in some places it is no translation at all. In the very beginning, for instance, he hath not rendered the true force of the author. *Homer*

invokes his muse in the first five lines of the *Iliad* ; and, at the end of the fifth, he gives his reason :

Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή.

For all these things," says he, "were brought about by the decree of *Jupiter*; and, therefore, he supposes their true sources are known only to the deities. Now, the translation takes no more notice of the ΔΕ than if no such word had been there." 5

"Very possibly," answered the author; "it is a long time since I read the original. Perhaps, then, he followed the *French* translations. I observe, indeed, he talks much in the notes of 10 *Madam Dacier* and *Monsieur Eustathius*."

Booth had now received conviction enough of his friend's knowledge of the *Greek* language; without attempting therefore, to set him right, he made a sudden transition to the *Latin*. "Pray, sir," said he, "as you have mentioned *Rowe's* translation 15 of the *Pharsalia*, do you remember how he hath rendered that passage in the character of *Cato* ?

— *Venerisque huic maximus Usus
Progenies; urbi Pater est, urbique Maritus.*

For I apprehend that passage is generally misunderstood." 20

"I really do not remember," answered the author. "Pray, sir, what do you take to be the meaning?"

"I apprehend, sir," replied *Booth*, "that, by these words, *Urbi Pater est, urbique Maritus*, *Cato* is represented as the father and husband to the city of *Rome*." 25

"Very true, sir," cries the author; "very fine, indeed. Not only the father of his country, but the husband too; very noble, truly."

"Pardon me, sir," cries *Booth*; "I do not conceive that to have been *Lucan's* meaning. If you please to observe the con- 30 text; *Lucan* having commended the temperance of *Cato*, in

the instances of diet and cloaths, proceeds to venereal pleasures ; of which, says the poet, his principal use was procreation : then he adds, *Urbi Pater est, urbique Maritus*, That he became a father and a husband for the sake only of the city."

5 "Upon my word, that's true," cries the author, "I did not think of it. It is much finer than the other. — *Urbis Pater est*— what is the other? — ay — *Urbis Maritus*. — It is certainly as you say, sir."

Booth was, by this, pretty well satisfied of the author's pro-
10 found learning ; however, he was willing to try him a little further. He asked him, therefore, what was his opinion of *Lucan* in general, and in what class of writers he ranked him?

The author stared a little at this question ; and after some hesitation, answered, "Certainly, sir, I think he is a fine writer
15 and a very great poet."

"I am very much of the same opinion, cries *Booth* ; but where do you class him—next to what poet do you place him?"

"Let me see," cries the author, "where do I class him ! next to whom do I place him ! — Ay ! — why ! — why, pray,
20 where do you yourself place him?"

"Why, surely," cries *Booth* ; "if he is not to be placed in the first rank with *Homer*, and *Virgil*, and *Milton* — I think clearly, he is at the head of the second ; before either *Statius* or *Silius Italicus*. — Tho' I allow to each of these their merits ;
25 but, perhaps, an epic poem was beyond the genius of either. I own I have often thought, if *Statius* had ventured no farther than *Ovid* or *Claudian*, he would have succeeded better ; for his *Sylvæ* are, in my opinion, much better than his *Thebais*."

"I believe I was of the same opinion formerly," said the
30 author.

"And for what reason have you altered it?" cries *Booth*.

"I have not altered it," answered the author ; "but, to tell you the truth, I have not any opinion at all about these matters

at present. I do not trouble my head much with poetry: for there is no encouragement to such studies in this age. It is true, indeed, I have now and then wrote a poem or two for the magazines; but I never intend to write any more: for a gentleman is not paid for his time. A sheet is a sheet with the booksellers; and, whether it be in prose or verse, they make no difference; tho' certainly there is as much difference to a gentleman in the work, as there is to a taylor, between making a plain and a laced suit. Rhimes are difficult things; they are stubborn things, sir, I have been sometimes longer in tagging a couplet, than I have been in writing a speech on the side of the opposition, which hath been read with great applause all over the kingdom."

"I am glad you are pleased to confirm that," cries *Booth*; "for I protest, it was an entire secret to me till this day. I was so perfectly ignorant, that I thought the speeches, published in the magazines, were really made by the members themselves."

"Some of them, and I believe I may, without vanity, say, the best," cries the author, "are all the production of my own pen! but, I believe, I shall leave it off soon, unless a sheet of speech will fetch more than it does at present. In truth, the romance writing is the only branch of our business now, that is worth following. Goods of that sort have had so much success lately in the market, that a bookseller scarce cares what he bids for them. And it is certainly the easiest work in the world; you may write it almost as fast as you can set pen to paper; and if you interlard it with a little scandal, a little abuse on some living characters of note, you cannot fail of success."

"Upon my word, sir," cries *Booth*, "you have greatly instructed me. I could not have imagined, there had been so much regularity in the trade of writing, as you are pleased to mention; by what I can perceive, the pen and ink is likely to become the staple commodity of the kingdom."

“Alas! sir,” answered the author, “it is overstocked — The market is overstocked. There is no encouragement to merit, no patrons. I have been these five years soliciting a subscription for my new translation of *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, with 5 notes explanatory, historical, and critical; and I have scarce collected five hundred names yet.”

The mention of this translation a little surprised *Booth*; not only as the author had just declared his intentions to forsake the tuneful muses; but for some other reasons, which he had 10 collected from his conversation with our author, he little expected to hear of a proposal to translate any of the *Latin* poets. He proceeded, therefore, to catechise him a little farther; and by his answers was fully satisfied, that he had the very same acquaintance with *Ovid*, that he had appeared to have with 15 *Lucan*.

XVIII

[THE LITERARY REPUBLIC]

Οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη· εἰς κοίρανος ἔστω,
 Εἰς βασιλεὺς, ᾧ ἔδωκε Κρόνου παῖς ἀγκυλομήτεω
 Σκῆπτρόν τ' ἠδὲ θέμιστας, ἵνα σφίσιν ἐμβασιλεύῃ.

HOMER.

— *Here is not allow'd*

*That worst of tyrants, an usurping crowd.
 To one sole monarch Jove commits the sway;
 His are the laws, and him let all obey.*

POPE.

Though of the three forms of government acknowledged in the schools, all have been very warmly opposed, and as warmly 25 defended; yet, in this point, the different advocates will, I believe, very readily agree, that there is not one of the three which is not greatly to be preferred to a total anarchy; a state in which there is no subordination, no lawful power, and no

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settled government; but where every man is at liberty to act in whatever manner it pleaseth him best.

* As this is in reality a most deplorable state, I have long lamented, with great anguish of heart, that it is at present the case of a very large body of people in this kingdom. An assertion which, as it may surprize most of my readers, I will make haste to explain, by declaring that I mean the fraternity of the quill, that body of men to whom the publick assign the name of authors. 5

However absurd politicians may have been pleased to represent the *imperium in imperio*, it will here, I doubt not, be found on a strict examination to be extremely necessary. The commonwealth of literature being indeed totally distinct from the greater common-wealth, and no more dependent upon it than the kingdom of England is on that of France. Of this our legislature seems to have been at all times sensible, as they have never attempted any provision for the regulation or correction of this body. In one instance, it is true, there are (I should rather, I believe, say there were) some laws to restrain them: for writers, if I am not mistaken, have been formerly punished for blasphemy against God, and libels against the government; nay I have been told, that to slander the reputation of private persons, was once thought unlawful here as well as among the Romans, who, as Horace tells us, had a severe law for this purpose. 15 20 25

In promulging these laws (whatever may be the reason of suffering them to grow obsolete) the state seems to have acted very wisely; as such kind of writings are really of most mischievous consequence to the publick; but alas! there are many abuses, many horrid evils, daily springing up in the commonwealth of literature, which appear to affect only that commonwealth, at least immediately, of which none of the political legislators have ever taken any notice; nor hath any 30

civil court of judicature ever pretended to any cognizance of them. Nonsense and dulness are no crimes in *foro civili*: no man can be questioned for bad verses in Westminster-hall; and amongst the many indictments for battery, not one can be
5 produced for breaking poor Priscian's head, though it is done almost every day.

But though immediately, as I have said, these evils do not affect the greater commonwealth; yet as they tend to the utter ruin of the lesser, so they have a remote evil conse-
10 quence, even on the state itself; which seems by having left them unprovided for, to have remitted them, for the sake of convenience, to the government of laws, and to the superintendence of magistrates of this lesser commonwealth; and never to have foreseen or suspected that dreadful state of
15 anarchy, which at present prevails in this lesser empire; an empire which hath formerly made so great a figure in this kingdom, and that indeed almost within our own memories.

It may appear strange, that none of our English historians have spoken clearly and distinctly of this lesser empire; but
20 this may be well accounted for, when we consider that all these histories have been written by two sorts of persons; that is to say, either politicians or lawyers. Now the former of these have had their imaginations so entirely filled with the affairs of the greater empire, that it is no wonder the busi-
25 ness of the lesser should have totally escaped their observation. And as to the lawyers, they are well known to have been very little acquainted with the commonwealth of literature, and to have always acted and written in defiance to its laws.

30 From these reasons it is very difficult to fix, with certainty, the exact period when this commonwealth first began among us. Indeed, if the originals of all the greater empires upon earth, and even of our own, be wrapped in such obscurity

that they elude the enquiries of the most diligent sifters of antiquity, we cannot be surprised that this fate should attend our little empire, opposed as it hath been by the pen of the lawyer, overlooked by the eye of the historian, and never once smelt after by the nose of the antiquarian.

5

In the earliest ages, the literary state seems to have been an ecclesiastical democracy: for the clergy are then said to have had all the learning among them; and the great reverence paid at that time to it by the laity, appears from hence, that whoever could prove in a court of justice that he belonged to this state, 10 by only reading a single verse in the Testament, was vested with the highest privileges, and might do almost what he pleased; even commit murder with impunity. And this privilege was called the benefit of the clergy.

This commonwealth, however, can scarce be said to have 15 been in any flourishing state of old time, even among the clergy themselves; inasmuch as we are told, that a rector of a parish going to law with his parishioners about paving the church, quoted this authority from St. Peter, *Paveant illi, non paveam ego*. Which he construed thus: "They are to pave 20 the church, and not I." And this by a judge, who was likewise an ecclesiastic, was allowed to be very good law.

The nobility had clearly no antient connection with this commonwealth, nor would submit to be bound by any of its laws, witness that provision in an old act of parliament; "that 25 a nobleman shall be entitled to the benefit of his clergy (the privilege above-mentioned) even though he cannot read." Nay the whole body of the laity, though they gave such honours to this commonwealth, appear to have been very few of them under its jurisdiction; as appears by a law cited by 30 judge Rolls in his Abridgment, with the reason which he gives for it: "The command of the sheriff, says this writer, to his officer by word of mouth, and without writing, is good; for it

may be, that neither the sheriff nor his officer can write or read.”

But not to dwell on these obscure times, when so very little authentic can be found concerning this commonwealth, let us
5 come at once to the days of Henry the eighth, when no less a revolution happened in the lesser than in the greater empire : for the literary government became absolute together with the political, in the hands of one and the same monarch ; who was himself a writer, and dictated not only law but common
10 sense too, to all his people ; suffering no one to write or speak but according to his own will and pleasure.

After this king’s demise, the literary commonwealth was again separated from the political ; for I do not find that his successor on the greater throne, succeeded him likewise in the
15 lesser. Nor did either of the two queens, as I can learn, pretend to any authority in this empire, in which the salique law hath universally prevailed ; for though there have been some considerable subjects of the female sex in the literary commonwealth, I never remember to have read of a queen.

It is not easy to say with any great exactness what form
20 of government was preserved in this commonwealth during the reigns of Edward VI, Queen Mary, and Queen Elizabeth ; for though there were some great men in those times, none of them seemed to have affected the throne of wit : nay, Shake-
25 speare, who flourished in the latter end of the last reign, and who seemed so justly qualified to enjoy this crown, never thought of challenging it.

In the reign of James I. the literary government was an aristocracy, for I do not chuse to give it the evil name of
30 oligarchy, though it consisted only of four, namely, master William Shakespeare, master Benjamin Johnson, master John Fletcher, and master Francis Beaumont. This quadrumvirate, as they introduced a new form of government, thought proper

according to Machiavel's advice, to introduce new names ; they therefore called themselves *the wits*, a name which hath been affected since by the reigning monarchs in this empire.

The last of this quadrumvirate enjoyed the government alone during his life ; after which the troubles that shortly 5 after ensued, involved this lesser commonwealth in all the confusion and ruin of the greater, nor can anything be found of it with sufficient certainty, till the *wits* in the reign of Charles the second, after many struggles among themselves for superiority, at last agreed to elect John Dryden to be their 10 king.

This King John had a very long reign, though a very unquiet one ; for there were several pretenders to the throne of wit in his time, who formed very considerable parties against him, and gave him great uneasiness, of which his successor hath 15 made mention in the following lines :

Pride, folly, malice, against Dryden rose,
In various shapes of parsons, critics, beaus.

Besides which, his finances were in such disorder, that it is affirmed his treasury was more than once entirely empty. 20

He died nevertheless in a good old age, possessed of the kingdom of wit, and was succeeded by king Alexander, sur-named Pope.

This prince enjoyed the crown many years, and is thought to have stretched the prerogative much farther than his pred- 25 ecessor : he is said to have been extremely jealous of the affections of his subjects, and to have employed various spies, by whom, if he was informed of the least suggestion against his title, he never failed of branding the accused person with the word *dunce* on his forehead in broad letters ; after which 30 the unhappy culprit was obliged to lay by his pen for ever ; for no bookseller would venture to print a word that he wrote.

He did indeed put a total restraint on the liberty of the press: for no person durst read any thing which was writ without his licence and approbation; and this licence he granted only to four during his reign, namely, to the celebrated Dr. Swift, to the ingenious Dr. Young, to Dr. Arbuthnot, and to one Mr. Gay, four of his principal courtiers and favourites.

But without diving any deeper into his character, we must allow that king Alexander had great merit as a writer, and his title to the kingdom of wit was better founded at least than his enemies have pretended.

After the demise of king Alexander, the literary state relapsed again into a democracy, or rather indeed into downright anarchy; of which, as well as of the consequences, I shall treat in a future paper.

XIX

[THE PURPOSE OF LETTERS]

15

*At nostri proavi Plautinos et numeros, et
Laudevere sales; nimium patienter utrumque,
Ne dicam stultè, mirati.*

MODERNIZED

*In former times this tasteless, silly town
Too fondly prais'd Tom D'Urfey and Tom Brown.*

The present age seems pretty well agreed in an opinion, that the utmost scope and end of reading is amusement only; and such, indeed, are now the fashionable books, that a reader can propose no more than mere entertainment, and it is sometimes very well for him if he finds even this in his studies.

Letters, however, were surely intended for a much more noble and profitable purpose than this. Writers are not, I presume, to be considered as mere jack-puddings, whose business

it is only to excite laughter: this, indeed, may sometimes be intermixed, and served up, with graver matters, in order to titillate the palate, and to recommend wholesome food to the mind; and, for this purpose, it hath been used by many excellent authors: “for why,” as Horace says, “should not any one promulgate truth with a smile on his countenance?” Ridicule indeed, as he again intimates, is commonly a stronger and better method of attacking vice, than the severer kind of satire. 5

When wit and humour are introduced for such good purposes, when the agreeable is blended with the useful, then is the writer said to have succeeded in every point. Pleasantry, (as the ingenious author of *Clarissa* says of a story) should be made only the vehicle of instruction; and thus romances themselves, as well as Epic Poems, may become worthy the perusal of the greatest of men: but when no moral, no lesson, no instruction is conveyed to the reader, where the whole design of the composition is no more than to make us laugh, the writer comes very near to the character of a buffoon; and his admirers, if an old Latin proverb be true, deserve no great compliments to be paid to their wisdom. 15 20

After what I have here advanced, I cannot fairly, I think, be represented as an enemy to laughter, or to all those kinds of writing that are apt to promote it. On the contrary, few men, I believe, do more admire the works of those great masters who have sent their satire (if I may use the expression) laughing into the world. Such are that great Triumvirate, Lucian, Cervantes, and Swift. These authors I shall ever hold in the highest degree of esteem; not indeed for that wit and humour alone which they all so eminently possess, but because they all endeavoured, with the utmost force of their wit and humour, to expose and extirpate those follies and vices which chiefly prevailed in their several countries. 25 30

I would not be thought to confine wit and humour to these writers. Shakespeare, Moliere, and some other authors, have been blessed with the same talents, and have employed them to the same purposes. There are some, however, who, though
 5 not void of these talents, have made so wretched a use of them, that, had the consecration of their labours been committed to the hands of the hangman, no good man would have regretted their loss: nor am I afraid to mention Rabelais, and Aristophanes himself in this number. For, if I may speak my
 10 opinion freely of these two last writers, and of their works, their design appears to me very plainly to have been to ridicule all sobriety, modesty, decency, virtue and religion, out of the world. Now whoever reads over the five great writers first mentioned in this paragraph, must either have a very bad
 15 head, or a very bad heart, if he doth not become both a wiser and a better man.

In the exercise of the mind, as well as in the exercise of the body, diversion is a secondary consideration, and designed only to make that agreeable, which is at the same time useful,
 20 to such noble purposes as health and wisdom. But what should we say to a man who mounted his chamber hobby, or fought with his own shadow for his amusement only? how much more absurd and weak would he appear, who swallowed poison because it was sweet?
 25 How differently did Horace think of study from our modern readers?

*Quid verum atque decens curo et rogo, et omnis in hoc sum :
 Condo et compono, quae mox depromere possim.*

“Truth and decency are my whole care and enquiry. In
 30 this study I am entirely occupied; these I am always laying up, and so disposing, that I can at any time draw forth my stores for my immediate use.” The whole epistle indeed, from

which I have paraphrased this passage, is a comment upon it, and affords many useful lessons of philosophy.

When we are employed in reading a great and good author, we ought to consider ourselves as searching after treasures, which, if well and regularly laid up in the mind, will be of use to us on sundry occasions in our lives. If a man, for instance, should be overloaded with prosperity or adversity, (both of which cases are liable to happen to us) who is there so very wise, or so very foolish, that, if he was a master of Seneca and Plutarch, could not find great matter of comfort and utility from their doctrines? I mention these rather than Plato and Aristotle, as the works of the latter are not, I think, yet completely made English; and, consequently, are less within the reach of most of my countrymen.

But, perhaps, it may be asked, will Seneca or Plutarch make us laugh? perhaps not; but if you are not a fool, my worthy friend, which I can hardly with civility suspect, they will both, (the latter especially) please you more than if they did. For my own part, I declare, I have not read even Lucian himself with more delight than I have Plutarch; but surely it is astonishing that such scriblers as Tom Brown, Tom D'Urfy, and the wits of our age should find readers, whilst the writings of so excellent, so entertaining, and so voluminous an author as Plutarch remain in the world, and, as I apprehend, are very little known.

The truth I am afraid is, that real taste is a quality with which human nature is very slenderly gifted. It is indeed so very rare, and so little known, that scarce two authors have agreed in their notions of it; and those who have endeavoured to explain it to others, seem to have succeeded only in shewing us that they knew it not themselves. If I might be allowed to give my own sentiments, I should derive it from a nice harmony between the imagination and the judgment; and hence

perhaps it is, that so few have ever possessed this talent in any eminent degree. Neither of these will alone bestow it ; nothing is indeed more common than to see men of very bright imaginations, and of very accurate learning (which can hardly
5 be acquired without judgment) who are entirely devoid of taste ; and Longinus, who of all men seems most exquisitely to have possessed it, will puzzle his reader very much if he should attempt to decide, whether imagination or judgment shine the brighter in that inimitable critic.

10 But as for the bulk of mankind, they are clearly void of any degree of taste. It is a quality in which they advance very little beyond a state of infancy. The first thing a child is fond of in a book, is a picture ; the second is a story ; and the third a jest. Here then is the true Pons Asinorum, which very
15 few readers ever get over.

From what I have said, it may perhaps be thought to appear, that true taste is the real gift of nature only ; and if so, some may ask to what purpose have I endeavoured to show men that they are without a blessing, which it is impossible for them to attain ?

20 Now, though it is certain that to the highest consummation of taste, as well as of every other excellence, nature must lend much assistance ; yet great is the power of art almost of itself, or at best with only slender aids from nature ; and to say the truth, there are very few who have not in their minds some
25 small seeds of taste. "All men (says Cicero) have a sort of tacit sense of what is right or wrong in arts and sciences, even without the help of arts." This surely it is in the power of art very greatly to improve. That most men therefore proceed no farther than as I have above declared, is owing either to
30 the want of any, or (what is perhaps yet worse) to an improper education.

I shall, probably, therefore, in a future paper, endeavour to lay down some rules by which all men may acquire, at least,

some degree of taste. In the mean while, I shall, (according to the method observed in inoculation) recommend to my readers, as a preparative for their receiving my instructions, a total abstinence from all bad books. I do therefore most earnestly intreat all my young readers, that they would cautiously avoid the perusal of any modern book till it hath first had the sanction of some wise and learned man ; and the same caution I propose to all fathers, mothers, and guardians.

“ Evil communications corrupt good manners,” is a quotation of St. Paul from Menander. *Evil books corrupt at once both our manners and our taste.*

XX

SHEWING THE WHOLESOME USES DRAWN FROM
RECORDING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THOSE
WONDERFUL PRODUCTIONS OF NATURE
CALLED GREAT MEN

As it is necessary that all great and surprizing events, the designs of which are laid, conducted, and brought to perfection by the utmost force of human invention and art, should be managed by great and eminent men, so the lives of such may be justly and properly styled the quintessence of history. In these, when delivered to us by sensible writers, we are not only most agreeably entertained, but usefully instructed ; for besides the attaining hence a consummate knowledge of human nature in general ; its secret springs, various windings and perplexed mazes ; we have here before our eyes, lively examples of whatever is amiable or detestable, worthy of admiration or abhorrence, and are consequently taught in a manner infinitely more effectual than by precept, what we are eagerly to imitate or carefully to avoid.

But besides the two obvious advantages of surveying as it were in a picture, the true beauty of virtue, and deformity of vice, we may moreover learn from *Plutarch*, *Nepos*, *Suetonius*, and other biographers this useful lesson, not too hastily nor
 5 in the gross to bestow either our praise or censure: since we shall often find such a mixture of good and evil in the same character, that it may require a very accurate judgment and elaborate inquiry to determine which side the ballance turns: for tho' we sometimes meet with an *Aristides* or a *Brutus*, a
 10 *Lysander* or a *Nero*, yet far the greater number are of the mixt kind; neither totally good nor bad; their greatest virtues being obscured and allayed by their vices, and those again softened and coloured over by their virtues.

Of this kind was the illustrious person whose history we here
 15 now undertake; who, as he was embellished with many of the greatest and noblest endowments, so these could not well be said to be absolutely pure and without allay. If we view one side of his character only, he must be acknowledged equal, if not superior to most of the heroes of antiquity: but if we turn
 20 to the reverse, it must be confessed our admiration will be a little abated, and his character will savour rather of the weakness of modern than the uniform greatness of ancient heroes.

We would not therefore be understood to affect giving the reader a perfect or consummate pattern of human virtue; but
 25 rather by faithfully recording the little imperfections which somewhat darkened the lustre of his great qualities, to teach the lesson we have above mentioned, and induce our reader with us to lament the frailty of human nature, and to convince him that no mortal, after a thorough scrutiny, can be a proper
 30 object of our adoration.

But before we enter on this great work, we must endeavour to remove some errors of opinion which mankind have by the disingenuity of writers contracted: for those from their fear

of attacking or contradicting the obsolete doctrines of a set of simple fellows called, in derision, sages or philosophers, have endeavoured as much as possible, to confound the ideas of greatness and goodness, whereas no two things can possibly be more distinct from each other. For greatness consists in bringing all manner of mischief on mankind, and goodness in removing it from them. Now, tho' the writer, if he will confine himself to truth, is obliged to draw a perfect picture of the former in all the actions which he records of his hero, yet to reconcile his work with those absurd doctrines abovementioned, he is ever guilty of interspersing reflections in reality to the disadvantage of that great perfection, uniformity of character; for instance, in the histories of *Alexander* and *Cæsar*, we are frequently reminded of their benevolence and generosity. When the former had with fire and sword overrun a whole empire, and destroyed the lives of millions of innocent people, we are told as an example of his benevolence, that he did not cut the throat of an old woman, and ravish her daughters whom he had before undone: And when the mighty *Cæsar* had with wonderful greatness of mind destroyed the liberties of his country, and gotten all the power into his own hands, we receive, as an evidence of his generosity, his largesses to his followers and tools, by whose means he had accomplished his purpose, and by whose assistance he was to establish it.

Now who doth not see that such sneaking qualities as these are rather to be bewailed as imperfections than admired as ornaments in those great men, rather obscuring their glory and holding them back in their race to greatness, and unworthy the end for which they seem to have come into the world, *viz.* of perpetrating vast and mighty mischief?

We hope our reader will have reason justly to acquit us of any such confounding ideas in the following pages, in which,

as we are to record the actions of a great man, so we have no where mentioned any spark of goodness which hath discovered itself either faintly in him, or more glaringly in any other person, but as a meanness and imperfection, disqualifying them
 5 for undertakings which lead to honour and esteem among men.

As our hero had as little as perhaps is to be found of that meanness, indeed only enough to make him partaker of the imperfection of humanity, and not the perfection of *dæmonism*,
 10 we have ventured to call him THE GREAT; nor do we doubt but our reader will, when he hath perused his story, concur with us in allowing him that title.

XXI

[THE CHARACTER OF A GREAT THIEF]

We will now endeavor to draw the character of this GREAT MAN, and by bringing together those several features as it
 15 were of his mind, which lie scattered up and down in this history, to present our readers with a perfect picture of GREATNESS.

Jonathan Wild had every qualification necessary to form a GREAT MAN: As his most powerful and predominant
 20 passion was ambition, so nature had with consummate propriety, adapted all his faculties to the attaining those glorious ends, to which this passion directed him. He was extremely ingenious in inventing designs; artful in contriving the means to accomplish his purposes, and resolute in execut-
 25 ing them: For, as the most exquisite cunning, and most undaunted boldness qualified him for any undertaking, so was he not restrained by any of those weaknesses which disappoint the views of mean and vulgar souls, and which are compre-

hended in one general term of Honesty, which is a corruption of *Honosty*, a word derived from what the *Greeks* call an *ass*. He was entirely free from those low vices of modesty and good-nature, which, as he said, implied a total negative of human GREATNESS, and were the only qualities which absolutely rendered a man incapable of making a considerable figure in the world. His lust was inferior only to his ambition ; but, as for what simple people call love, he knew not what it was. His avarice was immense ; but it was of the rapacious, not of the tenacious kind ; his rapaciousness was indeed so violent, that nothing ever contented him but the whole ; for, however considerable the share was, which his coadjutors allowed him of a booty, he was restless in inventing means to make himself master of the meanest pittance reserved by them. He said, Laws were made for the use of *prigs* only, and to secure their property ; they were never therefore more perverted, than when their edge was turned against these ; but that this generally happened through their want of sufficient dexterity. The character which he most valued himself upon, and which he principally honoured in others, was that of hypocrisy. His opinion was, that no one could carry *priggism* very far without it ; for which reason, he said, there was little GREATNESS to be expected in a man who acknowledged his vices ; but always much to be hoped from him, who professed great virtues ; wherefore, though he would always shun the person whom he discovered guilty of a good action, yet he was never deterred by a good character, which was more commonly the effect of profession than of action : For which reason, he himself was always very liberal of honest professions, and had as much virtue and goodness in his mouth as a saint ; never in the least scrupling to swear by his honour, even to those who knew him the best ; nay, tho' he held good-nature and modesty in the highest contempt, he constantly practised

the affectation of both, and recommended it to others, whose welfare, on his own account, he wished well to. He laid down several maxims, as the certain methods of attaining GREATNESS, to which, in his own pursuit of it, he constantly
5 adhered. As

1. NEVER to do more mischief to another, than was necessary to the effecting his purpose ; for that mischief was too precious a thing to be thrown away.
2. To know no distinction of men from affection ; but to sacrifice
10 all with equal readiness to his interest.
3. NEVER to communicate more of an affair than was necessary, to the person who was to execute it.
4. NOT to trust him, who had deceived him, nor who knew he had been deceived by him.
- 15 5. To forgive no enemy ; but to be cautious and often dilatory in revenge.
6. To shun poverty and distress, and to ally himself, as close as possible, to power and riches.
7. To maintain a constant gravity in his countenance and behav-
20 iour, and to affect wisdom on all occasions.
8. To foment eternal jealousies in his gang, one of another.
9. NEVER to reward any one equal to his merit ; but always to insinuate, that the reward was above it.
10. THAT all men were knaves or fools, and much the greater
25 number a composition of both.
11. THAT a good name, like money, must be parted with, or at least greatly risked, in order to bring the owner any advantage.
12. THAT virtues, like precious stones, were easily counterfeited ;
30 that counterfeits in both cases adorned the wearer equally, and that very few had knowledge or discernment sufficient to distinguish the counterfeit jewel from the real.
13. THAT many men were undone by not going deep enough in roguery, as in gaming any man may be the loser who doth
35 not play the whole game.

14. THAT men proclaim their own virtues, as shopkeepers expose their goods, in order to profit by them.
15. THAT the heart was the proper seat of hatred, and the countenance of affection and friendship.

He had many more of the same kind, all equally good with these, and which were after his decease found in his study, as the twelve excellent and celebrated rules were in that of King *Charles* the first; for he never promulgated them in his life time, not having them constantly in his mouth, as some grave persons have the rules of virtue and morality, without paying the least regard to them in their actions; whereas our hero, by a constant and steady adherence to his rules in conforming every thing he did to them, acquired at last a settled habit of walking by them, till at last he was in no danger of inadvertently going out of the way; and by these means he arrived at that degree of GREATNESS, which few have equalled; none, we may say, have exceeded: For, tho' it must be allowed that there have been some few heroes, who have done greater mischiefs to mankind, such as those who have betrayed the liberties of their country to others, or have undermined and over-powered it themselves, or conquerors who have impoverished, pillaged, sacked, burnt, and destroyed the countries and cities of their fellow creatures, from no other provocation than that of glory; *i.e.* as the tragic poet calls it,

A Privilege to kill,
A strong Temptation to do bravely ill.

yet, if we consider it in the light wherein actions are placed in this line,

Lætius est, quoties magno tibi constat honestum.

when we see him, without the least assistance or pretence, setting himself at the head of a gang, which he had not any

shadow of right to govern ; if we view him maintaining absolute power, and exercising tyranny over a lawless crew, contrary to all law, but that of his own will. If we consider him setting up an open trade publicly, in defiance, not only of the
 5 laws of his country but of the common sense of his countrymen ; if we see him first contriving the robbery of others, and again the defrauding the very robbers of that booty, which they had ventured their necks to acquire, and which without any hazard they might have retained : Here sure he must appear
 10 admirable, and we may challenge not only the truth of history, but almost the latitude of fiction, to equal it.

XXII

[MATTERS POLITICAL]

“How can it be otherwise? says the peer. Do you think it is possible to provide for all men of merit?”

“Yes, surely do I,” said the Doctor. “And very easily
 15 too.”

“How pray? — cries the Lord — “Upon my word, I shall be glad to know.”

“Only by not providing for those of none — The men of merit in any capacity are not I am afraid so extremely numer-
 20 ous, that we need starve any of them, unless we wickedly suffer a set of worthless fellows to eat their bread.”

“This is all mere *Utopia*, cries his Lordship. The chimerical system of *Plato's* Commonwealth with which we amused ourselves at the university ; politics which are inconsistent
 25 with the state of human affairs.”

“Sure, my Lord, cries the Doctor, we have read of states where such doctrines have been put in practice. What is your Lordship's opinion of *Rome* in the earlier ages of the

commonwealth, of *Sparta*, and even of *Athens* itself, in some periods of its history?"

"Indeed, Doctor, cries the Lord, all these notions are obsolete and long since exploded. To apply maxims of government drawn from the *Greek* and *Roman* histories, to this nation, is absurd and impossible. But if you will have *Roman* examples, fetch them from times like our own. Do you not know, Doctor, that this is as corrupt a nation as ever existed under the sun? And would you think of governing such a people by the strict principles of honesty and morality?" 10

"If it be so corrupt, said the Doctor, I think it is high time to amend it. Or else it is easy to foresee the consequence: for corruption in the body politic as naturally tends to dissolution as in the natural body."

"I thank you for your simile, cries my Lord: for in the natural body, I believe, you will allow there is the season of youth, the season of manhood, and the season of old age; and that, when the last of these arrives, it will be an impossible attempt by all the means of art to restore the body again to its youth, or to the vigour of its middle age. The same periods happen to every great kingdom. In its youth it rises by arts and arms to power and prosperity. This it enjoys and flourishes with a while; and then it may be said to be in the vigour of its age, enrich'd at home with all the emoluments and blessings of peace, and formidable abroad with all the terrors of war. At length this very prosperity introduces corruption; and then comes on its old age. Virtue and learning, art and industry, decay by degrees. The people sink into sloth and luxury, and prostitution. It is enervated at home, becomes contemptible abroad; and such indeed is its misery and wretchedness, that it resembles a man in the last decrepid stage of life, who looks with unconcern at his approaching dissolution."

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“This is a melancholy picture indeed,” cries the Doctor ;
“and if the latter part of it can be applied to our case, I see
nothing but religion which should prevent a man of spirit
from hanging himself out of the way of so wretched a con-
5 templation.”

“Why so?” said the peer ; “Why hang himself, Doctor?
Would it not be wiser, think you, to make the best of your
time, and the most you can in such a nation?”

“And is religion then to be really laid out of the ques-
10 tion?” cries the Doctor.

“If I am to speak my own opinion, sir,” answered the
peer, “you know I shall answer in the negative.— But you
are too well acquainted with the world to be told, that the
conduct of politicians is not formed upon the principles of
15 religion.”

“I am very sorry for it,” cries the Doctor ; “but I will
talk to them then of honour and honesty : This is a language
which I hope they will at least pretend to understand. Now
to deny a man the preferment which he merits, and to give
20 it to another man who doth not merit it, is a manifest act of
injustice ; and is consequently inconsistent with both honour
and honesty. Nor is it only an act of injustice to the man
himself, but to the public, for whose good principally all
public offices are, or ought to be instituted. Now this good
25 can never be completed, nor obtained, but by employing all
persons according to their capacities. Wherever true merit
is liable to be superseded by favour and partiality, and men
are intrusted with offices, without any regard to capacity or
integrity, the affairs of that state will always be in a deplor-
30 able situation. Such, as *Livy* tells us, was the state of *Capua*,
a little before its final destruction ; and the consequence
your Lordship well knows. But, my Lord, there is another
mischief which attends this kind of injustice, and that is, it

hath a manifest tendency to destroy all virtue and all ability among the people, by taking away all that encouragement and incentive, which should promote emulation, and raise men to aim at excelling in any art, science, or profession. Nor can anything, my Lord, contribute more to render a nation contemptible among its neighbours; for what opinion can other countries have of the councils, or what terror can they conceive of the arms of such a people? And it was owing singly, perhaps, to the avoiding this error, that *Oliver Cromwell* carried the reputation of *England* higher than it ever was at any other time. I will add only one argument more, and that is founded on the most narrow, and selfish system of politics; and this is, that such a conduct is sure to create universal discontent and grumbling at home: for nothing can bring men to rest satisfied, when they see others preferred to them, but an opinion that they deserve that elevation; for as one of the greatest men this country ever produced, observes,

*One worthless Man that gains what he pretends,
Disgusts a thousand unpretending Friends.*

With what heartburnings then must any nation see themselves obliged to contribute to the support of a set of men, of whose incapacity to serve them they are well apprized, and who do their country a double diskindness; by being themselves employed in posts to which they are unequal, and by keeping others out of those employments, for which they are qualified!"

"And do you really think, Doctor," cries the nobleman, "that any minister could support himself in this country upon such principles as you recommend? Do you think he would be able to baffle an opposition, unless he should oblige his friends by conferring places often, contrary to his own inclinations, and his own opinion?"

“Yes, really do I,” cries the Doctor. “Indeed if a minister is resolved to make good his confession in the liturgy, by leaving undone all those things which he ought to have done, and by doing all those things which he ought not to have done : such
5 a minister, I grant, will be obliged to baffle opposition, as you are pleased to term it ; for as *Shakespeare* somewhere says,

Things ill begun strengthen themselves by Ill.

But if, on the contrary, he will please to consider the true interest of his country, and that only in great and national
10 points; if he will engage his country in neither alliances or quarrels, but where it is really interested ; if he will raise no money but what is wanted ; nor employ any civil or military officers but what are useful ; and place in these employments men of the highest integrity, and of the greatest abilities ; if
15 he will employ some few of his hours to advance our trade, and some few more to regulate our domestic government : if he would do this, my Lord, I will answer for it he shall have no opposition to baffle. Such a minister may, in the language of the law, put himself on his country when he pleases and he
20 shall come off with honour and applause.”

“And do you really believe, Doctor,” cries the peer, “there ever was such a minister, or ever will be?”

“Why not, my Lord?” answered the Doctor. “It requires no very extraordinary parts, nor any extraordinary degree of
25 virtue. He need practise no great instances of self-denial. He shall have power, and honour, and riches, and perhaps all in a much greater degree than he can ever acquire, by pursuing a contrary system. He shall have more of each, and much more of safety.”

30 “Pray, Doctor,” said my Lord, “let me ask you one simple question. Do you really believe any man upon earth was ever a rogue out of choice?”

“Really, my Lord,” says the Doctor, “I am ashamed to answer in the affirmative; and yet I am afraid experience would almost justify me if I should. Perhaps the opinion of the world may sometimes mislead men to think those measures necessary, which in reality are not so. Or the truth may be, that a man of good inclinations finds his office filled with such corruption by the iniquity of his predecessors, that he may despair of being capable of purging it; and so sits down contented, as *Augeas* did with the filth of his stables, not because he thought them the better, or that such filth was really necessary to a stable; but that he despaired of sufficient force to cleanse them.”

“I will ask you one question more, and I have done,” said the nobleman. “Do you imagine that if any minister was really as good as you would have him, that the people in general would believe that he was so?”

“Truly, my Lord,” said the Doctor, “I think they may be justified in not believing too hastily. But I beg leave to answer your Lordship’s question by another. Doth your Lordship believe that the people of *Greenland*, when they see the light of the sun, and feel his warmth, after so long a season of cold and darkness, will really be persuaded that he shines upon them?”

My Lord smiled at the conceit; and then the Doctor took an opportunity to renew his suit, to which his Lordship answered he would promise nothing, and could give him no hopes of success: “But you may be assured,” said he with a leering countenance, “I shall do him all the service in my power.” A language which the Doctor well understood, and soon after took a civil, but not a very ceremonial leave.

XXIII

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE WORLD AND
THE STAGE

The world hath been often compared to the theatre ; and many grave writers, as well as the poets, have considered human life as a great drama, resembling, in almost every particular, those scenical representations, which *Thespis* is first reported to have invented, and which have been since received with so much approbation and delight in all polite countries.

This thought hath been carried so far, and become so general, that some words proper to the theatre, and which were, at first, metaphorically applied to the world, are now indiscriminately and literally spoken of both : thus stage and scene are by common use grown as familiar to us, when we speak of life in general, as when we confine ourselves to dramatic performances ; and when we mention transactions behind the curtain, St. James's is more likely to occur to our thoughts than Drury-Lane.

It may seem easy enough to account for all this, by reflecting that the theatrical stage is nothing more than a representation, or, as Aristotle calls it, an imitation of what really exists ; and hence, perhaps, we might fairly pay a very high compliment to those, who by their writings or actions have been so capable of imitating life, as to have their pictures, in a manner confounded with, or mistaken for, the originals.

But, in reality, we are not so fond of paying compliments to these people, whom we use as children frequently do the instruments of their amusement ; and have much more pleasure in hissing and buffeting them, than in admiring their excellence. There are many other reasons which have induced us to see this analogy between the world and the stage.

Some have considered the larger part of mankind in the light of actors, as personating characters no more their own, and to which, in fact, they have no better title, than the player hath to be truly thought the king or emperor whom he represents. Thus the hypocrite may be said to be a player; and indeed the Greeks called them both by one and the same name.

The brevity of life hath likewise given occasion to this comparison. So the immortal *Shakespear*.

— *Life's a poor player,* 10
That storms and struts his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more.

For which hackneyed quotation, I will make the reader amends by a very noble one, which few, I believe, have read. It is taken from a poem called the DEITY, published about nine years ago, and long since buried in oblivion. A proof that good books no more than good men do always survive the bad.

From Thee * all human actions take their springs,
 The rise of empires, and the fall of kings !
 See the VAST THEATRE OF TIME display'd, 20
 While o'er the scene succeeding heroes tread !
 With pomp the shining images succeed,
 What leaders triumph, and what monarchs bleed !
 Perform the parts thy providence assign'd,
 Their pride, their passions to thy ends inclin'd : 25
 A while they glitter in the face of day,
 Then at thy nod the phantoms pass away ;
 No traces left of all the busy scene,
 But that remembrance says — THE THINGS HAVE BEEN !

In all these, however, and in every other similitude of life to 30
 the theatre, the resemblance hath been always taken from the

* The Deity.

stage only. None, as I remember, have at all considered the audience at this great drama.

But as Nature often exhibits some of her best performances to a very full house ; so will the behaviour of her spectators
5 no less admit the above-mentioned comparison than that of her actors. In this vast theatre of time are seated the friend and the critic ; here are claps and shouts, hisses and groans ; in short, every thing which was ever seen or heard at the Theatre Royal.

10 Now we, who are admitted behind the scenes of this great theatre of nature, (and no author ought to write any thing besides dictionaries and spelling-books who hath not this privilege) can censure the action, without conceiving any absolute detestation of the person, whom perhaps Nature may
15 not have designed to act an ill part in all her dramas : for in this instance, life most exactly resembles the stage, since it is often the same person who represents the villain and the heroe ; and he who engages your admiration today, will probably attract your contempt tomorrow. As *Garrick*, whom I
20 regard in tragedy to be the greatest genius the world hath ever produced, sometimes condescends to play the fool ; so did *Scipio* the Great and *Laelius* the Wise, according to *Horace*, many years ago : nay, *Cicero* reports them to have been
"incredibly childish." — These, it is true play'd the fool, like
25 my friend *Garrick*, in jest only ; but several eminent characters have, in numberless instances of their lives, played the fool egregiously in earnest ; so far as to render it a matter of some doubt, whether their wisdom or folly was predominant ; or whether they were better intitled to the applause or censure,
30 the admiration or contempt, the love or hatred of mankind.

Those persons, indeed, who have passed any time behind the scenes of this great theatre, and are thoroughly acquainted not only with the several disguises which are there put on,

but also with the fantastic and capricious behaviour of the Passions who are the managers and directors of this theatre, (for as to Reason the patentee, he is known to be a very idle fellow, and seldom to exert himself) may most probably have learned to understand the famous *nil admirari* of *Horace*, or 5 in the English phrase, *to stare at nothing*.

A single bad act no more constitutes a villain in life, than a single bad part on the stage. The passions, like the managers of a playhouse, often force men upon parts, without consulting their judgement, and sometimes without any regard to their 10 talents. Thus the man, as well as the player, may condemn what he himself acts; nay, it is common to see vice sit as awkwardly on some men, as the character of *Iago* would on the honest face of Mr. *William Mills*.

Upon the whole then, the man of candour and of true 15 understanding, is never hasty to condemn. He can censure an imperfection, or even a vice, without rage against the guilty party. In a word, they are the same folly; the same childishness, the same ill-breeding, and the same ill-nature, which raise all the clamours and uproars both in life, and on the 20 stage. The worst of men generally have the words *rogue* and *villain* most in their mouths, as the lowest of all wretches are the aptest to cry out *low* in the pit.

XXIV

MORAL REFLECTIONS BY JOSEPH ANDREWS

I have often wondered, sir, said *Joseph*, to observe so few instances of charity among mankind; for tho' the goodness 25 of a man's heart did not incline him to relieve the distresses of his fellow-creatures, methinks the desire of honour should move him to it. What inspires a man to build fine houses, to

purchase fine furniture, pictures, clothes, and other things at a great expence, but an ambition to be respected more than other people? Now would not one great act of charity, one instance of redeeming a poor family from all the miseries of
5 poverty, restoring an unfortunate tradesman by a sum of money to the means of procuring a livelihood by his industry, discharging an undone debtor from his debts or a gaol, or any such like example of goodness, create a man more honour and respect than he could acquire by the finest house, furniture,
10 pictures or clothes that were ever beheld? For not only the object himself, who was thus relieved, but all who heard the name of such a person must, I imagine, reverence him infinitely more than the possessor of all those other things: which when we so admire, we rather praise the builder, the
15 workman, the painter, the laceman, the taylor, and the rest, by whose ingenuity they are produced, than the person who by his money makes them his own. For my own part, when I have waited behind my lady in a room hung with fine pictures, while I have been looking at them I have never once thought
20 of their owner, nor hath any one else, as I ever observed; for when it hath been asked whose picture that was, it was never once answered the master's of the house, but *Ammyconni*, *Paul Varnish*, *Hannibal Scratchi*, or *Hogarthi*, which I suppose were the names of the painters: but if it was asked, who
25 redeemed such a one out of prison? who lent such a ruined tradesman money to set up? who cloathed that family of poor little children? it is very plain, what must be the answer. And besides, these great folks are mistaken, if they imagine they get any honour at all by these means; for I do not
30 remember I ever was with my lady at any house where she commended the house or furniture, but I have heard her at her return home make sport and jeer at whatever she had before commended: and I have been told by other gentlemen in

livery, that it is the same in their families: but I defy the wisest man in the world to turn a true good action into ridicule. I defy him to do it. He who should endeavour it, would be laughed at himself, instead of making others laugh. Nobody scarce doth any good, yet they all agree in praising those who do. Indeed it is strange that all men should consent in commending goodness, and no man endeavour to deserve that commendation; whilst, on the contrary, all rail at wickedness, and all are as eager to be what they abuse. This I know not the reason of; but it is as plain as daylight to those who converse in the world, as I have done these three years. "Are all the great folks wicked then?" says *Fanny*. To be sure there are some exceptions, answered *Joseph*. Some gentlemen of our cloth report charitable actions done by their lords and masters, and I have heard Squire *Pope*, the great poet, at my lady's table, tell stories of a man that lived at a place called Ross, and another at the Bath, one Al— Al— I forget his name, but it is in the book of verses. This gentleman hath built up a stately house too, which the 'squire likes very well; but his charity is seen farther than his house, tho' it stands on a hill, ay, and brings him more honour. It was his charity that put him upon the book, where the 'squire says he puts all those who deserve it; and to be sure, as he lives among all those great people, if there were any such, he would know them. This was all of Mr. *Joseph Andrews's* speech which I could get him to recollect, which I have delivered as near as was possible in his own words, with a very small embellishment.

XXV

[HIGH PEOPLE AND LOW PEOPLE]

Be it known then, that the human species are divided into two sorts of people, to wit, *high* people and *low* people. As by high people, I would not be understood to mean persons literally born higher in their dimensions than the rest of the
5 species, nor metaphorically those of exalted characters or abilities; so by low people I cannot be construed to intend the reverse. High people signify no other than people of fashion, and low people those of no fashion. Now, this word fashion, hath by long use lost its original meaning, from which at present
10 it gives us a very different idea: for I am deceived, if by persons of fashion, we do not generally include a conception of birth and accomplishments superior to the herd of mankind; whereas in reality, nothing more was originally meant
15 by a person of fashion, than a person who drest himself in the fashion of the times; and the word really and truly signifies no more at this day. Now the world being thus divided into people of fashion, and people of no fashion, a fierce contention arose between them, nor would those of one party, to
20 avoid suspicion, be seen publicly to speak to those of the other; though they often held a very good correspondence in private. In this contention, it is difficult to say which party succeeded: for, whilst the people of fashion seized several places to their own use, such as courts, assemblies, operas,
25 balls, &c. the people of no fashion, besides one royal place called his Majesty's Bear-garden, have been in constant possession of all hops, fairs, revels, &c. Two places have been agreed to be divided between them, namely the church and the playhouse; where they segregate themselves from each other in a remarkable manner: for as the people of fashion exalt

themselves at church over the heads of the people of no fashion; so in the playhouse they abase themselves in the same degree under their feet. This distinction I have never met with any one able to account for; it is sufficient, that so far from looking on each other as brethren in the Christian language, they seem scarce to regard each other as of the same species. This the terms *strange persons, people one does not know, the creature, wretches, beasts, brutes*, and many other appellations evidently demonstrate; which Mrs. *Slipslop* having often heard her mistress use, thought she had also a right to use in her turn: and perhaps she was not mistaken; for these two parties, especially those bordering nearly on each other, to wit the lowest of the high, and the highest of the low, often change their parties according to place and time; for those who are people of fashion in one place, are often people of no fashion in another: and with regard to time, it may not be unpleasant to survey the picture of dependance like a kind of ladder; as for instance early in the morning arises the postillion, or some other boy which great families no more than great ships are without, and falls to brushing the clothes, and cleaning the shoes of *John* the footman, who being drest himself, applies his hands to the same labours for Mr. *Second-hand* the squire's gentleman; the gentleman in the like manner, a little later in the day, attends the squire; the squire is no sooner equipped, than he attends the levee of my lord; which is no sooner over, than my lord himself is seen at the levee of the favourite, who after his hour of homage is at an end, appears himself to pay homage to the levee of his sovereign. Nor is there perhaps, in this whole ladder of dependance, any one step at a greater distance from the other, than the first from the second: so that to a philosopher the question might only seem whether you would chuse to be a great man at six in

the morning, or at two in the afternoon. And yet there are scarce two of these, who do not think the least familiarity with the persons below them a condescension, and if they were to go one step farther, a degradation.

XXVI

[ON LIBERTY]

5 By liberty, however, I apprehend, is commonly understood the power of doing what we please : not absolutely ; for then it would be inconsistent with law, by whose control the liberty of the freest people, except only the Hottentots and wild Indians, must always be restrained.

10 But, indeed, however largely we extend, or however moderately we confine, the sense of the word, no politician will, I presume, contend that it is to pervade in an equal degree, and be with the same extent enjoyed by every member of society ; no such polity having been ever found, unless among those
15 vile people just before commemorated. Among the Greeks and Romans, the servile and free conditions were opposed to each other ; and no man who had the misfortune to be enrolled under the former, could lay any claim to liberty, till the right was conveyed to him by that master whose slave
20 he was, either by the means of conquest, of purchase, or of birth.

This was the state of all the free nations in the world ; and this, till very lately, was understood to be the case of our own.

I will not indeed say this is the case at present, the lowest
25 class of our people having shaken off all the shackles of their superiors, and become not only as free, but even freer, than most of their superiors. I believe it cannot be doubted, though, perhaps, we have no recent instance of it, that the

personal attendance of every man who hath three hundred pounds *per annum*, in parliament, is indispensably his duty ; and that, if the citizens and burgesses of any city or borough shall chuse such a one, however reluctant he appear, he may be obliged to attend, and be forcibly brought to his duty by 5 the serjeant at arms.

Again, there are numbers of subordinate offices, some of which are of burthen, and others of expence, in the civil government : all of which, persons who are qualified, are liable to have imposed on them, may be obliged to undertake and 10 properly execute, notwithstanding any bodily labour, or even danger, to which they may subject themselves, under the penalty of fines and imprisonment ; nay, and what may appear somewhat hard, may be compelled to satisfy the losses which are eventually incident to that of sheriff in particular, out of 15 their own private fortunes ; and though this should prove the ruin of a family, yet the public, to whom the price is due, incurs no debt or obligation to preserve its officer harmless, let his innocence appear ever so clearly.

I purposely omit the mention of those military or military 20 duties, which our old constitution laid upon its greatest members. These might, indeed, supply their posts with some other able-bodied men ; but, if no such could have been found, the obligation nevertheless remained, and they were compellable to serve in their own proper persons. 25

The only one, therefore, who is possessed of absolute liberty, is the lowest member of the society, who, if he prefers hunger, or the wild product of the fields, hedges, lanes and rivers, with the indulgence of ease and laziness, to a food a little more delicate, but purchased at the expence of labour, may lay him- 30 self under a shade ; nor can be forced to take the other alternative from that which he hath, I will not affirm whether wisely or foolishly, chosen.

Here I may, perhaps, be reminded of the last vagrant act, where all such persons are compellable to work for the usual and accustomed wages allowed in the place; but this is a clause little known to the justices of the peace, and least likely
5 to be executed by those who do know it, as they know likewise that it is formed on the antient power of the justices to fix and settle these wages every year, making proper allowances for the scarcity and plenty of the times, the cheapness and dearness of the place; and that *the usual and accustomed*
10 *wages*, are words without any force or meaning, when there are no such; but every man sponges and raps whatever he can get; and will haggle as long, and struggle as hard to cheat his employer of two-pence in a day's labour, as an honest tradesman will to cheat his customers of the same sum in a yard of
15 cloth or silk.

It is a great pity then that this power, or rather this practice, was not revived; but this having been so long omitted, that it is become obsolete, will be best done by a new law, in which this power, as well as the consequent power of forcing
20 the poor to labour at a moderate and reasonable rate, should be well considered, and their execution facilitated; for gentlemen who give their time and labour gratis, and even voluntarily, to the public, have a right to expect that all their business be made as easy as possible; and to enact laws without
25 doing this, is to fill our statute-books, much too full already, still fuller with dead letter, of no use but to the printer of the acts of parliament.

CG-J
No 49
June 20, 1752

XXVII

[THE POWER OF THE MOB]

Odi profanum vulgus. HOR.

I hate the mob.

In a former paper I have endeavoured to trace the rise and progress of the power of the fourth estate in this constitution. I shall now examine that share of power which they actually 5 enjoy at this day, and then proceed to consider the several means by which they have attained it.

First, though this estate have not *as yet* claimed that right which was insisted on by the people or mob in old Rome, of giving a negative voice in the enacting laws, they have clearly 10 exercised this power in controlling their execution. Of this it is easy to give many instances, particularly in the case of the gin-act some years ago; and in those of several turnpikes which have been erected against the good-will and pleasure of the mob, and have by them been demolished. 15

In opposing the execution of such laws, they do not always rely on force; but have frequent recourse to the most refined policy: for sometimes, without openly expressing their disapprobation, they take the most effectual means to prevent the carrying a law into execution; those are by discountenancing 20 all those who endeavour to prosecute the offences committed against it.

They well know, that the courts of justice cannot proceed without informations; if they can stifle these, the law of course becomes dead and useless. The informers therefore in such 25 cases, they declare to be infamous, and guilty of the crime *læsæ mobilitatis*. Of this whoever is suspected (which is with them a synonymous term with convicted) is immediately punished by buffeting, kicking, stoning, ducking, bemudding,

&c. in short, by all those means of putting, (sometimes quite, sometimes almost) to death, which are called by that general phrase of mobbing.

It may perhaps be said that the mob do, even at this day, 5 connive at the execution of some laws, which they can by no means be supposed to approve.

Such are the laws against robbery, burglary, and theft. This is, I confess, true; and I have often wondered that it is so. The reason perhaps is, the great love which the mob have 10 for a holiday, and the great pleasure they take in seeing men hanged; so great, that, while they are enjoying it, they are all apt to forget, that this is hereafter, in all probability, to be their own fate.

In all these matters however, the power of this estate is 15 rather felt than seen. It seems indeed to be like that power of the crown of France, which Cardinal de Retz compares to those religious mysteries that are performed in the *sanctum sanctorum*; and which, though it be often exercised, is never expressly claimed.

20 In other instances, the fourth estate is much more explicit in their pretensions, and much more constant in asserting and maintaining them; of which I shall mention some of the principal.

First, they assert an exclusive right to the river of Thames. 25 It is true, the other estates do sometimes venture themselves upon the river; but this is only upon sufferance; for which they pay whatever that branch of the fourth estate called watermen, are pleased to exact of them. Nor are the mob contented with all these exactions. They grumble whenever 30 they meet any persons in a boat, whose dress declares them to be of a different order from themselves. Sometimes they carry their resentment so far, as to endeavour to run against the boat, and overset it; but if they are too good-natured to

attempt this, they never fail to attack the passengers with all kind of scurrilous, abusive, and indecent terms, which indeed they claim as their own, and call mob language.

The second exclusive right which they insist on, is to those parts of the streets, that are set apart for the foot-passengers. 5 In asserting this privilege, they are extremely rigorous; inso-much, that none of the other orders can walk through the streets by day without being insulted, nor by night without being knocked down. And the better to secure these foot-paths to themselves, they take effectual care to keep the said 10 paths always well blocked up with chairs, wheel-barrows, and every other kind of obstruction; in order to break the legs of those who shall presume to encroach upon their privileges by walking the streets.

Here it was hoped their pretensions would have stopped; 15 but it is difficult to set any bounds to ambition; for, having sufficiently established this right, they now begin to assert their right to the whole street, and to have lately made such a disposition with their waggons, carts, and drays, that no coach can pass along without the utmost difficulty and danger. With 20 this view we every day see them driving side by side, and sometimes in the broader streets three a breast; again, we see them leaving a cart or waggon in the middle of the street, and often set a-cross it, while the driver repairs to a neighbouring ale-house, from the window of which he diverts himself 25 while he is drinking, with the mischief or inconvenience which his vehicle occasions.

The same pretensions which they make to the possession of the streets, they make likewise to the possession of the high-ways. I doubt not I shall be told they claim only an 30 equal right: for I know it is very usual when a carter or a dray-man is civilly desired to make a little room, by moving out of the middle of the road either to the right or left, to

hear the following answer: "D—n your eyes, who are you? Is not the road, and be d—n'd to you, as free for me as you?" Hence it will, I suppose, be inferred that they do not absolutely exclude the other estates from the use of the common high-ways. But notwithstanding this generous concession in words, I do aver this practice is different, and that a gentleman may go a voyage at sea with little more hazard than he can travel ten miles from the metropolis.

I shall mention only one claim more, and that a very new and a very extraordinary one. It is the right of excluding all women of fashion out of St. James's-Park on a Sunday evening. This they have lately asserted with great vehemence, and have inflicted the punishment of mobbing on several ladies, who had transgressed without design, not having been apprised of the good pleasure of the mob in this point. And this I the rather publish to prevent any such transgressions for the future, since it hath already appeared that no degree of either dignity or beauty can secure the offender.*

Many things have contributed to raise this fourth estate to that exorbitant degree of power which they at present enjoy, and which seems to threaten to shake the balance of our constitution. I shall name only three, as these appear to me to have had much the greatest share in bringing it about.

The first is that act of parliament which was made at the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, and which I cannot help considering as a kind of compromise between the other three estates and this. By this act it was stipulated, that the fourth estate should annually receive out of the possessions of the others, a certain large proportion yearly, upon an implied condition (for no such was express) that they should suffer the other estates to enjoy the rest of their property without loss or molestation.

* A lady of great quality, and admirable beauty, was mobbed in the park at this time.

This law gave a new turn to the minds of the mobility. They found themselves no longer obliged to depend on the charity of their neighbours, nor on their own industry for a maintenance. They now looked on themselves as joint proprietors in the land, and celebrated their independency in 5 songs of triumph; witness the old ballad which was in all their mouths,

Hang sorrow, cast away care;
The parish is bound to find us, &c.

A second cause of their present elevation has been the 10 private quarrels between particular members of the other estates, who, on such occasions, have done all they could on both sides to raise the power of the mob, in order to avail themselves of it, and to employ it against their enemies.

The third and the last which I shall mention, is the mis- 15 taken idea which some particular persons have always entertained of the word liberty; but this will open too copious a subject, and shall be therefore treated in a future paper.

But before I dismiss this, I must observe that there are two sorts of persons of whom this fourth estate do yet stand in 20 some awe, and whom consequently they have in great abhorrence: These are a justice of peace, and a soldier. To these two it is entirely owing that they have not long since rooted all the other orders out of the commonwealth.

XXVIII

[ON HUMOROUS CHARACTERS]

— *Juvat integros accedere fontes,
Atque haurire* — Lucretius

— *It is pleasant to handle
An untouched subject.*

5 It hath been observed, that characters of humour do abound more in this our island, than in any other country; and this hath been commonly supposed to arise from that pure and perfect state of liberty which we enjoy in a degree greatly superior to every foreign nation.

10 This opinion, I know, hath great sanction, and yet I am inclined to suspect the truth of it, unless we will extend the meaning of the word liberty farther than I think it hath been yet carried, and will include in it not only an exemption from all restraint of municipal laws, but likewise from all restraint of
15 those rules of behaviour which are expressed in the general term of good breeding. Laws which, though not written, are perhaps better understood, and though established by no coercive power, much better obeyed within the circle where they are received, than any of those laws which are recorded in books,
20 or enforced by public authority.

A perfect freedom from these laws, if I am not greatly mistaken, is absolutely necessary to form the true character of humour; a character which is therefore not [to] be met with among those people who conduct themselves by the rules of
25 good breeding.

For, indeed, good breeding is little more than the art of rooting out all those seeds of humour which nature had originally implanted in our minds.

To make this evident, it seems necessary only to explain the terms, a matter in which I do not see the great difficulty which hath appeared to other writers. Some of these have spoken of the word humour, as if it contained in it some mystery impossible to be revealed, and no one, as I know of, hath undertaken 5 to shew us expressly what it is, though I scarce doubt but it was done by Aristotle in his treatise on comedy, which is unhappily lost.

But what is more surprising, is, that we find it pretty well explained in authors who at the same time tell us, they know 10 not what it is. Mr. Congreve, in a letter to Mr. Dennis, hath these words: "We cannot certainly tell what wit is, or what humour is," and within a few lines afterwards he says, "There is a great difference between a comedy wherein there are many things humourously, as they call it, which is pleasantly spoken; 15 and one where there are several characters of humour, distinguished by the particular and different humours appropriated to the several persons represented, and which naturally arise from the different constitutions, complexions, and dispositions of men. And again, I take humour to be a singular and una- 20 voidable manner of saying or doing any thing peculiar and natural to one man only; by which his speech and actions are distinguished from those of other men. Our humour hath relation to us, and to what proceeds from us, as the accidents have to a substance; it is a colour, taste, and smell diffused through 25 all; though our actions are ever so many, and different in form, they are all splinters of the same wood, and have naturally one complexion, &c."

If my reader hath any doubt whether this is a just description of humour, let him compare it with those examples of humor- 30 ous characters, which the greatest masters have given us, and which have been universally acknowledged as such, and he will be perhaps convinced.

Ben Johnson, after complaining of the abuse of the word, proceeds thus :

Why humour (as 't is ens) we thus define it,
 To be a quality of air, or water,
 5 And in itself holds these two properties,
 Moisture and fluxure ; as for demonstration,
 Pour water on this floor ; 't will wet and run ;
 Likewise the air forc'd thro' a horn, or trumpet
 Flows instantly away, and leaves behind
 10 A kind of dew ; and hence we do conclude,
 That whatsoe'er hath fluxure and humidity,
 As wanting power to contain itself,
 Is humour. So in every human body,
 The choler, melancholy, phlegm and blood,
 15 By reason that they flow continually
 In some one part, and are not continent,
 Receive the name of humours. ' Now thus far,
 ' It may, by metaphor, apply itself
 ' Unto the general disposition :
 20 ' As when some one peculiar quality
 ' Doth so possess a man, that it doth draw,
 ' All his effects, his spirits, and his powers,
 ' In their confluxions all to run one way,'
This may be truly said to be a humour.
 25 But that a rook by wearing a py'd feather,
 The cable hatband, or the three piled ruff,
 A yard of shoe-tie, or the Switzer's knot
 On his French garters, should affect a humour !
 O ! it is more than most ridiculous.

30 This passage is in the first act of *Every man out of his humour* ; and I question not but to some readers, the author will appear to have been out of his wits when he wrote it ; but others, I am positive, will discern much excellent ore shining among the rubbish. In truth, his sentiment, when let loose from that stiff

boddice in which it is laced, will amount to this, that as the term humour contains in it the ideas of moisture and fluxure, it was applied to certain moist and flux habits of the body, and afterwards metaphorically to peculiar qualities of the mind, which, when they are extremely prevalent, do, like the predominant 5 humours of the body, flow all to one part, and as the latter are known to absorb and drain off all the corporeal juices and strength to themselves, so the former are no less certain of engaging the affections, spirits, and powers of the mind, and of enlisting them as it were, into their own service, and under 10 their own absolute command.

Here then we have another pretty adequate notion of humour, which is indeed nothing more than a violent bent or disposition of the mind to some particular point. To enumerate indeed these several dispositions would be, as Mr. Con- 15 greve observes, as endless as to sum up the several opinions of men; nay, as he well says, the *quot homines, tot sententiæ* may be more properly interpreted of their humours, than their opinions.

Hitherto there is no mention of the ridiculous, the idea of 20 which, though not essential to humour, is always included in our notions of it. The ridiculous is annexed to it these two ways, either by the manner or the degree in which it is exerted.

By either of these, the very best and worthiest disposition 25 of the human mind may become ridiculous. Excess, says Horace, even in the pursuit of virtue, will lead a wise and good man into folly and vice.—So will it subject him to ridicule; for into this, says the judicious Abbé Bellegarde, a man may tumble headlong with an excellent understanding, 30 and with the most laudable qualities. Piety, patriotism, loyalty, parental affection, &c. have all afforded characters of humour for the stage.

By the manner of exerting itself likewise a humour becomes ridiculous. By this means chiefly the tragic humour differs from the comic; it is the same ambition which raises our horror in Macbeth, and our laughter at the drunken sailors in the Tempest; the same avarice which causes the dreadful incidents in the fatal curiosity of Lillo, and in the Miser of Moliere; the same jealousy which forms an Othello, or a Suspicious Husband. No passion or humour of the mind is absolutely either tragic or comic in itself. Nero had the art of making vanity the object of horror; and Domitian, in one instance, at least, made cruelty ridiculous.

As these tragic modes however never enter into our notion of humour, I will venture to make a small addition to the sentiments of the two great masters I have mentioned, by which I apprehend my description of humour will pretty well coincide with the general opinion. By humour then, I suppose, is generally intended a violent impulse of the mind, determining it to some one particular point, by which a man becomes ridiculously distinguished from all other men.

If there be any truth in what I have now said, nothing can more clearly follow than the manifest repugnancy between humour and good breeding. The latter being the art of conducting yourself by certain common and general rules, by which means, if they were universally observed, the whole world would appear (as all courtiers actually do) to be, in their external behaviour, at least, but one and the same person.

I have not room at present, if I were able, to enumerate the rules of good breeding: I shall only mention one, which is a summary of them all. This is the most golden of all rules, no less than that *of doing to all men as you would they should do unto you.*

In the deviation from this law, as I hope to evince in my next, all that we call humour principally consists. I shall at

the same time, I think, be able to shew, that it is to this deviation we owe the general character mentioned in the beginning of this paper, as well as to assign the reasons why we of this nation have been capable of attracting to ourselves such merit in preference to others.

5

XXIX

[CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION]

G-G J
No 56

July 25, 1752

Hoc fonte derivata. HOR.*These are the sources.*

At the conclusion of my last paper, I asserted that the summary of good breeding was no other than that comprehensive and exalted rule, which the greatest authority hath told us is 10 the sum total of all religion and all morality.

Here, however, my readers will be pleased to observe that the subject matter of good breeding being only what is called behaviour, it is this only to which we are to apply it on the present occasion. Perhaps therefore we shall be better under- 15 stood, if we vary the word, and read it thus: *Behave unto all men, as you would they should behave unto you.*

This will most certainly oblige us to treat all mankind with the utmost civility and respect, there being nothing which we desire more than to be treated so by them. This will most 20 effectually restrain the indulgence of all those violent and inordinate desires, which, as we have endeavoured to shew, are the true seeds of humour in the human mind: the growth of which good breeding will be sure to obstruct; or will at least so overtop and shadow, that they shall not appear. The 25 ambitious, the covetous, the proud, the vain, the angry, the debauchee, the glutton, are all lost in the character of

the well-bred man; or, if nature should now and then venture to peep forth, she withdraws in an instant, and doth not shew enough of herself to become ridiculous.

Now humour arises from the very opposite behaviour, from
 5 throwing the reins on the neck of our favourite passion, and giving it a full scope and indulgence. The ingenious Abbé, whom I quoted in my former paper, paints this admirably in the characters of ill-breeding, which he mentions as the first scene of the ridiculous. ‘Ill breeding (l’Impolitesse) says he,
 10 is not a single defect, it is the result of many. It is sometimes a gross ignorance of decorum, or a stupid indolence, which prevents us from giving to others what is due to them. It is a peevish malignity which inclines us to oppose the inclinations of those with whom we converse. It is the consequence
 15 of a foolish vanity, which hath no complaisance for any other person; the effect of a proud and whimsical humour, which soars above all the rules of civility; or, lastly, it is produced by a melancholy turn of mind, which pampers itself (*qui trouve du Ragoût*) with a rude and disobliging behaviour.’

20 Having thus shewn, I think, very clearly, that good breeding is, and must be, the very bane of the ridiculous, that is to say, of all humorous characters; it will perhaps be no difficult task to discover why this character hath been in a singular manner attributed to this nation.

25 For this I shall assign two reasons only, as these seem to me abundantly satisfactory, and adequate to the purpose.

The first is that method so general in this kingdom of giving no education to the youth of both sexes; I say general only, for it is not without some few exceptions.

30 Much the greater part of our lads of fashion return from school at fifteen or sixteen, very little wiser, and not at all the better, for having been sent thither. Part of these return to the place from whence they came, their fathers’ country seats;

where racing, cock-fighting, hunting, and other rural sports, with smoaking, drinking, and party become their pursuit, and form the whole business and amusement of their future lives. The other part escape to town in the diversions, fashion, follies and vices of which they are immediately initiated. In this academy some finish their studies, while others by their wiser parents are sent abroad, to add the knowledge of the diversions, fashions, follies, and vices of all Europe, to that of those of their own country. 5

Hence then we are to derive two great general characters 10 of humour, which are the clown and the coxcomb, and both of these will be almost infinitely diversified according to the different passions and natural dispositions of each individual; and according to their different walks in life. Great will be the difference, for instance, whether the country gentleman 15 be a whig or a tory; whether he prefers women, drink, or dogs; so will it be whether the town spark be allotted to serve his country as a politician, a courtier, a soldier, a sailor, or possibly a churchman (for by draughts from this academy, all these offices are supplied); or lastly, whether his ambition 20 shall be contented with no other appellation than merely that of a beau.

Some of our lads however, are destined to a further progress in learning; these are not only confined longer to the labours of a school, but are sent thence to the university. Here, if 25 they please, they may read on; and if they please, they may (as most of them do) let it alone, and betake themselves as their fancy leads, to the imitation of their elder brothers either in town or country.

This is a matter which I shall handle very tenderly, as I am 30 clearly of an opinion that an university education is much the best we have; for here at least there is some restraint laid on the inclinations of our youth. The sportsman, the gamester,

and the sot, cannot give such a loose to their extravagance, as if they were at home and under no manner of government ; nor can our spark, who is disposed to the town pleasures, find either gaming-houses or play-houses, nor half the taverns or
5 bawdy-houses which are ready to receive him in Covent-Garden.

So far however, I hope, I may say without offence, that, among all the schools at the universities, there is none where the science of good-breeding is taught ; no lectures like the
10 excellent lessons on the ridiculous, which I have quoted above, and which I do most earnestly recommend to all my young readers. Hence the learned professions produce such excellent characters of humour ; and the rudeness of physicians, lawyers, and parsons, however dignified or distinguished, affords
15 such pleasant stories to divert private companies, and sometimes the public.

I come now to the beautiful part of the creation, who, in the sense I here use the word, I am assured can hardly (for the most part) be said to have any education.

20 As to the counterpart of my country squire, the country gentlewoman, I apprehend, that, except in the article of the dancing-master, and perhaps in that of being barely able to read and write, there is very little difference between the education of many a squire's daughter, and that of his dairymaid,
25 who is most likely her principal companion, nay, the little difference which there is, I am afraid, not in the favour of the former ; who, by being constantly flattered with her beauty and her wealth, is made the vainest and most selfconceited thing alive, at the same time, that such care is taken to instil
30 into her the principles of bashfulness and timidity, that she becomes ashamed and afraid of she knows not what.

If by any chance this poor creature drops afterwards, as it were, into the world, how absurd must be her behaviour ! If

a man looks at her, she is confounded ; and if he speaks to her, she is frightened out of her wits. She acts, in short, as if she thought the whole sex was engaged in a conspiracy to possess themselves of her person and fortune.

This poor girl, it is true, however she may appear to her 5
own sex, especially if she is handsome, is rather an object of compassion, than of just ridicule ; but what shall we say when time or marriage have carried off all this bashfulness and fear, and when ignorance, awkwardness, and rusticity, are embellished with the same degree, though perhaps not the same kind of 10
affectation, which are to be found in a court. Here sure is a plentiful source of all that various humour which we find in the character of a country gentlewoman.

All this, I apprehend, will be readily allowed ; but to deny good-breeding to the town lady, may be the more dangerous 15
attempt. Here, besides the professors of reading, writing, and dancing, the French and Italian masters, the music master, and of modern times, the whist master, all concur in forming this character. The manners master alone, I am afraid is omitted. And what is the consequence? not only 20
bashfulness and fear are entirely subdued, but modesty and discretion are taken off at the same time. So far from running away from, she runs after, the men ; and instead of blushing when a modest man looks at her, or speaks to her, she can bear, without any such emotion, to stare an impudent fellow 25
in the face, and sometimes to utter what, if he be not very impudent indeed, may put him to the blush. — Hence all those agreeable ingredients which form the humour of a rampant woman of — the town.

I cannot quit this part of my subject, in which I have been 30
obliged to deal a little more freely than I am inclined with the loveliest part of the creation, without preserving my own character of good-breeding, by saying that this last excess, is

by much the most rare ; and that every individual among my female readers, either is already, or may be, when she pleases, an example of a contrary behaviour.

The second general reason why humour so much abounds
 5 in this nation, seems to me to arise from the great number of people, who are daily raised by trade to the rank of gentry, without having had any education at all ; or, to use no improper phrase, without having served an apprenticeship to this calling. But I have dwelt so long on the other branch, that I have no
 10 room at present to animadvert on this ; nor is it indeed necessary I should, since most readers with the hints I have already given them, will easily suggest to themselves, a great number of humorous characters with which the public have been furnished this way. I shall conclude by wishing, that this excellent
 15 source of humour may still continue to flow among us, since, though it may make us a little laughed at, it will be sure to make us the envy of all the nations of Europe.

XXX

AN ESSAY ON CONVERSATION

Man is generally represented as an animal formed for and delighting in society : in this state alone, it is said, his various
 20 talents can be exerted, his numberless necessities relieved, the dangers he is exposed to can be avoided, and many of the pleasures he eagerly affects, enjoyed. If these assertions be, as I think they are, undoubtedly and obviously certain, those few who have denied man to be a social animal, have left us
 25 these two solutions of their conduct : either that there are men as bold in denial as can be found in assertion ; and as *Cicero* says, there is no absurdity which some philosopher or other hath not asserted ; so we may say, there is no truth

so glaring, that some have not denied it. Or else ; that these rejectors of society borrow all their information from their own savage dispositions, and are indeed themselves, the only exceptions to the above general rule.

But to leave such persons to those who have thought them 5 more worthy of an answer ; there are others who are so seemingly fond of this social state, that they are understood absolutely to confine it to their own species ; and, entirely excluding the tamer and gentler, the herding and flocking parts of the creation, from all benefits of it, to set up this as one grand general distinction, 10 between the human and the brute species.

Shall we conclude this *denial* of all society to the nature of brutes, which seems to be in defiance of every day's observation, to be as bold, as the denial of it to the nature of men? Or, may we not more justly derive the error from an improper 15 understanding of this word *society* in too confined and special a sense? In a word ; do those who utterly deny it to the brutal nature, mean any other by society than conversation?

Now if we comprehend them in this sense, as I think we very reasonably may, the distinction appears to me to be truly 20 just ; for though other animals are not without all use of society, yet this noble branch of it seems, of all the inhabitants of this globe, confined to man only ; the narrow power of communicating some few ideas of lust, or fear, or anger, which may be observable in brutes, falling infinitely short of 25 what is commonly meant by conversation, as may be deduced from the origination of the word itself, the only accurate guide to knowledge. The primitive and literal sense of this word is, I apprehend, to *turn round together* ; and in its more copious usage we intend by it, that reciprocal interchange of ideas, 30 by which truth is examined, things are, in a manner, *turned round*, and sifted, and all our knowledge communicated to each other.

In this respect man stands, I conceive, distinguished from and superior to all other earthly creatures: it is this privilege which, while he is inferior in strength to some, in swiftness to others; without horns, or claws, or tusks to attack them, or
5 even to defend himself against them, hath made him master of them all. Indeed, in other views, however vain men may be of their abilities, they are greatly inferior to their animal neighbors. With what envy must a swine, or a much less voracious animal, be survey'd by a glutton; and how contemptible must the talents of other sensualists appear, when
10 oppos'd, perhaps, to some of the lowest and meanest of brutes: but in conversation man stands alone, at least in this part of the creation; he leaves all others behind him at his first start, and the greater progress he makes, the greater distance is
15 between them.

Conversation is of three sorts. Men are said to converse with God, with themselves, and with one another. The two first of these have been so liberally and excellently spoken to by others, that I shall, at present, pass them by, and confine
20 myself, in this essay, to the third only: since it seems to me amazing, that this grand business of our lives, the foundation of every thing, either useful or pleasant, should have been so slightly treated of; that while there is scarce a profession or handicraft in life, however mean and contemptible, which is
25 not abundantly furnished with proper rules to the attaining its perfection, men should be left almost totally in the dark, and without the least light to direct, or any guide to conduct them in the proper exerting of those talents, which are the noblest privilege of human nature, and productive of all
30 rational happiness; and the rather as this power is by no means self-instructed, and in the possession of the artless and ignorant, is of so mean use, that it raises them very little above those animals who are void of it.

As conversation is a branch of society, it follows, that it can be proper to none who is not in his nature social. Now society is agreeable to no creatures who are not inoffensive to each other; and we therefore observe in animals who are entirely guided by nature, that it is cultivated by such only, while those of more noxious disposition addict themselves to solitude, and, unless when prompted by lust, or that necessary instinct implanted in them by nature, for the nurture of their young, shun as much as possible the society of their own species. If therefore there should be found some human individuals of so savage a habit, it would seem they were not adapted to society, and consequently, not to conversation: nor would any inconvenience ensue the admittance of such exceptions, since it would by no means impeach the general rule of man's being a social animal; especially when it appears (as is sufficiently and admirably proved by my friend, the author of *An Enquiry into Happiness*) * that these men live a constant opposition to their own nature, and are no less monsters than the most wanton abortions, or extravagant births.

Again; if society requires that its members should be inoffensive, so the more useful and beneficial they are to each other, the more suitable are they to the social nature, and more perfectly adapted to its institution: for all creatures seek their own happiness, and society is therefore natural to any, because it is naturally productive of this happiness. To render therefore any animal social is to render it inoffensive; an instance of which is to be seen in those the ferocity of whose nature can be tamed by man. And here the reader may observe a double distinction of man from the more savage animals by society, and from the social by conversation.

But if men were merely inoffensive to each other, it seems as if society and conversation would be merely indifferent;

* The Treatise here mentioned is not yet public.

and that in order to make it desirable by a sensible being, it is necessary we should go farther, and propose some positive good to ourselves from it; and this presupposes not only negatively, our not receiving any hurt; but positively, our
 5 receiving some good, some pleasure or advantage from each other in it, something which we could not find in an unsocial and solitary state: otherwise we might cry out with the right honourable poet;*

*Give us our Wildness and our Woods,
 10 Our Huts and Caves again.*

The art of pleasing or doing good to one another is therefore the art of conversation. It is this habit which gives it all its value. And as man's being a social animal (the truth of which is incontestably proved by that excellent author of *An Enquiry*,
 15 &c. I have above cited) presupposes a natural desire or tendency this way, it will follow, that we can fail in attaining this truly desirable end from ignorance only in the means; and how general this ignorance is, may be, with some probability, inferred from our want of even a word to express this
 20 art by: that which comes the nearest to it, and by which, perhaps, we would sometimes intend it, being so horribly and barbarously corrupted, that it contains at present scarce a simple ingredient of what it seems originally to have been designed to express.

25 The word I mean is *good breeding*; a word, I apprehend, not at first confined to externals, much less to any particular dress or attitude of the body: nor were the qualifications expressed by it to be furnished by a milliner, a taylor, or a perriwig-maker; no, nor even by a dancing-master himself.
 30 According to the idea I myself conceive from this word, I should not have scrupled to call *Socrates* a well-bred man,

* The Duke of *Buckingham*.

though I believe he was very little instructed by any of the persons I have above enumerated. In short, by *good breeding* (notwithstanding the corrupt use of the word in a very different sense) I mean the art of pleasing, or contributing as much as possible to the ease and happiness of those with whom you 5 converse. I shall contend therefore no longer on this head : for whilst my reader clearly conceives the sense in which I use this word, it will not be very material whether I am right or wrong in its original application.

Good breeding then, or the *art of pleasing in conversation*, 10 is expressed two different ways, *viz.* in our actions and our words, and our conduct in both may be reduced to that concise, comprehensive rule in scripture ; *Do unto all men as you would they should do unto you.* Indeed, concise as this rule is, and plain as it appears, what are all treatises on ethics, but 15 comments upon it? And whoever is well-read in the book of nature, and hath made much observation on the actions of men, will perceive so few capable of judging, or rightly pursuing their own happiness, that he will be apt to conclude that some attention is necessary (and more than is commonly used) to 20 enable men to know truly, *what they would have done unto them*, or at least, what it would be their interest *to have done.*

If therefore men, through weakness or inattention, often err in their conceptions of what would produce their own happiness, no wonder they should miss in the application of what 25 will contribute to that of others ; and thus we may, without too severe a censure on their inclinations, account for that frequent failure in true good breeding, which daily experience gives us instances of.

Besides, the commentators have well paraphrased on the 30 abovementioned divine rule, that it is, *to do unto men what you would they*, IF THEY WERE IN YOUR SITUATION AND CIRCUMSTANCES, AND YOU IN THEIRS, *should do unto you:* and as this

comment is necessary to be observed in ethics, so it is particularly useful in this our art, where the degree of the person is always to be considered, as we shall explain more at large hereafter.

5 We see then a possibility for a man well disposed to this golden rule, without some precautions, to err in the practice ; nay, even good-nature itself, the very habit of mind most essential to furnish us with true good breeding, the latter so nearly resembling the former, that it hath been called, and
10 with the appearance at least of propriety, artificial *good nature*. This excellent quality itself sometimes shoots us beyond the mark, and shews the truth of those lines in *Horace* :

*Insani sapiens nomen ferat, æquus iniqui,
Ultrà quam satis est, Virtutem si petat ipsam.*

15 Instances of this will be naturally produced where we shew the deviations from those rules, which we shall now attempt to lay down.

As this good breeding is the art of pleasing, it will be first necessary, with the utmost caution, to avoid hurting or giving
20 any offense to those with whom we converse. And here we are surely to shun any kind of actual disrespect, or affront to their persons, by insolence, which is the severest attack that can be made on the pride of man, and of which *Florus* seems to have had no inadequate opinion, when speaking of the second
25 *Tarquin*, he says ; *In omnes superbiâ (quæ Crudelitate gravior est BONÎS) grassatus* ; “ He trod on all with *INSOLENCE*, which sits heavier on men of great minds than cruelty itself.” If there is any temper in man which more than all others disqualifies him for society, it is this insolence or haughtiness,
30 which, blinding a man to his own imperfections, and giving him a hawk’s quick-sightedness to those of others, raises in him that contempt for his species, which inflates the cheeks, erects the head, and stiffens the gait of those strutting animals

who sometimes stalk in assemblies, for no other reason, but to shew in their gesture and behaviour the disregard they have for the company. Though to a truly great and philosophical mind, it is not easy to conceive a more ridiculous exhibition than this puppet; yet to others he is little less than a nuisance; for contempt is a murderous weapon, and there is this difference only between the greatest and weakest men, when attacked by it; that, in order to wound the former, it must be just; whereas without the shields of wisdom and philosophy, which God knows are in the possession of very few, it wants no justice to point it; but is certain to penetrate, from whatever corner it comes. It is this disposition which inspires the empty *Cacus* to deny his acquaintance, and overlook men of merit in distress; and the little, silly, pretty *Phillida*, or *Foolida*, to stare at the strange creatures round her. It is this temper which constitutes the supercilious eye, the reserved look, the distant bowe, the scornful leer, the affected astonishment, the loud whisper, ending in a laugh directed full in the teeth of another. Hence spring, in short, those numberless offenses given too frequently, in public and private assemblies, by persons of weak understandings, indelicate habits, and so hungry and foul-feeding a vanity, that it wants to devour whatever comes in its way. Now, if good breeding be what we have endeavoured to prove it, how foreign, and indeed how opposite to it, must such a behaviour be? And can any man call a duke or a dutchess who wears it, well-bred? or are they not more justly entitled to those inhuman names which they themselves allot to the lowest vulgar? But behold a more pleasing picture on the reverse. See the Earl of *C*—— noble in his birth, splendid in his fortune, and embellished with every endowment of mind; how affable, how condescending! himself the only one who seems ignorant that he is in every way the greatest person in the room.

But it is not sufficient to be inoffensive, we must be profitable servants to each other : we are, in the second place, to proceed to the utmost verge in paying the respect due to others. We had better go a little too far than stop short in this particular. My Lord *Shaftsbury* hath a pretty observation, that the beggar, in addressing to a coach with, my Lord, is sure not to offend, even though there be no lord there ; but, on the contrary, should plain sir fly in the face of a nobleman, what must be the consequence? And indeed, whoever considers the bustle and contention about precedence, the pains and labours undertaken, and sometimes the prices given, for the smallest title or mark of pre-eminence, and the visible satisfaction betray'd in its enjoyment, may reasonably conclude this is a matter of no small consequence. The truth is, we live in a world of common men, and not of philosophers ; for one of these, when he appears (which is very seldom) among us, is distinguished, and very properly too, by the name of an *odd fellow* : for what is it less than extream oddity to despise what the generality of the world think the labour of their whole lives well employed in procuring : we are therefore to adapt our behaviour to the opinion of the generality of mankind, and not to that of a few odd fellows. It would be tedious, and perhaps impossible, to specify every instance, or to lay down exact rules for our conduct in every minute particular. However, I shall mention some of the chief which most ordinarily occur, after premising, that the business of the whole is no more than to convey to others an idea of your esteem of them, which is indeed the substance of all the compliments, ceremonies, presents, and whatever passes between well-bred people. And here I shall lay down these positions.

First, that all meer ceremonies exist in *form* only, and have in them no substance at all : but being imposed by the laws of custom, become essential to good breeding, from those

high-flown compliments paid to the Eastern monarchs, and which pass between *Chinese* mandarines, to those coarser ceremonials in use between *English* farmers and *Dutch* boors.

Secondly, that these ceremonies, poor as they are, are of more consequence than they at first appear, and, in reality, constitute the only external difference between man and man. Thus, His Grace, Right Honourable, My Lord, Right Reverend, Reverend, Honourable, Sir, Esquire, Mr. &c. have in a philosophical sense, no meaning, yet are, perhaps, politically essential, and must be preserved by good breeding; because, Thirdly, they raise an expectation in the person by law and custom entitled to them, and who will consequently be displeas'd with the disappointment.

Now, in order to descend minutely into any rules for good breeding, it will be necessary to lay some scene, or to throw our disciple into some particular circumstance. We will begin then with a visit in the country; and as the principal actor on this occasion is the person who receives it, we will, as briefly as possible, lay down some general rules for his conduct; marking, at the same time, the principal deviations we have observed on these occasions.

When an expected guest arrives to dinner at your house, if your equal, or indeed not greatly your inferior, he should be sure to find your family in some order, and yourself dress'd and ready to receive him at your gate with a smiling countenance. This infuses an immediate cheerfulness into your guest, and perswades him of your esteem and desire of his company. Not so is the behaviour of *Polysperchon*, at whose gate you are obliged to knock a considerable time before you gain admittance. At length, the door being opened to you by a maid, or some improper servant, who wonders where the devil all the men are; and being asked if the gentleman is at home, answers, She believes so; you are conducted into a hall, or

back parlour, where you stay some time, before the gentleman, in *dishabille* from his study or his garden, waits upon you, asks pardon, and assures you he did not expect you so soon.

Your guest, being introduced into a drawing-room, is, after
5 the first ceremonies, to be asked whether he will refresh himself after his journey, before dinner, (for which he is never to stay longer than the usual or fixed hour). But this request is never to be repeated oftner than twice, [not] in imitation of *Chalepus*, who, as if hired by a physician, crams wine in a
10 morning down the throats of his most temperate friends, their constitutions being not so dear to them as their present quiet.

When dinner is on the table, and the ladies have taken their places, the gentlemen are to be introduced into the eating-
15 room, where they are to be seated with as much seeming indifference as possible, unless there be any present whose degrees claim an undoubted precedence. As to the rest, the general rules of precedence are by marriage, age, and profession. Lastly; in placing your guests, regard is rather to be had to
20 birth than fortune: for though purse-pride is forward enough to exalt itself, it bears a degradation with more secret comfort and ease than the former, as being more inwardly satisfied with itself, and less apprehensive of neglect or contempt.

The order of helping your guests is to be regulated by that
25 of placing them: but here I must with great submission recommend to the lady at the upper end of the table, to distribute her favours as equally, and as impartially as she can. I have sometimes seen a large dish of fish extend no farther than to the fifth person, and a haunch of venison lose all its
30 fat before half the table had tasted it.

A single request to eat of any particular dish, how elegant soever, is the utmost I allow. I strictly prohibit all earnest solicitations, all complaints that you have no appetite, which

are sometimes little less than burlesque, and always impertinent and troublesome.

And here, however low it may appear to some readers, as I have known omissions of this kind give offense, and sometimes make the offenders, who have been very well-meaning persons, 5 ridiculous, I cannot help mentioning the ceremonial of drinking healths at table, which is always to begin with the lady's, and next the master's of the house.

When dinner is ended, and the ladies retired, though I do not hold the master of the feast obliged to fuddle himself 10 through complacence ; and indeed it is his own fault generally, if his company be such as would desire it, yet he is to see that the bottle circulate sufficiently to afford every person present a moderate quantity of wine, if he chuses it ; at the same time permitting those who desire it, either to pass the bottle, or 15 to fill their glass as they please. Indeed, the beastly custom of besotting, and ostentatious contention for pre-eminence in their cups, seems at present pretty well abolished among the better sort of people. Yet *Methus* still remains, who measures the honesty and understanding of mankind by the capacious- 20 ness of their swallow ; who sings forth the praises of a bumper, and complains of the light in your glass ; and at whose table it is as difficult to preserve your senses, as to preserve your purse at a gaming table. On the other side, *Sophronus* eyes you carefully whilst you are filling out his liquor. The bottle 25 as surely stops when it comes to him, as your chariot at *Temple-Bar* ; and it is almost as impossible to carry a pint of wine from his house, as to gain the love of a reigning beauty, or borrow a shilling of *P—— W——* .

But to proceed. After a reasonable time, if your guest 30 intends staying with you the whole evening, and declines the bottle, you may propose play, walking, or any other amusement ; but these are to be but barely mentioned, and offered

to his choice with all indifference on your part. What person can be so dull as not to perceive in *Agyrtes* a longing to pick your pockets? or in *Alazon*, a desire to satisfy his own vanity in shewing you the rarities of his house and gardens? When your
 5 guest offers to go, there should be no solicitations to stay, unless for the whole night, and that no farther than to give him a moral assurance of his being welcome so to do: no assertions that he shan't go yet; no laying on violent hands; no private orders to servants, to delay providing the horses or vehicles; like
 10 *Desmophylax*, who never suffers any one to depart from his house without entitling him to an action of false imprisonment.

Let us now consider a little the part which the visitor himself is to act. And first, he is to avoid the two extremes of being too early, or too late, so as neither to surprize his friend
 15 unawares or unprovided, nor detain him too long in expectation. *Orthrius*, who hath nothing to do, disturbs your rest in a morning; and the frugal *Chronophidus*, lest he should waste some minutes of his precious time, is sure to spoil your dinner.

The address at your arrival should be as short as possible,
 20 especially when you visit a superior; not imitating *Phlenaphius*, who would stop his friend in the rain, rather than omit a single bowe.

Be not too observant of trifling ceremonies, such as rising, sitting, walking first in or out of the room, except with one
 25 greatly your superior; but when such a one offers you precedence, it is uncivil to refuse it: of which I will give you the following instance. An *English* nobleman being in *France*, was bid by *Lewis XIV.* to enter his coach before him, which he excused himself from; the king then immediately mounted,
 30 and ordering the door to be shut, drove on, leaving the nobleman behind him.

Never refuse anything offered you out of civility, unless in preference of a lady, and that no oftner than once; for nothing

is more truly good breeding, than to avoid being troublesome. Though the taste and humour of the visitor is to be chiefly considered, yet is some regard likewise to be had to that of the master of the house ; for otherwise your company will be rather a penance than a pleasure. *Methusus* plainly 5 discovers his visit to be paid to his sober friend's bottle ; nor will *Philopasus* abstain from cards, though he is certain they are agreeable only to himself ; whilst the slender *Leptines* gives his fat entertainer a sweat, and makes him run the hazard of breaking his wind up his own mounts. 10

If conveniency allows your staying longer than the time proposed, it may be civil to offer to depart, lest your stay may be incommodious to your friend : but if you perceive the contrary, by his solicitations, they should be readily accepted ; without tempting him to break these rules we have above laid 15 down for him ; causing a confusion in his family, and among his servants, by preparations for your departure. Lastly, when you are resolved to go, the same method is to be observed which I have prescribed at your arrival. No tedious ceremonies of taking leave : not like *Hyperphylus*, who bowes and 20 kisses, and squeezes by the hand as heartily, and wishes you as much health and happiness, when he is going a journey home of ten miles, from a common acquaintance, as if he was leaving his nearest friend or relation on a voyage to the *East-Indies*.

Having thus briefly considered our reader in the circum- 25 stance of a private visit, let us now take him into a public assembly, where, as more eyes will be on his behaviour, it cannot be less his interest to be instructed. We have indeed already formed a general picture of the chief enormities committed on these occasions, we shall here endeavour to explain 30 more particularly the rules of an opposite demeanour, which we may divide into three sorts, *viz.* our behaviour to our superiours, to our equals, and to our inferiours.

In our behaviour to our superiours two extremes are to be avoided, namely, an abject and base servility, and an impudent and encroaching freedom. When the well-born *Hyperdulus* approaches a nobleman in any public place, you would
5 be persuaded he was one of the meanest of his domestics; his cringes fall little short of prostration; and his whole behaviour is so mean and servile, that an Eastern monarch would not require more humiliation from his vassals. On the other side; *Anaschyntus*, whom fortunate accidents, without any pretensions from his birth, have raised to associate with his betters,
10 shakes my lord duke by the hand, with a familiarity savouring not only of the most perfect intimacy, but the closest alliance. The former behaviour properly raises our contempt, the latter our disgust. *Hyperdulus* seems worthy of wearing his lordship's livery; *Anaschyntus* deserves to be turned out of his service for his impudence. Between these two is that golden mean, which declares a man ready to acquiesce in allowing the respect due to a title by the laws and customs of his country, but impatient of any insult, and disdaining to purchase the
20 intimacy with, and favour of a superior, at the expence of conscience or honour. As to the question, who are our superiours? I shall endeavour to ascertain them, when I come, in the second place, to mention our behaviour to our equals. The first instruction on this head, being carefully to consider who are such:
25 every little superiority of fortune or profession being too apt to intoxicate men's minds, and elevate them in their own opinion, beyond their merit or pretensions. Men are superior to each other in this our country by title, by birth, by rank in profession, and by age; very little, if any, being to be allowed
30 to fortune, though so much is generally exacted by it, and commonly paid to it. Mankind never appear to me in a more despicable light than when I see them, by a simple as well as mean servility, voluntarily concurring in the adoration of riches,

without the least benefit or prospect from them. Respect and deference are perhaps justly demandable of the obliged, and may be, with some reason at least, from expectation, paid to the rich and liberal from the necessitous: but that men should be allured by the glittering of wealth only, to feed the insolent pride of those who will not in return feed their hunger; that the sordid niggard should find any sacrifices on the altar of his vanity, seems to arise from a blinder idolatry, and a more bigotted and senseless superstition, than any which the sharp eyes of priests have discovered in the human mind.

All gentlemen, therefore, who are not raised above each other by title, birth, rank in profession, age, or actual obligation, being to be considered as equals, let us take some lessons for their behaviour to each other in public, from the following examples; in which we shall discern as well what we are to elect, as what we are to avoid. *Authades* is so absolutely abandoned to his own humour, that he never gives it up on any occasion. If *Seraphina* herself, whose charms one would imagine should infuse alacrity into the limbs of a cripple sooner than the *Bath* waters, was to offer herself for his partner, he would answer, *He never danced*, even though the ladies lost their ball by it. Nor doth this denial arise from incapacity; for he was in his youth an excellent dancer, and still retains sufficient knowledge of the art, and sufficient abilities in his limbs to practice it; but from an affectation of gravity, which he will not sacrifice to the eagerest desire of others. *Dyskolus* hath the same aversion to cards; and though competently skilled in all games, is by no importunities to be prevailed on to make a third at *ombre*, or a fourth at whisk and *quadrille*. He will suffer any company to be disappointed of their amusement, rather than submit to pass an hour or two a little disagreeably to himself. The refusal of *Philautus* is not so general: he is very ready to engage, provided you will

indulge him in his favourite game, but it is impossible to persuade him to any other. I should add, both these are men of fortune, and the consequences of loss or gain, at the rate they are desired to engage, very trifling and inconsiderable to them.

5 The rebukes these people sometimes meet with, are no more equal to their deserts than the honour paid to *Charistus*, the benevolence of whose mind scarce permits him to indulge his own will, unless by accident. Though neither his age nor understanding incline him to dance, nor will admit his
10 receiving any pleasure from it, yet would he caper a whole evening, rather than a fine young lady should lose an opportunity of displaying her charms by the several genteel and amiable attitudes which this exercise affords the skilful of that sex. And though cards are not adapted to his temper, he
15 never once balked the inclinations of others on that account.

But as there are many who will not in the least instance mortify their own humour to purchase the satisfaction of all mankind, so there are some who make no scruple of satisfying their own pride and vanity, at the expence of the most cruel
20 mortification of others. Of this kind is *Agroicus*, who seldom goes to an assembly, but he affronts half his acquaintance, by overlooking, or disregarding them.

As this is a very common offence, and indeed much more criminal, both in its cause and effect, than is generally im-
25 agined, I shall examine it very minutely; and I doubt not but to make it appear, that there is no behaviour (to speak like a philosopher) more contemptible, nor, in a civil sense, more detestable than this.

The first ingredient in this composition is PRIDE, which,
30 according to the doctrine of some, is the universal passion. There are others who consider it as the foible of great minds; and others again, who will have it to be the very foundation of greatness; and perhaps it may be of that greatness which

we have endeavoured to expose in many parts of these works : but to real greatness, which is the union of a good heart with a good head, it is almost diametrically opposite, as it generally proceeds from the depravity of both, and almost certainly from the badness of the latter. Indeed, a little observation 5 will shew us, that fools are the most addicted to this vice ; and a little reflection will teach us, that it is incompatible with true understanding. Accordingly we see, that while the wisest of men have constantly lamented the imbecility and imperfection of their own nature, the meanest and weakest have 10 been trumpeting forth their own excellencies, and triumphing in their own sufficiency.

PRIDE may, I think, be properly defined ; *the pleasure we feel in contemplating our own superior merit, on comparing it with that of others.* That it arises from this supposed superiority 15 is evident : for however great you admit a man's merit to be, if all men were equal to him, there would be no room for pride : now if it stop here, perhaps there is no enormous harm in it, or at least, no more than is common to all other folly ; every species of which is always liable to produce every 20 species of mischief : folly I fear it is ; for should the man estimate rightly on this occasion, and the ballance should fairly turn on his side in this particular instance ; should he be indeed a greater orator, poet, general ; should he be more wise, witty, learned, young, rich, healthy, or in whatever 25 instance he may excel one, or many, or all ; yet, if he examine himself thoroughly, will he find no reason to abate his pride ? Is the quality, in which he is so eminent, so generally or justly esteemed ; is it so entirely his own ? Doth he not rather owe his superiority to the defects of others, than to his own perfection ? Or, lastly, can he find in no part of his character, a 30 weakness which may counterpoise this merit, and which as justly, at least, threatens him with shame, as this entices him

to pride? I fancy, if such a scrutiny was made, (and nothing so ready as good sense to make it) a proud man would be as rare, as in reality he is a ridiculous monster. But suppose a man, on this comparison, is (as may sometimes happen) a little
5 partial to himself, the harm is to himself, and he becomes only ridiculous from it. If I prefer my excellence in poetry to *Pope* or *Young*: if an inferior actor should, in his opinion, exceed *Quin* or *Garrick*; or a sign-post painter set himself above the inimitable *Hogarth*; we become only ridiculous by our
10 vanity; and the persons themselves, who are thus humbled in the comparison, would laugh with more reason than any other. PRIDE therefore, hitherto, seems an inoffensive weakness only, and entitles a man to no worse an appellation than that of a FOOL: but it will not stop here; though FOOL be no perhaps
15 desirable term, the proud man will deserve worse: he is not contented with the admiration he pays himself; he now becomes ARROGANT, and requires the same respect and preference from the world; for pride, though the greatest of flatterers, is by no means a profitable servant to itself; it resembles
20 the parson of the parish more than the 'squire, and lives rather on the tithes, oblations, and contributions it collects from others, than on its own desmesne. As pride therefore is seldom without arrogance, so is this never to be found without insolence. The arrogant man must be insolent, in order to attain
25 his own ends: and to convince and remind men of the superiority he affects, will naturally, by ill words, actions, and gestures, endeavour to throw the despised person at as much distance as possible from him. Hence proceeds that supercilious look, and all those visible indignities with which men
30 behave in public, to those whom they fancy their inferiors. Hence the very notable custom of deriding and often denying the nearest relations, friends, and acquaintance, in poverty and distress; lest we should anywise be levelled with the wretches

we despise, either in their own imagination, or in the conceit of any who should behold familiarities pass between us.

But besides pride, folly, arrogance, and insolence, there is another simple (which vice never willingly leaves out of any composition) and that is ill-nature. A good-natured man may indeed (provided he is a fool) be proud, but arrogant and insolent he cannot be; unless we will allow to such a still greater degree of folly, and ignorance of human nature; which may indeed entitle them to forgiveness, in the benign language of scripture, because *they know not what they do*. 5 10

For when we come to consider the effect of this behaviour on the person who suffers it, we may perhaps have reason to conclude, that murder is not a much more cruel injury. What is the consequence of this contempt? or indeed, What is the design of it, but to expose the object of it to shame? a 15 sensation as uneasy, and almost as intolérable, as those which arise from the severest pains inflicted on the body: a convulsion of the mind (if I may so call it) which immediately produces symptoms of universal disorder in the whole man; which hath sometimes been attended with death itself, and to which 20 death hath, by great multitudes, been with much alacrity preferred. Now, what less than the highest degree of ill-nature can permit a man to pamper his own vanity at the price of another's shame? Is the glutton, who, to raise the flavour of his dish, puts some bird or beast to exquisite torment, more 25 cruel to the animal, than this our proud man to his own species?

This character then is a composition made up of those odious contemptible qualities, pride, folly, arrogance, insolence, and ill-nature. I shall dismiss it with some general observations, 30 which will place it in so ridiculous a light, that a man must hereafter be possessed of a very considerable portion, either of folly or impudence, to assume it.

First, it proceeds on one grand fallacy: for whereas this wretch is endeavouring, by a supercilious conduct, to lead the beholder into an opinion of his superiority to the despised person, he inwardly flatters his own vanity with a deceitful
5 presumption, that this his conduct is founded on a general pre-conceived opinion of this superiority.

Secondly, this caution to preserve it, plainly indicates a doubt, that the superiority of our own character is very slightly established; for which reason we see it chiefly practiced by
10 men who have the weakest pretensions to the reputation they aim at: and indeed, none was ever freer from it than that noble person whom we have already mentioned in this essay, and who can never be mentioned but with honour, by those who know him.

15 Thirdly, this opinion of our superiority is commonly very erroneous. Who hath not seen a general behaving in this supercilious manner to an officer of lower rank, who hath been greatly his superior in that very art, to his excellence in which the general ascribes all his merit. Parallel instances occur in every
20 other art, science, or profession.

Fourthly, men who excel others in trifling instances, frequently cast a supercilious eye on their superiors in the highest. Thus the least pretensions to pre-eminence in title, birth, riches, equipage, dress, &c. constantly overlook the most noble endow-
25 ments of virtue, honour, wisdom, sense, wit, and every other quality which can truly dignify and adorn a man.

Lastly, the lowest and meanest of our species are the most strongly addicted to this vice. Men who are a scandal to their sex, and women who disgrace human nature: for the basest
30 mechanic is so far from being exempt, that he is generally the most guilty of it. It visits ale-houses and gin-shops, and whistles in the empty heads of fiddlers, mountebanks, and dancing-masters.

To conclude a character, on which we have already dwelt longer than is consistent with the intended measure of this essay : this contempt of others is the truest symptom of a base and a bad heart. While it suggests itself to the mean and the vile, and tickles their little fancy on every occasion, it never enters the great and good mind, but on the strongest motives ; nor is it then a welcome guest, affording only an uneasy sensation, and brings always with it a mixture of concern and compassion.

We will now proceed to inferior criminals in society. *Theoretus* conceiving that the assembly is only met to see and admire him, is uneasy unless he engrosses the eyes of the whole company. The giant doth not take more pains to be view'd ; and as he is unfortunately not so tall, he carefully deposits himself in the most conspicuous place : nor will that suffice, he must walk about the room, though to the great disturbance of the company ; and if he can purchase general observation, at no less rate will condescend to be ridiculous ; for he prefers being laughed at, to being taken little notice of.

On the other side, *Dusopius* is so bashful, that he hides himself in a corner ; he hardly bears being looked at, and never quits the first chair he lights upon, lest he should expose himself to public view. He trembles when you bow to him at a distance ; is shocked at hearing his own voice, and would almost swoon at the repetition of his name.

The audacious *Anedes*, who is extremely amorous in his inclinations, never likes a woman, but his eyes ask her the question ; without considering the confusion he often occasions to the object : he ogles and languishes at every pretty woman in the room. As there is no law of morality which he would not break to satisfy his desires, so there is no form of civility which he doth not violate to communicate them. When he gets possession of a woman's hand, which those of stricter decency never

give him but with reluctance, he considers himself as its master. Indeed there is scarce a familiarity which he will abstain from, on the slightest acquaintance, and in the most publick place. *Seraphina* herself can make no impression on the rough temper of *Agroicus*; neither her quality, nor her beauty, can exact the least complacence from him; and he would let her lovely limbs ach, rather than offer her his chair: while the gentle *Lyperus* tumbles over benches, and overthrows tea-tables, to take up a fan or a glove: he forces you as a good parent doth his child, for your own good: he is absolute master of a lady's will, nor will allow her the election of standing or sitting in his company. In short, the impertinent civility of *Lyperus* is as troublesome, tho' perhaps not so offensive as the brutish rudeness of *Agroicus*.

Thus we have hinted at most of the common enormities committed in publick assemblies, to our equals; for it would be tedious and difficult to enumerate all: nor is it needful; since from this sketch we may trace all others, most of which, I believe, will be found to branch out from some of the particulars here specified.

I am now, in the last place, to consider our behaviour to our inferiors: in which condescension can never be too strongly recommended: for as a deviation on this side is much more innocent than on the other, so the pride of man renders us much less liable to it. For besides that we are apt to over-rate our own perfections, and undervalue the qualifications of our neighbours, we likewise set too high an esteem on the things themselves, and consider them as constituting a more essential difference between us than they really do. The qualities of the mind do, in reality, establish the truest superiority over one another; yet should not these so far elevate our pride, as to inflate us with contempt, and make us look down on our fellow-creatures, as on the animals of an inferior order: but that the

fortuitous accident of birth, the acquisition of wealth, with some outward ornaments of dress, should inspire men with an insolence capable of treating the rest of mankind with disdain, is so preposterous, that nothing less than daily experience could give it credit. 5

If men were to be rightly estimated, and divided into subordinate classes, according to the superior excellence of their several natures, perhaps the lowest class of either sex would be properly assigned to those two disgracers of the human species, common[ly] called a beau and a fine lady: for if we rate men 10 by the faculties of the mind, in what degree must these stand? Nay, admitting the qualities of the body were to give the pre-eminence, how many of those whom fortune hath placed in the lowest station, must be ranked above them? If dress is their only title, sure even the monkey, if as well dressed, is on 15 as high a footing as the beau. — But perhaps I shall be told, they challenge their dignity from birth: that is a poor and mean pretence to honour, when supported with no other. Persons who have no better claim to superiority, should be ashamed of this; they are really a disgrace to those very 20 ancestors from whom they would derive their pride, and are chiefly happy in this, that they want the very moderate portion of understanding which would enable them to despise themselves.

And yet, who so prone to a contemptuous carriage as these! 25 I have myself seen a little female thing *which* they have called My Lady, of no greater dignity in the order of beings than a cat, and of no more use in society than a butterfly; whose mien would not give even the idea of a gentlewoman, and whose face would cool the loosest libertine; with a mind as 30 empty of ideas as an opera, and a body fuller of diseases than an hospital. I have seen this *thing* express contempt to a woman who was an honour to her sex, and an ornament to the creation.

To confess the truth, there is little danger of the possessor's ever undervaluing this titular excellence. Not that I would withdraw from it that deference which the policy of government hath assigned it. On the contrary, I have laid down the
5 most exact compliance with this respect, as a fundamental in good-breeding; nay, I insist only that we may be admitted to pay it; and not treated with a disdain even beyond what the eastern monarchs shew to their slaves. Surely it is too high an elevation, when instead of treating the lowest human crea-
10 ture, in a Christian sense, as our brethren; we look down on such as are but one rank, in the civil order, removed from us, as unworthy to breathe even the same air, and regard the most distant communication with them as an indignity and disgrace offered to ourselves. This is considering the differ-
15 ence not in the individual, but in the very species; a height of insolence impious in a Christian society, and most absurd and ridiculous in a trading nation.

I have now done with my first head, in which I have treated of good-breeding, as it regards our actions. I shall, in the
20 next place, consider it with respect to our words; and shall endeavour to lay down some rules, by observing which our well-bred man may, in his discourse as well as actions, contribute to the happiness and well-being of society.

Certain it is, that the highest pleasure which we are capa-
25 ble of enjoying in conversation, is to be met with only in the society of persons whose understanding is pretty near on an equality with our own: nor is this equality only necessary to enable men of exalted genius, and extensive knowledge, to taste the sublimer pleasures of communicating their refined
30 ideas to each other; but it is likewise necessary to the inferior happiness of every subordinate degree of society, down to the very lowest. For instance; we will suppose a conversation between *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Aristotle*, and three dancing-masters.

It will be acknowledged, I believe, that the heel sophists would be as little pleased with the company of the philosophers, as the philosophers with theirs.

It would be greatly therefore for the improvement and happiness of conversation, if society could be formed on this equality: but as men are not ranked in this world by the different degrees of their understanding, but by other methods, and consequently all degrees of understanding often meet in the same class, and must *ex necessitate* frequently converse together, the impossibility of accomplishing any such *Utopian* scheme very plainly appears. Here therefore is a visible but unavoidable imperfection in society itself.

But as we have laid it down as a fundamental, that the essence of good-breeding is to contribute as much as possible to the ease and happiness of mankind, so will it be the business of our well-bred man to endeavour to lessen this imperfection to his utmost, and to bring society as near to a level at least as he is able.

Now there are but two ways to compass this, *viz.* by raising the lower, and by lowering what is higher.

Let us suppose then, that very unequal company I have before mentioned met: the former of these is apparently impracticable. Let *Socrates*, for instance, institute a discourse on the nature of the soul, or *Plato* reason on the native beauty of virtue, and *Aristotle* on his occult qualities. — What must become of our dancing-masters? Would they not stare at one another with surprize? and, most probably, at our philosophers with contempt? Would they have any pleasure in such society? or would they not rather wish themselves in a dancing-school, or a green-room at the play-house? What therefore have our philosophers to do, but to lower themselves to those who cannot rise to them?

And surely there are subjects on which both can converse. Hath not *Socrates* heard of harmony? Hath not *Plato*, who

draws virtue in the person of a fine woman, any idea of the gracefulness of attitude? and hath not *Aristotle* himself written a book on motion? In short, to be a little serious, there are many topics on which they can at least be intelligible to each
5 other.

How absurd then must appear the conduct of *Cenodoxus*, who having had the advantage of a liberal education, and having made a pretty good progress in literature, is constantly advancing learned subjects in common conversation? He
10 talks of the classics before the ladies; and of *Greek* criticisms among fine gentlemen. What is this less than an insult on the company, over whom he thus affects a superiority, and whose time he sacrifices to his vanity?

Wisely different is the amiable conduct of *Sophronus*; who,
15 though he exceeds the former in knowledge, can submit to discourse on the most trivial matters, rather than introduce such as his company are utter strangers to. He can talk of fashions and diversions among the ladies; nay, can even condescend to horses and dogs with country gentlemen. This gen-
20 tleman, who is equal to dispute on the highest and abstrusest points, can likewise talk on a fan, or a horse-race; nor had ever any one, who was not himself a man of learning, the least reason to conceive the vast knowledge of *Sophronus*, unless from the report of others.

25 Let us compare these together. *Cenodoxus* proposes the satisfaction of his own pride from the admiration of others; *Sophronus* thinks of nothing but their amusement. In the company of *Cenodoxus*, every one is rendered uneasy, laments his own want of knowledge, and longs for the end of the dull
30 assembly: with *Sophronus* all are pleased, and contented with themselves in their knowledge of matters which they find worthy the consideration of a man of sense. Admiration is involuntarily paid the former; to the latter it is given joyfully.

The former receives it with envy and hatred ; the latter enjoys it as the sweet fruit of good-will. The former is shunned, the latter courted by all.

This behaviour in *Cenodoxus* may, in some measure, account for an observation we must have frequent occasion to make : 5 that the conversation of men of very moderate capacities is often preferred to that of men of superior talents : in which the world act more wisely than at first they may seem ; for besides that backwardness in mankind to give their admiration, what can be duller, or more void of pleasure than discourses 10 on subjects above our comprehension ! It is like listning to an unknown language ; and if such company is ever desired by us, it is a sacrifice to our vanity, which imposes on us to believe that we may by these means raise the general opinion of our own parts and knowledge, and not from that cheerful 15 delight which is the natural result of an agreeable conversation.

There is another very common fault, equally destructive of this delight, by much the same means ; though it is far from owing its original to any real superiority of parts and knowledge : this is discoursing on the mysteries of a particular pro- 20 fession, to which all the rest of the company, except one or two, are utter strangers. Lawyers are generally guilty of this fault, as they are more confined to the conversation of one another ; and I have known a very agreeable company spoilt, where there have been two of these gentlemen present, who 25 have seemed rather to think themselves in a court of justice, than in a mixed assembly of persons, met only for the entertainment of each other.

But it is not sufficient that the whole company understand the topic of their conversation ; they should be likewise equally 30 interested in every subject not tending to their general information or amusement ; for these are not to be postponed to the relation of private affairs, much less of the particular

grievance or misfortune of a single person. To bear a share in the afflictions of another is a degree of friendship not to be expected in a common acquaintance; nor hath any man a right to indulge the satisfaction of a weak and mean mind by the comfort of pity, at the expence of the whole company's diversion. The inferior and unsuccessful members of the several professions are generally guilty of this fault; for as they fail of the reward due to their great merit, they can seldom refrain from reviling their superiors, and complaining of their own hard and unjust fate.

Farther; as a man is not to make himself the subject of the conversation, so neither is he to engross the whole to himself. As every man had rather please others by what he says than be himself pleased by what they say; or, in other words, as every man is best pleased with the consciousness of pleasing; so should all have an equal opportunity of aiming at it. This is a right which we are so offended at being deprived of, that though I remember to have known a man reputed a good companion, who seldom opened his mouth in company, unless to swallow his liquor; yet I have scarce ever heard that appellation given to a very talkative person, even when he hath been capable of entertaining, unless he hath done this with buffoon'ry, and made the rest amends, by partaking of their scorn, together with their admiration and applause.

A well-bred man therefore will not take more of the discourse than falls to his share: nor in this will he shew any violent impetuosity of temper, or exert any loudness of voice, even in arguing: for the information of the company, and the conviction of his antagonist, are to be his apparent motives; not the indulgence of his own pride, or an ambitious desire of victory; which latter if a wise man should entertain, he will be sure to conceal with his utmost endeavour: since he must know, that to lay open his vanity in public, is no less absurd

than to lay open his bosom to an enemy, whose drawn sword is pointed against it: for every man hath a dagger in his hand, ready to stab the vanity of another, wherever he perceives it.

Having now shewn, that the pleasure of conversation must arise from the discourse being on subjects levelled to the capacity of the whole company; from being on such in which every person is equally interested; from every one's being admitted to his share in the discourse; and lastly, from carefully avoiding all noise, violence, and impetuosity; it might seem proper to lay down some particular rules for the choice of those subjects which are most likely to conduce to the cheerful delights proposed from this social communication: but as such an attempt might appear absurd, from the infinite variety, and perhaps too dictatorial in its nature, I shall confine myself to rejecting those topics only which seem most foreign to this delight, and which are most likely to be attended with consequences rather tending to make society an evil, than to procure us any good from it.

And first, I shall mention that which I have hitherto only endeavoured to restrain within certain bounds, namely, arguments: but which if they were entirely banished out of company, especially from mixed assemblies, and where ladies make part of the society, it would, I believe, promote their happiness: they have been sometimes attended with bloodshed, generally with hatred from the conquered party towards his victor; and scarce ever with conviction. Here I except jocose arguments, which often produce much mirth; and serious disputes between men of learning (when none but such are present) which tend to the propagation of knowledge, and the edification of the company.

Secondly, slander; which, however frequently used, or however savory to the palate of ill-nature, is extremely pernicious. As it is often unjust, and highly injurious to the person

slandered ; and always dangerous, especially in large and mixed companies ; where sometimes an undesigned offence is given to an innocent relation or friend of such person, who is thus exposed to shame and confusion, without having any right to
 5 resent the affront. Of this there have been very tragical instances ; and I have myself seen some very ridiculous ones, but which have given great pain, as well to the person offended, as to him who hath been the innocent occasion of giving the offence.

10 Thirdly ; all general reflections on countries, religions, and professions, which are always unjust. If these are ever tolerable, they are only from the persons who with some pleasantry ridicule their own country. It is very common among us to cast sarcasms on a neighbouring nation, to which we have no
 15 other reason to bear an antipathy, than what is more usual than justifiable, because we have injured it : but sure such general satire is not founded on truth : for I have known gentlemen of that nation possessed with every good quality which are to be wished in a man, or required in a friend. I remem-
 20 ber a repartee made by a gentleman of this country, which though it was full of the severest wit, the person to whom it was directed, could not resent, as he so plainly deserved it. He had with great bitterness inveighed against this whole people ; upon which, one of them who was present, very
 25 coolly answered, *I don't know, sir, whether I have not more reason to be pleased with the compliment you pay my country, than to be angry with what you say against it ; since by your abusing us all so heavily, you have plainly implied you are not of it.* This exposed the other to so much laughter, especially
 30 as he was not unexceptionable in his character, that I believe he was sufficiently punished for his ill-manner'd satire.

Fourthly ; blasphemy, and irreverent mention of religion. I will not here debate what compliment a man pays to his

own understanding, by the profession of infidelity ; it is sufficient to my purpose, that he runs a risque of giving the cruellest offence to persons of a different temper : for if a loyalist would be greatly affronted by hearing any indecencies offered to the person of a temporal prince, how much more bitterly 5 must a man, who sincerely believes in such a being as the Almighty, feel any irreverence, or insult shewn to His name, His honour, or His institution? And notwithstanding the impious character of the present age, and especially of many among those whose more immediate business it is to lead 10 men, as well by example as precept, into the ways of piety, there are still sufficient numbers left, who pay so honest and sincere a reverence to religion, as may give us a reasonable expectation of finding one at least of this stamp in every large company. 15

A fifth particular to be avoided is indecency. We are not only to forbear the repeating such words as would give an immediate affront to a lady of reputation ; but the raising any loose ideas tending to the offence of that modesty, which if a young woman hath not something more than the affectation 20 of, she is not worthy the regard even of a man of pleasure, provided he hath any delicacy in his constitution. How inconsistent with good-breeding it is to give pain and confusion to such, is sufficiently apparent ; all double-entendres, and obscene jests, are therefore carefully to be avoided before 25 them. But suppose no ladies present, nothing can be meaner, lower, and less productive of rational mirth, than this loose conversation. For my own part, I cannot conceive how the idea of jest or pleasantry came ever to be annexed to one of our highest and most serious pleasures. Nor can I help observ- 30 ing, to the discredit of such merriment, that it is commonly the last resource of impotent wit, the weak strainings of the lowest, silliest, and dullest fellows in the world.

Sixthly; you are to avoid knowingly mentioning any thing which may revive in any person the remembrance of some past accident; or raise an uneasy reflection on a present misfortune, or corporeal blemish. To maintain this rule nicely, 5 perhaps requires great delicacy; but it is absolutely necessary to a well-bred man. I have observed numberless breaches of it; many, I believe, proceeding from negligence and inadvertency; yet I am afraid some may be too justly imputed to a malicious desire of triumphing in our own superior happiness 10 and perfections: now when it proceeds from this motive, it is not easy to imagine any thing more criminal.

Under this head I shall caution my well-bred reader against a common fault, much of the same nature; which is mentioning any particular quality as absolutely essential to either man 15 or woman, and exploding all those who want it. This renders every one uneasy, who is in the least self-conscious of the defect. I have heard a boor of fashion declare in the presence of women remarkably plain, that beauty was the chief perfection of that sex; and an essential, without which no woman 20 was worth regarding. A certain method of putting all those in the room, who are but suspicious of their defect that way, out of countenance.

I shall mention one fault more, which is, not paying a proper regard to the present temper of the company, or the 25 occasion of their meeting, in introducing a topic of conversation, by which as great an absurdity is sometimes committed, as it would be to sing a dirge at a wedding, or an epithalamium at a funeral.

Thus I have, I think, enumerated most of the principal 30 errors which we are apt to fall into in conversation; and though perhaps some particulars worthy of remark may have escaped me, yet an attention to what I have here said, may enable the reader to discover them. At least I am

persuaded, that if the rules I have now laid down were strictly observed, our conversation would be more perfect, and the pleasure resulting from it purer, and more unsullied, than at present it is.

But I must not dismiss this subject without some animad- 5
versions on a particular species of pleasantry, which though I am far from being desirous of banishing from conversation, requires, most certainly, some reins to govern, and some rule to direct it. The reader may perhaps guess, I mean raillery; to which I may apply the fable of the Lap-Dog and the Ass: 10
for while in some hands it diverts and delights us with its dexterity and gentleness; in others, it paws, dawbs, offends, and hurts.

The end of conversation being the happiness of mankind, and the chief means to procure their delight and pleasure; it 15
follows, I think, that nothing can conduce to this end, which tends to make a man uneasy and dissatisfied with himself, or which exposes him to the scorn and contempt of others. I here except that kind of raillery therefore, which is concerned in tossing men out of their chairs, tumbling them into water, 20
or any of those handicraft jokes which are exercised on those notable persons, commonly known by the name of buffoons. This I pass by, as well as all remarks on the genius of the great men themselves, who are (to fetch a phrase from school, a phrase not improperly mentioned on this occasion) great 25
DABS at this kind of facetiousness.

But leaving all such persons to expose human nature among themselves, I shall recommend to my well-bred man, who aims at raillery, the excellent character given of *Horace* by *Persius*.

*Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus amico
Tangit, et admissus circum præcordia ludit,
Callidus excusso populum suspendere naso.*

Thus excellently rendered by the late ingenious translator of that obscure author.

5 *Yet cou'd shrewd Horace, with disportive Wit,
Rally his Friend, and tickle while he bit :
Winning Access, he play'd around the Heart,
And gently touching, prick'd the tainted Part.
The Crowd he sneer'd ; but sneer'd with such a Grace,
It pass'd for downright Innocence of Face.*

The raillery which is consistent with good-breeding, is a
10 gentle animadversion on some foible ; which while it raises a
laugh in the rest of the company, doth not put the person rallied
out of countenance, or expose him to shame and contempt. On
the contrary, the jest should be so delicate, that the object of
it should be capable of joining in the mirth it occasions.

15 All great vices therefore, misfortunes, and notorious blem-
ishes of mind or body, are improper subjects of raillery.
Indeed, a hint at such is an abuse and affront [which] is sure
to give the person (unless he be one shameless and abandoned)
pain and uneasiness, and should be received with contempt,
20 instead of applause, by all the rest of the company.

Again ; the nature and quality of the person are to be con-
sidered. As to the first, some men will not bear any raillery
at all. I remember a gentleman who declared, *He never made
a jest, nor would ever take one.* I do not indeed greatly
25 recommend such a person for a companion ; but at the same
time, a well-bred man, who is to consult the pleasure and
happiness of the whole, is not at liberty to make any one
present uneasy. By the quality, I mean the sex, degree, pro-
fession, and circumstances ; on which head I need not be
30 very particular. With regard to the two former, all raillery
on ladies and superiors should be extremely fine and gentle ;
and with respect to the latter, any of the rules I have above

laid down, most of which are to be applied to it, will afford sufficient caution.

Lastly. A consideration is to be had of the persons before whom we rally. A man will be justly uneasy at being reminded of those railleries in one company, which he would very 5
patiently bear the imputation of in another. Instances on this head are so obvious, that they need not be mentioned. In short, the whole doctrine of raillery is comprized in this famous line.

QUID *de* QUOQUE *viro*, *et* CUI *dicas*, *sæpe* *caveto*. 10

Be cautious WHAT *you say*, OF WHOM *and* TO WHOM.

And now methinks I hear some one cry out, that such restrictions are, in effect, to exclude all raillery from conversation: and, to confess the truth, it is a weapon from which many persons will do wisely in totally abstaining; for it is 15
a weapon which doth the more mischief, by how much the blunter it is. The sharpest wit therefore is only to be indulged the free use of it; for no more than a very slight touch is to be allowed; no hacking, nor bruising, as if they were to *hew a Carcase for Hounds*, as *Shakespear* phrases it. 20

Nor is it sufficient that it be sharp, it must be used likewise with the utmost tenderness and good-nature: and as the nicest dexterity of a gladiator is shewn in being able to hit without cutting deep, so is this of our rallier, who is rather to tickle than wound. 25

True raillery indeed consists either in playing on peccadillo's, which, however they may be censured by some, are not esteemed as really blemishes in a character in a company where they are made the subject of mirth; as too much freedom with the bottle, or too much indulgence with women, &c. 30

Or, secondly, in pleasantly representing real good qualities in a false light of shame, and bantering them as ill ones. So

generosity may be treated as prodigality ; œconomy as avarice ; true courage as fool-hardiness ; and so of the rest.

Lastly ; in ridiculing men for vices and faults which they are known to be free from. Thus the cowardice of *A—le*, the dulness of *Ch—d*, the unpoliteness of *D—ton*, may be attacked without danger of offence ; and thus *Lyt—n* may be censured for whatever vice or folly you please to impute to him.

And however limited these bounds may appear to some, yet, in skilful and witty hands, I have known raillery, thus confined, afford a very diverting, as well as inoffensive entertainment to the whole company.

I shall conclude this essay with these two observations, which I think may be clearly deduced from what hath been said.

15 First, that every person who indulges his ill-nature or vanity, at the expence of others ; and in introducing uneasiness, vexation, and confusion into society, however exalted or high-titled he may be, is thoroughly ill-bred.

Secondly, that whoever, from the goodness of his disposition
20 or understanding, endeavours to his utmost to cultivate the good-humour and happiness of others, and to contribute to the ease and comfort of all his acquaintance, however low in rank fortune may have placed him, or however clumsy he may be in his figure or demeanour, hath, in the truest sense of the
25 word, a claim to good-breeding.

XXXI

AN ESSAY ON NOTHING

THE INTRODUCTION

It is surprizing, that while such trifling matters employ the masterly pens of the present age, the great and noble subject of this essay should have passed totally neglected; and the rather, as it is a subject to which the genius of many of those writers who have unsuccessfully applied themselves to politics, religion, &c. is most peculiarly adapted. 5

Perhaps their unwillingness to handle what is of such importance, may not improperly be ascribed to their modesty; though they may not be remarkably addicted to this vice on every occasion. Indeed I have heard it predicated of some, whose assurance in treating other subjects hath been sufficiently notable, that they have blushed at this. For such is the awe with which this Nothing inspires mankind, that I believe it is generally apprehended of many persons of very high character among us, that were title, power, or riches to 15 allure them, they would stick at it.

But whatever be the reason, certain it is, that except a hardy wit in the reign of *Charles* II. none ever hath dared to write on this subject. I mean openly and avowedly; for it must be confessed, that most of our modern authors, however foreign the 20 matter which they endeavour to treat may seem at their first setting out, they generally bring their work to this in the end.

I hope, however, this attempt will not be imputed to me as an act of immodesty; since I am convinced there are many persons in this kingdom, who are persuaded of my fitness for 25 what I have undertaken. But as talking of a man's self is generally suspected to arise from vanity, I shall, without any more excuse or preface, proceed to my essay.

SECT. I.

Of the Antiquity of NOTHING.

There is nothing falser than that old proverb, which (like many other falsehoods) is in every one's mouth ;

Ex Nihilo nihil Fit.

Thus translated by *Shakespeare*, in *Lear*.

5 *Nothing can come of Nothing.*

Whereas in fact, from Nothing proceeds every thing. And this is a truth confessed by the philosophers of all sects : the only point in controversy between them being, whether Something made the world out of Nothing, or Nothing out of
 10 Something. A matter not much worth debating at present, since either will equally serve our turn. Indeed the wits of all ages seem to have ranged themselves on each side of this question, as their genius tended more or less to the spiritual or material substance. For those of the more spiritual species
 15 have inclined to the former, and those whose genius hath partaken more of the chief properties of matter, such as solidity, thickness, &c. have embraced the latter.

But whether Nothing was the *artifex* or *materies* only, it is plain in either case, it will have a right to claim to itself the
 20 origination of all things.

And farther, the great antiquity of Nothing is apparent from its being so visible in the accounts we have of the beginning of every nation. This is very plainly to be discovered in the first pages, and sometimes books of all general historians ; and
 25 indeed, the study of this important subject fills up the whole life of an antiquary, it being always at the bottom of his enquiry, and is commonly at last discovered by him with infinite labour and pains.

SECT. II.

Of the Nature of NOTHING.

Another falsehood which we must detect in the pursuit of this essay, is an assertion, *That no one can have an Idea of NOTHING*: But men who thus confidently deny us this idea, either grossly deceive themselves, or would impose a down-right cheat on the world: for so far from having none, I 5 believe there are few who have not many ideas of it; though they may mistake them for the idea of something.

For instance; is there any one who has not an idea of* immaterial substance? — Now what is immaterial substance, more than *Nothing*? But here we are artfully deceived by the 10 use of words: for were we to ask another what idea he had of immaterial matter, or unsubstantial substance, the absurdity of affirming it to be Something, would shock him, and he would immediately reply, it was *Nothing*.

Some persons perhaps will say then, we have no idea of it: 15 but as I can support the contrary by such undoubted authority, I shall, instead of trying to confute such idle opinions, proceed to shew, first, what Nothing is; secondly, I shall disclose the various kinds of Nothing; and lastly, shall prove its great dignity, and that it is the end of every thing. 20

It is extremely hard to define Nothing in positive terms, I shall therefore do it in negative. Nothing then is not Something. And here I must object to a third error concerning it, which is, that it is in no place; which is an indirect way of

* The author would not be here understood to speak against the doctrine of immateriality, to which he is a hearty well-wisher; but to point at the stupidity of those, who instead of immaterial *essence*, which would convey a rational meaning, have substituted immaterial *substance*, which is a contradiction in terms.

depriving it of its existence ; whereas it possesses the greatest and noblest place on this earth, *viz.* the human brain. But indeed this mistake hath been sufficiently refuted by many very wise men ; who having spent their whole lives in the
5 contemplation and pursuit of Nothing, have at last gravely concluded — *That there is Nothing in this world.*

Farther ; as Nothing is not Something, so every thing which is not Something, is Nothing ; and wherever Something is not, Nothing is : a very large allowance in its favour, as must
10 appear to persons well skilled in human affairs.

For instance ; when a bladder is full of wind, it is full of Something ; but when that is let out, we aptly say, there is Nothing in it.

The same may be as justly asserted of a man as of a blad-
15 der. However well he may be bedawbed with lace, or with title, yet if he have not Something in him, we may predicate the same of him as of an empty bladder.

But if we cannot reach an adequate knowledge of the true essence of Nothing, no more than we can of matter, let us, in
20 imitation of the experimental philosophers, examine some of its properties or accidents.

And here we shall see the infinite advantages which Nothing hath over Something : for while the latter is confined to one sense, or two perhaps at the most, Nothing is the object of
25 them all.

For first ; Nothing may be seen, as is plain from the relation of persons who have recovered from high fevers ; and perhaps may be suspected from some (at least) of those who have seen apparitions, both on earth, and in the clouds. Nay,
30 I have often heard it confessed by men, when asked what they saw at such a place and time, that they saw Nothing. Admitting then that there are two sights, *viz.* a first and second sight, according to the firm belief of some, Nothing must be allowed

to have a very large share of the first; and as to the second, it hath it all entirely to itself.

Secondly; Nothing may be heard: of which the same proofs may be given, as of the foregoing. The *Argive*, mentioned by *Horace*, is a strong instance of this. 5

— *Fuit haud ignobilis Argis*
Qui se credebat miros audire Tragædos
In vacuo lætos sessor, Plausorque Theatro.

That Nothing may be tasted and smelt, is not only known to persons of delicate palates and nostrils. How commonly 10 do we hear, that such a thing smells or tastes of Nothing? The latter I have heard asserted of a dish compounded of five or six savory ingredients. And as to the former, I remember an elderly gentlewoman who had a great antipathy to the smell of apples; who upon discovering that an idle boy had fastened 15 some mellow apple to her tail, contracted a habit of smelling them, whenever that boy came within her sight, though there were then none within a mile of her.

Lastly, feeling; and sure if any sense seems more particularly the object of matter only, which must be allowed to be 20 Something, this doth. Nay, I have heard it asserted (and with a colour of truth) of several persons, that they can feel nothing but a cudgel. Notwithstanding which, some have felt the motions of the spirit; and others have felt very bitterly the misfortunes of their friends, without endeavouring to relieve 25 them. Now these seem two plain instances, that Nothing is an object of this sense. Nay, I have heard a surgeon declare, while he was cutting off a patient's leg, that *he was sure he felt nothing*.

Nothing is as well the object of our passions as our senses. 30 Thus there are many who love Nothing, some who hate Nothing, and some who fear Nothing, &c.

We have already mentioned three of the properties of a noun, to belong to Nothing; we shall find the fourth likewise to be as justly claim'd by it: and that Nothing is as often the object of the understanding, as of the senses.

5 Indeed some have imagined, that knowledge, with the adjective *human* placed before it, is another word for Nothing. And one of the wisest men in the world declared, he knew nothing.

But without carrying it so far, this I believe may be allowed, that it is at least possible for a man to know Nothing. And who-
10 ever hath read over many works of our ingenious moderns, with proper attention and emolument, will, I believe, confess, that if he understands them right, he understands *Nothing*.

This is a secret not known to all readers; and want of this knowledge hath occasioned much puzzling; for where a book,
15 or chapter, or paragraph, hath seemed to the reader to contain Nothing, his modesty hath sometimes persuaded him, that the true meaning of the author hath escaped him, instead of concluding, as in reality the fact was, that the author, in the said book, &c. did truly, and *bonâ fide*, mean nothing. I remember
20 once, at the table of a person of great eminence, and one no less distinguished by superiority of wit than fortune, when a very dark passage was read out of a poet, famous for being so sublime, that he is often out of the sight of his reader, some persons present declared they did not understand the meaning.
25 The gentleman himself, casting his eyes over the performance, testified a surprize at the dulness of his company; seeing Nothing could, he said, possibly be plainer than the meaning of the passage which they stuck at. This set all of us to puzzling again; but with like success; we frankly owned we could not
30 find it out, and desired he would explain it. — Explain it! said the gentleman, why he means NOTHING.

In fact, this mistake arises from a too vulgar error among persons unacquainted with the mystery of writing, who imagine

it impossible that a man should sit down to write without any meaning at all ; whereas in reality, nothing is more common : for, not to instance in myself, who have confessedly sat down to write this essay, with Nothing in my head, or, which is much the same thing, to write about Nothing ; it may be incontestably proved, *ab effectu*, that Nothing is commoner among the moderns. The inimitable author of a preface to the Posthumous Eclogues of a late ingenious young gentleman, says, — There are men who sit down to write what they think, and others to think what they shall write. But indeed there is a third, and a much more numerous sort, who never think either before they sit down, or afterwards ; and who when they produce on paper what was before in their heads, are sure to produce Nothing.

Thus we have endeavoured to demonstrate the nature of Nothing, by shewing first, definitively, *what it is not* ; and secondly, by describing *what it is*. The next thing therefore proposed, is to shew its various kinds.

Now some imagine these several kinds differ in name only. But without endeavouring to confute so absurd an opinion, especially as these different kinds of Nothing occur frequently in the best authors, I shall content myself with setting them down, and leave it to the determination of the distinguishing reader, whether it is probable, or indeed possible, that they should all convey one and the same meaning.

These are, Nothing *per se* Nothing ; Nothing at all ; Nothing in the least ; Nothing in nature ; Nothing in the world ; Nothing in the whole world ; Nothing in the whole universal world. And perhaps many others, of which we say — *Nothing*.

SECT. III.

Of the Dignity of NOTHING ; and an Endeavour to prove, that it is the End as well as Beginning of all Things.

NOTHING contains so much dignity as NOTHING. Ask an infamous worthless nobleman (if any such be) in what his dignity consists? It may not be perhaps consistent with dignity to give you an answer ; but suppose he should be willing to con-
 5 descend so far, what could he in effect say? Should he say he had it of his ancestors, I apprehend a lawyer would oblige him to prove, that the virtues to which this dignity was annexed, descended to him. If he claims it as inherent in the title, might he not be told, that a title originally implied dignity, as
 10 it implied the presence of those virtues to which dignity is inseparably annexed ; but that no implication will fly in the face of downright positive proof to the contrary. In short, to examine no farther, since his endeavour to derive it from any other fountain would be equally impotent, his dignity arises from
 15 Nothing, and in reality is Nothing. Yet, that this dignity really exists ; that it glares in the eyes of men, and produces much good to the person who wears it, is, I believe, incontestable.

Perhaps this may appear in the following syllogism.

The respect paid to men on account of their titles, is paid
 20 at least to the supposal of their superior virtues and abilities, or it is paid to *Nothing*.

But when a man is a notorious knave or fool, it is impossible there should be any such supposal.

The conclusion is apparent.

25 Now that no man is ashamed of either paying or receiving this respect, I wonder not, since the great importance of Nothing seems, I think, to be pretty apparent : but that they should deny the deity worshipped, and endeavour to represent Nothing as Something, is more worthy reprehension. This is a

fallacy extremely common. I have seen a fellow, whom all the world knew to have Nothing in him, not only pretend to Something himself; but supported in that pretension by others who have been less liable to be deceived. Now whence can this proceed, but from their being ashamed of Nothing? A modesty very peculiar to this age. 5

But notwithstanding all such disguise and deceit, a man must have very little discernment, who can live long in courts, or populous cities, without being convinced of the great dignity of Nothing; and though he should, through corruption or necessity, comply with the vulgar worship and adulation, he will know to what it is paid, namely, to *Nothing*. 10

The most astonishing instance of this respect, so frequently paid to Nothing, is when it is paid (if I may so express myself) to Something less than Nothing; when the person who receives 15 it is not only void of the quality for which he is respected, but is in reality notoriously guilty of vices directly opposite to the virtues, whose applause he receives. This is, indeed, the highest degree of Nothing, or, (if I may be allowed the word) the *Nothingest* of all Nothings. 20

Here it is to be known, that respect may be aimed at Something, and really light on Nothing. For instance; when mistaking certain things called gravity, canting, blustering, ostentation, pomp, and such like, for wisdom, piety, magnanimity, charity, true greatness, &c. we give to the former the honour and reverence due to the latter. Not that I would be understood so far to discredit my subject, as to insinuate that gravity, canting, &c. are really Nothing; on the contrary, there is much more reason to suspect, (if we judge from the practice of the world) that wisdom, piety, and other virtues, have a good title 30 to that name. But we do not, in fact, pay our respect to the former, but to the latter: in other words, we pay it to that which is not, and consequently pay it to Nothing.

So far then for the dignity of the subject on which I am treating. I am now to shew, that Nothing is the end as well as beginning of all things.

That every thing is resolvable, and will be resolved into its first principles, will be, I believe, readily acknowledged by all philosophers. As therefore we have sufficiently proved the world came from Nothing, it follows, that it will likewise end in the same: but as I am writing to a nation of Christians, I have no need to be prolix on this head; since every one of my readers, by his faith, acknowledges that the world is to have an end, *i.e.* is to come to Nothing.

And as Nothing is the end of the world, so is it of every thing in the world. Ambition, the greatest, highest, noblest, finest, most heroic and godlike of all passions, what doth it end in? — Nothing. What did *Alexander, Cæsar*, and all the rest of that heroic band, who have plundered, and massacred so many millions, obtain by all their care, labour, pain, fatigue, and danger? — Could they speak for themselves, must they not own, that the end of all their pursuit was Nothing? Nor is this the end of private ambition only. What is become of that proud mistress of the world, — the *Caput triumphati Orbis*? that *Rome*, of which her own flatterers so liberally prophesied the immortality, in what hath all her glory ended? surely in Nothing.

Again, what is the end of avarice? Not power, or pleasure, as some think, for the miser will part with a shilling for neither: not ease or happiness; for the more he attains of what he desires, the more uneasy and miserable he is. If every good in this world was put to him, he could not say he pursued one. Shall we say then, he pursues misery only? that surely would be contradictory to the first principles of human nature. May we not therefore, nay, must we not confess, that he aims at Nothing? especially if he be himself unable to tell us what is

the end of all this bustle and hurry, this watching and toiling, this self-denial, and self-constraint !

It will not, I apprehend, be sufficient for him to plead, that his design is to amass a large fortune, which he never can nor will use himself, nor would willingly quit to any other person ; 5 unless he can shew us some substantial good which this fortune is to produce, we shall certainly be justified in concluding, that his end is the same with that of ambition.

The great Mr. *Hobbes* so plainly saw this, that as he was an enemy to that notable immaterial substance which we have 10 here handled, and therefore unwilling to allow it the large province we have contended for, he advanced a very strange doctrine, and asserted truly, — That in all these grand pursuits, the means themselves were the end proposed, *viz.* to ambition, plotting, fighting, danger, difficulty, and such like : — to ava- 15 rice, cheating, starving, watching, and the numberless painful arts by which the passion proceeds.

However easy it may be to demonstrate the absurdity of this opinion, it will be needless to my purpose, since if we are driven to confess that the means are the only end attained, — 20 I think we must likewise confess, that the end proposed is absolutely Nothing.

As I have here shewn the end of our two greatest and noblest pursuits, one or other of which engages almost every individual of the busy part of mankind, I shall not tire the 25 reader with carrying him through all the rest, since I believe the same conclusion may be easily drawn from them all.

I shall therefore finish this essay with an inference, which aptly enough suggests itself from what hath been said : seeing that such is its dignity and importance, and that it is really 30 the end of all those things which are supported with so much pomp and solemnity, and looked on with such respect and esteem, surely it becomes a wise man to regard Nothing with

the utmost awe and adoration; to pursue it with all his parts and pains; and to sacrifice to it his ease, his innocence, and his present happiness. To which noble pursuit we have this great incitement, that we may assure ourselves of never being
 5 cheated or deceived in the end proposed. The virtuous, wise, and learned may then be unconcerned at all the changes of ministries and of government; since they may be well satisfied, that while ministers of state are rogues themselves, and have inferior knavish tools to bribe and reward; true virtue,
 10 wisdom, learning, wit, and integrity, will most certainly bring their own possessors — NOTHING.

XXXII

A FAREWELL TO THE READER

We are now, reader, arrived at the last stage of our long journey. As we have therefore travelled together through so many pages, let us behave to one another like fellow-travellers
 15 in a stage-coach, who have passed several days in the company of each other; and who, notwithstanding any bickerings or little animosities which may have occurred on the road, generally make all up at last, and mount, for the last time, into their vehicle with cheerfulness and good-humour; since, after this
 20 one stage, it may possibly happen to us, as it commonly happens to them, never to meet more.

As I have here taken up this simile, give me leave to carry it a little farther. I intend then in this last book to imitate the good company I have mentioned in their last journey.
 25 Now it is well known, that all jokes and raillery are at this time laid aside; whatever characters any of the passengers have, for the jest-sake personated on the road, are now thrown off, and the conversation is usually plain and serious.

In the same manner, if I have now and then, in the course of this work, indulged any pleasantry for thy entertainment, I shall here lay it down. The variety of matter, indeed, which I shall be obliged to cram into this book, will afford no room for any of those ludicrous observations which I have elsewhere 5 made, and which may sometimes, perhaps, have prevented thee from taking a nap when it was beginning to steal upon thee. In this last book thou wilt find nothing (or at most very little) of that nature. All will be plain narrative only; and, indeed, when thou hast perused the many great events which 10 this book will produce, thou wilt think the number of pages contained in it, scarce sufficient to tell the story.

And now, my friend, I take this opportunity (as I shall have no other) of heartily wishing thee well. If I have been an entertaining companion to thee, I promise thee it is what I 15 have desired. If in any thing I have offended, it was really without any intention. Some things perhaps here said, may have hit thee or thy friends; but I do most solemnly declare they were not pointed at them. I question not but thou hast been told, among other stories of me, that thou wast to travel 20 with a very scurrilous fellow: but whoever told thee so, did me an injury. No man detests and despises scurrility more than myself; nor hath any man more reason; for none has ever been treated with more: and what is a very severe fate, I have had some of the abusive writings of those very men 25 fathered upon me, who in other of their works have abused me themselves with the utmost virulence.

All these works, however, I am well convinced, will be dead long before this page shall offer itself to thy perusal: for however short the period may be of my own performances, they 30 will most probably outlive their own infirm author, and the weekly productions of his abusive contemporaries.



NOTES

11 No. I is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book xvi, chap. i.

10 In contrast with the prologues of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, those of the Restoration stage and after had, as Fielding says, no essential connection with the plays to which they were prefixed. They were often written in a style of the most brazen effrontery. Not infrequently they were supplied by friends of the author or by writers of assured celebrity who thus patronized their younger fellow-craftsmen either from good nature or for a monetary consideration. Dryden was famous for his prologues and epilogues, which brought him considerable money. He raised the price paid for them from two to three guineas, according to Johnson, though the sums are variously stated. Pope salutes Southerne,

whom Heaven sent down to raise

The price of prologues and of plays.

To Mr. Thomas Southerne, on his Birthday, 1742.

Fielding's introductory chapters were copied by Richard Cumberland in his novel *Henry* (1795), but not to advantage. A warning to imitators is to be found on p. 28 of this volume.

24 **Emolument**: more often used in the general sense of *benefit, comfort*, in the eighteenth century than at present. So Swift, *Tale of a Tub*: "That wind still continues of great emolument in certain mysteries."

232 **Swift**: For an appreciation by Fielding, see Nos. XVII and XIX.

232 **Cervantes**: Cervantes was loved early and well by Fielding. Not only did he base a play on *Don Quixote* (see *Introduction*, xvi), but he was largely influenced by the same masterpiece when writing *Joseph Andrews*, as is proved not only by the sub-title, "written in imitation of the manner of Cervantes," but also by several incidents in the story itself. See No. XIX for his estimate of his great predecessor.

36 No. II is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book xiii, chap. i.

39 **Mnesis**: a form found in the classical authors only in the compound *ἀνάμνησις*, recollection. Stephanus, *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*

(ed. Hase and Dindorf, 1829) glosses it "Recordatio." It was used thus as equivalent to *Μνήμη* (Memory), who was represented as the mother of the Muses, and it was doubtless so understood by Fielding.

3 10 **Hebrus**: the chief river in Thrace, modern Maritza. On its banks Orpheus was torn in pieces by Thracian women. Often connected with worship of Dionysus.

3 11 **Mæonia**: the earlier name for Lydia, used by Homer.

3 11 **Mantua**: the birthplace of Virgil.

3 18 **Charlotte**: refers to Charlotte Cradock, Fielding's first wife. See *Introduction*, xvi.

3 28 **Trachtchugt**: is for the Dutch *trekschuit*, canal boat.

3 29 **Ufrow gelt**: The first of these words is for *juffrouw*, madam; the second may be for *geld*, money. The expression is, however, somewhat obscure.

4 1 **Grubstreet-school**: Grub Street, now Milton Street, was even more closely associated with hack writing in the eighteenth century than now, when poor authors have long since abandoned the neighborhood of Moorfields as a place of residence.

4 3 **Poetry to tickle not the fancy, etc.**: an allusion to the practice of literary patronage.

5 11 **Aristophanes, etc.**: all favorite authors of Fielding's at one time or other. See Nos. XVII and XIX of this volume.

5 18 **Allen and Lyttleton**: Ralph Allen and George Lyttelton were the author's two most constant friends. The former was born in Cornwall of poor parentage, in 1694. By his business capacity he became postmaster and chief citizen of Bath at an early age. He devised and farmed out a postal system between England and Wales, and also owned large quarries near Bath. At Prior Park, where he built a magnificent house, he received most of the literary and political celebrities of the time, with many of whom he was on the most friendly terms. The benevolence of "The Man of Bath," as he was called, expressed itself in countless ways and apparently with tact and discrimination. His relations with Fielding were especially intimate. Not only did he lodge the novelist at his home and assist him generously during his lifetime, but after his death educated his children and provided for them in his will. He was repaid by Fielding's manly and grateful regard, which finds expression in *Joseph Andrews* (see No. XXIV) and in the dedication to *Amelia*. He died in 1764. **Lyttleton** (or Lyttelton) was born in 1709, the son of Sir Thomas Lyttelton, Bart. He was educated at Eton, where Fielding was a schoolfellow, and at Christ Church, Oxford. After

making the "grand tour" he entered Parliament, where he played a very prominent rôle for over twenty years, not because he had any great capacity for political life but because of his family connection. He was a member of several ministries and, though manifestly unfitted for practical affairs, chancellor of the exchequer. In 1756 he was created Baron Lyttelton and never again held office, though he continued to be active in politics till his death in 1773. In his time he was scarcely less prominent as a literary than as a political figure. He wrote poems, essays, dialogues, epistles, and a large *History of the Revolutions of England* (1767). Of the last, Walpole (*Letters*, V, 58) said, "How dull one may be, if one will but take pains for six or seven and twenty years together." All his works are now equally forgotten. He was a man of fair talents and great industry, but he had no originality in letters and no practical knowledge of affairs. Fielding's praise of his friend in the dedication of *Tom Jones* is thus justified in only one particular, — Lyttelton's personal character, though it had no charm for most, was above all suspicion of taint. He was a thoroughly good and generous man, whose treatment of his old friend did him the utmost credit.

5 30 **Birchen altar**: A picture of this instrument is given in H. C. M. Lyte's *History of Eton College* (1889).

6 5 **Warburton**: William Warburton (1698–1779), the celebrated scholar and bishop of Gloucester. He was a man of wide but not well-ordered learning, whose industry brought him fame and his social relations money. He is now perhaps best remembered for his edition of Shakespeare and his numerous literary quarrels.

6 9 **Spunging-house**: The bailiff's house, where debtors were temporarily confined in order to give them a chance to pay their obligations and avoid imprisonment, was so called.

6 11 **Manners of mankind**: an allusion to Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 142, which Fielding took as the motto of *Tom Jones*.

6 18 No. III is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book i, chap. i.

6 20 **Public ordinary**: here the table d'hôte provided at an inn. It is sometimes applied to the inn or tavern itself and was formerly used of the company that frequented such a table.

7 23 **Calibash and calipee**: variously spelled. Calipash or calibash is the part of the turtle next to the upper shell, calipee the part next to the lower shell. The *New Eng. Dict.* conjectures that the words may be of West Indian origin.

8 8 **True wit, etc.**: from *An Essay on Criticism*, Part ii (vv. 298, 299 of the whole poem).

8 24 **Heliogabalus** (or better Elagabalus): the name assumed by Varius, who ruled as Roman emperor 218–222 A.D. under the style of M. Aurelius Antoninus. His career was one of the most besotted known even in degenerate Rome.

9 9 No. IV is the *Author's Preface* of *Joseph Andrews*. In connection with this essay read Addison, *On Ridicule, Spectator*, No. 249.

9 19 **Aristotle** tells us: In the *Poetics*, iv, 9, Aristotle remarks that Homer's *Margites* bore the same analogy to comedy that his *Iliad* and *Odyssey* did to tragedy. As Fielding says, it is lost; but our knowledge of it is sufficient to show that it was something like a burlesque of the Homeric poems.

10 6 **Telemachus**: the *Télémaque* by François de Salagnac de Lamotte-Fénelon (1651–1715), archbishop of Cambrai. Fielding's characterization of the work proceeded from the conventional esteem in which it was, and to some extent still is, held rather than from a critical examination of its worth. Undeniably great, it is a mixture of pagan antiquity and Christian aspiration. Lanson, *Hist. de la litt. franç.*, p. 608, calls it with much justice "a pedagogical romance."

10 12 **Clelia** (*Clélie*) by Madeleine de Scudéry (1607–1701); **Cleopatra** (*Cléopâtre*) by Gautier de Coste, seigneur de La Calprenède (1609–1663); **Astræa** (*l'Astrée*) by Honoré d'Urfé (1568–1625); **Cassandra** (*Cassandre*) by Mlle. de Scudéry. All of these works were famous representatives of the artificial romance of the seventeenth century. *Astrée* is of the pastoral type which developed under Spanish influence, the others of the heroic type as formed by La Calprenède. The literary impulse which produced them centered in the French court, was extraordinarily vigorous, but did not long survive. The romances in question were utterly lacking in verisimilitude and sense of proportion, but they had the merits of wit and tenderness. They were all prodigiously long, *Cléopâtre*, for example, extending to four thousand one hundred and fifty-three pages; but in spite of this fact they were exceedingly popular in France and were devoured with similar eagerness in their English translations. See Petit de Julleville, *Hist. de la langue et de la litt. française*, tome IV, and Dunlop-Liebrecht, *Prosadichtungen*, chaps. xi and xii, for accounts of the movement.

11 28 **Lord Shaftesbury's** opinion, etc.: In Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks*, I, 73 (London, 1733), the statement is more guarded: "'T is for this reason, I verily believe, that the Antients discover so little of this

spirit, and that there is hardly such a thing found as mere *Burlesque* in any Authors of the politer Ages."

12 12 Caricatura: This form of the word, taken from the Italian, was gradually superseded by *caricature* in the course of the eighteenth century.

12 31 Hogarth: William Hogarth, the painter and engraver, was born in 1697 and died in 1764. Little is known of his personal relations with Fielding, save that they were constant friends. The novelist's frequent and enthusiastic expressions of admiration were not unmerited by the work of the great artist and must have had some effect in establishing his vogue.

13 22 Proper to comedy: See Aristotle, *Poetics*, iv, 9,—the passage mentioned above (note to 9 19) concerning Homer. The statement is very indirect and says that Homer "first laid down the main lines of Comedy, by dramatising the ludicrous instead of writing personal satire" (trans. by Butcher).

13 25 The Abbé Bellegarde: Jean-Baptiste Morvan de Bellegarde, a member of the brotherhood of St. Francis of Sales, published in 1695 his *Réflexions sur l'élégance et la politesse du style*. Though this was his most famous work, Fielding refers to his *Réflexions sur le ridicule*, which made part of a collection published in four volumes in 1723. A translation of the work in two volumes was published in 1727.

14 28 Ben Johnson: Fielding commonly used this form of the name. In the brilliant series of comedies from *Every Man in his Humour* (1598) to *The Devil is an Ass* (1616), Jonson certainly used the "hypocritical affectation" with much success, though not so universally as Fielding's words imply.

15 22 None arê for being, etc.: I do not know the source of this quotation.

16 7 No. V is from *Tom Jones*, Book ii, chap. i.

17 1 Ad confligendum, etc.: from Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, iii, 833-837. The text does not altogether agree with that accepted to-day, notably in the third and fourth verses. The translation was that of Thomas Creech, published in 1682 and very famous in its day.

17 23 Drawn at Guild-Hall: It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader that lotteries were used in the eighteenth century to raise money for all kinds of worthy purposes, and that the government was not above operating them.

18 18 No. VI is taken from *Joseph Andrews*, Book iii, chap. i. The latter part of the chapter discusses various characters of the novel. It is omitted here as being uninteresting apart from the context.

19 4 Lord Clarendon and Mr. Whitlock: Lord Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, which was first published in 1702-1704, is now regarded as the best contemporary account of the Civil Wars. To it was opposed by the Whigs of the eighteenth century the *Memorials of the English Affairs from the beginning of the Reign of Charles I to the happy Restoration of King Charles II*, by Bulstrode Whitelocke, published in 1682. Whitelocke was a Commonwealth man turned Royalist, whose work was for long overrated, though of little real worth. Naturally his history differs from Clarendon's.

19 5 Echard and Rapin: Laurence Echard published his *History of England* in 1707 and 1718. It brought him considerable fame, though not of much merit, until superseded by the similar work by Paul de Rapin (in French, 1723-1725; trans. by Tindal, 1726-1731) which held the field till Hume's work appeared.

19 19 Chrysostom: a scholar who turned shepherd. See *Don Quixote*, Ormsby's trans., Part i, chaps. xii, xiii.

19 23 Cardenio and Ferdinand: a reference to the story in *Don Quixote*, Part i, chaps. xxiii-xxv, which tells how Ferdinand treacherously tried to deprive Cardenio of his lady love and how Cardenio went mad.

19 24 Anselmo, Camilla, and Lothario: the chief characters in the story *The Ill-Advised Curiosity* inserted in *Don Quixote*, Part i, chaps. xxxiii, xxxiv. Anselmo engages his friend Lothario to test the fidelity of his wife Camilla. The attempt succeeds too well and Anselmo dies of grief.

19 30 Dr. Sangrado: a well-known character in the romance of *Gil Blas* by Le Sage. Like many of his fellows in the book he has but one idea, that indicated in the text. Le Sage lived 1668-1747 and was thus a contemporary of Fielding.

20 5 Scarron: Paul Scarron (1610-1660), the author of the *Roman comique*, in which he parodied the works of La Calprenède and his school and produced a book of far more interest than any of theirs.

20 5 Marianne and Le Paisan Parvenu: romances by Marivaux (1688-1763).

20 10 Atalantis writers: a reference to the series of scandal mongers who continued the *New Atalantis* (1709-1710, 4 vols.) by Mrs. Mary Manley. Her work was immensely popular, impudently full of slander, and very typical of the worst sort of memoirs masquerading as fiction. Mrs. Manley wrote in the Tory interest and was the author of many plays as well as novels.

20 18 Balzac: Jean-Louis Guez de Balzac (1597-1654), author of many *Lettres*, *Le Prince*, and *Socrate chrétien*. He was a polished writer who was fond of sententious commonplaces like the one quoted in the text.

20 22 Those stilts, etc.: Voltaire, *Letters on England*, Letter XVIII, *On Tragedy* (Cassell's National Libr., ed. Henry Morley, p. 146). These letters, which were the fruits of Voltaire's sojourn in England from 1727 to 1729, were first published in London in an English translation made from Voltaire's manuscript under the direction of his friend Thieriot. This was in 1733. In 1734 appeared two separate and somewhat different editions of the French text, — one in London, the other in Rouen and Paris. The *Lettres sur les anglais* are often known as *Lettres philosophiques*. Fielding evidently quoted from memory the English text, which reads: "But then it must be also confessed that the stilts of the figurative style, on which the English tongue is lifted up, raises the genius at the same time very far aloft, though with an irregular pace."

20 26 Beyond the realm, etc.: Milton's *Paradise Lost*, i, 543. The quotation is not exact. The passage reads (ed. Masson):

At which the universal host sent up
A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.

20 32 Mariana's: again a reference to Marivaux's romance.

21 11 Lawyer in the stage-coach, etc.: See Book i, chap. xii, of *Joseph Andrews*.

22 11 No. VII is taken from *Joseph Andrews*, Book i, chap. i.

23 10 John the Great: needs scarcely be glossed as our nursery friend Jack the Giant-Killer.

23 12 Earl of Warwick: Guy of Warwick was one of the most celebrated heroes of Middle-English romance. His story took its rise in the tenth and eleventh centuries and was written down in Anglo-Norman verse late in the twelfth or early in the thirteenth century. About a hundred years later it was worked over into English verse. The latter version became the basis for several later adaptations of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, none of which has much literary merit. John Lydgate's poem (fifteenth century) tells only a portion of the story, and that was taken from a Latin version. Two epics of portentous length and unexceptionable dullness, dealing with Guy, were produced in the seventeenth century, the one by John Lane with an

introductory sonnet by the poet Milton's father, the other by Samuel Rowlands. The evidence which these ostensibly literary versions bear to the popularity of the story is strengthened by the fact that three so-called ballads on the same topic exist, though only one of them has any claim to the title (see Hales and Furnivall, *Percy's Folio MS.*, Vol. II). The tale was, indeed, so popular for many centuries that the hero assumed an historical character, though he was originally only the embodiment of patriotic feeling engendered by the fights between the Scandinavians and the English. About this as a centre was grouped a variety of adventures taken, whether consciously or not, from other romances. The tale, thus formed, possessed unusual vigor of life and is even now not altogether forgotten. Thus Guy's Cliff, the supposed hermitage of the hero's last days, is still shown near Warwick.

23 14 Argalus and Parthenia: the lovers whose woes form a moving episode in Sir Philip Sidney's *Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* (1590).

23 15 Champions of Christendom: Richard Johnson (1573-1659?) was the author of this romance. He was a literary hack with a touch of poetical skill, who published industriously. He is best known, however, for his *Famous Historie of the Seaven Champions of Christendom: St. George of England, St. Denis of France, St. James of Spaine, St. Anthony of Italy, St. Andrew of Scotland, St. Patricke of Ireland, and St. David of Wales*, which was entered at Stationers' Hall in 1596. The prose of the narrative is interspersed with verse, some of which is adapted from Shakespeare. See Seccombe's article in *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

23 27 Colley Cibber: The famous actor, theatrical manager, playwright, and poet laureate published in 1740 *An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber . . . written by himself*. The best edition of it is that by Robert W. Lowe, London, 1889. Cibber's *Apology* is one of the most famous of theatrical memoirs and deserves its fame, despite his indifference to accurate statement and his odd style. It must be remembered that the *Apology* was known to every one when Fielding printed this gibe in *Joseph Andrews* (1742), and it must be admitted that the sprightly playwright was fair game. For further discussion of the subject, see *Introduction*, xxxix ff., and for Cibber's attack on Fielding chap. viii of the *Apology*.

23 27 Pamela Andrews: Richardson's first and very famous novel was published in November, 1740. See *Introduction*, xix.

24 16 No. VIII is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book iv, chap. i. One sentence is omitted at the end of this selection.

24 25 While — history with her comrade ale: I do not know the source of this quotation.

24 28 Opinion of Butler: *Hudibras*, Part i, canto i, vv. 645-664:

Thou that with ale, or viler liquors,
Didst inspire Withers, Pryn, and Vickers,
And force them, though it were in spite
Of Nature, and their stars, to write; etc.

25 4 Hurlothrumbo: a comic opera by Samuel Johnson, dancing master and dramatist (1691-1773), which set London by the ears in 1729. It was arrant nonsense but had a certain success on that very account. Johnson himself was an eccentric individual, apparently half mad, who succeeded in attracting attention to himself by his impudence rather than by any merit.

25 19 Homer hath ascribed: *Iliad*, the beginning of the second book, for example.

26 3 Mr. Lock's blind man: See Locke, *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Book ii, chap. 9, § 8, "Of Perception." Locke argues that if a blind man, who had learned to distinguish objects by touch, should be restored to sight, he "would not be able with certainty to say which was the globe, which the cube, whilst he only saw them."

26 17 King Pyrrhus was at dinner, etc.: This anecdote must refer to Barton Booth (1681-1733), who made a great success with the part of Pyrrhus in Philips' *Distressed Mother* in 1712. As he had joined Wilks, Doggett, and Cibber in the management of Drury Lane the previous year, the circumstances of the story would all be accommodated. The impetuous temper of Wilks is well known. See *Biographica Dramatica* and Cibber's *Apology*.

26 31 The several pageants, etc.: The "Lord Mayor's Show" was until a few years ago embellished with these same movable pageants supported by the city gilds. Formerly the monstrous images of Gog and Magog, now preserved in the Guildhall, were carried in the procession. The inauguration of the lord mayor has recently become something like a military review, though still attended with much pomp.

28 1 No. IX is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book ix, chap. i.

28 17 Greek and Latin mottos: The *Spectator* (founded in 1711) set the fashion of prefixing extracts from the classics to journals. Fielding himself followed the custom, as see Nos. XVIII, XIX, XXVII, XXVIII, XXIX.

29 6 As Rowe was of Shakspear: Nicholas Rowe (1674-1718), poet laureate and dramatist. It is difficult for the modern reader to discover any imitation of Shakespeare in his frigid tragedies.

29 7 As Horace hints, etc.: an allusion to the *Epistles*, i, xix, 12-14:

Quid, si quis vultu torvo ferus et pede nudo
Exiguæque togæ simulet textore Catonem,
Virtutemne repræsentet moresque Catonis?

The Cato referred to is probably Cato the Elder, the stock representative of early Roman simplicity.

29 17 Scribimus indocti, etc.: apparently a paraphrase of Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 474. Philip Francis, father of the reputed author of the *Letters of Junius*, issued a translation of Horace in 1747, part of it having appeared five years earlier.

30 5 Doomsday Book: an allusion to the *Domesday Book*, or register of taxable real property, which William the Conqueror had compiled in order to make his exactions more complete and regular. He began it in 1085.

30 9 Pruritus: the itch.

30 28 No study, says Horace, etc.: a reference to the *Ars Poetica*, 409, 410:

ego nec studium sine divite vena,
Nec rude quid possit video ingenium.

32 5 Characters of men: See Fielding's essay *On the Knowledge of the Characters of Men*, printed in the *Miscellanies* of 1743, and Pope's *Of the Knowledge and Characters of Men, Moral Essays*, i (to Lord Cobham).

32 15 The ingenious Mr. Miller: Philip Miller, the celebrated gardener in charge of the Chelsea Botanical Garden, not only discovered many rare plants but wrote several works on his art. Among them were *The Gardener's and Florist's Dictionary* (1724) and the *Gardener's Kalendar* (1732). Fielding owned a copy of the latter.

32 17 Shakespear, or a Johnson: Fielding's favorite orthography for these names.

32 18 Wycherly: William Wycherley (1640?-1715), the author of four comedies, of which the most famous is *The Plain Dealer*. His work is characterized by bold satire and rich humor, but it is marred by the coarseness which he shared with all the Restoration comedy writers.

32 18 Otway: Thomas Otway (1652-1685) was one of the most unfortunate but most gifted dramatists of the Restoration period. He

was weak in comedy, but his tragedies show a mastery of dramatic construction and characterization which places him not far below the great Elizabethans. The best of them are *The Orphan* (1680) and *Venice Preserved* (1681), of which the latter is properly regarded as his masterpiece.

32 20 Garrick: Garrick (1717-1779) was in the first flush of his fame at the time when Fielding wrote (1749). He made his first hit on the London stage in 1741.

32 20 Cibber: not, of course, Colley Cibber, but his daughter-in-law, "the great Mrs. Cibber" (1714-1766). She was well known before her marriage with Theophilus Cibber, and after her separation from him won still higher renown both as singer and as actress, chiefly in tragedy.

32 20 Clive: Mrs. Catherine Clive (1711-1785), the famous Irish actress, best known for her work in comedy.

33 22 The author who will make me weep, etc.: Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 102, 103:

si vis me flere, dolendum est
Primum ipsi tibi.

34 1 No. X is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book v, chap. i.

34 7 This kind of writing: For Fielding's delightful announcement or proclamation, see No. V.

34 13 That nice unity of time or place: Dryden had accepted the unities in the same general way as Corneille, whom he quotes with approval in his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668). In the *Preface to Troilus and Cressida* (1679) he had fallen more under the influence of Rapin and Bossu. His critical opinions had much to do with the establishment of the classical tradition of which Fielding speaks. See *Essays of John Dryden*, ed. W. P. Ker, I, 228, and the note to the same on p. 319, for the current opinion as to the reason for the unities.

34 26 Cuicunq; in arte, etc.: "Whoever is skilled in his profession must be believed." A maxim of the law of evidence to the effect that an expert may testify not only as to facts but as to his opinion upon facts. It is generally quoted in the form: "Cuilibet in sua arte perito est credendum." See Broom, *Legal Maxims* (6th ed., 1884), p. 885. Fielding apparently quoted from Coke on Lyttleton, 125 a.

36 31 Bath: then of course the great watering place of England. It will be remembered that the town must have been almost as familiar to Fielding as London itself.

37 9 Inventas, etc.: Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi, 663:

Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes.

37 12 English pantomime : See Cibber's *Apology*, ed. Lowe, II, 180, 181, for a lively picture of the origin of English pantomime. He was one of the managers of Drury Lane at the time (1717 or thereabouts), but disclaims any active part in its invention. Pope, in *The Dunciad*, iii, 264, says :

On grinning Dragons Cibber mounts the wind.

For Cibber's reply, see *Apology*, II, 182, note 1.

37 20 Harlequin : The characterization of this personage was apparently quite just. He was "not at all related to the French family," but charmed the crowd with childish wonders. See the reference in *The Dunciad*, iii, 225-248, where there is an allusion to the pantomime of *Harlequin Sorcerer*, in which Harlequin was hatched from a monstrous egg on the stage.

38 5 Indignor, etc. : Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 359, 360. The second verse should read :

Verum operi longo fas est obrepere somnum.

38 12 Oldmixon : John Oldmixon (1673-1742), an industrious Whig historian and pamphleteer, still remembered for his quarrel with Pope, by which he earned the unenviable reputation of being duller than he really was. He was attacked by Pope in *The Dunciad*, ii, 283-290, and in *The Art of Sinking in Poetry*, chap. vi. The line quoted by Fielding does not refer to Oldmixon, but occurs in *The Dunciad*, i, 94. It should read :

Sleepless themselves, to give their readers sleep.

39 1 No. XI is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book x, chap. i.

40 9 Sir Epicure Mammon : the rich dupe in Ben Jonson's *Alchemist* (1610).

40 9 Sir Fopling Flutter : the chief character in *The Man of Mode*, by Sir George Etherege, which was produced in 1676.

40 11 Sir Courtly Nice : the title, as well as the name of the leading personage, of John Crowne's best-known play (1685).

40 31 Nulla virtute, etc. : Juvenal, iv, 2, 3.

41 16 Quas humana, etc. : a paraphrase of Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 353, which is quoted in No. XII.

42 1 No. XII is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book xi, chap. i.

42 8 This word critic : "An adaptation of Latin *critic-us* sb., adapted from Greek *κριτικὸς* a critical person, a critic, subst. use of the adj., perhaps immediately after French *critique*." — *New Eng. Dict.*

42 17 Westminster-hall : See *Spectator*, No. 21, *Choice of a Profession*, by Addison.

44 2 Who steals, etc.: *Othello*, III, iii, 161 ff. Apparently quoted from memory. *Cash* should, of course, read *purse*. A comparison with a standard text will illustrate Fielding's laxness in quotation.

44 17 The tender exclamation of Macduff: See *Macbeth*, IV, iii, 216. Macduff replies to Malcolm:

He has no children. All my pretty ones?

Fielding's parody shows that he understood the exclamation as referring to Malcolm, a bit of opinion on this much-discussed passage that seems to have escaped notice.

45 25 Aristotle, Horace, Longinus: Aristotle's *Poetics*, Horace's *Ars Poetica*, and Longinus *On the Sublime*. The last-named work is probably not by the Greek rhetorician of the third century A.D. but by some unknown writer who lived about the beginning of our era.

45 26 Dacier: André Dacier (1651-1722), an erudite scholar and French Academician, who was well known as a translator and commentator, most notably of Horace. His fame now rests on the fact that he was the husband of Mme. Dacier. See p. 64, l. 2, and note.

45 26 Bossu: Le Père Bossu, whom Dryden (*Preface to Troilus and Cressida*) called "the best of modern critics," wrote a treatise *Du poëme épique* (1675). It was translated in 1695, and Pope gave a summary of it as an introduction to his *Odyssey*.

46 7 No critic who is not Right Honourable: perhaps a reference to some attack made on Fielding's own work by a member of the government. I cannot identify the critic, however.

46 16 Verum ubi, etc.: Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 351-354. *Offendor* in the second verse should read *offendar*. For the translation by Francis, see No. IX, note to p. 29, l. 17.

46 23 For as Martial says: *Epigrammata* i, xvii, *Ad Avitum*. *Avite* is, of course, a proper name, though Fielding does not capitalize it.

47 12 No. XIII is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book viii, chap. i.

47 21 With M. Dacier: *Préface sur les satires d'Horace* (1687).

48 13 As Mr. Pope would have it: Near the end of *A General View of the Epic Poem, and of the Iliad and Odyssey: extracted from Bossu*, published with his translation of Homer, Pope says: "Thus the episodes of Circe, the Syrens, Polyphemus, etc., are necessary to the action of the *Odyssey*, and yet not humanly probable: yet Homer has artificially reduced them to human probability, by the simplicity

and ignorance of the Phæacians, before whom he causes those recitals to be made."

48 18 Polypheme: Polyphemus, *Odyssey*, Book ix.

48 21 Circe: *Odyssey*, Book x.

48 23 Homer could have known the rule prescribed by Horace: *Ars Poetica*, 191, 192.

49 6 Lord Shaftesbury observes: *Characteristicks*, I, p. 5 (London, 1733).

49 9 Invoke a ballad: See No. XVI, note to p. 64, l. 5. A reference to Bentley's theory of Homeric origins.

49 10 With the author of *Hudibras*: Part i, canto i, 645-664, already quoted, No. VIII, note to p. 24, l. 28.

49 12 Hippocrene: a fountain near Mount Helicon.

50 12 Described by Herodotus: Books vii and viii.

50 13 Related by Arrian: in his *Anabasis of Alexander*. Arrian lived in the latter part of the first and the first half of the second century A.D.

50 14 Agincourt: The battle was fought in 1415.

50 15 Narva: Charles XII of Sweden defeated Peter the Great at Narva in 1700.

50 25 The ghost of George Villiers: Clarendon in his *History of the Rebellion* tells how the ghost of Sir George Villiers, father of the first Duke of Buckingham, appeared at Windsor to an old officer of the King's Wardrobe about six months before the duke's assassination by Felton (1628). The ghost told the man to go to Buckingham and to urge him to court popular favor, else he would soon die. The man at first thought the appearance a dream, but when thrice warned, informed the duke, giving as credentials certain secrets which he had learned from the ghost. Buckingham was greatly disturbed and conferred about the matter with his mother, who subsequently manifested no surprise at her son's death. Clarendon Press ed., 1849, I, pp. 57-62.

50 27 Dr. Drelincourt: Charles Drelincourt, a minister of the reformed church in France, wrote a treatise entitled *Les consolations de l'ame contre les frayeurs de la mort* (1669), which was translated into English by Marius D'Assigny as the *Christian's Defence against the Fear of Death* (1675). To the fourth edition of the translation (1706) Defoe prefixed his *Apparition of Mrs. Veale*, the second narrative which he published. Dr. Drelincourt thus had nothing to do with "the ghost of Mrs. Veale," as Fielding implies.

51 3 That incredulous hatred mentioned by Horace: *Ars Poetica*, 188.

51 13 Trajan: Roman emperor, 98-117 A.D.; Antoninus, 138-161 A.D.; Nero, 54-68 A.D.; Caligula, 37-41 A.D.

51 31 *Scruitoire*: a form of *escritoire* not uncommon in the eighteenth century, though hardly justifiable.

52 15 Even Nero himself: See Suetonius, *Nero*, 34. A very free paraphrase, evidently from memory.

52 20 That I had known a man, etc.: a reference to Ralph Allen. See No. II, note to p. 5, l. 18.

53 14 *Quis credit?* etc.: a quotation, with variations, of Persius, i, 2, 3: 'Quis leget haec?' min tu istud ais? Nemo hercule. 'Nemo?' Vel duo, vel nemo.

53 20 *Raræ aves*: The term *rara avis* is found in Horace, *Satires*, ii, ii, 26, and Juvenal, vi, 165.

54 1 It is admirably remarked, etc.: I have not been able to trace the reference.

54 13 Our modern authors of comedy, etc.: This criticism of Fielding's is eminently just. Not one of the school of dramatists which found its greatest representative in Congreve was free from the fault.

54 24 Tyburn: Tyburn Hill, near the site of the present Marble Arch, was the ordinary place of execution in eighteenth-century London.

55 1 The Bathos: In the *Miscellanies* by Swift, Pope, Gay, and Arbuthnot, III (March, 1727-1728), Pope published his *Περὶ βᾶθου* with the sub-title *The Art of Sinking in Poetry*. In it he attacked in vigorous prose the absurdities of his literary contemporaries, adding some of his own invention. The treatise is reprinted in vol. X of the Elwin and Courthope edition. Arbuthnot had some share in its composition.

55 15 The character of a young lady of quality: perhaps a reference to *The Universal Gallant*, a comedy of Fielding's which was tried unsuccessfully in 1735. In his *Advertisement* he complained of ill treatment at the hands of the young men of the town, who made "a Jest of damning Plays." His *Eurydice* (1737) met an even worse fate.

55 22 No. XIV is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book xii, chap. i.

56 2 Abbé Bannier: The reference is to *Mythologie et les fables expliquées par l'histoire* (1738-1740) by the Abbé Antoine Banier, in which the Greek mythological stories are systematically resolved into history. As we know from the catalogue of his library issued at the time when his books were sold by his heirs, Fielding possessed this work in translation (4 vols., 1739-1740). See A. Dobson, *Eighteenth Century Vignettes*, 3d series, p. 173. The quotation here is from this edition,

I, p. viii. Aside from some changes of punctuation, the only difference between the quotation and its source is in the last word, which should read *transcribing* instead of *translating*.

57 33 **Spittal**: more commonly *spital* or *spittle*, a hospital; properly a hospital for lepers.

58 16 **Mr. Moore**: In Book ii of *The Dunciad*, Pope devotes twenty-six stinging lines to this person, among them these:

Never was dash'd out, at one lucky hit,
A fool so just a copy of a wit;
So like, that critics said, and courtiers swore,
A wit it was, and call'd the phantom More.

He was James Moore Smythe, a well-known fop, whose comedy *The Rival Modes* was produced in 1727. The circumstances were just about as Fielding narrates them. See notes in the Elwin and Court-hope edition of Pope, III, 112; IV, 132.

59 1 No. XV is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book xiv, chap. i.

59 26 **As Cicero perswades us**: Though Cicero speaks of the ideal orator in many places, he treats the necessity of his good equipment particularly in the *Orator*, xxxii-xxxiv.

60 3 **Bysse's Art of Poetry**: Edward Bysse was a hack writer of the early eighteenth century, of whose life nothing is known (see article in *Dict. Nat. Biog.*). In 1702 he published his least-forgotten work, *The Art of English Poetry*, which contained a dictionary of rhymes and quotations as well as a treatise on prosody. The book was very popular, going into its eighth edition in 1737. Part of it was reprinted in 1877 by Thomas Hood the younger as an appendix to his *Practical Guide to English Versification*. Fielding's reference implies a certain contempt for the work, though it was not bad in its way.

60 8 **Quam quisque norit, etc.**: "Whatever craft any one has, let him employ himself in that." See Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, i, 18, 41, where it appears as a quotation from the Greek.

60 17 **Mr. Essex**: John Essex was a London dancing master of much contemporary fame. The work to which Fielding refers is *The Young Ladies' Conduct: or, rules for education*, published in 1722. He had earlier (1710) published another book, *For the further Improvement of Dancing, a Treatise of Chorography, or Art of dancing Country Dances*.

60 19 **Mr. Broughton**: John Broughton (1705-1789), the most celebrated pugilist of his day and usually considered the father of the art in England. In Book xiii, chap. v, Fielding speaks of "the muffled

graduates of Mr. Broughton's school," and in a note appends a curious "advertisement which was published Feb. 1, 1747," announcing that "Mr. Broughton proposes" to open a school of boxing at his house in the Haymarket in which "muffles are provided, that will effectually secure them [his pupils] from the inconveniency of black eyes, broken jaws, and bloody noses."

61 4 Van Brugh and Congreve copied nature: Sir John Van Brugh was born in London about 1666, of Dutch parents. He was successively a soldier, a dramatist, and an architect, and, unlike most of his poetical contemporaries, a practical man. His work as an architect can still be judged in Blenheim Palace, his most notable building. His best comedies are *The Relapse* (1696) and *The Confederacy* (1705), which excel in characterization and repartee, though weak in plot and unedifying in content. He died in 1726. William Congreve (1670-1729) was the wittiest and the greatest of the school of comic dramatists which flourished at the end of the seventeenth century. All his comedies were written in one decade, but he lived on for a quarter of a century, an idle gentleman who despised the literary reputation on which he lived. His more important works are *The Double-Dealer* (1694), *Love for Love* (1695), *The Mourning Bride* (1697), — his only tragedy, — and *The Way of the World* (1700). The last is his masterpiece, a wonderful comedy, polished, sparkling, delicately satirical in characterization, and well molded in plot. It may be doubted whether Van Brugh and Congreve "copied nature" any more than did Etherege, Wycherley, and Farquahar, but they certainly created interesting dramatic types. Their imitators failed in that, as is well illustrated by Fielding's own early efforts in comedy.

61 6 A rout or a drum: evening parties of fashionable folk held at a private house. The two terms were used interchangeably.

62 1 What Mr. Pope says of women: *Moral Essays*, Epistle ii, *To a Lady. Of the Characters of Women*. The epistle is addressed to Martha Blount and begins:

Nothing so true as what you once let fall,
'Most women have no characters at all.'

62 19 Lady Bellaston: Sophia's hostess in London, whom Mr. Dobson (p. 123) calls a "fashionable demi-rep."

62 23 Thwackum: Tom Jones' tutor.

62 24 Ensign Northerton: the soldier whom Jones met in the seventh book, when he thought of enlisting.

63 9 No. XVI is taken from *A Journey from this World to the Next*, Book i, chap. viii.

63 21 A celebrated poet of our nation: Richard Glover (1712-1785) was believed by his friends to be a great poet, though posterity has refused to read his ponderous works. His *Leonidas* (1737), an epic in nine books, was praised by Fielding in the *Champion* and mentioned by Swift in a letter to Pope as having "great vogue." Glover appears to have been an excellent man of business.

63 26 Signior Piantanida: evidently some well-known musician of the period, though I have not been able to identify him.

64 1 Consort: an erroneous form for *concert*, by which it was gradually replaced in the course of the eighteenth century. See *New Eng. Dict.*

64 2 Madam Dacier: Anne Lefèvre Dacier, the wife of André Dacier, was a distinguished translator and editor of the classics. Her best works were the translations of the *Iliad* (1711) and the *Odyssey* (1716), which still find appreciative readers because of the sound scholarship and excellent style that they display.

64 2 Mr. Pope: Pope's *Iliad* was published in 1715-1720.

64 5 I had the curiosity to enquire, etc.: Richard Bentley (1662-1742), the English scholar, advanced the theory that the Homeric poems were written by Homer in the form of lays or ballads, thus indorsing the tradition that they were put together in the age of Pisistratus. See *Remarks on a late Discourse of Free-thinking* (1713). Volkmann, *Geschichte und Kritik der Wolfschen Prolegomena*, p. 8, says that this theory was "entirely unnoticed"; but Fielding's reference shows that such was not altogether the case.

64 18 Dr. Trapp's: Joseph Trapp (1679-1747), a distinguished clergyman, pamphleteer, and poetaster, published in 1718-1720 his translation of the *Æneid* in blank verse. The work had no particular merit save as a literal rendering. Trapp was one of the Tory hangers-on whom Swift befriended.

64 19 The discovery made by Mr. Warburton: Bishop Warburton devoted one chapter of his *Divine Legation of Moses* to a theory that the sixth book of the *Æneid* should be regarded as an account of Virgil's initiation to the Eleusinian mysteries. Such was the weight of Warburton's authority that the interpretation was accepted as fact until 1770, when Gibbon exploded the theory with his anonymous *Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Æneid*. See Gibbon, *Autobiographic Memoirs*, for an interesting account of the matter.

65 1 Betterton : Thomas Betterton, the great actor, theatrical manager, and playwright, was born in 1635 and died in 1710. There can be no doubt that he was one of the greatest interpreters of Shakespearean characters that ever lived, though he played in mangled versions. He had a prosperous career and was greatly esteemed as a man. See the life by R. W. Lowe (London, 1891).

65 2 Booth : See No. VIII, note to p. 26, l. 17.

65 8 Put out the Light, etc. : *Othello*, V, ii, 7. Most of the readings offered by Fielding have been warmly recommended at one time or another. For a summary of the controversy, see the *Variorum Shakespeare*, ed. H. H. Furness, *Othello*.

66 3 Mr. Theobald : Lewis Theobald (1688–1744) was an industrious and clear-sighted scholar, though he made many enemies in his own time. As a poet he did not attain even temporary success. His *Shakespeare restored, or a Specimen of the many Errors as well committed as unamended by Mr. Pope in his late Edition of this Poet* (1726) caused Pope to make him the hero of *The Dunciad*. He is now best remembered for his edition of Shakespeare, which was published in 1734.

66 20 This selection (No. XVII) is taken from the middle of the fifth chapter, Book viii, of *Amelia*.

66 27 The common Greek proverb : "Ofttimes the pupil goes beyond his master," — an epigram by Lucilius.

67 2 Mr. Pope compliments him : *Dunciad* i, 19ff. The quotation was made from memory apparently. In the first line *thy ear* should read *thine ear* ; in the third, *you take* should be *thou choose* ; and in the fourth, *Rabelais'* was written *Rab'lais'*.

67 10 Condescended to imitate Rabelais : The likeness between Swift and François Rabelais, if present at all, is exceedingly superficial. Fielding is quite right in dissenting from Pope, for the misanthropy and mordant satire of Swift differ altogether in quality from the gentle wisdom of Cervantes or the jovial humanity of Rabelais.

67 14 Lucian : born in Syria about 120 A.D. At first a professional rhetorician, he devoted the latter part of his life to travel and authorship. No writer either of Greek or of any other tongue has surpassed him in his own field of satirical dialogue. His *Dialogues of the Dead* are the most widely known of all his works.

67 18 Mr. Moyle : Walter Moyle (1672–1721). The *Works of Walter Moyle, none of which were ever before published*, were edited by Thomas Sergeant in 1726. *The Dissertation on the age of Philopatris, a*

dialogue commonly ascribed to Lucian, is to be found in the first of the two volumes.

67 23 **Cock** : Lucian's dialogue "*Ὀνειρος ἢ ἀλεκτρυών*", usually known as *Gallus* in Latin and *The Cock* in English.

67 24 **Cock and a Bull** : The origin of the term is obscure. It is impossible to say more than does the *New Eng. Dict.* : "In its origin apparently referring to some story or fable."

67 32 **Lucan** : Lucan (A.D. 39-65) was born in Spain but lived most of his brief life at Rome, where he fell under the displeasure of Nero. His only extant work is the *Pharsalia*, an epic in ten books, which displays vigorous imagination and diction but is excessively extravagant and bombastic. Nicholas Rowe (1674-1718), the dramatist and poet laureate, made a translation of the *Pharsalia* which was published immediately after his death. It had great vogue during the eighteenth century and was regarded by Warton as superior to the original.

68 6 **A wretched one published by Mr. Dryden** : This is not strictly true. A translation by Moyle, Sir Henry Shere, Charles Blount, and others was projected in 1696, when Dryden wrote a *Life of Lucian*. The work did not appear, however, till 1711, so that Dryden can hardly be held responsible for the translation, as he died in 1700.

68 27 **As Mr. Pope was for his Homer** : "The result was, therefore, a total profit at least approaching 9000 l." — Leslie Stephen, *Alexander Pope*, p. 63.

69 2 **He gives his reason** : Pope translates the verse :

Such was the sovereign doom, and such the will of Jove !

As a matter of fact, the particle in this case seems to possess no strong adversative force.

69 11 **Madam Dacier** : See No. XVI, note to p. 64, l. 2.

69 11 **Monsieur Eustathius** : Eustathius was an archbishop of Thessalonica who flourished in the twelfth century and wrote a valuable commentary on Homer.

69 18 **Venerisque huic maximus, etc.** : See *Pharsalia*, ii, 387, 388. Rowe renders the passage :

He sought no end of marriage, but increase,
Nor wish'd a pleasure, but his country's peace :
That took up all the tenderest parts of life
His country was his children and his wife.

70 23 **Statius** (*ca.* 61-*ca.* 96 A.D.) : Statius is best known for his *Thebais*, an heroic poem which was especially esteemed in the Middle

Ages. His miscellaneous poems, mostly in hexameters, are called the *Silvae*.

70 24 **Silius Italicus** (ca. 25–ca. 100 A.D.): Silius Italicus held important offices in the Roman government and wrote an heroic poem *Punica* in slavish imitation of Virgil. He is also now supposed to be the author of the metrical abridgment of the *Iliad*, which is called the *Homerus Latinus*.

70 27 **Ovid** (43 B.C.–17 or 18 A.D.) and **Claudian** (late fourth and early fifth centuries): These authors have left us no finished epics, though the latter at his death was engaged upon one, which is preserved in its uncompleted form.

71 11 **A speech on the side of the opposition**: See *Introduction*, p. xxxix, for a similar scene from *The Author's Farce*. References to the custom of preparing speeches supposed to have been delivered in Parliament are very common in the literature of the time.

71 32 **The pen and ink, etc.**: Fielding later developed this idea in the *Covent-Garden Journal* for June 27, 1752.

72 16 No. XVIII is taken from *Covent-Garden Journal*, March 21, 1752, No. 23.

72 16 The motto here is from the *Iliad*, Book ii, 204–206 (206 probably spurious). In Murphy's edition (1762), from which this selection is taken; there are several deviations from the normal orthography of these verses. Since they are correctly rendered in the Dublin reprint of 1752, as I am informed, it is clear that Murphy or the printers may be held responsible for the peculiarities.

73 19 **Laws to restrain them**: An act against blasphemy was passed in the time of William III (9 & 10 Will. III, c. 32), which is doubtless the one to which Fielding refers. It originated (1698) in an address to the king, calling upon him to "suppress pernicious books and pamphlets, which contain in them impious doctrines against the Holy Trinity," etc. The statute soon became a dead letter. See Stephen, *Hist. of the Crim. Law of England*, II, 468, 469. "Libels against the government" and slander were punishable in common law at the time when Fielding wrote, but the confusion which followed the expiration of the Licensing Act in 1694 and continued till the enactment of Fox's Libel Act finds expression in his words. It is interesting to note that in the year when this was published (1752) a jury acquitted one Owen of libel against the House of Commons, the first case, according to Stephen (II, 323), in which a jury "exercised their undoubted power to return a general verdict of not guilty in a case of libel."

73 24 As Horace tells us: See *Satires*, ii, i, 80 ff.

74 5 Breaking poor Priscian's head: violating the rules of grammar. A reference to the celebrated Latin grammarian, who lived about 500 A.D.

75 11 Reading a single verse in the Testament: For the history of benefit of clergy see Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, I, 424 ff. It arose from the claim of the church that criminal causes against priests should be remitted to the bishop of the diocese before condemnation. Gradually this was extended until all persons, whether in orders or not, who could read the so-called "neck-verse," might claim benefit of clergy. The verse was Psalm li. 1. Till 1487 a person who could read might commit murder as often as he chose with no other result than that of making his purgation. Until 1547 he was simply branded on the thumb with an M. Benefit of clergy was not abolished till 1827 for commoners, while for peers it continued till 1841.

75 19 *Paveant illi*, etc.: As far as I can discover, St. Peter is nowhere reported to have used any such expression, though the joke is doubtless of considerable antiquity, of French origin one would say. A similar contrast is found in Matt. xxvi. 33, but the verb used in the Vulgate is *scandalizo*.

75 25 In an old act of parliament: 1 Edw. VI, c. 12, s. 14, which was passed in 1547. See Stephen, *Hist. of the Crim. Law of England*, I, 462.

75 31 Judge Rolls: a mistake for Judge Rolle. Henry Rolle (1589?-1656) was an eminent member of the English bar, for some years a member of Parliament, and became lord chief justice of England under the Commonwealth. His *Abridgment des plusieurs Cases et Resolutions del Commun Ley* was published in 1668, two volumes, folio.

76 8 Who was himself a writer, etc.: Henry VIII wrote a book against Luther, the *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* (1521), which drew an angry reply from the reformer. In 1543 he wrote a preface for *A necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man*, which was known as "the king's book." Gairdner (*Henry VIII in Dict. Nat. Biog.*) also states that his hand can be recognized in many of the letters and manifestoes, both in Latin and English, which were issued under his royal authority.

76 31 Shakespeare: The dates of the four dramatists, in the order named, are 1564-1616, 1573?-1637, 1579-1625, 1584-1616.

77 1 Machiavel's advice: The reference is to Machiavelli's *Prince*, chap. xxvi, apparently, where he says (ed. Morley, p. 161): "Nothing

makes so much to the honour of a new prince as new laws and new orders invented by him," etc.

77 4 The last of this *quadrumvirate*: the last to die, that is. During the latter part of his life Jonson enjoyed an undisputed and unique authority over his younger contemporaries. Herrick's *Ode for Ben Jonson in Hesperides* and his own *Leges Conviviales* give us vivid pictures of the gatherings of the "tribe of Ben."

77 10 John Dryden to be their king: Dryden (1631-1700) was as autocratic a literary dictator as England has ever known. Though not a man who acted on mature reflection, he set and changed fashions both by precept and example. Thus he popularized the heroic play and later caused it to be abandoned. Nevertheless, he did not attain or retain his position without question. An account of his controversies with Howard, Buckingham, Settle, Rochester, and others would be a biography. The dastardly attack upon him in 1679, when he was set upon at night by hired bravoës, probably the tools of Rochester, shows the acrimony which characterized some of these quarrels.

77 17 Pride, folly, malice, etc.: Pope, *An Essay on Criticism*, 458, 459. The second and third words in the first line are misplaced. The particular "parson" referred to was Jeremy Collier, whose *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698) involved him in a quarrel with Dryden. The "critics" and "beaus" were Buckingham, who had a share in *The Rehearsal* (1671), which ridiculed Dryden, and Rochester, who was alternately his patron and his dearest foe.

77 22 King Alexander, surnamed Pope: It would be impossible in a brief note to discuss Pope's relations to his contemporaries. Fielding's description is but little exaggerated. See Leslie Stephen, *Alexander Pope*, and Pope's *Works*, ed. Elwin and Courthope. *The Dunciad* first appeared in 1712, was enlarged in 1729, and acknowledged in 1735.

78 5 The ingenious Dr. Young: Edward Young (1683-1765), the author of several tragedies, *The Complaint; or Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality*, and the series of satires called *The Universal Passion*.

78 5 Dr. Arbuthnot: John Arbuthnot (1667-1735), wit, physician, friend of Swift and Pope, was a member of the so-called "Scriblerus Club" and contributed to the *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*.

78 6 Mr. Gay: John Gay (1685-1732) had a varied career and was on good terms with most of the literary men of his time, including Pope. He was, indeed, the chartered satirist of the age, and was

doubtless given the more freedom because of his happy and careless nature.

78 15 No. XIX is taken from *Covent-Garden Journal*, February 4, 1752, No. 10.

78 15 The motto here is from Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 270-272. *Nostri* should read *vestri*.

78 19 Tom D'Urfey: Thomas D'Urfey (1653-1723), a poet and dramatist better loved as a man than regarded as a literary figure, even in his own day. His work is now forgotten save for certain songs said by his biographers in the *Dict. Nat. Biog.* still to be heard in Scotland. His dramas are worthless, but he was a fluent song writer and a genuine wit.

78 19 Tom Brown: Thomas Brown (1663-1704), satirist, was worse tempered than D'Urfey and not so versatile. He attacked most of his literary contemporaries, including Dryden and D'Urfey.

78 27 Jack-puddings: buffoons or clowns, especially such as attend on mountebanks.

79 5 As Horace says: *Satires*, i, i, 24, 25.

79 13 As the ingenious author of *Clarissa* says: In the *Preface* to *Clarissa Harlowe* Richardson says: "It will probably be thought tedious to all such as *dip* into it, expecting a *light novel* or *transitory romance*; and look upon the story in it (interesting as that is generally allowed to be) as its *sole end*, rather than as a vehicle to the instruction." See *Introduction*, pp. xix, xx, xlv-xlvii, for an account of Fielding's relations to Richardson.

80 8 Rabelais, and Aristophanes: Fielding's views must have changed very radically from the time when he was writing *Tom Jones*. See No. II. His estimate is, from any point of view, decidedly unjust.

80 27 *Quid verum*, etc.: Horace, *Epistles*, i, i, 11, 12 — to Mæcenas, replying to regrets that he had ceased to write.

81 11 I mention these [Seneca and Plutarch] rather than Plato and Aristotle, etc.: Fielding's statement is very true. Before the time when Fielding wrote (1752) there was no translation of Plato's complete works in English save that taken from the French of Dacier; and Aristotle had still to wait more than fifty years for his Taylor, though he was represented by translations of individual works. On the other hand, both Seneca and Plutarch had often been translated, the former by Wyttynton (1546), by Golding (1578), by Thomas Lodge (1614), by Freeman (1635), by Sir Roger L'Estrange (1678), etc.; the *Lives* of the latter by North (1579), whose work was often reprinted, and "by

several hands" with a *Life* by Dryden (1683-1686), while the *Morals* were equally well known to English readers.

82 6 Longinus: See No. XII, note to p. 45, l. 25.

82 14 Pons Asinorum: The name is frequently applied to the fifth proposition of the first book of Euclid,—the first difficult theorem and accordingly a stumbling-block to dullards. This was probably what Fielding had in mind. The term is wrongly applied to the Pythagorean proposition (I, 47), where it has no special meaning. The origin of the term is very doubtful. It occurs in its French form, *pont aux ânes*, as early as the fifteenth century.

82 25 "All men" says Cicero: I have not been able to discover any passage in Cicero of which this is an exact translation, though it somewhat resembles one in the *Archias*, viii.

83 9 Quotation of St. Paul: 1 Corinthians xv. 33. Found in the comic poet Menander's *Thais*, as see *Fragmenta*, ed. Meineke, p. 75. It is probable that Paul recognized the epigram simply as a Greek saying.

83 12 No. XX is taken from *Jonathan Wild*, Book i, chap. i. This selection and the following, both from *Jonathan Wild*, have a curious resemblance to the account of the character and death of Charles I given by Clarendon in the eleventh book of his *History of the Rebellion*. A comparison between the two, with further reference to other parts of *Jonathan Wild*, leads me to believe that Fielding had Clarendon in mind and half mockingly copied his style while composing the history of the "great man" who died at Tyburn.

The paragraph beginning "Of this kind" reads very differently in the edition of Murphy, which is presumably taken from the revised edition of 1754 and is therefore usually followed. "Of this kind was the illustrious person whose history we now undertake; to whom, tho' nature had given the greatest and most shining endowments, she had not given them absolutely pure and without allay. Tho' he had much of the admirable in his character, as much perhaps as is usually to be found in a hero, I will not yet venture to affirm that he was entirely free from all defects, or that the sharp eyes of censure could not spy out some little blemishes lurking amongst his many great perfections."

In the paragraph beginning "But before we enter," the sentence "Now, tho' the writer," etc., as far as "great perfection," reads in Murphy: "It seems therefore very unlikely that the same person should possess them both; and yet nothing is more usual with writers, who find many instances of greatness in their favourite hero, than to

make him a compliment of goodness into the bargain; and this, without considering that by such means they destroy the . . .," etc.

There is an unusual number of other changes in the text of this selection, though most of them are of little consequence. Only the first part of the chapter as it appears in *Jonathan Wild* is here reprinted.

84 9 An Aristides or a Brutus, a Lysander or a Nero: One would expect two contrasting pairs, but it is difficult to work out any such arrangement. Aristides, "the Just," the Athenian statesman and soldier of the fifth century B.C., is a type of glorious integrity. Brutus may refer either to Lucius Junius Brutus of Roman legend, the destroyer of the Tarquins, or to Marcus Junius Brutus, the conspirator against Cæsar. In the former case he must be regarded as a type of virtue, and in the latter he cannot be regarded as a complete villain. Lysander, again, is on the side of goodness. He was the Spartan general of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. who broke the power of Athens. As to Nero, there is unfortunately no question of his status in the minds of every one.

85 17 As an example of his benevolence: a reference to Plutarch's account of the magnanimity of Alexander towards the mother, wife, and daughters of Darius after the defeat and flight of that king in 333 B.C.

85 22 As an evidence of his generosity: a reference to Cæsar's treatment of such followers as Mamurra.

86 13 No. XXI is taken from *Jonathan Wild*, Book iv, chap. xvi.

87 1 Honesty: Fielding's etymology, as usual, is somewhat fanciful. *Honesty* is derived from OF: (*h*)*oneste*, which comes in turn from Lat. *honestas*, from *honestus*, "honest," or perhaps *honor*, "honor." It naturally has nothing to do with the Greek *ὄνος*, "an ass," as Fielding must have known.

87 15 Prigs: In thieves' slang *prig* is the name for a thief.

89 7 In that of King Charles the first: This must be a reference to the *Eikon Basiliké*, a little book published just after the execution of Charles. It purported to be the work of his hand and the revelation of his inmost thoughts, though it was in reality written by Dr. John Gauden. It nowhere lays down twelve rules, but does devote one chapter of moral instruction to the young prince, Charles.

89 25 A Privilege to kill, etc.: I do not know whence this is taken.

89 29 Lætius est, etc.: I have not discovered the source of this verse.

90 12 No. XXII is taken from *Amelia*, Book xi, chap. ii. Only the latter part of the chapter is reprinted.

90 22 This is all mere Utopia: that is, an impracticable dream. The name comes from Sir Thomas More's political romance, published in Latin in 1516, *De Optimo Reipublicae Statu, deque Nova Insula Utopia*. It was translated into English by Ralph Robynson in 1551, by Gilbert Burnet in 1684, and by Arthur Cayley in 1808. It is usually called *Utopia* simply, from the island of "Nowhere" on which More fixed his ideal state.

92 30 As Livy tells us: See Book xxvi of his history.

93 9 Oliver Cromwell carried, etc.: The contrasting views of modern historians as to the success of Cromwell's policy are well illustrated by the following statements from two most excellent biographies. "Yet the great position in Europe which Cromwell's energy had gained for England impressed the imagination of his contemporaries. . . . Cromwell's foreign policy was in part a failure, but only in part. He promoted the material welfare of his country and saved her from foreign interference in her domestic affairs. Where he sought purely national interests he succeeded, but it was impossible for him not to look beyond England."—Charles Firth, *Oliver Cromwell* (1900), pp. 387 and 389. "It has sometimes been said that Oliver made England respected in Europe. It would be more in accordance with truth to say that he made her feared."—S. R. Gardiner, *Oliver Cromwell* (1901), p. 318.

93 18 One worthless Man, etc.: I have not been able to trace this quotation to its source.

94 7 Things ill begun, etc.: *Macbeth*, III, ii, 55. Macbeth says:

Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.

94 19 Put himself on his country: that is, appeal to the country in a general election.

95 9 As Augeas did: a reference to the labor of Hercules.

96 1 No. XXIII is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book vii, chap. i.

96 1 The world hath been often compared to the theatre: A bibliography of this metaphor would lead one far afield. Aside from Jacques' famous speech in *As You Like It*, II, vii, references to it are common in Greek, Latin, and English before Shakespeare's time, so that it had become proverbial. For example, the saying is attributed to Pythagoras and occurs in a Greek epigram. Petronius Arbiter has "totus mundus exerceat, histrionam," and *The Legend of Orpheus and Eurydice* (1597) expresses the same thought. "Totus mundus agit histrionem" was the motto of the Globe Theatre. See Furness, *As You Like It* (Variorum ed.), for further references.

96 4 **Thespis**: the reputed father of Greek tragedy. He is said to have been the first to introduce an actor on the stage and so to have changed the choral recitation into crude drama. Horace in his *Ars Poetica*, 276, says that he went about in a wagon as a strolling player.

96 14 **St. James's is more likely, etc.**: that is, the fashionable quarter of the town than the chief playhouse, the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane.

96 18 **As Aristotle calls it, an imitation**: in the *Poetics*, *passim*.

97 6 **The Greeks called them both, etc.**: The Greek word for "expounder," as of dreams, *ὑποκριτής*, was also used of players and in a metaphorical sense of dissemblers, whence our "hypocrite."

97 10 **Life's a poor player**: *Macbeth*, V, v, 24-26. Macbeth speaks:

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more.

97 15 **The Deity**: This is a reference to the *Deity, a Poem*, [by Samuel Boyse], published in 1739. The author (1708-1749) was the son of a dissenting minister and was educated at the University of Glasgow. In spite of excellent introductions to the world of letters he had neither steadiness nor application, and he lived a life of misery in London. The *Deity*, his best known poem, was inspired by Pope's *Essay on Man*. Fielding's praise of it may well have been prompted by his knowledge of Boyse's poverty.

98 9 After the paragraph ending "at the Theatre Royal" five short paragraphs are omitted.

98 19 **Garrick**: See No. IX, note to p. 32, l. 20. According to the best accounts Garrick was no less excellent in comedy than in tragedy. Mrs. Clive, the actress, is said to have exclaimed in an angry mood, "D—n him, he could act a gridiron." Compare Partridge's sneer, *Tom Jones*, Book xvi, chap. v.

98 22 **Scipio the Great and Lælius the Wise**: P. Cornelius Scipio Æmilianus Africanus Minor was the adopted son of the great conqueror's elder son. He was both a learned man and a successful general. His friendship with Gaius Lælius Sapiens, a statesman and patron of literature, was celebrated by Cicero in *Laelius (de Amicitia)*. Horace couples their names in *Satires*, ii, i, 65-74.

99 5 **The famous nil admirari**: Horace, *Epistles*, i, vi, 1.

99 14 **Mr. William Mills** (? -1750): the son of John Mills, the great actor who died in 1736, whence he was known as "the younger

Mills." He does not seem to have inherited his father's talent, though his Julius Cæsar is praised by Davies, *Dramatic Miscellanies*.

99 24 No. XXIV is taken from *Joseph Andrews*, Book iii, chap. vi. After parting with Mr. Wilson, Parson Adams, Fanny, and Joseph Andrews are taking their midday meal in a "kind of natural amphitheatre" where "the soil was spread with a verdure which no paint could imitate." There Joseph launches on the discourse that forms the subject of this selection. The first part of the chapter only is here reprinted.

100 15 **Laceman**: one who manufactures or deals in lace.

100 22 **Ammyconni**: Jacopo Amigoni or Amiconi (1675-1752) was a painter of superficial brilliancy who had great vogue in England about this time. He was born at Venice but lived much of his life in Germany, England, and Spain. He died at Madrid as court painter, but he has been long forgotten.

100 22 **Paul Varnish**: Paolo Veronese (1528-1588) was born at Verona but lived most of his life at Venice, where his work can best be seen.

100 23 **Hannibal Scratchi**: Annibale Carracci (1560-1609) was born at Bologna, where with his brother and cousin he founded a school of painting which had a lasting but not altogether good influence on Italian art. He died in Rome.

100 23 **Hogarthi**: William Hogarth. See No. IV, note to p. 12, l. 31.

101 16 **A man that lived at a place called Ross**: John Kyrle (1637-1724) was educated at Oxford and entered at the Middle Temple, but after leaving the university retired to his estates at Ross, on the Wye, where he lived all his days a severely simple and very useful life. His philanthropic deeds on a comparatively small income brought him more than local fame, which was greatly increased by Pope, who celebrated him in his *Moral Essays*, Epistle iii, *To Allen, Lord Bathurst*, as "the Man of Ross." From that time (1732) his real name was well-nigh forgotten. Pope's lines (249-274 in Elwin-Courthope ed.) begin:

But all our praises why should Lords engross?
Rise, honest Muse! and sing the Man of Ross.

101 17 **Another at the Bath**: Ralph Allen. See No. II, note to p. 5, l. 18. The "stately house" was Prior Park, near Bath.

102 1 This extract (No. XXV) includes only part of Book ii, chap. xiii of *Joseph Andrews*, from which it is taken.

102 14 **Person of fashion**: Fielding has put the cart before the horse. See *New Eng. Dict.*, "fashion *sb.* 12. (Man, woman) of fashion." It is

shown that the phrase meant first "of high quality or breeding" and gradually merged into the current use: "That moves in upper-class society, and conforms to its rules with regard to dress," etc.

102 20 Correspondence: intercourse, communication; now obsolete in this sense, except of communication by letters, but common in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

102 25 His Majesty's Bear-garden. The bear garden at Hockley Hole was a popular place of resort in the eighteenth century, though neither the entertainment (bull baiting as well as bear baiting, etc.) nor the company was very worshipful. See *Spectator*, No. 141, where Steele refers to the devotees of such sport as showing "no characteristic of the human species but risibility."

102 29 Exalt themselves at church: either a reference to the choir stalls, where those of high rank had seats, as in St. James's Church, or to structures of a different type with galleries.

103 9 Mrs. Slipslop: Lady Booby's maid in *Joseph Andrews*.

104 5 No. XXVI is taken from *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*, July 21, 1754.

105 1 Every man who hath three hundred pounds per annum: This statement scarcely conforms to English usage at any time. Before the Norman conquest, to be sure, every freeman was required to attend the folk moot but not the witenagemot. The property qualification of £300 per annum did not appear till 1710, when that sum was fixed as the income necessary for the representative of a borough or town. It did not imply, however, that a reluctant citizen could be forced to represent a constituency. See Medley, *Eng. Const. Hist.*, p. 181.

105 15 Sheriff in particular: The office of hereditary sheriff was not abolished till 1784.

106 1 Last vagrant act: a reference to the act of 1744 (17 Geo. II, c. 5), which dealt, among other offenders, with "all persons who, not having wherewith to maintain themselves, live idly without employment and refuse to work for the usual and common wages given to other labourers on the like work, in the parishes or places where they then are." The poor laws of England, based on modifications of the vicious act of 1601, were not effectually bettered till 1834. Fielding, it will be remembered, had printed in 1753 *Proposals for Making an Effectual Provision for the Poor*.

106 11 Spunges and raps: gets by mean sycophancy or stealing. *Spunges* is Fielding's usual orthography for *sponges*, while *rap* in this sense is now obsolete.

107 1 No. XXVII is taken from *Covent-Garden Journal*, June 20, 1752, No. 49. The motto here is from the beginning of iii, i, of Horace's *Odes*.

107 3 In a former paper: *Covent-Garden Journal*, No. 47, June 13, 1752, a week before the present essay appeared.

107 9 The people or mob in old Rome: This reference implies a confusion in Fielding's mind between the veto power exercised by the tribune of the *plebs* over decrees of the senate and the right of making *leges* held by the assembly of the people.

107 12 In the case of the gin-act: In 1736 an act was passed to curtail the sale of spirituous liquors, especially gin, by the imposition of heavy taxes. Riots followed. See the excellent account in Lecky, *England in the Eighteenth Century*, I, 517 ff.

107 27 *Læsae mobilitatis*: a play on *laesae majestatis*, *lèse majesté*.

108 16 Cardinal de Retz: Jean François Paul de Gondi, Cardinal de Retz (1613-1679), was a distinguished clerical statesman, opponent of Mazarin, and archbishop of Paris. After a stormy career he settled down in Lorraine and wrote his *Mémoires*, to which Fielding here refers.

108 24 Assert an exclusive right to the river of Thames: In the *Spectator*, No. 383, Addison describes Sir Roger's trip on the Thames and gives some instances of river manners. Fielding tells of the watermen and their exactions in the *Voyage to Lisbon*.

109 4 The second exclusive right: There is plenty of other evidence that streets of eighteenth-century London were turbulent.

110 9 That a very new: Between *that* and *a* the word *the* is omitted.

110 11 Out of St. James's-Park on a Sunday evening: St. James's Park had long been the fashionable promenade, nor did it lose its popularity on account of the occurrences to which Fielding alludes. See Goldsmith's *Miscellaneous Essays* (1759).

110 24 That act of parliament which was made at the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign: By an act passed in 1601 the poor rates, established by the statutes of 1572 and 1598, were extended and strengthened. The system thus introduced was never radically changed till 1834. The essential feature of it was taxation for the benefit of the poor and disabled, but in practice these alms became a nuisance. See Prothero, *Statutes and Constitutional Documents*, p. 104.

111 8 Hang sorrow, cast away care: I have been unable to find any such song in the collections at my disposal.

112 1 No. XXVIII is taken from *Covent-Garden Journal*, July 18, 1752, No. 55. The motto is from Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, i, 927, 928.

112 5 It hath been observed, etc.: by Congreve in his essay on humor; referred to below, *Letters upon Several Occasions*, p. 95.

113 7 By Aristotle in his treatise on comedy: Aristotle treated comedy in the *Poetics*, as is known from the reference in chap. vi, § 1, where he says that he will come to it later on. That part of the *Poetics* is, however, in Fielding's phrase, "unhappily lost." There was not a separate treatise on comedy, as Fielding's words might imply. A work by a late Greek writer, *Περὶ Κωμῳδίας* (ed. G. Kaibel, *Abhandlungen der königl. Gesellschaft der Wissensch. zu Göttingen*, 1898), is unquestionably based on Aristotle, but it is exceedingly doubtful whether it correctly represents Aristotle's doctrine.

113 11 Mr. Congreve, in a letter to Mr. Dennis: In *Letters upon Several Occasions*, published by John Dennis in 1696, there is an essay *Concerning Humour in Comedy*, sent by William Congreve to Dennis on July 10, 1695. Fielding here quotes from this work, the only critical treatise of any consequence written by the master of the school of comedy which flourished at the end of the seventeenth century and lived on till the time of Goldsmith and Sheridan. The sentences here printed as one extract really come from three different places, pp. 81, 82, and 90, respectively. It is needless to say that Fielding does not quote verbatim, though in this case no serious alterations appear.

114 1 Ben Jonson: Fielding's customary orthography. The passage quoted is taken from the Induction of *Every Man out of his Humour* (1599), where it is spoken by Asper, who probably represents Jonson himself. The use of the terms of mediæval medicine and philosophy is not uncommon in Jonson's works. He follows here the ordinary line of reasoning. *Ens* is a philosophical term meaning an existence, entity, or being. It was formed from *esse* after the analogy of *absens*, etc. *Continent*, of course, means holding fast to one place, inseparable. *Effects* is usually printed *affects* and means affections or states of body and mind. *A rook*, a simpleton or gull. *Cable hatband*, "a twisted cord of gold, silver, or silk worn round the hat" (Halliwell, *Dictionary of Arch. and Prov. Words*). *Three piled*, three-tiered. I cannot understand why quotation marks inclose six lines, as they do in the text.

115 1 Will amount to this: Fielding's explanation, though "let loose from that stiff boddice" of which he complains in Jonson, is not altogether clear unless one understands the underlying idea of humor

which it presupposes. In ancient and mediæval physiology a humor was one of the four chief fluids of the body, — blood, phlegm, cholera, and melancholy. Disease, it was believed, was the result of the undue excess of some one of these “cardinal humors,” and by the proportion of them was determined a man’s natural temperament. The idea rested on the belief that the “elements,” out of which everything was made, were earth, air, fire, and water. Earth was said to be cold and dry, air hot and moist, etc. From the body, as Fielding says, these notions were applied to the mind, so that Jonson’s notion of humor implied the habitual mood or mental disposition natural to one’s temperament.

115 15 As Mr. Congreve observes: in the essay previously cited, p. 81. This is a free paraphrase of the passage.

115 17 Quot homines, tot sententiæ: Terence, *Phormio*, II, iv, 14. “Many men, many minds.” Cicero also uses the phrase, *De Finibus*, i, 15.

115 26 Excess, says Horace: *Satires*, i, ii, which is summed up in the twenty-fourth verse:

Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt.

115 29 Says the judicious Abbé Bellegarde: See No. IV, note to p. 13, l. 25. The observation to which Fielding refers is at the very beginning of the work *Réflexions sur le ridicule*.

116 3 It is the same ambition, etc.: a happy reference to the ambitious plot of Stephano and Trinculo with Caliban to kill Prospero, whereby Stephano is to become “king and queen, — save our graces!” *Tempest*, especially Act III, sc. ii.

116 5 The same avarice, etc.: George Lillo (1693–1739) produced his *Fatal Curiosity* in 1736. In this bombastic tragedy young Wilmot, who has returned to England after a long absence in India, intrusts a casket of jewels to his mother. Not suspecting his identity, the mother persuades old Wilmot to kill his son for the sake of the treasure. With reference to Molière’s *L’Avaré*, it must be recalled that Fielding had translated it as *The Miser* in 1733.

116 7 The same jealousy: again a comparison of small things with great. *The Suspicious Husband* was a comedy by Dr. Benjamin Hoadly, son of Bishop Hoadly, which Garrick produced in 1747. It turned on the absurd jealousy of a somewhat conventional husband and had considerable success at the time, though it had little real worth as a play.

116 9 Nero had the art of making vanity, etc.: The reference to Nero indicates the oft-repeated tale that he set fire to Rome that he might have a proper setting for his recitation of the Homeric hymns, Rome replacing Troy. Domitian "made cruelty ridiculous" when, in default of greater victims, he was found torturing flies.

116 14 The two great masters: that is, Jonson and Congreve, as above.

117 6 No. XXIX is taken from *Covent-Garden Journal*, July 25, 1752, No. 56. The motto here is from Horace's *Odes*, iii, vi, 19.

117 8 At the conclusion of my last paper: No. XXVIII.

118 6 The ingenious Abbé: Abbé Bellegarde. See notes to p. 13, l. 25, and p. 115, l. 29. The quotation is found at the beginning of the first treatise in *Réflexions sur le ridicule*. Fielding quotes from the original, not the translation.

119 2 Party: that is, politics.

120 10 The excellent lessons on the ridiculous: again a reference to Bellegarde.

121 18 Of modern times, the whist master: The first description of whist is said to be in *The Compleat Gamester* by Cotton (1674). It did not become a fashionable game, however, till towards the middle of the following century. Hoyle published his *Short Treatise* in 1743, and in the same year Fielding (*Jonathan Wild*, Book i, chap. iv) spoke of "whisk and swabbers" as the game then in vogue.

122 18 No. XXX was first printed in vol. I of *Miscellanies* (1743). Compare with this essay Lord Shaftesbury's *Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour in Characteristicks*, Treatise ii. Fielding was evidently familiar with that work, as he shows by numerous references scattered through his books. He did not, of course, copy it in any sense.

123 28 The primitive and literal sense of this word: This interpretation is more trustworthy than is usual with Fielding's linguistic observations. The word *converse* as such never meant "turn round together," but the Latin verb *conversari* had that primitive meaning, though used in other ways most commonly. Fielding employs *conversation* in its old and broader sense of "social intercourse." It is so used by Shakespeare.

125 16 An Enquiry into Happiness: The only published work of which I know that would at all correspond to this reference is *An Inquiry concerning Virtue and Happiness. In a Letter to a Friend*, by P. Glover, ed. C. Plumtre, 1751. A copy of this work is in the

British Museum, though I can find nothing of its author and have not access to the volume itself.

126 9 Give us our Wildness and our Woods: from *The Tragedy of Julius Cæsar, altered: with a Prologue and Chorus*, by John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham (1648–1721). The quotation, here printed as two lines, is really the last line of the third stanza of the chorus which was designed to be sung between the first and second acts. The altered play is one of the most curious of Shakespearean adaptations.

127 13 Do unto all men, etc.: Matthew vii. 12. Commonly misquoted as here.

128 13 *Insani sapiens nomen ferat*, etc.: *Epistles*, i, vi, 15, 16.

128 23 Florus . . . says: *Epitomæ de Tito Livio*, i, i, 7. The passage describes Tarquin the Proud, and runs: "Set ipse in senatum caedibus, in plebem verberibus, in omnis superbia, quæ crudelitate gravior est bonis, grassatus, cum saevitiam domi fatigasset, tandem in hostes conversus est."

129 29 See the Earl of C——: Philip Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, is undoubtedly meant. See p. 158, l. 5.

130 5 Lord Shaftsbury hath a pretty observation: *Characteristicks, A Letter concerning Enthusiasm*, ed. 1733, I, 35, 36.

131 2 Mandarin: the form now universally accepted is *mandarin*.

131 31 Improper: ill-clad or untidy.

132 2 Dishabille: This word, once thoroughly domesticated, has now reverted to its French form when used by educated persons. The use of it by Fielding in this form indicates the fashion of his day, though we should employ *en déshabillé* if we used the phrase at all.

133 24 At a gaming table: One clause is here omitted.

133 29 P—— W——: This seems to be a reference to Paul Whitehead (1710–1774), a somewhat disreputable satirist, who was later placed in comfortable circumstances by his intimacy with Sir Francis Dashwood and other politicians. At the time when this was written he had not become a government hanger-on and was still in poverty, though no longer an inhabitant of Fleet Prison, as he had been yet earlier.

137 29 A third at ombre, or a fourth at whisk and quadrille: Ombre was a popular game of cards played without the eights, nines, and tens, and usually by three persons. *Whisk* was the earlier orthography of *whist*. Quadrille was similar to ombre but was played by four persons.

138 30 The universal passion: apparently a reference to *The Universal Passion*, by Edward Young (see No. XVIII, note to p. 78, l. 5), a series of satires begun in 1725 and collected in 1728. Though its subject

is rather "love of fame" than pride, there is a considerable passage in Satire i, beginning "What is not proud?"

138 ³¹ **The foible of great minds:** This suggests Milton's reference to ambition in *Lycidas*:

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days.

140 ⁶ **Pope or Young:** It need occasion no surprise that Young's name is thus coupled with Pope's, since at that day he was held in scarcely less esteem. For his dates and works, see No. XVIII, note on p. 78, l. 5.

140 ⁸ **Quin or Garrick:** James Quin (1693-1766), an Irish actor, first became known in 1716 in London. He was the rival of Garrick at the maturity of his powers but never was his equal in tragedy. For Garrick, see note to p. 32, l. 20.

140 ²¹ **Oblations:** offerings made to the church.

142 ¹² **That noble person:** Chesterfield again.

147 ²² **Let Socrates, for instance, etc.:** as in Plato's *Phaedo*.

147 ²³ **Plato reason on the native beauty of virtue:** as in the *Meno*, *Phaedrus*, and *Republic*.

147 ²⁴ **Aristotle on his occult qualities:** as in the *Categories* and *Metaphysics*, where Aristotle elaborates his theory of the nature of being. *Occult* is to be understood in a very general sense.

147 ³³ **Hath not Socrates heard of harmony:** Socrates speaks of harmony very frequently in the works of Plato. See, for example, *Republic*, iii, 401, 402.

147 ³³ **Plato, who draws virtue in the person of a fine woman:** This seems to be a confused recollection by Fielding of the story about Hercules which Xenophon tells in *Memorabilia*, ii, i, 21 ff. The hero while a youth was said to have met two women, Pleasure and Virtue, who in turn urged him to follow them. Both women are described with some detail. In Plato I can find nothing similar.

148 ² **Hath not Aristotle himself written a book on motion:** his *Physics*.

155 ¹⁰ **The fable of the Lap-Dog and the Ass:** The ass tried to emulate the lap-dog by caressing its master, but was beaten for its pains instead of being received graciously. The fable is a widespread one. It was known very early in Asia and is found in *Æsop*, 212. La Fontaine, *Fables*, iv, v, *L'âne et le petit chien*, gives a pleasant version of it.

155 22 **Name of buffoons** : A clause is omitted after these words.

155 30 **Omne vafer vitium**, etc. : Persius, *Satires*, i, 116-118. Covington rendered the passage (ed. Nettleship, 2d ed. revised, 1874) : "Horace, the rogue, manages to probe every fault while making his friend laugh; he gains his entrance, and plays about the innermost feelings, with a sly talent for tossing up his nose and catching the public on it."

156 1 **The late ingenious translator of that obscure author** : Thomas Brewster, who was born in 1705 and was educated at St. John's College, Oxford. In 1733, while yet at Oxford, he published a translation of the *Second Satire of Persius* in English verse and followed it up with the other satires in succeeding years. According to Lowndes's *Manual*, the first edition (presumably complete) was published in 1741, but A. Goodwin in *Dict. Nat. Biog.* says that the third and fourth together and the fifth separately did not appear till 1742. The date of Brewster's death is unknown.

157 10 **Quid de quoque viro**, etc. : Horace, *Epistles*, i, xviii, 68. The last word in the verse should be *videto* instead of *caveto*.

157 19 **Hew a Carcase for Hounds** : *Julius Cæsar*, II, i, 4 :

Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds.

158 4 **The cowardice of A—le** : John Campbell, second Duke of Argyll or Argyll and Duke of Greenwich (1678-1743), was a prominent figure in several wars and also played an important part in politics. He was an important factor in bringing about the Scottish union and put down Mar's insurrection in 1715. He died on October 4, 1743, only a few months after Fielding published the *Miscellanies*.

158 5 **The dulness of Ch—d** : Philip Dormer Stanhope, fourth Earl of Chesterfield (1694-1773), the famous wit and statesman, is here referred to. His reputation in literature is sustained by his *Letters* to his natural son and to his godson, which were published posthumously. He was a man of sagacity and real worth in spite of his worldliness and low ethical standards. He opposed the Licensing Act of 1737 in the House of Lords, thereby doing Fielding a good turn.

158 5 **The unpoliteness of D—ton** : This must refer to George Bubb Dodington, Lord Melcombe (1691-1762), a famous but not particularly able statesman of the time. He was in several ministries and in 1743 was allied with Argyll, though his political vacillations were notorious. As a man of great wealth and some scholarship, he was fond of posing as a patron of literature. Fielding's epistle *Of True Greatness*, in the

Miscellanies, was addressed to him, as poems by Young and Thomson had been earlier. He was made a peer in 1761.

158 6 And thus Lyt—n: George Lyttelton. See No. II, note to p. 5, l. 18.

159 1 No. XXXI was first printed in vol. I of *Miscellanies* (1743).

159 17 A hardy wit in the reign of Charles II.: John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647–1680), wrote the short and not particularly amusing poem *Upon Nothing*, to which Fielding refers. George Farquahar (1678–1707) wrote a *Song on a Trifle*, appended to *The Stage-Coach*, which is far better turned and in the same vein.

160 3 Ex Nihilo nihil Fit: The Latin adage is usually referred to Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, i, 205:

Nil igitur fieri de nilo posse fatendumst.

160 4 By Shakespeare, in *Lear*: I, iv, 131:

Lear. Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.

163 4 The Argive, mentioned by Horace: *Epistles*, ii, ii, 128–131. *Laetos* in the text should read *laetus*.

164 22 A poet, famous for being so sublime: apparently Milton.

165 7 Posthumous Eclogues of a late ingenious young gentleman: I regret that I have been unable to identify these eclogues.

168 21 Caput triumphati Orbis: Ovid, *Amores*, ii, xv, 26:

Roma, triumphati dum caput orbis eris.

169 7 Is to produce: Between *to* and *produce*, *be* is omitted.

169 9 The great Mr. Hobbes: Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) of Malmesbury, the great political philosopher. The *Leviathan* (1651) is perhaps his best-known work, though most of his writings, both in Latin and in English, show the same clearness of exposition as that book. He was a thorough nominalist but was little influenced by Bacon's conception of the importance of systematic experiment, though for a time Bacon's amanuensis. That he was fond of paradox is shown in the somewhat confused exposition of his theory of the place of passions in "*conceptions and apparitions*," which Fielding here gives. We may paraphrase the latter part of the paragraph thus: "In the pursuit of ends agreeable to oneself, the means themselves cannot be separated from the ends in view. Thus in following ambition, a man virtually follows plotting, fighting, danger, difficulty, etc.; in following avarice, he pursues starving, cheating, watching, and numberless painful things

which are concomitant with the passion of avarice." This is, of course, no adequate treatment of Hobbes's doctrine, but it seems to be fair enough as far as it goes. For a rather full treatment of the theory, see his *Human Nature* (circulated in manuscript in 1640, published in 1650), chap. vii (ed. Molesworth, 1740, IV, 31 ff.).

170¹² No. XXXII is taken from *Tom Jones*, Book xviii, chap. i.

171²² No man detests and despises scurrility more than myself: For the truth of this statement, see *Introduction*, lxxiii-lxxvi. Fielding is quite within the limits of fact in saying that no man "has ever been treated with more" coarse abuse. Even granting that his work had not been free from coarseness, it could not have been pleasant for him to be called a ruffian. Moreover, he had had "abusive writings" fathered on him to a disagreeable extent, for example, *The Golden Rump* and the *Causidicade*.

171³² The weekly productions of his abusive contemporaries: in the journals of the time.



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WITH REFERENCE TO THE WORKS FROM WHICH
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¹ Extracts are taken from the second edition, London, 1742.

² Extracts are taken from the first edition, London, 1743.

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¹ Extracts are taken from the first edition, London, 1749.

² Extracts are taken from the first edition, London, 1752 (1751).

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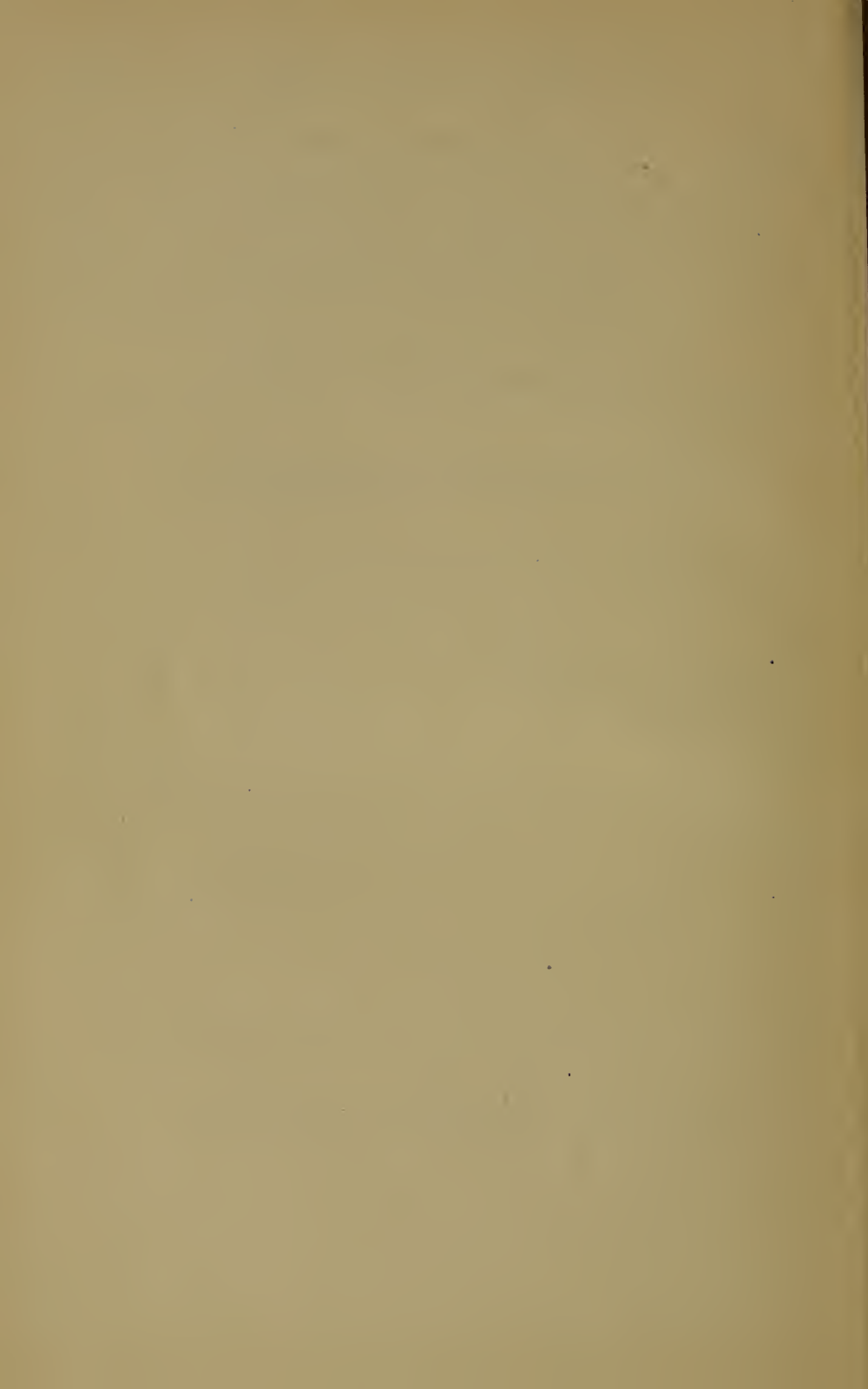
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¹ Extracts are taken from *Works*, ed. Murphy, London, 1762.

² Extract is taken from *Works*, ed. Murphy, London, 1762.



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