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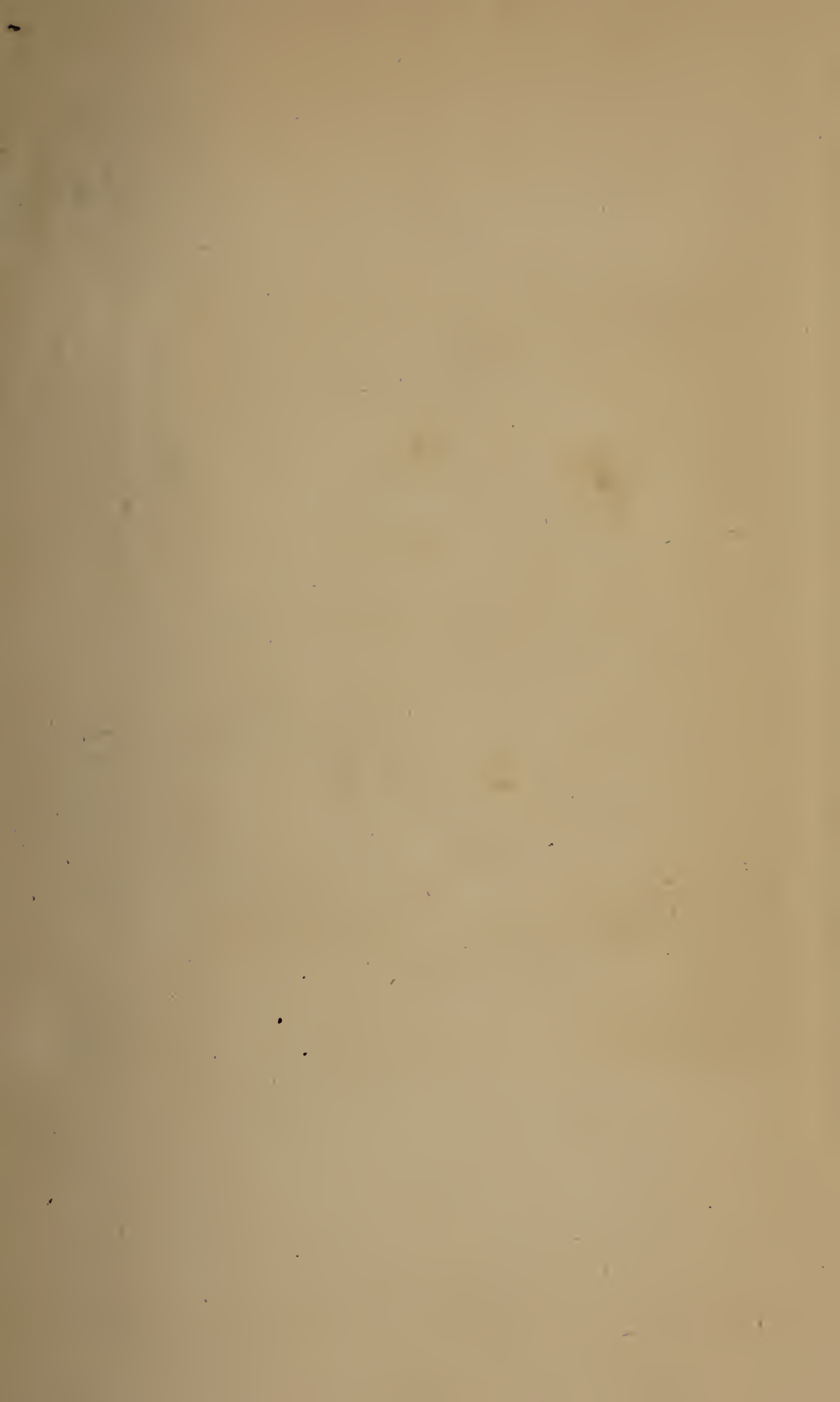
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WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION BY  
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VOL. I  
A TALE OF A TUB  
AND OTHER EARLY WORKS



LONDON  
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1900

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE need of a new edition of the collected works of Swift having been evident to students of English literature for many years past, it may be hoped that the undertaking of which this volume is the commencement will not in any quarter be regarded as superfluous. The well-known edition of Sir Walter Scott was issued for a second time in 1824, and since that date there has been no serious attempt to grapple with the difficulties which then prevented, and which still beset the attainment of a trustworthy and substantially complete text. They were certainly not successfully encountered in the edition by Roscoe in two royal 8vo. volumes, the chief merit of which consists in its comparative cheapness.

There have, however, not been wanting excellently edited texts of Swift's more important works, and many well-known students or lovers of Swift, either as editors, biographers, or collectors of his works, have been accumulating material which has now, perhaps for the first time, made it possible to overcome the difficulties whether as to genuineness or authenticity of text with which the editor of Swift is so frequently confronted. The work and researches of Mr. John Forster, Mr. Henry Craik, Mr. Stanley Lane Poole,

Mr. Churton Collins, Mr. Leslie Stephen, Mr. Elwin, Mr. Courthope, Colonel F. Grant, and others, have made accessible new material which is indispensable to other labourers in the same field, and to all of them the general editor of the present edition desires to express his indebtedness in one way or another. His main object is to supply a correct, authentic, and, as far as possible, complete text of Swift's works, and with this object early printed editions and original MSS. have been carefully collated. For the furtherance of this work he has especially to thank Colonel Grant, who generously placed at his service his invaluable collection of Swift pamphlets. He must also thank individually Mr. Stanley Lane Poole for spontaneously sending him some useful information.

Though any systematic explanatory or critical annotation has not been regarded as within the scope of this edition, a few footnotes have been included supplementary to those in the original editions. These are distinguished in this volume by the initials of the writer, thus [S.] indicates Sir Walter Scott, [H.] Hawkesworth, and [T. S.] the present editor.

Special attention has been given to the various portraits of Swift, most of which will be included in succeeding volumes of this edition. For much help and advice in this matter thanks are due to Sir Frederick Falkiner, Recorder of Dublin, to the Science and Art Department at South Kensington, to Mr. Cust, the Director of the National Portrait Gallery, and to Mr. Strickland, of the National Gallery of Ireland.

The portrait which forms the frontispiece to this volume was formerly in the possession of Mr. E. Meade, and was lent by him to the National Portrait

Exhibition held at South Kensington in 1867. The present ownership of the picture is unknown, and it is through the courtesy of the authorities at South Kensington in permitting the use of the negative made at the time of the exhibition, that the reproduction has been possible. The portrait itself is extremely interesting, in that it is the only one known, with any claim to authenticity, which represents Dean Swift as a young man.

The introductory biography contributed by Mr. Lecky appeared originally in his volume on "Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland," published in 1861, but it has been rewritten and a good deal amplified for its present purpose.



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## BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION.

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JONATHAN SWIFT was born in Dublin, on the 30th of March, 1667. His father, who had died a few months before, was a younger son of a Herefordshire rector, who had done much and suffered much for the Royalist cause during the Civil War ; who had married into the family from which the poet Dryden afterwards sprang, and who left thirteen or fourteen children, several of whom sought their fortunes in Ireland. Godwin, the eldest son, rose rapidly to considerable wealth and position, though unfortunate speculations, a large family, and failing faculties seriously crippled him towards the end of his life. Jonathan, the father of our author, was the seventh or eighth son. He worked for some years at the law courts in Dublin, and was elected Steward of the King's Inn, but only held this position for about fifteen months, dying at the early age of twenty-five. He had married a Leicestershire lady of good family, strong religious views, and bright and estimable character, but with no private means, and on the death of her husband she was left with an infant daughter, an unborn son, some debts, and little or nothing to live on, except an annuity of £20 a year.

The Swift family, however, was a very large one,

and Godwin Swift undertook the education of the posthumous child. Jonathan Swift was on affectionate terms with many members of his family, but of his Uncle Godwin he always spoke with bitterness. He considered him hard, penurious, and grudging in his favours, and he even accused him of having given him the "education of a dog." What measure of truth there may be in this description, it is impossible to say, but it is certain that Swift received the best education Ireland could afford. He was sent when only six years old to Kilkenny Grammar School, which was then probably the most famous in Ireland, and which had the rare fortune of educating, within a few years, Swift, Congreve, and Berkeley. At fourteen he entered Dublin University, and he remained there for nearly seven years. The stories that were afterwards circulated about his systematic defiance of college discipline and college studies were probably exaggerated, though it is evident that in the latter part of his university life he was guilty of some acts of not very serious insubordination, and that in his studies he followed rather the bent of his own tastes than the course of the university. He tells us that he studied history and poetry, and he attained a fair proficiency in Greek, Latin, and French; but his college course was entirely without brilliancy or promise; in his last term examination he failed in two out of the three subjects, and he only obtained his degree by "special favour." He afterwards spoke of himself as having been at this time "so discouraged and sunk in his spirits, that he too much neglected his academic studies, for some parts of which he had no great relish by nature."



Some anecdotes are preserved showing that at this early age he already suffered from the morbid melancholy, the bitter discontent with life, and what life had given him, which pursued him to the end. His Uncle Godwin died insane, and his own circumstances were utterly precarious. He received some assistance from another uncle who lived in Dublin, and on one occasion, when absolutely penniless, he was helped by an unexpected gift from a cousin at Lisbon. There are no proofs that his great literary talents were as yet born. The anecdote that he had shown a rough copy of the "Tale of a Tub" to a college friend when he was only nineteen, has been decisively disproved. He mentions, however, in an early letter, a characteristic saying of "a person of great honour in Ireland," "that my mind was like a conjured spirit that would do mischief if I did not give it employment."

The outbreak of the Revolution produced an immediate exodus of Protestants from Ireland, and Swift retired to Leicestershire, where his mother had for many years been living. His attachment to her was deep and tender, and lasted during his whole life. It was necessary for him to seek some immediate means of livelihood, and in this critical period of his life he had the great good fortune of finding a home which placed him in close connection with one of the first diplomatists and most experienced statesmen of his age. The father of Sir William Temple, when Master of the Rolls in Ireland, had been on terms of intimacy with the Swift family, and there was some relationship or connection between Swift's mother and the wife of Sir William Temple. Relying

on this claim, and acting on the advice of his mother, Swift applied to Temple, who at once received him into his house at Moor Park in Surrey, in the position of amanuensis or humble companion.

Sir William Temple was at this time sixty-one years of age, and completely withdrawn from active politics. He had a high and unblemished reputation, which was all the greater because he had long been outside the competitions of life. His experiences had been many and varied. He had represented the county of Carlow in the Irish parliament of 1660, had been brought into the diplomatic career by the favour of Arlington, and had won for himself an imperishable fame as the chief author of the triple alliance of England, Holland, and Sweden, which gave the first serious check to the ambition of Louis XIV., and forms the one bright page in the reign of Charles II. As ambassador at the Hague he enjoyed the confidence both of de Witt and of his great rival William of Orange, and the respect of all honest men, but when the Cabal made the treaty with France against Holland, Temple was dismissed, and retired without reward to his gardens and his books. The downfall of the Cabal and the great outburst of popular indignation against the French policy of Charles II. brought him again into prominence. He negotiated the peace with Holland, and refusing political office became again ambassador at the Hague, where he took a leading part in negotiating the marriage of William with Mary, and also the peace of Nimeguen. His reputation was now very great, and Charles II. several times offered him the post of Secretary of State, but Temple was well aware that his character, talents, and tastes were

far more suited for diplomacy than for the type of statesmanship that prevailed at the Restoration. He shrank alike from its passions, its corruption, its dangers, its humiliations, and its responsibilities, and though for a short time he was the confidential adviser of Charles, and consented to take part in one of his administrations, he gladly availed himself of the first opportunity to retire from public life, which he never again entered. At the Revolution his political ideas triumphed, and William, who had learned to appreciate him at the Hague, frequently consulted him, but he again refused the offer of a Secretaryship of State. His habits were now fully formed, and his ambition, which had never been keen, had wholly gone. His gardens and his books amply satisfied him. He wrote admirably pure, graceful, and melodious English, and dallied in a feeble way with literature, composing essays excellent in form, but for the most part very vapid in substance, on politics and gardens, on Chinese literature and the evil of extremes. In one of these essays he described "coolness of temper and blood and consequently of desires" as "the great principle of virtue," and his disposition almost realized his ideal. His bland, stately, patronizing manners, his refined and somewhat over-fastidious taste, his instinctive shrinking from turmoil, conflict, and controversy, denoted a man who was a little weak and a little vain, and more fitted to shine in a Court than in a Parliament. He had, however, real and solid talents, a rare experience both of men and affairs, a sound and moderate judgment in politics, a kindly and placid nature, and his life, if it had not been distinguished by splendid virtues, had, at least, been transparently pure in an age when political purity was very rare.



With such a character Swift had little natural affinity. For good or evil, intensity was always one of his leading characteristics. It was shown alike in his friendships and his enmities, in his ambitions and regrets. Few men were by nature less fitted for a dependent and semi-menial position, less regardful of the conventionalities of Society, less respectful to those "solemn plausibilities of life" which at Moor Park were greatly revered. He was, as he truly said, "a raw and inexperienced youth," probably shy, awkward, and ill at ease in his new position. "Don't you remember," he afterwards wrote, "how I used to be in pain when Sir W. Temple would look cold or out of humour for three or four days, and I used to suspect a hundred reasons? I have plucked up my spirits since then ; faith, he spoiled a fine gentleman !" He read to Temple, kept his accounts, discharged the duties of secretary, and was pronounced by his patron to be "very diligent and honest." By the interest of Temple he obtained an "ad eundem" degree at Oxford. Temple recommended him, though without success, to Sir Thomas Southwell, who was then Secretary of State in Ireland, and he allowed him to make long pedestrian visits to his mother at Leicester. In these expeditions Swift mixed much with the poorest classes of the people, lived in the humblest inns, giving an extra sixpence for a clean sheet, and acquired a knowledge of men which he afterwards said taught him more than his intercourse with statesmen, and also a taste for coarse or plebeian imagery which sometimes strengthens and often disfigures his writings. Probably no other English writer ever understood so well or reproduced so faithfully the

thoughts, feelings, and dialect of servants ; of the cook, the valet, the chambermaid, or the ostlers who hung about the smaller village inns. It was at this time also that he was first seized with those attacks of prolonged giddiness and deafness which pursued him through life. He attributed them to a fit of indigestion brought on by eating too many apples, but some modern authorities have seen in them the beginning of the brain disease which never wholly left him, and which threw a dark shadow over the closing years of his life.

We read little in connection with Swift of Temple's wife, the Dorothy Osborne whose charming letters are so well known. She died five years after Swift had entered into the house, and the establishment seems to have been managed by Temple's widowed sister, Lady Giffard, with whom at a later period Swift violently quarrelled. She had about her, sometimes in the house and sometimes in a neighbouring cottage, as companion or confidential servant, a Mrs. Johnson, widow of an old servant of Sir William Temple, and mother of two daughters. Esther Johnson, the elder of these daughters, was seven years old when Swift entered Moor Park. The young Irishman at once formed a deep attachment to this bright but delicate girl. He became her favourite playfellow. He taught her to write, guided her maturing mind, invented a charming child language for her use, and in after years under the name of Stella she became indissolubly twined with all that was tenderest in his life.

The position of Swift at Moor Park gradually improved, and Temple was quite perspicacious enough

to give him his full confidence and employ him on matters of grave moment. On one occasion Temple sent him to the king on an unsuccessful mission to persuade William to give his assent to the Triennial Bill. William seems to have seen Swift on more than one occasion. He is said to have taught him how to cut and eat asparagus in the Dutch manner, and to have offered to make him captain in a regiment of cavalry, and some time after he promised him a prebend in case he entered the Church. The literary talents of the young secretary were beginning slowly to develope in the form of poetry, but Pindaric odes and poems in praise of Temple were certainly not the forms in which nature intended him to succeed, and his cousin Dryden administered a salutary though much-resented rebuke when he told Swift that he would never be a poet. In some forms of poetry, indeed, Swift afterwards eminently excelled. No one obtained a more complete mastery over the octosyllabic metre, or could condense into a few lines greater force of meaning, fiercer satire, or more graphic delineations of character. It is impossible to deny the name of poet to the writer of "The Lines on his own Death," of "The Lines written in Sickness," of "The Legion Club," of "Cadenus and Vanessa." and of some of the poems written to Stella. But conventional eulogy and compliment were very alien to his genius, and an intense and almost terrible sincerity was one of the chief elements of his power.

Swift continued with some considerable intervals at Moor Park till the summer of 1694. He believed, however, that Temple had not sufficiently pushed his interests, and being now in his twenty-seventh year



he had grown impatient, and, greatly to Temple's indignation, he resolved to leave Moor Park, to go to Ireland, and to enter the Church. He refused a clerkship of £120 a year in the Irish Rolls which was offered to him by Temple, and he at one time thought of accepting the chaplaincy of an English factory at Lisbon with which his cousin was connected. The Church preferment which he had hoped from the king was not forthcoming, and on going to Ireland to be ordained he found to his great disappointment that a letter of recommendation from Temple was required by the bishop. He had parted from Temple in anger, and the letter which he wrote to Temple asking for this testimonial was in a strain of great humility. There was no real reason, however, why it should have been refused, nor does Temple appear to have made any difficulty or reproaches. Swift was ordained, and he obtained a small living of Kilroot, which was situated in a remote district, chiefly inhabited by Presbyterians, on the borders of Belfast Lough.

We know little authentic of his life there, except that it was broken by a brief and unsuccessful love affair with the sister of his old college friend Waring. The exile was not pleasing to him, and the Irish Presbyterians among whom he at this time chiefly lived afterwards became the objects of one of the most vehement of his many antipathies. Temple, on the other hand, appears greatly to have missed his old secretary and companion, and he wrote warmly asking him to return to Moor Park. Swift soon consented, and in 1696 he was again installed in the house of Temple. For a short time a clerical friend filled

his place at Kilroot, but he resigned the living in 1698.

His last stay at Moor Park continued till the death of Temple in January, 1699. The relations of Swift to his patron appear now to have been very cordial, and Swift found his old pupil Esther Johnson rapidly developing into womanhood. She was not quite fifteen when Swift returned to Moor Park. "I knew her," Swift afterwards wrote, "from six years old, and had some share in her education by directing what books she should read, and perpetually instructing her in the principles of honour and virtue from which she never swerved in any one action or moment of her life. She was sickly from her childhood until about the age of fifteen, but then grew into perfect health, and was looked upon as one of the most beautiful, graceful, and agreeable young women in London, only a little too fat. Her hair was blacker than a raven, and every feature of her face in perfection. . . . Never was any of her sex born with better gifts of the mind, or who more improved them by reading and conversation."

It is remarkable that a writer who was destined to become the greatest of English humourists, and one of the greatest masters of English prose, should have wholly failed to discover his true talents before his twenty-ninth year. There is some reason to believe that the first sketch of "The Tale of a Tub" was written at Kilroot, but it was on his return to Moor Park in 1697 that this great work assumed its complete form, though it was not published till 1704. To the same period also belongs that exquisite piece of humour, "The Battle of the Books," the one lasting



fruit of the silly controversy about the comparative merits of the ancient and modern writers which then greatly occupied writers both in France and England, and into which Temple, though totally destitute of classical scholarship, had foolishly flung himself. Of the merits of the controversy which such scholars as Bentley and Wotton waged with the Christ Church wits, the world has long since formed its opinion; but the fact that the burlesque was intended to ridicule the party who were incontestably in the right does not detract from its extraordinary literary merits. It appears to have been written to amuse or gratify Temple, and it was not published till 1704.

Temple left Esther Johnson a small landed property in Ireland, where she lived with Mrs. Dingley, a distant relative of Temple, who became her lifelong companion, and was herself the possessor of a small competence. Swift urged upon them that living was much cheaper, and the rate of interest higher in Ireland than in England, and it was by his advice that they went over to Ireland in 1708. To Swift, Temple left a small legacy, and the charge and profit of publishing a collected edition of his works, which he duly accomplished in five volumes. He dedicated them to the king, who, however, did nothing for him; but he became chaplain to the Earl of Berkeley, who had been appointed one of the Lords Justices in Ireland, and he lived with him for some time at Dublin Castle. As was not unusual with Swift, he considered that he was much neglected, and he expressed his indignation in no measured terms. The post of secretary, which he thought should have

gone with that of chaplain, was given to another, and he failed in his application for the rich deanery of Derry. He obtained, however, the small living of Laracor, near Trim, in the county of Meath, and two or three other pieces of almost sinecure Church patronage. The united income seems to have been about £230. The congregation at Laracor was not more than about fifteen, and when he endeavoured to introduce a weekly service he is said to have found himself alone with his clerk. After a certain time he followed the example which was then so common in the Irish Church of leaving the duties of Laracor to a curate, but it is remarkable that he enlarged the glebe from one acre to twenty acres, and endowed the church with tithes which he had himself bought, and it is still more remarkable that he made a provision in his will that the tithes should pass to the poor in the event of the disestablishment of the Church.

Swift was already moving familiarly in the best society connected with the government of Ireland. His dispute with Lord Berkeley led to no breach; he speaks with much respect and affection of Lady Berkeley, and with one of the daughters, Lady Betty Germaine, he formed one of those long, warm, and steady friendships which are among the most characteristic features of his life. He was chaplain to the Duke of Ormond, who became Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in 1703, and to the Earl of Pembroke, who succeeded him, and in many visits to London he soon became a familiar figure among the writers and politicians of the metropolis. The "Discourse on the Contests and Dissensions in Athens and Rome," which is his earliest political writing, was published

anonymously in 1701. It was written when the two Houses of Parliament were in conflict about the proposed impeachment by the Tory party of Somers and three other Whig ministers who had taken part in the Partition treaty, and it was intended to support the House of Lords in resisting that impeachment. At the same time, though it was a Whig pamphlet, probably composed under the influence of Lord Berkeley, those who read it carefully will easily perceive that it is in no essential respects inconsistent with the later writings of the author when he was the great supporter of the Tory party. The Church questions which chiefly determined his later policy were not here at issue. The evils of party spirit, the necessity of preserving a balance of power in the State, the opposite dangers to be feared from the despotism of an individual and from the despotism of a majority, the wisdom of making great changes in government so gradually that the old forms may continue unbroken, and the new elements may be slowly and insensibly incorporated into them—are all familiar topics in his later writings. In an age when reporting and newspaper criticism were still unborn, the political pamphlet exercised an enormous influence, and the pamphlet of Swift, though much less remarkable than several which he afterwards wrote, excited considerable attention, and was attributed to Bishop Burnet. The true authorship was soon known, and it strengthened his social position in London. He became intimate with Somers and several of the Whig leaders, and it is from this time that may be dated that friendship with Addison which, in spite of great differences of political opinion and still greater differences of charac-



ter, was never wholly eclipsed. The copy of his Italian travels which Addison presented to Swift may still be seen bearing the well-known autograph inscription, "To Dr. Jonathan Swift—the most agreeable companion, the truest friend, and the greatest genius of his age." Swift afterwards speaks of the many evenings he had spent alone with Addison, never wishing for a third. He described Addison as one who had "virtue enough to give reputation to an age," and he consented at the advice of Addison to cut out some eighty lines of his "Baucis and Philemon," and to alter many others.

"Whoever has a true value for Church and State," Swift wrote at a later period, "should avoid the extremes of Whig for the sake of the former and the extremes of Tory on account of the latter." In these words we have the true key to his politics. He was at no period of his life a Jacobite. He fully and cordially accepted the Revolution, and either never held the Tory doctrine of the divine right of kings, or at least accepted the king *de facto* as the rightful sovereign. As long as the question was mainly a question of dynasty he was frankly Whig, and it was natural that a young man who was formed in the school of Temple should have taken this side. On the other hand, Swift was beyond all things a Churchman, and was accustomed to subordinate every other consideration to the furtherance of Church interests. In each period of his life this intense ecclesiastical sentiment appears. Coarse and irreverent as are many passages in the "Tale of a Tub," which was published in 1704, the main purport of the book was to defend the Church of England, by pouring a torrent of ridicule and

hatred on all its opponents, whether they be Papists, or Nonconformists, or Freethinkers. In his "Project for the Reformation of Manners," in his "Sentiments of a Church of England Man," in his "Argument against the Abolition of Christianity," in his "Letter to a Member of Parliament concerning the Sacramental Test," all of which were written when he was still ostensibly a Whig, the same decided Church feeling is more reverently expressed. It appeared not less clearly in his later Irish tracts, when it was his clear political interest to endeavour to unite all religions in Ireland in support of his Irish policy. The abolition of the Test Act, which excluded Nonconformists from office, was opposed by Swift at every period of his life. In the reign of Queen Anne, and especially in its later years, party politics grouped themselves mainly on ecclesiastical lines. It was on the cry of Church in danger that the Tory party rode into power in 1710, and the close alliance between the Whigs and the Nonconformists, and between the Tories and the Church, was the main fact governing the party divisions of the time. There could be no doubt to which side Swift would inevitably gravitate.

He was still, however, a nominal Whig when he went over to London in 1707, chiefly at the request of Archbishop King, to endeavour to obtain for the Irish clergy a remission of the firstfruits and tenths which had been already conceded to the English clergy, and he was very indignant at hearing that the Whig ministers were desirous of coupling this favour to the Irish clergy with the abolition of the Test against Nonconformists in Ireland. There was at this time some question of his obtaining high office in the Irish

Church, for Somers had recommended him for the bishopric of Waterford. To Swift's great disappointment it was given to another, and this was but the first of several succeeding disappointments. The queen appears to have been inflexibly opposed to his promotion, and her feeling is said to have been largely due to a perusal of the "Tale of a Tub." Sharpe, the Archbishop of York, is reported to have brought this great work to her notice, and to have represented the author as a manifest Freethinker. Like most of Swift's works, the "Tale of a Tub" was published anonymously, but the authorship was soon known. Those who have read and have understood the pages describing the sect of the Æolists, and the manner in which Brother Peter maintained with many oaths and curses that his "brown loaf" was "by God true, good natural mutton as any in Leadenhall Market," will not greatly wonder at the scruples of the queen.

Swift had, however, other moods, and some of his ecclesiastical tracts are models of temperate, clear-sighted, and decorous piety. His "Sentiments of a Church of England Man," which was written in 1708, describes with perfect truth and frankness the position of that large body of the clergy who accepted without scruple the settlement of the Revolution as saving the nation from the danger of Popery, but who were gradually alienated from the Whig party by its latitudinarian or Nonconformist tendencies. His "Proposal for the Advancement of Religion," which appeared in the following year, is one of the best descriptions of the moral evils of the time, and a passage in it is said to have been the origin of the measure which was afterwards taken for building fifty new churches in London. In



another strain he wrote his famous argument against abolishing Christianity, in which he brought all the resources of the keenest wit to bear against the Free-thinkers, and about the same period he published his tract on the proposed abolition of the sacramental test in Ireland, displaying his intense antipathy to the Scotch Presbyterianism in Ulster, which he considered the one great danger of the Irish establishment. The Papists he looked on as completely broken and powerless, "inconsiderable as the women and children." Swift complains bitterly that the Whig ministers were endeavouring to ingratiate themselves with their English Nonconformist supporters by sacrificing the interests of the Episcopalians in Ireland, and it is at this time that his open alienation from the Whig party occurred. As Mr. Leslie Stephen justly says, Swift "separated from the Whig party when at the height of their power, and separated because he thought them opposed to the Church principles which he advocated from first to last."

The power of the Whig party, however, though supported by the popularity of the great French war and the victories of Marlborough, proved very transient, and the explosion of Church feeling that followed the impeachment of Sacheverell at the end of 1709 was one of the chief causes of their downfall. Swift welcomed the change with delight, and one of its first results was the concession by Harley of that boon to the Irish clergy which Swift had been so long vainly seeking to extort from the Whigs. His old Whig friends made great efforts to retain him on their side, but his part was soon taken, and with the principles he had avowed no real blame can attach to him for having

thrown in his lot with Harley, with whom he soon formed the closest friendship, both personal and political. In the eyes of historians Harley has commonly appeared only as a slow, dull, procrastinating man of good private morals and some talent both for business and for intrigue, but utterly without any real superiority of intellect or character, and he presents a strange contrast to St. John, his colleague in the ministry, one of the most brilliant, versatile, and seductive figures that have ever flashed across the stage of English politics. Yet it is remarkable how much more weight Harley carried in the country than St. John, and in spite of Swift's warm friendship with the latter, Harley always seems to have inspired him with the deepest affection and the fullest confidence.

With the Church policy of the Tory party under Queen Anne, indeed, Swift was in the fullest agreement. It showed itself in the concession of the first-fruits to the Irish clergy, in the Act of Toleration of 1712 relieving the Scotch Episcopalians, and in the project for erecting new churches in London, and not less clearly in the hostility to the Nonconformists which manifested itself in the temporary withdrawal of the Regium Donum from the Irish Presbyterians, and in the Occasional Conformity and the Schism Acts, which were justly regarded as among the most oppressive religious measures of the time. Swift, indeed, was no champion of religious liberty, and there can be little doubt that the sentiments which he put into the mouth of the King of Brobdingnag were his own: "He knew no reason why those who entertained opinions prejudicial to the public should be obliged to change, and should not be obliged to



conceal them. And as it was tyranny in any government to require the first, so it was weakness not to enforce the second; for a man may be allowed to keep poisons in his closet, but not to send them about for cordials."

With the other great object of the party—the termination of the war—Swift was equally in accord. The belief that the war had been unnecessarily prolonged for party purposes; that overtures which might have honourably terminated it had been more than once rejected; that England of all the allied powers had now the least interest in its issues, while she bore by far the largest share of its burdens, was growing steadily in the country, and was certainly by no means without foundation. It had always been a Tory doctrine that the Revolution of 1688 had unduly mixed England in Continental quarrels, and that from the days of William there had been a desire to use English resources for Continental objects. The present war was originally a Whig war, mainly supported by the Whig party, and conducted by a great Whig general, and the Emperor and the Dutch who gained most by it were violently hostile to the Tories, and had exerted their influence with the queen to dissuade her from giving her countenance to that party. It was also a favourite Tory doctrine, with which Swift most cordially sympathized, that the large loans necessitated by the war had given the moneyed classes, who were the chief supporters of the Whigs, a power which was lowering the position of the landed gentry, and even threatening the ruin of English liberty. "We have carried on wars," he wrote, "that we might fill the pockets of stockjobbers.

. . . . We are governed by upstarts who are unsettling the landmarks of our social system, and are displacing the influence of our landed gentry by that class of men who find their profit in our woes. . . . A change has now come which will awake the nation to a sense of its mistakes, will recover the rightful influence of the landed gentry, and will rid us of the pestilential swarm of stockjobbers who are confederate with the Whigs." For all these reasons the termination of the war was regarded by the Tory party as a supreme party, as well as a supreme national interest.

Swift, more than any other single man, contributed to impress this conviction on the mind of the nation. It is, however, creditable to his sagacity, that although he detested Marlborough, and although he devoted one of the most ingenious papers in the "Examiner" to a contrast between the rewards given to the English general and those which had been bestowed on conquerors in ancient Rome, he clearly warned his party of the dangers of the scurrilous attacks on Marlborough which were common in the Tory papers; he more than once, as he tells us, was the means of suppressing such attacks, and he did not approve of the dismissal of Marlborough from his command. In general Swift seldom scrupled to employ the most violent personal scurrility against his opponents. Nothing in political literature is more unmeasured in its invective than his attacks upon Wharton, and he did not even spare Somers, who had been both his friend and his patron, but of Marlborough he never failed to write in terms of moderation.

A few lines may be devoted to the other political opinions of Swift, as they mark the principles of the

Tories in the early days of the Revolution settlement. "Law," he said, "in a free country is, or ought to be, the determination of the majority of those who have property in land." In that remarkable "Essay on Public Absurdities," which was published after his death, he deplored that persons without landed property could by means of the boroughs obtain an entrance into Parliament, and that the suffrage had been granted to any one who was not a member of the Established Church, and he condemned absolutely the system of standing armies which had recently grown up. On the other hand, on some questions of Parliamentary reform, he held very advanced views. Like most of his party he strenuously advocated annual Parliaments, believing them to be the only true foundation of liberty, and the only means of putting an end to corrupt traffic between ministers and members of Parliament. He blamed the custom of throwing the expense of an election upon a candidate; the custom of making forty-shilling freeholders in order to give votes to landlords, and the immunity of members and of their servants from civil suits. "It is likewise," he says, "absurd that boroughs decayed are not absolutely extinguished, because the returned members do in reality represent nobody at all; and that several large towns are not represented, though full of industrious townsmen."

The four years of the Harley administration form the most brilliant and probably the happiest period of his life. His genius had now reached its full maturity, and he found the sphere which beyond all others was most fitted for its exercise. In many of the qualities of effective political writing he has never been



surpassed. Without the grace and delicacy of Addison, without the rich imaginative eloquence or the profound philosophic insight of Burke, he was a far greater master of that terse, homely, and nervous logic which appeals most powerfully to the English mind, and no writer has ever excelled him in the vivid force of his illustrations, in trenchant, original, and inventive wit, or in concentrated malignity of invective or satire. With all the intellectual and most of the moral qualities of the most terrible partisan he combined many of the gifts of a consummate statesman—a marvellous power of captivating those with whom he came in contact, great skill in reading characters and managing men, a rapid, decisive judgment in emergencies, an eminently practical mind, seizing with a happy tact the common-sense view of every question he treated, and almost absolutely free from the usual defects of mere literary politicians. But for his profession he might have risen to the highest posts of English statesmanship, and in spite of his profession, and without any of the advantages of rank or office, he was for some time one of the most influential men in England. He stemmed the tide of political literature, which had been flowing strongly against his party, and the admirable force of his popular reasoning, as well as the fierce virulence of his attacks, placed him at once in the first position in the fray. The Tory party, assailed by almost overwhelming combinations from without, and distracted by the most serious divisions within, found in him its most powerful defender. Its leaders were divided by interest, by temperament, and, in some degree, even by policy; but Swift gained a great ascendancy over their minds and a great influence in

their councils, and his persuasions long averted the impending collision. Its extreme members had formed themselves into a separate body, and were clamouring for the expulsion of all Whigs from office ; but Swift's "Letter of Advice to the 'October Club'" effected the dissolution of that body, and the threatened schism was prevented. The nation, dazzled by the genius of Marlborough, was for a time fiercely opposed to a party whose policy was peace, but Swift's "Examiners" gradually modified this opposition, and his "Conduct of the Allies" for a time completely quelled it. The success of this most masterly pamphlet has few parallels in history : 11,000 copies were sold in about two months. It for a time almost reversed the current of public opinion, and was one of the chief influences that enabled the ministers to conclude the Peace of Utrecht.

The social position of Swift at this time was equally brilliant. Notwithstanding his coarseness and capricious violence, and an occasional eccentricity of manner which indicated not obscurely the seeds of insanity, the brilliancy of his conversation made him the delight of every society, and his sayings became the proverbs of every coffee-house. He had friends of all parties, of all creeds, and of all characters. In the course of a few years he was intimate with Addison and Steele, with Halifax, Congreve, Prior, Pope, Arbuthnot, and Peterborough, with Harley and St. John, and most of the other leaders of the day. In spite of the gloomy misanthropy of his temperament, and the savage recklessness with which he too often employed his powers of sarcasm, he was capable of splendid generosity and of the truest and most constant

friendship. Few men have obtained a deeper or more lasting affection, and we may well place the testimony of the illustrious men who knew him best in opposition to the literary judgments of posterity. "Dear friend," wrote Arbuthnot in after years, "the last sentence of your letter plunged a dagger in my heart. Never repeat those sad but tender words, that you will try to forget me. For my part, I can never forget you, at least till I discover, which is impossible, another friend whose conversation could procure me the pleasure I have found in yours." Addison, as we have already seen, spoke of him in language of unqualified affection. Pope, after a friendship of twenty-three years, wrote of him to Lord Orrery, "My sincere love of that valuable, indeed incomparable man, will accompany him through life, and pursue his memory were I to live a hundred lives, as many of his works will live which are absolutely original, unequalled, unexampled. His humanity, his charity, his condescension, his candour, are equal to his wit, and require as good and true a taste to be equally valued."

Undoubtedly, in the first instance, many of these friendships arose from gratitude. Literature had not yet arrived at the period when it could dispense with patrons, and one of the legitimate goals to which every literary man aspired was a place under the State. This naturally drew the chief writers around Swift, and the manner in which he at this time employed his influence is one of the most pleasing features of his career. There is scarcely a man of genius of the age who was not indebted to him. Even his political opponents, even men who had written violently against his party, obtained places by his influence. Berkeley



was drawn by him from the retirement of college recommended more than once to the leading Tories, and placed upon the highway of promotion. Congreve was secured at his request in the place which the Whigs had given him. Parnell, Steele, Gay, and Rowe were among those who received places or other favours by his solicitation. He said himself, with a justifiable pride, that he had provided for more than fifty people, not one of whom was a relation. His influence in society as well as with the government was ceaselessly employed in favour of literature. He founded the "Scriblerus Club," in which many of the chief writers of the day joined; he exerted himself earnestly in bringing Pope forward, and obtaining subscriptions for his translation of Homer. He pressed upon the attention of the government a plan, though not a very wise one, for watching over the purity of the language, and he on every occasion insisted on marked deference being paid to literary men. He himself took an exceedingly high, and indeed arrogant, tone with Harley and St. John; and when the former sent him a sum of money as a compensation for his services, he was so offended that their friendship was wellnigh broken for ever. That this tone was not the mere vulgar insolence of an upstart, is sufficiently proved by the deep attachment manifested towards him by both Harley and St. John long after their political connection had terminated.

During all this time Swift kept up a continual correspondence with Stella, in the shape of a journal, recording with the utmost minuteness the events of every day. We have the clearest possible evidence that this journal was not intended for any other

eyes than those of Stella and Mrs. Dingley. It is filled with terms of the most childish endearment, with execrable puns, with passages written with his eyes shut, with extempore verses and extempore proverbs, with the records of every passing caprice, of every hope, fear, and petty annoyance. In this strange and touching journal we can trace clearly the eminence to which he rose, and also the shadows that overcast his mind. One of the principal of these was the gradual decline of his friendship with Addison. Addison's habitual coldness had, at first, completely yielded to the charms of Swift's conversation, and, notwithstanding the great dissimilarity of their characters, they lived on the most intimate terms. But Swift was a strong Tory, and Addison was a strong Whig; and Addison was almost identified with Steele, who was still more violent in his politics, and who, though he had received favours from Swift, had made a violent and wholly unjust personal attack upon his benefactor,<sup>1</sup> which elicited an equally violent reply; and these things tended to the dissolution of the friendship. There was never an open breach, but their intercourse lost its old cordiality. "I went to Mr. Addison's," wrote Swift in his journal, "and dined with him at his lodgings. I had not seen him these three weeks; we are grown common acquaintance, yet what have I not done for his friend Steele! Mr. Harley reproached me the last time I saw him, that, to please me, he would be reconciled to Steele, and had promised and appointed to see him, and that Steele never came. Harrison, whom Mr. Addison

<sup>1</sup> In a pamphlet called "The Crisis."



recommended to me, I have introduced to the Secretary of State, who has promised me to take care of him ; and I have represented Addison himself so to the Ministry, that they think and talk in his favour, though they hated him before. Well, he is now in my debt—there is an end ; and I never had the least obligation to him—and there is another end.”

Another source of annoyance to Swift was the difficulty with which he obtained Church preferment. He knew that his political position was exceedingly transient ; he had no resources except his living. He appears to have taken no pains to make profit from his writings. “I never got a farthing,” he wrote in 1735, “by anything I wrote, except once about eight years ago, and that was by Mr. Pope’s prudent management for me.” By his influence at least one bishopric and many other places had been given away, and yet he was unable to obtain for himself any preferment that would place him above the vicissitudes of politics. The antipathy of the queen was unabated ; the Duchess of Somerset, whose influence at Court was very great, and whom Swift had bitterly and coarsely satirized, employed herself with untiring hatred in opposing his promotion, and all the remonstrances of the ministers and all the entreaties of Lady Masham were unable to overcome the determination of the queen.

The charge of scepticism was one which Swift bitterly resented, and there is no class whom he more savagely assailed than the Deists of his time. At the same time no one can be surprised that such a charge should be brought against a writer who wrote as Swift had done in the “Tale of a Tub” about the

Roman Catholic doctrine concerning the Sacrament and the Calvinistic doctrine concerning inspiration. And although the "Tale of a Tub" is an extreme example, the same spirit pervades many of his other performances, especially those wonderful lines about the Judgment of the World by Jupiter, which Chesterfield sent to Voltaire.<sup>1</sup> His wit was perfectly unbridled. His unrivalled power of ludicrous combination seldom failed to get the better of his prudence, and he found it impossible to resist a jest. It must be added that no writer of the time indulged more habitually in coarse, revolting, and indecent imagery; that he delighted in a strain of ribald abuse peculiarly unbecoming in a clergyman; that he was the intimate friend of Bolingbroke and Pope, whose freethinking opinions were notorious, and that he frequently expressed a strong dislike for his profession. In one of his poems he describes himself as—

"A clergyman of special note  
For shunning those of his own coat,  
Which made his brethren of the gown  
Take care betimes to run him down."

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- <sup>1</sup> "With a whirl of thought oppress'd,  
I sunk from reverie to rest.  
A horrid vision seized my head,  
I saw the graves give up their dead!  
Jove, arm'd with terrors, burst the skies,  
And thunder roars and lightning flies!  
Amazed, confused, its fate unknown,  
The world stands trembling at his throne!  
While each pale sinner hung his head,  
Jove, nodding, shook the heavens, and said:  
'Offending race of human kind,  
By nature, reason, learning, blind;

In another poem he says :

“A genius in a reverend gown  
Will always keep its owner down ;  
'Tis an unnatural conjunction,  
And spoils the credit of the function.  
. . . . .

“And as, of old, mathematicians  
Were by the vulgar thought magicians,  
So academic dull ale-drinkers  
Pronounce all men of wit freethinkers.”

At the same time, while it must be admitted that Swift was far from being a model clergyman, it is, I conceive, a misapprehension to regard him as a secret disbeliever in Christianity. He was admirably described by St. John as “a hypocrite reversed.” He disguised as far as possible both his religion and his affections, and took a morbid pleasure in parading the harsher features of his nature. If we bear this in mind, the facts of his life seem entirely incompatible with the hypothesis of habitual concealed unbelief. I do not allude merely to the vehemence with which he at all times defended the interests of the Church, nor yet to the scrupulousness with which he discharged his functions as a clergyman,

You who, through frailty, stepp'd aside ;  
And you, who never fell—from pride :  
You who in different sects were shamm'd,  
And come to see each other damn'd ;  
(So some folk told you, but they knew  
No more of Jove's designs than you ;)—  
—The world's mad business now is o'er,  
And I resent these pranks no more.  
—I to such blockheads set my wit !  
I damn such fools !—Go, go, you're bit.”



to his increasing his duties by reading prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays at Laracor, and daily at St. Patrick's, to his administering the Sacrament every week, and paying great attention to his choir, and to all other matters connected with his deanery. In these respects he appears to have been wholly beyond reproach, and Hawkesworth has described the solemnity of his manner in the pulpit and the reading-desk, and in the grace which he pronounced at meals. But much more significant than these things are the many instances of concealed religion that were discovered by his friends. Delany had been weeks in his house before he found out that he had family prayers every morning with his servants. In London he rose early to attend public worship at an hour when he might escape the notice of his friends. Though he was never a rich man, he systematically allotted a third of his income to the poor, and he continued his unostentatious charity when extreme misanthropy and growing avarice must have rendered it peculiarly trying. He was observed in his later years, when his mind had given way, and when it was found necessary to watch him, pursuing his private devotions with undeviating regularity, and some of his letters, written under circumstances of agonizing sorrow, contain religious expressions of the most touching character. Many things which he wrote could not have been written by a reverent or deeply pious man, but his "Proposal for the Advancement of Religion," his admirable letter to a young clergyman on the qualities that are requisite in his profession, the singularly beautiful prayers which he wrote for the use of Stella when she was dying, are all worthy of a high place in religious literature. His



sermons, as he said himself, were too like pamphlets, but they are full of good sense and sound piety admirably and decorously expressed. Of the most political of them—that “On Doing Good”—Burke has said that it “contains perhaps the best motives to patriotism that were ever delivered within so small a compass.”

It must be added that the coarseness for which Swift has been so often and so justly censured is not the coarseness of vice. He accumulates images of a kind that most men would have regarded as loathsome, but there is nothing sensual in his writings; he never awakens an impure curiosity, or invests guilt with a meretricious charm. Vice certainly never appears attractive in his pages, and it may besafely affirmed that no one has ever been allured to vicious courses by reading them. He is often very repulsive and very indecent, but his faults in this respect are rather those of taste than of morals.

It was not till the year 1713 that Swift's friends succeeded in obtaining for him the deanery of St. Patrick's. The appointment was regarded both by him and by them as being far below what he might have expected, for its pecuniary value was not great, and it implied separation from all his friends and residence in a country which was then considered a most unenviable abode for a man of genius. He immediately went over to Ireland in June, intending to remain there for some time, but was in a few days recalled by his political friends. He did not at first yield to the request, but it was again and again repeated, and in September he arrived in London. An open breach had broken out between the ministers, and the government seemed on the verge of dissolution.

It would be difficult, indeed, to conceive two men less capable of co-operating with cordiality than Harley and St. John, or, to give them the titles they had by this time acquired, than Oxford and Bolingbroke.

It is not necessary here to examine in detail the many causes of the division. Bolingbroke occupied a position subordinate to Oxford in the ministry; he had been only created a viscount when Oxford was created an earl. His ambition had been perpetually trammelled by Oxford's procrastination, and his consciousness of superior genius irritated by Oxford's haughtiness, and his dislike to his colleague at length deepened into hatred. It is no slight proof of Swift's force of character that he could influence two such men, or of the charm of his society that he could retain the affection of both. Personally, he seems to have been especially attached to Oxford; while politically he now agreed with Bolingbroke that a more energetic line of policy was the only means by which the Tory party could be saved.

In truth, the position of the government became every week more desperate. The storm of popular indignation, which had been lulled for a time by "The Conduct of the Allies," broke out afresh with tenfold vigour on the conclusion of the Peace of Utrecht. The long duration of the war, the numerous powers engaged in it, and the many complications that had arisen in its progress, rendered the task of the ministers so peculiarly difficult, that it would have been easy to have attacked any peace framed under such circumstances, however consummate the wisdom with which its provisions had been framed. The Peace of Utrecht left England incontestably the first power of Europe,

arrested an expenditure which had been adding rapidly to the national debt, and began one of the most prosperous periods of English history. But, on the other hand, it was undoubtedly negotiated more through party than through national motives; it terminated a long series of splendid victories, and, while it saved France from almost complete destruction, it failed to obtain the object for which the war had been begun. The crown of Spain remained upon the head of Philip, and the Catalans, who had risen to arms relying upon English support, were left without any protection for their local liberties. Any peace which terminated a war of such continual and brilliant success would have been unpopular, and, although the Peace of Utrecht was certainly advantageous to the country, some of the objections to it were real and serious, while its free trade clauses raised a fierce storm of ignorant or selfish anger among the mercantile classes. Besides this, the Church enthusiasm which, after the persecution of Sacheverell, had borne the Tories to power, had begun to subside. The question of dynasty was still uncertain. The queen's health was visibly and rapidly breaking. The Elector of Hanover was openly hostile to the Tory party. The leading Tory ministers were justly suspected of intriguing with the Pretender. They were both, though on different grounds and with different classes, unpopular, and they were profoundly disunited at the very time when their union was most necessary.

Swift on his arrival from Ireland succeeded with some difficulty in bringing Oxford and Bolingbroke together, and he published two political pamphlets bitterly attacking Steele and Burnet and the Whig



party. Party feeling on both sides now ran furiously. Steele was expelled from the House of Commons, ostensibly on the ground of his pamphlet called "The Crisis," while the House of Lords, in which the Whig party predominated, retaliated by offering a reward for the discovery of the author of Swift's "Public Spirit of the Whigs," on the ground of some reflections it had made on the Scotch. No real reconciliation had been established between Oxford and Bolingbroke, and no real steps were taken to arrest a catastrophe which was manifestly impending. "I never," wrote Swift, "led a life so thoroughly uneasy as I do at present. Our situation is so bad that our enemies could not without abundance of invention and ability have placed us so ill if we had left it entirely to their management. . . . The queen is pretty well at present, but the least disorder she has puts us all in alarm, and when it is over we act as if she were immortal. Neither is it possible to persuade people to make any preparation against the evil day."

Swift did not know all that took place, for he appears to have had no knowledge of the overtures of the ministers to the Pretender. He was disgusted and hopeless at the state of affairs, and in May, 1714, he retired to the home of a friend in a quiet Berkshire parsonage. He wrote, however, at this time a remarkable pamphlet, in which he expressed with great force and sincerity his view of the situation. Though his personal sympathies were usually on the side of Oxford, he strongly blamed the indecision and procrastination of that statesman, and strenuously maintained that only the most drastic measures could save the party from ruin. The immense majority, he maintained, of



the English nation had two wishes. The first was "that the Church of England should be preserved entire in all her rights, powers, and privileges; all doctrines relating to government discouraged which she condemned; all schisms, sects, and heresies discountenanced." The second was the maintenance of the Protestant succession in the House of Brunswick, "not from any partiality to that illustrious House, further than as it had the honour to mingle with the blood royal of England and is the nearest branch of our royal line reformed from Popery." Real Jacobitism he maintained was very rare in England except among the nonjurors, and the great bulk of the clergy and other adherents of the doctrine of passive obedience were perfectly ready to support the line which they found established by law without entering into any inquiries about the legitimacy of the Revolution, provided that this line supported the Church to which they were attached.<sup>1</sup> But the evil of the situation was that the German heir to the throne had failed to give any such assurance to the nation; that he had, on the contrary, given all his confidence to the implacable enemies of the Church to which the overwhelming majority of the

<sup>1</sup> Swift explained his own view of this question very clearly in 1721 in a letter to his friend, Mr. Knightly Chetwode, who had some Jacobite sympathies. "I do not see any law of God or man forbidding us to give security to the powers that be, and private men are not to trouble themselves about titles to crowns, whatever may be their particular opinions. The abjuration is understood as the law stands, and as the law stands none has title to the crown but the present possessor. . . . The word lawful means according to present law in force, and let the law change ever so often, I am to act according to law, provided it neither offends faith or morality."

nation were attached—to Whigs, Low Churchmen, and Dissenters. The only apparent remedy, Swift maintained, was to exclude all such persons absolutely from all civil and military offices; to place the whole government of the country in all its departments in the hands of the Tory party, so that it would be impossible to displace them. The Whigs must be absolutely excluded, because they had already proved very dangerous to the Constitution in Church and State; because they were highly irritated at the loss of power, but “principally because they have prevailed by misrepresentations and other artifices to make the Successor look upon them as the only persons he can trust, upon which account they cannot be too soon or too much disabled; neither will England ever be safe from the attempts of this wicked confederacy until their strength and interests shall be so far reduced that for the future it shall not be in the power of the crown, although in conjunction with any rich and factious body of men, to choose an ill majority in the House of Commons.” The queen, he added, should at once peremptorily call upon the Elector to declare his approbation of the policy of her ministers and to disavow all connection with the Whigs.<sup>1</sup>

At the request of Bolingbroke the publication of this bold pamphlet was delayed, and before it appeared a great change had taken place in the ministry. Bolingbroke, by the assistance of Lady Masham, had effected the disgrace of Oxford, and had obtained the chief place. Swift received a letter from Lady Masham (who had always been his warm friend), couched in

<sup>1</sup> “Free Thoughts upon the Present State of Affairs.”

the most affectionate terms, imploring him to continue to uphold the ministry by his counsel and by his pen, and enclosing an order upon the Treasury for £1,000 for the necessary expenses of induction into his deanery, which Oxford had promised, but, with his usual procrastination, had delayed. He received at the same time a letter from Oxford, requesting his presence in the country, where, as the fallen statesman wrote with a touching pathos, he was going "alone." Swift did not hesitate for a moment between the claims of friendship and the allurements of ambition; he determined to accompany Oxford.

Events were now succeeding each other with startling rapidity. Bolingbroke had been only four days prime minister when the Tory party learned with consternation the death of the queen and the consequent downfall of their ascendancy. A Whig ministry was constituted. Parliament was dissolved; the influence of the crown was exerted to the utmost in favour of the Whig party, and a great Whig majority was returned, which continued unbroken during two reigns. One of the first measures of the new government was to institute a series of prosecutions for treason against its predecessors. Bolingbroke fled from England, and was condemned while absent. Ormond was impeached. Oxford was thrown into the Tower, where he remained for nearly two years, but was at last tried and acquitted. Swift retired to Ireland. A few vague rumours prevailed of his having been concerned in Jacobite intrigues, but they never took any consistency, or seem to have deserved any attention. "Dean Swift," wrote Arbuthnot, "keeps up his noble spirit, and, though like a man knocked down,



you may behold him still with a stern countenance, and aiming a blow at his adversaries." The path of ambition, however, was now for ever closed to him ; the misfortunes of his friends, and especially the imprisonment of Oxford, profoundly affected him, and he even wrote to the fallen statesman, asking permission to accompany him to prison. No man was ever a truer friend than Swift, and there are few men in literary biography in whose lives friendship bore a larger part. He was at this time, more than once, openly insulted by some Whigs in Dublin, and he had at first serious difficulties with the minor clergy of his deanery.

But a far more serious blow was in store for him—a blow that not only destroyed his peace for a season, but left an indelible stigma on his character. It appears to have been in 1708 or 1709 that Swift, during his residence in London, first made the acquaintance of a well-to-do widow named Vanhomrigh, who was living with two sons and two daughters in Bury Street. In 1710 the acquaintance ripened into an intimacy. Swift dined very frequently at her house, played cards there in the evenings, lodged for a short time in the immediate vicinity, and formed a special friendship with the eldest daughter, Hester, the unfortunate Vanessa. Hester Vanhomrigh was at this time less than twenty, and Swift was more than double her age. Though not conspicuously beautiful, she was a bright, intelligent girl, keenly interested both in literature and politics. She wrote letters to Swift as early as 1710, and at her request he directed her reading, much as he had formerly done that of Stella. He asserts, and there is not the least reason to doubt his sincerity, that the possibility



of his pupil falling in love with him had never for a moment flashed across his mind. Swift was very fond of the society of ladies, and he made many strong and lasting female friendships, but, as he has himself said, and as appears most abundantly, both from his writings and from his life, he was constitutionally unsusceptible to passion. He always considered himself prematurely old, and never suspected that he was capable of inspiring feelings which he had himself never felt and never really understood.

“Cadenus, common forms apart,  
In every scene had kept his heart.

. . . . .

He now could praise, esteem, approve,  
But understood not what was love;  
His conduct might have made him styled  
A father, and the nymph his child.  
That innocent delight he took  
To see the Virgin mind her book,  
Was but a Master's secret joy  
In school to hear the finest boy.”

His long platonic intercourse with Stella had probably contributed to blind him, and he had forgotten how seldom such intercourse retains its first character, and how closely admiration is allied to passion. It was seldom, indeed, that his commanding features, his eye, which Pope described as “azure as the heavens,” and the charm of his manner and his wit failed to exercise a powerful influence on those around him. The spell which had attached to him so many men of genius and so many women of rank, refinement, and intelligence, by a tie that neither his coarseness nor his violent and arbitrary temper could break

acted with a fearful power on his passionate and enthusiastic pupil. It was in 1713, just before his departure for Ireland in the last anxious days of the Tory ministry, that Swift first remarked a great change in the demeanour of his pupil. He was struck by her indifference to the studies she had once so keenly followed, and he completely misunderstood the cause. He supposed that she was weary of study and anxious to enter a gayer world, and he gladly assented to her desire, when, to his astonishment, he received from her a frank confession of her love.

“Vanessa not in years a score,  
Dreams of a gown of forty-four.”

Up to this time the conduct of Swift can hardly be taxed with any graver fault than imprudence, but it now became profoundly culpable. It is evident that he had been much captivated by Vanessa, and although, as he tells her, he received her confession with “shame, disappointment, grief, surprise,” he shrank with a fatal indecision from the plain and honourable course of decisively severing the connection. He was a little flattered as well as greatly surprised at the passion he had evoked, but he imagined that it was a mere transient caprice which would soon pass. One of the most curious results of the revelation was that he wrote a long poem describing with evident truthfulness the whole story. It was never intended to see the light, and was sent to Vanessa for herself alone, perhaps with the object of showing her how little her passion was reciprocated. Some lines in it have given rise to unpleasant conjecture, which can never be decisively solved, but it must be remembered that these lines

were written for Vanessa alone, and it must also be remembered that they were ultimately given to the world by her desire.

Changes in the Vanhomrigh family complicated the situation. One brother had died, the other was alienated from his sisters, and the mother died in 1714. There were some temporary money difficulties arising from debts left by Mrs. Vanhomrigh, and Vanessa consulted Swift, who gave advice and offered to stand security for a loan. More embarrassing still was the fact that Vanessa had inherited a small property in Ireland, and she resolved to go there when Swift returned to his deanery. Swift evidently disliked the idea. "If you are in Ireland," he wrote in 1714, "when I am there I shall see you very seldom. It is not a place for any freedom." "I say all this out of the perfect esteem and friendship I have for you."

Vanessa, however, persisted in her intention. Her letters reveal her violent passion, and they also show that while Swift abstained from putting an end to the intimacy he was trying to discourage it. "You once had a maxim," she wrote to him in this year, "which was to act what was right and not mind what the world would say. I wish you would keep to it now. Pray what can be wrong in seeing and advising an unhappy woman? I cannot imagine. You cannot but know that your frowns make my life insupportable. You have taught me to distinguish, and then you leave me miserable." "I am sure I could have bore the rack much better than those killing, killing words of yours. Sometimes I have resolved to die without seeing you more, but these resolves, to your misfortune, did not last long. . . . See me and speak kindly to me, for I



am sure you would not condemn anyone to suffer what I have done could you but know it. . . . When I begin to complain then you are angry, and there is something in your looks so awful, that it strikes me dumb."

During all this time the intimate friendship—for it was at this time evidently nothing more—between Swift and Stella continued. There is no real evidence that she resented her position—to which she had been habituated from childhood—and while Swift lived in Dublin she lived with Mrs. Dingley in a separate house, except occasionally during illnesses of Swift. They appear rarely or never to have seen each other alone; every precaution was taken to avoid scandal, nor does any scandal appear to have been in fact aroused, but Stella presided at the table of Swift when he received company. She was the recognized centre of his circle, and their relations were acknowledged to be of the most perfect confidence and affection. His annual poems to her on her birthday began in 1719, but they always strike the chord of friendship and never that of love.

"Thou, Stella, wast no longer young  
When first for thee my harp I strung.  
Without one word of Cupid's darts,  
Of killing eyes and bleeding hearts,  
With friendship and esteem possessed,  
I ne'er admitted Love a guest."

It is curious, indeed, to observe how constantly he decries her personal beauty, and directs all his compliments to her other qualities.

"But, Stella, say what evil tongue  
Reports that you're no longer young ;



That Time sits with his scythe to mow  
Where erst sat Cupid with his bow ;  
That half your locks are turned to grey.  
I'll ne'er believe a word they say !  
'Tis true—but let it not be known—  
My eyes are somewhat dimmish grown ;  
For Nature, always in the right,  
To your defects adapts my sight ;  
And wrinkles undistinguished pass,  
For I'm ashamed to use a glass ;  
And till I see them with these eyes,  
Whoever says you have them, lies.  
No length of time can make you quit  
Honour, virtue, sense and wit ;  
Thus you may still be young to me,  
While I can better hear than see.  
Oh, ne'er may Fortune show her spite  
To make me deaf and mend my sight !”

Stella's temperament, indeed, was singularly serene, patient, and unimpassioned, admirably suited both for social life and for sustained friendship, but as far as we can judge too cold for real love ; she appears to have always lived more from the head than from the heart, and to have acquiesced very placidly during her whole life in a kind of connection which few women could have tolerated. There is some reason, however—though it is not very clear or certain—to believe that the Vanessa episode had come to her knowledge and had troubled her serenity ; and there is considerable, though not absolutely decisive, evidence that she was secretly married to Swift in 1716. If so, the marriage was concealed, and their mode of life continued as before, but Stella obtained a guarantee that at least no other woman should take her place.

The mystery of the story can never be fully unravelled. Swift's extreme dislike of marriage appears continually in his writings. It is probable, as Scott conjectured, that a physical cause contributed to it, and the continually recurring fits of dizziness, with indications of brain disease, of which he was painfully sensible, may have also strengthened it. The passion of Vanessa, however, continued unabated, and some of her letters, written in 1720, show that it had risen almost to the point of madness, and that she believed that Swift was more and more turning away from her. "It is now ten long weeks since I saw you, and in all that time I have never received but one letter from you and a little note of excuse. Oh! have you forgot me? . . . I cannot comfort you, but here declare that it is not in the power of art, time, or accident to lessen the inexpressible passion which I have for—— . . . Nor is the love I bear you only seated in my soul; for there is not a single atom of my frame that is not blended with it. Therefore do not flatter yourself that separation will ever change my sentiments. . . . For Heaven's sake tell me what has caused this prodigious change in you, which I have found of late." "I was born with violent passions which terminate all in one, that inexpressible passion I have for you. Consider the killing emotions which I feel from your neglect of me, and show some tenderness for me, or I shall lose my senses. . . . I firmly believe if I could know your thoughts (which no human creature is capable of guessing at, because never any one living thought like you), I should find you had often in a rage wished me religious, hoping that I should have paid my devotions to Heaven;

but that would not spare you, for were I an enthusiast still you would be the deity I should worship. . . . Your dear image is always before my eyes. Sometimes you strike me with that prodigious awe I tremble with fear—at others a divine compassion shines through your countenance.”

Such a strain could have but one meaning. The fragmentary correspondence which was published by Hawkesworth, and more fully by Scott, only throws a casual light on this melancholy story. It is easy to see that Swift was perplexed, anxious, and irresolute. He pays Vanessa compliments on her letters and her conversation; assures her of his unabated esteem and love; of his “respect and kindness;” promises to visit her, but says that it must be seldom, lest uncivil tongues should speak about them. He implores her not to yield to unhappy imaginations, to ride, to see company, to read cheerful books; above all, to be on her guard against “the spleen” getting the better of her, “than which there is no more foolish and troublesome disease,” and he would gladly see her return to England. “Settle your affairs,” he writes in 1721, “and quit this scoundrel island, and things will be as you desire.” He tells her that she has no real reason for her melancholy, “if all the advantages of life can be any defence against it.” He tries by a somewhat cynical, but not unkindly banter to bring her down to more prosaic levels. “Remember that riches are nine parts in ten of all that is good in life, and health is the tenth; drinking coffee comes long after, and yet it is the eleventh; but without the two former you cannot drink it right.” “The worst thing in you and me is that we are too hard to please; and



whether we have not made ourselves so is the question. . . . One thing that I differ from you in is that I do not quarrel with my best friends. . . . We differ prodigiously in one point. I fly from the spleen to the world's end; you run out of your way to meet it. . . . I wish you would get yourself a horse, and have always two servants to attend you, and visit your neighbours—the worse the better: there is a pleasure in being revered, and that is always in your power by your superiority of sense and an easy fortune. . . . I long to see you in figure and equipage. Pray do not lose that taste.” “The best maxim I know in this life is to drink your coffee when you can, and when you cannot to be easy without it. While you continue to be splenetick count upon it I will always preach. . . . Without health and good humour I had rather be a dog.” “What a foolish thing is time, and how foolish is man, who would be as angry if time stopped as if it passed. . . . But I am thinking myself fast into the spleen, which is the only thing I would not compliment you by imitating.”

But such language was of no avail, and the sequel, as it is told by Sheridan, is well known. Vanessa in the spring of 1723 wrote to Stella asking whether she was indeed the wife of Swift, and Stella placed the letter in the hands of the dean. In a paroxysm of rage he rode to Celbridge, where Vanessa was then living, entered her room, and darting at her a look of concentrated anger, flung down the letter at her feet, and departed without uttering a word. She saw at once that her fate was sealed. She languished away, and in a few weeks died. Before her death she revoked the will she had made in favour of Swift, and



ordered the publication of "Cadenus and Vanessa," the poem in which he had immortalized her love. Swift fled to the country, and remained for two months buried in absolute seclusion.

There can be little doubt that this tragedy added greatly to the constitutional gloom which was fast settling on Swift. Ireland was never a congenial country to him. Though he lived there so much both in youth and in old age, he always described his life there as an exile. He never called himself an Irishman; he declared that he had been born, or, as he elsewhere expressed it, "dropped" in Ireland by "a perfect accident," and thus, as he said, "I am a Teague or an Irishman, or what people please." In Ireland, however, as elsewhere, he made some warm and intimate friends. The chief appears to have been Dr. Delany, an accomplished and amiable Fellow of Trinity College, the husband of a very charming English lady, whose correspondence furnishes some of the best pictures of Irish life in the first half of the eighteenth century, and also some passing glimpses of Swift both in the days when he was an honoured and popular centre of Dublin society, and also in the last sad years of old age and decrepitude. Delany himself has left an account of Swift's Irish life which is undoubtedly authentic, and which brings into clear relief sides of the character of Swift which those who judged him only by his writings would scarcely have suspected. Another very close friend was Thomas Sheridan, who was for some years probably the most successful schoolmaster in Ireland. He was the father of the biographer of Swift—the grandfather of Richard Brinsley Sheridan—the head

of a family which has continued for more than a century prolific in genius beyond almost any in English history. He was in some respects a perfect type of certain sides of the Irish character; recklessly improvident, with boundless good-nature and the most boisterous spirits; full of wit and fire, and with a rare talent for versification. He ruined his prospects of promotion by preaching from pure forgetfulness from the text, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," on the anniversary of the accession of the House of Hanover; and through most of his life he greatly mismanaged his interests and talents. He carried on a continual warfare with Swift in the shape of puns, charades, satirical poems, and practical jokes; and there is something very winning in the boyish and careless delight with which Swift threw himself into these contests. We owe to them many of his best comic poems, and many of the most amusing anecdotes of his life. Swift was sincerely attached to him. A room at the deanery was specially reserved for him; he spent many of his holidays there, and on more than one occasion Swift used all his influence to help him in his career.

It was not to be expected, however, that Swift could withdraw his attention from political affairs, and he soon entered upon that political career which has given him his place in the history of Ireland.

It would be difficult, indeed, to conceive a more deplorable and humiliating condition than that of Ireland in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. The Battle of the Boyne and the events that followed it had completely prostrated the Irish Roman Catholics. Nearly all the men of energy and talent among them

had emigrated to foreign lands, while penal laws of atrocious severity crushed the Catholics who remained. The Protestants, on the other hand, were regarded as an English colony ; any feeling of independence that appeared among them was sedulously repressed, and their interests were habitually sacrificed to those of England. The Irish Parliament was little more than a court for registering English decrees, for it had no power of passing, or even discussing, any Bill which had not been previously approved and certified under the Great Seal of England. Irishmen were systematically excluded from the most lucrative places. The viceroys were usually absent for three-fourths of their terms of office. About a third of the rents of the country was expended in England, and an abject poverty prevailed.

This poverty was largely due to a commercial legislation which was deliberately intended to crush the chief sources of Irish wealth. Until the reign of Charles II. the Irish shared the commercial privileges of the English ; but as the island had not been really conquered till the reign of Elizabeth, and as its people were till then scarcely removed from barbarism, the progress was necessarily slow. In the early Stuart reigns, however, comparative repose and good government were followed by a sudden rush of prosperity. The land was chiefly pasture, for which it was admirably adapted ; the export of live cattle to England was carried on upon a large scale, and it became a chief source of Irish wealth. The English landowners, however, took the alarm. They complained that Irish rivalry in the cattle market was reducing English rents ; and accordingly, by an Act which was first



passed in 1663, and was made perpetual in 1666, the importation of cattle to England was forbidden.

The effect of a measure of this kind, levelled at the principal article of the commerce of the nation, was necessarily most disastrous. The profound modification which it introduced into the course of Irish industry is sufficiently shown by the estimate of Sir W. Petty, who declares that before this statute three-fourths of the trade of Ireland was with England, but not one-fourth of it since that time. In the very year when this Bill was passed another measure was taken not less fatal to the interests of the country. In the first Navigation Act, Ireland was placed on the same terms as England; but in the Act as amended in 1663 she was omitted, and was thus deprived of the whole colonial trade. With the exception of a very few specified articles, no European merchandise could be imported into the British colonies except directly from England, in ships built in England, and manned chiefly by English sailors. No articles, with a few exceptions, could be brought from the colonies to Europe without being first unladen in England. In 1670 this exclusion of Ireland was confirmed, and in 1696 it was rendered more stringent, for it was enacted that no goods of any sort could be imported directly from the colonies to Ireland. It will be remembered that at this time the chief British colonies were those of America, and that Ireland, by her geographical position, was naturally of all countries most fitted for the American trade.

As far, then, as the colonial trade was concerned, Ireland at this time gained nothing whatever by her connection with England. To other countries, how-



ever, her ports were still open, and in time of peace her foreign commerce was unrestricted. When forbidden to export their cattle to England, the Irish turned their land chiefly into sheep-walks, and proceeded energetically to manufacture the wool. Some faint traces of this manufacture may be detected from an early period, and Lord Strafford, when governing Ireland, had mentioned it with a characteristic comment. Speaking of the Irish he says, "There was little or no manufactures amongst them, but some small beginnings towards a clothing trade, which I had, and so should still discourage all I could, unless otherwise directed by his Majesty and their Lordships. . . . It might be feared they would beat us out of the trade itself by underselling us, which they were well able to do." With the exception, however, of an abortive effort by this governor, the Irish wool manufacture was in no degree impeded, and was indeed mentioned with special favour in some Acts of Parliament ; and it was in a great degree on the faith of this long-continued legislative sanction that it so greatly expanded. The poverty of Ireland, the low state of the civilization of a large proportion of its inhabitants, the effects of the civil wars which had so recently convulsed it, and the exclusion of its products from the English colonies, were doubtless great obstacles to manufacturing enterprise ; but, on the other hand, Irish wool was very good, living was cheaper and taxes were lighter than in England, a spirit of real industrial energy began to pervade the country, and a considerable number of English manufacturers came over to colonize it. There appeared for a time every probability that the Irish would become an industrial nation, and had

manufactures arisen, their whole social, political, and economical condition would have been changed. But commercial jealousy again interposed. By an Act of crushing and unprecedented severity, which was carried in 1699, the export of the Irish woollen manufactures, not only to England, but also to all other countries, was absolutely forbidden.

The effects of this measure were terrible almost beyond conception. The main industry of the country was at a blow completely and irretrievably annihilated. A vast population was thrown into a condition of utter destitution. Thousands of manufacturers left the country, and carried their skill and enterprise to Germany, France, and Spain. The western and southern districts of Ireland are said to have been nearly depopulated. Emigration to America began on a large scale, and the blow was so severe that long after, a kind of chronic famine prevailed. In 1707 the Irish government was unable to pay its military establishments, and the national resources were so small that a debt of less than £100,000 caused the gravest anxiety. Fortunately for the country, it was found impossible to guard the ports, and a vast smuggling export of wool to France was carried on, in which all classes participated, and which somewhat alleviated the distress, but contributed powerfully, with other influences, to educate the people in a contempt for law. Industrial enterprise and confidence were utterly destroyed. By a simple act of authority the English Parliament had suppressed the chief form of Irish commerce, solely and avowedly because it had so succeeded as to appear a formidable competitor ; and there was no reason why a similar step should not be

taken whenever any other Irish manufacture began to flourish. It is true that some small encouragement was given to the linen manufacture, but that manufacture was then very insignificant, and the encouragement was utterly precarious. "I am sorry to find," wrote an author in 1729, "so universal a despondency amongst us in respect to trade. Men of all degrees give up the thought of improving our commerce, and conclude that the restrictions under which we are laid are so insurmountable that any attempt on that head would be vain and fruitless."<sup>1</sup> Molyneux was impelled, chiefly by these restrictions, to raise the banner of Irish legislative independence. "Ireland," wrote Swift, "is the only kingdom I ever heard or read of, either in ancient or modern story, which was denied the liberty of exporting their native commodities and manufactures wherever they pleased, except to countries at war with their own prince or state. Yet this privilege, by the superiority of mere power, is refused us in the most momentous parts of commerce ; besides an Act of Navigation, to which we never assented, pressed down upon us, and rigorously executed." "The conveniency of ports and harbours which nature bestowed so liberally on this kingdom is of no more use than a beautiful prospect to a man shut up in a dungeon."

The spirit in which Irish affairs were administered can hardly be better illustrated than by the letters of Archbishop Boulter, who occupied the see of Armagh from 1724 to 1738, and exercised during all that time a dominating influence. Boulter was an honest but

<sup>1</sup> An essay on the trade of Ireland by the author of "Seasonable Remarks." (1729.)



narrow man, charitable to the poor, and liberal to the extent of warmly advocating the endowment of the Presbyterian clergy ; but he was a strenuous supporter of the penal code, and the main object of his policy was to prevent the rise of an Irish party. His letters are chiefly on questions of money and patronage, and it is curious to observe how entirely all religious motives appear to have been absent from his mind in his innumerable recommendations for Church dignities. Personal claims, and above all the fitness of the candidate to carry out the English policy, were in these cases the only elements considered. His uniform policy was to divide the Irish Catholics and the Irish Protestants, to crush the former by disabling laws, to destroy the independence of the latter by conferring the most lucrative and influential posts upon Englishmen, and thus to make all Irish interests strictly subservient to those of England. The continual burden of his letters is the necessity of sending over Englishmen to fill all important Irish posts. "The only way to keep things quiet here," he writes, "and make them easy to the ministry, is by filling the great places with natives of England." He complains bitterly that only nine of the twenty-two Irish bishops were Englishmen, and urges the ministers "gradually to get as many English on the bench here as can decently be sent hither." On the death of the Chancellor, writing to the Duke of Newcastle, he speaks of "the uneasiness we are under at the report that a native of this place is like to be made Lord Chancellor." "I must request of your grace," he adds, "that you would use your influence to have none but Englishmen put into the great places here for the future." When

a vacancy in the see of Dublin was likely to occur, he writes: "I am entirely of opinion that the new archbishop ought to be an Englishman either already on the bench here, or in England. As for a native of this country, I can hardly doubt that, whatever his behaviour has been and his promises may be, when he is once in that station he will put himself at the head of the Irish interest in the Church at least, and he will naturally carry with him the college and most of the clergy here."

It is not surprising that a policy of this kind should have been resented by the Irish Protestants, and many traces of their dissatisfaction may be found in the letters of Primate Boulter. The Protestants, however, were too few, too divided, and too dependent upon English support to be really formidable, and measures of the grossest tyranny were carried without resistance, and almost without protest.

There had been, however, one remarkable exception. In 1698, when the measure for destroying the Irish wool trade was under deliberation, Molyneux—one of the members of Trinity College, an eminent man of science, and the "ingenious friend" mentioned by Locke in his essay—had published his famous "Case of Ireland," in which he asserted the full and sole competence of the Irish Parliament to legislate for Ireland. He maintained that the Parliament of Ireland had naturally and anciently all the prerogatives in Ireland which the English Parliament possessed in England, and that the subservience to which it had been reduced was merely due to acts of usurpation. His arguments were chiefly historical, and were those which were afterwards maintained by Flood and

Grattan, and which eventually triumphed in 1782. The position and ability of the writer, and the extreme malevolence with which, in commercial matters, English authority was at this time employed, attracted to the work a large measure of attention, and it was written in the most moderate, decorous, and respectful language. The government, however, took the alarm ; the book was speedily brought before the English House of Commons and formally condemned.

Such was the condition of Irish politics and Irish opinion when Swift came over to his deanery. It is not difficult to understand how intolerable it must have been to a man of his character and antecedents. Accustomed during several years to exercise a commanding influence upon the policy of the empire, endowed beyond all living men with that kind of literary talent which is most fitted to arouse and direct a great popular movement, and at the same time embittered by disappointment and defeat, it would have been strange if he had remained a passive spectator of the scandalous and yet petty tyranny about him. He had every personal and party motive to stimulate him ; he was capable of a very real patriotism, and a burning hatred of injustice and oppression was the form which his virtue most naturally assumed.

To this hatred, however, there was one melancholy exception. He was always an ecclesiastic and a High Churchman, imbued with the intolerance of his order. For the Catholics, as such, he did simply nothing. Neither in England when he was guiding the ministry, nor in Ireland when he was leading the nation, did he make any effort to prevent the infraction of the Treaty



of Limerick. One of his arguments in defence of the Test Act, which excluded the Dissenters from office, was, that if it were repealed, even the Catholics, by parity of reasoning, might claim to be enfranchised. The very existence of the Catholic worship in Ireland he hoped would some day be destroyed by law. His language on this subject is explicit and emphatic. "The Popish priests are all registered, and without permission (which I hope will not be granted) they can have no successors, so that the Protestant clergy will find it perhaps no difficult matter to bring great numbers over to the Church."

He first turned his attention to the state of Irish manufactures. He published anonymously, in 1720, an admirable pamphlet on the subject, in which he urged the people to meet the restrictions which had been imposed on their trade by abstaining from importation, using exclusively Irish products, and burning everything that came from England—"except the coal." He described the recent English policy in an ingenious passage under the guise of the fable of "Pallas and Arachne." "The goddess had heard of one Arachne, a young virgin very famous for spinning and weaving. They both met upon a trial of skill; and Pallas, finding herself almost equalled in her own art, stung with rage and envy, knocked her rival down, turned her into a spider, enjoining her to spin and weave for ever out of her own bowels, and in a very narrow compass." He concluded with an earnest appeal to the landlords to lighten the rents, which were crushing so many of their tenants, and with a powerful but probably not exaggerated picture of the "poverty and desolation that prevailed." "Whoever,"

he said, "travels in this country and observes the face of nature or the faces and habits and dwellings of the natives, will hardly think himself in a land where either law, religion, or common humanity is professed." The pamphlet attracted great attention, but was immediately prosecuted, and Chief Justice Whiteshed displayed gross partisanship in endeavouring to intimidate the jury into giving a verdict against it, but the printer ultimately remained unpunished, and a shower of lampoons assailed the judge.

The next productions of Swift were his famous "Drapier's Letters." Ireland had been for some time suffering from the want of a sufficiently large copper coinage. Walpole determined to remedy this want, but the manner in which this was done was very justly described as a scandalous job. The frequent issue of base coinage in Ireland had been an old grievance, and the English government had been again and again petitioned to establish a mint in Ireland, and to provide that in Ireland as in other civilized countries the coinage should be undertaken by government officials. These petitions, however, had been rejected, and on the present occasion neither the Lord Lieutenant, nor the Irish Privy Council, nor the Irish Parliament were consulted about the step that was taken. The patent for issuing the new coinage was granted to the Duchess of Kendal, the mistress of the king, who sold it for £10,000 to an English iron merchant, named Wood.

In order to raise the profits it was determined that no less than £108,000 should be coined. According to the best authorities in Ireland, £10,000 or £15,000 would amply meet the wants of the country. In England the copper coinage seldom exceeded a

hundredth part of the whole currency, and, serving only for the convenience of change, its intrinsic value was of no importance. In Ireland, the whole current coin was estimated at not more than £400,000, and it was proposed to coin in copper more than a fourth part of that sum. It was contended in Ireland that a proportion which was so utterly extravagant made the question of intrinsic value of supreme importance ; that copper would enter largely into all considerable payments ; that the precious metals would be displaced, and would go for the most part to England in the shape of rent ; that coiners would find it for their advantage to coin a great additional amount of debased copper, and that Ireland being mainly reduced to such a coinage would be placed at a ruinous disadvantage in commerce with other countries.

The clamour against Wood's halfpence was not originated by Swift. Before he took up his pen the new coinage had been vehemently denounced in the House of Commons, and both of the Irish Houses of Parliament as well as the Irish Privy Council had presented addresses against the project. Their complaints, however, were disregarded, and, in spite of the remonstrances of all the organs of public opinion in Ireland, the government determined to persevere.

There is no real reason to believe that the new coins were inferior to the very bad copper coinage which already existed in Ireland, though they appear to have been by no means uniform, and though no less than four varieties were struck. That their intrinsic value was greatly below their nominal value was true, but if they had only been coined in a moderate amount, and had only served the purpose of tokens or small change,



this would have signified little or nothing. Taking, however, all the circumstances of the case, there can be no doubt that a real and gross job had been perpetrated, and that the dignity and independence of the country had been grossly outraged. It would, however, have been hopeless to raise an opposition simply on constitutional grounds. The Catholics were utterly crushed. A large proportion of the Protestants were far too ignorant to care for any mere constitutional question. Public opinion was faint, dispirited, and divided, and the habit of servitude had passed into all classes. The English party, occupying the most important posts, disposing of nearly all the great emoluments, and controlling the courts of justice, were anxious to suppress every symptom of opposition. The fate of the treatise of Molyneux, and of Swift's own tract on Irish manufactures, was a sufficient warning, and it was plain that the contemplated measure could only be resisted by a strong national enthusiasm.

A report that the coins were below their nominal value had spread through the country, and was adopted by Parliament and embodied in the resolutions of both Houses. Of this report Swift availed himself. Writing in the character of a tradesman, and adopting with consummate skill a style of popular argument consonant to his assumed character, he commenced a series of letters in which he asserted with the utmost assurance that all who took the new coin would lose nearly elevenpence in a shilling, or, as he afterwards maintained with a great parade of accuracy, that thirty-six of them would purchase a quart of twopenny ale. He appealed alternately to every section of the community, pointing out how their special interests would be

affected by its introduction, concluding with the beggars, who were assured that the coin selected for adulteration had been halfpence, in order that they too might be ruined. Tampering with the coinage, he justly said, "is the tenderest point of government, affecting every individual in the highest degree. When the value of money is arbitrary or unsettled, no man can well be said to have any property at all; nor is any wound so suddenly felt, so hardly cured, or that leaveth such deep and lasting scars behind it." A great panic was soon created. The ministry endeavoured to allay it by reducing the amount to be coined to £40,000, by a formal examination of some of the later halfpence at the Mint, and by a report attesting their good quality issued by Sir I. Newton; but the time for such measures had passed. Swift combated the report in an exceedingly ingenious letter, and the distrust of the people was far too deep to be assuaged.

By this means the needful agitation was produced, and it remained only to turn it into the national channel. This was done by the famous Fourth Letter. Swift began by deploring the general weakness and subserviency of the people. "Having," he said, "already written three letters upon so disagreeable a subject as Mr. Wood and his halfpence, I conceived my task was at an end. But I find that cordials must be frequently applied to weak constitutions, political as well as natural. A people long used to hardships lose by degrees the very notions of liberty; they look upon themselves as creatures of mercy, and that all impositions laid on them by a strong hand are, in the phrase of the report, legal and

obligatory." He defined clearly and boldly the limits of the prerogative of the Crown, maintaining that while the sovereign had an undoubted right to issue coin, he could not compel the people to receive it; and he proceeded to assert the independence of Ireland, and the essential nullity of those measures which had not received the sanction of the Irish legislature. He avowed his entire adherence to the doctrine of Molyneux; he declared his allegiance to the king, not as King of England, but as King of Ireland, and he asserted that Ireland was rightfully a free nation, which implied that it had the power of self-legislation; for "government without the consent of the governed is the very definition of slavery."

This letter was sustained by other pamphlets and by ballads which were sung through the streets, and it brought the agitation to the highest pitch. All parties combined in resistance to the obnoxious patent and in a determination to support the constitutional doctrine. The Chancellor Middleton denounced the coin; the Lords Justices refused to issue an order for its circulation; both Houses of Parliament were opposed to it; the grand jury of Dublin and the country gentry at most of the quarter sessions condemned it. "I find," wrote Primate Boulter, "by my own and others' inquiry, that the people of every religion, country, and party here are alike set against Wood's halfpence, and that their agreement in this has had a very unhappy influence on the state of this nation, by bringing on intimacies between Papists and Jacobites and the Whigs." Government was exceedingly alarmed. Walpole had already recalled the Duke of Grafton, whom he described as "a fair-weather pilot,



that did not know how to act when the first storm arose;" but Lord Carteret, who succeeded him as Lord Lieutenant, was equally unable to quell the agitation. A reward of £300 was offered in vain for the discovery of the author of the Fourth Letter. The authorship was notorious, and scarcely concealed by Swift, but no legal evidence was forthcoming. A prosecution was instituted against the printer; but the grand jury refused to find the bill, and persisted in their refusal, notwithstanding the violent and indecorous conduct of Chief Justice Whiteshed. The popular feeling grew daily stronger, and at last Walpole thought it prudent to yield, and withdrew the patent. Wood was awarded no less than £3,000 a year for eight years, as compensation for its loss.

Such were the circumstances of this memorable contest—a contest which has been deservedly placed in the foremost ranks in the annals of Ireland. There is no more momentous epoch in the history of a nation than that in which the voice of the people has first spoken, and spoken with success. It marks the transition from an age of semi-barbarism to an age of civilization—from the government of force to the government of opinion.

Swift was admirably calculated to be the leader of public opinion in Ireland, from his complete freedom from the characteristic defects of the Irish temperament. His writings exhibit no tendency to rhetoric or bombast, no fallacious images or far-fetched analogies, no tumid phrases in which the expression hangs loosely and inaccurately around the meaning. His style is always clear, keen, nervous, and exact. He delights in the most homely Saxon, in the simplest

and most unadorned sentences. His arguments are so plain that the weakest mind can grasp them, yet so logical that it is seldom possible to evade their force. Even his fictions exhibit everywhere his antipathy to vagueness and mystery. As Emerson observes, "He describes his characters as if for the police-court." It has been often remarked that his very wit is a species of argument. He starts from one ludicrous conception, such as the existence of minute men, or the suitability of children for food, and he proceeds to examine that conception in every aspect, to follow it out to all its consequences, and to derive from it, systematically and consistently, a train of the most grotesque incidents. He seeks to reduce everything to its most practical form, and to its simplest expression, and sometimes affects not even to understand inflated language. It is curious to observe an Irishman, when addressing the Irish people, laying hold of a careless expression attributed to Walpole—that he would pour the coin down the throats of the nation—and arguing gravely that the difficulties of such a course would be insuperable. This shrewd, practical, unimpassioned tone was especially needed in Ireland. To employ Swift's own image, it was a medicine well suited to correct the weakness of the national character.

After the "Drapier's Letters," Swift published several minor pieces on Irish affairs, but most of them are very inconsiderable. The principal are his "Maxims controlled in Ireland," in which he showed how many of the ordinary maxims of English policy are inapplicable to Ireland, and his "Short View of the State of Ireland," published in 1727, in which he

enumerated fourteen causes of a nation's prosperity, and showed in how many of these Ireland was deficient. He brought forward the condition of the country indirectly, in that ghastly piece of sustained irony, his proposal for employing Irish children for food, and also in an admirable allegory, "The Story of an Injured Lady." His influence with the people after the "Drapier's Letters" was unbounded. Walpole once spoke of having him arrested, and was asked whether he had ten thousand men to spare, for they would be needed for the enterprise. When Serjeant Bettesworth, an eminent lawyer whom Swift had fiercely satirized, threatened him with personal violence, the people voluntarily formed a guard for his protection. When Primate Boulter accused him of exciting the people, he retorted, with scarcely an exaggeration, "If I were only to lift my finger, you would be torn to pieces." We have a curious proof of the extent of his reputation in a letter written by Voltaire, then a very young man, requesting him to procure subscriptions in Ireland for the "Henriade"—a request with which Swift complied, though he had always refused to publish his own works by subscription.

In more than one private letter Swift denies that in his Irish writings he was animated by any special love for Ireland. "What I did for this country," he said, "was from profound hatred of tyranny and oppression. . . . I believe the people of Lapland or the Hottentots cannot be so miserable a people as we." Nor did he ever seek like a common demagogue to flatter those for whom he wrote by attributing all their calamities to others than themselves. In his analysis



of the causes of Irish depression he dwelt with unsparing force upon those which grew out of vices that were purely Irish. He speaks of the excessive rents ; the depopulation of vast districts by the great graziers ; the scandalous absenteeism and neglect of duty of the upper classes, their passion for London silks and calicoes and for every English fashion in preference to native manufacture ; the reckless extravagance that was leading to the ruin of so many country seats and the destruction of so much noble timber in order to meet the expenses of spendthrift owners in London or at Bath. He deplores the absence of any serious effort to raise and civilize a population who in many parts of Ireland were sunk in a squalor, ignorance, poverty, and extreme idleness hardly equalled in Europe, and he gives striking examples of the utter ignorance or utter improvidence displayed in Irish agriculture. Great tracts of land were ruined because it was the practice of Irish farmers to cut turf without any providence or regularity ; to flay off the green surface even of shallow soils in order to cover with it their cabins and make up ditches ; to wear out the ground by excessive ploughing, without taking any proper care to manure it or giving any part of the land time to recover itself ; to plough up the meadows and let farms go to utter ruin when the end of a lease was approaching. No pains were taken to enclose lands ; there was so much ignorance or so much carelessness in the management of woods that not one hedge in a hundred came to maturity ; trees were habitually suffered to ruin each other for want of the most elementary trimming, or were cut down long before they had come to their proper size. In no other country in

Europe, he said, had so much excellent timber been of late cut down in so short a time, and with so little advantage to the country either in shipping or building.

But although Swift never flattered, no one can mistake the accent of genuine compassion and genuine indignation in his writings, and his countrymen fully recognized the services he had rendered them. Few things in the Irish history of the last century are more touching than the constancy with which the people clung to their old leader, even at a time when his faculties had wholly decayed ; and, notwithstanding his creed, his profession, and his intolerance, the name of Swift was for many generations the most universally popular in Ireland. He first taught the Irish people to rely upon themselves. He led them to victory at a time when long oppression and the expatriation of all the energy of the country had deprived them of every hope. He gave a voice to their mute sufferings, and traced the lines of their future progress. The cause of free trade and the cause of legislative independence never again passed out of the minds of Irishmen, and the non-importation agreement of 1779 and the legislative emancipation of 1782 were the development of his policy. The street ballads which he delighted in writing, the homely, transparent nature of all his pamphlets, and the peculiar vein of rich humour which pervaded them, extended his influence to the very lowest class. His birthdays were kept with public rejoicings. On his return from England in 1726 bonfires were lit and church bells rung. It is related of him that on one occasion, being disturbed by a crowd who gathered at

the deanery door to watch an eclipse, he sent out his servant with a bell to proclaim that by order of the Dean of St. Patrick's the eclipse was postponed, and the laughing crowd at once dispersed. On another occasion he gave a guinea to a maidservant to buy a new gown, with the characteristic injunction that it should be of Irish stuff. When he afterwards reproached her with not having complied with his injunction, she brought him his own volumes, which she had purchased, saying they were the best "Irish stuff" she knew.

In spite of all this popularity, Ireland never ceased to be a land of exile to him. "It is time for me," he wrote to Bolingbroke in 1729, "to have done with the world; and so I would if I could get into a better world before I was called into the best; and not die here in a rage like a poisoned rat in a hole." He more than once tried to obtain some English preferment instead of his deanery. With this object, on the death of George I., he made an assiduous court to Mrs. Howard, the mistress of the new sovereign, but soon found that she possessed no real power. The presence of Pope and Bolingbroke, whom he truly loved, as well as the wider sphere which it furnished, drew his affections to England, and a number of causes made Ireland peculiarly painful to him. The non-payment of some of his church revenues and some litigation connected with the rights of his deanery gave him much anxiety. He was engaged towards the close of his life in ecclesiastical disputes, into the details of which it is not necessary to enter. He strenuously opposed Bills for commuting the tithes of flax and hemp, for preventing the settlement of



landed property on the Church or on public charities, for enlarging the power of the bishops in granting leases, and for relieving pasture land from the payment of tithes; and the first three Bills were ultimately rejected. The conduct of the Irish House of Commons in carrying a resolution in favour of the last measure threw him into a paroxysm of fury. Nothing he ever wrote, nothing indeed in English literature, is more savage than the "Legion Club," in which he described the Irish Parliament as a devil-worshipping "den of thieves"—

"Scarce a bowshot from the college,  
Half the globe from sense and knowledge,  
· · · · ·  
Roaring till their lungs are spent  
Privilege of Parliament—"

and he expressed his fervent hope that this Parliament might some day be extirpated from the island. This was his language about those "able and faithful counsellors," whose protest against Wood's halfpence he had so greatly blamed the English government for neglecting. With the bishops also, who were always strong Whigs, and who usually represented the Church and State policy which he detested, he was on bad terms. His judgment of them he expressed with his usual emphasis. "Excellent and moral men had been selected upon every occasion of vacancy. But it unfortunately has uniformly happened that as these worthy divines crossed Hounslow Heath, on their road to Ireland, to take possession of their bishoprics, they have been regularly robbed and murdered by the highwaymen frequenting that common, who seize upon their robes and patents, come

over to Ireland, and are consecrated bishops in their stead." There was, indeed, a curious vein of democracy in his Toryism. "I hate everything with a title," he once wrote, "except my books, and even in those the shorter the title the better."

In the management of his deanery he was in all essentials irreproachable, though his wayward, imperious, eccentric nature was often shown. He was indefatigable in maintaining its rights, most regular in discharging its duties, exceedingly munificent in his charities. He devoted a large sum out of his very moderate income to loans to industrious tradesmen ; he organized a system for giving badges to beggars, in order to distinguish genuine from assumed poverty, and he had a crowd of poor persons, usually old and infirm, whom he was accustomed habitually to assist. Few men can have given a larger proportion of their incomes in charity, and Delany tells us that he "never saw poor so carefully and conscientiously attended to as those of his cathedral." Mrs. Pilkington describes him, as she saw him after service, "at the church door surrounded by a crowd of poor, to all of whom he gave charity, except to one old woman who held out a very dirty hand to him ; he told her gravely that 'though she was a beggar, water was not so scarce but she might have washed her hands.'" In Dublin also, as in London, he was always ready to help struggling talent, and many acts of kindness to obscure and sometimes undeserving persons are recorded of him. "My notion," he wrote to Knightly Chetwode, "is that if a man cannot mend the public, he should mend old shoes if he can do no better, and therefore I endeavour in the little sphere I am placed in to

do all the good it is capable of." He had some Church patronage, and he administered it with scrupulous care, and many anecdotes are preserved showing the persistence with which he discouraged the idleness, the extravagance, the intemperance, the love of display which prevailed in all ranks of Irish life. Whatever might be thought of his influence on public affairs, no one can doubt that in all these ways his influence was most beneficent.

In 1726 he paid a visit to England after an absence of twelve years. He was introduced to Walpole, who received him with civility, and whom he endeavoured to interest, both directly and through the medium of Peterborough, in Irish affairs. He also revisited his old friends Pope and Bolingbroke, but was soon recalled by the news that Stella was dying. "I have been long weary," he wrote, "of the world, and shall, for my small remainder of years, be weary of life, having for ever lost that conversation which could alone make it tolerable." Stella, however, lingered till 1728. The close of her life was in keeping with the rest, involved in circumstances of mystery and obscurity; and an anecdote is related concerning it which, if it be accepted, would leave a deep stain on the memory of Swift. The younger Sheridan states, on the authority of his father, that a few days before her death, Stella, in the presence of Sheridan, adjured Swift to acknowledge the marriage that had previously taken place between them, to save her reputation from posthumous slander, and to grant her the consolation of dying his admitted wife. He adds that Swift made no reply, but walked silently out of the room, and never saw her again during the few days that she lived;



that she was thrown by his behaviour into unspeakable agonies of disappointment, inveighed bitterly against his cruelty, and then sent for a lawyer and bequeathed her property, in the presence of Sheridan, to charitable purposes. But high as is the authority for this anecdote, it is certainly inaccurate. The book in which it appeared was only published fifty years after the time, and its author was a boy when his father died. It appears from the extant will that it was drawn up, not a "few days," but a full month before the death of the testator, and at a time when she was so far from regarding herself as on the point of death that she described herself as in "tolerable health of body," left a legacy to one of her servants if he should be alive and in her service at the time of her death, and another to the poor of the parish in which she may happen to die. It is certain that the disposition of her property was no sudden resolution, and it is equally certain that it was not made contrary to the wishes of Swift, for a letter by him exists which was written a year earlier, in which he expresses a strong desire that she could be induced to make her will, and states her intentions about her property in the exact words which she subsequently employed. On money matters Swift was very disinterested, and it is not surprising that he who had refused to marry Vanessa notwithstanding her large fortune, should have advised Stella to bequeath her property in charity. The terms of agonizing sorrow and intense affection in which he at this time wrote about her, and the entire absence of any known reason why he should not have avowed the marriage had she desired it, make the alleged act of harshness very improbable; and it may be added that the will

contains a bequest to Swift of a box of papers, and of a bond for thirty pounds. The bulk of her property she bequeathed, as Swift had before intimated, to Steevens Hospital, after the death of her mother and sister, to revert to her nearest relative in case of the disestablishment of the Protestant Church in Ireland. As we have already seen, Swift had himself provided for the same contingency in the case of some tithes which he purchased when at Laracor, and left to his descendants. Her body, in accordance with the desire expressed in her will, was buried in St. Patrick's Cathedral. On her monument, as in her will, she is described simply as Esther Johnson.

In addition to the anecdote I have mentioned, there is another related about the last hours of Stella which is not very consistent with the former one. Mrs. Whiteway, the niece of Swift, is said to have informed one of his relations that Stella was carried shortly before her death to the deanery, and being very feeble was laid upon a bed, while Swift sat by the side, holding her hand and addressing her in the most affectionate terms. Mrs. Whiteway, out of delicacy, and being unwilling to overhear their conversation, withdrew into another room, but she could not help hearing two broken sentences. Swift said in an audible tone, "Well, my dear, if you wish it, it shall be owned;" to which Stella answered, with a sigh, "It is too late!" and it is assumed that these words referred to the marriage. There is, however, no decisive evidence that Stella ever complained of her relations with Swift, nor does Swift ever appear during her lifetime to have been accused of harshness to her. At the time of her death she was forty-seven and Swift was sixty-one.

But whatever may have been the relation subsisting between Stella and Swift, it is plain that when she died the death-knell of his happiness had struck. "For my part," he wrote to one of his friends shortly before the event took place, "as I value life very little, so the poor casual remains of it, after such a loss, would be a burden that I must heartily beg God Almighty to enable me to bear ; and I think there is not a greater folly than that of entering into too strict and particular a friendship, with the loss of which a man must be absolutely miserable, but especially at an age when it is too late to engage in a new friendship." That morbid melancholy to which he had ever been subject assumed a darker hue and a more unremitting sway as the shadows began to lengthen upon his path. It had appeared very vividly in "Gulliver's Travels," which was published in 1726. Like nearly all Swift's works this great book was published anonymously, and like nearly all of them it met with a great and immediate success. It is, indeed, one of the most original as well as one of the most enduring books of the eighteenth century. Few things might have seemed more impossible than to combine in a single work the charm of an eminently popular children's story, a savage satire on human nature, and a large amount of shrewd and practical political speculation. Yet all this will be found in "Gulliver." Of all Swift's works it probably exhibits most frequently his idiosyncrasies and his sentiments. We find his old hatred of mathematics displayed in the history of Laputa ; his devotion to his disgraced friends in the attempt to cast ridicule on the evidence on which Atterbury was condemned ; his antipathy to Sir Isaac Newton, whose habitual absence



of mind is said to have suggested the flappers ; as well as allusions to Sir R. Walpole, to the doubtful policy of the Prince of Wales, and to the antipathy Queen Anne had conceived against him on account of the indecorous manner in which he had defended the Church. We find, above all, his profound disenchantment with human life and his deep-seated contempt for mankind in his picture of the Yahoos. Embittered by disappointment and ill-health, and separated by death or by his position from all he most deeply loved, he had learnt to look with contempt upon the contests in which so much of his life had been expended, and his naturally stern, gloomy, and foreboding nature darkened into an intense misanthropy. "I love only individuals," he once wrote. He "hated and detested that animal called man," and he declared that he wrote "Gulliver" "to vex the world rather than to divert it." It was his deliberate opinion that man is hopelessly corrupt, that the evil preponderates over the good, and that life itself is a curse. No one who really understands Swift will question the reality and the intensity of this misanthropy. It was one of his strange habits to celebrate his birthday by reading the third chapter of the Book of Job, in which the patriarch cursed bitterly the day of his birth. "I hate life," he once wrote on learning the early death of a dear friend, "when I think it is exposed to such accidents, and to see so many thousand wretches burdening the earth while such as her die makes me think God did never intend life for a blessing." "Life," he wrote to Pope, "is not a farce ; it is a ridiculous tragedy, which is the worst kind of composition."

The melancholy of Swift was doubtless essentially

constitutional, and mainly due to a physical malady which had long acted upon his brain. His nature was a profoundly unhappy one, but it is not true that his life was on the whole unprosperous. Very few penniless men of genius have had the advantages which he obtained at an early age by his connection with Sir William Temple. He tasted in ample measure all the sweets of literary success, and although his political career was chequered by grave disappointments he obtained both in England and in Ireland some brilliant triumphs. A deanery in an important provincial capital, where he was adored by the populace, and where he had warm friends among the gentry, may not have been all to which he aspired, but it was no very deplorable fate, and although the income attached to it was moderate and at one time greatly diminished, it was sufficient for his small wants and frugal habits. Above all, few men have received from those who knew them best a larger measure of affection and friendship. But happiness and misery come mainly from within, and to Swift life had lost all its charm. After "Gulliver," his literary activity sensibly abated, but in 1731 he wrote one of the most powerful, but also the saddest of his poems, the poem on his own death.

Age had begun to press heavily upon him, and age he had ever regarded as the greatest of human ills. In his picture of the "Immortals" he had painted its attendant evils as they had never been painted before. He had ridiculed the reverence paid to the old, as resembling that which the vulgar pay to comets, for their beards and their pretensions to foretell the future. He had predicted that, like the blasted tree, he would himself die first at the top. Those whom he had valued

the most had almost all preceded him to the tomb. Oxford, Arbuthnot, Peterborough, Gay, Lady Masham and Rowe, had one by one dropped off. Of all that brilliant company who had surrounded him in the days of his power, Pope and Bolingbroke alone remained, and Pope was sinking under continued illness, and Bolingbroke was drawing his last breath in the more congenial atmosphere of France. A cloud had passed over his friendship with Sheridan, whom he sincerely loved, but whose boisterous spirits had become too much for the old and misanthropic man, and Sheridan had now gone with broken fortunes to a school at Cavan. Stella had left no successor. His niece, Mrs. Whiteway, watched over him with unwearied kindness, but she could not supply the place of those who had gone.

He looked forward to death without terror, but his mind quailed at the prospect of the dotage and the decrepitude that precedes it. He had seen the greatest general and the greatest lawyer of the day sink into second childhood, and he felt that the fate of Marlborough and of Somers would at last be his own. A large mirror once fell to the ground in the room where he was standing. A friend observed how nearly it had killed him. "Would to God," he exclaimed, "that it had!" His later letters—especially his letters to his friend Knightly Chetwode—are full of complaints of attacks of deafness and dizziness, of failure of memory, of confusion of mind. He was conscious of failing powers, and grew morbidly restless and irritable. His flashes of wit became fewer and fewer. Avarice, the common vice of the old, came upon him, and he was himself quite aware of the fact. He shrank



The paper of "Resolutions," of which a facsimile (slightly reduced) is given opposite, was found by Mrs. Whiteway among Swift's papers at his death. It is here reproduced from the original, now in the Forster Collection at South Kensington. The following is a literal transcript :

When I come to be old. 1699.

Not to marry a young Woman.

Not to keep young Company unless they reely desire it.

Not to be peevish or morose, or suspicious.

Not to scorn present Ways, or Wits, or Fashions, or Men, or War, &c.

Not to be fond of Children, *or let them come near me hardly.*<sup>1</sup>

Not to tell the same story over and over to the same People.

Not to be covetous.

Not to neglect decency, or cleenlyness, for fear of falling into Nastyness.

Not to be over severe with young People, but give Allowances for their youthfull follyes and weaknesses.

Not to be influenced by, or give ear to knavish tatling servants, or others.

Not to be too free of advise, nor trouble any but those that desire it.

To desire<sup>2</sup> some good Friends to inform me w<sup>ch</sup> of these Resolutions I break, or neglect, and wherein ; and reform accordingly.

Not to talk much, nor of my self.

Not to boast of my former beauty, or strength, or favor with Ladyes, &c.

Not to hearken to Flatteryes, nor conceive I can be beloved by a young woman, et eos qui hereditatem captant, odisse ac vitare.

Not to be positive or opiniative.

Not to sett up for observing all these Rules ; for fear I should observe none.

<sup>1</sup> The words in italics were erased by another hand, probably by Deane Swift.

<sup>2</sup> The original word was "conjure."

When I came to the D 1099

- Not to marry a young Woman.
- Not to keep young Company unless they really desire it.
- Not to be peevish or morose, or suspicious.
- Not to learn present Ways, or Wits, or Fashions, or Pleas, or Lies, &c.
- Not to be fond of Children, or with their managers & playmates.
- Not to tell the same story over & over to the same People.
- Not to be covetous.
- Not to neglect decency, or cleanliness, for fear of falling into Whoriness.
- Not to be severe with young People, but give Pleasures in their youthful follies, and Weaknesses.
- Not to be influenced by, or give ear to knavish talking servants, or others.
- Not to be too free of discourse with any but those that desire it.
- To ~~keep~~<sup>desire</sup> some good Friends to inform me w<sup>th</sup> of those Revolutiones I break, or neglect, & wherein; and reform accordingly.
- Not to talk much, nor of my self.
- Not to boast of my former beauty, or strength, or favor with Ladies, &c.
- Not to hearken to flatterers, nor conceive I can be beloved by a young woman. or as qui reddet saltem captivum non de odore caritative.
- Not to be positive or opinionative.
- Not to set up for observing all these Rules; for fear I should observe none.





A TALE OF A TUB.



# A TALE OF A TUB.

## NOTE.

THE "Tale of a Tub" was first published in April or May of the year 1704. Before the end of the year there had appeared three editions in addition to those which were published in Ireland. In the following year an authorized edition was issued by Mr. John Nutt; this is the fourth. In 1710, the same bookseller published the fifth edition, which included, for the first time, the "Author's Apology," and the notes by Wotton and others. The present text is based on this edition.

Apparently Nutt must either have sold or handed over the copyright of the work to Benjamin Motte and Tooke, for these booksellers issued the sixth and seventh editions in 1724 and 1727. There were other issues before 1750, but these will be detailed in the Bibliography of Swift's writings to be included in the last volume of this present edition. Wotton's annotations originally appeared in a pamphlet entitled "A Defense of the Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning . . . with observations upon 'The Tale of a Tub,'" (London: Tim Goodwin, 1705). They were written by way of exposing the errors of what he considered to be a ridiculous work. Swift turned the tables on him by frankly accepting them, since they were really valuable expositions. Thus it happens, in the words of Mr. Forster, that "its most envenomed assailant has, in countless editions since, figured as its friendly illustrator."

At the time of its publication Swift was thirty-seven years of age, but the "Tale" itself had been finished and ready for the printer more than seven years before. The greater part of it, as Swift himself says in his "Apology," was written in 1696.

On its first appearance the book made a great hit, and, as it was issued anonymously, there was much speculation as to its author. Sacheverell ascribed it to Smalridge, but that gentleman had to keep clean a reputation which he was saving up for ecclesiastical preferment, and he immediately repudiated it. Two young Oxford students, Edmund Smith and John Philips, did not take any active steps to deny the imputation of authorship when it was laid upon them. Each had a fairly respectable literary ability, but of the first there are now left only the reputation of his profligacy, and a tragedy, "Phædra and Hippolitus," while the fame of the second rests on the tottering foundations of his Miltonic parody, "The Splendid Shilling."

Wotton, in his criticism on the "Tale," said that Thomas Swift was its author. This belief may have arisen from the fact that a copy of some portion of the satire which Swift originally made for Temple



had, after Temple's death, fallen into the hands of Thomas Swift. Curll, in what Forster calls his "scurrilous 'Key,'" affirms that the "Tale" was "performed by a couple of young clergymen who, having been domestic chaplains to Sir William Temple, thought themselves obliged to take up his quarrel." The "couple of young clergymen" were Jonathan and Thomas Swift. The base insinuations which Curll goes on to make were treated by Swift in a contemptuous fashion. He suspected, in a letter to Tooke (who had sent him a copy of the "Key"), that his "little parson-cousin" (meaning Thomas Swift) was at the bottom of it.

Dr. Johnson's doubt about Swift being the author may be put down to the inexplicable repugnance he had for Swift. Forster sufficiently answers him when he sarcastically remarks that "Swift was to lose a bishopric in one generation because a piece of writing was thought too witty to be fathered on anybody else, and in the next he was to lose the credit of having written the piece because it was too witty to be fathered on him" ("Life," pp. 156, 157).

The only written avowals of Swift with regard to the "Tale's" authorship are in letters to Esther Johnson and Ben Tooke. But, indeed, at the time it was perfectly well known among a certain set that Swift was the author. Otherwise it is difficult to explain how Archbishop Sharp could have succeeded in preventing Swift's appointment to a bishopric, when he urged that the author of the "Tale of a Tub" was not a proper person to hold such an office.

Mrs. Whiteway's anecdote must also be taken as good evidence, and its meaning cannot be mistaken. In the latter years of Swift's life, she observed, on one occasion, the Dean looking over the "Tale," when suddenly closing the book he muttered to himself unconsciously, "Good God! what a genius I had when I wrote that book!"

Mr. Churton Collins draws attention to a curious point which has escaped other biographers. He finds that Archbishop Sharp, who biassed Queen Anne against Swift for writing the "Tale," printed a sermon in which he uses an allegory very similar to that of Swift's. As Sharp's sermon was in existence in 1686, it is probable that Swift was indebted to it for the hint. (See Mr. Collins's "Jonathan Swift," p. 47.)

"The History of Martin" is reprinted from the third volume of the "Supplement to Dr. Swift's Works," edited by Hawkesworth, and published by Nichols in 1779. There it is stated that it is taken from a Dutch edition of 1720, and is headed, "Abstract of what, in the Dutch edition, is said to have followed Sect. IX. of the MS." The full title of this Dutch volume is "Miscellaneous Works, Comical and Diverting: by T.A.D.J.S.D.O.P.I.I. in Two Parts. I. The Tale of a Tub; with the Fragment and the Battel of the Books; with considerable additions, and explanatory notes, never before printed. II. Miscellanies in Prose and Verse, by the supposed Author of the First Part. London, Printed by Order of the Society de Propaganda, &c. 1720." (See Bibliography of Swift.)

With the "Tale" have always appeared in the same volume "The Battle of the Books" and "The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit." The "dissertations" of the "Tale" grew out of the "Battle of the Books." [T. S.]

A  
T A L E  
O F A  
T U B.

Written for the Universal Improvement of Mankind.

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*Diu multumque desideratum.*

---

To which is added,  
An ACCOUNT of a  
B A T T L E  
BETWEEN THE  
Antient and Modern BOOKS  
in St. *James's* Library.

---

Bafima eacabafa eanaa irraurifta, diarba da caetaba  
fobor camelanthi. *Iren. Lib. I. C. 18.*

---

——— *Juvatque novos decerpere flores,  
Insignemque meo capiti petere inde coronam,  
Unde prius nulli velarunt tempora Musæ.* Lucret.

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The Fifth EDITION: With the Author's Apology and Explanatory Notes.  
By *W. W--tt--n*, B. D. and others.

---

L O N D O N: Printed for *John Nutt*, near  
*Stationers-Hall.* M D C C X.

---

Treatises wrote by the same Author, most of them mentioned in the following Discourses ; which will be speedily published.

*A Character of the present Set of Wits in this Island.*

*A panegyric Essay upon the Number THREE.*

*A Dissertation upon the principal Productions of Grub-Street.*

*Lectures upon a Dissection of Human Nature.*

*A Panegyric upon the World.*

*An analytical Discourse upon Zeal, histori-theophysically considered.*

*A general History of Ears.*

*A modest Defence of the Proceedings of the Rabble in all ages.*

*A Description of the Kingdom of Absurdities.*

*A Voyage into England, by a Person of Quality in Terra Australis incognita, translated from the Original.*

*A critical Essay upon the Art of Canting, philosophically, physically, and musically considered.*



# A TALE OF A TUB.

## ANALYTICAL TABLE.

### *The Author's Apology.*

THE Tale approved of by a great majority among the men of taste. Some treatises written expressly against it; but not one syllable in its defence. The greatest part of it finished in 1696, eight years before it was published. The author's intention when he began it. No irreligious or immoral opinion can fairly be deduced from the book. The clergy have no reason to dislike it. The author's intention not having met with a candid interpretation, he declined engaging in a task he had proposed to himself, of examining some publications, that were intended against all religion. Unfair to fix a name upon an author, who had so industriously concealed himself. The Letter on Enthusiasm,<sup>1</sup> ascribed by several to the same author. If the abuses in law or physic had been the subject of this treatise, the learned professors in either faculty would have been more liberal than the clergy. The passages which appear most liable to objection are parodies. The author entirely innocent of any intention of glancing at those tenets of religion, which he has by some prejudiced or ignorant readers been supposed to mean. This

<sup>1</sup> This celebrated Letter, which was generally supposed to have been written by Dr. Swift, and by him, with as little foundation, ascribed to his friend Colonel Hunter, was the production of the noble author of the "Characteristics"; in which collection it holds the foremost rank. It bears date in September, 1707; and was written with a view to the French prophets, whose enthusiastic extravagances were then at the greatest height. [S.]

particularly the case in the passage about the three wooden machines. An irony runs through the whole book. Not necessary to take notice of treatises written against it. The usual fate of common answerers to books of merit, is to sink into waste paper and oblivion. The case very different, when a great genius exposes a foolish piece. Reflections occasioned by Dr. King's Remarks on the Tale of a Tub; others, by Mr. Wotton. The manner in which the Tale was first published accounted for. The Fragment not printed in the way the author intended; being the ground-work of a much larger discourse. The oaths of Peter why introduced. The severest strokes of satire in the treatise are levelled against the custom of employing wit in profaneness or immodesty. Wit the noblest and most useful gift of human nature; and humour the most agreeable. Those who have no share of either, think the blow weak, because they are themselves insensible.

P.S. The author of the Key wrong in all his conjectures. The whole work entirely by one hand; the author defying any one to claim three lines in the book.

*The Bookseller's Dedication to Lord Somers.*

How he finds out that lord to be the patron intended by his author. Dedicators ridiculous, who praise their patrons for qualities that do not belong to them.

*The Bookseller to the Reader.*

Tells how long he has had these papers, when they were written, and why he publishes them now.

*The Dedication to Posterity.*

The author, apprehending that Time will soon destroy almost all the writings of this age, complains of his malice against modern authors and their productions, in hurrying them so quickly off the scene; and therefore addresses posterity in favour of his contemporaries; assures him they abound in wit and learning, and books; and, for instance, mentions Dryden, Tate, D'Urfey, Bentley, and Wotton.

*Preface.*

The occasion and design of this work.

Project for employing the beaux of the nation. Of modern prefaces. Modern wit how delicate. Method for penetrating into an author's thoughts.

Complaints of every writer against the multitude of writers, like the fat fellows in a crowd. Our author insists on the common privilege of writers; to be favourably explained, when not understood; and to praise himself in the modern way. This treatise without satire; and why. Fame sooner gotten by satire than panegyric; the subject of the latter being narrow, and that of the former infinite. Difference between Athens and England, as to general and particular satire. The author designs a panegyric on the world, and a modest defence of the rabble.

SECT. I. THE INTRODUCTION. A physico-mythological dissertation on the different sorts of oratorical machines. Of the bar and the bench. The author fond of the number Three; promises a panegyric on it. Of pulpits; which are the best. Of ladders; on which the British orators surpass all others. Of the stage itinerant; the seminary of the two former. A physical reason why those machines are elevated. Of the curious contrivance of modern theatres. These three machines emblematically represent the various sorts of authors.

An apologetical dissertation for the Grub-Street writers, against their revolted rivals of Gresham and Will's. Superficial readers cannot easily find out wisdom; which is compared to several pretty things. Commentaries promised on several writings of Grub-Street authors; as Reynard the Fox, Tom Thumb, Dr. Faustus, Whittington and his Cat, the Hind and Panther, Tommy Pots, and the Wise Men of Gotham. The author's pen and person worn out in serving the state. Multiplicity of titles and dedications.

SECT. II. TALE OF A TUB. Of a Father and his Three Sons. His will, and his legacies to them. Of the young men's carriage at the beginning: and of the genteel qualifications they acquired in town. Description of a new sect, who adored their creator the tailor. Of their idol, and their system. The three brothers follow the mode against



their father's will ; and get shoulder-knots, by help of distinctions ; gold-lace, by help of tradition ; flame-coloured satin lining, by means of a supposed codicil ; silver fringe, by virtue of critical interpretation ; and embroidery of Indian figures, by laying aside the plain literal meaning. The will at last locked up. Peter got into a lord's house, and after his death turned out his children, and took in his own brothers in their stead.

SECT. III. A DIGRESSION concerning Critics. Three sorts of Critics ; the two first sorts now extinct. The true sort of Critics' genealogy ; office ; definition. Antiquity of their race proved from Pausanias, who represents them by Asses browsing on vines ; and Herodotus, by Asses with horns ; and by an Ass that frightened a Scythian army ; and Diodorus, by a Poisonous Weed ; and Ctesias, by Serpents that poison with their vomit ; and Terence, by the name of *Malevoli*. The true Critic compared to a Tailor, and to a true Beggar. Three characteristics of a true modern Critic.

SECT. IV. TALE OF A TUB continued. Peter assumes grandeur and titles ; and, to support them, turns projector. The Author's hopes of being translated into foreign languages. Peter's first invention, of *Terra Australis Incognita*. The second of a remedy for Worms. The third, a Whispering-Office. Fourth, an Insurance-Office. Fifth, an Universal Pickle. Sixth, a set of Bulls with leaden feet. Lastly, his pardons to malefactors. Peter's brains turned ; he plays several tricks, and turns out his brothers' wives. Gives his brothers bread for mutton and for wine. Tells huge lies : of a Cow's milk, that would fill 3,000 churches ; of a Sign-post as large as a man of war ; of a House, that travelled 2,000 leagues. The brothers steal a copy of the will ; break open the cellar door ; and are both kicked out of doors by Peter.

SECT. V. A DIGRESSION in the modern kind. Our author expatiates on his great pains to serve the public by instructing, and more by diverting. The Moderns having so far excelled the Ancients, the Author gives them a receipt for a complete system of all arts and sciences, in a small pocket volume. Several defects discovered in Homer ; and his ignorance in modern invention, &c. Our Author's

writings fit to supply all defects. He justifies his praising his own writings, by modern examples.

SECT. VI. TALE OF A TUB continued. The Two Brothers ejected, agree in a resolution to reform, according to the will. They take different names ; and are found to be of different complexions. How Martin began rudely, but proceeded more cautiously, in reforming his coat. Jack, of a different temper, and full of zeal, begins tearing all to pieces. He endeavours to kindle up Martin to the same pitch ; but, not succeeding, they separate. Jack runs mad, gets many names, and founds the sect of Æolists.

SECT. VII. A DIGRESSION in praise of Digressions. Digressions suited to modern palates. A proof of depraved appetites ; but necessary for modern writers. Two ways now in use to be book-learned ; 1. by learning Titles ; 2. by reading Indexes. Advantages of this last : and of Abstracts. The number of writers increasing above the quantity of matter, this method becomes necessary and useful. The Reader empowered to transplant this Digression.

SECT. VIII. TALE OF A TUB continued. System of the Æolists : they hold wind, or spirit, to be the origin of all things, and to bear a great part in their composition. Of the fourth and fifth animas attributed by them to man. Of their belching, or preaching. Their inspiration from Σκοτία. They use barrels for pulpits. Female officers used for inspiration ; and why. The notion opposite to that of a Deity, fittest to form a Devil. Two Devils dreaded by the Æolists. Their relation with a Northern nation. The Author's respect for this sect.

SECT. IX. DISSERTATION ON MADNESS. Great conquerors of empires, and founders of sects in philosophy and religion, have generally been persons whose reason was disturbed. A small vapour, mounting to the brain, may occasion great revolutions. Examples ; of Henry IV., who made great preparations for war, because of his mistress's absence ; and of Louis XIV., whose great actions concluded in a fistula. Extravagant notions of several great philosophers, how nice to distinguish from madness. Mr. Wotton's fatal mistake, in misapplying his peculiar talents. Madness the source of conquests and systems. Advantages of fiction and delusion over truth and reality. The outside of things



better than the inside. Madness, how useful. A proposal for visiting Bedlam, and employing the divers members in a way useful to the public.

SECT. X. The Author's compliments to the Readers. Great civilities practised between the Authors and Readers; and our Author's thanks to the whole nation. How well satisfied Authors and Booksellers are. To what occasions we owe most of the present writings. Of a paltry scribbler, our Author is afraid of; and therefore desires Dr. Bentley's protection. He gives here his whole store at one meal. Usefulness of this treatise to different sorts of Readers; the superficial, the ignorant, and the learned. Proposal for making some ample Commentaries on this work; and of the usefulness of Commentaries for dark writers. Useful hints for the Commentators of this Treatise.

SECT. XI. THE TALE OF A TUB continued. The Author, not in haste to be at home, shews the difference between a traveller weary, or in haste, and another in good plight, that takes his pleasure, and views every pleasant scene in his way. The sequel of Jack's adventures; his superstitious veneration for the Holy Scripture, and the uses he made of it. His flaming zeal, and blind submission to the Decrees. His harangue for Predestination. He covers roguish tricks with a show of devotion. Affects singularity in manners and speech. His aversion to music and painting. His discourses provoke sleep. His groaning, and affecting to suffer for the good cause. The great antipathy of Peter and Jack made them both run into extremes, where they often met.

The degenerate ears of this age cannot afford a sufficient handle to hold men by. The senses and passions afford many handles. Curiosity is that by which our Author has held his readers so long. The rest of this story lost, &c.

THE CONCLUSION. Of the proper Seasons for publishing books. Of profound Writers. Of the ghost of Wit. Sleep and the Muses nearly related. Apology for the Author's fits of dulness. Method and Reason the lacquey of Invention. Our Author's great collection of Flowers of little use till now.



A DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE MECHANICAL OPERATION  
OF THE SPIRIT.

THE Author, at a loss what title to give this piece, finds, after much pains, that of *A Letter to a Friend* to be most in vogue. Of modern excuses for haste and negligence, &c.

SECT. I. Mahomet's fancy of being carried to Heaven by an Ass, followed by many Christians. A great affinity between this creature and man. That talent of bringing his rider to Heaven, the subject of this Discourse; but for Ass and Rider, the Author uses the synonymous terms of Enlightened Teacher and Fanatic Hearer. A tincture of Enthusiasm runs through all men and all sciences; but prevails most in Religion. Enthusiasm defined and distinguished. That which is Mechanical and Artificial is treated of by our Author. Though Art oftentimes changes into Nature: examples in the Scythian Longheads, and English Roundheads.—Sense and Reason must be laid aside to let this Spirit operate. The objections about the manner of the Spirit from above descending upon the Apostles, make not against this Spirit that arises within. The methods by which the Assembly helps to work up this Spirit, jointly with the Preacher.

SECT. II. How some worship a good Being, others an evil. Most people confound the bounds of good and evil. Vain mortals think the Divinity interested in their meanest actions. The scheme of spiritual mechanism left out. Of the usefulness of quilted night-caps, to keep in the heat, to give motion and vigour to the little animals that compose the brain. Sound of far greater use than sense in the operations of the Spirit, as in Music. Inward light consists of theological monosyllables and mysterious texts. Of the great force of one vowel in canting; and of blowing the nose, hawking, spitting, and belching. The Author to publish an Essay on the Art of Canting. Of speaking through the nose, or snuffling: its origin from a disease occasioned by a conflict betwixt the Flesh and the Spirit. Inspired vessels, like lanterns, have a sorry sooty outside. Fanaticism deduced from the Ancients, in their Orgies, Bacchanals, &c. Of their great lasciviousness on those occasions. The Fanatics of the first centuries, and those of

later times, generally agree in the same principle, of improving spiritual into carnal ejaculations, &c

### THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS.

THE Preface informs us, this piece was written in 1697, on account of a famous dispute about Ancient and Modern Learning, between Sir William Temple and the Earl of Orrery on the one side, and Mr. Wotton and Bentley on the other.

War and Invasions generally proceed from the attacks of Want and Poverty upon Plenty and Riches. The Moderns quarrel with the Ancients, about the possession of the highest top of Parnassus; and desire them to surrender it, or to let it be levelled. The answer of the Ancients not accepted. A war ensues; in which rivulets of ink are spilt; and both parties hang out their trophies, books of controversy. These books haunted with disorderly spirits; though often bound to the peace in Libraries. The Author's advice in this case neglected; which occasions a terrible fight in St. James's Library. Dr. Bentley, the Library-keeper, a great enemy to the Ancients. The Moderns, finding themselves 50,000 strong, give the Ancients ill language. Temple, a favourite of the Ancients. An incident of a quarrel between a Bee and a Spider; with their arguments on both sides. Æsop applies them to the present dispute. The order of battle of the Moderns, and names of their leaders. The leaders of the Ancients. Jupiter calls a council of the Gods, and consults the books of Fate; and then sends his orders below. Momus brings the news to Criticism; whose habitation and company is described. She arrives; and sheds her influence on her son Wotton. The battle described. Paracelsus engages Galen; Aristotle aims at Bacon, and kills Descartes; Homer overthrows Gondibert, kills Denham and Wesley,<sup>1</sup> Perrault<sup>2</sup> and Fontenelle.<sup>3</sup> Encounter of Virgil and Dryden;

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Wesley, rector of Ormesby and Epworth, in Lincolnshire. He died April 25, 1735. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> Charles Perrault, author of a poem, entitled, "*Le Siècle de Louis le Grand*," in which the modern authors are exalted above the ancient; and of several other curious works. He was born in 1626, and died in 1703. [S.]

<sup>3</sup> The celebrated author of "*The Plurality of Worlds*;" who died in 1756, when he wanted only a few days of completing his hundredth year. [S.]

of Lucan and Blackmore ; of Creech and Horace ; of Pindar and Cowley. The episode of Bentley and Wotton. Bentley's armour. His speech to the modern generals. Scaliger's answer. Bentley and Wotton march together. Bentley attacks Phalaris and Æsop. Wotton attacks Temple in vain. Boyle pursues Wotton ; and, meeting Bentley in his way, he pursues and kills them both.



## AN APOLOGY

*For the, &c.*

*I*F good and ill nature equally operated upon Mankind, I might have saved myself the trouble of this Apology; for it is manifest by the reception the following discourse hath met with, that those who approve it, are a great majority among the men of taste; yet there have been two or three treatises written expressly against it, besides many others that have flirted at it occasionally, without one syllable having been ever published in its defence, or even quotation to its advantage, that I can remember, except by the polite author of a late discourse between a Deist and a Socinian.

Therefore, since the book seems calculated to live, at least as long as our language and our taste admit no great alterations, I am content to convey some Apology along with it.

The greatest part of that book was finished above thirteen years since, 1696, which is eight years before it was published. The author was then young, his invention at the height, and his reading fresh in his head. By the assistance of some thinking, and much conversation, he had endeavour'd to strip himself of as many real prejudices as he could; I say real ones, because, under the notion of prejudices, he knew to what dangerous heights some men have proceeded. Thus prepared, he thought the numerous and gross corruptions in Religion and Learning might furnish matter for a satire, that would be useful and diverting. He resolved to proceed in a manner that should be altogether new, the world having been already too long nauseated with endless repetitions upon every subject. The abuses in Religion, he proposed to set forth in the Allegory of the Coats, and the three Brothers, which was to make up the body of the discourse. Those in learning, he chose to introduce by way of digressions. He was then a young gentleman

*much in the world,<sup>1</sup> and wrote to the taste of those who were like himself; therefore, in order to allure them, he gave a liberty to his pen, which might not suit with maturer years, or graver characters, and which he could have easily corrected with a very few blots, had he been master of his papers, for a year or two before their publication.*

*Not that he would have governed his judgment by the ill-placed cavils of the sour, the envious, the stupid, and the tasteless, which he mentions with disdain. He acknowledges there are several youthful sallies, which, from the grave and the wise, may deserve a rebuke. But he desires to be answerable no farther than he is guilty, and that his faults may not be multiplied by the ignorant, the unnatural, and uncharitable applications of those who have neither candour to suppose good meanings, nor palate to distinguish true ones. After which, he will forfeit his life, if any one opinion can be fairly deduced from that book, which is contrary to Religion or Morality.*

*Why should any clergyman of our church be angry to see the follies of fanaticism and superstition exposed, though in the most ridiculous manner; since that is perhaps the most probable way to cure them, or at least to hinder them from farther spreading? Besides, though it was not intended for their perusal, it rallies nothing but what they preach against. It contains nothing to provoke them, by the least scurrility upon their persons or their functions. It celebrates the church of England, as the most perfect of all others, in discipline and doctrine; it advances no opinion they reject, nor condemns any they receive. If the clergy's resentment lay upon their hands, in my humble opinion they might have found more proper objects to employ them on: nondum tibi defuit hostis; I mean those heavy, illiterate scribblers, prostitute in their reputations, vicious in their lives, and ruined in their fortunes, who, to the shame of good sense as well as piety, are greedily read, merely upon the strength of bold, false, impious assertions, mixed with unmannerly reflections upon the priesthood, and openly intended against all Religion; in short, full of such principles as are kindly received, because they are levelled to remove those terrors, that Religion tells men will be the consequence of immoral*

<sup>1</sup> Swift resided at Moor-park, in 1696; and unquestionably the companion of Sir William Temple must be considered as "living in the world." [S.]



*lives. Nothing like which is to be met with in this discourse, though some of them are pleased so freely to censure it. And I wish there were no other instance of what I have too frequently observed, that many of that reverend body are not always very nice in distinguishing between their enemies and their friends.*

*Had the author's intentions met with a more candid interpretation from some, whom out of respect he forbears to name, he might have been encouraged to an examination of books written by some of those authors above described, whose errors, ignorance, dulness, and villainy, he thinks he could have detected and exposed in such a manner, that the persons, who are most conceived to be affected by them, would soon lay them aside and be ashamed: But he has now given over those thoughts; since the weightiest men, in the weightiest stations, are pleased to think it a more dangerous point to laugh at those corruptions in Religion, which they themselves must disapprove, than to endeavour pulling up those very foundations, wherein all Christians have agreed.*

*He thinks it no fair proceeding, that any person should offer determinately to fix a name upon the author of this discourse, who hath all along concealed himself from most of his nearest friends: Yet several have gone a farther step, and pronounced Letter of another book to have been the work of the same Enthusiasm. hand with this, which the author directly affirms to be a thorough mistake; <sup>1</sup> he having as yet never so much as read that discourse: a plain instance how little truth there often is in general surmises, or in conjectures drawn from a similitude of style, or way of thinking.*

*Had the author written a book to expose the abuses in Law, or in Physic, he believes the learned professors in either faculty would have been so far from resenting it, as to have given him thanks for his pains, especially if he had made an honourable reservation for the true practice of either science. But Religion, they tell us, ought not to be ridiculed; and they tell us truth: yet surely the corruptions in it may; for we are taught by the tritest maxim in the world, that Religion being the best of things, its corruptions are likely to be the worst.*

<sup>1</sup> The celebrated Letter on Enthusiasm, published in 1708. It had been submitted by Lord Shaftesbury, to the revision of Lord Somers, and others; but appeared anonymously. [S.]



*There is one thing which the judicious reader cannot but have observed, that some of those passages in this discourse, which appear most liable to objection, are what they call parodies, where the author personates the style and manner of other writers, whom he has a mind to expose. I shall produce one instance, it is in the 51st page.<sup>1</sup> Dryden, L'Estrange, and some others I shall not name, are here levelled at, who, having spent their lives in faction, and apostacies, and all manner of vice, pretended to be sufferers for Loyalty and Religion. So Dryden tells us, in one of his prefaces, of his merits and sufferings, and thanks God that he possesses his soul in patience;<sup>2</sup> In other places he talks at the same rate; and L'Estrange often uses the like style; and I believe the reader may find more persons to give that passage an application: But this is enough to direct those who may have overlooked the author's intention.*

*There are three or four other passages, which prejudiced or ignorant readers have drawn by great force to hint at ill meanings; as if they glanced at some tenets in religion. In answer to all which, the author solemnly protests, he is entirely innocent; and never had it once in his thoughts, that anything he said, would in the least be capable of such interpretations, which he will engage to deduce full as fairly from the most innocent book in the world. And it will be obvious to every reader, that this was not any part of his scheme or design, the abuses he notes being such as all Church-of-England men agree in; nor was it proper for his subject to meddle with other points, than such as have been perpetually controverted since the Reformation.*

*To instance only in that passage about the three wooden machines, mentioned in the Introduction: In the original manuscript there was a description of a fourth, which those who had the papers in their power, blotted out, as having something in it of satire, that I suppose they thought was too*

<sup>1</sup> P. 57 of this edition. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> In the Tale of a Tub, Dryden is repeatedly mentioned with great disrespect, not only as a translator and original author, but a mean-spirited sycophant of the great. The passage here alluded to occurs in the Essay on Satire, which Dryden prefixed to his version of Juvenal. The recollection of his condemned Odes still rankled in Swift's bosom, though Dryden died four years before the publication of the Tale of a Tub. [S.]

*particular ; and therefore they were forced to change it to the number Three, from whence some have endeavoured to squeeze out a dangerous meaning, that was never thought on. And, indeed, the conceit was half spoiled by changing the numbers ; that of Four being much more cabalistic, and, therefore, better exposing the pretended virtue of Numbers, a superstition there intended to be ridiculed.*

*Another thing to be observed is, that there generally runs an irony through the thread of the whole book, which the men of taste will observe and distinguish ; and which will render some objections that have been made, very weak and insignificant.*

*This Apology being chiefly intended for the satisfaction of future readers, it may be thought unnecessary to take any notice of such treatises as have been written against this ensuing discourse, which are already sunk into waste paper and oblivion, after the usual fate of common answerers to books which are allowed to have any merit : They are indeed like annuals, that grow about a young tree, and seem to vie with it for a summer, but fall and die with the leaves in autumn, and are never heard of any more. When Dr. Eachard<sup>1</sup> writ his book about the Contempt of the Clergy, numbers of these answerers immediately started up, whose memory, if he had not kept alive by his replies, it would now be utterly unknown that he were ever answered at all. There is indeed an exception, when any great genius thinks it worth his while to expose a foolish piece ; so we still read Marvell's Answer to Parker<sup>2</sup> with pleasure, though the book it answers be sunk long ago : so the Earl of Orrery's remarks will be read with delight, when the Dissertation he exposes will neither be sought nor found :<sup>3</sup> but these are no enterprizes for common hands, nor*

<sup>1</sup> John Eachard, D.D. (1636-1697), was Master of Catherine Hall, Cambridge. The book referred to by Swift was published in 1670. His attack on Hobbes in two dialogues is characterized by a delightful humour. A fairly complete edition of his works was issued in 3 vols. sm. 8vo. in 1774. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Parker, afterwards Bishop of Oxford, wrote many treatises against the dissenters, with insolence and contempt, says Burnet, that enraged them beyond measure ; for which he was chastised by Andrew Marvell, under-secretary to Milton, in a little book called the Rehearsal Transposed. [S.]

<sup>3</sup> Boyle's "Remarks upon Bentley's Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris."



*to be hoped for above once or twice in an age. Men would be more cautious of losing their time in such an undertaking, if they did but consider, that, to answer a book effectually, requires more pains and skill, more wit, learning, and judgment, than were employed in the writing of it. And the author assures those gentlemen, who have given themselves that trouble with him, that his discourse is the product of the study, the observation, and the invention of several years; that he often blotted out much more than he left, and if his papers had not been a long time out of his possession, they must have still undergone more severe corrections: and do they think such a building is to be battered with dirt-pellets, however envenomed the mouths may be that discharge them? He hath seen the productions but of two answerers, one of which at first appeared as from an unknown hand, but since avowed by a person,<sup>1</sup> who, upon some occasions, hath discovered no ill vein of humour. 'Tis a pity any occasion should put him under a necessity of being so hasty in his productions, which, otherwise, might often be entertaining. But there were other reasons obvious enough for his miscarriage in this; he writ against the conviction of his talent, and entered upon one of the wrongest attempts in nature, to turn into ridicule, by a week's labour, a work which had cost so much time, and met with so much success in ridiculing others: the manner how he has handled his subject I have now forgot, having just looked it over, when it first came out, as others did, merely for the sake of the title.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Dr. William King (1663-1712), author of an answer to Lord Molesworth's Account of Denmark. His burlesque on the Royal Society, the "Transactioneer," and his "Journey to London," both ironical pieces of merit, are better known works. He took a part in the Bentley-Phalaris controversy, and wrote for the "Examiner" in 1710. In 1703 he went over to Ireland and filled several important official positions, including that of Judge of the Admiralty. At Sacheverell's trial he was one of that doctor's defenders. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> A specimen of King's humour may entertain the reader:—"A certain gentleman, that is the nearest to you of any person, was mentioned, upon supposition that the book had wit and learning in it; but when I had displayed it in its proper colours, I must do the company that justice, that there was not one but acquitted you. That matter being dispatched, every one was at their liberty of guessing. One said, he believed it was a journeyman tailor, in Billeter-lane, that was an idle sort of a fellow, and loved writing more than stitching, that was the author; his reason was, 'because he is so desirous to



*The other answer is from a person of a graver character, and is made up of half invective, and half annotation;<sup>1</sup> in the latter of which, he hath generally succeeded well enough. And the project at that time was not amiss to draw in readers to his pamphlet, several having appeared desirous that there might be some explication of the more difficult passages. Neither can he be altogether blamed for offering at the invective part, because it is agreed on all hands, that the author had given him sufficient provocation. The great objection is against his manner of treating it, very unsuitable to one of his function. It was determined by a fair majority, that this answerer had, in a way not to be pardoned, drawn his pen against a certain*

mention his goose and his garret;’ but it was answered, ‘that he was a member of the society;’ and so he was excused. ‘But why then,’ says another, ‘since he makes such a parable upon coats, may it not be Mr. Amy, the coat-seller, who is a poet and a wit?’ To which it was replied, that that gentleman’s loss had been bewailed in an elegy some years ago. ‘Why may it not be Mr. Gumly, the rag-woman’s husband, in Turnbull-street?’ Says another, ‘He is kept by her, and having little to do, and having been an officer in Monmouth’s army, since the defeat at Sedgemore, has always been a violent Tory.’ But it was urged that his style was harsh, rough, and unpolished; and that he did not understand one word of Latin. ‘Why, then,’ cries another, ‘Oliver’s porter had an amanuensis at Bedlam, that used to transcribe what he dictated: and may not these be some scattered notes of his master’s?’ To which all replied, that though Oliver’s porter was crazed, yet his misfortune never let him forget that he was a Christian. One said, it was a surgeon’s man, that had married a midwife’s nurse; but though by the style it might seem probable that two such persons had a hand in it; yet, since he could not name the persons, his fancy was rejected. ‘I conjecture,’ says another, ‘that it may be a lawyer, that——’ When, on a sudden, he was interrupted by Mr. Markland, the scrivener, ‘No, rather, by the oaths, it should be an Irish evidence.’ At last there stood up a sprant young man, that is secretary to a scavenger, and cried, ‘What if, after all, it should be a parson! for who may make more free with their trade? What if I know him, describe him, name him, and how he and his friends talk of it, admire it, are proud of it.’—‘Hold,’ cry all the company; ‘that function must not be mentioned without respect. We have enough of the dirty subject; we had better drink our coffee, and talk our politicks.’—*Remarks on the Tale of a Tub, apud Dr. King’s Works, 1776, i. 217.*

It must be remembered to Swift’s honour, that this rude and malignant criticism did not prevent his befriending King, when his intimacy with Harley gave him an opportunity of conferring benefits. [S.]

<sup>1</sup> Wotton’s Defence of his Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning, published in 1705. [T. S.]

great man then alive, and universally revered for every good quality that could possibly enter into the composition of the most accomplished person; it was observed how he was pleased, and affected to have that noble writer called his adversary; and it was a point of satire well directed; for I have been told Sir W[illiam] T[emple] was sufficiently mortified at the term. All the men of wit and politeness were immediately up in arms through indignation, which prevailed over their contempt, by the consequences they apprehended from such an example; and it grew Porsenna's case; idem trecenti juravimus. In short, things were ripe for a general insurrection, till my Lord Orrery had a little laid the spirit, and settled the ferment. But, his lordship being principally engaged with another antagonist,<sup>1</sup> it was thought necessary, in order to quiet the minds of men, that this opposer should receive a reprimand, which partly occasioned that discourse of the Battle of the Books; and the author was farther at the pains to insert one or two remarks on him, in the body of the book.

This answerer has been pleased to find fault with about a dozen passages, which the author will not be at the trouble of defending, further than by assuring the reader, that, for the greater part, the reflecter is entirely mistaken, and forces interpretations which never once entered into the writer's head, nor will he is sure into that of any reader of taste and candour; he allows two or three at most, there produced, to have been delivered unwarily: for which he desires to plead the excuse offered already, of his youth, and frankness of speech, and his papers being out of his power at the time they were published.

But this answerer insists, and says, what he chiefly dislikes, is the design: what that was, I have already told, and I believe there is not a person in England who can understand that book, that ever imagined it to have been anything else, but to expose the abuses and corruptions in Learning and Religion.

But it would be good to know what design this reflecter was serving, when he concludes his pamphlet with a Caution to the Reader to beware of thinking the author's wit was entirely his own: surely this must have had some allay of personal animosity at least, mixed with the design of serving the public, by so useful a discovery; and it indeed touches the author in a

<sup>1</sup> Bentley concerning Phalaris and Æsop.



tender point; who insists upon it, that through the whole book he has not borrowed one single hint from any writer in the world; and he thought, of all criticisms, that would never have been one. He conceived, it was never disputed to be an original, whatever faults it might have. However, this answerer produces three instances to prove this author's wit is not his own in many places. The first is, that the names of Peter, Martin, and Jack, are borrowed from a letter of the late Duke of Buckingham. Whatever wit is contained in those three names, the author is content to give it up, and desires his readers will subtract as much as they placed upon that account; at the same time protesting solemnly, that he never once heard of that letter except in this passage of the answerer: so that the names were not borrowed, as he affirms, though they should happen to be the same; which, however, is odd enough, and what he hardly believes: that of Jack being not quite so obvious as the other two. The second instance to shew the author's wit is not his own, is Peter's banter (as he calls it in his *Alsatia* phrase) upon Transubstantiation, which is taken from the same duke's conference with an Irish priest, where a cork is turned into a horse. This the author confesses to have seen about ten years after his book was writ, and a year or two after it was published. Nay, the answerer overthrows this himself; for he allows the Tale was written in 1697; and I think that pamphlet was not printed in many years after. It was necessary that corruption should have some allegory as well as the rest; and the author invented the properest he could, without inquiring what other people had written; and the commonest reader will find, there is not the least resemblance between the two stories.—The third instance is in these words; “I have been assured, that the battle in St. James's Library is, *mutatis mutandis*, taken out of a French book, entitled, *Combat des Livres*,<sup>1</sup> if I mis-remember not.” In which passage there are two clauses observable; “I have been assured;” and, “if I mis-remember not.” I desire first to know whether, if that conjecture proves an utter falsehood, those two clauses will be a sufficient excuse for this worthy critic? The matter is a trifle; but, would he venture to pro-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Craik correctly points out that the author of this book, a copy of which is in the British Museum, was François de Callières, the diplomatist and Academician. [T. S.]



nounce at this rate upon one of greater moment? I know nothing more contemptible in a writer, than the character of a plagiarist, which he here fixes at a venture; and this not for a passage, but a whole discourse, taken out from another book, only *mutatis mutandis*. The author is as much in the dark about this as the answerer; and will imitate him by an affirmation at random; that if there be a word of truth in this reflection, he is a paltry, imitating pedant; and the answerer is a person of wit, manners, and truth. He takes his boldness, from never having seen any such treatise in his life, nor heard of it before; and he is sure it is impossible for two writers, of different times and countries, to agree in their thoughts after such a manner, that two continued discourses shall be the same, only *mutatis mutandis*. Neither will he insist upon the mistake of the title, but let the answerer and his friend produce any book they please, he defies them to shew one single particular, where the judicious reader will affirm he has been obliged for the smallest hint; giving only allowance for the accidental encountering of a single thought, which he knows may sometimes happen; though he has never yet found it in that discourse, nor has heard it objected by anybody else.

So that, if ever any design was unfortunately executed, it must be that of this answerer; who, when he would have it observed, that the author's wit is not his own, is able to produce but three instances, two of them mere trifles, and all three manifestly false. If this be the way these gentlemen deal with the world in those criticisms, where we have not leisure to defeat them, their readers had need be cautious how they rely upon their credit; and whether this proceeding can be reconciled to humanity or truth, let those who think it worth their while determine.

It is agreed, this answerer would have succeeded much better, if he had stuck wholly to his business, as a commentator upon the Tale of a Tub, wherein it cannot be denied that he hath been of some service to the public, and hath given very fair conjectures towards clearing up some difficult passages;<sup>1</sup> but it is the frequent error of those men, (otherwise very commendable for their labours,) to make excursions beyond their talent and their office, by pretending to point out the beauties and the

<sup>1</sup> Which have been retained in all editions subsequent to the third.  
[T. S.]

*faults ; which is no part of their trade, which they always fail in, which the world never expected from them, nor gave them any thanks for endeavouring at. The part of Minellius, or Farnaby,<sup>1</sup> would have fallen in with his genius, and might have been serviceable to many readers, who cannot enter into the abstruser parts of that discourse ; but optat ephippia bos piger : the dull, unwieldy, ill-shaped ox, would needs put on the furniture of a horse, not considering he was born to labour, to plough the ground for the sake of superior beings, and that he has neither the shape, mettle, nor speed, of the nobler animal he would affect to personate.*

*It is another pattern of this answerer's fair dealing, to give us hints that the author is dead, and yet to lay the suspicion upon somebody, I know not who, in the country ; to which can only be returned, that he is absolutely mistaken in all his conjectures ; and surely conjectures are, at best, too light a pretence to allow a man to assign a name in public. He condemns a book, and consequently the author, of whom he is utterly ignorant ; yet at the same time fixes, in print, what he thinks a disadvantageous character upon those who never deserved it. A man who receives a buffet in the dark, may be allowed to be vexed ; but it is an odd kind of revenge, to go to cuffs in broad day with the first he meets with, and lay the last night's injury at his door. And thus much for this discreet, candid, pious, and ingenious answerer.*

*How the author came to be without his papers, is a story not proper to be told, and of very little use, being a private fact of which the reader would believe as little, or as much, as he thought good. He had, however, a blotted copy by him, which he intended to have writ over with many alterations, and this the publishers were well aware of, having put it into the book-seller's preface, that they apprehended a surreptitious copy, which was to be altered, &c. This, though not regarded by readers, was a real truth, only the surreptitious copy was rather that which was printed ; and they made all haste they could, which, indeed, was needless ; the author not being at all prepared ; but he has been told the bookseller was in much pain, having given a good sum of money for the copy.*

<sup>1</sup> Low commentators, who wrote notes upon classic authors for the use of schoolboys. [S.]



*In the author's original copy there were not so many chasms as appear in the book ; and why some of them were left, he knows not ; had the publication been trusted to him, he would have made several corrections of passages, against which nothing hath been ever objected. He would likewise have altered a few of those, that seem with any reason to be excepted against ; but, to deal freely, the greatest number he should have left untouched, as never suspecting it possible any wrong interpretations could be made of them.*

*The author observes, at the end of the book, there is a discourse called A Fragment, which he more wondered to see in print than all the rest. Having been a most imperfect sketch, with the addition of a few loose hints, which he once lent a gentleman, who had designed a discourse on somewhat the same subject ; he never thought of it afterwards ; and it was a sufficient surprise to see it pieced up together, wholly out of the method and scheme he had intended ; for it was the ground-work of a much larger discourse ; and he was sorry to observe the materials so foolishly employed.*

*There is one farther objection made by those who have answered this book, as well as by some others, that Peter is frequently made to repeat oaths and curses. Every reader observes, it was necessary to know that Peter did swear and curse. The oaths are not printed out, but only supposed ; and the idea of an oath is not immoral, like the idea of a profane or immodest speech. A man may laugh at the Popish folly of cursing people to hell, and imagine them swearing, without any crime ; but lewd words, or dangerous opinions, though printed by halves, fill the reader's mind with ill ideas ; and of these the author cannot be accused. For the judicious reader will find, that the severest strokes of satire in his book are levelled against the modern custom of employing wit upon those topics ; of which there is a remarkable instance in the 153rd<sup>1</sup> page, as well as in several others, though perhaps once or twice expressed in too free a manner, excusable only for the reasons already alleged. Some overtures have been made, by a third hand, to the bookseller, for the author's altering those passages which he thought might require it ; but it seems the bookseller will not hear of any such thing, being apprehensive it might spoil the sale of the book.*

<sup>1</sup> P. 104 of this edition. [T. S.]



*The author cannot conclude this apology without making this one reflection ; that, as wit is the noblest and most useful gift of human nature, so humour is the most agreeable ; and where these two enter far into the composition of any work, they will render it always acceptable to the world. Now, the great part of those who have no share or taste of either, but by their pride, pedantry, and ill manners, lay themselves bare to the lashes of both, think the blow is weak, because they are insensible ; and, where wit has any mixture of raillery, 'tis but calling it banter, and the work is done. This polite word of theirs was first borrowed from the bullies in White-Friars, then fell among the footmen, and at last retired to the pedants ; by whom it is applied as properly to the production of wit, as if I should apply it to Sir Isaac Newton's mathematics. But, if this bantering, as they call it, be so despicable a thing, whence comes it to pass they have such a perpetual itch towards it themselves ? To instance only in the answerer already mentioned : it is grievous to see him, in some of his writings, at every turn going out of his way to be waggish, to tell us of a cow that pricked up her tail ; and in his answer to this discourse, he says, it is all a farce and a ladle ; with other passages equally shining. One may say of these impedimenta literarum, that wit owes them a shame ; and they cannot take wiser counsel than to keep out of harm's way, or, at least, not to come till they are sure they are called.*

*To conclude : with those allowances above required, this book should be read ; after which, the author conceives, few things will remain which may not be excused in a young writer. He wrote only to the men of wit and taste ; and he thinks he is not mistaken in his accounts, when he says they have been all of his side, enough to give him the vanity of telling his name ; wherein the world, with all its wise conjectures, is yet very much in the dark ; which circumstance is no disagreeable amusement either to the public or himself.*

*The author is informed, that the bookseller has prevailed on several gentlemen to write some explanatory notes ; for the goodness of which he is not to answer, having never seen any of them, nor intends it, till they appear in print ; when it is not unlikely he may have the pleasure to find twenty meanings which never entered into his imagination.*

*June 3, 1709.*

## POSTSCRIPT.

*SINCE the writing of this, which was about a year ago, a prostitute bookseller<sup>1</sup> has published a foolish paper, under the name of Notes on the Tale of a Tub, with some account of the author: and, with an insolence which, I suppose, is punishable by law, hath presumed to assign certain names. It will be enough for the author to assure the world, that the writer of that paper is utterly wrong in all his conjectures upon that affair. The author farther asserts, that the whole work is entirely of one hand, which every reader of judgment will easily discover. The gentleman who gave the copy to the bookseller, being a friend of the author, and using no other liberties besides that of expunging certain passages, where now the chasms appear under the name of desiderata. But, if any person will prove his claim to three lines in the whole book, let him step forth, and tell his name and titles; upon which, the bookseller shall have orders to prefix them to the next edition, and the claimant shall from henceforward be acknowledged the undisputed author.*

<sup>1</sup> The bookseller referred to was Edmund Curll, who was lampooned by Pope in the "Dunciad." His publications were largely made up of forgeries and libels, for which they are now much sought after. In 1710 he issued an edition of Swift's "Meditation upon a Broomstick," which contained also the "Baucis and Philemon," but the work was issued, of course, entirely on his own responsibility. He had his ears cut off for publishing "The Nun in her Smock." He died in 1748. [T. S.]

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN LORD SOMERS.

MY LORD,

THO' the author has written a large Dedication, yet that being addressed to a prince, whom I am never likely to have the honour of being known to; a person besides, as far as I can observe, not at all regarded, or thought on by any of our present writers; and being wholly free from that slavery which booksellers usually lie under, to the caprices of authors; I think it a wise piece of presumption to inscribe these papers to your Lordship, and to implore your Lordship's protection of them. God and your Lordship know their faults and their merits; for, as to my own particular, I am altogether a stranger to the matter; and though everybody else should be equally ignorant, I do not fear the sale of the book, at all the worse, upon that score. Your Lordship's name on the front in capital letters will at any time get off one edition: neither would I desire any other help to grow an alderman, than a patent for the sole privilege of dedicating to your Lordship.

I should now, in right of a dedicator, give your Lordship a list of your own virtues, and, at the same time, be very unwilling to offend your modesty; but chiefly, I should celebrate your liberality towards men of great parts and small fortunes, and give you broad hints that I mean myself. And I was just going on, in the usual method, to peruse a hundred or two of dedications, and transcribe an abstract to be applied to your Lordship; but I was diverted by a certain accident. For, upon the covers of these papers, I casually observed written in large letters the two following words,



DETUR DIGNISSIMO ; which, for aught I knew, might contain some important meaning. But it unluckily fell out, that none of the authors I employ understood Latin ; (though I have them often in pay to translate out of that language ;) I was therefore compelled to have recourse to the curate of our parish, who englished it thus, *Let it be given to the worthiest* : and his comment was, that the author meant his work should be dedicated to the sublimest genius of the age for wit, learning, judgment, eloquence, and wisdom. I called at a poet's chamber (who works for my shop) in an alley hard by, shewed him the translation, and desired his opinion, who it was that the author could mean : he told me, after some consideration, that vanity was a thing he abhorred ; but, by the description, he thought himself to be the person aimed at ; and, at the same time, he very kindly offered his own assistance *gratis* towards penning a dedication to himself. I desired him, however, to give a second guess. Why, then, said he, it must be I, or my Lord Somers. From thence I went to several other wits of my acquaintance, with no small hazard and weariness to my person, from a prodigious number of dark, winding stairs ; but found them all in the same story, both of your Lordship and themselves. Now, your Lordship is to understand, that this proceeding was not of my own invention ; for I have somewhere heard it is a maxim, that those to whom everybody allows the second place, have an undoubted title to the first.

This infallibly convinced me, that your Lordship was the person intended by the author. But, being very unacquainted in the style and form of dedications, I employed those wits aforesaid to furnish me with hints and materials, towards a panegyric upon your Lordship's virtues.

In two days they brought me ten sheets of paper, filled up on every side. They swore to me, that they had ransacked whatever could be found in the characters of *Socrates*, *Aristides*, *Epaminondas*, *Cato*, *Tully*, *Atticus*, and other hard names, which I cannot now recollect. However, I have reason to believe, they imposed upon my ignorance ; because, when I came to read over their collections, there was not a syllable there, but what I and everybody else knew as well as themselves : Therefore I grievously suspect a cheat ; and that these authors of mine stole and transcribed every word,

from the universal report of mankind. So that I look upon myself as fifty shillings out of pocket, to no manner of purpose.

If, by altering the title, I could make the same materials serve for another Dedication, (as my betters have done,) it would help to make up my loss ; but I have made several persons dip here and there in those papers, and before they read three lines, they have all assured me plainly, that they cannot possibly be applied to any person besides your Lordship.

I expected, indeed, to have heard of your Lordship's bravery at the head of an army ; of your undaunted courage in mounting a breach, or scaling a wall ; or, to have had your pedigree traced in a lineal descent from the house of Austria ; or, of your wonderful talent at dress and dancing ; or, your profound knowledge in algebra, metaphysics, and the oriental tongues. But to ply the world with an old beaten story of your wit, and eloquence, and learning, and wisdom, and justice, and politeness, and candour, and evenness of temper in all scenes of life ; of that great discernment in discovering, and readiness in favouring deserving men ; with forty other common topics ; I confess, I have neither conscience nor countenance to do it. Because there is no virtue, either of a public or private life, which some circumstances of your own have not often produced upon the stage of the world ; and those few, which, for want of occasions to exert them, might otherwise have passed unseen, or unobserved, by your *friends*, your *enemies* have at length brought to light.

'Tis true, I should be very loth, the bright example of your Lordship's virtues should be lost to after-ages, both for their sake and your own ; but chiefly because they will be so very necessary to adorn the history of a *late reign* ;<sup>1</sup> and that is another reason why I would forbear to make a recital of them here ; because I have been told by wise men, that, as Dedications have run for some years past, a good historian will not be apt to have recourse thither in search of characters.

<sup>1</sup> King William's, whose memory he defended in the House of Lords against some invidious reflections of the Earl of Nottingham. [S.]

There is one point, wherein I think we dedicators would do well to change our measures ; I mean, instead of running on so far upon the praise of our patrons' *liberality*, to spend a word or two in admiring their *patience*. I can put no greater compliment on your Lordship's, than by giving you so ample an occasion to exercise it at present.—Though perhaps I shall not be apt to reckon much merit to your Lordship upon that score, who having been formerly used to tedious harangues, and sometimes to as little purpose, will be the readier to pardon this ; especially, when it is offered by one, who is with all respect and veneration,

MY LORD,<sup>1</sup>

*Your Lordship's most obedient,*

*And most faithful servant,*

THE BOOKSELLER.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John, Lord Somers, was born March 4, 1650. He early distinguished himself on the question of the abdication of the throne, shortly after his election to the Convention Parliament, in 1688. He held successively the offices of Solicitor and Attorney-General, and in 1693 was appointed Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. Advancement quickly followed on advancement, and in a few years he was raised to the peerage and made Lord Chancellor. The disgraceful quarrels which divided the two Houses in 1701 reached their climax in the Commons impeaching four Whig ministers, upon whom the blame of the Partition Treaties was laid. Among these was Somers. It was to bring about an understanding, and, possibly, to help Somers, that Swift wrote his first political pamphlet, the "Contests and Dissensions between the Nobles and the Commons in Athens and Rome." Previous to his impeachment, in 1700, Somers had been deprived of the seals, but after his acquittal he was again taken into favour. To him is largely due the union of England and Scotland. Although he was made president of the council in 1708, yet two years later he retired into private life, and devoted himself to literary pursuits. He died in 1716, remaining to the last a warm patron of literature and of men of letters. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> The bookseller in whose person Swift writes this dedication was, of course, John Nutt. [T. S.]





## THE BOOKSELLER TO THE READER.

*I*T is now six years since these papers came first to my hand, which seems to have been about a twelvemonth after they were writ; for the author tells us in his preface to the first treatise, that he has calculated it for the year 1697, and in several passages of that Discourse, as well as the second, it appears they were written about that time.

As to the author, I can give no manner of satisfaction; however, I am credibly informed, that this publication is without his knowledge; for he concludes the copy is lost, having lent it to a person, since dead, and being never in possession of it after: so that, whether the work received his last hand, or whether he intended to fill up the defective places, is like to remain a secret.

If I should go about to tell the reader, by what accident I became master of these papers, it would, in this unbelieving age, pass for little more than the cant or jargon of the trade. I therefore gladly spare both him and myself so unnecessary a trouble. There yet remains a difficult question, why I published them no sooner. I forbore upon two accounts; first, because I thought I had better work upon my hands; and secondly, because I was not without some hope of hearing from the author, and receiving his directions. But I have been lately alarmed with intelligence of a surreptitious copy, which a certain great wit had new polished and refined, or, as our present writers express themselves, fitted to the humour of the age; as they have already done, with great felicity, to Don Quixote, Boccacini, la Bruyere, and other authors. However, I thought it fairer dealing to offer the whole work in its naturals. If any gentleman will please to furnish me with a key, in order to explain the more difficult parts, I shall very gratefully acknowledge the favour, and print it by itself.





## THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY,

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

### PRINCE POSTERITY.<sup>1</sup>

SIR,

I HERE present Your Highness with the fruits of a very few leisure hours, stolen from the short intervals of a world of business, and of an employment quite alien from such amusements as this ; the poor production of that refuse of time, which has lain heavy upon my hands, during a long prorogation of parliament, a great dearth of foreign news, and a tedious fit of rainy weather ; for which, and other reasons, it cannot choose extremely to deserve such a patronage as that of Your Highness, whose numberless virtues, in so few years, make the world look upon you as the future example to all princes ; for although Your Highness is hardly got clear of infancy, yet has the universal learned world already resolved upon appealing to your future dictates, with the lowest and most resigned submission ; fate having decreed you sole arbiter of the productions of human wit, in this polite and most accomplished age. Methinks, the number of appellants were enough to shock and startle any judge, of a genius less unlimited than yours : but, in order to prevent such glorious trials, the person (it seems) to whose care the education of

<sup>1</sup> The Citation of Irenæus in the title-page, which seems to be all gibberish, is a form of initiation used antiently by the Marcosian Heretics. —W. WOTTON.

It is the usual style of decried writers to appeal to Posterity, who is here represented as a prince in his nonage, and Time as his governor ; and the author begins in a way very frequent with him, by personating other writers, who sometimes offer such reasons and excuses for publishing their works, as they ought chiefly to conceal and be ashamed of.

Your Highness is committed,<sup>1</sup> has resolved (as I am told) to keep you in almost a universal ignorance of our studies, which it is your inherent birth-right to inspect.

It is amazing to me, that this person should have assurance, in the face of the sun, to go about persuading Your Highness, that our age is almost wholly illiterate, and has hardly produced one writer upon any subject. I know very well, that when Your Highness shall come to riper years, and have gone through the learning of antiquity, you will be too curious, to neglect inquiring into the authors of the very age before you : and to think that this insolent, in the account he is preparing for your view, designs to reduce them to a number so insignificant as I am ashamed to mention ; it moves my zeal and my spleen for the honour and interest of our vast flourishing body, as well as of myself, for whom, I know by long experience, he has professed, and still continues, a peculiar malice.

'Tis not unlikely, that, when Your Highness will one day peruse what I am now writing, you may be ready to expostulate with your governor, upon the credit of what I here affirm, and command him to shew you some of our productions. To which he will answer, (for I am well informed of his designs,) by asking Your Highness, where they are? and what is become of them? and pretend it a demonstration that there never were any, because they are not then to be found. Not to be found! Who has mislaid them? Are they sunk in the abyss of things? 'Tis certain, that in their own nature, they were light enough to swim upon the surface for all eternity. Therefore the fault is in him, who tied weights so heavy to their heels, as to depress them to the centre. Is their very essence destroyed? Who has annihilated them? Were they drowned by purges, or martyred by pipes? Who administered them to the posteriors of ——? But, that it may no longer be a doubt with Your Highness, who is to be the author of this universal ruin, I beseech you to observe that large and terrible scythe which your governor affects to bear continually about him. Be pleased to remark the length and strength, the sharpness and hardness, of his nails and teeth : consider his baneful, abominable breath,

<sup>1</sup> *Time*, allegorically described as the tutor of Posterity. [S.]

enemy to life and matter, infectious and corrupting : and then reflect, whether it be possible, for any mortal ink and paper of this generation, to make a suitable resistance. O ! that Your Highness would one day resolve to disarm this usurping *maitre du palais*<sup>1</sup> of his furious engines, and bring your empire *hors de page*.<sup>2</sup>

It were endless to recount the several methods of tyranny and destruction, which your governor is pleased to practise upon this occasion. His inveterate malice is such to the writings of our age, that of several thousands produced yearly from this renowned city, before the next revolution of the sun, there is not one to be heard of : Unhappy infants ! many of them barbarously destroyed, before they have so much as learnt their mother tongue to beg for pity. Some he stifles in their cradles ; others he frights into convulsions, whereof they suddenly die ; some he flays alive ; others he tears limb from limb. Great numbers are offered to *Moloch* ; and the rest, tainted by his breath, die of a languishing consumption.

But the concern I have most at heart, is for our corporation of poets ; from whom I am preparing a petition to Your Highness, to be subscribed with the names of one hundred and thirty-six of the first rate ; but whose immortal productions are never likely to reach your eyes, though each of them is now an humble and earnest appellant for the laurel, and has large comely volumes ready to shew, for a support to his pretensions. The *never-dying* works of these illustrious persons, your governor, sir, has devoted to unavoidable death ; and Your Highness is to be made believe, that our age has never arrived at the honour to produce one single poet.

We confess Immortality to be a great and powerful goddess ; but in vain we offer up to her our devotions and our sacrifices, if Your Highness's governor, who has usurped the priesthood, must, by an unparalleled ambition and avarice, wholly intercept and devour them.

To affirm that our age is altogether unlearned, and devoid

<sup>1</sup> Comptroller. The kingdom of France had a race of kings, which they call *les roys faineans*, (from their doing nothing,) who lived lazily in their apartments, while the kingdom was administered by the *mayor de palais*, till Charles Martell, the last mayor, put his master to death, and took the kingdom into his own hand.

<sup>2</sup> Out of guardianship.



of writers in any kind, seems to be an assertion so bold and so false, that I have been some time thinking, the contrary may almost be proved by uncontrollable demonstration. 'Tis true, indeed, that although their numbers be vast, and their productions numerous in proportion, yet are they hurried so hastily off the scene, that they escape our memory, and elude our sight. When I first thought of this address, I had prepared a copious list of titles to present Your Highness, as an undisputed argument for what I affirm. The originals were posted fresh upon all gates and corners of streets ; but, returning in a very few hours to take a review, they were all torn down, and fresh ones in their places. I inquired after them among readers and booksellers ; but I inquired in vain ; the *memorial of them was lost among men ; their place was no more to be found* ; and I was laughed to scorn for a clown and a pedant, without all taste and refinement, little versed in the course of present affairs, and that knew nothing of what had passed in the best companies of court and town. So that I can only avow in general to Your Highness, that we do abound in learning and wit ; but to fix upon particulars, is a task too slippery for my slender abilities. If I should venture in a windy day to affirm to Your Highness, that there is a large cloud near the horizon, in the form of a bear ; another in the zenith, with the head of an ass ; a third to the westward, with claws like a dragon ; and Your Highness should in a few minutes think fit to examine the truth, it is certain they would all be changed in figure and position : new ones would arise, and all we could agree upon would be, that clouds there were, but that I was grossly mistaken in the zoography and topography of them.

But your governor perhaps may still insist, and put the question,—What is then become of those immense bales of paper, which must needs have been employed in such numbers of books ? Can these also be wholly annihilate, and so of a sudden, as I pretend ? What shall I say in return of so invidious an objection ? It ill befits the distance between Your Highness and me, to send you for ocular conviction to a jakes, or an oven ; to the windows of a bawdy-house, or to a sordid lantern. Books, like men their authors, have no more than one way of coming into the world, but there are ten thousand to go out of it, and return no more.

I profess to Your Highness, in the integrity of my heart, that what I am going to say is literally true this minute I am writing : what revolutions may happen before it shall be ready for your perusal, I can by no means warrant : however, I beg you to accept it as a specimen of our learning, our politeness, and our wit. I do therefore affirm, upon the word of a sincere man, that there is now actually in being a certain poet, called John Dryden, whose translation of Virgil was lately printed<sup>1</sup> in a large folio, well bound, and, if diligent search were made, for aught I know, is yet to be seen. There is another, called Nahum Tate,<sup>2</sup> who is ready to make oath, that he has caused many reams of verse to be published, whereof both himself and his bookseller, (if lawfully required,) can still produce authentic copies, and therefore wonders why the world is pleased to make such a secret of it. There is a third, known by the name of Tom Durfey,<sup>3</sup> a poet of a vast comprehension, an universal genius, and most profound learning. There are also one Mr. Rymer,<sup>4</sup> and one Mr. Dennis,<sup>5</sup> most profound critics. There is a person styled Dr. B—tl-y, who has written near a thousand pages of immense erudition, *giving a full and true account* of a certain squabble, of wonderful importance, between himself and a bookseller : He is a writer of infinite wit and humour ; no man rallies with a better grace, and in more sprightly turns.

<sup>1</sup> Dryden published his translation of Virgil in 1697, about seven months before Swift would have us believe he wrote this Dedication. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Nahum Tate (1652-1715) assisted Dryden in the composition of some of his works, especially the "Absalom and Achitophel." He is best known for his metrical version of the Psalms. [T. S.]

<sup>3</sup> Tom Durfey or D'Urfey, was the author of "Wit and Mirth, or Pills to Purge Melancholy," a collection of ballads which kept the town alive, and which is even now much appreciated by not a few. He died in February, 1722-23. [T. S.]

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Rymer (1638-1713) was historiographer in 1692, and in that capacity compiled the great folios of the "Fœdera," of which he lived to edit fifteen. Swift, in including him with Wotton and Bentley, refers to the pamphlets Rymer wrote against the Christ Church wits in controversy about Ancient and Modern Learning. [T. S.]

<sup>5</sup> John Dennis (1657-1733), poet and dramatist, wrote some plays which had more than the average success. In particular, his "Liberty Asserted," on account of its severe strictures on the French people, made a great hit. Dennis, however, is now known more for his intemperate criticisms, which caused him to be the object of the satire of the wits of his day. [T. S.]

Farther, I avow to Your Highness, that with these eyes I have beheld the person of William W-tt-n, B.D., who has written a good sizeable volume against a friend of your governor,<sup>1</sup> (from whom, alas! he must therefore look for little favour,) in a most gentlemanly style, adorned with the utmost politeness and civility; replete with discoveries equally valuable for their novelty and use; and embellished with traits of wit, so poignant and so apposite, that he is a worthy yokemate to his forementioned friend.

Why should I go upon farther particulars, which might fill a volume with the just eulogies of my contemporary brethren? I shall bequeath this piece of justice to a larger work, wherein I intend to write a character of the present set of wits in our nation: their persons I shall describe particularly and at length, their genius and understandings in miniature.

In the meantime, I do here make bold to present Your Highness with a faithful abstract, drawn from the universal body of all arts and sciences, intended wholly for your service and instruction. Nor do I doubt in the least, but Your Highness will peruse it as carefully, and make as considerable improvements, as other young princes have already done, by the many volumes of late years written for a help to their studies.<sup>2</sup>

That Your Highness may advance in wisdom and virtue, as well as years, and at last outshine all your royal ancestors, shall be the daily prayer of,

*Sir,*

*Your Highness's,*

*Most devoted, &c.*

*Decemb. 1697.*

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Temple, whose praise of Phalaris's Epistles brought on him Bentley's criticisms which appeared in the second edition of Wotton's "Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning." [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> There were innumerable books printed for the use of the Dauphin of France. [S.]



## THE PREFACE.

THE wits of the present age being so very numerous and penetrating, it seems the grandees of Church and State begin to fall under horrible apprehensions, lest these gentlemen, during the intervals of a long peace, should find leisure to pick holes in the weak sides of Religion and Government. To prevent which, there has been much thought employed of late, upon certain projects for taking off the force and edge of those formidable enquirers, from canvassing and reasoning upon such delicate points. They have at length fixed upon one, which will require some time as well as cost to perfect. Meanwhile, the danger hourly increasing, by new levies of wits, all appointed (as there is reason to fear) with pen, ink, and paper, which may, at an hour's warning, be drawn out into pamphlets, and other offensive weapons, ready for immediate execution, it was judged of absolute necessity, that some present expedient be thought on, till the main design can be brought to maturity. To this end, at a Grand Committee some days ago, this important discovery was made by a certain curious and refined observer—that seamen have a custom, when they meet a whale, to fling him out an empty tub<sup>1</sup> by way of amusement, to divert him from laying violent hands upon the ship. This parable was immediately mythologised; the whale was interpreted to be Hobbes's *Leviathan*, which tosses and plays with all schemes of Religion and Government, whereof a great many are hollow, and dry, and empty, and noisy, and wooden, and given to rotation: this is the *Leviathan*, whence the terrible wits of our age are said to borrow their weapons. The ship in danger is easily understood to be its old antitype, the Commonwealth. But how to analyze the tub, was a matter of difficulty; when, after long enquiry and debate, the literal meaning was preserved; and it was decreed, that, in order to prevent these Leviathans from tossing and sporting with

<sup>1</sup> Defoe, in his pamphlet on the grievances of Irish Dissenters (1704), describes a Bill as a "Tale of a Tub," in the same sense in which Swift uses the expression here. [T. S.]

the Commonwealth (which of itself is too apt to fluctuate) they should be diverted from that game by a *Tale of a Tub*.<sup>1</sup> And, my genius being conceived to lie not unhappily that way, I had the honour done me to be engaged in the performance.

This is the sole design in publishing the following treatise, which I hope will serve for an *interim* of some months to employ those unquiet spirits, till the perfecting of that great work ; into the secret of which, it is reasonable the courteous reader should have some little light.

It is intended, that a large Academy be erected, capable of containing nine thousand seven hundred forty and three persons ; which, by modest computation, is reckoned to be pretty near the current number of wits in this island. These are to be disposed into the several schools of this academy, and there pursue those studies to which their genius most inclines them. The undertaker himself will publish his proposals with all convenient speed ; to which I shall refer the curious reader for a more particular account, mentioning at present only a few of the principal schools. There is, first, a large Pæderastic School, with French and Italian masters. There is also the Spelling School, a very spacious building : the School of Looking-glasses : the School of Swearing : the School of Critics : the School of Salvation : the School of Hobby-horses : the School of Poetry : the School of Tops : the School of Spleen : the School of Gaming : with many others, too tedious to recount. No person to be admitted member into any of these schools, without an attestation under two sufficient persons' hands, certifying him to be a wit.

But, to return : I am sufficiently instructed in the principal duty of a preface, if my genius were capable of arriving at it. Thrice have I forced my imagination to make the tour of my invention, and thrice it has returned empty ; the latter having been wholly drained by the following treatise. Not so, my more successful brethren the moderns ; who will by no means let slip a preface or dedication, without some notable

<sup>1</sup> Swift, although he had a great respect for Hobbes's genius, and indeed shows in his own writings a strong intellectual kinship with that vigorous thinker, could not overlook Hobbes's attack on religion and his view of absolute government. The "*Leviathan*" was published in 1651. [T. S.]



distinguishing stroke to surprise the reader at the entry, and kindle a wonderful expectation of what is to ensue. Such was that of a most ingenious poet, who, soliciting his brain for something new, compared himself to the hangman, and his patron to the patient: this was *insigne, recens, indictum ore alio*.<sup>1</sup> When I went through that necessary and noble course of study,<sup>2</sup> I had the happiness to observe many such egregious touches, which I shall not injure the authors by transplanting: because I have remarked, that nothing is so very tender as a modern piece of wit, and which is apt to suffer so much in the carriage. Some things are extremely witty to-day, or fasting, or in this place, or at eight o'clock, or over a bottle, or spoke by Mr. What'd'y'call'm, or in a summer's morning: any of the which, by the smallest transposal or misapplication, is utterly annihilate. Thus, wit has its walks and purlieus, out of which it may not stray the breadth of a hair, upon peril of being lost. The moderns have artfully fixed this mercury, and reduced it to the circumstances of time, place, and person. Such a jest there is, that will not pass out of Covent-Garden; and such a one, that is nowhere intelligible but at Hyde-Park corner. Now, though it sometimes tenderly affects me to consider, that all the towardly passages I shall deliver in the following treatise, will grow quite out of date and relish with the first shifting of the present scene, yet I must needs subscribe to the justice of this proceeding: because, I cannot imagine why we should be at the expense to furnish wit for succeeding ages, when the former have made no sort of provision for ours: wherein I speak the sentiment of the very newest, and consequently the most orthodox refiners, as well as my own. However, being extremely solicitous, that every accomplished person, who has got into the taste of wit calculated for this present month of August, 1697, should descend to the very bottom of all the sublime, throughout this treatise; I hold fit to lay down this general maxim: whatever reader desires to have a thorough comprehension of an author's thoughts, cannot take a better method, than by putting himself into the circumstances and postures of

<sup>1</sup> Horace (Odes iii. 25, 8.). Something extraordinary, new and never hit upon before.

<sup>2</sup> Reading Prefaces, &c.



life, that the writer was in upon every important passage, as it flowed from his pen : For this will introduce a parity, and strict correspondence of ideas, between the reader and the author. Now, to assist the diligent reader in so delicate an affair, as far as brevity will permit, I have recollected, that the shrewdest pieces of this treatise were conceived in bed in a garret ; at other times (for a reason best known to myself) I thought fit to sharpen my invention with hunger ; and in general, the whole work was begun, continued, and ended, under a long course of physic, and a great want of money. Now, I do affirm, it will be absolutely impossible for the candid peruser to go along with me in a great many bright passages, unless, upon the several difficulties emergent, he will please to capacitate and prepare himself by these directions. And this I lay down as my principal *postulatum*.

Because I have professed to be a most devoted servant of all modern forms, I apprehend some curious wit may object against me, for proceeding thus far in a preface, without declaiming, according to the custom, against the multitude of writers, whereof the whole multitude of writers most reasonably complains. I am just come from perusing some hundreds of prefaces, wherein the authors do, at the very beginning, address the gentle reader concerning this enormous grievance. Of these I have preserved a few examples, and shall set them down as near as my memory has been able to retain them.

One begins thus :

*For a man to set up for a writer, when the press swarms with, &c.*

Another :

*The tax upon paper does not lessen the number of scribblers, who daily pester, &c.*

Another :

*When every little would-be wit takes pen in hand, 'tis in vain to enter the lists, &c.*

Another :

*To observe what trash the press swarms with, &c.*

Another :

*Sir, It is merely in obedience to your commands, that I*

*venture into the public ; for who upon a less consideration would be of a party with such a rabble of scribblers, &c.*

Now, I have two words in my own defence against this objection. First, I am far from granting the number of writers a nuisance to our nation, having strenuously maintained the contrary, in several parts of the following Discourse. Secondly, I do not well understand the justice of this proceeding ; because I observe many of these polite prefaces to be not only from the same hand, but from those who are most voluminous in their several productions. Upon which, I shall tell the reader a short tale.

*A mountebank, in Leicester-fields, had drawn a huge assembly about him. Among the rest, a fat unwieldy fellow, half stifled in the press, would be every fit crying out, Lord ! what a filthy crowd is here ! Pray, good people, give way a little. Bless me ! what a devil has raked this rabble together ! Z—ds ! what squeezing is this ! Honest friend, remove your elbow. At last a weaver, that stood next him, could hold no longer. A plague confound you, (said he,) for an overgrown sloven ; and who (in the devil's name) I wonder, helps to make up the crowd half so much as yourself ? Don't you consider (with a pox) that you take up more room with that carcase, than any five here ? Is not the place as free for us as for you ? Bring your own guts to a reasonable compass, (and be d—n'd,) and then I'll engage we shall have room enough for us all.*

There are certain common privileges of a writer, the benefit whereof, I hope, there will be no reason to doubt ; particularly, that where I am not understood, it shall be concluded, that something very useful and profound is couched underneath : and again, that whatever word or sentence is printed in a different character, shall be judged to contain something extraordinary either of wit or sublime.

As for the liberty I have thought fit to take of praising myself, upon some occasions or none, I am sure it will need no excuse, if a multitude of great examples be allowed sufficient authority : For it is here to be noted, that praise was originally a pension paid by the world ; but the moderns, finding the trouble and charge too great in collecting it, have lately bought out the fee-simple ; since which time, the right of



presentation is wholly in ourselves. For this reason it is, that when an author makes his own elogy,<sup>1</sup> he uses a certain form to declare and insist upon his title, which is commonly in these or the like words, "I speak without vanity;" which I think plainly shews it to be a matter of right and justice. Now I do here once for all declare, that in every encounter of this nature through the following treatise, the form aforesaid is implied; which I mention, to save the trouble of repeating it on so many occasions.

'Tis a great ease to my conscience, that I have written so elaborate and useful a discourse, without one grain of satire intermixed; which is the sole point wherein I have taken leave to dissent from the famous originals of our age and country. I have observed some satirists to use the public much at the rate that pedants do a naughty boy, ready horsed for discipline: First, expostulate the case, then plead the necessity of the rod from great provocations, and conclude every period with a lash. Now, if I know anything of mankind, these gentlemen might very well spare their reproof and correction: for there is not, through all nature, another so callous and insensible a member, as the world's posteriors, whether you apply to it the toe or the birch. Besides, most of our late satirists seem to lie under a sort of mistake; that because nettles have the prerogative to sting, therefore all other weeds must do so too. I make not this comparison out of the least design to detract from these worthy writers; for it is well known among mythologists, that weeds have the pre-eminence over all other vegetables; and therefore the first monarch of this island, whose taste and judgment were so acute and refined, did very wisely root out the roses from the collar of the Order, and plant the thistles in their stead, as the nobler flower of the two. For which reason it is conjectured by profounder antiquaries, that the satirical itch, so prevalent in this part of our island, was first brought among us from beyond the Tweed. Here may it long flourish and abound: may it survive and neglect the scorn of the world, with as much ease and contempt, as the world is insensible to the lashes of it. May their own dulness, or that of their party, be no discouragement for the

<sup>1</sup> Used in the sense of "eulogy," as it often was used in Swift's day. [T. S.]



authors to proceed ; but let them remember, it is with wits as with razors, which are never so apt to cut those they are employed on, as when they have lost their edge. Besides, those, whose teeth are too rotten to bite, are best, of all others, qualified to revenge that defect with their breath.

I am not like other men, to envy or undervalue the talents I cannot reach ; for which reason I must needs bear a true honour to this large eminent sect of our British writers. And I hope this little panegyric will not be offensive to their ears, since it has the advantage of being only designed for themselves. Indeed, nature herself has taken order, that fame and honour should be purchased at a better pennyworth by satire, than by any other productions of the brain ; the world being soonest provoked to praise by lashes, as men are to love. There is a problem in an ancient author, why Dedications, and other bundles of flattery, run all upon stale musty topics, without the smallest tincture of anything new ; not only to the torment and nauseating of the Christian reader, but (if not suddenly prevented) to the universal spreading of that pestilent disease, the lethargy, in this island : whereas there is very little satire, which has not something in it untouched before. The defects of the former are usually imputed to the want of invention among those who are dealers in that kind ; but, I think, with a great deal of injustice ; the solution being easy and natural ; for the materials of panegyric, being very few in number, have been long since exhausted. For, as health is but one thing, and has been always the same, whereas diseases are by thousands, beside new and daily additions ; so, all the virtues that have been ever in mankind, are to be counted upon a few fingers ; but his follies and vices are innumerable, and time adds hourly to the heap. Now the utmost a poor poet can do, is to get by heart a list of the cardinal virtues, and deal them with his utmost liberality to his hero, or his patron : he may ring the changes as far as it will go, and vary his phrase till he has talked round : but the reader quickly finds it is all pork,<sup>1</sup> with a little variety of sauce. For there is no inventing terms of art beyond our ideas, and, when our ideas are exhausted, terms of art must be so too.

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch.

But though the matter for panegyric were as fruitful as the topics of satire, yet would it not be hard to find out a sufficient reason why the latter will be always better received than the first. For, this being bestowed only upon one, or a few persons at a time, is sure to raise envy, and consequently ill words from the rest, who have no share in the blessing. But satire, being levelled at all, is never resented for an offence by any, since every individual person makes bold to understand it of others, and very wisely removes his particular part of the burden upon the shoulders of the world, which are broad enough, and able to bear it. To this purpose, I have sometimes reflected upon the difference between Athens and England, with respect to the point before us. In the Attic commonwealth,<sup>1</sup> it was the privilege and birth-right of every citizen and poet to rail aloud, and in public, or to expose upon the stage, by name, any person they pleased, though of the greatest figure, whether a Creon,<sup>2</sup> an Hyperbolus, an Alcibiades, or a Demosthenes: but, on the other side, the least reflecting word let fall against the people in general, was immediately caught up, and revenged upon the authors, however considerable for their quality or their merits. Whereas in England it is just the reverse of all this. Here, you may securely display your utmost rhetoric against mankind, in the face of the world; tell them, "That all are gone astray; that there is none that doth good, no not one; that we live in the very dregs of time; that knavery and atheism are epidemic as the pox; that honesty is fled with Astræa;" with any other common-places, equally new and eloquent, which are furnished by the *splendida bilis*.<sup>3</sup> And when you have done, the whole audience, far from being offended, shall return you thanks, as a deliverer of precious and useful truths. Nay, farther; it is but to venture your lungs, and you may preach in Covent-Garden against foppery and fornication, and something else: against pride, and dissimulation, and bribery, at White-Hall: you may expose rapine and injustice in the Inns of Court Chapel: and in a city pulpit, be as fierce as you please against avarice, hypocrisy, and extortion. 'Tis

<sup>1</sup> Vide Xenophon (Athenian Republic, cap. 2).

<sup>2</sup> Properly Cleon, but so printed in all editions. [T. S.]

<sup>3</sup> Horace. Spleen.



but a ball bandied to and fro, and every man carries a racket about him, to strike it from himself, among the rest of the company. But, on the other side, whoever should mistake the nature of things so far, as to drop but a single hint in public, how such a one starved half the fleet, and half poisoned the rest : how such a one, from a true principle of love and honour, pays no debts but for wenches and play : how such a one has got a clap, and runs out of his estate : how Paris, bribed by Juno and Venus,<sup>1</sup> loth to offend either party, slept out the whole cause on the bench : or, how such an orator makes long speeches in the senate, with much thought, little sense, and to no purpose ; whoever, I say, should venture to be thus particular, must expect to be imprisoned for *scandalum magnatum* ; to have challenges sent him ; to be sued for defamation ; and to be brought before the bar of the house.

But I forget that I am expatiating on a subject wherein I have no concern, having neither a talent nor an inclination for satire. On the other side, I am so entirely satisfied with the whole present procedure of human things, that I have been some years preparing materials towards *A Panegyric upon the World* ; to which I intended to add a second part, entitled, *A modest Defence of the Proceedings of the Rabble in all Ages*. Both these I had thoughts to publish, by way of appendix to the following treatise ; but finding my common-place book fill much slower than I had reason to expect, I have chosen to defer them to another occasion. Besides, I have been unhappily prevented in that design by a certain domestic misfortune ; in the particulars whereof, though it would be very seasonable, and much in the modern way, to inform the gentle reader, and would also be of great assistance towards extending this preface into the size now in vogue, which by rule ought to be large in proportion as the subsequent volume is small ; yet I shall now dismiss our impatient reader from any farther attendance at the porch, and, having duly prepared his mind by a preliminary discourse, shall gladly introduce him to the sublime mysteries that ensue.

<sup>1</sup> Juno and Venus are Money and a mistress, very powerful bribes to a judge, if scandal says true. I remember such reflections were cast about that time, but I cannot fix the person intended here.



# A TALE OF A TUB, &c.

## SECT. I.

### THE INTRODUCTION.

WHOEVER has an ambition to be heard in a crowd, must press, and squeeze, and thrust, and climb, with indefatigable pains, till he has exalted himself to a certain degree of altitude above them. Now, in all assemblies, though you wedge them ever so close, we may observe this peculiar property, that over their heads there is room enough, but how to reach it is the difficult point ; it being as hard to get quit of number, as of hell ;

— *evadere ad auras,*  
*Hoc opus, hic labor est.*<sup>1</sup>—VIRGIL.

To this end, the philosopher's way, in all ages, has been by erecting certain edifices in the air : but, whatever practice and reputation these kind of structures have formerly possessed, or may still continue in, not excepting even that of Socrates, when he was suspended in a basket to help contemplation, I think, with due submission, they seem to labour under two inconveniences. First, That the foundations being laid too high, they have been often out of sight, and ever out of hearing. Secondly, That the materials being very transitory, have suffered much from inclemencies of air, especially in these north-west regions.

Therefore, towards the just performance of this great work, there remain but three methods that I can think of ; whereof the wisdom of our ancestors being highly sensible, has, to

<sup>1</sup> But to return, and view the cheerful skies ;  
In this the task and mighty labour lies.—DRYDEN.

encourage all aspiring adventurers, thought fit to erect three wooden machines for the use of those orators, who desire to talk much without interruption. These are, the pulpit, the ladder, and the stage itinerant. For, as to the bar, though it be compounded of the same matter, and designed for the same use, it cannot, however, be well allowed the honour of a fourth, by reason of its level or inferior situation exposing it to perpetual interruption from collaterals. Neither can the bench itself, though raised to a proper eminency, put in a better claim, whatever its advocates insist on. For, if they please to look into the original design of its erection, and the circumstances or adjuncts subservient to that design, they will soon acknowledge the present practice, exactly correspondent to the primitive institution, and both to answer the etymology of the name, which in the Phœnician tongue is a word of great signification, importing, if literally interpreted, the place of sleep; but in common acceptation, a seat well bolstered and cushioned, for the repose of old and gouty limbs: *senes ut in otia tuta recedant*. Fortune being indebted to them this part of retaliation, that, as formerly, they have long talked, while others slept; so now they may sleep as long, while others talk.

But if no other argument could occur, to exclude the Bench and the Bar from the list of oratorial machines, it were sufficient that the admission of them would overthrow a number, which I was resolved to establish, whatever argument it might cost me; in imitation of that prudent method observed by many other philosophers, and great clerks, whose chief art in division has been to grow fond of some proper mystical number, which their imaginations have rendered sacred, to a degree, that they force common reason to find room for it, in every part of nature; reducing, including, and adjusting, every genus and species within that compass, by coupling some against their wills, and banishing others at any rate. Now, among all the rest, the profound number THREE is that which has most employed my sublimest speculations, nor ever without wonderful delight. There is now in the press (and will be published next term) a panegyric essay of mine upon this number; wherein I have, by most convincing proofs, not only reduced the senses and the elements under its banner, but brought over several deserters from its two great rivals, SEVEN and NINE.

Now, the first of these oratorical machines, in place, as well as dignity, is the pulpit. Of pulpits there are in this island several sorts ; but I esteem only that made of timber from the *sylva Caledonia*, which agrees very well with our climate. If it be upon its decay, 'tis the better both for conveyance of sound, and for other reasons to be mentioned by and by. The degree of perfection in shape and size, I take to consist in being extremely narrow, with little ornament ; and, best of all, without a cover, (for, by ancient rule, it ought to be the only uncovered vessel in every assembly, where it is rightfully used,) by which means, from its near resemblance to a pillory, it will ever have a mighty influence on human ears.

Of ladders I need say nothing : it is observed by foreigners themselves, to the honour of our country, that we excel all nations in our practice and understanding of this machine. The ascending orators do not only oblige their audience in the agreeable delivery, but the whole world in the early publication of their speeches ; which I look upon as the choicest treasury of our British eloquence, and whereof, I am informed, that worthy citizen and bookseller, Mr. John Dunton, has made a faithful and painful collection, which he shortly designs to publish, in twelve volumes in folio, illustrated with copper-plates. A work highly useful and curious, and altogether worthy of such a hand.<sup>1</sup>

The last engine of orators is the stage itinerant,<sup>2</sup> erected with much sagacity, *sub Jove pluvio, in triviis et quadriiviis*.<sup>3</sup> It is the great seminary of the two former, and its orators are sometimes preferred to the one, and sometimes to the other, in proportion to their deservings ; there being a strict and perpetual intercourse between all three.

From this accurate deduction it is manifest, that for obtaining attention in public, there is of necessity required a

<sup>1</sup> Mr. John Dunton (1659-1733) was a London bookseller and publisher, who failed through his too ambitious projects. He brought out the "Athenian Mercury," a monthly magazine of questions and answers upon all possible subjects. The "Mercury" was afterwards reprinted as the "Athenian Oracle." His most remarkable achievement was the writing of that very curious book, "Dunton's Life and Errors." [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> The mountebank's stage, whose orators the author determines either to the gallows, or a conventicle.

<sup>3</sup> In the open air, and in streets where the greatest resort is.



superior position of place. But, although this point be generally granted, yet the cause is little agreed in ; and it seems to me, that very few philosophers have fallen into a true, natural solution of this phenomenon. The deepest account, and the most fairly digested of any I have yet met with, is this ; that air being a heavy body, and therefore, (according to the system of Epicurus,<sup>1</sup>) continually descending, must needs be more so, when loaden and pressed down by words ; which are also bodies of much weight and gravity, as it is manifest from those deep impressions they make and leave upon us ; and therefore must be delivered from a due altitude, or else they will neither carry a good aim, nor fall down with a sufficient force.

Corpoream quoque enim vocem constare fatendum est,  
Et sonitum, quoniam possunt impellere sensus.<sup>2</sup>

LUCR. Lib. 4.

And I am the readier to favour this conjecture, from a common observation, that in the several assemblies of these orators, nature itself has instructed the hearers to stand with their mouths open, and erected parallel to the horizon, so as they may be intersected by a perpendicular line from the zenith, to the centre of the earth. In which position, if the audience be well compact, every one carries home a share, and little or nothing is lost.

I confess there is something yet more refined, in the contrivance and structure of our modern theatres. For, first, the pit is sunk below the stage, with due regard to the institution above deduced ; that, whatever weighty matter shall be delivered thence (whether it be lead or gold) may fall plumb into the jaws of certain critics (as I think they are called) which stand ready opened to devour them. Then, the boxes are built round, and raised to a level with the scene, in deference to the ladies ; because, that large portion of wit, laid out in raising pruriences and protuberances, is observed to run much upon a line, and ever in a circle. The whining passions, and little starved conceits, are gently wafted up, by their own extreme levity, to the middle region, and there fix and are frozen by the frigid understandings of the inhabitants. Bom-

<sup>1</sup> Lucretius, Lib. 2.

<sup>2</sup> 'Tis certain then, that voice that thus can wound,  
Is all material ; body every sound.

bastry and buffoonery, by nature lofty and light, soar highest of all, and would be lost in the roof, if the prudent architect had not, with much foresight, contrived for them a fourth place, called the twelve-penny gallery, and there planted a suitable colony, who greedily intercept them in their passage.

Now this physico-logical scheme of oratorial receptacles or machines, contains a great mystery ; being a type, a sign, an emblem, a shadow, a symbol, bearing analogy to the spacious commonwealth of writers, and to those methods, by which they must exalt themselves to a certain eminency above the inferior world. By the pulpit are adumbrated the writings of our modern saints in Great Britain, as they have spiritualized and refined them, from the dross and grossness of sense and human reason. The matter, as we have said, is of rotten wood ; and that upon two considerations ; because it is the quality of rotten wood, to give light in the dark : and secondly, because its cavities are full of worms ; which is a type with a pair of handles,<sup>1</sup> having a respect to the two principal qualifications of the orator, and the two different fates attending upon his works.

The ladder, is an adequate symbol of faction, and of poetry, to both of which so noble a number of authors are indebted for their fame. Of faction, because<sup>2</sup> \* \* \* *Hiatus in MS.* \* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \* Of *poetry*, because its orators do *perorare* with a song ; and because, climbing up by slow degrees, fate is sure to turn them off, before they can reach within many steps of the top : and because it is a ferment attained by transferring of propriety, and a confounding of *meum* and *tuum*.

Under the stage itinerant, are couched those productions designed for the pleasure and delight of mortal man ; such as, Six-penny-worth of Wit, Westminster Drolleries, De-

<sup>1</sup> The two principal qualifications of a fanatic preacher are, his inward light, and his head full of maggots ; and the two different fates of his writings are, to be burnt or worm-eaten.

<sup>2</sup> Here is pretended a defect in the manuscript ; and this is very frequent with our author, either when he thinks he cannot say anything worth reading, or when he has no mind to enter on the subject, or when it is a matter of little moment ; or perhaps to amuse his reader, whereof he is frequently very fond ; or, lastly, with some satirical intention.



lightful Tales, Compleat Jesters, and the like ; by which the writers of and for *Grub-street*, have in these latter ages so nobly triumphed over Time ; have clipped his wings, pared his nails, filed his teeth, turned back his hour-glass, blunted his scythe, and drawn the hob-nails out of his shoes. It is under this class I have presumed to list my present treatise, being just come from having the honour conferred upon me, to be adopted a member of that illustrious fraternity.

Now, I am not unaware, how the productions of the Grub-street brotherhood, have of late years fallen under many prejudices, nor how it has been the perpetual employment of two junior start-up societies to ridicule them and their authors, as unworthy their established post in the commonwealth of wit and learning. Their own consciences will easily inform them whom I mean ; nor has the world been so negligent a looker-on, as not to observe the continual efforts made by the societies of Gresham,<sup>1</sup> and of Will's,<sup>2</sup> to edify a name and reputation upon the ruin of OURS. And this is yet a more feeling grief to us, upon the regards of tenderness as well as of justice, when we reflect on their proceedings not only as unjust, but as ungrateful, undutiful, and unnatural. For how can it be forgot by the world or themselves, (to say nothing of our own records, which are full and clear in the point,) that they both are seminaries not only of our planting, but our watering too ? I am informed, our two rivals have lately made an offer to enter into the lists with united forces, and challenge us to a comparison of books, both as to weight and number. In return to which, (with licence from our president,) I humbly offer two answers : first, we say, the proposal is like that which Archimedes made upon a smaller affair,<sup>3</sup> including an impossibility in the practice ; for, where can they find scales of capacity enough for the first, or an arithmetician of capacity enough for the second ? Secondly, we are ready to accept

<sup>1</sup> Gresham College was the place where the Royal Society then met. Swift never misses an opportunity for satirizing either the scientists or the wits of his day. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Will's coffee-house, in Covent-Garden, was formerly the place where the poets usually met, which, though it be yet fresh in memory, in some years may be forgotten, and want this explanation.

<sup>3</sup> *Viz.* About moving the earth.



the challenge; but with this condition, that a third indifferent person be assigned, to whose impartial judgment it should be left to decide, which society each book, treatise, or pamphlet, do most properly belong to. This point, God knows, is very far from being fixed at present; for we are ready to produce a catalogue of some thousands, which in all common justice ought to be entitled to our fraternity, but by the revolted and new-fangled writers, most perfidiously ascribed to the others. Upon all which, we think it very unbecoming our prudence, that the determination should be remitted to the authors themselves; when our adversaries, by brigu<sup>1</sup>ing and caballing, have caused so universal a defection from us, that the greatest part of our society has already deserted to them, and our nearest friends begin to stand aloof, as if they were half ashamed to own us.

This is the utmost I am authorized to say upon so ungrateful and melancholy a subject; because we are extreme unwilling to inflame a controversy, whose continuance may be so fatal to the interests of us all, desiring much rather that things be amicably composed; and we shall so far advance on our side, as to be ready to receive the two prodigals with open arms, whenever they shall think fit to return from their husks and their harlots; which, I think, from the present course of their studies,<sup>2</sup> they most properly may be said to be engaged in; and, like an indulgent parent, continue to them our affection and our blessing.

But the greatest maim given to that general reception, which the writings of our society have formerly received, (next to the transitory state of all sublunary things,) has been a superficial vein among many readers of the present age, who will by no means be persuaded to inspect beyond the surface and the rind of things; whereas, wisdom is a fox, who, after long hunting, will at last cost you the pains to dig out. It is a cheese, which, by how much the richer, has the thicker, the homelier, and the coarser coat; and whereof, to a judicious palate,<sup>3</sup> the maggots are the best. It is a sack-posset, wherein the deeper you go, you will find it the sweeter. Wisdom is a hen, whose cackling we must value

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.* intriguing. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Virtuoso experiments, and modern comedies.

<sup>3</sup> *Pate* in the original edition. [T. S.]

and consider, because it is attended with an egg ; but then lastly, it is a nut, which, unless you choose with judgment, may cost you a tooth, and pay you with nothing but a worm. In consequence of these momentous truths, the Grubæan Sages have always chosen to convey their precepts and their arts, shut up within the vehicles of types and fables ; which having been perhaps more careful and curious in adorning, than was altogether necessary, it has fared with these vehicles, after the usual fate of coaches over finely painted and gilt, that the transitory gazers have so dazzled their eyes, and filled their imaginations with the outward lustre, as neither to regard nor consider the person, or the parts, of the owner within. A misfortune we undergo with somewhat less reluctance, because it has been common to us with Pythagoras, Æsop, Socrates, and other of our predecessors.

However, that neither the world, nor ourselves, may any longer suffer by such misunderstandings, I have been prevailed on, after much importunity from my friends, to travel in a complete and laborious dissertation, upon the prime productions of our society ; which, beside their beautiful externals, for the gratification of superficial readers, have darkly and deeply couched under them, the most finished and refined systems of all sciences and arts ; as I do not doubt to lay open, by untwisting or unwinding, and either to draw up by exantlation,<sup>1</sup> or display by incision.

This great work was entered upon some years ago, by one of our most eminent members : he began with the History of Reynard the Fox,<sup>2</sup> but neither lived to publish his essay, nor to proceed farther in so useful an attempt ; which is very much to be lamented, because the discovery he made, and communicated with his friends, is now universally received ; nor do I think any of the learned will dispute that famous treatise to be a complete body of civil knowledge, and the revelation, or rather the apocalypse, of all State Arcana. But the progress I have made is much greater, having already finished my annotations upon several dozens ; from

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, by exhaustion. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> The Author seems here to be mistaken, for I have seen a Latin edition of Reynard the Fox, above an hundred years old, which I take to be the original ; for the rest it has been thought by many people to contain some satyrical design in it.



some of which I shall impart a few hints to the candid reader, as far as will be necessary to the conclusion at which I aim.

The first piece I have handled is that of Tom Thumb, whose author was a Pythagorean philosopher. This dark treatise contains the whole scheme of the Metempsychosis, deducing the progress of the soul through all her stages.

The next is Dr. Faustus, penned by Artephius, an author *bonæ notæ*, and an *adeptus*; he published it in the nine-hundred-eighty-fourth year of his age;<sup>1</sup> this writer proceeds wholly by reincrudation, or in the *via humida*; and the marriage between Faustus and Helen does most conspicuously dilucidate the fermenting of the male and female dragon.

Whittington and his Cat is the work of that mysterious rabbi, Jehuda Hannasi, containing a defence of the Gemara of the Jerusalem Mishna,<sup>2</sup> and its just preference to that of Babylon, contrary to the vulgar opinion.

The Hind and Panther. This is the masterpiece of a famous writer now living,<sup>3</sup> intended for a complete abstract of sixteen thousand school-men, from Scotus to Bellarmin.

Tommy Potts.<sup>4</sup> Another piece, supposed by the same hand, by way of supplement to the former.

The Wise Men of Gotham, *cum appendice*. This is a treatise of immense erudition, being the great original and fountain of those arguments, bandied about, both in France and England, for a just defence of the moderns' learning and wit, against the presumption, the pride, and ignorance of the ancients. This unknown author has so exhausted the subject, that a penetrating reader will easily discover whatever has been written since upon that dispute, to be little more than repetition. An abstract of this treatise has been lately published by a worthy member of our society.<sup>5</sup>

These notices may serve to give the learned reader an idea,

<sup>1</sup> He lived a thousand.

<sup>2</sup> The Gemara is the decision, explanation, or interpretation of the Jewish rabbis; and the Mishna is properly the code or body of the Jewish civil or common law. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> Viz. In the year 1698.

<sup>4</sup> A popular ballad, then the favourite of the vulgar, now an object of ambition to the collectors of black-letter. [S.]

<sup>5</sup> This I suppose to be understood of Mr. Wotton's discourse of ancient and modern learning.



as well as a taste, of what the whole work is likely to produce ; wherein I have now altogether circumscribed my thoughts and my studies ; and, if I can bring it to a perfection before I die, shall reckon I have well employed the poor remains of an unfortunate life.<sup>1</sup> This, indeed, is more than I can justly expect, from a quill worn to the pith in the service of the state, in *pros* and *cons* upon Popish plots, and meal-tubs,<sup>2</sup> and exclusion bills, and passive obedience, and addresses of lives and fortunes, and prerogative, and property,<sup>3</sup> and liberty of conscience, and letters to a friend : from an understanding and a conscience thread-bare and ragged with perpetual turning ; from a head broken in a hundred places by the malignants of the opposite factions ; and from a body spent with poxes ill cured, by trusting to bawds and surgeons, who, (as it afterwards appeared,) were professed enemies to me and the government, and revenged their party's quarrel upon my nose and shins. Fourscore and eleven pamphlets have I written under three reigns, and for the service of six and thirty factions.<sup>4</sup> But, finding the state has no farther occasion for me and my ink, I retire willingly to draw it out into speculations more becoming a philosopher ; having, to my unspeakable comfort, passed a long life with a conscience void of offence.<sup>5</sup>

But to return. I am assured from the reader's candour, that the brief specimen I have given, will easily clear all the rest of our society's productions from an aspersion grown, as it is manifest, out of envy and ignorance ; that they are of little farther use or value to mankind, beyond the common entertainments of their wit and their style ; for these I am sure have never yet been disputed by our keenest adversaries : in

<sup>1</sup> Here the author seems to personate L'Estrange, Dryden, and some others, who, after having passed their lives in vices, faction, and falsehood, have the impudence to talk of merit, and innocence, and sufferings.

<sup>2</sup> In King Charles the Second's time, there was an account of a Presbyterian plot, found in a tub, which then made much noise.

<sup>3</sup> First edition—*popery*. [T. S.]

<sup>4</sup> Foster ("Life," p. 183, *note*) quotes from Kidd's "Tracts," the curious discovery made by Professor Porson. A passage in "Gulliver" speaks of the King's smiths, who "conveyed four score and eleven chains . . . which were locked to my left leg with six and thirty padlocks." [T. S.]

<sup>5</sup> The first edition adds to this sentence—*towards God and towards men*. [S.]

both which, as well as the more profound and mystical part, I have, throughout this treatise, closely followed the most applauded originals. And to render all complete, I have, with much thought and application of mind, so ordered, that the chief title prefixed to it, (I mean that under which I design it shall pass in the common conversations of court and town,) is modelled exactly after the manner peculiar to our society.

I confess to have been somewhat liberal in the business of titles,<sup>1</sup> having observed the humour of multiplying them, to bear great vogue among certain writers, whom I exceedingly reverence. And indeed it seems not unreasonable, that books, the children of the brain, should have the honour to be christened with variety of names, as well as other infants of quality. Our famous Dryden has ventured to proceed a point farther, endeavouring to introduce also a multiplicity of god-fathers;<sup>2</sup> which is an improvement of much more advantage upon a very obvious account. 'Tis a pity this admirable invention has not been better cultivated, so as to grow by this time into general imitation, when such an authority serves it for a precedent. Nor have my endeavours been wanting to second so useful an example; but it seems there is an unhappy expense usually annexed to the calling of a god-father, which was clearly out of my head, as it is very reasonable to believe. Where the pinch lay, I cannot certainly affirm; but having employed a world of thoughts and pains to split my treatise into forty sections, and having entreated forty lords of my acquaintance, that they would do me the honour to stand, they all made it a matter of conscience, and sent me their excuses.

## SECT. II.

ONCE upon a time, there was a man who had three sons by one wife,<sup>3</sup> and all at a birth, neither could the midwife tell certainly, which was the eldest. Their father died while they

<sup>1</sup> The title-page in the original was so torn, that it was not possible to recover several titles, which the author here speaks of.

<sup>2</sup> See Virgil translated, &c.

He dedicated the different parts of Virgil to different patrons. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> By these three sons, Peter, Martin, and Jack; Popery, the Church of England, and our Protestant dissenters, are designed.—W. WORTON.



were young ; and upon his deathbed, calling the lads to him, spoke thus :

“Sons ; because I have purchased no estate, nor was born to any, I have long considered of some good legacies to bequeath you ; and at last, with much care, as well as expense, have provided each of you (here they are) a new coat.<sup>1</sup> Now, you are to understand, that these coats have two virtues contained in them ; one is, that with good wearing, they will last you fresh and sound as long as you live : the other is, that they will grow in the same proportion with your bodies, lengthening and widening of themselves, so as to be always fit. Here ; let me see them on you before I die. So ; very well ; pray, children, wear them clean, and brush them often. You will find in my will<sup>2</sup> (here it is) full instructions in every particular concerning the wearing and management of your coats ; wherein you must be very exact, to avoid the penalties I have appointed for every transgression or neglect, upon which your future fortunes will entirely depend. I have also commanded in my will, that you should live together in one house like brethren and friends, for then you will be sure to thrive, and not otherwise.”

Here the story says, this good father died, and the three sons went all together to seek their fortunes.

I shall not trouble you with recounting what adventures they met for the first seven years ;<sup>3</sup> any farther than by taking notice, that they carefully observed their father's will, and kept their coats in very good order : that they travelled through several countries, encountered a reasonable quantity of giants, and slew certain dragons.

Being now arrived at the proper age for producing themselves, they came up to town, and fell in love with the ladies, but especially three, who about that time were in chief reputation ; the Duchess d'Argent, Madame de Grands Titres,

<sup>1</sup> By his coats which he gave his sons, the Garments of the Israelites.—W. WOTTON.

An error (with submission) of the learned commentator ; for by the coats are meant the Doctrine and Faith of Christianity, by the Wisdom of the divine Founder fitted to all times, places, and circumstances.—LAMBIN.

<sup>2</sup> The New Testament.

<sup>3</sup> The first seven centuries.—BENTLEY.



and the Countess d'Orgueil.<sup>1</sup> On their first appearance, our three adventurers met with a very bad reception ; and soon with great sagacity guessing out the reason, they quickly began to improve in the good qualities of the town : they writ, and rallied, and rhymed, and sung, and said, and said nothing : they drank, and fought, and whored, and slept, and swore, and took snuff : they went to new plays on the first night, haunted the chocolate houses, beat the watch, lay on bulks, and got claps : they bilked hackney-coachmen, ran in debt with shopkeepers, and lay with their wives : they killed bailiffs, kicked fiddlers down stairs, eat at Locket's,<sup>2</sup> loitered at Will's :<sup>3</sup> they talked of the drawing-room, and never came there : dined with lords they never saw : whispered a duchess, and spoke never a word : exposed the scrawls of their laundress for billetdoux of quality : came ever just from court, and were never seen in it : attended the Levee *sub dio* : got a list of peers by heart in one company, and with great familiarity retailed them in another. Above all, they constantly attended those Committees of Senators, who are silent in the House, and loud in the coffee-house ; where they nightly adjourn to chew the cud of politics, and are encompassed with a ring of disciples, who lie in wait to catch up their droppings. The three brothers had acquired forty other qualifications of the like stamp, too tedious to recount, and by consequence, were justly reckoned the most accomplished persons in the town : but all would not suffice, and the ladies aforesaid continued still inflexible. To clear up which difficulty I must, with the reader's good leave and patience, have recourse to some points of weight, which the authors of that age have not sufficiently illustrated.

For, about this time it happened a sect arose,<sup>4</sup> whose tenets obtained and spread very far, especially in the *grande monde*, and among everybody of good fashion. They worshipped a sort of idol,<sup>5</sup> who, as their doctrine delivered, did

<sup>1</sup> Their mistresses are the Duchess d'Argent, Mademoiselle de Grands Titres, and the Countess d'Orgueil, *i.e.* covetousness, ambition, and pride ; which were the three great vices that the ancient fathers inveighed against, as the first corruptions of Christianity.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>2</sup> A noted tavern. [S.]

<sup>3</sup> See p. 53, *note*. [T. S.]

<sup>4</sup> This is an occasional satire upon dress and fashion, in order to introduce what follows.

<sup>5</sup> By this idol is meant a tailor.

daily create men by a kind of manufactory operation. This idol they placed in the highest parts of the house, on an altar erected about three foot: he was shewn in the posture of a Persian emperor, sitting on a superficies, with his legs interwoven under him. This god had a goose for his ensign: whence it is that some learned men pretend to deduce his original from Jupiter Capitolinus. At his left hand, beneath the altar, Hell seemed to open, and catch at the animals the idol was creating; to prevent which, certain of his priests hourly flung in pieces of the uninformed mass, or substance, and sometimes whole limbs already enlivened, which that horrid gulf insatiably swallowed, terrible to behold. The goose was also held a subaltern divinity or *deus minorum gentium*, before whose shrine was sacrificed that creature, whose hourly food is human gore, and who is in so great renown abroad, for being the delight and favourite of the Ægyptian Cercopithecus.<sup>1</sup> Millions of these animals were cruelly slaughtered every day, to appease the hunger of that consuming deity. The chief idol was also worshipped as the inventor of the yard and needle; whether as the god of seamen, or on account of certain other mystical attributes, has not been sufficiently cleared.

The worshippers of this deity had also a system of their belief, which seemed to turn upon the following fundamentals. They held the universe to be a large suit of clothes, which invests everything: that the earth is invested by the air; the air is invested by the stars; and the stars are invested by the *primum mobile*. Look on this globe of earth, you will find it to be a very complete and fashionable dress. What is that which some call land, but a fine coat faced with green? or the sea, but a waistcoat of water-tabby? Proceed to the particular works of the creation, you will find how curious journeyman Nature has been, to trim up the vegetable beaux; observe how sparkish a periwig adorns the head of a beech, and what a fine doublet of white satin is worn by the birch. To conclude from all, what is man himself but a micro-coat,<sup>2</sup> or rather a complete suit of clothes with all its trimmings?

<sup>1</sup> The Ægyptians worshipped a monkey, which animal is very fond of eating lice, styled here creatures that feed on human gore.

<sup>2</sup> Alluding to the word microcosm, or a little world, as man has been called by philosophers.



as to his body, there can be no dispute: but examine even the acquirements of his mind, you will find them all contribute in their order towards furnishing out an exact dress: to instance no more; is not religion a cloak; honesty a pair of shoes worn out in the dirt; self-love a surtout; vanity a shirt; and conscience a pair of breeches; which, though a cover for lewdness as well as nastiness, is easily slipt down for the service of both?

These *postulata* being admitted, it will follow in due course of reasoning, that those beings, which the world calls improperly suits of clothes, are in reality the most refined species of animals; or, to proceed higher, that they are rational creatures, or men. For, is it not manifest, that they live, and move, and talk, and perform all other offices of human life? Are not beauty, and wit, and mien, and breeding, their inseparable proprieties? In short, we see nothing but them, hear nothing but them. Is it not they who walk the streets, fill up parliament—, coffee—, play—, bawdy-houses? 'Tis true, indeed, that these animals, which are vulgarly called suits of clothes, or dresses, do, according to certain compositions, receive different appellations. If one of them be trimmed up with a gold chain, and a red gown, and a white rod, and a great horse, it is called a Lord-Mayor: if certain ermines and furs be placed in a certain position, we style them a Judge; and so an apt conjunction of lawn and black satin we entitle a Bishop.

Others of these professors, though agreeing in the main system, were yet more refined upon certain branches of it; and held, that man was an animal compounded of two dresses, the natural and celestial suit, which were the body and the soul: that the soul was the outward, and the body the inward clothing; that the latter was *ex traduce*; but the former of daily creation and circumfusion; this last they proved by scripture, because in them we live, and move, and have our being; as likewise by philosophy, because they are all in all, and all in every part. Besides, said they, separate these two, and you will find the body to be only a senseless unsavoury carcase. By all which it is manifest, that the outward dress must needs be the soul.

To this system of religion, were tagged several subaltern doctrines, which were entertained with great vogue; as par-



ticularly, the faculties of the mind were deduced by the learned among them in this manner ; embroidery, was sheer wit ; gold fringe, was agreeable conversation ; gold lace, was repartee ; a huge long periwig,<sup>1</sup> was humour ; and a coat full of powder, was very good raillery : all which required abundance of *finesse* and *delicatesse* to manage with advantage, as well as a strict observance after times and fashions.

I have, with much pains and reading, collected out of ancient authors, this short summary of a body of philosophy and divinity, which seems to have been composed by a vein and race of thinking, very different from any other systems either ancient or modern. And it was not merely to entertain or satisfy the reader's curiosity, but rather to give him light into several circumstances of the following story ; that knowing the state of dispositions and opinions in an age so remote, he may better comprehend those great events, which were the issue of them. I advise therefore the courteous reader to peruse with a world of application, again and again, whatever I have written upon this matter. And leaving these broken ends, I carefully gather up the chief thread of my story and proceed.

These opinions, therefore, were so universal, as well as the practices of them, among the refined part of court and town, that our three brother-adventurers, as their circumstances then stood, were strangely at a loss. For, on the one side, the three ladies they addressed themselves to, (whom we have named already,) were at the very top of the fashion, and abhorred all that were below it but the breadth of a hair. On the other side, their father's will was very precise, and it was the main precept in it, with the greatest penalties annexed, not to add to, or diminish from their coats one thread, without a positive command in the will. Now, the coats their father had left them were, 'tis true, of very good cloth, and, besides, so neatly sewn, you would swear they were all of a piece ; but, at the same time, very plain, and with little or no ornament : and it happened, that before they were a month in town, great shoulder-knots<sup>2</sup> came up :

<sup>1</sup> *Peruke* in the first edition. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> The first part of the Tale is the history of Peter ; thereby Popery is exposed : everybody knows the Papists have made great additions to Christianity ; that, indeed, is the great exception which the Church of

straight all the world was shoulder-knots ; no approaching the ladies' *ruelles* without the *quota* of shoulder-knots. 'That fellow, cries one, has no soul ; where is his shoulder-knot ? Our three brethren soon discovered their want by sad experience, meeting in their walks with forty mortifications and indignities. If they went to the play-house, the door-keeper shewed them into the twelve-penny gallery. If they called a boat, says a waterman, I am first sculler. If they stepped to the Rose to take a bottle, the drawer would cry, Friend, we sell no ale. If they went to visit a lady, a footman met them at the door, with, Pray send up your message. In this unhappy case, they went immediately to consult their father's will, read it over and over, but not a word of the shoulder-knot. What should they do ? What temper should they find ? Obedience was absolutely necessary, and yet shoulder-knots appeared extremely requisite. After much thought, one of the brothers, who happened to be more book-learned than the other two, said, he had found an expedient. 'Tis true, said he, there is nothing here in this will, *totidem verbis*,<sup>1</sup> making mention of shoulder-knots : but I dare conjecture, we may find them *inclusive*, or *totidem syllabis*. This distinction was immediately approved by all ; and so they fell again to examine the will. But their evil star had so directed the matter, that the first syllable was not to be found in the whole writing. Upon which disappointment, he, who found

England makes against them ; accordingly Peter begins his pranks with adding a shoulder-knot to his coat.—W. WOTTON.

His description of the cloth of which the coat was made, has a farther meaning than the words may seem to import : "The coats their father had left them were of very good cloth, and, besides, so neatly sewn, you would swear they were all of a piece ; but, at the same time, very plain, with little or no ornament." This is the distinguishing character of the Christian religion : *christiana religio absoluta et simplex*, was Ammianus Marcellinus's description of it, who was himself a heathen.—W. WOTTON.

By this is understood the first introducing of pageantry, and unnecessary ornaments in the Church, such as were neither for convenience nor edification, as a Shoulder-knot, in which there is neither symmetry nor use.

<sup>1</sup> When the Papists cannot find anything which they want in Scripture, they go to Oral Tradition : thus Peter is introduced satisfied with the tedious way of looking for all the letters of any word, which he has occasion for in the Will, when neither the constituent syllables, nor much less the whole word, were there *in terminis*.—W. WOTTON.



the former evasion, took heart, and said, "Brothers, there are yet hopes ; for though we cannot find them *totidem verbis*, nor *totidem syllabis*, I dare engage we shall make them out, *tertio modo*, or *totidem literis*." This discovery was also highly commended, upon which they fell once more to the scrutiny, and picked out S, H, O, U, L, D, E, R ; when the same planet, enemy to their repose, had wonderfully contrived, that a K was not to be found. Here was a weighty difficulty ! But the distinguishing brother, (for whom we shall hereafter find a name,) now his hand was in, proved by a very good argument, that K was a modern, illegitimate letter, unknown to the learned ages, nor anywhere to be found in ancient manuscripts. "'Tis true," said he, "Calendæ hath in Q. V. C.<sup>1</sup> been sometimes writ with a K, but erroneously ; for, in the best copies, it ever spelt with a C. And, by consequence, it was a gross mistake in our language to spell 'knot' with a K ;" but that from henceforward, he would take care it should be writ with a C. Upon this all farther difficulty vanished ; shoulder-knots were made clearly out to be *jure paterno* : and our three gentlemen swaggered with as large and as flaunting ones as the best.

But, as human happiness is of a very short duration, so in those days were human fashions, upon which it entirely depends. Shoulder-knots had their time, and we must now imagine them in their decline ; for a certain lord came just from Paris, with fifty yards of gold lace upon his coat, exactly trimmed after the court fashion of that month. In two days all mankind appeared closed up in bars of gold lace :<sup>2</sup> whoever durst peep abroad without his complement of gold lace, was as scandalous as a —, and as ill received among the women. What should our three knights do in this momentous affair ? They had sufficiently strained a point already in the affair of shoulder-knots. Upon recourse to the will, nothing appeared there but *altum silentium*. That of the shoulder-knots was a loose, flying, circumstantial point ; but this of gold lace seemed too considerable an alteration without better warrant. It did *aliquo modo essentia*

<sup>1</sup> Quibusdam veteribus codicibus ; *i.e.* some ancient manuscripts.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot tell whether the author means any new innovation by this word, or whether it be only to introduce the new methods of forcing and perverting scripture.



*adhærere*, and therefore required a positive precept. But about this time it fell out, that the learned brother aforesaid had read "*Aristotelis Dialectica*," and especially that wonderful piece *de Interpretatione*, which has the faculty of teaching its readers to find out a meaning in everything but itself, like commentators on the Revelations, who proceed prophets without understanding a syllable of the text. "Brothers," said he, "you are to be informed, that of wills *duo sunt genera*, nuncupatory<sup>1</sup> and scriptory; that in the scriptory will here before us, there is no precept or mention about gold lace, *conceditur*: but, *si idem affirmetur de nuncupatorio, negatur*. For, brothers, if you remember, we heard a fellow say, when we were boys, that he heard my father's man say, that he heard my father say, that he would advise his sons to get gold lace on their coats, as soon as ever they could procure money to buy it." "By G—! that is very true," cries the other; "I remember it perfectly well," said the third. And so without more ado got the largest gold lace in the parish, and walked about as fine as lords.

A while after there came up all in fashion a pretty sort of flame-coloured satin for linings; and the mercer brought a pattern of it immediately to our three gentlemen: "An please your worships," said he,<sup>2</sup> "my Lord C—— and Sir J. W. had linings out of this very piece last night; it takes wonderfully, and I shall not have a remnant left enough to make my wife a pin-cushion, by to-morrow morning at ten

<sup>1</sup> By this is meant tradition, allowed by the Papists to have equal authority with the scripture, or rather greater.

This is purgatory, whereof he speaks more particularly hereafter; but here, only to shew how scripture was perverted to prove it, which was done by giving equal authority with the canon to Apocrypha, called here a codicil annexed. It is likely the author, in every one of these changes in the brothers' dresses, refers to some particular error in the Church of Rome, though it is not easy, I think, to apply them all: but by this of flame-coloured satin, is manifestly intended purgatory; by gold lace may perhaps be understood, the lofty ornaments and plate in the churches; the shoulder-knots and silver fringe are not so obvious, at least to me; but the Indian figures of men, women, and children, plainly relate to the pictures in the Romish churches, of God like an old man, of the Virgin Mary, and our Saviour as a child.

<sup>2</sup> This shews the time the author writ, it being about fourteen years since those two persons were reckoned the fine gentlemen of the town.

*Ibid.*—To whom Swift refers is not known with certainty. [T. S.]

o'clock." Upon this, they fell again to rummage the will, because the present case also required a positive precept, the lining being held by orthodox writers to be of the essence of the coat. After long search, they could fix upon nothing to the matter in hand, except a short advice of their father's in the will, to take care of fire, and put out their candles before they went to sleep.<sup>1</sup> This, though a good deal for the purpose, and helping very far towards self-conviction, yet not seeming wholly of force to establish a command; and being resolved to avoid farther scruple, as well as future occasion for scandal, says he that was the scholar, "I remember to have read in wills of a codicil annexed, which is indeed a part of the will, and what it contains hath equal authority with the rest. Now, I have been considering of this same will here before us, and I cannot reckon it to be complete for want of such a codicil: I will therefore fasten one in its proper place very dexterously: I have had it by me some time; it was written by a dog-keeper of my grandfather's,<sup>2</sup> and talks a great deal, (as good luck would have it,) of this very flame-coloured satin." The project was immediately approved by the other two; an old parchment scroll was tagged on according to art, in the form of a codicil annexed, and the satin bought and worn.

Next winter a player, hired for the purpose by the corporation of fringe-makers, acted his part in a new comedy, all covered with silver fringe,<sup>3</sup> and, according to the laudable custom, gave rise to that fashion. Upon which the brothers, consulting their father's will, to their great astonishment found these words; "*Item*, I charge and command my said three sons to wear no sort of silver fringe upon or about their said coats," etc., with a penalty, in case of disobedience, too long here to insert. However, after some pause, the brother so often mentioned for his erudition, who was well skilled in criticisms, had found in a certain author, which he said should be nameless, that the same word, which, in the

<sup>1</sup> That is, to take care of hell; and, in order to do that, to subdue and extinguish their lusts.

<sup>2</sup> I believe this refers to that part of the Apocrypha, where mention is made of Tobit and his dog.

<sup>3</sup> This is certainly the farther introducing the poms of habit and ornament.



will, is called fringe, does also signify a broom-stick,<sup>1</sup> and doubtless ought to have the same interpretation in this paragraph. This another of the brothers disliked, because of that epithet silver, which could not, he humbly conceived, in propriety of speech, he reasonably applied to a broom-stick ; but it was replied upon him, that his epithet was understood in a mythological and allegorical sense. However, he objected again, why their father should forbid them to wear a broom-stick on their coats, a caution that seemed unnatural and impertinent ; upon which he was taken up short, as one who spoke irreverently of a mystery, which doubtless was very useful and significant, but ought not to be over-curiously pried into, or nicely reasoned upon. And, in short, their father's authority being now considerably sunk, this expedient was allowed to serve as a lawful dispensation for wearing their full proportion of silver fringe.

A while after was revived an old fashion, long antiquated, of embroidery with Indian figures of men, women, and children.<sup>2</sup> Here they remembered but too well how their father had always abhorred this fashion ;<sup>3</sup> that he made several paragraphs on purpose, importing his utter detestation of it, and bestowing his everlasting curse to his sons, whenever they should wear it. For all this, in a few days they appeared higher in the fashion than anybody else in the town. But they solved the matter by saying, that these figures were not at all the same with those that were formerly worn, and were meant in the will. Besides, they did not wear them in the sense as forbidden by their father ; but as they were a commendable custom, and of great use to the public.<sup>4</sup> That these rigorous clauses in the will did therefore require some

<sup>1</sup> The next subject of our author's wit is the glosses and interpretations of scripture ; very many absurd ones of which are allowed in the most authentic books of the Church of Rome.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>2</sup> The images of saints, the blessed Virgin, and our Saviour an infant.

*Ibid.* Images in the Church of Rome give him but too fair a handle, the brothers remembered, &c. The allegory here is direct.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>3</sup> Here they had no occasion to examine the will : they remembered.—*First Edition.* [T. S.]

<sup>4</sup> The excuse made for the worship of images by the Church of Rome, that they were used, not as idols, but as helps to devotional recollection of those whom they represented. [S.]



allowance, and a favourable interpretation, and ought to be understood *cum grano salis*.

But fashions perpetually altering in that age, the scholastic brother grew weary of searching farther evasions, and solving everlasting contradictions. Resolved, therefore, at all hazards, to comply with the modes of the world, they concerted matters together, and agreed unanimously to lock up their father's will in a strong box,<sup>1</sup> brought out of Greece or Italy, (I have forgot which,) and trouble themselves no farther to examine it, but only refer to its authority whenever they thought fit. In consequence whereof, a while after it grew a general mode to wear an infinite number of points, most of them tagged with silver : upon which, the scholar pronounced *ex cathedra*,<sup>2</sup> that points were absolutely *jure paterno*, as they might very well remember. 'Tis true, indeed, the fashion prescribed somewhat more than were directly named in the will ; however, that they, as heirs-general of their father, had power to make and add certain clauses for public emolument, though not deducible, *totidem verbis*, from the letter of the will, or else *multa absurda sequerentur*. This was understood for canonical, and therefore, on the following Sunday, they came to church all covered with points.

The learned brother, so often mentioned, was reckoned the best scholar in all that, or the next street to it ; inso-much as, having run something behind-hand in the world, he obtained the favour of a certain lord,<sup>3</sup> to receive him into his house, and to teach his children. A while after the lord died, and he, by long practice of his father's will, found the

<sup>1</sup> The Papists formerly forbade the people the use of scripture in the vulgar tongue : Peter therefore locks up his father's will in a strong box, brought out of Greece or Italy : these countries are named, because the New Testament is written in Greek ; and the vulgar Latin, which is the authentic edition of the Bible in the Church of Rome, is in the language of old Italy.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>2</sup> The popes, in their decretals and bulls, have given their sanction to very many gainful doctrines, which are now received in the Church of Rome, that are not mentioned in scripture, and are unknown to the primitive church. Peter, accordingly, pronounces *ex cathedra*, that points tagged with silver were absolutely *jure paterno* ; and so they wore them in great numbers.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>3</sup> This was Constantine the Great, from whom the popes pretend a donation of St. Peter's patrimony, which they have never been able to produce.

way of contriving a deed of conveyance of that house to himself and his heirs ; upon which he took possession, turned the young squires out, and received his brothers in their stead.<sup>1</sup>

### SECT. III.

#### A DIGRESSION CONCERNING CRITICS.

THOUGH I have been hitherto as cautious as I could, upon all occasions, most nicely to follow the rules and methods of writing laid down by the example of our illustrious moderns ; yet has the unhappy shortness of my memory led me into an error, from which I must extricate myself, before I can decently pursue my principal subject. I confess with shame, it was an unpardonable omission to proceed so far as I have already done, before I had performed the due discourses, expostulatory, supplicatory, or deprecatory, with my good lords the critics. Towards some atonement for this grievous neglect, I do here make humbly bold, to present them with a short account of themselves, and their art, by looking into the original and pedigree of the word, as it is generally understood among us ; and very briefly considering the ancient and present state thereof.

By the word critic, at this day so frequent in all conversations, there have sometimes been distinguished three very different species of mortal men, according as I have read in ancient books and pamphlets. For first, by this term was understood such persons as invented or drew up rules for themselves and the world, by observing which, a careful reader might be able to pronounce upon the productions of the learned, from his taste to a true relish of the sublime and

<sup>1</sup> The bishops of Rome enjoyed their privileges in Rome at first, by the favour of emperors, whom at last they shut out of their own capital city, and then forged a donation from Constantine the Great, the better to justify what they did. In imitation of this, Peter, having run something behind-hand in the world, obtained leave of a certain lord, &c.—  
W. WOTTON.

the admirable, and divide every beauty of matter, or of style, from the corruption that apes it. In their common perusal of books, singling out the errors and defects, the nauseous, the fulsome, the dull, and the impertinent, with the caution of a man that walks through Edinburgh streets in a morning, who is indeed as careful as he can to watch diligently, and spy out the filth in his way ; not that he is curious to observe the colour and complexion of the ordure, or take its dimensions, much less to be paddling in, or tasting it ; but only with a design to come out as cleanly as he may. These may seem, though very erroneously, to have understood the appellation of critic in a literal sense ; that one principal part of his office was to praise and acquit ; and that a critic, who sets up to read only for an occasion of censure and reproof, is a creature as barbarous as a judge, who should take up a resolution to hang all men that came before him upon a trial.

Again, by the word critic have been meant, the restorers of ancient learning from the worms, and graves, and dust of manuscripts.

Now the races of those two have been for some ages utterly extinct ; and besides, to discourse any farther of them, would not be at all to my purpose.

The third and noblest sort, is that of the TRUE CRITIC, whose original is the most ancient of all. Every true critic is a hero born, descending in a direct line, from a celestial stem by Momus and Hybris, who begat Zoilus, who begat Tigellius, who begat Etcætera the elder ; who begat Bentley, and Rymer, and Wotton, and Perrault, and Dennis ; who begat Etcætera the younger.

And these are the critics, from whom the commonwealth of learning has in all ages received such immense benefits, that the gratitude of their admirers placed their origin in Heaven, among those of Hercules, Theseus, Perseus, and other great deservers of mankind. But heroic virtue itself, hath not been exempt from the obloquy of evil tongues. For it hath been objected, that those ancient heroes, famous for their combating so many giants, and dragons, and robbers, were in their own persons a greater nuisance to mankind, than any of those monsters they subdued ; and therefore to render their obligations more complete, when all



other vermin were destroyed, should, in conscience, have concluded with the same justice upon themselves. Hercules<sup>1</sup> most generously did, and hath upon that score procured to himself more temples and votaries, than the best of his fellows. For these reasons, I suppose it is, why some have conceived, it would be very expedient for the public good of learning, that every true critic, as soon as he had finished his task assigned, should immediately deliver himself up to ratsbane, or hemp, or leap from some convenient altitude; and that no man's pretensions to so illustrious a character should by any means be received, before that operation were performed.

Now, from this heavenly descent of criticism, and the close analogy it bears to heroic virtue, it is easy to assign the proper employment of a true ancient genuine critic; which is, to travel through this vast world of writings; to pursue and hunt those monstrous faults bred within them; to drag out the lurking errors, like Cacus from his den; to multiply them like Hydra's heads; and rake them together like Augeas's dung; or else drive away a sort of dangerous fowl, who have a perverse inclination to plunder the best branches of the tree of knowledge, like those stymphalian birds that eat up the fruit.

These reasonings will furnish us with an adequate definition of a true critic: that he is discoverer and collector of writers' faults; which may be farther put beyond dispute by the following demonstration:—That whoever will examine the writings in all kinds, wherewith this ancient sect has honoured the world, shall immediately find, from the whole thread and tenor of them, that the ideas of the authors have been altogether conversant and taken up, with the faults, and blemishes, and oversights, and mistakes of other writers; and, let the subject treated on be whatever it will, their imaginations are so entirely possessed and replete with the defects of other pens, that the very quintessence of what is bad, does of necessity distil into their own; by which means the whole appears to be nothing else but an abstract of the criticisms themselves have made.

Having thus briefly considered the original and office of a

<sup>1</sup> As Hercules.—*First Edition*. [T. S.]

critic, as the word is understood in its most noble and universal acceptation, I proceed to refute the objections of those who argue from the silence and pretermission of authors ; by which they pretend to prove, that the very art of criticism, as now exercised, and by me explained, is wholly modern ; and consequently, that the critics of Great Britain and France have no title to an original so ancient and illustrious as I have deduced. Now, if I can clearly make out, on the contrary, that the most ancient writers have particularly described both the person and the office of a true critic, agreeable to the definition laid down by me, their grand objection, from the silence of authors, will fall to the ground.

I confess to have, for a long time, borne a part in this general error : from which I should never have acquitted myself, but through the assistance of our noble moderns ! whose most edifying volumes I turn undefatigably over night and day, for the improvement of my mind, and the good of my country. These have, with unwearied pains, made many useful searches into the weak sides of the ancients, and given us a comprehensive list of them.<sup>1</sup> Besides, they have proved beyond contradiction, that the very finest things delivered of old, have been long since invented, and brought to light by much later pens ; and that the noblest discoveries those ancients ever made, of art or nature, have all been produced by the transcending genius of the present age. Which clearly shews, how little merit those ancients can justly pretend to ; and takes off that blind admiration paid them by men in a corner, who have the unhappiness of conversing too little with present things. Reflecting maturely upon all this, and taking in the whole compass of human nature, I easily concluded, that these ancients, highly sensible of their many imperfections, must needs have endeavoured, from some passages in their works, to obviate, soften, or divert the censorious reader, by satire, or panegyric upon the critics, in imitation of their masters, the moderns. Now, in the common-places of both these,<sup>2</sup> I was plentifully instructed, by a long course of useful study in prefaces and prologues ; and therefore immediately resolved to try what I could discover of either, by a

<sup>1</sup> See Wotton of Ancient and Modern Learning.

<sup>2</sup> Satire and Panegyric upon Critics.



diligent perusal of the most ancient writers, and especially those who treated of the earliest times. Here I found, to my great surprise, that although they all entered, upon occasion, into particular descriptions of the true critic, according as they were governed by their fears or their hopes; yet, whatever they touched of that kind, was with abundance of caution, adventuring no farther than mythology and hieroglyphic. This, I suppose, gave ground to superficial readers, for urging the silence of authors, against the antiquity of the true critic, though the types are so apposite, and the applications so necessary and natural, that it is not easy to conceive how any reader of a modern eye and taste could overlook them. I shall venture from a great number to produce a few, which, I am very confident, will put this question beyond dispute.

It well deserves considering, that these ancient writers, in treating enigmatically upon the subject, have generally fixed upon the very same hieroglyph, varying only the story, according to their affections, or their wit. For first; Pausanias is of opinion, that the perfection of writing correct was entirely owing to the institution of critics; and, that he can possibly mean no other than the true critic, is, I think, manifest enough from the following description. He says, they were a race of men, who delighted to nibble at the superfluities, and excrescencies of books; which the learned at length observing, took warning, of their own accord, to lop the luxuriant, the rotten, the dead, the sapless, and the overgrown branches from their works. But now, all this he cunningly shades under the following allegory; that the Nauplians in Argia learned the art of pruning their vines, by observing, that when an ASS had browsed upon one of them, it thrived the better, and bore fairer fruit. But Herodotus,<sup>1</sup> holding the very same hieroglyph, speaks much plainer, and almost *in terminis*. He hath been so bold as to tax the true critics of ignorance and malice; telling us openly, for I think nothing can be plainer, that in the western part of Libya, there were ASSES with HORNS; upon which relation Ctesias<sup>2</sup> yet refines, mentioning the very same animal about India, adding, that whereas all other

<sup>1</sup> Lib. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Vide excerpta ex eo apud Photium.



ASSES wanted a gall, these horned ones were so redundant in that part, that their flesh was not to be eaten, because of its extreme bitterness.

Now, the reason why those ancient writers treated this subject only by types and figures, was, because they durst not make open attacks against a party so potent and terrible, as the critics of those ages were ; whose very voice was so dreadful, that a legion of authors would tremble, and drop their pens at the sound ; for so Herodotus<sup>1</sup> tells us expressly in another place, how a vast army of Scythians was put to flight in a panic terror, by the braying of an ASS. From hence it is conjectured by certain profound philologers, that the great awe and reverence paid to a true critic, by the writers of Britain, have been derived to us from those our Scythian ancestors. In short, this dread was so universal, that in process of time, those authors, who had a mind to publish their sentiments more freely, in describing the true critics of their several ages, were forced to leave off the use of the former hieroglyph, as too nearly approaching the prototype, and invented other terms instead thereof, that were more cautious and mystical. So, Diodorus, speaking to the same purpose, ventures no farther, than to say, that in the mountains of Helicon, there grows a certain weed, which bears a flower of so damned a scent, as to poison those who offer to smell it. Lucretius gives exactly the same relation :

Est etiam in magnis Heliconis montibus arbos,  
Floris odore hominem tetro consueta necare.<sup>2</sup>

Lib. 6.

But Ctesias, whom we lately quoted, hath been a great deal bolder ; he had been used with much severity by the true critics of his own age, and therefore could not forbear to leave behind him, at least one deep mark of his vengeance against the whole tribe. His meaning is so near the surface, that I wonder how it possibly came to be overlooked by those who deny the antiquity of true critics. For, pretending to make a description of many strange animals about India, he hath set down these remarkable words : “ Among

<sup>1</sup> Lib. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Near Helicon, and round the learned hill,  
Grow trees, whose blossoms with their odour kill.

the rest," says he, "there is a serpent that wants teeth, and consequently cannot bite; but if its vomit, (to which it is much addicted,) happens to fall upon anything, a certain rottenness or corruption ensues. These serpents are generally found among the mountains, where jewels grow, and they frequently emit a poisonous juice: whereof whoever drinks, that person's brains fly out of his nostrils."

There was also among the ancients a sort of critics, not distinguished in species from the former, but in growth or degree, who seem to have been only the tyros or junior scholars; yet, because of their differing employments, they are frequently mentioned as a sect by themselves. The usual exercise of these younger students, was, to attend constantly at theatres, and learn to spy out the worst parts of the play, whereof they were obliged carefully to take note, and render a rational account to their tutors. Fleshed at these smaller sports, like young wolves, they grew up in time to be nimble and strong enough for hunting down large game. For it hath been observed, both among ancients and moderns, that a true critic hath one quality in common with a whore and an alderman, never to change his title or his nature; that a gray critic has been certainly a green one, the perfections and acquirements of his age being only the improved talents of his youth; like hemp, which some naturalists inform us is bad for suffocations, though taken but in the seed. I esteem the invention, or at least the refinement of prologues, to have been owing to these younger proficientes, of whom Terence makes frequent and honourable mention, under the name of *malevoli*.

Now, 'tis certain, the institution of the true critics was of absolute necessity to the commonwealth of learning. For all human actions seem to be divided, like Themistocles and his company; one man can fiddle, and another can make a small town a great city; and he that cannot do either one or the other, deserves to be kicked out of the creation. The avoiding of which penalty, has doubtless given the first birth to the nation of critics; and withal, an occasion for their secret detractors to report, that a true critic is a sort of mechanic, set up with a stock and tools for his trade, at as little expense as a tailor; and that there is much analogy between the utensils and abilities of both: that the tailor's hell is



the type of a critic's common-place book, and his wit and learning held forth by the goose ; that it requires at least as many of these to the making up of one scholar, as of the others to the composition of a man ; that the valour of both is equal, and their weapons near of a size. Much may be said in answer to those invidious reflections ; and I can positively affirm the first to be a falsehood : for, on the contrary, nothing is more certain, than that it requires greater layings out, to be free of the critic's company, than of any other you can name. For, as to be a true beggar, it will cost the richest candidate every groat he is worth ; so, before one can commence a true critic, it will cost a man all the good qualities of his mind ; which, perhaps for a less purchase, would be thought but an indifferent bargain.

Having thus amply proved the antiquity of criticism, and described the primitive state of it, I shall now examine the present condition of this empire, and shew how well it agrees with its ancient self. A certain author,<sup>1</sup> whose works have many ages since been entirely lost, does, in his fifth book, and eighth chapter, say of critics, that their writings are the mirrors of learning. This I understand in a literal sense, and suppose our author must mean, that whoever designs to be a perfect writer, must inspect into the books of critics, and correct his invention there, as in a mirror. Now, whoever considers, that the mirrors of the ancients were made of brass, and *sine mercurio*, may presently apply the two principal qualifications of a true modern critic, and consequently must needs conclude, that these have always been, and must be for ever the same. For brass is an emblem of duration, and, when it is skilfully burnished, will cast reflections from its own superficies, without any assistance of mercury from behind. All the other talents of a critic will not require a particular mention, being included, or easily deducible to these. However, I shall conclude with three maxims, which may serve both as characteristics to distinguish a true modern critic from a pretender, and will be also of admirable use to those worthy spirits, who engage in so useful and honourable an art.

The first is, that criticism, contrary to all other faculties of

<sup>1</sup> A quotation after the manner of a great author. Vide Bentley's Dissertation, &c.



the intellect, is ever held the truest and best, when it is the very first result of the critic's mind ; as fowlers reckon the first aim for the surest, and seldom fail of missing the mark, if they stay for a second.

Secondly, the true critics are known, by their talents of swarming about the noblest writers, to which they are carried merely by instinct, as a rat to the best cheese, or a wasp to the fairest fruit. So when the king is on horseback, he is sure to be the dirtiest person of the company ; and they that make their court best, are such as bespatter him most.

Lastly, a true critic, in the perusal of a book, is like a dog at a feast, whose thoughts and stomach are wholly set upon what the guests fling away, and consequently is apt to snarl most when there are the fewest bones.

Thus much, I think, is sufficient to serve by way of address to my patrons, the true modern critics ; and may very well atone for my past silence, as well as that which I am like to observe for the future. I hope I have deserved so well of their whole body, as to meet with generous and tender usage from their hands. Supported by which expectation, I go on boldly to pursue those adventures, already so happily begun.

## SECT. IV.

### A TALE OF A TUB.

I HAVE now, with much pains and study, conducted the reader to a period, where he must expect to hear of great revolutions. For no sooner had our learned brother, so often mentioned, got a warm house of his own over his head, than he began to look big, and take mightily upon him ; insomuch, that unless the gentle reader, out of his great candour, will please a little to exalt his idea, I am afraid he will henceforth hardly know the hero of the play, when he happens to meet him ; his part, his dress, and his mien being so much altered.

He told his brothers, he would have them to know that he

was their elder, and consequently his father's sole heir ; nay, a while after, he would not allow them to call him brother, but *Mr.* PETER ; and then he must be styled *Father* PETER ; and sometimes, *My Lord* PETER. To support this grandeur, which he soon began to consider could not be maintained without a better *fonde* than what he was born to, after much thought, he cast about at last to turn projector and virtuoso, wherein he so well succeeded, that many famous discoveries, projects, and machines, which bear great vogue and practice at present in the world, are owing entirely to Lord PETER'S invention. I will deduce the best account I have been able to collect of the chief among them, without considering much the order they came out in ; because, I think, authors are not well agreed as to that point.

I hope, when this treatise of mine shall be translated into foreign languages (as I may without vanity affirm, that the labour of collecting, the faithfulness in recounting, and the great usefulness of the matter to the public, will amply deserve that justice) that the worthy members of the several academies abroad, especially those of France and Italy, will favourably accept these humble offers, for the advancement of universal knowledge. I do also advertise the most reverend fathers, the Eastern Missionaries, that I have, purely for their sakes, made use of such words and phrases, as will best admit an easy turn into any of the oriental languages, especially the Chinese. And so I proceed with great content of mind, upon reflecting, how much emolument this whole globe of the earth is likely to reap by my labours.

The first undertaking of Lord Peter, was, to purchase a large continent,<sup>1</sup> lately said to have been discovered in *Terra Australis Incognita*. This tract of land he bought at a very great penny-worth, from the discoverers themselves, (though some pretend to doubt whether they had ever been there,) and then retailed it into several cantons to certain dealers, who carried over colonies, but were all shipwrecked in the voyage. Upon which Lord Peter sold the said continent to other customers again, and again, and again, and again, with the same success.

The second project I shall mention, was his sovereign

<sup>1</sup> That is, Purgatory.

remedy for the worms,<sup>1</sup> especially those in the spleen. The patient was to eat nothing after supper for three nights :<sup>2</sup> as soon as he went to bed, he was carefully to lie on one side, and when he grew weary, to turn upon the other. He must also duly confine his two eyes to the same object : and by no means break wind at both ends together, without manifest occasion. These prescriptions diligently observed, the worms would void insensibly by perspiration, ascending through the brain.

A third invention was the erecting of a whispering-office,<sup>3</sup> for the public good, and ease of all such as are hypochondriacal, or troubled with the colic ; as midwives,<sup>4</sup> small politicians, friends fallen out, repeating poets, lovers happy or in despair, bawds, privy-counsellors, pages, parasites, and buffoons : in short, of all such as are in danger of bursting with too much wind. An ass's head was placed so conveniently, that the party affected, might easily with his mouth accost either of the animal's ears ; to which he was to apply close for a certain space, and by a fugitive faculty, peculiar to the ears of that animal, receive immediate benefit, either by eructation, or expiration, or evomitation.

Another very beneficial project of Lord Peter's was, an office of insurance for tobacco-pipes,<sup>5</sup> martyrs of the modern zeal, volumes of poetry, shadows,———and rivers : that these, nor any of these, shall receive damage by fire. From whence our friendly societies may plainly find themselves to be only transcribers from this original ; though the one and the other have been of great benefit to the undertakers, as well as of equal to the public.

Lord Peter was also held the original author of puppets

<sup>1</sup> Penance and absolution are played upon under the notion of a sovereign remedy for the worms, especially in the spleen, which, by observing Peter's prescription, would void insensibly by perspiration, ascending through the brain, &c.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>2</sup> Here the author ridicules the penances of the Church of Rome, which may be made as easy to the sinner as he pleases, provided he will pay for them accordingly.

<sup>3</sup> By his whispering-office, for the relief of eaves-droppers, physicians, bawds, and privy-counsellors, he ridicules auricular confession ; and the priest who takes it, is described by the ass's head.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>4</sup> As likewise of all eaves-droppers, midwives, &c.—*First Edition*. [T. S.]

<sup>5</sup> This I take to be the office of indulgences, the gross abuses whereof first gave occasion for the Reformation.



and raree-shows ;<sup>1</sup> the great usefulness whereof being so generally known, I shall not enlarge farther upon this particular.

But another discovery, for which he was much renowned, was his famous universal pickle.<sup>2</sup> For, having remarked how your common pickle,<sup>3</sup> in use among housewives, was of no farther benefit than to preserve dead flesh, and certain kinds of vegetables, Peter, with great cost as well as art, had contrived a pickle proper for houses, gardens, towns, men, women, children, and cattle ; wherein he could preserve them as sound as insects in amber. Now, this pickle to the taste, the smell, and the sight, appeared exactly the same with what is in common service for beef, and butter, and herrings (and has been often that way applied with great success) ; but, for its many sovereign virtues, was a quite different thing. For Peter would put in a certain quantity of his powder pimperlimpimp,<sup>4</sup> after which it never failed of success. The operation was performed by spargefaction,<sup>5</sup> in a proper time of the moon. The patient, who was to be pickled, if it were a house, would infallibly be preserved from all spiders, rats, and weasels. If the party affected were a dog, he should be exempt from mange, and madness, and hunger. It also infallibly took away all scabs, and lice, and scalled heads from children, never hindering the patient from any duty, either at bed or board.

But of all Peter's rarities, he most valued a certain set of bulls,<sup>6</sup> whose race was by great fortune preserved in a lineal

<sup>1</sup> I believe are the monkeries and ridiculous processions, &c., among the papists.

<sup>2</sup> Holy water, he calls a universal pickle, to preserve houses, gardens, towns, men, women, children, and cattle, wherein he could preserve them as sound as insects in amber.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>3</sup> This is easily understood to be holy water, composed of the same ingredients with many other pickles.

<sup>4</sup> And because holy water differs only in consecration from common water, therefore he tells us that his pickle by the powder of pimperlimpimp receives new virtues, though it differs not in sight nor smell from the common pickles, which preserve beef, and butter, and herrings.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>5</sup> Sprinkling. [H.]

<sup>6</sup> The papal bulls are ridiculed by name, so that here we are at no loss for the author's meaning.—W. WOTTON.

*Ibid.* Here the author has kept the name, and means the pope's

descent from those that guarded the golden fleece. Though some, who pretended to observe them curiously, doubted the breed had not been kept entirely chaste; because they had degenerated from their ancestors in some qualities, and had acquired others very extraordinary, by a foreign mixture. The bulls of Colchis are recorded to have brazen feet; but whether it happened by ill pasture and running, by an allay from intervention of other parents, from stolen intrigues; whether a weakness in their progenitors had impaired the seminal virtue, or by a decline necessary through a long course of time, the originals of nature being depraved in these latter sinful ages of the world; whatever was the cause, it is certain, that Lord Peter's bulls were extremely vitiated by the rust of time in the metal of their feet, which was now sunk into common lead. However, the terrible roaring, peculiar to their lineage, was preserved; as likewise that faculty of breathing out fire from their nostrils; which, notwithstanding, many of their detractors took to be a feat of art; to be nothing so terrible as it appeared; proceeding only from their usual course of diet, which was of squibs and crackers.<sup>1</sup> However, they had two peculiar marks, which extremely distinguished them from the bulls of Jason, and which I have not met together in the description of any other monster, beside that in Horace;—

*Varias inducere plumas ;*  
and  
*Atrum definit in piscem.*

For these had fishes' tails, yet upon occasion could outfly any bird in the air. Peter put these bulls upon several employs. Sometimes he would set them a-roaring to fright naughty boys,<sup>2</sup> and make them quiet. Sometimes he would send them out upon errands of great importance; where, it is wonderful to recount, and perhaps the cautious reader may think much to believe it, an *appetitus sensibilis*, deriving itself through the whole family from their noble ancestors, guardians

bulls, or rather his fulminations, and excommunications of heretical princes, all signed with lead, and the seal of the fisherman.

<sup>1</sup> These are the fulminations of the pope, threatening hell and damnation to those princes who offend him.

<sup>2</sup> That is, kings who incurred his displeasure.



of the golden fleece, they continued so extremely fond of gold, that if Peter sent them abroad, though it were only upon a compliment, they would roar, and spit, and belch, and piss, and fart, and snivel out fire, and keep a perpetual coil, till you flung them a bit of gold; but then, *pulveris exigui jactu*, they would grow calm and quiet as lambs. In short, whether by secret connivance, or encouragement from their master, or out of their own liquorish affection to gold, or both, it is certain they were no better than a sort of sturdy, swaggering beggars; and where they could not prevail to get an alms, would make women miscarry, and children fall into fits, who to this very day, usually call sprights and hobgoblins by the name of bull-beggars. They grew at last so very troublesome to the neighbourhood, that some gentlemen of the north-west got a parcel of right English bull-dogs, and baited them so terribly, that they felt it ever after.

I must needs mention one more of Lord Peter's projects, which was very extraordinary, and discovered him to be master of a high reach, and profound invention. Whenever it happened, that any rogue of Newgate was condemned to be hanged, Peter would offer him a pardon for a certain sum of money; which when the poor caitiff had made all shifts to scrape up, and send, his lordship would return a piece of paper in this form.<sup>1</sup>

"TO all mayors, sheriffs, jailors, constables, bailiffs, hangmen, &c. Whereas we are informed, that A. B. remains in the hands of you, or some of you, under the sentence of death. We will and command you, upon sight hereof, to let the said prisoner depart to his own habitation, whether he stands condemned for murder, sodomy, rape, sacrilege, incest, treason, blasphemy, &c., for which this shall be your sufficient warrant: and if you fail hereof, G—d—mn you and yours to all eternity. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Your most humble  
man's man,  
Emperor PETER."

The wretches, trusting to this, lost their lives and money too.

<sup>1</sup> This is a copy of a general pardon, signed *servus servorum*.

*Ibid.* Absolution *in articulo mortis*, and the tax *cameræ apostolicæ*, are jested upon in Emperor Peter's letter.—W. WOTTON.



I desire of those, whom the learned among posterity will appoint for commentators upon this elaborate treatise, that they will proceed with great caution upon certain dark points, wherein all, who are not *verè adepts*, may be in danger to form rash and hasty conclusions, especially in some mysterious paragraphs, were certain *arcana* are joined for brevity sake, which in the operation must be divided. And I am certain, that future sons of art will return large thanks to my memory, for so grateful, so useful an *innuendo*.

It will be no difficult part to persuade the reader, that so many worthy discoveries met with great success in the world ; though I may justly assure him, that I have related much the smallest number ; my design having been only to single out such as will be of most benefit for public imitation, or which best served to give some idea of the reach and wit of the inventor. And therefore it need not be wondered at, if, by this time, Lord Peter was become exceeding rich. But, alas ! he had kept his brain so long and so violently upon the rack, that at last it shook itself, and began to turn round for a little ease. In short, what with pride, projects, and knavery, poor Peter was grown distracted, and conceived the strangest imaginations in the world. In the height of his fits, (as it is usual with those who run mad out of pride,) he would call himself God Almighty,<sup>1</sup> and sometimes monarch of the universe. I have seen him (says my author) take three old high-crowned hats,<sup>2</sup> and clap them all on his head three story high, with a huge bunch of keys at his girdle,<sup>3</sup> and an angling-rod in his hand. In which guise, whoever went to take him by the hand in the way of salutation, Peter with much grace, like a well-educated spaniel, would present them with his foot ;<sup>4</sup> and if they refused his civility, then he would raise it as high as their chaps, and give them a damned kick on the mouth, which hath ever since been called a salute. Whoever walked by without paying him their compliments, having

<sup>1</sup> The Pope is not only allowed to be the vicar of Christ, but by several divines is called God upon earth, and other blasphemous titles.

<sup>2</sup> The triple crown.

<sup>3</sup> The keys of the church.

*Ibid.* The Pope's universal monarchy, and his triple crown and fisher's ring.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>4</sup> Neither does his arrogant way of requiring men to kiss his slipper escape reflection.—W. WOTTON.

a wonderful strong breath, he would blow their hats off into the dirt. Meantime his affairs at home went upside down, and his two brothers had a wretched time; where his first *boutade*<sup>1</sup> was, to kick both their wives one morning out of doors, and his own too;<sup>2</sup> and in their stead, gave orders to pick up the first three strollers that could be met with in the streets. A while after he nailed up the cellar-door; and would not allow his brothers a drop of drink to their victuals.<sup>3</sup> Dining one day at an alderman's in the city, Peter observed him expatiating, after the manner of his brethren, in the praises of his sirloin of beef. Beef, said the sage magistrate, is the king of meat; beef comprehends in it the quintessence of partridge, and quail, and venison, and pheasant, and plum-pudding, and custard. When Peter came home, he would needs take the fancy of cooking up this doctrine into use, and apply the precept, in default of a sirloin, to his brown loaf: "Bread," says he, "dear brothers, is the staff of life; in which bread is contained, inclusive, the quintessence of beef, mutton, veal, venison, partridge, plum-pudding, and custard: and, to render all complete, there is intermingled a due quantity of water, whose crudities are also corrected by yeast or barm; through which means it becomes a wholesome fermented liquor, diffused through the mass of the bread." Upon the strength of these conclusions, next day at dinner, was the brown loaf served up in all the formality of a city feast. "Come, brothers," said Peter, "fall to, and spare not; here is excellent good mutton;<sup>4</sup> or hold, now my hand is in, I will help you." At which word, in much ceremony, with fork and knife, he carves out two good slices of a loaf, and presents each on a plate to his brothers. The elder of the two, not suddenly entering into Lord Peter's

<sup>1</sup> This word properly signifies a sudden jerk, or lash of a horse, when you do not expect it.

<sup>2</sup> The Celibacy of the Romish clergy is struck at in Peter's beating his own and brothers' wives out of doors.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>3</sup> The Pope's refusing the cup to the laity, persuading them that the blood is contained in the bread, and that the bread is the real and entire body of Christ.

<sup>4</sup> Transubstantiation. Peter turns his bread into mutton, and according to the popish doctrine of concomitants, his wine too, which in his way he calls palming his damned crusts upon the brothers for mutton.—W. WOTTON.



conceit, began with very civil language to examine the mystery. "My lord," said he, "I doubt, with great submission, there may be some mistake." "What," says Peter, "you are pleasant ; come then, let us hear this jest your head is so big with." "None in the world, my lord ; but, unless I am very much deceived, your lordship was pleased a while ago to let fall a word about mutton, and I would be glad to see it with all my heart." "How," said Peter, appearing in great surprise, "I do not comprehend this at all."—Upon which, the younger interposing to set the business aright ; "My lord," said he, "my brother, I suppose, is hungry, and longs for the mutton your lordship has promised us to dinner." "Pray," said Peter, "take me along with you ; either you are both mad, or disposed to be merrier than I approve of. If you there do not like your piece, I will carve you another : though I should take that to be the choicé bit of the whole shoulder." "What then, my lord," replied the first, "it seems this is a shoulder of mutton all this while?" "Pray, sir," says Peter, "eat your victuals, and leave off your impertinence, if you please, for I am not disposed to relish it at present." But the other could not forbear, being overprovoked at the affected seriousness of Peter's countenance. "By G—, my lord," said he, "I can only say, that to my eyes, and fingers, and teeth, and nose, it seems to be nothing but a crust of bread." Upon which the second put in his word : "I never saw a piece of mutton in my life so nearly resembling a slice from a twelve-penny loaf." "Look ye, gentlemen," cries Peter in a rage, "to convince you what a couple of blind, positive, ignorant, wilful puppies you are, I will use but this plain argument ; by G—, it is true, good, natural mutton as any in Leadenhall market ; and G— confound you both eternally, if you offer to believe otherwise." Such a thundering proof as this left no farther room for objection. The two unbelievers began to gather and pocket up their mistake as hastily as they could. "Why, truly," said the first, "upon more mature consideration"—"Ay," says the other, interrupting him, "now I have thought better on the thing, your lordship seems to have a great deal of reason." "Very well," said Peter ; "here, boy, fill me a beer-glass of claret ; here's to you both, with all my heart." The two brethren, much delighted to see him so readily ap-



peased, returned their most humble thanks, and said they would be glad to pledge his lordship. "That you shall," said Peter; "I am not a person to refuse you anything that is reasonable: wine, moderately taken, is a cordial; here is a glass a-piece for you; 'tis true natural juice from the grape, none of your damned vintner's brewings." Having spoke thus, he presented to each of them another large dry crust, bidding them drink it off, and not be bashful, for it would do them no hurt. The two brothers, after having performed the usual office in such delicate conjunctures, of staring a sufficient period at Lord Peter and each other, and finding how matters were likely to go, resolved not to enter on a new dispute, but let him carry the point as he pleased; for he was now got into one of his mad fits, and to argue or expostulate farther, would only serve to render him a hundred times more untractable.

I have chosen to relate this worthy matter in all its circumstances, because it gave a principal occasion to that great and famous rupture,<sup>1</sup> which happened about the same time among these brethren, and was never afterwards made up. But of that I shall treat at large in another section.

However, it is certain, that Lord Peter, even in his lucid intervals, was very lewdly given in his common conversation, extreme wilful and positive, and would at any time rather argue to the death, than allow himself once to be in an error. Besides, he had an abominable faculty of telling huge palpable lies upon all occasions; and not only swearing to the truth, but cursing the whole company to hell, if they pretended to make the least scruple of believing him. One time he swore he had a cow<sup>2</sup> at home, which gave as much milk at a meal, as would fill three thousand churches; and what was yet more extraordinary, would never turn sour. Another time he was telling of an old sign-post,<sup>3</sup> that belonged to his father, with nails and timber enough in it to build sixteen large men-of-war. Talking one day of Chinese waggons, which were made so light as to sail over mountains:—

<sup>1</sup> By this Rupture is meant the Reformation.

<sup>2</sup> The ridiculous multiplying of the Virgin Mary's milk among the papists, under the allegory of a cow, which gave as much milk at a meal as would fill three thousand churches.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>3</sup> By the sign-post is meant the cross of our Blessed Saviour.

“Z——ds,” said Peter, “where’s the wonder of that? By G—, I saw a large house of lime and stone<sup>1</sup> travel over sea and land, (granting that it stopped sometimes to bait,) above two thousand German leagues.” And that which was the good of it, he would swear desperately all the while, that he never told a lie in his life; and at every word; “By G—, gentlemen, I tell you nothing but the truth: and the D—I broil them eternally, that will not believe me.”

In short, Peter grew so scandalous, that all the neighbourhood began in plain words to say, he was no better than a knave. And his two brothers, long weary of his ill usage, resolved at last to leave him; but first, they humbly desired a copy of their father’s will, which had now lain by neglected time out of mind. Instead of granting this request, he called them damned sons of whores, rogues, traitors, and the rest of the vile names he could muster up. However, while he was abroad one day upon his projects, the two youngsters watched their opportunity, made a shift to come at the will,<sup>2</sup> and took a *copia vera*, by which they presently saw how grossly they had been abused; their father having left them equal heirs, and strictly commanded, that whatever they got, should lie in common among them all. Pursuant to which, their next enterprise was, to break open the cellar-door, and get a little good drink,<sup>3</sup> to spirit and comfort their hearts. In copying the will, they had met another precept against whoring, divorce, and separate maintenance; upon which their next work<sup>4</sup> was to discard their concubines, and send for their wives. While all this was in agitation, there enters a solicitor from Newgate, desiring Lord Peter would please procure a pardon for a thief that was to be hanged to-morrow. But the two brothers told him, he was a cox-

<sup>1</sup> The chapel of Loretto. He falls here only upon the ridiculous inventions of popery: the church of Rome intended by these things to gull silly, superstitious people, and rook them of their money; the world had been too long in slavery, our ancestors gloriously redeemed us from that yoke. The church of Rome therefore ought to be exposed, and he deserves well of mankind that does expose it.—W. WOTTON.

*Ibid.* The chapel of Loretto, which travelled from the Holy Land to Italy.

<sup>2</sup> Translated the scriptures into the vulgar tongues.

<sup>3</sup> Administered the cup to the laity at the communion.

<sup>4</sup> Allowed the marriages of priests.



comb to seek pardons from a fellow who deserved to be hanged much better than his client; and discovered all the method of that imposture, in the same form I delivered it a while ago, advising the solicitor to put his friend upon obtaining a pardon from the king.<sup>1</sup> In the midst of all this clutter and revolution, in comes Peter with a file of dragoons at his heels,<sup>2</sup> and gathering from all hands what was in the wind, he and his gang, after several millions of scurrilities and curses, not very important here to repeat, by main force very fairly kicked them both out of doors,<sup>3</sup> and would never let them come under his roof from that day to this.

## SECT. V.

### A DIGRESSION IN THE MODERN KIND.

WE, whom the world is pleased to honour with the title of modern authors, should never have been able to compass our great design of an everlasting remembrance, and never-dying fame, if our endeavours had not been so highly serviceable to the general good of mankind. This, O universe! is the adventurous attempt of me thy secretary;

— Quemvis perferre laborem  
Suadet, et inducit noctes vigilare serenas.

To this end, I have some time since, with a world of pains and art, dissected the carcass of human nature, and read many useful lectures upon the several parts, both containing and contained; till at last it smelt so strong, I could preserve it no longer. Upon which, I have been at a great expense to fit up all the bones with exact contexture, and in

<sup>1</sup> Directed penitents not to trust to pardons and absolutions procured for money, but sent them to implore the mercy of God, from whence alone remission is to be obtained.

<sup>2</sup> By Peter's dragoons is meant the civil power, which those princes who were bigotted to the Romish superstition, employed against the reformers.

<sup>3</sup> The Pope shuts all who dissent from him out of the Church.



due symmetry; so that I am ready to shew a complete anatomy thereof, to all curious gentlemen and others. But not to digress farther in the midst of a digression, as I have known some authors enclose digressions in one another, like a nest of boxes; I do affirm, that having carefully cut up human nature, I have found a very strange, new, and important discovery, that the public good of mankind is performed by two ways, instruction and diversion. And I have farther proved, in my said several readings, (which perhaps the world may one day see, if I can prevail on any friend to steal a copy, or on certain gentlemen of my admirers to be very importunate,) that as mankind is now disposed, he receives much greater advantage by being diverted than instructed; his epidemical diseases being fastidiousity, amorphy, and oscitation; whereas, in the present universal empire of wit and learning, there seems but little matter left for instruction. However, in compliance with a lesson of great age and authority, I have attempted carrying the point in all its heights; and, accordingly, throughout this divine treatise, have skilfully kneaded up both together, with a layer of *utile*, and a layer of *dulce*.

When I consider how exceedingly our illustrious moderns have eclipsed the weak glimmering lights of the ancients, and turned them out of the road of all fashionable commerce, to a degree, that our choice town wits,<sup>1</sup> of most refined accomplishments, are in grave dispute, whether there have been ever any ancients or no: in which point, we are likely to receive wonderful satisfaction from the most useful labours and lucubrations of that worthy modern, Dr. Bentley. I say, when I consider all this, I cannot but bewail, that no famous modern hath ever yet attempted a universal system, in a small portable volume, of all things that are to be known, or believed, or imagined, or practised in life. I am, however, forced to acknowledge, that such an enterprize was thought on some time ago by a great philosopher of O. Brazile.<sup>2</sup> The method he proposed was, by a certain curious

<sup>1</sup> The learned person, here meant by our author, hath been endeavouring to annihilate so many ancient writers, that, until he is pleased to stop his hand, it will be dangerous to affirm, whether there have been any ancients in the world.

<sup>2</sup> This is an imaginary island of kin to that which is called Painters'

receipt, a nostrum, which, after his untimely death, I found among his papers, and do here, out of my great affection to the modern learned, present them with it, not doubting it may one day encourage some worthy undertaker.

*You take fair correct copies, well bound in calf-skin, and lettered at the back, of all modern bodies of arts and sciences whatsoever, and in what language you please. These you distil in balneo Mariæ, infusing quintessence of poppy Q.S., together with three pints of Lethe, to be had from the apothecaries. You cleanse away carefully the sordes and caput mortuum, letting all that is volatile evaporate. You preserve only the first running, which is again to be distilled seventeen times, till what remains will amount to about two drams. This you keep in a glass vial, hermetically sealed, for one-and-twenty days. Then you begin your Catholic treatise, taking every morning fasting, (first shaking the vial,) three drops of this elixir, snuffing it strongly up your nose. It will dilate itself about the brain, (where there is any,) in fourteen minutes, and you immediately perceive in your head an infinite number of abstracts, summaries, compendiums, extracts, collections, medullas, excerpta quædams, florilegias, and the like, all disposed into great order, and reducible upon paper.*

I must needs own, it was by the assistance of this arcanum, that I, though otherwise *impar*, have adventured upon so daring an attempt, never achieved or undertaken before, but by a certain author called Homer, in whom, though otherwise a person not without some abilities, and, for an ancient, of a tolerable genius, I have discovered many gross errors, which are not to be forgiven his very ashes, if, by chance, any of them are left. For whereas we are assured he designed his work for a complete body of all knowledge,<sup>1</sup>

Wives Island, placed in some unknown part of the ocean, merely at the fancy of the map-maker.

*Ibid.* There was a belief that the inhabitants of the Isle of Arran could, at certain times, distinguish an enchanted island, called by them O Brazil. Mr. Southey conjectures, that this belief was founded upon some optical delusion, similar to that which produces, in the bay of Naples, the ærial palaces of the Fata Morgana.—SOUTHEY'S *History of Brazil*, p. 22. [S.]

<sup>1</sup> Homerus omnes res humanas poematis complexus est.—*Xenoph. in conviv.*



human, divine, political, and mechanic, it is manifest he hath wholly neglected some, and been very imperfect in the rest. For, first of all, as eminent a cabalist as his disciples would represent him, his account of the *opus magnum* is extremely poor and deficient; he seems to have read but very superficially either Sendivogus, Behmen, or Anthroposophia Theomagica.<sup>1</sup> He is also quite mistaken about the *sphæra pyroplastica*, a neglect not to be atoned for; and, (if the reader will admit so severe a censure,) *vix crederem autorem hunc unquam audivisse ignis vocem*. His failings are not less prominent in several parts of the mechanics. For, having read his writings with the utmost application, usual among modern wits, I could never yet discover the least direction about the structure of that useful instrument, a save-all. For want of which, if the moderns had not lent their assistance, we might yet have wandered in the dark. But I have still behind a fault far more notorious to tax the author with; I mean, his gross ignorance in the common laws of this realm, and in the doctrine as well as discipline of the Church of England.<sup>2</sup> A defect, indeed, for which both he, and all the ancients, stand most justly censured, by my worthy and ingenious friend, Mr. Wotton, Bachelor of Divinity, in his incomparable treatise of *Ancient and Modern Learning*: a book never to be sufficiently valued, whether we consider the happy turns and flowings of the author's wit, the great usefulness of his sublime discoveries upon the subject of flies and spittle, or the laborious eloquence of his style. And I cannot forbear doing that author the justice of my public acknowledgments, for the great helps and liftings I had out of his incomparable piece, while I was penning this treatise.

But, beside these omissions in Homer already mentioned, the curious reader will also observe several defects in that author's writings, for which he is not altogether so account-

<sup>1</sup> A treatise written about fifty years ago, by a Welsh gentleman of Cambridge. His name, as I remember, Vaughan, as appears by the answer to it written by the learned Dr. Henry More. It is a piece of the most unintelligible fustian, that perhaps was ever published in any language.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Wotton, (to whom our author never gives any quarter,) in his comparison of ancient and modern learning, numbers divinity, law, &c., among those parts of knowledge wherein we excel the ancients.



able. For whereas every branch of knowledge has received such wonderful acquirements since his age, especially within these last three years, or thereabouts, it is almost impossible he could be so very perfect in modern discoveries as his advocates pretend. We freely acknowledge him to be the inventor of the compass, of gunpowder, and the circulation of the blood: but I challenge any of his admirers to shew me, in all his writings, a complete account of the spleen. Does he not also leave us wholly to seek in the art of political wagering? What can be more defective and unsatisfactory than his long dissertation upon tea? And as to his method of salivation without mercury, so much celebrated of late, it is, to my own knowledge and experience, a thing very little to be relied on.

It was to supply such momentous defects, that I have been prevailed on, after long solicitation, to take pen in hand; and I dare venture to promise, the judicious reader shall find nothing neglected here, that can be of use upon any emergency of life. I am confident to have included and exhausted all that human imagination can rise or fall to. Particularly, I recommend to the perusal of the learned, certain discoveries, that are wholly untouched by others; whereof I shall only mention, among a great many more, my *New Help for Smatterers, or the Art of being deep-learned and shallow-read; A Curious Invention about Mouse-Traps; A Universal Rule of Reason, or every Man his own Carver*; together with a most useful engine for catching of owls. All which, the judicious reader will find largely treated on in the several parts of this discourse.

I hold myself obliged to give as much light as is possible, into the beauties and excellencies of what I am writing: because it is become the fashion and humour most applauded, among the first authors of this polite and learned age, when they would correct the ill-nature of critical, or inform the ignorance of courteous readers. Besides, there have been several famous pieces lately published, both in verse and prose, wherein, if the writers had not been pleased, out of their great humanity and affection to the public, to give us a nice detail of the sublime and the admirable they contain, it is a thousand to one, whether we should ever have discovered one grain of either. For my own particular, I cannot deny,

that whatever I have said upon this occasion, had been more proper in a preface, and more agreeable to the mode which usually directs it there. But I here think fit to lay hold on that great and honourable privilege, of being the last writer. I claim an absolute authority in right, as the freshest modern, which gives me a despotic power over all authors before me. In the strength of which title, I do utterly disapprove and declare against that pernicious custom, of making the preface a bill of fare to the book. For I have always looked upon it as a high point of indiscretion in monster-mongers, and other retailers of strange sights, to hang out a fair large picture over the door, drawn after the life, with a most eloquent description underneath. This hath saved me many a threepence; for my curiosity was fully satisfied, and I never offered to go in, though often invited by the urging and attending orator, with his last moving and standing piece of rhetoric: "Sir, upon my word, we are just going to begin." Such is exactly the fate, at this time, of Prefaces, Epistles, Advertisements, Introductions, Prolegomenas, Apparatuses, To the Readers'. This expedient was admirable at first; our great Dryden has long carried it as far as it would go, and with incredible success. He has often said to me in confidence, that the world would have never suspected him to be so great a poet, if he had not assured them so frequently in his prefaces, that it was impossible they could either doubt or forget it. Perhaps it may be so. However, I much fear, his instructions have edified out of their place, and taught men to grow wiser in certain points, where he never intended they should; for it is lamentable to behold, with what a lazy scorn many of the yawning readers of our age, do now-a-days twirl over forty or fifty pages of preface and dedication, (which is the usual modern stint,) as if it were so much Latin. Though it must be also allowed on the other hand, that a very considerable number is known to proceed critics and wits, by reading nothing else. Into which two factions, I think, all present readers may justly be divided. Now, for myself, I profess to be of the former sort; and therefore, having the modern inclination, to expatiate upon the beauty of my own productions, and display the bright parts of my discourse, I thought best to do it in the body of the work; where, as it now lies, it makes



a very considerable addition to the bulk of the volume ; a circumstance by no means to be neglected by a skilful writer.

Having thus paid my due deference and acknowledgment to an established custom of our newest authors, by a long digression unsought for, and a universal censure unprovoked, by forcing into the light, with much pains and dexterity, my own excellencies, and other men's defaults, with great justice to myself, and candour to them, I now happily resume my subject, to the infinite satisfaction both of the reader and the author.

## SECT. VI.

### A TALE OF A TUB.

WE left Lord Peter in open rupture with his two brethren ; both for ever discarded from his house, and resigned to the wide world, with little or nothing to trust to. Which are circumstances that render them proper subjects for the charity of a writer's pen to work on, scenes of misery ever affording the fairest harvest for great adventures. And in this, the world may perceive the difference between the integrity of a generous author and that of a common friend. The latter is observed to adhere close in prosperity, but on the decline of fortune, to drop suddenly off. Whereas the generous author, just on the contrary, finds his hero on the dunghill, from thence by gradual steps raises him to a throne, and then immediately withdraws, expecting not so much as thanks for his pains ; in imitation of which example, I have placed Lord Peter in a noble house, given him a title to wear, and money to spend. There I shall leave him for some time, returning where common charity directs me, to the assistance of his two brothers, at their lowest ebb. However, I shall by no means forget my character of an historian to follow the truth step by step, whatever happens, or wherever it may lead me.

The two exiles, so nearly united in fortune and interest,



took a lodging together, where, at their first leisure, they began to reflect on the numberless misfortunes and vexations of their life past, and could not tell on the sudden, to what failure in their conduct they ought to impute them, when, after some recollection, they called to mind the copy of their father's will, which they had so happily recovered. This was immediately produced, and a firm resolution taken between them, to alter whatever was already amiss, and reduce all their future measures to the strictest obedience prescribed therein. The main body of the will (as the reader cannot easily have forgot) consisted in certain admirable rules about the wearing of their coats, in the perusal whereof, the two brothers, at every period, duly comparing the doctrine with the practice, there was never seen a wider difference between two things, horrible downright transgressions of every point. Upon which they both resolved, without further delay, to fall immediately upon reducing the whole, exactly after their father's model.

But, here it is good to stop the hasty reader, ever impatient to see the end of an adventure, before we writers can duly prepare him for it. I am to record, that these two brothers began to be distinguished at this time by certain names. One of them desired to be called MARTIN,<sup>1</sup> and the other took the appellation of JACK.<sup>2</sup> These two had lived in much friendship and agreement, under the tyranny of their brother Peter, as it is the talent of fellow-sufferers to do; men in misfortune, being like men in the dark, to whom all colours are the same. But when they came forward into the world, and began to display themselves to each other, and to the light, their complexions appeared extremely different, which the present posture of their affairs gave them sudden opportunity to discover.

But, here the severe reader may justly tax me as a writer of short memory, a deficiency to which a true modern cannot but, of necessity, be a little subject. Because, memory being an employment of the mind upon things past, is a faculty for which the learned in our illustrious age have no manner of occasion, who deal entirely with invention, and strike all things out of themselves, or at least by collision

<sup>1</sup> Martin Luther.

<sup>2</sup> John Calvin.

from each other ; upon which account, we think it highly reasonable to produce our great forgetfulness, as an argument unanswerable for our great wit. I ought in method to have informed the reader, about fifty pages ago, of a fancy Lord Peter took, and infused into his brothers, to wear on their coats whatever trimmings came up in fashion ; never pulling off any, as they went out of the mode, but keeping on all together, which amounted in time to a medley the most antic you can possibly conceive, and this to a degree, that upon the time of their falling out, there was hardly a thread of the original coat to be seen, but an infinite quantity of lace and ribbons, and fringe, and embroidery, and points ; (I mean only those tagged with silver,<sup>1</sup> for the rest fell off). Now this material circumstance having been forgot in due place, as good fortune hath ordered, comes in very properly here, when the two brothers were just going to reform their vestures into the primitive state, prescribed by their father's will.

They both unanimously entered upon this great work, looking sometimes on their coats, and sometimes on the will. Martin laid the first hand ; at one twitch brought off a large handful of points ; and, with a second pull, stripped away ten dozen yards of fringe.<sup>2</sup> But when he had gone thus far, he demurred a while : he knew very well there yet remained a great deal more to be done ; however, the first heat being over, his violence began to cool, and he resolved to proceed more moderately in the rest of the work ; having already narrowly escaped a swinging rent, in pulling off the points, which, being tagged with silver (as we have observed before) the judicious workman had, with much sagacity, double sewn, to preserve them from falling.<sup>3</sup> Resolving therefore to rid his coat of a great quantity of gold-lace, he picked up the stitches with much caution, and diligently gleaned out all the loose threads as he went, which proved to be a work of time. Then he fell about the embroidered

<sup>1</sup> Points tagged with silver are those doctrines that promote the greatness and wealth of the church, which have been therefore woven deepest into the body of popery.

<sup>2</sup> Alluding to the commencement of the Reformation in England, by seizing on the abbey lands. [S.]

<sup>3</sup> The dissolution of the monasteries occasioned several insurrections, and much convulsion, during the reign of Edward VI. [S.]



Indian figures of men, women, and children, against which, as you have heard in its due place, their father's testament was extremely exact and severe: these, with much dexterity and application, were, after a while, quite eradicated, or utterly defaced.<sup>1</sup> For the rest, where he observed the embroidery to be worked so close, as not to be got away without damaging the cloth, or where it served to hide or strengthen any flaw in the body of the coat, contracted by the perpetual tampering of workmen upon it; he concluded, the wisest course was to let it remain, resolving in no case whatsoever, that the substance of the stuff should suffer injury, which he thought the best method for serving the true intent and meaning of his father's will. And this is the nearest account I have been able to collect of Martin's proceedings upon this great revolution.

But his brother Jack, whose adventures will be so extraordinary, as to furnish a great part in the remainder of this discourse, entered upon the matter with other thoughts, and a quite different spirit. For the memory of Lord Peter's injuries, produced a degree of hatred and spite, which had a much greater share of inciting him, than any regards after his father's commands, since these appeared, at best, only secondary and subservient to the other. However, for this medley of humour, he made a shift to find a very plausible name, honouring it with the title of zeal; which is perhaps the most significant word that has been ever yet produced in any language; as, I think, I have fully proved in my excellent analytical discourse upon that subject; wherein I have deduced a histori-theo-physi-logical account of zeal, shewing how it first proceeded from a notion into a word, and thence, in a hot summer, ripened into a tangible substance. This work, containing three large volumes in folio, I design very shortly to publish by the modern way of subscription, not doubting but the nobility and gentry of the land will give me all possible encouragement, having had already such a taste of what I am able to perform.

I record, therefore, that brother Jack, brimful of this miraculous compound, reflecting with indignation upon Peter's tyranny, and farther provoked by the despondency of

<sup>1</sup> The abolition of the worship of saints was the second grand step in English reformation. [S.]



Martin, prefaced his resolutions to this purpose. "What!" said he, "a rogue that locked up his drink, turned away our wives, cheated us of our fortunes; palmed his damned crusts upon us for mutton; and, at last, kicked us out of doors; must we be in his fashions, with a pox? A rascal, besides, that all the street cries out against." Having thus kindled and inflamed himself, as high as possible, and by consequence in a delicate temper for beginning a reformation, he set about the work immediately; and in three minutes made more dispatch than Martin had done in as many hours. For, (courteous reader,) you are given to understand, that zeal is never so highly obliged, as when you set it a-tearing; and Jack, who doated on that quality in himself, allowed it at this time its full swing. Thus it happened, that, stripping down a parcel of gold lace a little too hastily, he rent the main body of his coat from top to bottom; and whereas his talent was not of the happiest in taking up a stitch, he knew no better way, than to darn it again with packthread and a skewer.<sup>1</sup> But the matter was yet infinitely worse (I record it with tears) when he proceeded to the embroidery: for, being clumsy by nature, and of temper impatient; withal, beholding millions of stitches that required the nicest hand, and sedatest constitution, to extricate; in a great rage he tore off the whole piece, cloth and all, and flung them into the kennel,<sup>2</sup> and furiously thus continuing his career: "Ah! good brother Martin," said he, "do as I do, for the love of God;<sup>3</sup> strip, tear, pull, rend, flay off all, that we may appear as unlike the rogue Peter as it is possible. I would not, for a hundred pounds, carry the least mark about me, that might give occasion to the neighbours of suspecting that I was related to such a rascal." But Martin, who at this time happened to be extremely phlegmatic and sedate, begged his brother, of all love, not to damage his coat by any means;

<sup>1</sup> The reformers in Scotland left their established clergy in an almost beggarly condition, from the hasty violence with which they seized on all the possessions of the Romish church. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> The presbyterians, in discarding forms of prayers, and unnecessary church ceremonies, disused even those founded in scripture. [S.]

<sup>3</sup> The presbyterians were particularly anxious to extend their church government into England. This was the bait held out by the English parliament, to prevail on the Scots to invade England in 1643, and it proved successful. [S.]

for he never would get such another: desired him to consider, that it was not their business to form their actions by any reflection upon Peter, but by observing the rules prescribed in their father's will. That he should remember, Peter was still their brother, whatever faults or injuries he had committed; and therefore they should, by all means, avoid such a thought as that of taking measures for good and evil, from no other rule than of opposition to him. That it was true, the testament of their good father was very exact in what related to the wearing of their coats; yet it was no less penal, and strict, in prescribing agreement, and friendship, and affection between them. And therefore, if straining a point were at all dispensible, it would certainly be so, rather to the advance of unity, than increase of contradiction.

MARTIN had still proceeded as gravely as he began, and doubtless would have delivered an admirable lecture of morality, which might have exceedingly contributed to my reader's repose both of body and mind, (the true ultimate end of ethics); but Jack was already gone a flight-shot beyond his patience. And as in scholastic disputes, nothing serves to rouse the spleen of him that opposes, so much as a kind of pedantic affected calmness in the respondent; disputants being for the most part like unequal scales, where the gravity of one side advances the lightness of the other, and causes it to fly up, and kick the beam; so it happened here that the weight of Martin's argument exalted Jack's levity, and made him fly out, and spurn against his brother's moderation. In short, Martin's patience put Jack in a rage; but that which most afflicted him, was, to observe his brother's coat so well reduced into the state of innocence; while his own was either wholly rent to his shirt, or those places which had escaped his cruel clutches, were still in Peter's livery. So that he looked like a drunken beau, half rifled by bullies; or like a fresh tenant of Newgate, when he has refused the payment of garnish; or like a discovered shoplifter, left to the mercy of Exchange women;<sup>1</sup> or like a bawd in her old velvet petticoat, resigned into the secular hands of the mobile. Like any, or

<sup>1</sup> The galleries over the piazzas in the Royal Exchange were formerly filled with shops, kept chiefly by women; the same use was made of a building called the New Exchange in the Strand. [H.]



like all of these, a medley of rags, and lace, and rents, and fringes, unfortunate Jack did now appear: he would have been extremely glad to see his coat in the condition of Martin's, but infinitely gladder to find that of Martin in the same predicament with his. However, since neither of these was likely to come to pass, he thought fit to lend the whole business another turn, and to dress up necessity into a virtue. Therefore, after as many of the fox's arguments as he could muster up, for bringing Martin to reason, as he called it; or, as he meant it, into his own ragged, bobtailed condition; and observing he said all to little purpose; what, alas! was left for the forlorn Jack to do, but, after a million of scurrilities against his brother, to run mad with spleen, and spite, and contradiction. To be short, here began a mortal breach between these two. Jack went immediately to new lodgings, and in a few days it was for certain reported, that he had run out of his wits. In a short time after he appeared abroad, and confirmed the report by falling into the oddest whimseys that ever a sick brain conceived.

And now the little boys in the streets began to salute him with several names. Sometimes they would call him Jack the bald;<sup>1</sup> sometimes, Jack with a lantern;<sup>2</sup> sometimes, Dutch Jack;<sup>3</sup> sometimes, French Hugh;<sup>4</sup> sometimes, Tom the beggar;<sup>5</sup> and sometimes, Knocking Jack of the north.<sup>6</sup> And it was under one, or some, or all of these appellations, (which I leave the learned reader to determine,) that he has given rise to the most illustrious and epidemic sect of Æolists; who, with honourable commemoration, do still acknowledge the renowned JACK for their author and founder. Of whose original, as well as principles, I am now advancing to gratify the world with a very particular account.

—Melleo contingens cuncta lepore.

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<sup>1</sup> That is, Calvin, from *calvus*, bald.

<sup>2</sup> All those who pretend to inward light.

<sup>3</sup> Jack of Leyden, who gave rise to the Anabaptists.

<sup>4</sup> The Huguenots.

<sup>5</sup> The Gueuses, by which name some Protestants in Flanders were called.

<sup>6</sup> John Knox, the reformer of Scotland.



## SECT. VII.

## A DIGRESSION IN PRAISE OF DIGRESSIONS.

I HAVE sometimes heard of an Iliad in a nutshell ; but it has been my fortune to have much oftener seen a nutshell in an Iliad. There is no doubt that human life has received most wonderful advantages from both ; but to which of the two the world is chiefly indebted, I shall leave among the curious, as a problem worthy of their utmost inquiry. For the invention of the latter, I think the commonwealth of learning is chiefly obliged to the great modern improvement of digressions : the late refinements in knowledge, running parallel to those of diet in our nation, which among men of a judicious taste, are dressed up in various compounds, consisting in soups and olios, fricassees, and ragouts.

'Tis true, there is a sort of morose, detracting, ill-bred people, who pretend utterly to disrelish those polite innovations ; and as to the similitude from diet, they allow the parallel, but are so bold to pronounce the example itself, a corruption and degeneracy of taste. They tell us that the fashion of jumbling fifty things together in a dish, was at first introduced, in compliance to a depraved and debauched appetite, as well as to a crazy constitution : and to see a man hunting through an olio, after the head and brains of a goose, a widgeon, or a woodcock, is a sign he wants a stomach and digestion for more substantial victuals. Farther, they affirm, that digressions in a book are like foreign troops in a state, which argue the nation to want a heart and hands of its own, and often either subdue the natives, or drive them into the most unfruitful corners.

But, after all that can be objected by these supercilious censors, it is manifest, the society of writers would quickly be reduced to a very inconsiderable number, if men were put upon making books, with the fatal confinement of delivering nothing beyond what is to the purpose. 'Tis acknowledged, that were the case the same among us, as with the Greeks and Romans, when learning was in its cradle, to be reared,

and fed, and clothed by invention, it would be an easy task to fill up volumes upon particular occasions, without farther expatiating from the subject, than by moderate excursions, helping to advance or clear the main design. But with knowledge it has fared as with a numerous army, encamped in a fruitful country, which, for a few days, maintains itself by the product of the soil it is on ; till, provisions being spent, they are sent to forage many a mile, among friends or enemies, it matters not. Meanwhile, the neighbouring fields, trampled and beaten down, become barren and dry, affording no sustenance but clouds of dust.

The whole course of things being thus entirely changed between us and the ancients, and the moderns wisely sensible of it, we of this age have discovered a shorter, and more prudent method, to become scholars and wits, without the fatigue of reading or of thinking. The most accomplished way of using books at present, is two-fold ; either, first, to serve them as some men do lords, learn their titles exactly, and then brag of their acquaintance. Or, secondly, which is indeed the choicer, the profounder, and politer method, to get a thorough insight into the index, by which the whole book is governed and turned, like fishes by the tail. For, to enter the palace of learning at the great gate, requires an expense of time and forms ; therefore men of much haste, and little ceremony, are content to get in by the back door. For the arts are all in a flying march, and therefore more easily subdued by attacking them in the rear. Thus physicians discover the state of the whole body, by consulting only what comes from behind. Thus men catch knowledge, by throwing their wit on the posteriors of a book, as boys do sparrows with flinging salt upon their tails. Thus human life is best understood, by the wise man's rule, of regarding the end. Thus are the sciences found, like Hercules's oxen, by tracing them backwards. Thus are old sciences unravelled, like old stockings, by beginning at the foot. Besides all this, the army of the sciences hath been of late, with a world of martial discipline, drawn into its close order, so that a view or a muster may be taken of it with abundance of expedition. For this great blessing we are wholly indebted to systems and abstracts, in which the modern fathers of learning, like prudent usurers, spent their sweat for the ease of us their



children. For labour is the seed of idleness, and it is the peculiar happiness of our noble age to gather the fruit.

Now, the method of growing wise, learned, and sublime, having become so regular an affair, and so established in all its forms, the number of writers must needs have increased accordingly, and to a pitch that hath made it of absolute necessity for them to interfere continually with each other. Besides, it is reckoned, that there is not at this present, a sufficient quantity of new matter left in nature, to furnish and adorn any one particular subject, to the extent of a volume. This I am told by a very skilful computer, who hath given a full demonstration of it from rules of arithmetic.

This, perhaps, may be objected against by those who maintain the infinity of matter, and therefore will not allow, that any species of it can be exhausted. For answer to which, let us examine the noblest branch of modern wit or invention, planted and cultivated by the present age, and which, of all others, hath borne the most and the fairest fruit. For, though some remains of it were left us by the ancients, yet have not any of those, as I remember, been translated or compiled into systems for modern use. Therefore we may affirm to our own honour, that it has, in some sort, been both invented and brought to perfection by the same hands. What I mean, is, that highly celebrated talent among the modern wits, of deducing similitudes, allusions, and applications, very surprising, agreeable, and apposite, from the *pudenda* of either sex, together with their proper uses. And truly, having observed how little invention bears any vogue, besides what is derived into these channels, I have sometimes had a thought, that the happy genius of our age and country was prophetically held forth by that ancient typical description of the Indian pigmies ;<sup>1</sup> whose stature did not exceed above two foot ; *sed quorum pudenda crassa, et ad talos usque pertingentia*. Now, I have been very curious to inspect the late productions, wherein the beauties of this kind have most prominently appeared. And although this vein hath bled so freely, and all endeavours have been used in the power of human breath to dilate, extend, and keep it open ; like the Scythians,<sup>2</sup> who had a custom, and an instrument, to blow up the privities of

<sup>1</sup> Ctesiaë fragm. apud Photium.

<sup>2</sup> Herodot. L. 4.



their mares, that they might yield the more milk ; yet I am under an apprehension it is near growing dry, and past all recovery ; and that either some new *fonde* of wit should, if possible, be provided, or else, that we must even be content with repetition here, as well as upon all other occasions.

This will stand as an uncontestable argument, that our modern wits are not to reckon upon the infinity of matter for a constant supply. What remains therefore, but that our last recourse must be had to large indexes, and little compendiums? Quotations must be plentifully gathered, and booked in alphabet ; to this end, though authors need be little consulted, yet critics, and commentators, and lexicons, carefully must. But above all, those judicious collectors of bright parts, and flowers, and observandas, are to be nicely dwelt on, by some called the sieves and boulders of learning, though it is left undetermined, whether they dealt in pearls or meal, and consequently, whether we are more to value that which passed through, or what staid behind.

By these methods, in a few weeks, there starts up many a writer, capable of managing the profoundest and most universal subjects. For, what though his head be empty, provided his common-place book be full, and if you will bate him but the circumstances of method, and style, and grammar, and invention ; allow him but the common privileges of transcribing from others, and digressing from himself, as often as he shall see occasion ; he will desire no more ingredients towards fitting up a treatise, that shall make a very comely figure on a bookseller's shelf ; there to be preserved neat and clean for a long eternity, adorned with the heraldry of its title fairly inscribed on a label ; never to be thumbed or greased by students, nor bound to everlasting chains of darkness in a library : but, when the fulness of time is come, shall happily undergo the trial of purgatory, in order to ascend the sky.

Without these allowances, how is it possible we modern wits should ever have an opportunity to introduce our collections, listed under so many thousand heads of a different nature ; for want of which, the learned world would be deprived of infinite delight, as well as instruction, and we ourselves buried beyond redress, in an inglorious and undistinguished oblivion ?

From such elements as these, I am alive to behold the

day, wherein the corporation of authors can outvie all its brethren in the field. A happiness derived to us, with a great many others, from our Scythian ancestors, among whom the number of pens was so infinite, that the Grecian<sup>1</sup> eloquence had no other way of expressing it, than by saying, that in the regions, far to the north, it was hardly possible for a man to travel, the very air was so replete with feathers.

The necessity of this digression will easily excuse the length ; and I have chosen for it as proper a place as I could readily find. If the judicious reader can assign a fitter, I do here impower him to remove it into any other corner he pleases. And so I return, with great alacrity, to pursue a more important concern.

## SECT. VIII.

### A TALE OF A TUB.

THE learned Æolists<sup>2</sup> maintain the original cause of all things to be wind, from which principle this whole universe was at first produced, and into which it must at last be resolved ; that the same breath, which had kindled, and blew up the flame of nature, should one day blow it out :—

Quod procul a nobis flectat fortuna gubernans.

This is what the *adepti* understand by their *anima mundi* ; that is to say, the spirit, or breath, or wind of the world ; for, examine the whole system by the particulars of nature, and you will find it not to be disputed. For whether you please to call the *forma informans* of man, by the name of *spiritus*, *animus*, *afflatus*, or *anima* ; what are all these but several appellations for wind, which is the ruling element in every compound, and into which they all resolve upon their corruption ? Farther, what is life itself, but, as it is commonly called, the breath of our nostrils ? Whence it is very justly observed by naturalists, that wind still continues of great emolument in

<sup>1</sup> Herodot. L. 4.

<sup>2</sup> All pretenders to inspiration whatsoever.

certain mysteries not to be named, giving occasion for those happy epithets of *turgidus* and *inflatus*, applied either to the *emittent* or *recipient* organs.

By what I have gathered out of ancient records, I find the compass of their doctrine took in two-and-thirty points, wherein it would be tedious to be very particular. However, a few of their most important precepts, deducible from it, are by no means to be omitted; among which the following maxim was of much weight: That since wind had the master share, as well as operation, in every compound, by consequence, those beings must be of chief excellence, wherein that *primordium* appears most prominently to abound, and therefore man is in the highest perfection of all created things, as having, by the great bounty of philosophers, been endued with three distinct *animas* or winds, to which the sage Æolists, with much liberality, have added a fourth, of equal necessity as well as ornament with the other three, by this *quartum principium*, taking in the four corners of the world. Which gave occasion to that renowned *cabalist*, *Bumbastus*,<sup>1</sup> of placing the body of a man in due position to the four cardinal points.

In consequence of this, their next principle was, that man brings with him into the world, a peculiar portion or grain of wind, which may be called a *quinta essentia*, extracted from the other four. This quintessence is of a catholic use upon all emergencies of life, is improveable into all arts and sciences, and may be wonderfully refined, as well as enlarged, by certain methods in education. This, when blown up to its perfection, ought not to be covetously hoarded up, stifled, or hid under a bushel, but freely communicated to mankind. Upon these reasons, and others of equal weight, the wise Æolists affirm the gift of BELCHING to be the noblest act of a rational creature. To cultivate which art, and render it more serviceable to mankind, they made use of several methods. At certain seasons of the year, you might behold the priests among them, in vast numbers, with their mouths<sup>2</sup> gaping wide enough against a storm. At other times were to be

<sup>1</sup> This is one of the names of Paracelsus; he was called Christophorus Theophrastus Paracelsus Bumbastus.

<sup>2</sup> This is meant of those seditious preachers, who blow up the seeds of rebellion, &c.



seen several hundreds linked together in a circular chain, with every man a pair of bellows applied to his neighbour's breech, by which they blew up each other to the shape and size of a tun ; and for that reason, with great propriety of speech, did usually call their bodies, their vessels. When, by these and the like performances, they were grown sufficiently replete, they would immediately depart, and disembogue, for the public good, a plentiful share of their acquirements, into their disciples' chaps. For we must here observe, that all learning was esteemed among them, to be compounded from the same principle. Because, first, it is generally affirmed, or confessed, that learning puffeth men up ; and, secondly, they proved it by the following syllogism : Words are but wind ; and learning is nothing but words ; *ergo*, learning is nothing but wind. For this reason, the philosophers among them did, in their schools, deliver to their pupils, all their doctrines and opinions, by eructation, wherein they had acquired a wonderful eloquence, and of incredible variety. But the great characteristic, by which their chief sages were best distinguished, was a certain position of countenance, which gave undoubted intelligence, to what degree or proportion the spirit agitated the inward mass. For, after certain gripings, the wind and vapours issuing forth, having first, by their turbulence and convulsions within, caused an earthquake in man's little world, distorted the mouth, bloated the cheeks, and gave the eyes a terrible kind of relievo. At such junctures all their belches were received for sacred, the sourer the better, and swallowed with infinite consolation by their meagre devotees. And, to render these yet more complete, because the breath of man's life is in his nostrils, therefore the choicest, most edifying, and most enlivening belches, were very wisely conveyed through that vehicle, to give them a tincture as they passed.

Their gods were the four winds, whom they worshipped, as the spirits that pervade and enliven the universe, and as those from whom alone all inspiration can properly be said to proceed. However, the chief of these, to whom they performed the adoration of *latria*,<sup>1</sup> was the almighty North,<sup>2</sup> an ancient

<sup>1</sup> Latria is that worship which is paid only to the supreme Deity. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> The more zealous sectaries were the presbyterians of the Scottish discipline. [S.]

deity, whom the inhabitants of Megalopolis, in Greece, had likewise in the highest reverence : *omnium deorum Boream maxime celebrant*.<sup>1</sup> This god, though endued with ubiquity, was yet supposed, by the profounder Æolists, to possess one peculiar habitation, or, (to speak in form,) a *cælum empyræum*, wherein he was more intimately present. This was situated in a certain region, well known to the ancient Greeks, by them called, Σκοτία, or the Land of Darkness. And although many controversies have arisen upon that matter, yet so much is undisputed, that from a region of the like denomination, the most refined Æolists have borrowed their original, from whence, in every age, the zealous among their priesthood have brought over their choicest inspiration, fetching it with their own hands from the fountain-head in certain bladders, and disploding it among the sectaries in all nations, who did, and do, and ever will, daily gasp and pant after it.

Now, their mysteries and rites were performed in this manner. 'Tis well known among the learned, that the virtuosos of former ages had a contrivance for carrying and preserving winds in casks or barrels, which was of great assistance upon long sea voyages, and the loss of so useful an art at present is very much to be lamented, though, I know not how, with great negligence omitted by Pancirollus.<sup>2</sup> It was an invention ascribed to Æolus himself, from whom this sect is denominated ; and who, in honour of their founder's memory, have to this day preserved great numbers of those barrels, whereof they fix one in each of their temples, first beating out the top ; into this barrel, upon solemn days, the priest enters, where, having before duly prepared himself by the methods already described, a secret funnel is also conveyed from his posteriors to the bottom of the barrel, which admits new supplies of inspiration, from a northern chink or cranny. Whereupon, you behold him swell immediately to the shape and size of his vessel. In this posture he disembogues whole tempests upon his auditory, as the spirit from beneath gives him utterance, which, issuing *ex adytis et penetralibus*, is not performed without much pain and

<sup>1</sup> Pausan. L. 8.

<sup>2</sup> An author who writ *De Artibus perditis*, &c., of arts lost, and of arts invented.



gripings. And the wind, in breaking forth, deals with his face<sup>1</sup> as it does with that of the sea, first blackening, then wrinkling, and at last bursting it into a foam. It is in this guise the sacred Æolist delivers his oracular belches to his panting disciples ; of whom, some are greedily gaping after the sanctified breath, others are all the while hymning out the praises of the winds ; and, gently wafted to and fro by their own humming, do thus represent the soft breezes of their deities appeased.

It is from this custom of the priests, that some authors maintain these Æolists to have been very ancient in the world. Because, the delivery of their mysteries, which I have just now mentioned, appears exactly the same with that of other ancient oracles, whose inspirations were owing to certain subterraneous effluvia of wind, delivered with the same pain to the priest, and much about the same influence on the people.<sup>2</sup> It is true, indeed, that these were frequently managed and directed by female officers, whose organs were understood to be better disposed for the admission of those oracular gusts, as entering and passing up through a receptacle of greater capacity, and causing also a pruriency by the way, such as, with due management, hath been refined from carnal into a spiritual ecstasy. And, to strengthen this profound conjecture, it is farther insisted, that this custom of female priests<sup>3</sup> is kept up still in certain refined colleges of our modern Æolists, who are agreed to receive their inspiration, derived through the receptacle aforesaid, like their ancestors, the Sybils.

And whereas the mind of a man, when he gives the spur and bridle to his thoughts, doth never stop, but naturally sallies out into both extremes, of high and low, of good and evil ; his first flight of fancy commonly transports him to ideas of what is most perfect, finished, and exalted ; till, having soared out of his own reach and sight, not well perceiving how near the frontiers of height and depth border upon each other ; with the same course and wing, he falls down plumb

<sup>1</sup> This is an exact description of the changes made in the face by enthusiastic preachers.

<sup>2</sup> The oracles delivered by the Pythoness and other priestesses of Apollo. [S.]

<sup>3</sup> Quakers, who suffer their women to preach and pray.



into the lowest bottom of things, like one who travels the east into the west, or like a straight line drawn by its own length into a circle. Whether a tincture of malice in our natures makes us fond of furnishing every bright idea with its reverse ; or whether reason, reflecting upon the sum of things, can, like the sun, serve only to enlighten one half of the globe, leaving the other half by necessity under shade and darkness ; or, whether fancy, flying up to the imagination of what is highest and best, becomes overshot, and spent, and weary, and suddenly falls, like a dead bird of paradise, to the ground ;<sup>1</sup> or whether, after all these metaphysical conjectures, I have not entirely missed the true reason ; the proposition, however, which has stood me in so much circumstance, is altogether true ; that, as the most uncivilized parts of mankind have some way or other climbed up into the conception of a God, or Supreme Power, so they have seldom forgot to provide their fears with certain ghastly notions, which, instead of better, have served them pretty tolerably for a devil. And this proceeding seems to be natural enough ; for it is with men, whose imaginations are lifted up very high, after the same rate as with those whose bodies are so ; that, as they are delighted with the advantage of a nearer contemplation upwards, so they are equally terrified with the dismal prospect of a precipice below. Thus, in the choice of a devil, it hath been the usual method of mankind, to single out some being, either in act or in vision, which was in most antipathy to the god they had framed. Thus also the sect of Æolists possessed themselves with a dread, and horror, and hatred of two malignant natures, betwixt whom, and the deities they adored, perpetual enmity was established. The first of these was the chameleon,<sup>2</sup> sworn foe to inspiration, who in scorn devoured large influences of their god, without refunding the smallest blast by eructation. The other was a huge terrible monster,

<sup>1</sup> It was an ancient belief that birds of paradise had no feet, but always continued on the wing until their death. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> I do not well understand what the Author aims at here, any more than by the terrible Monster, mentioned in the following lines, called *Moulinavent*, which is the French word for a windmill.

*Ibid.* The author seems to mean latitudinarians, persons too indifferent to religion, either to object to, or to receive with interest, any modification of its doctrines. [S.]

called Moulinavent, who, with four strong arms, waged eternal battle with all their divinities, dexterously turning to avoid their blows, and repay them with interest.

Thus furnished, and set out with gods, as well as devils, was the renowned sect of Æolists, which makes at this day so illustrious a figure in the world, and whereof that polite nation of Laplanders are, beyond all doubt, a most authentic branch ; of whom I therefore cannot, without injustice, here omit to make honourable mention, since they appear to be so closely allied in point of interest, as well as inclinations, with their brother Æolists among us, as not only to buy their winds by wholesale from the same merchants, but also to retail them after the same rate and method, and to customers much alike.

Now, whether this system here delivered was wholly compiled by Jack ; or, as some writers believe, rather copied from the original at Delphos, with certain additions and emendations, suited to the times and circumstances ; I shall not absolutely determine. This I may affirm, that Jack gave it at least a new turn, and formed it into the same dress and model as it lies deduced by me.

I have long sought after this opportunity of doing justice to a society of men for whom I have a peculiar honour ; and whose opinions, as well as practices, have been extremely misrepresented and traduced by the malice or ignorance of their adversaries. For I think it one of the greatest and best of human actions, to remove prejudices, and place things in their truest and fairest light ; which I therefore boldly undertake, without any regards of my own, beside the conscience, the honour, and the thanks.

## SECT. IX.

### *A Digression concerning the Original, the Use, and Improvement of Madness, in a Commonwealth.*

NOR shall it any ways detract from the just reputation of this famous sect, that its rise and institution are owing to such an author as I have described Jack to be—a person

whose intellectuals were overturned, and his brain shaken out of its natural position ; which we commonly suppose to be a distemper, and call by the name of madness or frenzy. For, if we take a survey of the greatest actions that have been performed in the world, under the influence of single men, which are, the establishment of new empires by conquest, the advance and progress of new schemes in philosophy, and the contriving, as well as the propagating, of new religions ; we shall find the authors of them all to have been persons, whose natural reason had admitted great revolutions, from their diet, their education, the prevalency of some certain temper, together with the particular influence of air and climate. Besides, there is something individual in human minds, that easily kindles, at the accidental approach and collision of certain circumstances, which, though of paltry and mean appearance, do often flame out into the greatest emergencies of life. For great turns are not always given by strong hands, but by lucky adaption, and at proper seasons ; and it is of no import where the fire was kindled, if the vapour has once got up into the brain. For the upper region of man is furnished like the middle region of the air ; the materials are formed from causes of the widest difference, yet produce at last the same substance and effect. Mists arise from the earth, steams from dung-hills, exhalations from the sea, and smoke from fire ; yet all clouds are the same in composition as well as consequences, and the fumes issuing from a jakes will furnish as comely and useful a vapour as incense from an altar. Thus far, I suppose, will easily be granted me ; and then it will follow, that, as the face of nature never produces rain, but when it is overcast and disturbed, so human understanding, seated in the brain, must be troubled and overspread by vapours, ascending from the lower faculties to water the invention, and render it fruitful. Now, although these vapours (as it hath been already said) are of as various original as those of the skies, yet the crops they produce differ both in kind and degree, merely according to the soil. I will produce two instances to prove and explain what I am now advancing.

A certain great prince<sup>1</sup> raised a mighty army, filled his

<sup>1</sup> This was Harry the Great of France.



coffers with infinite treasures, provided an invincible fleet, and all this without giving the least part of his design to his greatest ministers, or his nearest favourites. Immediately the whole world was alarmed ; the neighbouring crowns in trembling expectations, towards what point the storm would burst ; the small politicians everywhere forming profound conjectures. Some believed he had laid a scheme for universal monarchy ; others, after much insight, determined the matter to be a project for pulling down the pope, and setting up the reformed religion, which had once been his own. Some, again, of a deeper sagacity, sent him into Asia to subdue the Turk, and recover Palestine. In the midst of all these projects and preparations, a certain state-surgeon,<sup>1</sup> gathering the nature of the disease by these symptoms, attempted the cure, at one blow performed the operation, broke the bag, and out flew the vapour ; nor did anything want to render it a complete remedy, only that the prince unfortunately happened to die in the performance. Now, is the reader exceeding curious to learn whence this vapour took its rise, which had so long set the nations at a gaze ? What secret wheel, what hidden spring, could put into motion so wonderful an engine ? It was afterwards discovered, that the movement of this whole machine had been directed by an absent female, whose eyes had raised a protuberancy, and, before emission, she was removed into an enemy's country. What should an unhappy prince do in such ticklish circumstances as these ? He tried in vain the poet's never-failing receipt of *corpora quæque* ; for

Idque petit corpus mens unde est saucia amore :  
Unde feritur, eo tendit, gestitque coire.—LUCR.

Having to no purpose used all peaceable endeavours, the collected part of the semen, raised and inflamed, became adust, converted to choler, turned head upon the spinal duct, and ascended to the brain. The very same principle that influences a bully to break the windows of a whore who has jilted him, naturally stirs up a great prince to raise mighty armies, and dream of nothing but sieges, battles, and victories.

<sup>1</sup> Ravillac, who stabbed Henry the Great in his coach.

—Teterrima belli  
Causa—

The other instance<sup>1</sup> is what I have read somewhere in a very ancient author, of a mighty king, who, for the space of above thirty years, amused himself to take and lose towns, beat armies, and be beaten, drive princes out of their dominions; fright children from their bread and butter; burn, lay waste, plunder, dragoon, massacre subject and stranger, friend and foe, male and female. 'Tis recorded, that the philosophers of each country were in grave dispute upon causes natural, moral, and political, to find out where they should assign an original solution of this phenomenon. At last, the vapour or spirit, which animated the hero's brain, being in perpetual circulation, seized upon that region of the human body, so renowned for furnishing the *zibeta occidentalis*,<sup>2</sup> and, gathering there into a tumour, left the rest of the world for that time in peace. Of such mighty consequence it is where those exhalations fix, and of so little from whence they proceed. The same spirits, which, in their superior progress, would conquer a kingdom, descending upon the anus, conclude in a fistula.

Let us next examine the great introducers of new schemes in philosophy, and search till we can find from what faculty of the soul the disposition arises in mortal man, of taking it into his head to advance new systems, with such an eager zeal, in things agreed on all hands impossible to be known; from what seeds this disposition springs, and to what quality of human nature these grand innovators have been indebted for their number of disciples. Because it is plain, that several of the chief among them, both ancient and modern, were usually mistaken by their adversaries, and indeed by all, except their own followers, to have been persons crazed, or out of their wits; having generally proceeded, in the common course of their words and actions, by a method very different from the vulgar dictates of unrefined reason; agreeing for the

<sup>1</sup> This is meant of the present French king [Lewis XIV.].

<sup>2</sup> Paracelsus, who was so famous for chemistry, tried an experiment upon human excrement, to make a perfume of it; which, when he had brought to perfection, he called *zibeta occidentalis*, or western civet; the back parts of man, (according to his division mentioned by the author, page 107,) being the west.



most part in their several models, with their present undoubted successors in the academy of modern Bedlam, (whose merits and principles I shall farther examine in due place). Of this kind were *Epicurus*, *Diogenes*, *Apollonius*, *Lucretius*, *Paracelsus*, *Des Cartes*, and others, who, if they were now in the world, tied fast, and separate from their followers, would, in this our undistinguishing age, incur manifest danger of phlebotomy, and whips, and chains, and dark chambers, and straw. For what man, in the natural state or course of thinking, did ever conceive it in his power to reduce the notions of all mankind exactly to the same length, and breadth, and height of his own? Yet this is the first humble and civil design of all innovators in the empire of reason. Epicurus modestly hoped, that, one time or other, a certain fortuitous concourse of all men's opinions, after perpetual justlings, the sharp with the smooth, the light and the heavy, the round and the square, would, by certain clinamina, unite in the notions of atoms and void, as these did in the originals of all things. Cartesius reckoned to see, before he died, the sentiments of all philosophers, like so many lesser stars in his romantic system, wrapped and drawn within his own vortex. Now, I would gladly be informed, how it is possible to account for such imaginations as these in particular men, without recourse to my phenomenon of vapours, ascending from the lower faculties to overshadow the brain, and there distilling into conceptions, for which the narrowness of our mother-tongue has not yet assigned any other name beside that of madness or phrenzy. Let us therefore now conjecture how it comes to pass, that none of these great prescribers do ever fail providing themselves and their notions with a number of implicit disciples. And, I think, the reason is easy to be assigned: for there is a peculiar string in the harmony of human understanding, which, in several individuals, is exactly of the same tuning. This, if you can dexterously screw up to its right key, and then strike gently upon it, whenever you have the good fortune to light among those of the same pitch, they will, by a secret necessary sympathy, strike exactly at the same time. And in this one circumstance lies all the skill or luck of the matter; for, if you chance to jar the string among those who are either above or below your own height, instead of subscribing to



your doctrine, they will tie you fast, call you mad, and feed you with bread and water. It is therefore a point of the nicest conduct, to distinguish and adapt this noble talent, with respect to the differences of persons and times. Cicero understood this very well, when writing to a friend in England, with a caution, among other matters, to beware of being cheated by our hackney-coachmen, (who, it seems, in those days were as arrant rascals as they are now,) has these remarkable words : *Est quod gaudeas te in ista loca venisse, ubi aliquid sapere viderere.*<sup>1</sup> For, to speak a bold truth, it is a fatal miscarriage so ill to order affairs, as to pass for a fool in one company, when, in another, you might be treated as a philosopher. Which I desire some certain gentlemen of my acquaintance to lay up in their hearts, as a very seasonable *innuendo*.

This, indeed, was the fatal mistake of that worthy gentleman, my most ingenious friend, Mr. Wotton : a person, in appearance, ordained for great designs, as well as performances ; whether you will consider his notions or his looks. Surely no man ever advanced into the public with fitter qualifications of body and mind, for the propagation of a new religion. Oh, had those happy talents, misapplied to vain philosophy, been turned into their proper channels of dreams and visions, where distortion of mind and countenance are of such sovereign use, the base detracting world would not then have dared to report, that something is amiss, that his brain has undergone an unlucky shake ; which even his brother modernists themselves, like ungrates, do whisper so loud, that it reaches up to the very garret I am now writing in.

Lastly, whosoever pleases to look into the fountains of enthusiasm, from whence, in all ages, have eternally proceeded such fattening streams, will find the spring-head to have been as troubled and muddy as the current ; of such great emolument is a tincture of this vapour, which the world calls madness, that without its help, the world would not only be deprived of those two great blessings, conquests and systems, but even all mankind would unhappily be reduced to the same belief in things invisible. Now, the

<sup>1</sup> Epist. ad Fam. Trebatio.

former *postulatum* being held, that it is of no import from what originals this vapour proceeds, but either in what angles it strikes and spreads over the understanding, or upon what species of brain it ascends ; it will be a very delicate point to cut the feather, and divide the several reasons to a nice and curious reader, how this numerical difference in the brain can produce effects of so vast a difference from the same vapour, as to be the sole point of individuation between Alexander the Great, Jack of Leyden, and Monsieur Des Cartes. The present argument is the most abstracted that ever I engaged in ; it strains my faculties to their highest stretch ; and I desire the reader to attend with the utmost perpensity, for I now proceed to unravel this knotty point.

There is in mankind a certain <sup>1</sup> *				*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Hic multa</i>		*	*	*	*	*
<i>desiderantur.</i>		*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	And this I take to be a clear solution of the matter.			

Having therefore so narrowly passed through this intricate difficulty, the reader will, I am sure, agree with me in the conclusion, that if the moderns mean by madness, only a disturbance or transposition of the brain, by force of certain vapours issuing up from the lower faculties, then has this madness been the parent of all those mighty revolutions that have happened in empire, philosophy, and in religion. For the brain, in its natural position and state of serenity, disposeth its owner to pass his life in the common forms, without any thoughts of subduing multitudes to his own power, his reasons, or his visions ; and the more he shapes his understanding by the pattern of human learning, the less he is inclined to form parties, after his particular notions, because that instructs him in his private infirmities, as well as in the stubborn ignorance of the people. But when a man's fancy gets astride on his reason ; when imagination is at cuffs with the senses, and common understanding, as well as common sense, is kicked out of doors ; the first proselyte he makes is

<sup>1</sup> Here is another defect in the manuscript ; but I think the author did wisely, and that the matter, which thus strained his faculties, was not worth a solution ; and it were well if all metaphysical cobweb problems were no otherwise answered.



himself ; and when that is once compassed, the difficulty is not so great in bringing over others ; a strong delusion always operating from without as vigorously as from within. For cant and vision are to the ear and the eye, the same that tickling is to the touch. Those entertainments and pleasures we most value in life, are such as dupe and play the wag with the senses. For, if we take an examination of what is generally understood by happiness, as it has respect either to the understanding or the senses, we shall find all its properties and adjuncts will herd under this short definition, that it is a perpetual possession of being well deceived. And, first, with relation to the mind or understanding, 'tis manifest what mighty advantages fiction has over truth ; and the reason is just at our elbow, because imagination can build nobler scenes, and produce more wonderful revolutions than fortune or nature will be at expense to furnish. Nor is mankind so much to blame in his choice thus determining him, if we consider that the debate merely lies between things past and things conceived ; and so the question is only this :—whether things, that have place in the imagination, may not as properly be said to exist, as those that are seated in the memory, which may be justly held in the affirmative, and very much to the advantage of the former, since this is acknowledged to be the womb of things, and the other allowed to be no more than the grave. Again, if we take this definition of happiness, and examine it with reference to the senses, it will be acknowledged wonderfully adapt. How fading and insipid do all objects accost us, that are not conveyed in the vehicle of delusion ! How shrunk is everything, as it appears in the glass of nature ! So that if it were not for the assistance of artificial mediums, false lights, refracted angles, varnish and tinsel, there would be a mighty level in the felicity and enjoyments of mortal men. If this were seriously considered by the world, as I have a certain reason to suspect it hardly will, men would no longer reckon among their high points of wisdom, the art of exposing weak sides, and publishing infirmities ; an employment, in my opinion, neither better nor worse than that of unmasking, which, I think, has never been allowed fair usage, either in the world, or the play-house.

In the proportion that credulity is a more peaceful posses-



sion of the mind than curiosity ; so far preferable is that wisdom, which converses about the surface, to that pretended philosophy, which enters into the depth of things, and then comes gravely back with the informations and discoveries, that in the inside they are good for nothing. The two senses, to which all objects first address themselves, are the sight and the touch ; these never examine farther than the colour, the shape, the size, and whatever other qualities dwell, or are drawn by art upon the outward of bodies ; and then comes reason officiously with tools for cutting, and opening, and mangling, and piercing, offering to demonstrate, that they are not of the same consistence quite through. Now I take all this to be the last degree of perverting nature ; one of whose eternal laws it is, to put her best furniture forward. And therefore, in order to save the charges of all such expensive anatomy for the time to come, I do here think fit to inform the reader, that in such conclusions as these, reason is certainly in the right, and that in most corporeal beings, which have fallen under my cognizance, the outside has been infinitely preferable to the in ; whereof I have been farther convinced from some late experiments. Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse. Yesterday I ordered the carcass of a beau to be stripped in my presence, when we were all amazed to find so many unsuspected faults under one suit of clothes. Then I laid open his brain, his heart, and his spleen ; but I plainly perceived at every operation, that the farther we proceeded, we found the defects increase upon us in number and bulk ; from all which, I justly formed this conclusion to myself ; that whatever philosopher or projector can find out an art to sodder and patch up the flaws and imperfections of nature, will deserve much better of mankind, and teach us a more useful science, than that so much in present esteem, of widening and exposing them, (like him who held anatomy to be the ultimate end of physic). And he, whose fortunes and dispositions have placed him in a convenient station to enjoy the fruits of this noble art ; he that can, with Epicurus, content his ideas with the films and images that fly off upon his senses from the superficies of things ; such a man, truly wise, creams off nature, leaving the sour and the dregs for philosophy and reason to lap up.

This is the sublime and refined point of felicity, called the possession of being well deceived ; the serene peaceful state, of being a fool among knaves.

But to return to madness. It is certain, that, according to the system I have above deduced, every species thereof proceeds from a redundancy of vapours ; therefore, as some kinds of phrenzy give double strength to the sinews, so there are of other species, which add vigour, and life, and spirit to the brain. Now, it usually happens, that these active spirits, getting possession of the brain, resemble those that haunt other waste and empty dwellings, which, for want of business, either vanish, and carry away a piece of the house, or else stay at home, and fling it all out of the windows. By which, are mystically displayed the two principal branches of madness, and which some philosophers, not considering so well as I, have mistaken to be different in their causes, over hastily assigning the first to deficiency, and the other to redundancy.

I think it therefore manifest, from what I have here advanced, that the main point of skill and address is, to furnish employment for this redundancy of vapour, and prudently to adjust the season of it ; by which means, it may certainly become of cardinal and catholic emolument, in a commonwealth. Thus one man, choosing a proper juncture, leaps into a gulf, from whence proceeds a hero, and is called the saver of his country ; another achieves the same enterprise, but, unluckily timing it, has left the brand of madness fixed as a reproach upon his memory ; upon so nice a distinction, are we taught to repeat the name of Curtius with reverence and love, that of Empedocles with hatred and contempt. Thus also it is usually conceived, that the elder Brutus only personated the fool and madman for the good of the public ; but this was nothing else than a redundancy of the same vapour long misapplied, called by the Latins, *ingenium par negotiis* ;<sup>1</sup> or, (to translate it as nearly as I can) a sort of phrenzy, never in its right element, till you take it up in the business of the state.

Upon all which, and many other reasons of equal weight, though not equally curious, I do here gladly embrace an

<sup>1</sup> Tacit.



opportunity I have long sought for, of recommending it as a very noble undertaking to Sir Edward Seymour, Sir Christopher Musgrave, Sir John Bowls, John How, Esq., and other patriots concerned, that they would move for leave to bring in a bill for appointing commissioners to inspect into Bedlam, and the parts adjacent; who shall be empowered to send for persons, papers, and records, to examine into the merits and qualifications of every student and professor, to observe with utmost exactness their several dispositions and behaviour, by which means, duly distinguishing and adapting their talents, they might produce admirable instruments for the several offices in a state, \* \* \* \* \*, civil, and military, proceeding in such methods as I shall here humbly propose. And I hope the gentle reader will give some allowance to my great solitudes in this important affair, upon account of the high esteem I have borne that honourable society, whereof I had some time the happiness to be an unworthy member.

Is any student tearing his straw in piece-meal, swearing and blaspheming, biting his grate, foaming at the mouth, and emptying his piss-pot in the spectators' faces? Let the right worshipful the commissioners of inspection give him a regiment of dragoons, and send him into Flanders among the rest. Is another eternally talking, sputtering, gaping, bawling in a sound without period or article? What wonderful talents are here mislaid! Let him be furnished immediately with a green bag and papers, and threepence in his pocket,<sup>1</sup> and away with him to Westminster-Hall. You will find a third gravely taking the dimensions of his kennel, a person of foresight and insight, though kept quite in the dark; for why, like Moses, *ecce cornuta*<sup>2</sup> *erat ejus facies*. He walks dully in one pace, entreats your penny with due gravity and ceremony, talks much of hard times, and taxes, and the whore of Babylon, bars up the wooden window of his cell constantly at eight o'clock, dreams of fire, and shoplifters, and court-customers, and privileged places. Now, what a figure would all these acquirements amount to, if the owner were sent into the city among his brethren! Behold a

<sup>1</sup> A lawyer's coach-hire.

<sup>2</sup> Cornutus is either horned or shining, and by this term Moses is described in the vulgar Latin of the Bible.



fourth, in much and deep conversation with himself, biting his thumbs at proper junctures, his countenance checkered with business and design, sometimes walking very fast, with his eyes nailed to a paper that he holds in his hands ; a great saver of time, somewhat thick of hearing, very short of sight, but more of memory ; a man ever in haste, a great hatcher and breeder of business, and excellent at the famous art of whispering nothing ; a huge idolator of monosyllables and procrastination, so ready to give his word to everybody, that he never keeps it ; one that has forgot the common meaning of words, but an admirable retainer of the sound ; extremely subject to the looseness, for his occasions are perpetually calling him away. If you approach his grate in his familiar intervals ; “Sir,” says he, “give me a penny, and I’ll sing you a song ; but give me the penny first,” (hence comes the common saying, and commoner practice, of parting with money for a song.) What a complete system of court skill is here described in every branch of it, and all utterly lost with wrong application ! Accost the hole of another kennel, first stopping your nose, you will behold a surly, gloomy, nasty, slovenly mortal, raking in his own dung, and dabbling in his urine. The best part of his diet is the reversion of his own ordure, which, expiring into steams, whirls perpetually about, and at last re-infunds. His complexion is of a dirty yellow, with a thin scattered beard, exactly agreeable to that of his diet upon its first declination, like other insects, who, having their birth and education in an excrement, from thence borrow their colour and their smell. The student of this apartment is very sparing of his words, but somewhat over-liberal of his breath. He holds his hand out ready to receive your penny, and immediately upon receipt withdraws to his former occupations. Now, is it not amazing to think, the society of Warwick-lane should have no more concern for the recovery of so useful a member ; who, if one may judge from these appearances, would become the greatest ornament to that illustrious body ? Another student struts up fiercely to your teeth, puffing with his lips, half squeezing out his eyes, and very graciously holds you out his hand to kiss. The keeper desires you not to be afraid of this professor, for he will do you no hurt ; to him alone is allowed the liberty of the anti-chamber, and the orator of the place

gives you to understand, that this solemn person is a tailor run mad with pride. This considerable student is adorned with many other qualities, upon which at present I shall not farther enlarge. . . . . Hark in your ear<sup>1</sup> . . . . . I am strangely mistaken, if all his address, his motions, and his airs, would not then be very natural, and in their proper element.

I shall not descend so minutely, as to insist upon the vast number of beaux, fiddlers, poets, and politicians, that the world might recover by such a reformation; but what is more material, beside the clear gain redounding to the commonwealth, by so large an acquisition of persons to employ, whose talents and acquirements, if I may be so bold as to affirm it, are now buried, or at least misapplied; it would be a mighty advantage accruing to the public from this inquiry, that all these would very much excel, and arrive at great perfection in their several kinds; which, I think, is manifest from what I have already shewn, and shall enforce by this one plain instance, that even I myself, the author of these momentous truths, am a person, whose imaginations are hard-mouthed, and exceedingly disposed to run away with his reason, which I have observed, from long experience, to be a very light rider, and easily shook off; upon which account, my friends will never trust me alone, without a solemn promise to vent my speculations in this, or the like manner, for the universal benefit of human kind; which perhaps the gentle, courteous, and candid reader, brimful of that modern charity and tenderness usually annexed to his office, will be very hardly persuaded to believe.

## SECT. X.

### A FARTHER DIGRESSION.

It is an unanswerable argument of a very refined age, the wonderful civilities that have passed of late years between

<sup>1</sup> I cannot conjecture what the author means here, or how this chasm should be filled, though it is capable of more than one interpretation.



the nation of authors and that of readers. There can hardly pop out a play, a pamphlet, or a poem, without a preface full of acknowledgment to the world for the general reception and applause they have given it,<sup>1</sup> which the Lord knows where, or when, or how, or from whom it received. In due deference to so laudable a custom, I do here return my humble thanks to his Majesty, and both houses of Parliament; to the Lords of the King's Most Honourable Privy-Council; to the reverend the Judges; to the clergy, and gentry, and yeomanry of this land; but in a more especial manner to my worthy brethren and friends at Will's Coffee-house, and Gresham College, and Warwick Lane, and Moorfields, and Scotland Yard, and Westminster Hall, and Guildhall; in short, to all inhabitants and retainers whatsoever, either in court, or church, or camp, or city, or country, for their generous and universal acceptance of this divine treatise. I accept their approbation and good opinion with extreme gratitude, and, to the utmost of my poor capacity, shall take hold of all opportunities to return the obligation.

I am also happy, that fate has flung me into so blessed an age for the mutual felicity of booksellers and authors, whom I may safely affirm to be at this day the two only satisfied parties in England. Ask an author how his last piece has succeeded: Why, truly, he thanks his stars, the world has been very favourable, and he has not the least reason to complain: and yet, by G—, he writ it in a week, at bits and starts, when he could steal an hour from his urgent affairs, as it is a hundred to one, you may see farther in the preface, to which he refers you, and for the rest, to the bookseller. There you go as a customer, and make the same question: he blesses his God the thing takes wonderfully, he is just printing the second edition, and has but three left in his shop. You beat down the price: "Sir, we shall not differ," and, in hopes of your custom another time, lets you have it as reasonable as you please, 'and pray send as many of your acquaintance as you will, I shall, upon your account, furnish them all at the same rate."

Now, it is not well enough considered, to what accidents and occasions the world is indebted for the greatest part of

<sup>1</sup> This is literally true, as we may observe in the prefaces to most plays, poems, &c.



those noble writings, which hourly start up to entertain it. If it were not for a rainy day, a drunken vigil, a fit of the spleen, a course of physic, a sleepy Sunday, an ill run at dice, a long tailor's bill, a beggar's purse, a factious head, a hot sun, costive diet, want of books, and a just contempt of learning—but for these events, I say, and some others too long to recite (especially a prudent neglect of taking brimstone inwardly) I doubt, the number of authors and of writings would dwindle away to a degree most woful to behold. To confirm this opinion, hear the words of the famous Troglodyte philosopher: "'Tis certain," (said he,) "some grains of folly are of course annexed, as part of the composition of human nature, only the choice is left us, whether we please to wear them inlaid or embossed, and we need not go very far to seek how that is usually determined, when we remember it is with human faculties as with liquors, the lightest will be ever at the top."

There is in this famous island of Britain a certain paltry scribbler, very voluminous, whose character the reader cannot wholly be a stranger to. He deals in a pernicious kind of writings, called second parts, and usually passes under the name of the author of the first. I easily foresee, that as soon as I lay down my pen, this nimble operator will have stole it, and treat me as inhumanly as he has already done Dr. Blackmore, Lestrangle, and many others, who shall here be nameless. I therefore fly for justice and relief into the hands of that great rectifier of saddles,<sup>1</sup> and lover of mankind, Dr. Bentley, begging he will take this enormous grievance into his most modern consideration; and if it should so happen, that the furniture of an ass, in the shape of a second part, must, for my sins, be clapped by a mistake upon my back, that he will immediately please, in the presence of the world, to lighten me of the burden, and take it home to his own house, till the true beast thinks fit to call for it.

In the meantime I do here give this public notice, that my resolutions are to circumscribe, within this discourse, the whole stock of matter I have been so many years providing.

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the trite phrase, "place the saddle on the right horse."—Bentley is ridiculed by Boyle, for making use of some such low and vernacular forms of expression. [S.]

Since my vein is once opened, I am content to exhaust it all at a running, for the peculiar advantage of my dear country, and for the universal benefit of mankind. Therefore, hospitably considering the number of my guests, they shall have my whole entertainment at a meal, and I scorn to set up the leavings in the cupboard. What the guests cannot eat, may be given to the poor, and the dogs<sup>1</sup> under the table may gnaw the bones. This I understand for a more generous proceeding, than to turn the company's stomach, by inviting them again to-morrow to a scurvy meal of scraps.

If the reader fairly considers the strength of what I have advanced in the foregoing section, I am convinced it will produce a wonderful revolution in his notions and opinions; and he will be abundantly better prepared to receive and to relish the concluding part of this miraculous treatise. Readers may be divided into three classes—the superficial, the ignorant, and the learned: and I have with much felicity fitted my pen to the genius and advantage of each. The superficial reader will be strangely provoked to laughter; which clears the breast and the lungs, is sovereign against the spleen, and the most innocent of all diuretics. The ignorant reader, (between whom and the former the distinction is extremely nice,) will find himself disposed to stare; which is an admirable remedy for ill eyes, serves to raise and enliven the spirits, and wonderfully helps perspiration. But the reader truly learned, chiefly for whose benefit I wake when others sleep, and sleep when others wake, will here find sufficient matter to employ his speculations for the rest of his life. It were much to be wished, and I do here humbly propose for an experiment, that every prince in Christendom will take seven of the deepest scholars in his dominions, and shut them up close for seven years in seven chambers, with a command to write seven ample commentaries on this comprehensive discourse. I shall venture to affirm, that whatever difference may be found in their several conjectures, they will be all, without the least distortion, manifestly deducible from the text. Meantime, it is my earnest request, that so useful an undertaking may be entered upon, (if their Majesties please,) with all convenient speed; because I have

<sup>1</sup> By dogs, the author means common injudicious critics, as he explains it himself before in his Digression upon Critics (p. 78).



a strong inclination, before I leave the world, to taste a blessing, which we mysterious writers can seldom reach, till we have got into our graves: whether it is, that fame, being a fruit grafted on the body, can hardly grow, and much less ripen, till the stock is in the earth: or whether she be a bird of prey, and is lured, among the rest, to pursue after the scent of a carcass: or whether she conceives her trumpet sounds best and farthest when she stands on a tomb, by the advantage of a rising ground, and the echo of a hollow vault.

'Tis true, indeed, the republic of dark authors, after they once found out this excellent expedient of dying, have been peculiarly happy in the variety, as well as extent of their reputation. For, night being the universal mother of things, wise philosophers hold all writings to be fruitful, in the proportion they are dark; and therefore, the true illuminated<sup>1</sup> (that is to say, the darkest of all) have met with such numberless commentators, whose scholastic midwifery hath delivered them of meanings, that the authors themselves perhaps never conceived, and yet may very justly be allowed the lawful parents of them, the words of such writers being like seed,<sup>2</sup> which, however scattered at random, when they light upon a fruitful ground, will multiply far beyond either the hopes or imagination of the sower.

And therefore, in order to promote so useful a work, I will here take leave to glance a few innuendoes, that may be of great assistance to those sublime spirits, who shall be appointed to labour in a universal comment upon this wonderful discourse. And, first,<sup>3</sup> I have couched a very profound mystery in the number of O's multiplied by seven, and divided by nine. Also, if a devout brother of the Rosy Cross will pray fervently for sixty-three mornings, with a lively faith, and then transpose certain letters and syllables, according to prescription, in the second and fifth section, they will certainly reveal into a full receipt of the *opus magnum*. Lastly, whoever will be at the pains to calculate the

<sup>1</sup> A name of the Rosicrucians.

<sup>2</sup> Nothing is more frequent than for Commentators to force interpretation, which the author never meant.

<sup>3</sup> This is what the Cabalists among the Jews have done with the Bible, and pretend to find wonderful mysteries by it.



whole number of each letter in this treatise, and sum up the difference exactly between the several numbers, assigning the true natural cause for every such difference, the discoveries in the product will plentifully reward his labour. But then he must beware of Bythus and Sigé,<sup>1</sup> and be sure not to forget the qualities of Achamoth; *à cujus lacrymis humecta prodit substantia, à risu lucida, à tristitia solida, et à timore mobilis*; wherein Eugenius Philalethes<sup>2</sup> hath committed an unpardonable mistake.

## SECT. XI.

## A TALE OF A TUB.

AFTER so wide a compass as I have wandered, I do now gladly overtake, and close in with my subject, and shall henceforth hold on with it an even pace to the end of my journey, except some beautiful prospect appears within sight

<sup>1</sup> I was told by an eminent divine, whom I consulted on this point, that these two barbarous words, with that of Achamoth, and its qualities, as here set down, are quoted from Irenæus. This he discovered by searching that ancient writer for another quotation of our author, which he has placed in the title-page, and refers to the book and chapter; the curious were very inquisitive, whether those barbarous words, *basyma cacabasa, &c.* are really in Irenæus, and upon inquiry, it was found they were a sort of cant or jargon of certain heretics, and therefore very properly prefixed to such a book as this of our author.

*Ibid.* Mr. Craik points out that the words Bythus (*βυθός*) and Sigé (*σιγή*), Profundity and Silence, are given, by Irenæus, in his "Treatise against Heresies," in an exposition of one of the sects of Gnostics. Achamoth, like Cham, is a corruption of the Hebrew word, Chachma = Wisdom. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> *Vid. Anima magica abscondita.*

*Ibid.* To the above-mentioned treatise, called Anthroposophia Theomagica, there is another annexed, called *Anima magica abscondita*, written by the same author, Vaughan, under the name of Eugenius Philalethes, but in neither of those treatises is there any mention of Achamoth, or its qualities, so that this is nothing but amusement, and a ridicule of dark, unintelligible writers; only the words, *à cujus lacrymis, &c.* are, as we have said, transcribed from Irenæus, though I know not from what part. I believe one of the author's designs was to set curious men a-hunting through indexes, and inquiring for books out of the common road.

of my way, whereof though at present I have neither warning nor expectation, yet upon such an accident, come when it will, I shall beg my reader's favour and company, allowing me to conduct him through it along with myself. For in writing it is as in travelling : if a man is in haste to be at home, (which I acknowledge to be none of my case, having never so little business as when I am there,) and his horse be tired with long riding and ill ways, or be naturally a jade, I advise him clearly to make the straightest and the commonest road, be it ever so dirty ; but then surely we must own such a man to be a scurvy companion at best ; he spatters himself and his fellow-travellers at every step : all their thoughts, and wishes, and conversation, turn entirely upon the subject of their journey's end ; and at every splash, and plunge, and stumble they heartily wish one another at the devil.

On the other side, when a traveller and his horse are in heart and plight ; when his purse is full, and the day before him ; he takes the road only where it is clean and convenient ; entertains his company there as agreeably as he can ; but upon the first occasion, carries them along with him to every delightful scene in view, whether of art, of nature, or of both ; and if they chance to refuse, out of stupidity or weariness, let them jog on by themselves and be d——n'd ; he'll overtake them at the next town, at which arriving, he rides furiously through ; the men, women, and children run out to gaze ; a hundred <sup>1</sup> noisy curs run barking after him, of which, if he honours the boldest with a lash of his whip, it is rather out of sport than revenge ; but should some sourer mongrel dare too near an approach, he receives a salute on the chaps by an accidental stroke from the courser's heels, (nor is any ground lost by the blow,) which sends him yelping and limping home.

I now proceed to sum up the singular adventures of my renowned Jack ; the state of whose dispositions and fortunes the careful reader does, no doubt, most exactly remember, as I last parted with them in the conclusion of a former section. Therefore, his next care must be, from two of the foregoing, to extract a scheme of notions, that may best fit his understanding, for a true relish of what is to ensue.

<sup>1</sup> By these are meant what the author calls the true critics, p. 78.



JACK had not only calculated the first revolution of his brain so prudently, as to give rise to that epidemic sect of *Æolists*, but succeeding also into a new and strange variety of conceptions, the fruitfulness of his imagination led him into certain notions, which, although in appearance very unaccountable, were not without their mysteries and their meanings, nor wanted followers to countenance and improve them. I shall therefore be extremely careful and exact in recounting such material passages of this nature as I have been able to collect, either from undoubted tradition, or indefatigable reading ; and shall describe them as graphically as it is possible, and as far as notions of that height and latitude can be brought within the compass of a pen. Nor do I at all question, but they will furnish plenty of noble matter for such, whose converting imaginations dispose them to reduce all things into types ; who can make shadows, no thanks to the sun, and then mould them into substances, no thanks to philosophy ; whose peculiar talent lies in fixing tropes and allegories to the letter, and refining what is literal into figure and mystery.

JACK had provided a fair copy of his father's will, engrossed in form upon a large skin of parchment ; and, resolving to act the part of a most dutiful son, he became the fondest creature of it imaginable. For although, as I have often told the reader, it consisted wholly in certain plain, easy directions, about the management and wearing their coats, with legacies and penalties in case of obedience or neglect, yet he began to entertain a fancy that the matter was deeper and darker, and therefore must needs have a great deal more of mystery at the bottom. "Gentlemen," said he, "I will prove this very skin of parchment to be meat, drink, and cloth, to be the philosopher's stone, and the universal medicine." In consequence of which raptures, he resolved to make use of it in the necessary, as well as the most paltry occasions of life.<sup>1</sup> He had a way of working it into any shape he pleased ; so that it served him for a night-cap when he went to bed, and for an umbrella in rainy weather. He would lap a piece of it about a sore toe, or when he had fits, burn two inches under his nose ; or if any-

<sup>1</sup> The author here lashes those pretenders to purity, who place so much merit in using scripture phrases on all occasions.



thing lay heavy on his stomach, scrape off, and swallow as much of the powder, as would lie on a silver-penny—they were all infallible remedies. With analogy to these refinements, his common talk and conversation ran wholly in the phrase of his will,<sup>1</sup> and he circumscribed the utmost of his eloquence within that compass, not daring to let slip a syllable without authority from thence. Once, at a strange house, he was suddenly taken short upon an urgent juncture, whereon it may not be allowed too particularly to dilate ; and being not able to call to mind, with that suddenness the occasion required, an authentic phrase for demanding the way to the back-side ; he chose rather, as the more prudent course, to incur the penalty in such cases usually annexed. Neither was it possible for the united rhetoric of mankind, to prevail with him to make himself clean again ; because, having consulted the will upon this emergency, he met with a passage<sup>2</sup> near the bottom (whether foisted in by the transcriber, is not known) which seemed to forbid it.

He made it a part of his religion, never to say grace to his meat ;<sup>3</sup> nor could all the world persuade him, as the common phrase is, to eat his victuals like a Christian.<sup>4</sup>

He bore a strange kind of appetite to snap-dragon,<sup>5</sup> and to the livid snuffs of a burning candle, which he would catch

<sup>1</sup> The Protestant dissenters use scripture phrases in their serious discourses and composures, more than the Church-of-England men ; accordingly, Jack is introduced making his common talk and conversation to run wholly in the phrase of his WILL.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot guess the author's meaning here, which I would be very glad to know, because it seems to be of importance.

*Ibid.* Incurring the penalty in such cases usually annexed, wants no explanation. He would not make himself clean, because, having consulted the will, (*i.e.* the New Testament,) he met with a passage near the bottom, (*i.e.* in the 11th verse of the last chapter of the Revelations,) "He which is filthy, let him be filthy still," which seemed to forbid it. "Whether foisted in by the transcriber," is added, because this paragraph is wanting in the Alexandrian MS., the oldest and most authentic copy of the New Testament. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> The slovenly way of receiving the sacrament among the fanatics.

<sup>4</sup> This is a common phrase to express eating cleanly, and is meant for an invective against that indecent manner among some people in receiving the sacrament ; so in the lines before, which is to be understood of the dissenters refusing to kneel at the sacrament.

<sup>5</sup> I cannot well find out the author's meaning here, unless it be the hot, untimely, blind zeal of enthusiasts.

and swallow with an agility wonderful to conceive ; and by this procedure, maintained a perpetual flame in his belly, which, issuing in a glowing steam from both his eyes, as well as his nostrils and his mouth, made his head appear in a dark night, like the skull of an ass, wherein a roguish boy had conveyed a farthing candle, to the terror of his Majesty's liege subjects. Therefore, he made use of no other expedient to light himself home, but was wont to say, that a wise man was his own lanthorn.

He would shut his eyes as he walked along the streets, and if he happened to bounce his head against a post, or fall into a kennel, (as he seldom missed either to do one or both,) he would tell the gibing prentices, who looked on, that he submitted with entire resignation, as to a trip, or a blow of fate, with whom he found, by long experience, how vain it was either to wrestle or to cuff, and whoever durst undertake to do either, would be sure to come off with a swinging fall, or a bloody nose. "It was ordained," said he, "some few days before the creation, that my nose and this very post should have a rencounter, and, therefore, nature thought fit to send us both into the world in the same age, and to make us countrymen and fellow-citizens. Now, had my eyes been open, it is very likely the business might have been a great deal worse ; for how many a confounded slip is daily got by a man with all his foresight about him ? Besides, the eyes of the understanding see best, when those of the senses are out of the way ; and therefore, blind men are observed to tread their steps with much more caution, and conduct, and judgment, than those who rely with too much confidence upon the virtue of the visual nerve, which every little accident shakes out of order, and a drop, or a film, can wholly disconcert ; like a lanthorn among a pack of roaring bullies when they scour the streets, exposing its owner and itself to outward kicks and buffets, which both might have escaped, if the vanity of appearing would have suffered them to walk in the dark. But farther, if we examine the conduct of these boasted lights, it will prove yet a great deal worse than their fortune. 'Tis true, I have broke my nose against this post, because fortune either forgot, or did not think it convenient, to twitch me by the elbow, and give me notice to avoid it. But, let not this encourage either the present



age, or posterity, to trust their noses into the keeping of their eyes, which may prove the fairest way of losing them for good and all. For, O ye eyes, ye blind guides ; miserable guardians are ye of our frail noses ; ye, I say, who fasten upon the first precipice in view, and then tow our wretched willing bodies after you, to the very brink of destruction. But, alas ! that brink is rotten, our feet slip, and we tumble down prone into a gulf, without one hospitable shrub in the way to break the fall—a fall, to which not any nose of mortal make is equal, except that of the giant Laurcalco,<sup>1</sup> who was lord of the silver bridge. Most properly therefore, O eyes, and with great justice, may you be compared to those foolish lights, which conduct men through dirt and darkness, till they fall into a deep pit or a noisome bog.”

This I have produced as a scantling of Jack’s great eloquence, and the force of his reasoning upon such abstruse matters.

He was, besides, a person of great design and improvement in affairs of devotion, having introduced a new deity, who has since met with a vast number of worshippers, by some called Babel, by others Chaos ; who had an ancient temple of Gothic structure upon Salisbury plain, famous for its shrine, and celebration by pilgrims.

When he had some roguish trick to play,<sup>2</sup> he would down with his knees, up with his eyes, and fall to prayers, though in the midst of the kennel. Then it was, that those who understood his pranks, would be sure to get far enough out of his way, and whenever curiosity attracted strangers to laugh, or to listen, he would, of a sudden, with one hand, out with his gear, and piss full in their eyes, and with the other, all bespatter them with mud.

In winter he went always loose and unbuttoned,<sup>3</sup> and clad as thin as possible, to let in the ambient heat ; and in summer lapped himself close and thick to keep it out.

In all revolutions of government,<sup>4</sup> he would make his

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Don Quixote.

<sup>2</sup> The villainies and cruelties, committed by enthusiasts and fanatics among us, were all performed under the disguise of religion and long prayers.

<sup>3</sup> They affect differences in habit and behaviour.

<sup>4</sup> They are severe persecutors, and all in a form of cant and devotion.



court for the office of hangman general ; and in the exercise of that dignity, wherein he was very dexterous, would make use of no other vizard,<sup>1</sup> than a long prayer.

He had a tongue so musculous and subtile, that he could twist it up into his nose, and deliver a strange kind of speech from thence. He was also the first in these kingdoms, who began to improve the Spanish accomplishment of braying ; and having large ears, perpetually exposed and erected, he carried his art to such perfection, that it was a point of great difficulty to distinguish, either by the view or the sound, between the original and the copy.

He was troubled with a disease, reverse to that called the stinging of the tarantula ; and would run dog-mad at the noise of music,<sup>2</sup> especially a pair of bagpipes. But he would cure himself again, by taking two or three turns in Westminster-hall, or Billingsgate, or in a boarding-school, or the Royal-Exchange, or a state coffee-house.

He was a person that feared no colours, but mortally hated all, and, upon that account, bore a cruel aversion against painters ;<sup>3</sup> insomuch, that, in his paroxysms, as he walked the streets, he would have his pockets loaden with stones to pelt at the signs.

Having, from this manner of living, frequent occasion to wash himself, he would often leap over head and ears into the water,<sup>4</sup> though it were in the midst of the winter, but was always observed to come out again much dirtier, if possible, than he went in.

He was the first that ever found out the secret of contriving a soporiferous medicine to be conveyed in at the ears ;<sup>5</sup> it was a compound of sulphur and balm of Gilead, with a little pilgrim's salve.

<sup>1</sup> Cromwell and his confederates went, as they called it, to seek the Lord, when they resolved to murder the king.

<sup>2</sup> This is to expose our dissenters' aversion to instrumental music in churches.—W. WOTTON.

<sup>3</sup> They quarrel at the most innocent decency and ornament, and defaced the statues and paintings in all the churches in England.

<sup>4</sup> Baptism by immersion. [T. S.]

<sup>5</sup> Fanatic preaching, composed either of hell and damnation, or a fulsome description of the joys of heaven ; both in such a dirty, nauseous style, as to be well resembled to pilgrim's salve.

He wore a large plaister of artificial caustics on his stomach, with the fervour of which, he could set himself a-groaning, like the famous board upon application of a red-hot iron.

He would stand in the turning of a street, and, calling to those who passed by, would cry to one, "Worthy sir, do me the honour of a good slap in the chaps."<sup>1</sup> To another, "Honest friend, pray favour me with a handsome kick on the arse;" "Madam, shall I entreat a small box on the ear from your ladyship's fair hands?" "Noble captain, lend a reasonable thwack, for the love of God, with that cane of yours over these poor shoulders." And when he had, by such earnest solicitations, made a shift to procure a basting sufficient to swell up his fancy and his sides, he would return home extremely comforted, and full of terrible accounts of what he had undergone for the public good. "Observe this stroke," (said he, shewing his bare shoulders,) "a plaguy janissary gave it me this very morning at seven o'clock, as, with much ado, I was driving off the great Turk. Neighbours, mind, this broken head deserves a plaister; had poor Jack been tender of his noddle, you would have seen the Pope and the French king, long before this time of day, among your wives and your warehouses. Dear Christians, the great Mogul was come as far as Whitechapel, and you may thank these poor sides, that he hath not (God bless us!) already swallowed up man, woman, and child."

It was highly worth observing the singular effects of that aversion,<sup>2</sup> or antipathy, which Jack and his brother Peter seemed, even to an affectation, to bear toward each other. Peter had lately done some rogueries, that forced him to abscond; and he seldom ventured to stir out before night, for fear of bailiffs. Their lodgings were at the two most distant parts of the town from each other; and whenever

<sup>1</sup> The fanatics have always had a way of affecting to run into persecution, and count vast merit upon every little hardship they suffer.

<sup>2</sup> The papists and fanatics, though they appear the most averse to each other, yet bear a near resemblance in many things, as has been observed by learned men.

*Ibid.* The agreement of our dissenters and the papists, in that which Bishop Stillingfleet called the fanaticism of the Church of Rome, is ludicrously described, for several pages together, by Jack's likeness to Peter, and their being often mistaken for each other, and their frequent meeting when they least intended it.—[W. WOTTON.]



their occasions or humours called them abroad, they would make choice of the oddest unlikely times, and most uncouth rounds, they could invent, that they might be sure to avoid one another : yet, after all this, it was their perpetual fortune to meet. The reason of which is easy enough to apprehend ; for, the phrenzy and the spleen of both having the same foundation, we may look upon them as two pair of compasses, equally extended, and the fixed foot of each remaining in the same centre ; which, though moving contrary ways at first, will be sure to encounter somewhere or other in the circumference. Besides, it was among the great misfortunes of Jack, to bear a huge personal resemblance with his brother Peter. Their humour and dispositions were not only the same, but there was a close analogy in their shape and size, and their mien. Insomuch, that nothing was more frequent than for a bailiff to seize Jack by the shoulder, and cry, " Mr. Peter, you are the king's prisoner." Or, at other times, for one of Peter's nearest friends to accost Jack with open arms, " Dear Peter, I am glad to see thee, pray send me one of your best medicines for the worms." This, we may suppose, was a mortifying return of those pains and proceedings Jack had laboured in so long ; and finding how directly opposite all his endeavours had answered to the sole end and intention, which he had proposed to himself, how could it avoid having terrible effects upon a head and heart so furnished as his ? However, the poor remainders of his coat bore all the punishment ; the orient sun never entered upon his diurnal progress, without missing a piece of it. He hired a tailor to stitch up the collar so close, that it was ready to choke him, and squeezed out his eyes at such a rate, as one could see nothing but the white. What little was left of the main substance of the coat, he rubbed every day for two hours against a rough-cast wall, in order to grind away the remnants of lace and embroidery, but at the same time went on with so much violence, that he proceeded a heathen philosopher. Yet, after all he could do of this kind, the success continued still to disappoint his expectation. For, as it is the nature of rags to bear a kind of mock resemblance to finery, there being a sort of fluttering appearance in both, which is not to be distinguished at a distance, in the dark, or by short-sighted eyes, so ; in those junctures,



it fared with Jack and his tatters, that they offered to the first view a ridiculous flaunting ; which, assisting the resemblance in person and air, thwarted all his projects of separation, and left so near a similitude between them, as frequently deceived the very disciples and followers of both.

*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Desunt non-</i>		*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>nulla.</i>		*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

The old Slavonian proverb said well, that it is with men as with asses ; whoever would keep them fast, must find a very good hold at their ears. Yet I think we may affirm, that it hath been verified by repeated experience, that,

Effugiet tamen hæc sceleratus vincula Proteus.

It is good, therefore, to read the maxims of our ancestors, with great allowances to times and persons ; for if we look into primitive records, we shall find, that no revolutions have been so great, or so frequent, as those of human ears. In former days, there was a curious invention to catch and keep them ; which, I think, we may justly reckon among the *artes perditæ* ; and how can it be otherwise, when, in the latter centuries, the very species is not only diminished to a very lamentable degree, but the poor remainder is also degenerated so far as to mock our skilfullest tenure ? For, if the only slitting of one ear in a stag has been found sufficient to propagate the defect through a whole forest, why should we wonder at the greatest consequences, from so many lop-pings and mutilations, to which the ears of our fathers, and our own, have been of late so much exposed ? 'Tis true, indeed, that while this island of ours was under the dominion of grace, many endeavours were made to improve the growth of ears once more among us. The proportion of largeness was not only looked upon as an ornament of the outward man, but as a type of grace in the inward. Besides, it is held by naturalists, that, if there be a protuberancy of parts, in the superior region of the body, as in the ears and nose, there must be a parity also in the inferior ; and, therefore, in that truly pious age, the males in every assembly,

according as they were gifted, appeared very forward in exposing their ears to view, and the regions about them; because Hippocrates tells us,<sup>1</sup> that, when the vein behind the ear happens to be cut, a man becomes a eunuch: and the females were nothing backward in beholding and edifying by them; whereof those who had 'already used the means, looked about them with great concern, in hopes of conceiving a suitable offspring by such a prospect; others, who stood candidates for benevolence, found there a plentiful choice, and were sure to fix upon such as discovered the largest ears, that the breed might not dwindle between them. Lastly, the devouter sisters, who looked upon all extraordinary dilata-tions of that member as protrusions of zeal, or spiritual excrescencies, were sure to honour every head they sat upon, as if they had been marks of grace;<sup>2</sup> but especially that of the preacher, whose ears were usually of the prime magnitude; which upon that account, he was very frequent and exact in exposing with all advantages to the people: in his rhetorical paroxysms turning sometimes to hold forth the one, and sometimes to hold forth the other; from which custom, the whole operation of preaching is to this very day, among their professors, styled by the phrase of holding forth.

Such was the progress of the saints for advancing the size of that member; and it is thought the success would have been every way answerable, if, in process of time, a cruel king had not arisen,<sup>3</sup> who raised a bloody persecution against all ears above a certain standard; upon which, some were glad to hide their flourishing sprouts in a black border, others crept wholly under a periwig; some were slit, others cropped, and a great number sliced off to the stumps. But of this more hereafter in my general "History of Ears," which I design very speedily to bestow upon the public.

From this brief survey of the falling state of ears in the last age, and the small care had to advance their ancient growth in the present, it is manifest, how little reason we can have to rely upon a hold so short, so weak, and so slippery; and that whoever desires to catch mankind fast,

<sup>1</sup> *Lib. de aëre, locis, et aquis.*

<sup>2</sup> As if they had been cloven tongues.—*First Edition.* [T. S.]

<sup>3</sup> This was King Charles the Second, who, at his restoration, turned out all the dissenting teachers that would not conform.



must have recourse to some other methods. Now, he that will examine human nature with circumspection enough, may discover several handles, whereof the six<sup>1</sup> senses afford one a-piece, beside a great number that are screwed to the passions, and some few rivetted to the intellect. Among these last, curiosity is one, and, of all others, affords the firmest grasp ; curiosity, that spur in the side, that bridle in the mouth, that ring in the nose, of a lazy and impatient and a grunting reader. By this handle it is, that an author should seize upon his readers ; which as soon as he has once compassed, all resistance and struggling are in vain, and they become his prisoners as close as he pleases, till weariness or dulness force him to let go his gripe.

And therefore, I, the author of this miraculous treatise, having hitherto, beyond expectation, maintained, by the aforesaid handle, a firm hold upon my gentle readers, it is with great reluctance, that I am at length compelled to remit my grasp, leaving them, in the perusal of what remains, to that natural oscitancy inherent in the tribe. I can only assure thee, courteous reader, for both our comforts, that my concern is altogether equal to thine, for my unhappiness in losing, or mislaying among my papers, the remaining part of these memoirs ; which consisted of accidents, turns, and adventures, both new, agreeable, and surprising ; and therefore calculated, in all due points, to the delicate taste of this our noble age. But, alas ! with my utmost endeavours, I have been able only to retain a few of the heads. Under which, there was a full account, how Peter got a protection out of the King's Bench ; and of a reconcilment<sup>2</sup> between Jack and him, upon a design they had, in a certain rainy night, to trepan brother Martin into a spunging-house, and there strip him to the skin. How Martin, with much ado,

<sup>1</sup> Including Scaliger's.

<sup>2</sup> In the reign of King James the Second, the Presbyterians, by the king's invitation, joined with the Papists, against the Church of England, and addressed him for repeal of the penal laws and test. The king, by his dispensing power, gave liberty of conscience, which both Papists and Presbyterians made use of ; but, upon the Revolution, the Papists being down of course, the Presbyterians freely continued their assemblies, by virtue of King James's indulgence, before they had a toleration by law. This I believe the author means by Jack's stealing Peter's protection, and making use of it himself.



shewed them both a fair pair of heels. How a new warrant came out against Peter ; upon which, how Jack left him in the lurch, stole his protection, and made use of it himself. How Jack's tatters came into fashion in court and city ; how he got upon a great horse,<sup>1</sup> and eat custard.<sup>2</sup> But the particulars of all these, with several others, which have now slid out of my memory, are lost beyond all hopes of recovery. For which misfortune, leaving my readers to condole with each other, as far as they shall find it to agree with their several constitutions ; but conjuring them by all the friendship that has passed between us, from the title-page to this, not to proceed so far as to injure their healths for an accident past remedy ; I now go on to the ceremonial part of an accomplished writer, and therefore, by a courtly modern, least of all others to be omitted.

## THE CONCLUSION.

GOING too long, is a cause of abortion, as effectual, though not so frequent, as going too short ; and holds true especially in the labours of the brain. Well fare the heart of that noble Jesuit,<sup>3</sup> who first adventured to confess in print, that books must be suited to their several seasons, like dress, and diet, and diversions ; and better fare our noble nation, for refining upon this among other French modes. I am living fast to see the time, when a book that misses its tide, shall be neglected, as the moon by day, or like mackarel a week after the season. No man has more nicely observed our climate, than the bookseller who bought the copy of this work. He knows to a tittle what subjects will best go off in a dry year, and which it is proper to expose foremost, when the weather-glass is fallen to much rain. When he had seen this treatise, and consulted his almanack upon it, he gave me to under-

<sup>1</sup> Sir Humphry Edwyn, a Presbyterian, when lord-mayor of London, in 1697, had the insolence to go in his formalities to a conventicle, with the ensigns of his office.

<sup>2</sup> Custard is a famous dish at a lord-mayor's feast.

<sup>3</sup> Père d'Orleans.

stand, that he had manifestly considered the two principal things, which were, the bulk and the subject ; and found it would never take but after a long vacation, and then only in case it should happen to be a hard year for turnips. Upon which I desired to know, considering my urgent necessities, what he thought might be acceptable this month. He looked westward, and said, "I doubt we shall have a fit of bad weather. However, if you could prepare some pretty little banter, (but not in verse,) or a small treatise upon the —, it would run like wildfire. But, if it hold up, I have already hired an author to write something against Dr. Bentley, which, I am sure, will turn to account."

At length we agreed upon this expedient ; that when a customer comes for one of these, and desires in confidence to know the author, he will tell him very privately, as a friend, naming whichever of the wits shall happen to be that week in vogue ; and if Durfey's last play should be in course, I would as lieve he may be the person as Congreve. This I mention, because I am wonderfully well acquainted with the present relish of courteous readers ; and have often observed, with singular pleasure, that a fly, driven from a honey-pot, will immediately, with very good appetite, alight, and finish his meal on an excrement.

I have one word to say upon the subject of profound writers, who are grown very numerous of late ; and I know very well, the judicious world is resolved to list me in that number. I conceive therefore, as to the business of being profound, that it is with writers as with wells—a person with good eyes may see to the bottom of the deepest, provided any water be there, and, that, often, when there is nothing in the world at the bottom, besides dryness and dirt, though it be but a yard and half under-ground, it shall pass, however, for wondrous deep, upon no wiser a reason, than because it is wondrous dark.

I am now trying an experiment very frequent among modern authors ; which is to write upon nothing ; when the subject is utterly exhausted, to let the pen still move on ; by some called the ghost of wit, delighting to walk after the death of its body. And to say the truth, there seems to be no part of knowledge in fewer hands, than that of discerning when to have done. By the time that an author has writ

out a book, he and his readers are become old acquaintants, and grow very loth to part ; so that I have sometimes known it to be in writing, as in visiting, where the ceremony of taking leave has employed more time than the whole conversation before. The conclusion of a treatise resembles the conclusion of human life, which has sometimes been compared to the end of a feast ; where few are satisfied to depart, *ut plenus vitæ conviva*. For men will sit down after the fullest meal, though it be only to doze, or to sleep out the rest of the day. But, in this latter, I differ extremely from other writers, and shall be too proud, if, by all my labours, I can have anyways contributed to the repose of mankind, in times<sup>1</sup> so turbulent and unquiet as these. Neither do I think such an employment so very alien from the office of a wit as some would suppose. For, among a very polite nation in Greece,<sup>2</sup> there were the same temples built and consecrated, to Sleep and the Muses, between which two deities they believed the strictest friendship was established.

I have one concluding favour to request of my reader ; that he will not expect to be equally diverted and informed by every line or every page of this discourse ; but give some allowance to the author's spleen, and short fits or intervals of dulness, as well as his own ; and lay it seriously to his conscience, whether, if he were walking the streets in dirty weather, or a rainy day, he would allow it fair dealing, in folks at their ease from a window to critick<sup>3</sup> his gait, and ridicule his dress at such a juncture.

In my disposeure of employments of the brain, I have thought fit to make invention the master, and to give method and reason the office of its lackeys. The cause of this distribution was, from observing it my peculiar case, to be often under a temptation of being witty upon occasions, where I could be neither wise, nor sound, nor anything to the matter in hand. And I am too much a servant of the modern way, to neglect any such opportunities, whatever pains or improprieties I may be at, to introduce them. For I have observed, that, from a laborious collection of seven

<sup>1</sup> This was writ before the peace of Ryswick [which was signed in September, 1697].

<sup>2</sup> Trezenii. Pausan, Hb. 2.



hundred and thirty-eight flowers, and shining hints of the best modern authors, digested with great reading into my book of commonplaces, I have not been able, after five years, to draw, hook, or force, into common conversation, any more than a dozen. Of which dozen, the one moiety failed of success, by being dropped among unsuitable company ; and the other cost me so many strains, and traps, and ambages to introduce, that I at length resolved to give it over. Now, this disappointment, (to discover a secret,) I must own, gave me the first hint of setting up for an author ; and I have since found, among some particular friends, that it is become a very general complaint, and has produced the same effects upon many others. For I have remarked many a towardly word to be wholly neglected or despised in discourse, which has passed very smoothly, with some consideration and esteem, after its preferment and sanction in print. But now, since, by the liberty and encouragement of the press, I am grown absolute master of the occasions and opportunities to expose the talents I have acquired, I already discover, that the issues of my *observanda* begin to grow too large for the receipts. Therefore, I shall here pause a while, till I find, by feeling the world's pulse and my own, that it will be of absolute necessity for us both, to resume my pen.

## THE HISTORY OF MARTIN.<sup>1</sup>

*Giving an Account of his Departure from Jack, and their setting up for themselves, on which account they were obliged to travel and meet many Disasters, finding no shelter near Peter's Habitation: Martin succeeds in the North: Peter thunders against Martin for the Loss of the large Revenue he used to receive from thence; Harry Huff sent Martin a Challenge to Fight, which he received; Peter rewards Harry for the pretended Victory, which encouraged Harry to huff Peter also; with many other extraordinary Adventures of the said Martin in several Places with many considerable Persons.*

*With a Digression concerning the Nature, Usefulness, and Necessity of Wars and Quarrels.*

HOW Jack and Martin, being parted, set up each for himself. How they travelled over hills and dales, met many disasters, suffered much from the good cause, and struggled with difficulties and wants, not having where to lay their head; by all which they afterwards proved themselves to be right father's sons, and Peter to be spurious. Finding no shelter near Peter's habitation, Martin travelled northwards, and

<sup>1</sup> In the third volume of Nichols's "Supplement to Dr. Swift's Works" (1779), this "History" comes under the title, "Abstract of what, in the Dutch edition, is said to have followed Sect. IX. of the MS." Although Nichols, Scott, and all other editors state that the "History" was inserted in former editions of the "Tale," I have not come across it in any of the authorized issues. The present text is Scott's, collated with that in the volume of Nichols's edition above referred to. Nichols states that the "History" was omitted in subsequent editions "by the Dean's direction, in order to remove the censure of those who put a construction on it foreign to his design." See also note prefixed to "A Tale of a Tub." [T. S.]

finding the Thuringians<sup>1</sup> and neighbouring people disposed to change, he set up his stage first among them, where, making it his business to cry down Peter's powders, plaisters, salves, and drugs, which he had sold a long time at a dear rate, allowing Martin none of the profit, though he had been often employed in recommending and putting them off, the good people, willing to save their pence, began to hearken to Martin's speeches.<sup>2</sup> How several great lords took the hint, and on the same account declared for Martin; particularly one who, not having enough of one wife, wanted to marry a second, and knowing Peter used not to grant such licences but at a swinging price, he struck up a bargain with Martin, whom he found more tractable, and who assured him he had the same power to allow such things. How most of the other northern lords, for their own private ends, withdrew themselves and their dependents from Peter's authority, and closed in with Martin. How Peter, enraged at the loss of such large territories, and consequently of so much revenue, thundered against Martin, and sent out the strongest and most terrible of his bulls to devour him; but this having no effect, and Martin defending himself boldly and dexterously, Peter at last put forth proclamations, declaring Martin, and all his adherents, rebels and traitors, ordaining and requiring all his loving subjects to take up arms, and to kill, burn, and destroy all and every one of them; promising large rewards, &c., upon which ensued bloody wars and desolation.

How Harry Huff,<sup>3</sup> Lord of Albion, one of the greatest bullies of those days, sent a cartel to Martin to fight him on a stage, at cudgels, quarter-staff, back-sword, &c. Hence the origin of that genteel custom of prize-fighting so well known and practised to this day among those polite islanders, though unknown everywhere else. How Martin, being a bold blustering fellow, accepted the challenge. How they met and fought, to the great diversion of the spectators; and, after giving one another broken heads and many bloody wounds and bruises, how they both drew off victorious; in which

<sup>1</sup> The States in the North of Germany, who adopted the Lutheran religion. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> The commencement of Luther's revolt against the Church of Rome, is here insinuated. [S.]

<sup>3</sup> Henry VIII.



their example has been frequently imitated by great clerks and others since that time. How Martin's friends applauded his victory, and how Lord Harry's friends complimented him on the same score, and particularly Lord Peter, who sent him a fine feather for his cap,<sup>1</sup> to be worn by him and his successors, as a perpetual mark for his bold defence of Lord Peter's cause. How Harry, flushed with his pretended victory over Martin, began to huff Peter also, and at last downright quarrelled with him about a wench.<sup>2</sup> How some of Lord Harry's tenants, ever fond of changes, began to talk kindly of Martin, for which he mauled them soundly, as he did also those that adhered to Peter. How he turned some out of house and hold, others he hanged or burnt, &c.

How Harry Huff, after a good deal of blustering, wenching, and bullying, died, and was succeeded by a good-natured boy,<sup>3</sup> who, giving way to the general bent of his tenants, allowed Martin's notions to spread everywhere, and take deep root in Albion. How, after his death, the farm fell into the hands of a lady, who was violently in love with Lord Peter.<sup>4</sup> How she purged the whole country with fire and sword, resolved not to leave the name or remembrance of Martin. How Peter triumphed, and set up shops again for selling his own powders, plaisters, and salves, which were now called the only true ones, Martin's being all declared counterfeit. How great numbers of Martin's friends left the country, and, travelling up and down in foreign parts, grew acquainted with many of Jack's followers, and took a liking to many of their notions and ways; which they afterwards brought back into Albion, now under another landlady, more moderate and more cunning than the former, her elder sister.<sup>5</sup> How she endeavoured to keep friendship both with Peter and Martin, and trimmed for some time between the two, not without countenancing and assisting at the same time many of Jack's followers; but, finding no possibility of reconciling all the three brothers, because each would be master, and allow no other salves, powders, or plaisters to be used but his own, she discarded all three, and set up a shop for those of her own farm, well furnished with powders, plaisters, salves, and all other drugs

<sup>1</sup> The title of "Defender of the Faith."

<sup>2</sup> Ann Boleyn.

<sup>3</sup> Edward VI.

<sup>4</sup> Queen Mary.

<sup>5</sup> Queen Elizabeth.

necessary, all right and true, composed according to receipts made by physicians and apothecaries of her own creating, which they extracted out of Peter's, and Martin's, and Jack's receipt-books, and of this medley or hodgepodge, made up a dispensatory of their own, strictly forbidding any other to be used, and particularly Peter's ; from which the greatest part of this new dispensatory was stolen. How the lady, farther to confirm this change, wisely imitating her father, degraded Peter from the rank he pretended as eldest brother, and set up herself in his place as head of the family, and ever after wore her father's old cap, with the fine feather he had got from Peter for standing his friend ; which has likewise been worn with no small ostentation, to this day, by all her successors, though declared enemies to Peter.<sup>1</sup> How Lady Bess and her physicians, being told of many defects and imperfections in their new medley dispensatory, resolved on a farther alteration ; and to purge it from a great deal of Peter's trash, that still remained in it, but were prevented by her death. How she was succeeded by a north-country farmer, who pretended great skill in the managing of farms, though he could never govern his own poor little farm, nor yet this large new one after he got it.<sup>2</sup> How this new landlord, to shew his valour and dexterity, fought against enchanters, weeds, giants, and wind-mills, and claimed great honour for his victories, though he oft-times b-sh-t himself when there was no danger.<sup>3</sup> How his successor, no wiser than he, occasioned great disorders by the new methods he took to manage his farms. How he attempted to establish in his northern farm, the same dispensatory used in the southern, but miscarried ; because Jack's powders, pills, salves, and plaisters, were there in great vogue.

How the author finds himself embarrassed for having introduced into his history a new sect different from the three he had undertaken to treat of ; and how his inviolable respect to the sacred number *three*, obliges him to reduce these four, as he intends to do all other things, to that number ; and for that end to drop the former Martin, and to

<sup>1</sup> Claimed the title of Head of the Church, and retained that of Defender of the Faith. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> James I.

<sup>3</sup> King James's works on Demonology. [T. S.]



substitute in his place Lady Bess's institution, which is to pass under the name of Martin in the sequel of this true history. This weighty point being cleared, the author goes on, and describes mighty quarrels between Jack and Martin;<sup>1</sup> how sometimes the one had the better, and sometimes the other, to the great desolation of both farms; till at last both sides concur to hang up the landlord, who pretended to die a martyr for Martin; though he had been true to neither side, and was suspected by many to have a great affection for Peter.<sup>2</sup>

#### A DIGRESSION ON THE NATURE, USEFULNESS, AND NECESSITY OF WARS AND QUARRELS.

THIS being a matter of great consequence, the author intends to treat it methodically and at large in a treatise apart; and here to give only some hints of what his large treatise contains. The state of war natural to all creatures. War is an attempt to take by violence from others a part of what they have and we want. Every man, fully sensible of his own merit, and finding it not duly regarded by others, has a natural right to take from them all that he thinks due to himself; and every creature, finding its own wants more than those of others, has the same right to take everything its nature requires. Brutes, much more modest in their pretensions this way than men, and mean men more than great ones. The higher one raises his pretensions this way, the more bustle he makes about them; and the more success he has, the greater hero. Thus greater souls, in proportion to their superior merit, claim a greater right to take everything from meaner folks. This the true foundation of grandeur and heroism, and of the distinction of degrees among men. War, therefore, necessary to establish subordination, and to found cities, kingdoms, &c., as also to purge bodies politic of gross humours. Wise princes find it necessary to have wars abroad, to keep peace at home. War, famine, and pestilence, the usual cures for corruptions in bodies politic. A comparison of these three. The author is to write a panegyric on each of them. The greatest part of mankind

<sup>1</sup> The Great Civil War.

<sup>2</sup> Charles I.



loves war more than peace. They are but few and mean-spirited that live in peace with all men. The modest and meek of all kinds always a prey to those of more noble or stronger appetites. The inclination to war universal; those that cannot, or dare not, make war in person employ others to do it for them. This maintains bullies, braves, cut-throats, lawyers, soldiers, &c. Most professions would be useless, if all were peaceable. Hence brutes want neither smiths nor lawyers, magistrates nor joiners, soldiers nor surgeons. Brutes, having but narrow appetites, are incapable of carrying on or perpetuating war against their own species, or of being led out in troops and multitudes to destroy one another. These prerogatives proper to man alone. The excellency of human nature demonstrated by the vast train of appetites, passions, wants, &c., that attend it. This matter to be more fully treated in the author's Panegyric on Mankind.

### THE HISTORY OF MARTIN, continued.

How Jack, having got rid of the old landlord, set up another to his mind,<sup>1</sup> quarrelled with Martin, and turned him out of doors. How he pillaged all his shops, and abolished the whole dispensatory. How the new landlord laid about him, mauled Peter, worried Martin, and made the whole neighbourhood tremble. How Jack's friends fell out among themselves, split into a thousand parties, and turned all things topsyturvey, till everybody grew weary of them; and at last, the blustering landlord dying, Jack was kicked out of doors, a new landlord brought in, and Martin re-established.<sup>2</sup> How this new landlord let Martin do what he pleased, and Martin agreed to everything his pious landlord desired, provided Jack might be kept low. Of several efforts Jack made to raise up his head, but all in vain; till at last the landlord died, and was succeeded by one who was a great friend to Peter, who, to humble Martin, gave Jack some liberty.<sup>3</sup> How Martin grew enraged at this, called in a foreigner,<sup>4</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Cromwell.

<sup>2</sup> The Restoration.

<sup>3</sup> Indulgences to sectaries during the reign of James II. [S.]

<sup>4</sup> William III.

turned out the landlord; in which Jack concurred with Martin, because this landlord was entirely devoted to Peter, into whose arms he threw himself, and left his country.<sup>1</sup> How the new landlord secured Martin in the full possession of his former rights, but would not allow him to destroy Jack, who had always been his friend. How Jack got up his head in the north, and put himself in possession of a whole canton,<sup>2</sup> to the great discontent of Martin, who, finding also that some of Jack's friends were allowed to live and get their bread in the south parts of the country, grew highly discontent with the new landlord he had called in to his assistance. How this landlord kept Martin in order; upon which he fell into a raging fever, and swore he would hang himself, or join in with Peter, unless Jack's children were all turned out to starve.<sup>3</sup> Of several attempts made to cure Martin, and make peace between him and Jack, that they might unite against Peter; but all made ineffectual by the great address of a number of Peter's friends, that herded among Martin's, and appeared the most zealous for his interest. How Martin, getting abroad in this mad fit, looked so like Peter in his air and dress, and talked so like him, that many of the neighbours could not distinguish the one from the other; especially when Martin went up and down strutting in Peter's armour, which he had borrowed to fight Jack.<sup>4</sup> What remedies were used to cure Martin's distemper, \* \* \* \*

Here the author being seized with a fit of dulness, (to which he is very subject,) after having read a poetical epistle addressed to \*\*\*, it entirely composed his senses, so that he has not writ a line since.

N.B. Some things that follow after this are not in the MS. but seem to have been written since, to fill up the place of what was not thought convenient then to print.

<sup>1</sup> The Revolution of 1688. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> The establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland. [T. S.]

<sup>3</sup> Clamour that the church was in danger from the dissenters. [S.]

<sup>4</sup> High Church *versus* Dissent. [T. S.]

## A PROJECT

FOR THE UNIVERSAL BENEFIT OF MANKIND.

THE author, having laboured so long, and done so much, to serve and instruct the public, without any advantage to himself, has at last thought of a project, which will tend to the great benefit of all mankind, and produce a handsome revenue to the author. He intends to print by subscription, in 96 large volumes in *folio*, an exact description of *Terra Australis incognita*;<sup>1</sup> collected with great care and pains from 999 learned and pious authors, of undoubted veracity. The whole work, illustrated with maps and cuts agreeable to the subject, and done by the best masters, will cost but one guinea each volume to subscribers; one guinea to be paid in advance, and afterwards a guinea on receiving each volume, except the last. This work will be of great use for all men, and necessary for all families; because it contains exact accounts of all the provinces, colonies, and mansions of that spacious country, where, by a general doom, all transgressors of the law are to be transported; and every one having this work, may choose out the fittest and best place for himself, there being enough for all, so as every one shall be fully satisfied.

The author supposes that one copy of this work will be bought at the public charge, or out of the parish rates, for every parish-church in the three kingdoms, and in all the dominions thereunto belonging; and that every family that can command ten pounds per annum, even though retrenched from less necessary expenses, will subscribe for one. He does not think of giving out above nine volumes yearly; and considering the number requisite, he intends to print at least 100,000 for the first edition. He is to print proposals against next term, with a specimen, and a curious map of the capital city, with its twelve gates, from a known author, who took an exact survey of it in a dream.<sup>2</sup> Considering the

<sup>1</sup> See "Tale," Sect. IV. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> St. John's vision in Revelation. Nichols thinks this refers to Bunyan. [T. S.]



great care and pains of the author, and the usefulness of the work, he hopes every one will be ready, for their own good as well as his, to contribute cheerfully to it, and not grudge him the profit he may have by it, especially if it comes to a third or fourth edition, as he expects it will very soon.

He doubts not but it will be translated into foreign languages, by most nations of Europe, as well as of Asia and Africa, being of as great use to all those nations as to his own; for this reason, he designs to procure patents and privileges for securing the whole benefit to himself, from all those different princes and states, and hopes to see many millions of this great work printed, in those different countries and languages, before his death.

After this business is pretty well established, he has promised to put a friend on another project, almost as good as this, by establishing insurance offices everywhere, for securing people from shipwreck, and several other accidents in their voyage to this country; and these offices shall furnish, at a certain rate, pilots well versed in the route, and that know all the rocks, shelves, quicksands, &c., that such pilgrims and travellers may be exposed to. Of these he knows a great number ready instructed in most countries; but the whole scheme of this matter he is to draw up at large, and communicate to his friend.

[Here (says the Dutch Editor) the original MS. ended.]



THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS.



71 Temple  
12 Boyle  
21 Swift  
18 Wotton  
22 Bentley

A SOMEWHAT silly controversy had been raised in France by Fontenelle and Perrault respecting the superiority of the learning of the France of Louis XIV. over that of the ancients. They contended that Thucydides, Cicero, Pliny, and Horace were inferior to the Bishop of Meaux, Balsac, Voiture, and Boileau. Much writing and feeling were expended in the progress of the dispute, which was carried on even in England, though here it was not confined to French civilization merely. In answer to Perrault, Sir William Temple, Swift's patron, wrote his "Essay upon Ancient and Modern Learning," in which, through an over-indulgence in ardour, he made statements on behalf of the writers of antiquity as ridiculous as those made by his opponents on behalf of their favourite champions. To this essay, William Wotton wrote a somewhat scathing reply. One of Temple's proofs for the superiority of ancient learning was the "Epistles of Phalaris;" Temple had considered these letters to be one of the triumphs of antiquity. At Oxford, the Christ Church scholars took Temple's view, and an edition of Phalaris was issued under the editorship of the Honourable Charles Boyle, afterwards Earl of Orrery. Boyle, not content with fulfilling the duties of an editor, took occasion in the preface to sneer at Dr. Bentley, the Librarian of St. James's Library, for withdrawing the manuscript of the spurious letters, which Boyle had borrowed from the Library, before he had quite done with it. Bentley, irritated as much by the presumption of the ignorant editor as by the sneer, supplied an appendix to the second edition of Wotton's "Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning," in which he conclusively showed that the "letters" were absolutely spurious. Out of this arose the smaller controversy respecting Phalaris in which Boyle, Atterbury, and finally Swift took part. Swift, as Temple's client, took his patron's side, and his contribution, "The Battle of the Books," is perhaps the only valuable fruit of as silly a sally as ever diverted the minds of wits. Mr. Forster rightly calls "The Battle" "a triumphant piece of humour." The work may now be considered as in itself an argument against Temple's assertion, since one may look far and wide among the literature of the ancients for satire so scathing or humour so sarcastic. [T. S.]

A  
Full and True Account  
OF THE  
BATTEL  
Fought last *FRIDAY*,  
Between the  
*Antient* and the *Modern*  
BOOKS  
IN  
St. *JAMES'S*  
LIBRARY.

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L O N D O N :  
Printed in the Year, MDCCX.





## THE BOOKSELLER TO THE READER.<sup>1</sup>

THE following Discourse, as it is unquestionably of the same author, so it seems to have been written about the same time with the former ; I mean the year 1697, when the famous dispute was on foot about ancient and modern learning. The controversy took its rise from an essay of Sir William Temple's upon that subject, which was answered by W. Wotton, B.D.,<sup>2</sup> with an Appendix by Dr. Bentley, endeavouring to destroy the credit of Æsop and Phalaris for authors, whom Sir William Temple had, in the essay before mentioned, highly commended. In that appendix, the doctor falls hard upon a new edition of Phalaris, put out by the Honourable Charles Boyle,<sup>3</sup> now Earl of Orrery, to which Mr. Boyle replied at large, with great learning and wit ; and the doctor voluminously rejoined. In

<sup>1</sup> On the face of it, this preface shows none of the characteristics of Swift's writings. In all probability it was written by some person employed by the publisher to furnish an explanation of the causes which gave birth to Swift's work. The "Account" had been in manuscript some seven years, so that the explanation was, perhaps, necessary. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> William Wotton, D.D. (1666-1726), known in his time as "the polyglot infant," was a fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. He obtained his bachelor's degree when he was but thirteen years of age, and at twenty-seven was rector of Middleton Keynes. In 1705 he was appointed prebendary of Salisbury. In addition to his "Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning," he wrote a "History of Rome," "Discourses relating to the Traditions and Usages of the Scribes and Pharisees," and a host of other books. [T. S.]

<sup>3</sup> Boyle's edition of the "Letters of Phalaris," in the preparation of which Dr. Atterbury largely assisted, was published in 1695—three years after Temple's "Essay," and the year following the appearance of Wotton's "Reflections." To Bentley's appendix in Wotton's work Boyle replied in 1696, and Bentley, in 1699, re-issued his Appendix in a separate and more extended form, with the title, "A Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris." For a list of the tracts and pamphlets relating to this controversy, see Lowndes' "Bibliographer's Manual," revised edition, pp. 1847-48. [T. S.]

this dispute, the town highly resented to see a person of Sir William Temple's character and methods roughly used by the two reverend gentlemen aforesaid, and without any manner of provocation. At length, there appearing no end of the quarrel, our author tells us, that the BOOKS in St. James's Library, looking upon themselves as parties principally concerned, took up the controversy, and came to a decisive battle ; but the manuscript, by the injury of fortune or weather, being in several places imperfect, we cannot learn to which side the victory fell.

I must warn the reader to beware of applying to persons what is here meant only of books, in the most literal sense. So, when Virgil is mentioned, we are not to understand the person of a famous poet called by that name, but only certain sheets of paper, bound up in leather, containing in print the works of the said poet ; and so of the rest.

## THE PREFACE OF THE AUTHOR.

*SATIRE is a sort of glass, wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own ; which is the chief reason for that kind reception it meets with in the world, and that so very few are offended with it. But, if it should happen otherwise, the danger is not great ; and I have learned, from long experience, never to apprehend mischief from those understandings I have been able to provoke ; for anger and fury, though they add strength to the sinews of the body, yet are found to relax those of the mind, and to render all its efforts feeble and impotent.*

*There is a brain that will endure but one scumming ; let the owner gather it with discretion, and manage his little stock with husbandry ; but, of all things, let him beware of bringing it under the lash of his betters, because that will make it all bubble up into impertinence, and he will find no new supply. Wit, without knowledge, being a sort of cream, which gathers in a night to the top, and, by a skilful hand, may be soon whipped into froth ; but, once scummed away, what appears underneath will be fit for nothing but to be thrown to the hogs.*

## A FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE FOUGHT LAST FRIDAY, &c.

WHOEVER examines, with due circumspection, into the *Annual Records of Time*,<sup>1</sup> will find it remarked, that war is the child of pride, and pride the daughter of riches. The former of which assertions may be soon granted, but one cannot so easily subscribe to the latter ; for pride is nearly related to beggary and want, either by father or mother, and sometimes by both : and, to speak naturally, it very seldom happens among men to fall out when all have enough ; invasions usually travelling from north to south, that is to say, from poverty to plenty. The most ancient and natural grounds of quarrels, are lust and avarice ; which, though we may allow to be brethren, or collateral branches of pride, are certainly the issues of want. For, to speak in the phrase of writers upon politics, we may observe in the Republic of Dogs, (which, in its original, seems to be an institution of the many,) that the whole state is ever in the profoundest peace after a full meal ; and that civil broils arise among them when it happens for one great bone to be seized on by some leading dog, who either divides it among the few, and then it falls to an oligarchy, or keeps it to himself, and then it runs up to a tyranny. The same reasoning also holds place among them in those dissensions we behold upon a turgescency in any of their females. For the right of possession lying in common, (it being impossible to establish a property in so delicate a case,) jealousies and suspicions do so abound, that the whole

<sup>1</sup> Riches produce pride ; pride is war's ground, &c. *Vide* Ephem. de Mary Clarke ; opt. edit.



commonwealth of that street is reduced to a manifest state of war, of every citizen against every citizen, till some one, of more courage, conduct, or fortune than the rest, seizes and enjoys the prize ; upon which naturally arises plenty of heart-burning, and envy, and snarling against the happy dog. Again, if we look upon any of those republics engaged in a foreign war, either of invasion or defence, we shall find the same reasoning will serve as to the grounds and occasions of each, and that poverty or want, in some degree or other, (whether real or in opinion, which makes no alteration in the case,) has a great share, as well as pride, on the part of the aggressor.

Now, whoever will please to take this scheme, and either reduce or adapt it to an intellectual state, or commonwealth of learning, will soon discover the first ground of disagreement between the two great parties at this time in arms, and may form just conclusions upon the merits of either cause. But the issue or events of this war are not so easy to conjecture at ; for the present quarrel is so inflamed by the warm heads of either faction, and the pretensions somewhere or other so exorbitant, as not to admit the least overtures of accommodation. This quarrel first began, (as I have heard it affirmed by an old dweller in the neighbourhood,) about a small spot of ground, lying and being upon one of the two tops of the hill *Parnassus* ; the highest and largest of which had, it seems, been time out of mind in quiet possession of certain tenants, called the Ancients, and the other was held by the Moderns. But these, disliking their present station, sent certain ambassadors to the Ancients, complaining of a great nuisance ; how the height of that part of *Parnassus* quite spoiled the prospect of theirs, especially towards the *east* ;<sup>1</sup> and therefore, to avoid a war, offered them the choice of this alternative—either that the Ancients would remove themselves and their effects down to the lower summity, which the Moderns would graciously surrender to them, and advance in their place ; or else the said Ancients will give leave to the Moderns to come with shovels and mattocks, and level the

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Temple affects to trace the progress of arts and sciences from east to west. Thus the moderns had only such knowledge of the learning of Chaldæa and Egypt as was conveyed to them through the medium of Grecian and Roman writers. [S.]

said hill as low as they shall think it convenient. To which the Ancients made answer, how little they expected such a message as this from a colony whom they had admitted, out of their own free grace, to so near a neighbourhood. That, as to their own seat, they were aborigines of it, and therefore, to talk with them of a removal or surrender, was a language they did not understand. That if the height of the hill on their side shortened the prospect of the Moderns, it was a disadvantage they could not help; but desired them to consider, whether that injury (if it be any) were not largely recompensed by the shade and shelter it afforded them. That as to the levelling or digging down, it was either folly or ignorance to propose it, if they did, or did not know, how that side of the hill was an entire rock, which would break their tools and hearts, without any damage to itself. That they would therefore advise the Moderns rather to raise their own side of the hill, than dream of pulling down that of the Ancients; to the former of which they would not only give licence, but also largely contribute. All this was rejected by the Moderns with much indignation, who still insisted upon one of the two expedients; and so this difference broke out into a long and obstinate war, maintained on the one part by resolution, and by the courage of certain leaders and allies; but on the other, by the greatness of their number, upon all defeats affording continual recruits. In this quarrel whole rivulets of ink have been exhausted, and the virulence of both parties enormously augmented. Now, it must here be understood, that ink is the great missive weapon in all battles of the learned, which, conveyed through a sort of engine called a quill, infinite numbers of these are darted at the enemy, by the valiant on each side, with equal skill and violence, as if it were an engagement of *porcupines*. This malignant liquor was compounded, by the engineer who invented it, of two ingredients, which are gall and copperas; by its bitterness and venom to suit, in some degree, as well as to foment, the genius of the combatants. And as the *Grecians*, after an engagement, when they could not agree about the victory, were wont to set up trophies on both sides, the beaten party being content to be at the same expense, to keep itself in countenance; (a laudable and ancient custom, happily revived of late, in the art of war;) so the learned,



after a sharp and bloody dispute, do, on both sides, hang out their trophies too, whichever comes by the worst. These trophies have largely inscribed on them the merits of the cause, a full impartial account of such a *battle*, and how the victory fell clearly to the party that set them up. They are known to the world under several names ; as disputes, arguments, rejoinders, brief considerations, answers, replies, remarks, reflections, objections, confutations. For a very few days they are fixed up in all public places, either by themselves or their representatives,<sup>1</sup> for passengers to gaze at ; whence the chiefest and largest are removed to certain magazines they call libraries, there to remain in a quarter purposely assigned them, and thenceforth begin to be called Books of Controversy

In these books is wonderfully instilled and preserved the spirit of each warrior, while he is alive ; and after his death his soul transmigrates there to inform them. This at least is the more common opinion ; but I believe it is with libraries as with other cemeteries, where some philosophers affirm, that a certain spirit, which they call *brutum hominis*, hovers over the monument, till the body is corrupted and turns to dust or to worms, but then vanishes or dissolves : So, we may say, a restless spirit haunts over every book, till dust or worms have seized upon it, which to some may happen in a few days, but to others later ; and, therefore, books of controversy being, of all others, haunted by the most disorderly spirits, have always been confined in a separate lodge from the rest ; and, for fear of a mutual violence against each other, it was thought prudent by our ancestors to bind them to the peace with strong iron chains. Of which invention the original occasion was this—When the works of Scotus first came out, they were carried to a certain library and had lodgings appointed them ; but this author was no sooner settled than he went to visit his master Aristotle ; and there both concerted together to seize Plato by main force, and turn him out from his ancient station among the divines, where he had peaceably dwelt near eight hundred years. The attempt succeeded, and the two usurpers have reigned ever since in his stead : but to maintain quiet

<sup>1</sup> Their title-pages.



for the future, it was decreed, that all *polemics* of the larger size should be held fast with a chain.

By this expedient, the public peace of libraries might certainly have been preserved, if a new species of controversial books had not arose of late years, instinct with a more malignant spirit, from the war above mentioned between the learned, about the higher summit of *Parnassus*.

When these books were first admitted into the public libraries, I remember to have said, upon occasion, to several persons concerned, how I was sure they would create broils wherever they came, unless a world of care were taken ; and therefore I advised, that the champions of each side should be coupled together, or otherwise mixed, that, like the blending of contrary poisons, their malignity might be employed among themselves. And it seems I was neither an ill prophet, nor an ill counsellor ; for it was nothing else but the neglect of this caution which gave occasion to the terrible fight that happened on Friday last, between the ancient and modern books, in the King's Library. Now, because the talk of this battle is so fresh in everybody's mouth, and the expectation of the town so great to be informed in the particulars, I, being possessed of all qualifications requisite in an historian, and retained by neither party, have resolved to comply with the urgent importunity of my friends, by writing down a full impartial account thereof.

The guardian of the regal library,<sup>1</sup> a person of great valour, but chiefly renowned for his humanity,<sup>2</sup> had been a fierce champion for the Moderns ; and, in an engagement upon *Parnassus*, had vowed, with his own hands, to knock down two of the Ancient chiefs,<sup>3</sup> who guarded a small pass on the superior rock ; but, endeavouring to climb up, was cruelly

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bentley, appointed Royal Librarian, 23rd December, 1693, upon the death of his predecessor, Mr. Justell. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> The Honourable Mr. Boyle, in the preface to his edition of Phalaris, says he was refused a manuscript by the library keeper, *pro solita humanitate sua*.

*Ibid.* This was the sparkle which kindled so hot a flame. Dr. Bentley does not quite clear himself of having been a little churlish concerning the manuscript, and even of having expressed an opinion very unworthy of his good sense and learning, that, when collated, it was lessened in value, *and no better than a squeezed orange*. [S.]

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Bentley wrote an appendix to Wotton's "Reflections upon

obstructed by his own unhappy weight, and tendency towards his centre a quality to which those of the Modern party are extreme subject ; for, being light-headed, they have, in speculation, a wonderful agility, and conceive nothing too high for them to mount ; but, in reducing to practice, discover a mighty pressure about their posteriors and their heels. Having thus failed in his design, the disappointed champion bore a cruel rancour to the Ancients, which he resolved to gratify, by shewing all marks of his favour to the books of their adversaries, and lodging them in the fairest apartments ; when, at the same time, whatever book had the boldness to own itself for an advocate of the Ancients, was buried alive in some obscure corner, and threatened, upon the least displeasure, to be turned out of doors. Besides, it so happened, that about this time there was a strange confusion of place among all the books in the library ; for which several reasons were assigned. Some imputed it to a great heap of learned dust, which a perverse wind blew off from a shelf of Moderns, into the keeper's eyes. Others affirmed he had a humour to pick the worms out of the schoolmen, and swallow them fresh and fasting ; whereof some fell upon his spleen, and some climbed up into his head, to the great perturbation of both. And lastly, others maintained, that, by walking much in the dark about the library, he had quite lost the situation of it out of his head ; and, therefore, in replacing his books, he was apt to mistake, and clap *Des Cartes* next to *Aristotle* ; poor *Plato* had got between *Hobbes* and the *Seven Wise Masters*, and *Virgil* was hemmed in with *Dryden* on one side, and *Withers* on the other.

Meanwhile those books that were advocates for the Moderns, chose out one from among them to make a progress through the whole library, examine the number and strength of their party, and concert their affairs. This messenger performed all things very industriously, and brought back with him a list of their forces, in all fifty thousand, consisting chiefly of light-horse, heavy-armed foot, and mercenaries ; whereof the foot were in general but sorrily armed, and

Ancient and Modern Learning," in which he proved the works of *Phalaris* and *Æsop* to be spurious. See preliminary note to "The Battle of the Books." [T. S.]



worse clad ; their horses large, but extremely out of case and heart ; however, some few, by trading among the Ancients, had furnished themselves tolerably enough.

While things were in this ferment, discord grew extremely high ; hot words passed on both sides, and ill blood was plentifully bred. Here a solitary Ancient, squeezed up among a whole shelf of Moderns, offered fairly to dispute the case, and to prove by manifest reason, that the priority was due to them, from long possession ; and in regard of their prudence, antiquity, and, above all, their great merits toward the Moderns. But these denied the premises, and seemed very much to wonder, how the Ancients could pretend to insist upon their antiquity, when it was so plain, (if they went to that,) that the Moderns were much the more ancient<sup>1</sup> of the two. As for any obligations they owed to the Ancients, they renounced them all. "'Tis true ;" said they, "we are informed, some few of our party have been so mean to borrow their subsistence from you ; but the rest, infinitely the greater number, (and especially we French and English,) were so far from stooping to so base an example, that there never passed, till this very hour, six words between us. For our horses were of our own breeding, our arms of our own forging, and our clothes of our own cutting out and sewing." Plato was by chance up on the next shelf, and observing those that spoke to be in the ragged plight mentioned a while ago ; their jades lean and foundered, their weapons of rotten wood, their armour rusty, and nothing but rags underneath ; he laughed loud, and in his pleasant way swore, by G— he believed them.

Now, the Moderns had not proceeded in their late negotiation with secrecy enough to escape the notice of the enemy. For those advocates, who had begun the quarrel by setting first on foot the dispute of precedency, talked so loud of coming to a battle, that Temple happened to overhear them, and gave immediate intelligence to the Ancients, who, thereupon, drew up their scattered troops together, resolving to act upon the defensive ; upon which, several of the Moderns fled over to their party, and among the rest Temple himself. This Temple, having been educated and long con-

<sup>1</sup> According to the modern paradox.



versed among the Ancients, was, of all the Moderns, their greatest favourite, and became their greatest champion.

Things were at this crisis, when a material accident fell out. For, upon the highest corner of a large window, there dwelt a certain spider, swollen up to the first magnitude by the destruction of infinite numbers of flies, whose spoils lay scattered before the gates of his palace, like human bones before the cave of some giant. The avenues to his castle were guarded with turnpikes and palisadoes, all after the modern way of fortification.<sup>1</sup> After you had passed several courts, you came to the centre, wherein you might behold the constable himself in his own lodgings, which had windows fronting to each avenue, and ports to sally out, upon all occasions of prey or defence. In this mansion he had for some time dwelt in peace and plenty, without danger to his person by swallows from above, or to his palace, by brooms from below ; when it was the pleasure of fortune to conduct thither a wandering bee, to whose curiosity a broken pane in the glass had discovered itself, and in he went ; where, expatiating a while, he at last happened to alight upon one of the outward walls of the spider's citadel ; which, yielding to the unequal weight, sunk down to the very foundation. Thrice he endeavoured to force his passage, and thrice the centre shook. The spider within, feeling the terrible convulsion, supposed at first that nature was approaching to her final dissolution ; or else, that Beelzebub,<sup>2</sup> with all his legions, was come to revenge the death of many thousands of his subjects, whom his enemy had slain and devoured. However, he at length valiantly resolved to issue forth, and meet his fate. Meanwhile the bee had acquitted himself of his toils, and, posted securely at some distance, was employed in cleansing his wings, and disengaging them from the ragged remnants of the cobweb. By this time the spider was adventured out, when, beholding the chasms, the ruins, and dilapidations of his fortress, he was very near at his wit's end ; he stormed and swore like a madman, and swelled till he

<sup>1</sup> Fortification was one of the arts, upon the improvement of which the argument in favour of the moderns was founded by their advocates. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> Supposed to be the tutelar deity of the flies. [S.]

was ready to burst. At length, casting his eye upon the bee, and wisely gathering causes from events, (for they knew each other by sight): "A plague split you," said he, "for a giddy son of a whore. Is it you, with a vengeance, that have made this litter here? Could not you look before you, and be d—d? Do you think I have nothing else to do (in the devil's name) but to mend and repair after your arse?"—"Good words, friend," said the bee, (having now pruned himself, and being disposed to droll,) "I'll give you my hand and word to come near your kennel no more; I was never in such a confounded pickle since I was born."—"Sirrah," replied the spider, "if it were not for breaking an old custom in our family, never to stir abroad against an enemy, I should come and teach you better manners."—"I pray have patience," said the bee, "or you'll spend your substance, and, for aught I see, you may stand in need of it all, toward the repair of your house."—"Rogue, rogue," replied the spider, "yet, methinks you should have more respect to a person, whom all the world allows to be so much your betters."—"By my troth," said the bee, "the comparison will amount to a very good jest, and you will do me a favour to let me know the reasons that all the world is pleased to use in so hopeful a dispute." At this the spider, having swelled himself into the size and posture of a disputant, began his argument in the true spirit of controversy, with resolution to be heartily scurrilous and angry, to urge on his own reasons, without the least regard to the answers or objections of his opposite, and fully predetermined in his mind against all conviction.

"Not to disparage myself," said he, "by the comparison with such a rascal, what art thou but a vagabond without house or home, without stock or inheritance? Born to no possession of your own, but a pair of wings and a drone-pipe. Your livelihood is a universal plunder upon nature; a free-booter over fields and gardens; and, for the sake of stealing, will rob a nettle as easily as a violet. Whereas I am a domestic animal, furnished with a native stock within myself. This large castle (to shew my improvements in the mathematics) is all built with my own hands, and the materials extracted altogether out of my own person."

"I am glad," answered the bee, "to hear you grant at



least that I am come honestly by my wings and my voice ; for then, it seems, I am obliged to Heaven alone for my flights and my music ; and Providence would never have bestowed on me two such gifts, without designing them for the noblest ends. I visit indeed all the flowers and blossoms of the field and garden ; but whatever I collect thence, enriches myself, without the least injury to their beauty, their smell, or their taste. Now, for you and your skill in architecture, and other mathematics, I have little to say : In that building of yours there might, for aught I know, have been labour and method enough ; but, by woful experience for us both, it is plain, the materials are naught, and I hope you will henceforth take warning, and consider duration and matter, as well as method and art. You boast, indeed, of being obliged to no other creature, but of drawing and spinning out all from yourself ; that is to say, if we may judge of the liquor in the vessel by what issues out, you possess a good plentiful store of dirt and poison in your breast ; and, though I would by no means lessen or disparage your genuine stock of either, yet, I doubt you are somewhat obliged, for an increase of both, to a little foreign assistance. Your inherent portion of dirt does not fail of acquisitions, by sweepings exhaled from below ; and one insect furnishes you with a share of poison to destroy another. So that, in short, the question comes all to this—Whether is the nobler being of the two, that which, by a lazy contemplation of four inches round, by an overweening pride, feeding and engendering on itself, turns all into excrement and venom, producing nothing at all, but flybane and a cobweb ; or that which, by a universal range, with long search, much study, true judgment, and distinction of things, brings home honey and wax."

This dispute was managed with such eagerness, clamour, and warmth, that the two parties of books, in arms below, stood silent a while, waiting in suspense what would be the issue, which was not long undetermined : For the bee, grown impatient at so much loss of time, fled straight away to a bed of roses, without looking for a reply, and left the spider, like an orator, collected in himself, and just prepared to burst out.

It happened upon this emergency, that Æsop broke silence



first. He had been of late most barbarously treated by a strange effect of the regent's humanity, who <sup>1</sup> had tore off his title-page, sorely defaced one half of his leaves, and chained them fast among a shelf of Moderns. Where, soon discovering how high the quarrel was likely to proceed, he tried all his arts, and turned himself to a thousand forms. At length, in the borrowed shape of an ass, the regent mistook him for a Modern ; by which means he had time and opportunity to escape to the Ancients, just when the spider and the bee were entering into their contest, to which he gave his attention with a world of pleasure ; and when it was ended, swore in the loudest key, that in all his life he had never known two cases so parallel and adapt to each other, as that in the window, and this upon the shelves. "The disputants," said he, "have admirably managed the dispute between them, have taken in the full strength of all that is to be said on both sides, and exhausted the substance of every argument *pro* and *con*. It is but to adjust the reasonings of both to the present quarrel, then to compare and apply the labours and fruits of each, as the bee has learnedly deduced them, and we shall find the conclusion fall plain and close upon the Moderns and us. For, pray, gentlemen, was ever anything so modern as the spider in his air, his turns, and his paradoxes? He argues in the behalf of you his brethren and himself, with many boastings of his native stock and great genius ; that he spins and spits wholly from himself, and scorns to own any obligation or assistance from without. Then he displays to you his great skill in architecture, and improvement in the mathematics. To all this the bee, as an advocate, retained by us the Ancients, thinks fit to answer—that, if one may judge of the great genius or inventions of the Moderns by what they have produced, you will hardly have countenance to bear you out, in boasting of either. Erect your schemes with as much method and skill as you please ; yet if the materials be nothing but dirt, spun out of your own entrails (the guts of modern brains) the edifice will conclude at last in a cobweb, the duration of which, like that of other spiders' webs, may be imputed to their being for-

<sup>1</sup> Bentley, who denied the antiquity of Æsop, and the authenticity of the fables ascribed to him, which he supposed to have been composed by Maximus Planudes. [S.]

gotten, or neglected, or hid in a corner. For anything else of genuine that the Moderns may pretend to, I cannot recollect ; unless it be a large vein of wrangling and satire, much of a nature and substance with the spider's poison ; which, however they pretend to spit wholly out of themselves, is improved by the same arts, by feeding upon the insects and vermin of the age. As for us the Ancients, we are content, with the bee, to pretend to nothing of our own, beyond our wings and our voice, that is to say, our flights and our language. For the rest, whatever we have got, has been by infinite labour and search, and ranging through every corner of nature ; the difference is, that, instead of dirt and poison, we have rather chosen to fill our hives with honey and wax, thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light."

'Tis wonderful to conceive the tumult arisen among the books, upon the close of this long descant of Æsop ; both parties took the hint, and heightened their animosities so on a sudden, that they resolved it should come to a battle. Immediately the two main bodies withdrew, under their several ensigns, to the farthest parts of the library, and there entered into cabals and consults upon the present emergency. The Moderns were in very warm debates upon the choice of their leaders ; and nothing less than the fear impending from the enemies, could have kept them from mutinies upon this occasion. The difference was greatest among the horse, where every private trooper pretended to the chief command, from Tasso and Milton, to Dryden and Withers. The light-horse<sup>1</sup> were commanded by Cowley and Despreaux.<sup>2</sup> There came the bowmen<sup>3</sup> under their valiant leaders, Des Cartes, Gassendi, and Hobbes ; whose strength was such, that they could shoot their arrows beyond the atmosphere, never to fall down again, but turn, like that of Evander, into meteors ; or, like the cannon-ball, into stars. Paracelsus brought a squadron of stink-pot-flingers from the snowy mountains of Rhætia. There came a vast body of dragoons, of different

<sup>1</sup> The epic poets were presented as full-armed horsemen ; the lyrical bards as light horse. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> More commonly known by the name of Boileau. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> The philosophers, whether physical or metaphysical, are thus classed. [S.]



nations, under the leading of Harvey,<sup>1</sup> their great aga : part armed with scythes, the weapons of death ; part with lances and long knives, all steeped in poison ; part shot bullets of a most malignant nature, and used white powder, which infallibly killed without report. There came several bodies of heavy-armed foot, all mercenaries, under the ensigns of Guicciardini, Davila, Polydore Virgil, Buchanan, Mariana, Cambden,<sup>2</sup> and others. The engineers were commanded by Regiomontanus and Wilkins.<sup>3</sup> The rest were a confused multitude, led by Scotus, Aquinas, and Bellarmine ;<sup>4</sup> of mighty bulk and stature, but without either arms, courage, or discipline. In the last place, came infinite swarms of calones, a disorderly rout led by L'Estrange ; rogues and ragamuffins, that follow the camp for nothing but the plunder, all without coats<sup>5</sup> to cover them.

The army of the Ancients was much fewer in number ; Homer led the horse, and Pindar the light-horse ; Euclid was

<sup>1</sup> The discoverer of the circulation of the blood. In his "Essay upon Ancient and Modern Learning" Sir William Temple considered the discovery of the circulation of the blood to have made no change in "the practice of physic" and to "have been of little use to the world." He couples this discovery with that of Copernicus, and is inclined to the belief that both are "derived from old fountains." [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Francesco Guicciardini (1482-1540) wrote the famous "History of Italy." Davila (1576-1623) wrote the "History of the Civil War in France." Mariana (1537-1624), a Spanish historian, who also published a treatise "De rege et regis institutione," in which he endeavoured to defend the assassination of Henry III. Cambden = Camden, the antiquarian. Polydore Vergil, born at Urbino, resided in England, as the Pope's collector of Peter's pence, for fifty years. He was Arch-deacon of Wells in 1508. His edition of Gildas was published in 1525 ; but he is better known for his History of England in Latin, first issued at Basle in 1534. He died at Urbino in 1555. George Buchanan (1506-1582) wrote a "History of Scotland," which appeared in the same year in which he died. He is also well known for his elegant Latin poems. [T. S.]

<sup>3</sup> Regiomontanus (1436-1476), a celebrated German astronomer. His real name was Johann Müller. He also established a printing office in Nuremberg. John Wilkins, D.D., afterwards Bishop of Chester (1614-1672), author of "The Discovery of a New World, or a Discourse on the World in the Moon." He also wrote "Mathematical Magic" and other contributions to the Transactions of the Royal Society. [T. S.]

<sup>4</sup> There is nothing in Bellarmine's (1542-1621) works to connect him with Scotus and Aquinas, as Swift does here ; unless it be that he was a staunch defender of the Roman Catholic Church. [T. S.]

<sup>5</sup> These are pamphlets, which are not bound or covered.



chief engineer; Plato and Aristotle commanded the bowmen; Herodotus and Livy the foot; Hippocrates the dragoons. The allies, led by Vossius<sup>1</sup> and Temple, brought up the rear.

All things violently tending to a decisive battle, Fame, who much frequented, and had a large apartment formerly assigned her in the regal library, fled up straight to Jupiter, to whom she delivered a faithful account of all that had passed between the two parties below; (for, among the gods, she always tells truth). Jove, in great concern, convokes a council in the Milky Way. The senate assembled, he declares the occasion of convening them; a bloody battle just impendent between two mighty armies of Ancient and Modern creatures, called books, wherein the celestial interest was but too deeply concerned. Momus,<sup>2</sup> the patron of the Moderns, made an excellent speech in their favour, which was answered by Pallas, the protectress of the Ancients. The assembly was divided in their affections; when Jupiter commanded the book of fate to be laid before him. Immediately were brought by Mercury three large volumes in folio, containing memoirs of all things past, present, and to come. The clasps were of silver double gilt; the covers of celestial turkey leather; and the paper such as here on earth might pass almost for vellum. Jupiter, having silently read the decree, would communicate the import to none, but presently shut up the book.

Without the doors of this assembly, there attended a vast number of light, nimble gods, menial servants to Jupiter: these are his ministering instruments in all affairs below. They travel in a caravan, more or less together, and are fastened to each other, like a link of galley-slaves, by a light chain, which passes from them to Jupiter's great toe; and yet, in receiving or delivering a message, they may never approach above the lowest step of his throne, where he and they whisper to each other, through a large hollow trunk.

<sup>1</sup> John Gerard Vossius (1577-1649), head of the Leyden divinity college, fell under censure for his "History of Pelagianism," and retracted. The same work, however, procured for him the Oxford LL.D. and a Canterbury prebend. He was a profound classical scholar. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Momus is named as the presiding deity of the moderns, probably on account of the superiority claimed for them in works of humour. [S.]

These deities are called by mortal men accidents or events ; but the gods call them second causes. Jupiter having delivered his message to a certain number of these divinities, they flew immediately down to the pinnacle of the regal library, and, consulting a few minutes, entered unseen, and disposed the parties according to their orders.

Meanwhile, Momus, fearing the worst, and calling to mind an ancient prophecy, which bore no very good face to his children the Moderns, bent his flight to the region of a malignant deity, called Criticism. She dwelt on the top of a snowy mountain in Nova Zembla ; there Momus found her extended in her den, upon the spoils of numberless volumes, half devoured. At her right hand sat Ignorance, her father and husband, blind with age ; at her left, Pride, her mother, dressing her up in the scraps of paper herself had torn. There was Opinion, her sister, light of foot, hood-winked, and headstrong, yet giddy, and perpetually turning. About her played her children, Noise and Impudence, Dulness and Vanity, Positiveness, Pedantry, and Ill-manners. The goddess herself had claws like a cat ; her head, and ears, and voice, resembled those of an ass ; her teeth fallen out before, her eyes turned inward, as if she looked only upon herself ; her diet was the overflowing of her own gall ; her spleen was so large, as to stand prominent, like a dug of the first rate ; nor wanted excrescencies in form of teats, at which a crew of ugly monsters were greedily sucking ; and, what is wonderful to conceive, the bulk of spleen increased faster than the sucking could diminish it. "Goddess," said Momus, "can you sit idly here while our devout worshippers, the Moderns, are this minute entering into a cruel battle, and perhaps now lying under the swords of their enemies ? Who then hereafter will ever sacrifice, or build altars, to our divinities ? Haste, therefore, to the British Isle, and, if possible, prevent their destruction ; while I make factions among the gods, and gain them over to our party."

Momus, having thus delivered himself, staid not for an answer, but left the goddess to her own resentment. Up she rose in a rage, and, as it is the form upon such occasions, began a soliloquy : "'Tis I," (said she,) "who give wisdom to infants and idiots ; by me, children grow wiser than their parents ; by me, beaux become politicians, and school-boys



judges of philosophy ; by me, sophisters debate, and conclude upon the depths of knowledge ; and coffeehouse wits, instinct by me, can correct an author's style, and display his minutest errors, without understanding a syllable of his matter, or his language. By me, striplings spend their judgment, as they do their estate, before it comes into their hands. 'Tis I who have deposed wit and knowledge from their empire over poetry, and advanced myself in their stead. And shall a few upstart Ancients dare oppose me?—But come, my aged parent, and you, my children dear, and thou, my beauteous sister ; let us ascend my chariot, and haste to assist our devout Moderns, who are now sacrificing to us a hecatomb, as I perceive by that grateful smell, which from thence reaches my nostrils."

The goddess and her train having mounted the chariot, which was drawn by tame geese, flew over infinite regions, shedding her influence in due places, till at length she arrived at her beloved island of Britain ; but, in hovering over its metropolis, what blessings did she not let fall upon her seminaries of Gresham and Covent-Garden ! And now she reached the fatal plain of St. James's Library, at what time the two armies were upon the point to engage ; where, entering with all her caravan unseen, and landing upon a case of shelves, now desert, but once inhabited by a colony of virtuosoes, she staid a while to observe the posture of both armies.

But here the tender cares of a mother began to fill her thoughts, and move in her breast. For, at the head of a troop of Modern Bowmen, she cast her eyes upon her son Wotton ; to whom the fates had assigned a very short thread. Wotton, a young hero, whom an unknown father of mortal race begot by stolen embraces with this goddess. He was the darling of his mother above all her children, and she resolved to go and comfort him. But first, according to the good old custom of deities, she cast about to change her shape, for fear the divinity of her countenance might dazzle his mortal sight, and overcharge the rest of his senses. She therefore gathered up her person into an octavo compass ; her body grew white and arid, and split in pieces with dryness ; the thick turned into pasteboard, and the thin into paper ; upon which her parents and children artfully strewed



a black juice, or decoction of gall and soot, in form of letters ; her head, and voice, and spleen, kept their primitive form, and that which before was a cover of skin, did still continue so. In which guise she marched on towards the Moderns, undistinguishable in shape and dress from the divine Bentley, Wotton's dearest friend. "Brave Wotton," said the goddess, "why do our troops stand idle here, to spend their present vigour, and opportunity of this day? Away, let us haste to the generals, and advise to give the onset immediately." Having spoke thus, she took the ugliest of her monsters, full glutted from her spleen, and flung it invisibly into his mouth, which, flying straight up into his head, squeezed out his eye-balls, gave him a distorted look, and half overturned his brain. Then she privately ordered two of her beloved children, Dulness and Ill-Manners, closely to attend his person in all encounters. Having thus accoutred him, she vanished in a mist, and the hero perceived it was the goddess his mother.

The destined hour of fate being now arrived, the fight began ; whereof, before I dare adventure to make a particular description, I must, after the example of other authors, petition for a hundred tongues, and mouths, and hands, and pens, which would all be too little to perform so immense a work. Say, goddess, that presidest over History, who it was that first advanced in the field of battle ! Paracelsus, at the head of his dragoons, observing Galen in the adverse wing, darted his javelin with a mighty force, which the brave Ancient received upon his shield, the point breaking in the second fold.

*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	<i>Hic pauca</i>	
*	*	*	*	*	*	<i>desunt.</i>	
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

They bore the wounded aga<sup>1</sup> on their shields to his chariot

*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Desunt</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>nonnulla.</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Then Aristotle, observing Bacon<sup>2</sup> advance with a furious

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Harvey.

<sup>2</sup> The author, in naming Bacon, does a piece of justice to modern philosophy which Temple had omitted. Neither Swift nor Temple mention the discoveries of Newton, though the "Principia" were published in 1657. [S.]

mien, drew his bow to the head, and let fly his arrow, which missed the valiant Modern, and went whizzing over his head. But Des Cartes it hit ; the steel point quickly found a defect in his head-piece ; it pierced the leather and the pasteboard, and went in at his right eye. The torture of the pain whirled the valiant bowman round, till death, like a star of superior influence, drew him into his own vortex.<sup>1</sup>

*Ingens hiatus* \* \* \* \* \*

*hic in MS.* \* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* when Homer appeared at the head of the cavalry, mounted on a furious horse, with difficulty managed by the rider himself, but which no other mortal durst approach : he rode among the enemy's ranks, and bore down all before him. Say, goddess, whom he slew first, and whom he slew last ! First, Gondibert<sup>2</sup> advanced against him, clad in heavy armour, and mounted on a staid, sober gelding, not so famed for his speed as his docility in kneeling, whenever his rider would mount or alight. He had made a vow to Pallas, that he would never leave the field till he had spoiled Homer of his armour : Madman, who had never once seen the wearer, nor understood his strength ! Him Homer overthrew, horse and man, to the ground, there to be trampled and choked in the dirt. Then, with a long spear, he slew Denham,<sup>3</sup> a stout Modern, who from his father's side derived his lineage from Apollo, but his mother was of mortal race. He fell, and bit the earth. The celestial part Apollo took, and made it a star ; but the terrestrial lay wallowing upon the ground. Then Homer slew Wesley,<sup>4</sup> with a kick of his horse's heel ; he took Perrault by mighty

<sup>1</sup> Referring to Descartes' Theory of Vortices. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> A heroic poem by Sir William Davenant, in rhymed quatrains. It was published in 1650, and although wearisome reading to a reader of the present day, was considered at the time an excellent performance. [T. S.]

<sup>3</sup> Sir John Denham's poems are very unequal, extremely good and very indifferent ; so that his detractors said he was not the real author of "Cooper's Hill." [H.] Denham was born at Dublin 1615, and died in 1668. He was buried in Westminster Abbey. His best work is his "Cooper's Hill." [T. S.]

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Wesley, who wrote the Life of Christ, in verse, &c. [S.] This is Samuel Wesley (1662-1735), the father of John and Charles Wesley. He also published a volume of poems called "Maggots." [T. S.]



force out of his saddle, then hurled him at Fontenelle, with the same blow dashing out both their brains.

On the left wing of the horse, Virgil appeared, in shining armour, completely fitted to his body : He was mounted on a dapple-gray steed, the slowness of whose pace was an effect of the highest mettle and vigour. He cast his eye on the adverse wing, with a desire to find an object worthy of his valour, when, behold, upon a sorrel gelding of a monstrous size, appeared a foe, issuing from among the thickest of the enemy's squadrons ; but his speed was less than his noise ; for his horse, old and lean, spent the dregs of his strength in a high trot, which, though it made slow advances, yet caused a loud clashing of his armour, terrible to hear. The two cavaliers had now approached within the throw of a lance, when the stranger desired a parley, and, lifting up the vizard of his helmet, a face hardly appeared from within, which, after a pause, was known for that of the renowned Dryden. The brave Ancient suddenly started, as one possessed with surprise and disappointment together ; for the helmet was nine times too large for the head, which appeared situate far in the hinder part, even like the lady in a lobster, or like a mouse under a canopy of state, or like a shrivelled beau, from within the penthouse of a modern periwig ; and the voice was suited to the visage, sounding weak and remote. Dryden, in a long harangue, soothed up the good Ancient ; called him father, and, by a large deduction of genealogies, made it plainly appear that they were nearly related.<sup>1</sup> Then he humbly proposed an exchange of armour, as a lasting mark of hospitality between them. Virgil consented, (for the goddess Diffidence came unseen, and cast a mist before his eyes,) though his was of gold,<sup>2</sup> and cost a hundred beeves, the other's but of rusty iron. However, this glittering armour became the Modern yet worse than his own. Then they agreed to exchange horses ; but, when it came to the trial, Dryden was afraid, and utterly unable to mount. \* \*

*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	<i>Alter hiatus</i>	
*	*	*	*	*	*	<i>in MS.</i>	
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the Preliminary Dissertations in Dryden's Virgil. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* Homer. [*Original.*]



Lucan appeared upon a fiery horse of admirable shape, but headstrong, bearing the rider where he list over the field; he made a mighty slaughter among the enemy's horse; which destruction to stop, Blackmore,<sup>1</sup> a famous Modern, (but one of the mercenaries,) strenuously opposed himself, and darted his javelin with a strong hand, which, falling short of its mark, struck deep in the earth. Then Lucan threw a lance; but Æsculapius came unseen, and turned off the point. "Brave Modern," said Lucan, "I perceive some god protects you,<sup>2</sup> for never did my arm so deceive me before; but what mortal can contend with a god? Therefore, let us fight no longer, but present gifts to each other." Lucan then bestowed the Modern a pair of spurs, and Blackmore gave Lucan a bridle. \*

*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Pauca de-</i>	*	*	*	*	*
<i>sunt.</i>	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*

Creech<sup>3</sup>—but the goddess Dulness took a cloud, formed into the shape of Horace, armed and mounted, and placed in a flying posture before him. Glad was the cavalier to begin a combat with a flying foe, and pursued the image, threatening aloud, till at last it lead him to the peaceful bower of his father, Ogleby,<sup>4</sup> by whom he was disarmed, and assigned to his repose.

Then Pindar slew —, and —, Oldham,<sup>5</sup> and —, and Afra

<sup>1</sup> Sir Richard Blackmore, M.D. (c. 1650-1729), was a most voluminous writer. His "Prince Arthur" is a big folio, as is also his "Paraphrase on the Book of Job." Perhaps his best work is "Creation, a Poem." He wrote also on medical subjects; but, indeed, a list of his writings would make a rather lengthy note. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> His skill as a physician atoned for his dulness as a poet. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Creech (born in 1659) translated Horace in 1684. He hanged himself at Oxford in 1700. [T. S.]

<sup>4</sup> John Ogilby or Ogleby was born in 1600, at Edinburgh. Starting as a teacher of dancing, he went over to Ireland and became deputy master of the revels. He built a theatre in Dublin, but lost all in the rebellion. Settling at Cambridge he published a translation of Virgil. At the age of fifty-four he began to learn Greek, and in 1660 issued a translation of Homer's Iliad. The Odyssey appeared in 1665. He again became master of the revels in Ireland, and again built a theatre. Finally, he set up a printing-house and issued several sumptuous volumes. He died in 1676. [T. S.]

<sup>5</sup> John Oldham (born 1653, died 1683) wrote satires on the Jesuits. His collected works were published in 3 vols. 12mo. in 1770. [T. S.]

the Amazon,<sup>1</sup> light of foot ; never advancing in a direct line, but wheeling with incredible agility and force, he made a terrible slaughter among the enemy's light horse. Him when Cowley<sup>2</sup> observed, his generous heart burnt within him, and he advanced against the fierce Ancient, imitating his address, his pace, and career, as well as the vigour of his horse and his own skill would allow. When the two cavaliers had approached within the length of three javelins, first Cowley threw a lance, which missed Pindar, and, passing into the enemy's ranks, fell ineffectual to the ground. Then Pindar darted a javelin so large and weighty, that scarce a dozen cavaliers, as cavaliers are in our degenerate days, could raise it from the ground ; yet he threw it with ease, and it went, by an unerring hand, singing through the air ; nor could the Modern have avoided present death, if he had not luckily opposed the shield, that had been given him by Venus.<sup>3</sup> And now both heroes drew their swords ; but the Modern was so aghast and disordered, that he knew not where he was ; his shield dropped from his hands ; thrice he fled, and thrice he could not escape. At last he turned, and lifting up his hand in the posture of a suppliant : "Godlike Pindar," said he, "spare my life, and possess my horse with these arms, beside the ransom which my friends will give when they hear I am alive, and your prisoner." "Dog !" said Pindar, "let your ransom stay with your friends ; but your carcass shall be left for the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field." With that he raised his sword, and, with a mighty stroke, cleft the wretched Modern in twain, the sword pursuing the blow ; and one half lay panting on the ground, to be trod in pieces by the horses' feet ; the other half was borne by the frightened steed through the field. This Venus<sup>4</sup> took, washed it seven times in ambrosia, then struck it thrice with a sprig of amarant ; upon which the leather grew round and soft, and the leaves turned into

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Aphra Behn, novelist and dramatist (died 1689). [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Abraham Cowley, poet, born 1618, died at Chertsey 1667, author of "Love's Riddle," "The Puritan and the Papist," &c. A strong adherent of King Charles I., he was neglected at the Restoration. [T. S.]

<sup>3</sup> His poem called "The Mistress." [H.]

<sup>4</sup> I do not approve the author's judgment in this, for I think Cowley's "Pindarics" are much preferable to his "Mistress."



feathers, and being gilded before, continued gilded still ; so it became a dove, and she harnessed it to her chariot. \*

*	*	*	*	*			
*	*	*	*	*			
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

*Hiatus valde deflendus in MS.*

Day being far spent, and the numerous forces of the Moderns half inclining to a retreat, there issued forth from a squadron of their heavy-armed foot, a captain, The Episode whose name was Bentley, the most deformed of of Bentley all the Moderns ; tall, but without shape or and Wotton. comeliness ; large, but without strength or proportion. His armour was patched up of a thousand incoherent pieces, and the sound of it, as he marched, was loud and dry, like that made by the fall of a sheet of lead, which an Etesian wind blows suddenly down from the roof of some steeple. His helmet was of old rusty iron, but the vizard was brass, which, tainted by his breath, corrupted into copperas, nor wanted gall from the same fountain ; so that, whenever provoked by anger or labour, an atramentous quality, of most malignant nature, was seen to distil from his lips. In his right hand he grasped a flail, and (that he might never be unprovided of an offensive weapon) a vessel full of ordure in his left.<sup>1</sup> Thus completely armed, he advanced with a slow and heavy pace where the Modern chiefs were holding a consult upon the sum of things ; who, as he came onwards, laughed to behold his crooked leg and hump shoulder, which his boot and armour, vainly endeavouring to hide, were forced to comply with and expose. The generals made use of him for his talent of railing, which, kept within government, proved frequently of great service to their cause, but, at other times, did more mischief than good ; for, at the least touch of offence, and often without any at all, he would, like a wounded elephant, convert it against his leaders. Such, at this juncture, was the disposition of Bentley ; grieved to see the enemy prevail, and dissatisfied with everybody's conduct but his own. He humbly gave the Modern generals to understand, that he conceived, with great submission, that they were all a pack of rogues, and fools, and sons of whores, and d—d cowards, and confounded loggerheads, and illiterate

<sup>1</sup> The person here spoken of is famous for letting fly at everybody without distinction, and using mean and foul scurrilities.



whelps, and nonsensical scoundrels ; that, if himself had been constituted general, those presumptuous dogs,<sup>1</sup> the Ancients, would, long before this, have been beaten out of the field. "You," said he, "sit here idle ; but when I, or any other valiant Modern, kill an enemy, you are sure to seize the spoil. But I will not march one foot against the foe till you all swear to me, that whomsoever I take or kill, his arms I shall quietly possess." Bentley having spoken thus, Scaliger, bestowing him a sour look : "Miscreant prater !" said he, "eloquent only in thine own eyes, thou railest without wit, or truth, or discretion. The malignity of thy temper perverteth nature ; thy learning makes thee more barbarous, thy study of humanity more inhuman ; thy converse among poets, more grovelling, miry, and dull. All arts of civilizing others render thee rude and untractable ; courts have taught thee ill manners, and polite conversation has finished thee a pedant. Besides, a greater coward burdeneth not the army. But never despond ; I pass my word, whatever spoil thou takest shall certainly be thy own, though, I hope, that vile carcass will first become a prey to kites and worms."

Bentley durst not reply, but, half choked with spleen and rage, withdrew, in full resolution of performing some great achievement. With him, for his aid and companion, he took his beloved Wotton ; resolving, by policy or surprise, to attempt some neglected quarter of the Ancients' army. They began their march over carcasses of their slaughtered friends ; then to the right of their own forces ; then wheeled northward, till they came to Aldrovandus's tomb,<sup>2</sup> which they passed on the side of the declining sun. And now they arrived, with fear, toward the enemy's out-guards ; looking about, if haply they might spy the quarters of the wounded, or some straggling sleepers, unarmed, and remote from the rest. As when two mongrel curs, whom native greediness and domestic want provoke and join in partnership, though fearful, nightly to invade the folds of some rich grazier, they

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Homer. de Thersite.

<sup>2</sup> Ulysses Aldrovandi of Bologna (1522-1607) spent sixty years of his life in researches for his work on natural history. Poor, blind, and ruined in health, he died before his great labour was published. It was issued in folios after his death, and Swift aptly refers to it as his tomb. [T. S.]

with tails depressed, and lolling tongues, creep soft and slow ; meanwhile, the conscious moon, now in her zenith, on their guilty heads darts perpendicular rays ; nor dare they bark, though much provoked at her refulgent visage, whether seen in puddle by reflection, or in sphere direct ; but one surveys the region round, while the other scouts the plain, if haply to discover, at distance from the flock, some carcass half devoured, the refuse of gorged wolves, or ominous ravens. So marched this lovely, loving pair of friends, nor with less fear and circumspection, when, at a distance, they might perceive two shining suits of armour hanging upon an oak, and the owners not far off, in a profound sleep. The two friends drew lots, and the pursuing of this adventure fell to Bentley ; on he went, and, in his van, Confusion and Amaze, while Horror and Affright brought up the rear. As he came near, behold two heroes of the Ancients' army, Phalaris and Æsop, lay fast asleep : Bentley would fain have dispatched them both, and, stealing close, aimed his flail at Phalaris's breast.<sup>1</sup> But then the goddess Affright interposing, caught the Modern in her icy arms, and dragged him from the danger she foresaw ; for both the dormant heroes happened to turn at the same instant, though soundly sleeping, and busy in a dream. For Phalaris<sup>2</sup> was just that minute dreaming how a most vile poetaster had lampooned him, and how he had got him roaring in his bull. And Æsop dreamed, that, as he and the Ancient chiefs were lying on the ground, a wild ass broke loose, ran about, trampling and kicking, and dunging in their faces. Bentley, leaving the two heroes asleep, seized on both their armours, and withdrew in quest of his darling Wotton.

He, in the meantime, had wandered long in search of some enterprize, till at length he arrived at a small rivulet, that issued from a fountain hard by, called, in the language of mortal men, Helicon. Here he stopped, and, parched with

<sup>1</sup> Bentley united the question concerning Phalaris with the debate about ancient and modern learning, in a Proemium, as he called it, addressed to Wotton, and levelled against Sir William Temple, being the *telum imbellè* which he is presently represented in the text as launching against that ally of the ancient cause. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> This is according to Homer, who tells the dreams of those who were killed in their sleep.



thirst, resolved to allay it in this limpid stream. Thrice with profane hands he essayed to raise the water to his lips, and thrice it slipped all through his fingers. Then he stooped prone on his breast, but, ere his mouth had kissed the liquid crystal, Apollo came, and in the channel held his shield betwixt the Modern and the fountain, so that he drew up nothing but mud. For, although no fountain on earth can compare with the clearness of Helicon, yet there lies at bottom a thick sediment of slime and mud; for so Apollo begged of Jupiter, as a punishment to those who durst attempt to taste it with unhallowed lips, and for a lesson to all not to draw too deep or far from the spring.

At the fountain-head, Wotton discerned two heroes; the one he could not distinguish, but the other was soon known for Temple, general of the allies to the Ancients. His back was turned, and he was employed in drinking large draughts in his helmet from the fountain, where he had withdrawn himself to rest from the toils of the war. Wotton observing him, with quaking knees, and trembling hands, spoke thus to himself: "O that I could kill this destroyer of our army, what renown should I purchase among the chiefs! But to issue out against him, man against man, shield against shield, and lance against lance,<sup>1</sup> what Modern of us dare? For he fights like a god, and Pallas, or Apollo, are ever at his elbow. But, O mother! if what Fame reports be true, that I am the son of so great a goddess, grant me to hit Temple with this lance, that the stroke may send him to hell, and that I may return in safety and triumph, laden with his spoils." The first part of this prayer, the gods granted at the intercession of his mother and of Momus; but the rest, by a perverse wind sent from Fate was scattered in the air. Then Wotton grasped his lance, and, brandishing it thrice over his head, darted it with all his might, the goddess, his mother, at the same time, adding strength to his arm. Away the lance went hissing, and reached even to the belt of the averted Ancient, upon which lightly grazing, it fell to the ground. Temple neither felt the weapon touch upon him, nor heard it fall; and Wotton might have escaped to his army, with the honour of having remitted his lance

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Homer.



against so great a leader, unrevenged. But Apollo, enraged that a javelin, flung by the assistance of so foul a goddess, should pollute his fountain, put on the shape of ———, and softly came to young Boyle, who then accompanied Temple : He pointed first to the lance, then to the distant Modern that flung it, and commanded the young hero to take immediate revenge.<sup>1</sup> Boyle, clad in a suit of armour, which had been given him by all the gods,<sup>2</sup> immediately advanced against the trembling foe, who now fled before him. As a young lion in the Libyan plains, or Araby desert, sent by his aged sire to hunt for prey, or health, or exercise, he scours along, wishing to meet some tiger from the mountains, or a furious boar ; if chance, a wild ass, with brayings importune, affronts his ear, the generous beast, though loathing to distain his claws with blood so vile, yet, much provoked at the offensive noise which Echo, foolish nymph, like her ill-judging sex, repeats much louder, and with more delight than Philomela's song, he vindicates the honour of the forest, and hunts the noisy long-eared animal. So Wotton fled, so Boyle pursued. But Wotton, heavy-armed, and slow of foot, began to slack his course, when his lover, Bentley, appeared, returning laden with the spoils of the two sleeping Ancients. Boyle observed him well, and soon discovering the helmet and shield of Phalaris, his friend, both which he had lately with his own hands new polished and gilded ;<sup>3</sup> Rage sparkled in his eyes, and, leaving his pursuit after Wotton, he furiously rushed on against this new approacher. Fain would he be revenged on both ; but both now fled different ways ; and, as a woman in a little house that gets a painful livelihood by spinning ;<sup>4</sup> if chance her geese be scattered o'er the common, she courses round the

<sup>1</sup> Boyle alleges in his preface, as his principal reason for entering into the controversy about Phalaris, his respect for Sir William Temple, who had been coarsely treated by Bentley. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> Boyle was assisted in this dispute by Dean Aldrich, Dr. Atterbury, afterwards Bishop of Rochester, and other persons at Oxford, celebrated for their genius and their learning, then called the Christ-Church wits. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> This refers to Boyle's edition of the " Letters of Phalaris." [T. S.]

<sup>4</sup> This is also after the manner of Homer ; the woman's getting a painful livelihood by spinning, has nothing to do with the similitude, nor would be excusable without such an authority.

plain from side to side, compelling here and there the stragglers to the flock ; they cackle loud, and flutter o'er the campaign. So Boyle pursued, so fled this pair of friends : Finding at length their flight was vain, they bravely joined, and drew themselves in phalanx. First Bentley threw a spear with all his force, hoping to pierce the enemy's breast ; but Pallas came unseen, and in the air took off the point, and clapped on one of lead, which, after a dead bang against the enemy's shield, fell blunted to the ground. Then Boyle, observing well his time, took up a lance of wondrous length and sharpness ; and, as this pair of friends compacted, stood close side to side, he wheeled him to the right, and, with unusual force, darted the weapon. Bentley saw his fate approach, and flanking down his arms close to his ribs, hoping to save his body, in went the point, passing through arm and side, nor stopped or spent its force, till it had also pierced the valiant Wotton, who, going to sustain his dying friend, shared his fate.<sup>1</sup> As when a skilful cook has trussed a brace of woodcocks, he, with iron skewer, pierces the tender sides of both, their legs and wings close pinioned to the ribs ; so was this pair of friends transfixed, till down they fell, joined in their lives, joined in their deaths, so closely joined, that Charon would mistake them both for one, and waft them over Styx for half his fare. Farewell, beloved loving pair ! Few equals have you left behind : and happy and immortal shall you be, if all my wit and eloquence can make you.

And, now	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	<i>Desunt cætera.</i>				

<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding what is here stated, Wotton was treated with much more delicacy by Boyle, than was his friend Bentley. [S.] See Boyle's "Examination," p. 23. [T. S.]





A  
DISCOURSE  
Concerning the  
Mechanical Operation  
OF THE  
SPIRIT.  
IN A  
LETTER  
*To a FRIEND.*  
A  
FRAGMENT.

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LONDON:  
Printed in the Year, MDCCX.

## THE BOOKSELLER'S ADVERTISEMENT.

*THE following Discourse came into my hands perfect and entire. But there being several things in it which the present age would not very well bear, I kept it by me some years, resolving it should never see the light. At length, by the advice and assistance of a judicious friend, I retrenched those parts that might give most offence, and have now ventured to publish the remainder ; Concerning the author I am wholly ignorant, neither can I conjecture whether it be the same with that of the two foregoing pieces, the original having been sent me at a different time, and in a different hand. The learned reader will better determine ; to whose iudgment I entirely submit it.*

A  
DISCOURSE  
CONCERNING THE  
MECHANICAL OPERATION  
OF THE  
SPIRIT, &c.

*For T. H. Esquire,<sup>1</sup> at his Chambers in the Academy of the  
Beaux Esprits in New Holland.*

*Sir,*

IT is now a good while since I have had in my head something, not only very material, but absolutely necessary to my health, that the world should be informed in. For, to tell you a secret, I am able to contain it no longer. However, I have been perplexed, for some time, to resolve what would be the most proper form to send it abroad in. To which end I have been three days coursing through Westminster-Hall, and St. Paul's Churchyard, and Fleet-street, to peruse titles; and I do not find any which holds so general a vogue, as that of a Letter to a Friend: Nothing is more common than to meet with long epistles, addressed to persons and places, where, at first thinking, one would be apt to imagine it not altogether so necessary or convenient; such as,

<sup>1</sup> Supposed to be Col. Hunter, for some time believed to be the author of the Letter of Enthusiasm, mentioned in the Apology for the Tale of a Tub. [S.]

This Discourse is not altogether equal to the former, the best parts of it being omitted; whether the bookseller's account be true, that he durst not print the rest, I know not; nor indeed is it easy to determine, whether he may be relied on in anything he says of this or the former treatises, only as to the time they were writ in, which, however, appears more from the discourses themselves than his relation.



*a neighbour at next door, a mortal enemy, a perfect stranger, or a person of quality in the clouds ; and these upon subjects, in appearance, the least proper for conveyance by the post ; as long schemes in philosophy ; dark and wonderful mysteries of state ; laborious dissertations in criticism and philosophy ; advice to parliaments, and the like.*

Now, sir, to proceed after the method in present wear. (For let me say what I will to the contrary, I am afraid you will publish this letter, as soon as ever it comes to your hands ;) I desire you will be my witness to the world how careless and sudden a scribble it has been ; that it was but yesterday when you and I began accidentally to fall into discourse on this matter : that I was not very well when we parted ; that the post is in such haste, I have had no manner of time to digest it into order, or correct the style ; and if any other modern excuses for haste and negligence shall occur to you in reading, I beg you to insert them, faithfully promising they shall be thankfully acknowledged.

Pray, sir, in your next letter to the *Iroquois Virtuosi*, do me the favour to present my humble service to that illustrious body, and assure them I shall send an account of those phenomena, as soon as we can determine them at Gresham.

I have not had a line from the *Literati* of Topinambou these three last ordinaries.

And now, sir, having dispatched what I had to say of forms, or of business, let me entreat you will suffer me to proceed upon my subject ; and to pardon me, if I make no farther use of the epistolary style till I come to conclude.

## SECTION I.

'Tis recorded of Mahomet, that, upon a visit he was going to pay in Paradise, he had an offer of several vehicles to conduct him upwards ; as fiery chariots, winged horses, and celestial sedans ; but he refused them all, and would be borne to Heaven upon nothing but his ass. Now this inclination of Mahomet, as singular as it seems, hath been since taken up by a great number of devout Christians ; and doubtless,

with very good reason. For, since that Arabian is known to have borrowed a moiety of his religious system from the Christian faith ; it is but just he should pay reprisals to such as would challenge them ; wherein the good people of England, to do them all right, have not been backward. For, though there is not any other nation in the world so plentifully provided with carriages for that journey, either as to safety or ease, yet there are abundance of us who will not be satisfied with any other machine beside this of Mahomet.

For my own part, I must confess to bear a very singular respect to this animal, by whom I take human nature to be most admirably held forth in all its qualities, as well as operations : And therefore, whatever in my small reading occurs, concerning this our fellow-creature, I do never fail to set it down by way of common-place ; and when I have occasion to write upon human reason, politics, eloquence, or knowledge ; I lay my memorandums before me, and insert them with a wonderful facility of application. However, among all the qualifications ascribed to this distinguished brute, by ancient or modern authors ; I cannot remember this talent of bearing his rider to Heaven, has been recorded for a part of his character, except in the two examples mentioned already ; therefore, I conceive the methods of this art to be a point of useful knowledge in very few hands, and which the learned world would gladly be better informed in. This is what I have undertaken to perform in the following discourse. For, towards the operation already mentioned, many peculiar properties are required both in the rider and the ass ; which I shall endeavour to set in as clear a light as I can.

But, because I am resolved, by all means, to avoid giving offence to any party whatever, I will leave off discoursing so closely to the letter as I have hitherto done, and go on for the future by way of allegory, though in such a manner, that the judicious reader may without much straining, make his applications as often as he shall think fit. Therefore, if you please, from henceforward, instead of the term ass, we shall make use of gifted or enlightened teacher ; and the word rider we will exchange for that of fanatic auditory, or any other denomination of the like import. Having settled this weighty point ; the great subject of inquiry before us, is to



examine by what methods this teacher arrives at his gifts, or spirit, or light ; and by what intercourse between him and his assembly, it is cultivated and supported.

In all my writings I have had constant regard to this great end, not to suit and apply them to particular occasions and circumstances of time, of place, or of person, but to calculate them for universal nature and mankind in general. And of such catholic use I esteem this present disquisition ; for I do not remember any other temper of body, or quality of mind, wherein all nations and ages of the world have so unanimously agreed, as that of a fanatic strain, or tincture of enthusiasm ; which, improved by certain persons or societies of men, and by them practised upon the rest, has been able to produce revolutions of the greatest figure in history ; as will soon appear to those who know anything of Arabia, Persia, India, or China, of Morocco and Peru : Farther, it has possessed as great a power in the kingdom of knowledge, where it is hard to assign one art or science which has not annexed to it some fanatic branch : Such are, *The Philosopher's Stone, The Grand Elixir*,<sup>1</sup> *The Planetary Worlds, The Squaring of the Circle, The Summum Bonum, Utopian Commonwealths* ; with some others of less or subordinate note ; which all serve for nothing else, but to employ or amuse this grain of enthusiasm, dealt into every composition.

But if this plant has found a root, in the fields of empire and of knowledge, it has fixed deeper, and spread yet farther, upon holy ground. Wherein, though it hath passed under the general name of enthusiasm, and perhaps arisen from the same original, yet hath it produced certain branches of a very different nature, however often mistaken for each other. The word, in its universal acceptation, may be defined, a *lifting-up of the soul, or its faculties, above matter*. This description will hold good in general ; but I am only to understand it as applied to religion ; wherein there are three general ways of ejaculating the soul, or transporting it beyond the sphere of matter. The first is the immediate act of God, and is called *prophecy* or *inspiration*. The second is the immediate act of the Devil, and is termed *possession*. The third is the product of natural causes, the effect of strong imagination, spleen,

<sup>1</sup> Some writers hold them for the same, others not.



violent anger, fear, grief, pain, and the like. These three have been abundantly treated on by authors, and therefore shall not employ my enquiry. But the fourth method of religious enthusiasm, or launching out of the soul, as it is purely an effect of artifice and *mechanick operation*, has been sparingly handled, or not at all, by any writer; because, though it is an art of great antiquity, yet, having been confined to few persons, it long wanted those advancements and refinements which it afterwards met with, since it has grown so epidemick, and fallen into so many cultivating hands.

It is, therefore, upon this *Mechanical Operation of the Spirit* that I mean to treat, as it is at present performed by our British Workmen. I shall deliver to the reader the result of many judicious observations upon the matter; tracing, as near as I can, the whole course and method of this trade, producing parallel instances, and relating certain discoveries, that have luckily fallen in my way,

I have said, that there is one branch of religious enthusiasm which is purely an effect of Nature; whereas the part I mean to handle is wholly an effect of art, which, however, is inclined to work upon certain natures and constitutions more than others. Besides, there is many an operation which, in its original, was purely an artifice, but through a long succession of ages hath grown to be natural. Hippocrates tells us, that among our ancestors, the Scythians, there was a nation called *Long-Heads*,<sup>1</sup> which at first began, by a custom among midwives and nurses, of moulding, and squeezing, and bracing up the heads of infants; by which means Nature, shut out at one passage, was forced to seek another, and finding room above, shot upwards in the form of a sugar-loaf; and, being diverted that way for some generations, at last found it out of herself, needing no assistance from the nurse's hand. This was the original of the *Scythian Long-heads*, and thus did custom, from being a second nature, proceed to be a first. To all which there is something very analogous among us of this nation, who are the undoubted posterity of that refined people. For, in the age of our fathers, there arose a generation of men in this island, called *Round-heads*,<sup>2</sup> whose race is now spread over three kingdoms, yet, in its

<sup>1</sup> Macrocephali.

<sup>2</sup> The Puritans in the time of Charles I. [T. S.]

beginning, was merely an operation of art, produced by a pair of scissors, a squeeze of the face, and a black cap. These heads, thus formed into a perfect sphere in all assemblies, were most exposed to the view of the female sort, which did influence their conceptions so effectually, that nature at last took the hint and did it of herself ; so that a *Round-Head* has been ever since as familiar a sight among us as a *Long-Head* among the Scythians.

Upon these examples, and others easy to produce, I desire the curious reader to distinguish, first, between an effect grown from Art into Nature, and one that is natural from its beginning ; secondly, between an effect wholly natural, and one which has only a natural foundation, but where the superstructure is entirely artificial. For the first and the last of these, I understand to come within the districts of my subject. And having obtained these allowances, they will serve to remove any objections that may be raised hereafter against what I shall advance.

The practitioners of this famous art proceed, in general, upon the following fundamental : That *the corruption of the senses is the generation of the spirit* : Because the senses in men are so many avenues to the fort of reason, which, in this operation, is wholly blocked up. All endeavours must be therefore used, either to divert, bind up, stupify, fluster, and amuse the senses, or else to juggle them out of their stations ; and, while they are either absent, or otherwise employed, or engaged in a civil war against each other, the spirit enters, and performs its part.

Now the usual methods of managing the senses upon such conjunctures are, what I shall be very particular in delivering, as far as it is lawful for me to do ; but having had the honour to be initiated into the mysteries of every society, I desire to be excused from divulging any rites, wherein the profane must have no part.

But here, before I can proceed farther, a very dangerous objection must, if possible, be removed : For, it is positively denied by certain critics, that the spirit can, by any means, be introduced into an assembly of modern saints, the disparity being so great, in many material circumstances, between the primitive way of inspiration and that which is practised in the present age. This they pretend to prove



from the second chapter of the *Acts*, where, comparing both, it appears, first, That *the apostles were gathered together with one accord, in one place*; by which is meant a universal agreement in opinion and form of worship; a harmony, (say they) so far from being found between any two conventicles among us, that it is in vain to expect it between any two heads in the same. Secondly, the spirit instructed the apostles in the gift of speaking several languages, a knowledge so remote from our dealers in this art, that they neither understand propriety of words or phrases in their own. Lastly, (say these objectors) the modern artists do utterly exclude all approaches of the spirit, and bar up its ancient way of entering, by covering themselves so close and so industriously a-top. For they will needs have it as a point clearly gained, that the *Cloven Tongues* never sat upon the apostles' heads while their hats were on.

Now, the force of these objections seems to consist in the different acceptation of the word spirit: which, if it be understood for a supernatural assistance, approaching from without, the objectors have reason, and their assertions may be allowed; but the spirit we treat of here proceeding entirely from within, the argument of these adversaries is wholly eluded. And upon the same account, our modern artificers find it an expedient of absolute necessity, to cover their heads as close as they can, in order to prevent perspiration, than which nothing is observed to be a greater spender of Mechanick Light, as we may, perhaps, farther shew in a convenient place.

To proceed therefore upon the phenomenon of *Spiritual Mechanism*, it is here to be noted, that in forming and working up the spirit, the assembly has a considerable share as well as the preacher; the method of this *arcanum* is as follows:—They violently strain their eyeballs inward, half-closing the lids; then, as they sit, they are in a perpetual motion of see-saw, making long hums at proper periods, and continuing the sound at equal height, choosing their time in those intermissions, while the preacher is at ebb. Neither is this practice, in any part of it, so singular or improbable as not to be traced in distant regions from reading and observation. For, first, the *Jauguis*,<sup>1</sup> or enlightened saints

<sup>1</sup> Bernier, Mem. de Mogol.



of India, see all their visions by help of an acquired straining and pressure of the eyes. Secondly, the art of see-saw on a beam, and swinging by session upon a cord, in order to raise artificial ecstasies, hath been derived to us from our Scythian<sup>1</sup> ancestors, where it is practised at this day among the women. Lastly, the whole proceeding, as I have here related it, is performed by the natives of Ireland, with a considerable improvement; and it is granted, that this noble nation, hath of all others, admitted fewer corruptions, and degenerated least from the purity of the old Tartars. Now, it is usual for a knot of Irish men and women, to abstract themselves from matter, bind up all their senses, grow visionary and spiritual, by influence of a short pipe of tobacco, handed round the company, each preserving the smoke in his mouth till it comes again to his turn to take it in fresh: at the same time there is a concert of a continued gentle hum, repeated and renewed by instinct, as occasion requires, and they move their bodies up and down, to a degree, that sometimes their heads and points lie parallel to the horizon. Meanwhile you may observe their eyes turned up, in the posture of one who endeavours to keep himself awake; by which, and many other symptoms among them, it manifestly appears that the reasoning faculties are all suspended and superseded, that imagination hath usurped the seat, scattering a thousand deliriums over the brain. Returning from this digression, I shall describe the methods by which the spirit approaches. The eyes being disposed according to art, at first you can see nothing, but, after a short pause, a small glimmering light begins to appear, and dance before you. Then, by frequently moving your body up and down, you perceive the vapours to ascend very fast, till you are perfectly dosed and flustered, like one who drinks too much in a morning. Meanwhile the preacher is also at work; he begins a loud hum, which pierces you quite through; this is immediately returned by the audience, and you find yourself prompted to imitate them, by a mere spontaneous impulse, without knowing what you do. The *interstitia* are duly filled up by the preacher, to prevent too long a pause, under which the spirit would soon faint and grow languid.

<sup>1</sup> Guagnini Hist. Sarmat.

This is all I am allowed to discover about the progress of the spirit, with relation to that part which is borne by the assembly ; but in the methods of the preacher to which I now proceed, I shall be more large and particular.

## SECTION II.

You will read it very gravely remarked in the books of those illustrious and right eloquent penmen, the modern travellers ; that the fundamental difference in point of religion, between the wild Indians and us, lies in this ; that we worship God, and they worship the devil. But there are certain critics who will by no means admit of this distinction ; rather believing, that all nations whatsoever adore the true God, because they seem to intend their devotions to some invisible power of greatest goodness and ability to help them, which, perhaps, will take in the brightest attributes ascribed to the divinity. Others, again, inform us, that those idolators adore two principles ; the principle of good, and that of evil ; which, indeed, I am apt to look upon as the most universal notion that mankind, by the mere light of nature, ever entertained of things invisible. How this idea hath been managed by the Indians and us, and with what advantage to the understandings of either, may deserve well to be examined. To me the difference appears little more than this, that they are put oftener upon their knees by their fears, and we by our desires ; that the former set them a-praying, and us a-cursing. What I applaud them for is, their discretion, in limiting their devotions and their deities to their several districts, nor ever suffering the liturgy of the white God to cross, or to interfere with that of the black. Not so with us, who pretending by the lines and measures of our reason, to extend the dominion of one invisible power, and contract that of the other, have discovered a gross ignorance in the natures of good and evil, and most horribly confounded the frontiers of both. After men have lifted up the throne of their divinity to the *cælum empyræum*, adorned with all such qualities and accomplishments as themselves seem most to



value and possess : after they have sunk their principle of evil to the lowest centre, bound him with chains, loaded him with curses, furnished him with viler dispositions than any rake-hell of the town, accoutred him with tail, and horns, and huge claws, and saucer eyes : I laugh aloud to see these reasoners, at the same time, engaged in wise dispute about certain walks and purlieus, whether they are in the verge of God or the devil, seriously debating, whether such and such influences come into men's minds from above, or below, whether certain passions and affections are guided by the evil spirit or the good :

Dum fas atque nefas exiguo fine libidinum  
Discernunt avidi.—

Thus do men establish a fellowship of Christ with Belial, and such is the analogy they make between *Cloven Tongues* and *Cloven Feet*. Of the like nature is the disquisition before us : It hath continued these hundred years an even debate, whether the deportment and the cant of our English enthusiastic preachers were possession or inspiration, and a world of argument has been drained on either side, perhaps to little purpose. For, I think, it is in life as in tragedy, where, it is held a conviction of great defect, both in order and invention, to interpose the assistance of preternatural power, without an absolute and last necessity. However, it is a sketch of human vanity, for every individual to imagine the whole universe is interested in his meanest concern. If he hath got cleanly over a kennel, some angel unseen descended on purpose to help him by the hand ; if he hath knocked his head against a post, it was the devil, for his sins, let loose from hell, on purpose to buffet him. Who, that sees a little paltry mortal, droning, and dreaming, and drivelling to a multitude, can think it agreeable to common good sense, that either Heaven or Hell should be put to the trouble of influence or inspection, upon what he is about ? Therefore I am resolved immediately to weed this error out of mankind, by making it clear, that this mystery of vending spiritual gifts is nothing but a trade, acquired by as much instruction, and mastered by equal practice and application, as others are. This will best appear, by describing and de-



ducing the whole process of the operation, as variously as it hath fallen under my knowledge or experience.

*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Here the whole scheme of</i>				*	*	*	*
<i>spiritual mechanism was de-</i>				*	*	*	*
<i>duced and explained, with</i>				*	*	*	*
<i>an appearance of great read-</i>				*	*	*	*
<i>ing and observation ; but it</i>				*	*	*	*
<i>was thought neither safe nor</i>				*	*	*	*
<i>convenient to print it.</i>				*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Here it may not be amiss to add a few words upon the laudable practice of wearing quilted caps ; which is not a matter of mere custom, humour, or fashion, as some would pretend, but an institution of great sagacity and use ; these, when moistened with sweat, stop all perspiration, and by reverberating the heat, prevent the spirit from evaporating any way, but at the mouth ; even as a skilful house-wife, that covers her still with a wet clout, for the same reason, and finds the same effect. For, it is the opinion of choice *virtuosi*, that the brain is only a crowd of little animals, but with teeth and claws extremely sharp, and therefore, cling together in the contexture we behold, like the picture of Hobbes's Leviathan, or like bees in perpendicular swarm upon a tree, or like a carrion corrupted into vermin, still preserving the shape and figure of the mother animal. That all invention is formed by the morsure of two or more of these animals, upon certain capillary nerves, which proceed from thence, whereof three branches spread into the tongue, and two into the right hand. They hold also, that these animals are of a constitution extremely cold ; that their food is the air we attract, their excrement phlegm ; and that what we vulgarly call rheums, and colds, and distillations, is nothing else but an epidemical looseness, to which that little commonwealth is very subject, from the climate it lies under. Farther, that nothing less than a violent heat can disentangle these creatures from their hamated station of life, or give them vigour and humour, to imprint the marks of their little teeth. That if the morsure be hexagonal, it produces Poetry ; the

circular gives Eloquence ; if the bite hath been conical, the person, whose nerve is so affected, shall be disposed to write upon Politics ; and so of the rest.

I shall now discourse briefly, by what kind of practices the voice is best governed, toward the composition and improvement of the spirit ; for, without a competent skill in tuning and toning each word, and syllable, and letter, to their due cadence, the whole operation is incomplete, misses entirely of its effect on the hearers, and puts the workman himself to continual pains for new supplies, without success. For, it is to be understood, that, in the language of the spirit, cant and droning supply the place of sense and reason, in the language of men : because, in spiritual harangues, the disposition of the words according to the art of grammar hath not the least use, but the skill and influence wholly lie in the choice and cadence of the syllables ; even as a discreet composer, who, in setting a song, changes the words and order so often, that he is forced to make it nonsense before he can make it music. For this reason, it hath been held by some, that the Art of Canting is ever in greatest perfection, when managed by ignorance ; which is thought to be enigmatically meant by Plutarch, when he tells us, that the best musical instruments were made from the bones of an ass. And the profounder critics upon that passage, are of opinion, the word, in its genuine signification, means no other than a jaw-bone ; though some rather think it to have been the *os sacrum* ; but in so nice a case I shall not take upon me to decide : The curious are at liberty to pick from it whatever they please.

The first ingredient toward the Art of Canting is, a competent share of *inward light* ; that is to say, a large memory, plentifully fraught with theological polysyllables, and mysterious texts from holy writ, applied and digested by those methods and mechanical operations, already related : the bearers of this light, resembling lanthorns compact of leaves from old Geneva Bibles ; which invention, Sir Humphrey Edwin,<sup>1</sup> during his mayoralty, of happy memory, highly approved and advanced ; affirming the Scripture to be now fulfilled, where it says : *Thy word is a lanthorn to my feet, and a light to my paths.*

<sup>1</sup> A Presbyterian, who, ascending to the dignity of Lord Mayor of London, went in his official character to a meeting-house. [S.]



Now, the Art of Canting consists in skilfully adapting the voice to whatever words the spirit delivers, that each may strike the ears of the audience with its most significant cadence. The force, or energy of this eloquence, is not to be found, as among ancient orators, in the disposition of words to a sentence, or the turning of long periods ; but, agreeable to the modern refinements in music, is taken up wholly in dwelling and dilating upon syllables and letters. Thus, it is frequent for a single vowel to draw sighs from a multitude ; and for a whole assembly of saints to sob to the music of one solitary liquid. But these are trifles ; when even sounds inarticulate are observed to produce as forcible effects. A master workman shall blow his nose so powerfully as to pierce the hearts of his people, who are disposed to receive the excrements of his brain with the same reverence as the issue of it. Hawking, spitting, and belching, the defects of other men's rhetoric, are the flowers, and figures, and ornaments of his. For, the spirit being the same in all, it is of no import through what vehicle it is conveyed.

It is a point of too much difficulty to draw the principles of this famous art within the compass of certain adequate rules. However, perhaps I may one day oblige the world with my *Critical Essay upon the Art of Canting; philosophically, physically, and musically considered.*

But, among all improvements of the spirit, wherein the voice hath borne a part, there is none to be compared with that of *conveying the sound through the nose*, which, under the denomination of *snuffling*,<sup>1</sup> hath passed with so great applause in the world. The originals of this institution are very dark ; but, having been initiated into the mystery of it, and leave being given me to publish it to the world, I shall deliver as direct a relation as I can.

This art, like many other famous inventions, owed its birth, or at least improvement and perfection, to an effect of chance, but was established upon solid reasons, and hath flourished in this island ever since with great lustre. All agree that it first appeared upon the decay and discouragement of *bagpipes*, which having long suffered under the mortal hatred of the

<sup>1</sup> The snuffling of men who have lost their noses by lewd courses, is said to have given rise to that tone, which our dissenters did too much affect.—W. WOTTON.



brethren, tottered for a time, and at last fell with monarchy. The story is thus related.

As yet snuffling was not ; when the following adventure happened to a Banbury saint. Upon a certain day, while he was far engaged among the tabernacles of the wicked, he felt the outward man put into odd commotions, and strangely pricked forward by the inward ; an effect very usual among the modern inspired. For, some think, that the spirit is apt to feed on the flesh, like hungry wines upon raw beef. Others rather believe there is a perpetual game at leap-frog between both ; and, sometimes the flesh is uppermost, and sometimes the spirit, adding, that the former, while it is in the state of a rider, wears huge Rippon spurs, and when it comes to the turn of being bearer, is wonderfully headstrong and hard-mouthed. However it came about, the saint felt his vessel full extended in every part (a very natural effect of strong inspiration ; ) and the place and time falling out so unluckily, that he could not have the convenience of evacuating upwards, by repetition, prayer, or lecture, he was forced to open an inferior vent. In short, he wrestled with the flesh so long, that he at length subdued it, coming off with honourable wounds, all *before*. The surgeon had now cured the parts primarily affected ; but the disease, driven from its post, flew up into his head ; and, as a skilful general, valiantly attacked in his trenches and beaten from the field, by flying marches withdraws to the capital city, breaking down the bridges to prevent pursuit ; so the disease, repelled from its first station, fled before the Rod of Hermes to the upper region, there fortifying itself ; but, finding the foe making attacks at the nose, broke down the bridge, and retired to the head-quarters. Now, the naturalists observe, that there is in human noses an idiosyncrasy, by virtue of which, the more the passage is obstructed, the more our speech delights to go through, as the music of a flageolet is made by the stops. By this method, the twang of the nose becomes perfectly to resemble the snuffle of a bagpipe, and is found to be equally attractive of British ears ; whereof the saint had sudden experience, by practising his new faculty with wonderful success in the operation of the spirit : For, in a short time, no doctrine passed for sound and orthodox, unless it were delivered through the nose. Straight, every pastor copied after this

original, and those who could not otherwise arrive to a perfection, spirited by a noble zeal, made use of the same experiment to acquire it. So that, I think, it may be truly affirmed, the saints own their empire to the snuffling of one animal, as Darius did his to the neighing of another, and both stratagems were performed by the same art ; for we read how the Persian beast acquired his faculty by covering a mare the day before.<sup>1</sup>

I should now have done, if I were not convinced, that whatever I have yet advanced upon this subject is liable to great exception. For, allowing all I have said to be true, it may still be justly objected, that there is, in the commonwealth of artificial enthusiasm, some real foundation for art to work upon in the temper and complexion of individuals, which other mortals seem to want. Observe, but the gesture, the motion, and the countenance, of some choice professors, though in their most familiar actions, you will find them of a different race from the rest of human creatures. Remark your commonest pretender to a light within, how dark, and dirty, and gloomy he is without ; as lanthorns, which, the more light they bear in their bodies, cast out so much the more soot, and smoke, and fuliginous matter to adhere to the sides. Listen but to their ordinary talk, and look on the mouth that delivers it ; you will imagine you are hearing some ancient oracle, and your understanding will be equally informed. Upon these, and the like reasons, certain objectors pretend to put it beyond all doubt, that there must be a sort of preternatural spirit possessing the heads of the modern saints ; and some will have it to be the heat of zeal working upon the dregs of ignorance, as other spirits are produced from lees by the force of fire. Some again think, that, when our earthly tabernacles are disordered and desolate, shaken and out of repair ; the spirit delights to dwell within them, as houses are said to be haunted, when they are forsaken and gone to decay.

To set this matter in as fair a light as possible ; I shall here very briefly deduce the history of *Fanaticism* from the most early ages to the present. And if we are able to fix upon any one material or fundamental point, wherein the chief

<sup>1</sup> Herodot.



professors have universally agreed, I think we may reasonably lay hold on that, and assign it for the great seed or principle of the spirit.

The most early traces we meet with of fanatics in ancient story are among the Egyptians, who instituted those rites, known in Greece by the names of Orgia, Panegyres, and Dionysia, whether introduced there by Orpheus or Melampus we shall not dispute at present, nor in all likelihood at any time for the future.<sup>1</sup> These feasts were celebrated to the honour of Osiris, whom the Grecians called Dionysius, and is the same with Bacchus ; which has betrayed some superficial readers to imagine, that the whole business was nothing more than a set of roaring, scouring companions, overcharged with wine ; but this is a scandalous mistake foisted on the world by a sort of modern authors, who have too literal an understanding ; and, because antiquity is to be traced backwards, do therefore, like Jews, begin their books at the wrong end, as if learning were a sort of conjuring. These are the men who pretend to understand a book by scouring through the index, as if a traveller should go about to describe a palace, when he had seen nothing but the privy ; or like certain fortune-tellers in Northern America, who have a way of reading a man's destiny by peeping into his breech. For, at the time of instituting these mysteries, there was not one vine in all Egypt,<sup>2</sup> the natives drinking nothing but ale ; which liquor seems to have been far more ancient than wine, and has the honour of owing its invention and progress, not only to the Egyptian Osiris,<sup>3</sup> but to the Grecian Bacchus, who, in their famous expedition, carried the receipt of it along with them, and gave it to the nations they visited or subdued. Besides, Bacchus himself, was very seldom, or never drunk ; for it is recorded of him, that he was the first inventor of the mitre,<sup>4</sup> which he wore continually on his head (as the whole company of bacchanals did) to prevent vapours and the headache after hard drinking. And for this reason (say some) the *Scarlet Whore*, when she makes the kings of the earth drunk with her cup of abomination, is always sober herself, though she never balks the glass in her

<sup>1</sup> Diod. Sic. L. 1. Plut. de Iside et Osiride.

<sup>2</sup> Herod. L. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Diod. Sic. L. 1 and 3.

<sup>4</sup> Id. L. 4.



turn, being, it seems, kept upon her legs by the virtue of her triple mitre. Now, these feasts were instituted in imitation of the famous expedition Osiris made through the world, and of the company that attended him, whereof the bacchanalian ceremonies were so many types and symbols. From which account<sup>1</sup> it is manifest, that the fanatic rites of these bacchanals cannot be imputed to intoxications by wine, but must needs have had a deeper foundation. What this was, we may gather large hints from certain circumstances in the course of their mysteries. For, in the first place, there was, in their processions, an entire mixture and confusion of sexes; they affected to ramble about hills and deserts: Their garlands were of ivy and vine, emblems of cleaving and clinging; or of fir, the parent of turpentine. It is added, that they imitated satyrs, were attended by goats, and rode upon asses, all companions of great skill and practice in affairs of gallantry. They bore for their ensigns certain curious figures, perched upon long poles, made into the shape and size of the *virga genitalis*, with its appurtenances, which were so many shadows and emblems of the whole mystery, as well as trophies set up by the female conquerors. Lastly, in a certain town of Attica, the whole solemnity stripped of all its types,<sup>2</sup> was performed in *puris naturalibus*, the votaries not flying in coveys, but sorted into couples. The same may be farther conjectured from the death of Orpheus, one of the institutors of these mysteries, who was torn in pieces by women, because he refused to communicate his orgies to them;<sup>3</sup> which others explained, by telling us he had castrated himself upon grief, for the loss of his wife.

Omitting many others of less note, the next fanatics we meet with, of any eminence, were the numerous sects of heretics appearing in the five first centuries of the Christian era, from Simon Magus and his followers to those of Eutyches. I have collected their systems from infinite reading, and, comparing them with those of their successors, in the several ages since, I find there are certain bounds set even to the irregularities of human thought, and those a great deal narrower than is commonly apprehended. For, as they all

<sup>1</sup> See the particulars in Diod. Sic. L. 1 and 3.

<sup>2</sup> Dionysia Brauronia.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* Photium in excerptis è Conone.

frequently interfere, even in their wildest ravings ; so there is one fundamental point, wherein they are sure to meet, as lines in a centre, and that is, the *Community of Women*. Great were their solitudes in this matter, and they never failed of certain articles, in their schemes of worship, on purpose to establish it.

The last fanatics of note, were those which started up in Germany, a little after the reformation of Luther ; springing as mushrooms do at the end of a harvest ; such were John of Leyden, David George, Adam Neuster,<sup>1</sup> and many others ; whose visions and revelations, always terminated in leading about half a dozen sisters a-piece, and making that practice a fundamental part of their system. For, human life is a continual navigation, and if we expect our vessels to pass with safety through the waves and tempests of this fluctuating world, it is necessary to make a good provision of the flesh, as seamen lay in store of beef for a long voyage.

Now from this brief survey of some principal sects among the fanatics in all ages (having omitted the Mahometans and others, who might also help to confirm the argument I am about) to which I might add several among ourselves, such as the *Family of Love*, *Sweet Singers of Israel*, and the like : and from reflecting upon that fundamental point in their doctrines about women, wherein they have so unanimously agreed ; I am apt to imagine, that the seed or principle which has ever put men upon visions in things

<sup>1</sup> John of Leyden, a fanatic tailor, whose real name was John Boccold. He was the leader of those Anabaptists who, in 1533, seized Munster. As head of this mob, he took upon himself to reform the government. He was hailed as king and prophet ; but in 1536 was executed, in the twenty-eighth year of his age. David George, born at Delft in 1501, was the son of an acrobat. His real name was Jean de Coman. He took the name of David, when he gave himself out as the Messiah. He joined the Anabaptists, but afterwards set up a sect of his own. In 1542 appeared his famous "Wonderboek." He died in 1556. The Neuster to whom Swift here refers is Adam Neuser, a Socinian theologian of the sixteenth century. He strongly opposed the Elector of the Palatinate in his attempts to introduce the system of the Genevan ecclesiastical police, and attempted to introduce Socinianism. He was imprisoned, but escaped, and fled to Constantinople, where he became a Mohammedan. He died in 1576. All these individuals are notorious for free living. In some of the sects the women went unclothed, because they were considered to be the naked truth. [T. S.]



invisible, is of a corporeal nature ; for the profounder chemists inform us, that the strongest spirits may be extracted from human flesh. Besides, the spinal marrow being nothing else but a continuation of the brain, must needs create a very free communication between the superior faculties and those below : and thus the *thorn in the flesh* serves for a spur to the spirit. I think, it is agreed among physicians, that nothing affects the head so much as a tentiginous humour, repelled and elated to the upper region, found, by daily practice, to run frequently up into madness. A very eminent member of the faculty assured me, that, when the Quakers first appeared, he seldom was without some female patients among them for the *furor* ———. Persons of a visionary devotion, either men or women, are, in their complexion, of all others the most amorous ; for, zeal is frequently kindled from the same spark with other fires, and, from inflaming brotherly love, will proceed to raise that of a gallant. If we inspect into the usual process of modern courtship, we shall find it to consist in a devout turn of the eyes, called ogling ; an artificial form of canting and whining by rote, every interval, for want of other matter, made up with a shrug or a hum, a sigh or a groan ; the style compact of insignificant words, incoherences, and repetition. These, I take to be the most accomplished rules of address to a mistress ; and where are these performed with more dexterity than by the saints ? Nay, to bring this argument yet closer, I have been informed by certain sanguine brethren of the first class, that, in the height and orgasmus of their spiritual exercise, it has been frequent with them \* \* \* \* \* ; immediately after which, they found the spirit to relax and flag of a sudden with the nerves, and they were forced to hasten to a conclusion. This may be farther strengthened, by observing, with wonder, how unaccountably all females are attracted by visionary or enthusiastic preachers, though ever so contemptible in their outward men ; which is usually supposed to be done upon considerations purely spiritual, without any carnal regards at all. But I have reason to think, the sex hath certain characteristics, by which they form a truer judgment of human abilities and performings, than we ourselves can possibly do of each other. Let that be as it will, thus much is certain,



that, however spiritual intrigues begin, they generally conclude like all others ; they may branch upward towards heaven, but the root is in the earth. Too intense a contemplation is not the business of flesh and blood ; it must, by the necessary course of things, in a little time let go its hold, and fall into matter. Lovers for the sake of celestial converse are but another sort of Platonics, who pretend to see stars and heaven in ladies' eyes, and to look or think no lower ; but the same pit is provided for both ; and they seem a perfect moral to the story of that philosopher, who, while his thoughts and eyes were fixed upon the constellations, found himself seduced by his lower parts into a ditch.

I had somewhat more to say upon this part of the subject, but the post is just going, which forces me in great haste to conclude,

*Sir,*

Yours, &c

*Pray burn this letter as soon  
as it comes to your hands.*

PREFACES TO TEMPLE'S WORKS.

IN a journal which Swift kept in French, bearing the title, "*Journal d'Estat de Mr. Temple devant sa mort*," and which related to Sir William Temple's illness, the last entry is: "He died at one o'clock this morning, the 27th of January, 1698-99, and with him all that was good and amiable among men." In his will Temple had left Swift, according to some accounts, the sum of £100. Whether this be true or not, it is certain that he was chosen to edit his patron's works and to receive the proceeds of their sale. This Swift did, and he issued the works in five volumes over a period of nearly ten years. The works were published in 1700 (in two volumes) with a Dedication and Preface by Swift; in 1701 appeared the third part of Temple's *Miscellanea*, also with a preface by Swift (the first two volumes had been issued by Temple himself); in 1703 he wrote a preface to the third volume of Temple's *Letters*, and finally in 1709 a preface to the third part of the *Memoirs*. By publishing the *Memoirs* he lost the favour of Lady Gifford, Temple's sister, who considered the revelations made concerning the statesmen of Temple's time as being unfit for public property. It was, indeed, owing to Lady Gifford's opinion that the publication of the *Memoirs* was delayed for so long. Mr. Forster, following Nichols, calculates that Swift netted £40 by each volume, but Mr. Craik considers the calculation of doubtful accuracy. (See Craik's "*Life of Swift*," p. 75, note.) For full particulars of these volumes see BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SWIFT'S WRITINGS. [T. S.]



# DEDICATION

TO THE FIRST TWO VOLUMES OF

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE'S LETTERS.

To his most sacred Majesty, William the Third, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, &c. These letters of Sir William Temple having been left to my care, they are most humbly presented to your Majesty, by

Your Majesty's

Most dutiful

And obedient Subject,

JONATHAN SWIFT.



## PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST TWO VOLUMES

OF

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE'S LETTERS,

1700.

THE collection of the following letters is owing to the diligence of Mr. Thomas Downton, who was one of the secretaries during the whole time wherein they bear date; and it has succeeded very fortunately for the public, that there is contained in them an account of all the chief transactions and negotiations which passed in Christendom during the seven years wherein they are dated; as the war from Holland, which began in 1665; the treaty between his Majesty and the Bishop of Munster, with the issue of it; the French invasion of Flanders in the year 1667; the peace concluded between Spain and Portugal by the King's mediation; the treaty at Breda; the triple alliance; the peace at Aix-la-Chapelle, in the first part; and in the second part, the negotiations in Holland in consequence of those alliances, with the steps and degrees by which they came to decay; the journey and death of Madam; the seizure of Lorrain and his excellency's recalling; with the first unkindness between England and Holland, upon the yacht's transporting his lady and family; and the beginning of the second Dutch war in 1672. With these are intermixed several letters, familiar and pleasant.

I found the book among Sir William Temple's papers, with many others, wherewith I had the opportunity of being long conversant, having passed several years in his family.



I pretend no other part than the care that Mr. Downton's book should be correctly transcribed, and the letters placed in the order they were writ. I have also made some literal amendments, especially in the Latin, French, and Spanish; these I took care should be translated and printed in another column, for the use of such readers as may be unacquainted with the originals. Whatever fault there may be in the translation, I doubt I must answer for the greater part, and must leave the rest to those friends who were pleased to assist me. I speak only of the French and Latin; for the few Spanish translations I believe need no apology.

It is generally believed that this author has advanced our English tongue to as great a perfection as it can well bear; and yet how great a master he was of it, as I think, never appeared so much as it will in the following letters, wherein the style appears so very different, according to the difference of the persons to whom they were addressed; either men of business or idle, of pleasure or serious, of great or of less parts or abilities, in their several stations; so that one may discover the characters of most of those persons he writes to, from the style of his letters.

At the end of each volume, is added a collection, copied by the same hand, of several letters to this ambassador, from the chief persons employed, either at home or abroad, in these transactions, and during six years' course of his negotiations; among which are many from the pensionary John de Witt, and all the writings of this kind that I know of, which remain of that minister, so renowned in his time.

It has been justly complained of as a defect among us, that the English tongue has produced no letters of any value; to supply which it has been the vein of late years, to translate several out of other languages, though I think with little success; yet among many advantages, which might recommend this sort of writing, it is certain that nothing is so capable of giving a true account of stories, as letters are; which describe actions while they are breathing, whereas all other relations are of actions past and dead; so as it has been observed, that the epistles of Cicero to Atticus give a better account of those times, than is to be found in any other writer.

In the following letters the reader will everywhere discover

the force and spirit of this author ; but that which will most value them to the public, both at home and abroad, is, first, that the matters contained in them were the ground and foundation, whereon all the wars and invasions, as well as all the negotiations and treaties of peace in Christendom, have since been raised. And next, that they are written by a person who had so great a share in all those transactions and negotiations.

By residing in his family, I know the author has had frequent instances from several great persons, both at home and abroad, to publish some memoirs of those affairs and transactions, which are the subject of the following papers ; and particularly of the treaties of the triple alliance, and those of Aix-la-Chapelle ; but his usual answer was, that whatever memoirs he had written of those times and negotiations were burnt ; however, that perhaps after his death some papers might come out, wherein there would be some account of them. By which, as he often told me, he meant these letters.

I had begun to fit them for the press during the author's life, but never could prevail for leave to publish them ; though he was pleased to be at the pains of reviewing, and to give me his directions for digesting them in order. It has since pleased God to take this great and good person to himself ; and he having done me the honour to leave and recommend to me the care of his writings, I thought I could not at present do a greater service to my country, or to the author's memory, than by making these papers public.

By way of introduction, I need only take notice, that after the peace of the Pyrenees, and his Majesty's happy restoration in 1660, there was a general peace in Christendom, (except only the remainder of a war between Spain and Portugal,) until the year 1665 ; when that between England and Holland began, which produced a treaty between his Majesty and the Bishop of Munster. And this commences the following letters.

PREFACE  
TO  
THE THIRD PART  
OF  
SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE'S  
MISCELLANEA, 1701.

THE two following essays, "Of Popular Discontents," and "Of Health and Long Life," were written many years before the author's death. They were revised and corrected by himself; and were designed to have been part of a Third Miscellanea, to which some others were to have been added, if the latter part of his life had been attended with any sufficient degree of health.

For the third paper, relating to the controversy about "Ancient and Modern Learning," I cannot well inform the reader upon what occasion it was writ, having been at that time in another kingdom; but it appears never to have been finished by the author.<sup>1</sup>

The two next papers contain the heads of two essays

<sup>1</sup> It seems very improbable that Dr. Swift should be altogether ignorant of the famous dispute about "Ancient and Modern Learning." If he had not made his public declaration, he would highly, and with justice, have resented the being taxed by any other with being ignorant of a passage which made so great a noise in the commonwealth of learning. At this time, however, the doctor, (being generally suspected of being the author of "The Tale of a Tub," which came abroad some time before, and which he did not think fit to own,) might fancy, that by his disclaiming the knowledge of the occasion on which Sir William wrote the above Essay, he should weaken the suspicion of his having written "The Tale of a Tub," which last is a subsidiary defence of Sir William Temple. [D. S.]



intended to have been written upon the "Different Conditions of Life and Fortune," and upon "Conversation." I have directed they should be printed among the rest, because I believe there are few who will not be content to see even the first draught of anything from the author's hand.

At the end I have added a few translations from Virgil, Horace, and Tibullus, or rather imitations, done by the author above thirty years ago; whereof the first was printed among other Eclogues of Virgil, in the year 1679, but without any mention of the author. They were indeed not intended to have been made public, till I was informed of several copies that were got abroad, and those very imperfect and corrupt. Therefore the reader finds them here, only to prevent him from finding them in other places very faulty, and perhaps accompanied with many spurious additions.

JONATHAN SWIFT.

PREFACE  
TO  
THE THIRD VOLUME  
OF  
SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE'S LETTERS,  
1703.

THE following papers are the last of this, or indeed of any kind, about which the author ever gave me his particular commands. They were corrected by himself, and fairly transcribed in his lifetime. I have in all things followed his directions as strictly as I could ; but accidents unforeseen having since intervened, I have thought convenient to lessen the bulk of this volume. To which end, I have omitted several letters addressed to persons with whom this author corresponded without any particular confidence, farther than upon account of their posts : because great numbers of such letters, procured out of the office, or by other means, (how justifiable I shall not examine,) have been already printed : but, running wholly upon long dry subjects of business, have met no other reception than merely what the reputation of the author would give them. If I could have foreseen an end of this trade, I should, upon some considerations, have longer forborne sending these into the world. But I daily hear, that new discoveries of *original* letters are hasting to the press : to stop the current of which, I am forced to an earlier publication than I designed. And therefore I take this occasion to inform the reader, that these letters, ending with the author's revocation from his employments abroad, (which in less than two years was followed by his retirement from all public business,) are the

last he ever intended for the press ; having been selected by himself from great numbers yet lying among his papers.

If I could have been prevailed with by the rhetoric of booksellers, or any other little regards, I might easily, instead of retrenching, have made very considerable additions : and by that means have perhaps taken the surest course to prevent the interloping of others. But, if the press must needs be loaded, I would rather it should not be by my means. And therefore I may hope to be allowed one word in the style of a publisher, (an office liable to much censure without the least pretensions to merit or to praise,) that if I have not been much deceived in others and myself, the reader will hardly find one Letter in this collection unworthy of the author, or which does not contain something either of entertainment or of use.



PREFACE  
TO  
THE THIRD PART  
OF  
SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE'S MEMOIRS;  
FROM THE PEACE CONCLUDED 1679 TO THE TIME OF THE  
AUTHOR'S RETIREMENT FROM PUBLIC BUSINESS.

[FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1709.]

IT was perfectly in compliance to some persons for whose opinion I have great deference, that I so long withheld the publication of the following papers. They seemed to think, that the freedom of some passages in these Memoirs might give offence to several who were still alive; and whose part in those affairs which are here related, could not be transmitted to posterity with any advantage to their reputation. But whether this objection be in itself of much weight, may perhaps be disputed; at least it should have little with me, who am under no restraint in that particular; since I am not of an age to remember those transactions, nor had any acquaintance with those persons whose counsels or proceedings are condemned, and who are all of them now dead.

But, as this author is very free in exposing the weakness and corruptions of ill ministers, so he is as ready to commend the abilities and virtue of others, as may be observed from several passages of these Memoirs; particularly of the late Earl of Sunderland, with whom the author continued in the most intimate friendship to his death; and who was father of that most learned and excellent lord, now secretary of state:

as likewise, of the present Earl of Rochester ; and the Earl of Godolphin, now lord treasurer, represented by this impartial author as a person at that time deservedly entrusted with so great a part in the prime ministry ; an office he now executes again with such universal applause, so much to the Queen's honour and his own, and to the advantage of his country, as well as of the whole confederacy.

There are two objections I have sometimes heard to have been offered against those Memoirs that were printed in the author's life-time, and which these now published may perhaps be equally liable to. First, as to the matter ; that the author speaks too much of himself : next, as to the style ; that he affects the use of French words, as well as some turns of expression peculiar to that language.

I believe, those who make the former criticism do not well consider the nature of memoirs : it is to the French (if I mistake not) we chiefly owe that manner of writing : and Sir William Temple is not only the first, but I think the only Englishman, (at least of any consequence,) who ever attempted it. The best French memoirs are writ by such persons as were the principal actors in those transactions they pretend to relate, whether of wars or negotiations. Those of Sir William Temple are of the same nature ; and therefore, in my judgment, the publisher (who sent them into the world without the author's privity) gave them a wrong title, when he called them "Memoirs of what passed in Christendom," &c., whereas it should rather have been "Memoirs of the Treaty at Nimeguen," which was plainly the sense of the author, who in the epistle tells his son, that "in compliance with his desire, he will leave him some memoirs of what passed in his public employments abroad ;" and in the book itself, when he deduces an account of the state of war in Christendom, he says, it is only to prepare the reader for a relation of that famous treaty ; where he and Sir Lionel Jenkins were the only mediators that continued any considerable time ; and as the author was first in commission, so in point of abilities or credit, either abroad or at home, there was no sort of comparison between the two persons. Those memoirs, therefore, are properly a relation of a general treaty of peace, wherein the author had the principal as well as the most honourable part in quality of mediator ; so that

the frequent mention of himself seems not only excusable but necessary. The same may be offered in defence of the following papers ; because, during the greatest part of the period they treat of, the author was in chief confidence with the king his master. To which may be added, that, in the few preliminary lines at the head of the first page, the author professes he writ those papers “for the satisfaction of his friends hereafter, upon the grounds of his retirement, and his resolution never to meddle again with public affairs.” As to the objection against the style of the former Memoirs, that it abounds in French words and turns of expression ; it is to be considered, that at the treaty of Nimeguen, all business, either by writing or discourse, passed in the French tongue ; and the author having lived so many years abroad, in that and foreign embassies, where all business, as well as conversation, ran in that language, it was hardly possible for him to write upon public affairs without some tincture of it in his style, though in his other writings there be little or nothing of it to be observed ; and as he has often assured me, it was a thing he never affected ; so, upon the objections made to his former Memoirs, he blotted out some French words in these, and placed English in their stead, though perhaps not so significant.

There is one thing proper to inform the reader, why these Memoirs are called the Third Part, there having never been published but one part before, where, in the beginning, the author mentions a former part, and in the conclusion promises a third. The subject of the first part was chiefly the triple alliance, during the negotiation of which my Lord Arlington was secretary of state and chief minister. Sir William Temple often assured me, he had burnt those Memoirs ; and for that reason was content his letters during his embassies at the Hague and Aix-la-Chapelle, should be printed after his death, in some manner to supply that loss.

What it was that moved Sir William Temple to burn those first Memoirs, may perhaps be conjectured from some passages in the second part, formerly printed. In one place, the author has these words : “ My Lord Arlington, who made so great a figure in the former part of these Memoirs, was now grown out of all credit,” &c. In other parts he tells us, “ That lord



was of the ministry which broke the triple league ; advised the Dutch war and French alliance ; and, in short, was the bottom of all those ruinous measures which the court of England was then taking ;" so that, as I have been told from a good hand, and as it seems very probable, he could not think that lord a person fit to be celebrated for his part in forwarding that famous league while he was secretary of state, who had made such counterpaces to destroy it. At the end I have subjoined an Appendix, containing, besides one or two other particulars, a Speech of Sir William Temple's in the House of Commons ; and an Answer of the King's to an Address of that House, relating to the Bill of Exclusion ; both which are mentioned in these Memoirs.

I have only farther to inform the reader, that, although these papers were corrected by the author, yet he had once intended to insert some additions in several places, as appeared by certain hints or memorandums in the margin ; but whether they were omitted out of forgetfulness, neglect, or want of health, I cannot determine ; one passage relating to Sir William Jones he was pleased to tell me, and I have added it in the Appendix. The rest I know nothing of ; but the thread of the story is entire without them.



CONTESTS AND DISSENSIONS IN  
ATHENS AND ROME.



"THE Dissensions in Athens and Rome" is Swift's first essay in politics. It was published shortly after his return to England in the company of his patron, Lord Berkeley, in 1701.

The year before had been a particularly critical one as regards the relationship between the representatives of the people and the monarchy. The Tories had strenuously opposed a Resumption Bill, by which King William's Dutch adherents were to continue to benefit from the estates in Ireland which had been forfeited after the Revolution of 1688. In the House of Commons, where the Tory element was very strong, William found his bitterest opponents. The Whig Upper House succeeded in helping him to a victory over the Resumption Bill, but the victory was dearly bought. Both houses took up an attitude to each other of determined opposition. The elections of February, 1701, resulted in a large addition to the Tory strength; this, with the fact of the death of the only surviving son of Princess Anne, compelled the king to make terms with the stronger party. The unpopular Partition Treaty was seized on as offering a ready excuse for the Tories' demands. They were not satisfied with the dismissal of the Whig Lord Chancellor, Lord Somers, but they took steps to impeach him along with Lords Orford, Halifax, and the Earl of Portland, for their share in the treaty. At the same time the Commons addressed William to remove these lords from his councils and court. The House of Lords took up the case of their fellow-peers, and petitioned the king to await the issue of their trial. It was at this juncture that Swift stepped in with his pamphlet. While being a defence of Somers, it brought both parties to a sense of the dangers they were courting by a piece of admirable comparison. Happily for Swift's reputation, events followed which justified his prognostications. The death of James II. ended in Louis XIV.'s acknowledgment of the Pretender. This roused the English people to an ardent expression of loyalty to William, and the November elections found Parliament strongly Whig, and all for the king.

Swift's avowal of the authorship brought him the friendship of Somers, Bishop Burnet, and the leaders of the Whig party. So highly was the pamphlet thought of, that it was considered by many that either Somers or the Bishop of Salisbury had written it.

The "balance of power" theory, which Swift assumes in this pamphlet, was one commonly accepted by the politicians of his day. The Revolution had upset the doctrine of the divine right of kings. Society was now considered, as Locke expounded it—a collection of individuals who had originally entered on a contract to give up some portion of their liberty in order to maintain the harmony of the body politic. This theory Swift found elaborated in detail in Harrington's "Oceana." It is not a theory which Swift could accept without many reservations. In spite of his antagonism to Hobbes, Swift had much in common with that acute thinker; and we find, in the course of this essay, that the power of the people becomes the power of the king. He felt instinctively that the dangers from a democracy were not a whit less harmful than those which had resulted from a monarchy. [T..S.]

A  
DISCOURSE  
OF THE  
*Contests and Dissensions*  
BETWEEN THE  
NOBLES and the COMMONS  
IN  
*ATHENS* and *ROME*,  
WITH THE  
Consequences they had upon both those  
STATES.

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— *Si tibi vera videtur*  
*Dede manus; & si falsa est accingere contra.*    Lucret.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for John Nutt near Stationers-Hall. 1701.





## DISCOURSE, &c.

### CHAP. I.

'TIS agreed, that in all government there is an absolute unlimited power, which naturally and originally seems to be placed in the whole body, wherever the executive part of it lies. This holds in the body natural ; for wherever we place the beginning of motion, whether from the head, or the heart, or the animal spirits in general, the body moves and acts by a consent of all its parts. This unlimited power, placed fundamentally in the body of a People, is what the best legislators of all ages have endeavoured, in their several schemes or institutions of government, to deposit in such hands as would preserve the people from rapine and oppression within, as well as violence from without. Most of them seem to agree in this, that it was a trust too great to be committed to any one man or assembly, and, therefore, they left the right still in the whole body ; but the administration or executive part, in the hands of the one, the few, or the many, into which three powers all independent bodies of men seem naturally to divide ; for by all I have read of those innumerable and petty commonwealths in Italy, Greece, and Sicily, as well as the great ones of Carthage and Rome, it seems to me, that a free People met together, whether by compact, or family government, as soon as they fall into any acts of civil society, do of themselves divide into three powers. The first is that of some one eminent spirit, who, having signalized his valour and fortune in defence of his country, or by the practice of popular arts at home, comes to have great influence on the people, to grow their leader in warlike expeditions, and to preside, after a sort, in their civil assemblies ; and this is grounded upon the principles of nature and common reason, which, in all difficulties or

dangers, where prudence or courage is required, rather incite us to fly for counsel or assistance to a single person, than a multitude. The second natural division of power is, of such men, who have acquired large possessions, and consequently dependencies, or descend from ancestors who have left them great inheritances, together with an hereditary authority. These easily uniting in thoughts and opinions, and acting in concert, begin to enter upon measures for securing their properties, which are best upheld by preparing against invasions from abroad, and maintaining peace at home ; this commences a great council, or Senate of Nobles, for the weighty affairs of the nation. The last division is, of the mass or body of the people, whose part of power is great and indisputable, whenever they can unite either collectively, or by deputation, to exert it. Now the three forms of government so generally known in the schools, differ only by the civil administration being placed in the hands of one, or sometimes two, (as in Sparta,) who were called Kings ; or in a senate, who were called the Nobles ; or in the people collective or representative, who may be called the Commons. Each of these had frequently the executive power in Greece, and sometimes in Rome ; but the power in the last resort was always meant by legislators to be held in balance among all three. And it will be an eternal rule in politics among every free people, that there is a balance of power to be carefully held by every state within itself, as well as among several states with each other.

The true meaning of a balance of power, either without or within a state, is best conceived by considering what the nature of a balance is. It supposes three things : First, the part which is held, together with the hand that holds it ; and then the two scales, with whatever is weighed therein. Now consider several states in a neighbourhood ; in order to preserve peace between these states, it is necessary they should be formed into a balance, whereof one or more are to be directors, who are to divide the rest into equal scales, and, upon occasion, remove from one into the other, or else fall with their own weight into the lightest ; so, in a state within itself, the balance must be held by a third hand, who is to deal the remaining power with the utmost exactness into the several scales. Now it is not necessary, that the power



should be equally divided between these three; for the balance may be held by the weakest, who, by his address and conduct, removing from either scale and adding of his own, may keep the scales duly poised. Such was that of the two kings of Sparta, the consular power in Rome, that of the kings of Media before the reign of Cyrus, as represented by Xenophon; and that of the several limited states in the Gothic institution.

When the balance is broken, whether by the negligence, folly, or weakness of the hand that held it, or by mighty weights fallen into either scale, the power will never continue long in equal division between the two remaining parties, but (till the balance is fixed anew) will run entirely into one. This gives the truest account of what is understood in the most ancient and approved Greek authors, by the word Tyranny, which is not meant for the seizing of the uncontrolled or absolute power into the hands of a single person (as many superficial men have grossly mistaken) but for the breaking of the balance by whatever hand, and leaving the power wholly in one scale: For tyranny and usurpation in a state are by no means confined to any number, as might easily appear from examples enough; and, because the point is material, I shall cite a few to prove it.

The Romans<sup>1</sup> having sent to Athens, and the Greek cities of Italy, for the copies of the best laws, chose ten legislators to put them into form, and, during the exercise of their office, suspended the consular power, leaving the administration of affairs in their hands. These very men, though chosen for such a work, as the digesting a body of laws for the government of a free state, did immediately usurp arbitrary power: ran into all the forms of it, had their guards and spies after the practice of the tyrants of those ages, affected kingly state, destroyed the Nobles, and oppressed the People; one of them proceeding so far as to endeavour to force a lady of great virtue: the very crime, which gave occasion to the expulsion of the regal power but sixty years before, as this attempt did to that of the Decemviri.

The Ephori in Sparta were at first only certain persons deputed by the kings to judge in civil matters, while they were employed in the wars. These men, at several times,

<sup>1</sup> Dionys. Hal. lib. 10.



usurped the absolute authority, and were as cruel tyrants as any in their age.

Soon after the unfortunate expedition into Sicily,<sup>1</sup> the Athenians chose four hundred men for administration of affairs, who became a body of tyrants, and were called, in the language of those ages, an Oligarchy, or Tyranny of the Few ; under which hateful denomination they were soon after deposed in great rage by the People.

When Athens was subdued by Lysander,<sup>2</sup> he appointed thirty men for the administration of that city, who immediately fell into the rankest tyranny ; but this was not all ; for, conceiving their power not founded on a basis large enough, they admitted three thousand into a share of the government ; and thus fortified, became the cruellest tyranny upon record. They murdered in cold blood great numbers of the best men, without any provocation, from the mere lust of cruelty, like Nero or Caligula. This was such a number of tyrants together, as amounted to near a third part of the whole city ; for Xenophon tells us,<sup>3</sup> that the city contained about ten thousand houses ; and allowing one man to every house, who could have any share in the government, (the rest consisting of women, children, and servants,) and making other obvious abatements, these tyrants, if they had been careful to adhere together, might have been a majority even of the people collective.

In the time of the second Punic war,<sup>4</sup> the balance of power in Carthage was got on the side of the people, and this to a degree, that some authors reckon the government to have been then among them a *dominatio plebis*, or Tyranny of the Commons ; which it seems they were at all times apt to fall into, and was at last among the causes that ruined their state : and the frequent murders of their generals, which Diodorus<sup>5</sup> tells us was grown to an established custom among them, may be another instance, that tyranny is not confined to numbers.

I shall mention but one example more among a great number that might be produced ; it is related by the author last cited.<sup>6</sup> The orators of the people at Argos (whether you

<sup>1</sup> Thucyd. lib. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Memorab. lib. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Lib. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Xenoph. de Rebus Græc. l. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Polyb. Frag. lib. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Lib. 15.

will style them, in modern phrase, great speakers of the house ; or only, in general, representatives of the people collective) stirred up the commons against the nobles, of whom 1600 were murdered at once ; and at last, the orators themselves, because they left off their accusations, or, to speak intelligibly, because they withdrew their impeachments ; having, it seems, raised a spirit they were not able to lay. And this last circumstance, as cases have lately stood, may perhaps be worth noting.

From what has been already advanced, several conclusions may be drawn.

First, That a mixed government, partaking of the known forms received in the schools, is by no means of Gothic invention, but hath place in nature and reason, seems very well to agree with the sentiments of most legislators, and to have been followed in most states, whether they have appeared under the name of monarchies, aristocracies, or democracies : For, not to mention the several republics of this composition in Gaul and Germany, described by Cæsar and Tacitus, Polybius tells us, the best government is that, which consists of three forms, *Regno, Optimatum, et Populi imperio* ;<sup>1</sup> which may be fairly translated, the King, Lords, and Commons. Such was that of Sparta, in its primitive institution by Lycurgus ; who, observing the corruptions and depravations to which every of these was subject, compounded his scheme out of all ; so that it was made up of *Reges, Seniores, et Populus*. Such also was the state of Rome under its consuls ; and the author tells us, that the Romans fell upon this model purely by chance, (which I take to have been nature and common reason,) but the Spartans by thought and design. And such at Carthage was the *summa reipublicæ*,<sup>2</sup> or power in the last resort ; for they had their kings, called *Suffetes*, and a Senate, which had the power of nobles, and the people had a share established too.

Secondly, It will follow, that those reasoners, who employ so much of their zeal, their wit, and their leisure for the upholding the balance of power in Christendom, at the same time that by their practices they are endeavouring to destroy it at home, are not such mighty patriots, or so much in the

<sup>1</sup> Frag. lib. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Id. ib.



true interest of their country, as they would affect to be thought, but seem to be employed like a man, who pulls down with his right hand what he has been building with his left.

Thirdly, This makes appear the error of those, who think it an uncontrollable maxim, that power is always safer lodged in many hands than in one: For, if these many hands be made up only from one of the three divisions before-mentioned, it is plain from those examples already produced, and easy to be paralleled in other ages and countries, that they are capable of enslaving the nation, and of acting all manner of tyranny and oppression, as it is possible for a single person to be, although we should suppose their number not only to be of four or five hundred, but above three thousand.

Again, it is manifest, from what has been said, that, in order to preserve the balance in a mixed state, the limits of power deposited with each party ought to be ascertained, and generally known. The defect of this is the cause that introduces those strugglings in a state, about Prerogative and Liberty; about Encroachments of the Few upon the Rights of the Many, and of the Many upon the Privileges of the Few, which ever did, and ever will, conclude in a Tyranny; first, either of the Few, or the Many; but at last, infallibly of a single person: For whichever of the three divisions in a state is upon the scramble for more power than its own, (as one or other of them generally is,) unless due care be taken by the other two, upon every new question that arises, they will be sure to decide in favour of themselves, talk much of *inherent Right*; they will nourish up a dormant power, and reserve privileges *in petto*, to exert upon occasions, to serve expedients, and to urge upon necessities; they will make large demands, and scanty concessions, ever coming off considerable gainers: Thus at length the balance is broke, and Tyranny let in, from which door of the three it matters not.

To pretend to a *declarative* right upon any occasion whatsoever, is little less than to make use of the whole power; that is, to declare an opinion to be law, which has always been contested, or perhaps never started at all before such an incident brought it on the stage. Not to consent to the enacting of such a law, which has no view beside the general



good, unless another law shall at the same time pass, with no other view but that of advancing the power of one party alone ; what is this but to claim a positive voice as well as a negative ?<sup>1</sup> To pretend that great changes and alienations of property have created new and great dependencies, and, consequently, new additions of power, as some reasoners have done, is a most dangerous tenet.<sup>2</sup> If dominion must follow property, let it follow in the same pace ; for, change in property through the bulk of a nation makes slow marches, and its due power always attends it. To conclude, that whatever attempt is begun by an assembly ought to be pursued to the end, without regard to the greatest incidents that may happen to alter the case ; to count it mean, and below the dignity of a house, to quit a prosecution ; to resolve upon a conclusion, before it is possible to be apprised of the premises ; to act thus, I say, is to affect not only absolute power, but infallibility too.<sup>3</sup> Yet such unaccountable proceedings as these have popular assemblies engaged in, for want of fixing the due limits of power and privilege.

Great changes may indeed be made in a government, yet the form continue, and the balance be held : But large intervals of time must pass between every such innovation, enough to melt down and make it of a piece with the constitution. Such, we are told, were the proceedings of Solon, when he modelled anew the Athenian Commonwealth ;

<sup>1</sup> On the second of April, 1701, the House of Commons sent up to the House of Peers the bill for the land-tax, to which they had coupled, or, as the phrase went, *tacked*, a clause for the sale of the forfeited estates in Ireland, to follow upon the resumption of the grants of the said estates, made by King William to the Countess of Orkney, his mistress, and to several of his favourites. This being thought to encroach upon the privileges of the peers, was the subject of warm discussion between the two Houses, and the bill was only passed by the special interference of the king, who dreaded the consequences of the dispute to which it gave rise. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> In the bill for resumption of the forfeited estates in Ireland was a clause for erecting a judicature to decide the claims touching the said property. And, in other respects, the House acted as if the peculiar extent and importance of these forfeitures had given the national council a greater title to interfere in the management of them, than in the disposal of escheats of less importance. [S.]

<sup>3</sup> Alluding to the commons declining to give up the impeachment of the four lords, although they experienced the difficulty of supporting it by specific articles of accusation. [S.]

and what convulsions in our own, as well as other states, have been bred by a neglect of this rule, is fresh and notorious enough : It is too soon, in all conscience, to repeat this error again.

Having shown, that there is a natural balance of power in all free states, and how it hath been divided, sometimes by the people themselves, as in Rome, at others by the institutions of the legislators, as in the several states of Greece and Sicily ; the next thing is to examine what methods have been taken to break or overthrow this balance, which every one of the three parties hath continually endeavoured, as opportunities have served ; as might appear from the stories of most ages and countries : For, absolute power in a particular state is of the same nature with universal monarchy in several states adjoining to each other. So endless and exorbitant are the desires of men, whether considered in their persons or their states, that they will grasp at all, and can form no scheme of perfect happiness with less. Ever since men have been united into governments, the hopes and endeavours after universal monarchy have been bandied among them, from the reign of Ninus, to this of the Most Christian King ; in which pursuits commonwealths have had their share, as well as monarchs : So the Athenians, the Spartans, the Thebans, and the Achaïans, did several times aim at the universal monarchy of Greece ; so the commonwealths of Carthage and Rome affected the universal monarchy of the then known world. In like manner has absolute power been pursued by the several parties of each particular state ; wherein single persons have met with most success, though the endeavours of the Few and the Many have been frequent enough ; but, being neither so uniform in their designs, nor so direct in their views, they neither could manage nor maintain the power they had got ; but were ever deceived by the popularity and ambition of some single person. So that it will be always a wrong step in policy, for the Nobles and Commons to carry their endeavours after power so far as to overthrow the balance : And it would be enough to damp their warmth in such pursuits, if they could once reflect, that in such a course they will be sure to run upon the very rock that they meant to avoid ; which, I suppose, they would have us think is the tyranny of a single person.



Many examples might be produced of the endeavours of each of these three rivals after absolute power ; but I shall suit my discourse to the time I am writing in, and relate only such dissensions in Greece and Rome, between the Nobles and Commons, with the consequences of them, wherein the latter were the aggressors.

I shall begin with Greece, where my observation shall be confined to Athens, though several instances might be brought from other states thereof.

## CHAP. II.

*Of the Dissensions in ATHENS, between the FEW and the MANY.*

THESEUS is the first who is recorded, with any appearance of truth, to have brought the Grecians from a barbarous manner of life, among scattered villages, into cities ; and to have established the popular state in Athens, assigning to himself the guardianship of the laws, and chief command in war. He was forced, after some time, to leave the Athenians to their own measures, upon account of their seditious temper, which ever continued with them, till the final dissolution of their government by the Romans. It seems, the country about Attica was the most barren of any in Greece ; through which means it happened, that the natives were never expelled by the fury of invaders, (who thought it not worth a conquest,) but continued always aborigines ; and therefore retained, through all revolutions, a tincture of that turbulent spirit wherewith their government began. This institution of Theseus appears to have been rather a sort of mixed monarchy than a popular state, and for aught we know, might continue so during the series of kings, till the death of Codrus. From this last prince, Solon was said to be descended ; who, finding the people engaged in two violent factions of the Poor and the Rich, and in great confusion thereupon ; refusing the monarchy which was offered him, chose rather to cast the government after another model, wherein he made due provision for settling the balance of power, choosing a senate of four hundred and disposing the magistracies and



offices according to men's estates ; leaving to the multitude their votes in electing, and the power of judging certain processes by appeal. This council of 400 was chosen, 100 out of each tribe, and seems to have been a body representative of the people ; though the people collective reserved a share of power to themselves. It is a point of history perplexed enough ; but this much is certain, that the balance of power was provided for ; else Pisistratus, called by authors the Tyrant of Athens, could never have governed so peaceably as he did, without changing any of Solon's laws.<sup>1</sup> These several powers, together with that of the Archon or chief magistrate, made up the form of government in Athens, at what time it began to appear upon the scene of action and story.

The first great man bred up under this institution was Miltiades, who lived about ninety years after Solon, and is reckoned to have been the first great captain, not only of Athens, but of all Greece. From the time of Miltiades to that of Phocion, who is looked upon as the last famous general of Athens, are about 130 years ; after which, they were subdued and insulted by Alexander's captains, and continued under several revolutions a small truckling state of no name or reputation, till they fell, with the rest of Greece, under the power of the Romans.

During this period from Miltiades to Phocion, I shall trace the conduct of the Athenians with relation to their dissensions between the People and some of their Generals ; who, at that time, by their power and credit in the army, in a warlike commonwealth, and often supported by each other, were, with the magistrates and other civil officers, a sort of counterpoise to the power of the people, who, since the death of Solon, had already made great encroachments. What these dissensions were, how founded, and what the consequences of them, I shall briefly and impartially relate.

I must here premise, that the Nobles in Athens were not at this time a corporate assembly, that I can gather ; therefore the resentments of the Commons were usually turned against particular persons, and by way of articles of impeachment. Whereas the Commons in Rome and some other

<sup>1</sup> Herodot. lib. I.

states, as will appear in a proper place, though they followed this method upon occasion, yet generally pursued the enlargement of their power by more set quarrels of one entire assembly against another. However, the custom of particular impeachments being not limited to former ages, any more than that of general struggles and dissensions between fixed assemblies of Nobles and Commons ; and the ruin of Greece having been owing to the former, as that of Rome was to the latter ; I shall treat on both expressly ; that those states who are concerned in either, (if, at least, there be any such now in the world,) may, by observing the means and issues of former dissensions, learn whether the causes are alike in theirs ; and if they find them to be so, may consider whether they ought not justly to apprehend the same effects.

To speak of every particular person impeached by the Commons of Athens, within the compass designed, would introduce the history of almost every great man they had among them. I shall therefore take notice only of six, who, living at that period of time when Athens was at the height of its glory, (as indeed it could not be otherwise while such hands were at the helm) though impeached for high crimes and misdemeanours, such as bribery, arbitrary proceedings, misapplying or embezzling public funds, ill conduct at sea, and the like, were honoured and lamented by their country as the preservers of it, and have had the veneration of all ages since paid justly to their memories.

Miltiades<sup>1</sup> was one of the Athenian generals against the Persian power, and the famous victory at Marathon was chiefly owing to his valour and conduct. Being sent some time after to reduce the Island of Paros, he mistook a great fire at a distance for the fleet, and being no ways a match for them, set sail for Athens : At his arrival he was impeached by the Commons for treachery, though not able to appear by reason of his wounds, fined 30,000 crowns, and died in prison. Though the consequences of this proceeding upon the affairs of Athens were no otherwise than by the untimely loss of so great and good a man, yet I could not forbear relating it.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Orford seems to be presented under the character of Miltiades, as well as under that of Themistocles ; as the cases of Pericles and Alcibiades both apply to the character of Halifax. [S.]



Their next great man was Aristides.<sup>1</sup> Beside the mighty service he had done his country in the wars ; he was a person of the strictest justice, and best acquainted with the laws as well as forms of their government, so that he was in a manner Chancellor of Athens. This man, upon a slight and false accusation of favouring arbitrary power, was banished by ostracism ; which, rendered into modern English, would signify, that they voted he should be removed from their presence and councils for ever. But they had soon the wit to recal him, and to that action owed the preservation of their state by his future services. For it must be still confessed in behalf of the Athenian People, that they never conceived themselves perfectly infallible, nor arrived to the heights of modern assemblies, to make obstinacy confirm what sudden heat and temerity began. They thought it not below the dignity of an assembly to endeavour at correcting an ill step ; at least to repent, though it often fell out too late.

Themistocles<sup>2</sup> was at first a Commoner himself. It was he that raised the Athenians to their greatness at sea, which he thought to be the true and constant interest of that Commonwealth ; and the famous naval victory over the Persians at Salamis was owing to his conduct. It seems the people observed somewhat of haughtiness in his temper and behaviour, and therefore banished him for five years ; but finding some slight matter of accusation against him, they sent to seize his person, and he hardly escaped to the Persian court ; from whence, if the love of his country had not surmounted its base ingratitude to him, he had many invitations to return at the head of the Persian fleet, and take a terrible revenge ; but he rather chose a voluntary death.

The people of Athens impeached Pericles<sup>3</sup> for misapplying the public revenues to his own private use. He had been a person of great deservings from the Republic, was an admirable speaker, and very popular. His accounts were confused, and he could not then give them up ;<sup>4</sup> therefore, merely to

<sup>1</sup> Lord Somers. [Orrery.]

<sup>2</sup> Admiral Russell, created Earl of Orford. [Orrery.]

<sup>3</sup> Under the fate of Pericles, and again under that of Alcibiades, Swift points out circumstances parallel to the case of Halifax. [S.]

<sup>4</sup> In Faulkner's edition (1735) this passage is given—"and he wanted time to adjust them." [T. S.]



divert that difficulty, and the consequences of it, he was forced to engage his country in the Peloponnesian war, the longest that ever was known in Greece, and which ended in the utter ruin of Athens.

The same people having resolved to subdue Sicily, sent a mighty fleet under the command of Nicias, Lamachus, and Alcibiades : the two former, persons of age and experience ; the last, a young man of noble birth, excellent education, and a plentiful fortune. A little before the fleet set sail, it seems, one night, the stone-images of Mercury, placed in several parts of the city, were all pined in the face : This action the Athenians interpreted for a design of destroying the popular state ; and Alcibiades, having been formerly noted for the like frolics and excursions, was immediately accused of this. He, whether conscious of his innocence, or assured of the secrecy, offered to come to his trial before he went to his command ; this the Athenians refused ; but as soon as he was got to Sicily, they sent for him back, designing to take the advantage, and prosecute him in the absence of his friends, and of the army, where he was very powerful. It seems, he understood the resentments of a popular assembly too well to trust them ; and, therefore, instead of returning, escaped to Sparta ; where his desires of revenge prevailing over his love to his country, he became its greatest enemy. Meanwhile the Athenians, before Sicily, by the death of one commander, and the superstition, weakness, and perfect ill-conduct of the other, were utterly destroyed, the whole fleet taken, and a miserable slaughter made of the army, whereof hardly one ever returned. Some time after this, Alcibiades was recalled upon his own conditions by the necessities of the People ; and made chief commander at sea and land ; but his lieutenant engaging against his positive orders, and being beaten by Lysander, Alcibiades was again disgraced and banished. However, the Athenians having lost all strength and heart since their misfortune at Sicily, and now deprived of the only person that was able to recover their losses, repent of their rashness, and endeavour in vain for his restoration ; the Persian lieutenant, to whose protection he fled, making him a sacrifice to the resentments of Lysander, the general of the Lacedemonians, who now reduces all the dominions of the Athenians, takes the city, razes

their walls, ruins their works, and changes the form of their government ; which, though again restored for some time by Thrasybulus, (as their walls were rebuilt by Conon,) yet here we must date the fall of the Athenian greatness ; the dominion and chief power in Greece from that period to the time of Alexander the Great, which was about fifty years, being divided between the Spartans and Thebans. Though Philip, Alexander's father, (the most Christian king of that age,) had indeed some time before begun to break in upon the republic of Greece by conquest or bribery, particularly dealing large money among some popular orators, by which he brought many of them (as the term of art was then) to Philippize.

In the time of Alexander and his captains, the Athenians were offered an opportunity of recovering their liberty, and being restored to their former state ; but the wise turn they thought to give the matter, was by an impeachment and sacrifice of the author to hinder the success. For, after the destruction of Thebes by Alexander ; this prince designing the conquest of Athens, was prevented by Phocion,<sup>1</sup> the Athenian general, then ambassador from that state ; who, by his great wisdom and skill at negotiations, diverted Alexander from his design, and restored the Athenians to his favour. The very same success he had with Antipater after Alexander's death, at which time the government was new regulated by Solon's laws : But Polyperchon, in hatred to Phocion, having by order of the young king, (whose governor he was,) restored those whom Phocion had banished, the plot succeeded ; Phocion was accused by popular orators, and put to death.

Thus was the most powerful commonwealth of all Greece, after great degeneracies from the institution of Solon, utterly destroyed by that rash, jealous, and inconstant humour of the People, which was never satisfied to see a general either victorious or unfortunate ; such ill judges, as well as rewarders, have Popular Assemblies been, of those who best deserved from them.

Now, the circumstance which makes these examples of more importance is, that this very power of the People in

<sup>1</sup> William Bentinck, Earl of Portland. [Orrery.]



Athens, claimed so confidently for an inherent right, and insisted on as the undoubted privilege of an Athenian born, was the rankest encroachment imaginable, and the grossest degeneracy from the form that Solon left them. In short, their government was grown into a *dominatio plebis*, or Tyranny of the People, who by degrees had broke and overthrew the balance, which that legislator had very well fixed and provided for. This appears not only from what has been already said of that lawgiver ; but more manifestly from a passage in Diodorus ;<sup>1</sup> who tells us, that Antipater, one of Alexander's captains, "abrogated the popular government (in Athens) and restored the power of suffrages and magistracy to such only as were worth two thousand drachmas ; by which means, (says he,) that Republic came to be [again] administered by the laws of Solon." By this quotation 'tis manifest that this great author looked upon Solon's institution, and a popular government, to be two different things. And as for this restoration by Antipater, it had neither consequence nor continuance worth observing.

I might easily produce many more examples, but these are sufficient : and it may be worth the reader's time to reflect a little on the merits of the cause, as well as of the men, who had been thus dealt with by their country. I shall direct him no further than by repeating, that Aristides<sup>2</sup> was the most renowned by the people themselves for his exact justice and knowledge in the law. That Themistocles<sup>3</sup> was a most fortunate admiral, and had got a mighty victory over the great King of Persia's fleet ; that Pericles<sup>4</sup> was an able minister of state, an excellent orator, and a man of letters ; and, lastly, that Phocion,<sup>5</sup> besides the success of his arms, was also renowned for his negotiations abroad, having in an embassy brought the greatest monarch of the world at that time to the terms of an honourable peace, by which his country was preserved.

I shall conclude my remarks upon Athens with the character given us of that People by Polybius. "About this time, (says he,) the Athenians were governed by two men, quite sunk in their affairs ; had little or no commerce with

<sup>1</sup> Lib. 18.<sup>4</sup> Halifax.<sup>2</sup> Somers.<sup>5</sup> Portland.<sup>3</sup> Orford.



the rest of Greece, and were become great reverencers of crowned heads."

For, from the time of Alexander's captains, till Greece was subdued by the Romans, (to the latter part of which this description of Polybius falls in,) Athens never produced one famous man either for counsels or arms, or hardly for learning. And, indeed, it was a dark insipid period through all Greece: for except the Achaian league under Aratus and Philopœmen,<sup>1</sup> and the endeavours of Agis and Cleomenes to restore the state of Sparta, so frequently harassed by tyrannies occasioned by the popular practices of the Ephori, there was very little worth recording. All which consequences may perhaps be justly imputed to this degeneracy of Athens.

### CHAP. III.

*Of the Dissensions between the PATRICIANS and PLEBEIANS in ROME, with the Consequences they had upon that State.*

HAVING in the foregoing Chapter confined myself to the proceedings of the Commons only, by the method of impeachments against particular persons, with the fatal effects they had upon the state of Athens; I shall now treat of the dissensions at Rome, between the People and the collective body of the Patricians or Nobles. It is a large subject, but I shall draw it into as narrow a compass as I can.

As Greece, from the most ancient accounts we have of it, was divided into several kingdoms, so was most part of Italy<sup>2</sup> into several petty commonwealths. And as those kings in Greece are said to have been deposed by their People upon the score of their arbitrary proceedings; so, on the contrary, the commonwealths of Italy were all swallowed up, and concluded in the tyranny of the Roman emperors. However, the differences between those Grecian monarchies and Italian Republics were not very great: for, by the accounts Homer gives us of those Grecian princes who came to the siege of Troy, as well as by several passages in the

<sup>1</sup> Polyb.

<sup>2</sup> Dionys. Halicar.

Odyssey ; it is manifest, that the power of these princes in their several states was much of a size with that of the kings in Sparta, the Archon at Athens, the Suffetes at Carthage, and the Consuls in Rome : So that a limited and divided power seems to have been the most ancient and inherent principle of both those People in matters of government. And such did that of Rome continue from the time of Romulus, though with some interruptions, to Julius Cæsar, when it ended in the tyranny of a single person. During which period (not many years longer than from the Norman conquest to our age) the Commons were growing by degrees into power and property, gaining ground upon the Patricians, as it were, inch by inch, till at last they quite overturned the balance, leaving all doors open to the practices of popular and ambitious men, who destroyed the wisest republic, and enslaved the noblest people that ever entered upon the stage of the world. By what steps and degrees this was brought to pass shall be the subject of my present enquiry.

While Rome was governed by kings, the monarchy was altogether elective. Romulus himself, when he had built the city, was declared king by the universal consent of the People, and by augury, which was there understood for Divine appointment. Among other divisions he made of the People, one was into Patricians and Plebeians : the former were like the Barons of England some time after the conquest ; and the latter are also described to be almost exactly what our Commons were then. For they were dependents upon the Patricians, whom they chose for their patrons and protectors, to answer for their appearance, and defend them in any process : they also supplied their patrons with money in exchange for their protection. This custom of patronage, it seems, was very ancient, and long practised among the Greeks.

Out of these Patricians Romulus chose a hundred to be a Senate, or Grand Council, for advice and assistance to him in the administration. The Senate, therefore, originally consisted all of nobles, and were of themselves a standing council, the People being only convoked upon such occasions, as by this institution of Romulus fell into their cognizance : Those were, to constitute magistrates, to give their votes for making laws, and to advise upon entering on a war. But



the two former of these popular privileges were to be confirmed by authority of the Senate ; and the last was only permitted at the King's pleasure. This was the utmost extent of power pretended to by the Commons in the time of Romulus ; all the rest being divided between the King and the Senate, the whole agreeing very nearly with the constitution of England for some centuries after the conquest.

After a year's interregnum from the death of Romulus, the Senate of their own authority chose a successor, and a stranger, merely upon the fame of his virtue, without asking the consent of the Commons ; which custom they likewise observed in the two following kings. But in the election of Tarquinius Priscus, the fifth king, we first hear mentioned, that it was done, *populi impetratâ veniâ* ; which indeed was but very reasonable for a free people to expect ; though I cannot remember, in my little reading, by what incidents they were brought to advance so great a step. However it were, this prince, in gratitude to the People, by whose consent he was chosen, elected a hundred Senators out of the Commons, whose number, with former additions, was now amounted to three hundred.

The People having once discovered their own strength, did soon take occasion to exert it, and that by very great degrees.<sup>1</sup> For at this king's death, (who was murdered by the sons of a former,) being at a loss for a successor, Servius Tullius, a stranger, and of mean extraction, was chosen protector of the kingdom by the People, without the consent of the Senate ; at which the Nobles being displeased, he wholly applied himself to gratify the Commons, and was by them declared and confirmed no longer protector, but King.

This prince first introduced the custom of giving freedom to servants, so as to become citizens of equal privileges with the rest, which very much contributed to increase the power of the People.

Thus in a very few years the Commons proceeded so far, as to wrest even the power of choosing a king entirely out of the hands of the Nobles ; which was so great a leap, and caused such a convulsion and struggle in the state, that the consti-

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the great rebellion, and protectorship of Oliver Cromwell. [S.]



tution could not bear it ; but civil dissensions arose, which immediately were followed by the tyranny of a single person, as this was by the utter subversion of the regal government, and by a settlement upon a new foundation. For the Nobles, spited at this indignity done them by the Commons, firmly united in a body, deposed this prince by plain force, and chose Tarquin the Proud,<sup>1</sup> who, running into all the forms and methods of tyranny, after a cruel reign, was expelled by a universal concurrence of Nobles and People, whom the miseries of his reign had reconciled.

When the Consular government began, the balance of power between the Nobles and Plebeians was fixed anew. The two first Consuls were nominated by the Nobles, and confirmed by the Commons ; and a law was enacted, That no person should bear any magistracy in Rome, *injussu populi* ; that is, without consent of the Commons.

In such turbulent times as these, many of the poorer citizens had contracted numerous debts, either to the richer sort among themselves, or to senators and other nobles : and the case of debtors in Rome for the first four centuries<sup>2</sup> was, after the set time for payment, no choice but either to pay or be the creditor's slave. In this juncture, the Commons leave the city in mutiny and discontent, and will not return but upon condition to be acquitted of all their debts ; and moreover, that certain magistrates be chosen yearly ; whose business it shall be to defend the Commons from injuries. These are called Tribunes of the People, their persons are held sacred and inviolable, and the People bind themselves by oath never to abrogate the office. By these Tribunes, in process of time, the People were grossly imposed on to serve the turns and occasions of revengeful or ambitious men, and to commit such exorbitances, as could not end but in the dissolution of the government.

These Tribunes, a year or two after their institution, kindled great dissensions between the Nobles and the Commons on the account of Coriolanus, a nobleman, whom the latter had impeached, and the consequences of whose impeachment (if I had not confined myself to Grecian examples for that part of my subject) had like to have been so fatal to their

<sup>1</sup> James II. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> Ab urbe condita.

state. And from this time, the Tribunes began a custom of accusing to the People whatever noble they pleased, several of whom were banished or put to death in every age.

At this time the Romans were very much engaged in wars with their neighbouring states ; but upon the least intervals of peace, the quarrels between the Nobles and the Plebeians would revive ; and one of the most frequent subjects of their differences was the conquered lands, which the Commons would fain have divided among the public ; but the Senate could not be brought to give their consent.<sup>1</sup> For, several of the wisest among the Nobles began to apprehend the growing power of the People ; and therefore knowing what an accession thereof would accrue to them by such an addition of property, used all means to prevent it : for this the Appian family was most noted, and thereupon most hated by the Commons. One of them having made a speech against this division of lands, was impeached by the People of high treason, and a day appointed for his trial ; but disdaining to make his defence, chose rather the usual Roman remedy of killing himself : after whose death the Commons prevailed, and the lands were divided among them.

This point was no sooner gained, but new dissensions began ; for the Plebeians would fain have a law enacted to lay all men's rights and privileges upon the same level ; and to enlarge the power of every magistrate within his own jurisdiction, as much as that of the Consuls. The Tribunes also obtained to have their numbers doubled, which before was five ; and the author tells us, that their insolence and power increased with their number, and the seditions were also doubled with it.<sup>2</sup>

By the beginning of the fourth century from the building of Rome, the Tribunes proceeded so far in the name of the Commons, as to accuse and fine the Consuls themselves, who represented the kingly power. And the Senate observing, how in all contentions they were forced to yield to the Tribunes and People, thought it their wisest course to give way also to time : therefore a decree was made to send ambassadors to Athens, and to the other Grecian commonwealths planted in that part of Italy called Græcia Major, to

<sup>1</sup> Allusion to the forfeited lands in Ireland. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> Dionys. Halicar.



make a collection of the best laws ; out of which, and some of their own, a new complete body of law was formed, afterward known by the name of the Laws of the Twelve Tables.

To digest these laws into order, ten men were chosen, and the administration of all affairs left in their hands ; what use they made of it has been already shown. It was certainly a great revolution, produced entirely by the many unjust encroachments of the People ; and might have wholly changed the fate of Rome, if the folly and vice of those, who were chiefly concerned, could have suffered it to take root.

A few years after, the Commons made farther advances on the power of the Nobles ; demanding among the rest, that the Consulship, which hitherto had only been disposed to the former, should now lie in common to the pretensions of any Roman whatsoever. This, although it failed at present, yet afterward obtained, and was a mighty step to the ruin of the commonwealth.

What I have hitherto said of Rome has been chiefly collected out of that exact and diligent writer Dionysius Halicarnasseus ; whose history (through the injury of time) reaches no farther than to the beginning of the fourth century after the building of Rome. The rest I shall supply from other authors, though I do not think it necessary to deduce this matter any farther so very particularly as I have hitherto done.

To point at what time the balance of power was most equally held between the Lords and Commons in Rome would perhaps admit a controversy. Polybius tells us,<sup>1</sup> that in the second Punic war the Carthaginians were declining, because the balance was got too much on the side of the People, whereas the Romans were in their greatest vigour by the power remaining in the Senate ; yet this was between two and three hundred years after the period Dionysius ends with ; in which time the Commons had made several farther acquisitions. This, however, must be granted, that, (till about the middle of the fourth century,) when the Senate appeared resolute at any time upon exerting their authority, and adhered closely together, they did often carry their point. Besides, it is observed by the best authors,<sup>2</sup> that in all the

<sup>1</sup> Fragm. lib. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Dionys. Hal. Plutarch, &c.



quarrels and tumults at Rome, from the expulsion of the kings; though the People frequently proceeded to rude contumelious language, and sometimes so far as to pull and hale one another about the forum; yet no blood was ever drawn in any popular commotions, till the time of the Gracchi. However, I am of opinion, that the balance had begun many years before to lean to the popular side. But this default was corrected, partly by the principle just mentioned, of never drawing blood in a tumult; partly by the warlike genius of the People, which in those ages was almost perpetually employed; and partly by their great commanders, who, by the credit they had in their armies, fell into the scales as a farther counterpoise to the growing power of the People. Besides, Polybius, who lived in the time of Scipio Africanus the younger, had the same apprehensions of the continual encroachments made by the Commons; and being a person of as great abilities, and as much sagacity as any of his age; from observing the corruptions, which, he says, had already entered into the Roman constitution, did very nearly foretel what would be the issue of them. His words are very remarkable, and with little addition may be rendered to this purpose:<sup>1</sup> “That those abuses and corruptions, which in time destroy a government, are sown along with the very seeds of it, and both grow up together; and that as rust eats away iron, and worms devour wood, and both are a sort of plagues born and bred along with the substance they destroy; so with every form and scheme of government that man can invent, some vice or corruption creeps in with the very institution, which grows up along with, and at last destroys it.” The same author,<sup>2</sup> in another place, ventures so far as to guess at the particular fate which would attend the Roman government. He says, its ruin would arise from the popular tumults, which would introduce a *dominatio plebis*, or Tyranny of the People; wherein it is certain he had reason; and therefore might have adventured to pursue his conjectures so far, as to the consequences of a popular tyranny, which, as perpetual experience teaches, never fails to be followed by the arbitrary government of a single person.

About the middle of the fourth century from the building

<sup>1</sup> Lib. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Fragm. lib. 6.

of Rome, it was declared lawful for nobles and plebeians to intermarry ; which custom, among many other states, has proved the most effectual means to ruin the former, and raise the latter.

And now the greatest employments in the state were, one after another, by laws forcibly enacted by the Commons, made free to the People ; the Consulship itself, the office of Censor, that of the Quæstors or Commissioners of the Treasury, the office of Prætor or Chief Justice, the priesthood, and even that of Dictator. The Senate, after long opposition, yielding, merely for present quiet, to the continual urging clamours of the Commons, and of the Tribunes their advocates. A law was likewise enacted, that the *plebiscita*, or a Vote of the House of Commons, should be of universal obligation ; nay, in time the method of enacting laws was wholly inverted : for, whereas the Senate used of old to confirm the *plebiscita* ; the People did at last, as they pleased, confirm or disannul the *senatusconsulta*.<sup>1</sup>

Appius Claudius brought in a custom of admitting to the Senate the sons of freedmen, or of such who had once been slaves ; by which, and succeeding alterations of the like nature, that great council degenerated into a most corrupt and factious body of men, divided against itself, and its authority became despised.

The century and half following, to the end of the third Punic war by the destruction of Carthage, was a very busy period at Rome : the intervals between every war being so short, that the Tribunes and People had hardly leisure or breath to engage in domestic dissensions : however, the little time they could spare was generally employed the same way. So, Terentius Leo, a Tribune, is recorded to have basely prostituted the privileges of a Roman citizen, in perfect spite to the Nobles. So, the great African Scipio and his brother, after all their mighty services, were impeached by an ungrateful Commons.

However, the warlike genius of the people, and continual employment they had for it, served to divert this humour from running into a head, till the age of the Gracchi.

These persons, entering the scene in the time of a full peace,

<sup>1</sup> Dionys. Hal. lib. ii.



fell violently upon advancing the power of the People, by reducing into practice all those encroachments which they had been so many years gaining. There were at that time certain conquered lands to be divided, besides a great private estate left by a king. These, the Tribunes, by procurement of the elder Gracchus, declared by their legislative authority, were not to be disposed of by the Nobles, but by the Commons only. The younger brother pursued the same design ; and, besides, obtained a law, that all Italians should vote at elections, as well as the citizens of Rome : in short, the whole endeavours of them both perpetually turned upon retrenching the Nobles' authority in all things, but especially in the matter of judicature. And although they both lost their lives in those pursuits, yet they traced out such ways as were afterward followed by Marius, Sylla, Pompey, and Cæsar, to the ruin of the Roman freedom and greatness.

For in the time of Marius, Saturninus, a Tribune, procured a law, that the Senate should be bound by oath to agree to whatever the People would enact : and Marius, himself, while he was in that office of Tribune, is recorded to have with great industry used all endeavours for depressing the Nobles, and raising the People ; particularly for cramping the former in their power of judicature, which was their most ancient inherent right.

Sylla, by the same measures, became absolute tyrant of Rome ; he added three hundred Commons to the Senate, which perplexed the power of the whole order, and rendered it ineffectual ; then flinging off the mask, he abolished the office of Tribune, as being only a scaffold to tyranny, whereof he had no farther use.

As to Pompey and Cæsar, Plutarch tells us, that their union for pulling down the Nobles (by their credit with the People) was the cause of the civil war, which ended in the tyranny of the latter ; both of them in their consulships having used all endeavours and occasions for sinking the authority of the Patricians, and giving way to all encroachments of the People, wherein they expected best to find their own account.

From this deduction of popular encroachments in Rome, the reader will easily judge, how much the balance was fallen upon that side. Indeed, by this time the very foundation



was removed, and it was a moral impossibility that the Republic could subsist any longer. For the Commons having usurped the offices of state, and trampled on the Senate, there was no government left but a *dominatio plebis*. Let us therefore examine how they proceeded in this conjuncture.

I think it is an universal truth, that the People are much more dexterous at pulling down and setting up, than at preserving what is fixed; and they are not fonder of seizing more than their own, than they are of delivering it up again to the worst bidder, with their own into the bargain. For, although in their corrupt notions of divine worship, they are apt to multiply their gods; yet their earthly devotion is seldom paid to above one idol at a time, of their own creation; whose oar they pull with less murmuring, and much more skill, than when they share the lading, or even hold the helm.

The several provinces of the Roman empire were now governed by the great men of their state; those upon the frontiers, with powerful armies, either for conquest or defence. These governors, upon any designs of revenge or ambition, were sure to meet with a divided power at home, and therefore bent all their thoughts and applications to close in with the People, who were now by many degrees the stronger party. Two of the greater spirits that Rome ever produced happened to live at the same time, and to be engaged in the same pursuit; and this at a conjuncture the most dangerous for such a contest. These were Pompey and Cæsar, two stars of such a magnitude, that their conjunction was as likely to be fatal as their opposition.

The Tribunes and People, having now subdued all competitors, began the last game of a prevalent populace, which is that of choosing themselves a master; while the Nobles foresaw, and used all endeavours left them to prevent it. The People at first made Pompey their admiral, with full power over all the Mediterranean; soon after Captain-General of all the Roman forces, and governor of Asia. Pompey, on the other side, restored the office of Tribune, which Sylla had put down; and in his Consulship procured a law for examining into the miscarriages of men in office or command for twenty years past. Many other examples of Pompey's popularity are left us on record, who was a perfect favourite

of the People, and designed to be more ; but his pretensions grew stale for want of a timely opportunity of introducing them upon the stage. For Cæsar, with his legions in Gaul, was a perpetual check upon his designs ; and in the arts of pleasing the People, did soon after get many lengths beyond him. For he tells us himself, that the Senate, by a bold effort, having made some severe decrees against his proceedings, and against the Tribunes ; these all left the city, and went over to his party, and consequently along with them the affections and interests of the People ; which is farther manifest from the accounts he gives us of the citizens in several towns mutinying against their commanders, and delivering both to his devotion. Besides, Cæsar's public and avowed pretensions for beginning the civil war were, to restore the Tribunes and the People, oppressed (as he pretended) by the Nobles.

This forced Pompey, against his inclinations, upon the necessity of changing sides, for fear of being forsaken by both ; and of closing in with the Senate and chief magistrates, by whom he was chosen general against Cæsar.

Thus at length the Senate (at least the primitive part of them, the Nobles) under Pompey, and the Commons under Cæsar, came to a final decision of the long quarrels between them. For, I think, the ambition of private men did by no means begin or occasion this war ; though civil dissensions never fail of introducing and spiring the ambition of private men ; who thus become indeed the great instruments for deciding such quarrels, and at last are sure to seize on the prize. But no man that sees a flock of vultures hovering over two armies ready to engage, can justly charge the blood drawn in the battle to them, though the carcasses fall to their share. For, while the balance of power is equally held, the ambition of private men, whether orators or great commanders, gives neither danger nor fear, nor can possibly enslave their country ; but that once broken, the divided parties are forced to unite each to its head, under whose conduct or fortune one side is at first victorious, and at last both are slaves. And to put it past dispute, that this entire subversion of the Roman liberty and constitution was altogether owing to those measures which had broke the balance between the Patricians and Plebeians, whereof the ambition of



particular men was but an effect and consequence ; we need only consider, that when the uncorrupted part of the Senate had, by the death of Cæsar, made one great effort to restore the former state and liberty ; the success did not answer their hopes ; but that whole assembly was so sunk in its authority, that those patriots were forced to fly, and give way to the madness of the People ; who, by their own dispositions, stirred up with the harangues of their orators, were now wholly bent upon single and despotic slavery. Else, how could such a profligate as Antony, or a boy of eighteen, like Octavius, ever dare to dream of giving the law to such an empire and People ? Wherein the latter succeeded, and entailed the vilest tyranny that Heaven, in its anger, ever inflicted on a corrupt and poisoned People. And this, with so little appearance at Cæsar's death, that when Cicero wrote to Brutus, how he had prevailed by his credit with Octavius to promise him (Brutus) pardon and security for his person ; that great Roman received the notice with the utmost indignity, and returned Cicero an answer, (yet upon record,) full of the highest resentment and contempt for such an offer, and from such a hand.

Here ended all show or shadow of liberty in Rome. Here was the repository of all the wise contentions and struggles for power between the Nobles and Commons, lapped up safely in the bosom of a Nero and a Caligula, a Tiberius and a Domitian.

Let us now see, from this deduction of particular impeachments, and general dissensions in Greece and Rome, what conclusions may naturally be formed for instruction of any other state, that may haply upon many points labour under the like circumstances.

#### CHAP. IV.

UPON the subject of impeachments we may observe, that the custom of accusing the Nobles to the People, either by themselves, or their orators, (now styled An Impeachment in the Name of the Commons,) has been very ancient both in Greece and Rome, as well as Carthage ; and therefore



may seem to be the inherent right of a free People ; nay, perhaps it is really so ; but then it is to be considered, first, that this custom was peculiar to republics, or such states where the administration lay principally in the hands of the Commons, and ever raged more or less, according to their encroachments upon absolute power ; having been always looked upon by the wisest men and best authors of those times as an effect of licentiousness, and not of liberty ; a distinction, which no multitude, either represented or collective, has been at any time very nice in observing. However, perhaps this custom in a popular state, of impeaching particular men, may seem to be nothing else, but the People's choosing upon occasion to exercise their own jurisdiction in person ; as if a king of England should sit as chief justice in his court of King's Bench ; which, they say, in former times he sometimes did. But in Sparta, which was called a kingly government, though the People were perfectly free, yet because the administration was in the two kings and the Ephori, (with the assistance of the Senate,) we read of no impeachments by the People. Nor was the process against great men, either upon account of ambition or ill conduct, though it reached sometimes to kings themselves, ever formed that way, as I can recollect, but only passed through those hands where the administration lay. So likewise, during the regal government in Rome, though it was instituted a mixed monarchy, and the People made great advances in power, yet I do not remember to have read of one impeachment from the Commons against a patrician, until the consular state began, and the People had made great encroachments upon the administration.

Another thing to be considered is, that, allowing this right of impeachment to be as inherent as they please : yet, if the Commons have been perpetually mistaken in the merits of the causes and the persons, as well as in the consequences of such impeachments upon the peace of the state ; we cannot conclude less, than that the Commons in Greece and Rome (whatever they may be in other states) were by no means qualified, either as prosecutors or judges in such matters ; and, therefore, that it would have been prudent to reserve these privileges dormant, never to be produced but upon very great and urging occasions, where the state is in apparent

danger, the universal body of the people in clamours against the administration, and no other remedy in view. But for a few popular orators or tribunes, upon the score of *personal piques*; or *to employ the pride they conceive in seeing themselves at the head of a party*; or *as a method for advancement*; or *moved by certain powerful arguments that could make Demosthenes philippize*: for such men, I say, when the state would of itself gladly be quiet, and hath, besides, affairs of the last importance upon the anvil, to impeach Miltiades, *after a great naval victory, for not pursuing the Persian fleet*; to impeach Aristides, *the person most versed among them in the knowledge and practice of their laws, for a blind suspicion of his acting in an arbitrary way, (that is, as they expound it, not in concert with the People)*; to impeach Pericles, *after all his services, for a few inconsiderable accounts*; or to impeach Phocion, *who had been guilty of no other crime but negotiating a treaty for the peace and security of his country*: what could the continuance of such proceedings end in, but the utter discouragement of all virtuous actions and persons, and consequently in the ruin of a state? Therefore the historians of those ages seldom fail to set this matter in all its lights; leaving us in the highest and most honourable ideas of those persons, who suffered by the persecution of the People, together with the fatal consequences they had, and how the persecutors seldom failed to repent, when it was too late.

These impeachments perpetually falling upon many of the best men both in Greece and Rome, are a cloud of witnesses, and examples enough to discourage men of virtue and abilities from engaging in the service of the public; and help on the other side to introduce the ambitious, the covetous, the superficial, and the ill designing; who are as apt to be bold, and forward, and meddling, as the former are to be cautious, and modest, and reserved. This was so well known in Greece, that an eagerness after employments in the state was looked upon by wise men as the worst title a man could set up; and made Plato say; "That if all men were as good as they ought to be, the quarrel in a commonwealth would be, not, as it is now, who *should* be ministers of state, but who should *not* be so." And Socrates is introduced by Xenophon,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lib. iii. Memorab.



severely chiding a friend of his for not entering into the public service, when he was every way qualified for it. Such a backwardness there was at that time among good men to engage with a usurping People, and a set of pragmatistical ambitious orators. And Diodorus tells us,<sup>1</sup> that when the petalism<sup>2</sup> was erected at Syracuse, in imitation of the ostracism at Athens, it was so notoriously levelled against all who had either birth or merit to recommend them, that whoever possessed either withdrew for fear, and would have no concern in public affairs. So that the people themselves were forced to abrogate it, for fear of bringing all things into confusion.

There is one thing more to be observed, wherein all the popular impeachments in Greece and Rome seem to have agreed ; and that was, a notion they had of being concerned in point of honour to condemn whatever person they impeached ; however frivolous the articles were upon which they began, or however weak the surmises whereon they were to proceed in their proofs. For, to conceive that the body of the People could be mistaken, was an indignity not to be imagined, till the consequences had convinced them, when it was past remedy. And I look upon this as a fate to which all popular accusations are subject ; although I should think that the saying, *Vox populi vox Dei*, ought to be understood of the universal bent and current of a People, not of the bare majority of a few representatives ; which is often procured by little arts, and great industry and application ; wherein those, who engage in the pursuits of malice and revenge, are much more sedulous than such as would prevent them.

From what has been deduced of the dissensions in Rome between the two bodies of Patricians and Plebeians, several reflections may be made.

First, That when the balance of power is duly fixed in a state, nothing is more dangerous or unwise than to give way to the first steps of popular encroachments, which is usually done either in hopes of procuring ease and quiet from some vexatious clamour, or else *made merchandize, and merely*

<sup>1</sup> Lib. II.

<sup>2</sup> Popular votes of banishment by petalism were so called, because the voters inscribed the name of the accused person on a leaf, as in the ostracism it was marked on a shell. [S.]



*bought and sold.* This is breaking into a constitution to serve a present expedient, or supply a present exigency: the remedy of an empiric, to stifle the present pain, but with certain prospect of sudden and terrible returns. When a child grows easy and content by being humoured; and when a lover becomes satisfied by small compliances, without farther pursuits; then expect to find popular assemblies content with small concessions. If there could one single example be brought from the whole compass of history, of any one popular assembly, who, after beginning to contend for power, ever sat down quietly with a certain share; or if one instance could be produced of a popular assembly that ever knew, or proposed, or declared what share of power was their due; then might there be some hopes that it were a matter to be adjusted by reasonings, by conferences, or debates: but since all that is manifestly otherwise, I see no other course to be taken in a settled state, than a steady constant resolution in those, to whom the rest of the balance is entrusted, never to give way so far to popular clamours, as to make the least breach in the constitution, through which a million of abuses and encroachments will certainly in time force their way.

Again, from this deduction it will not be difficult to gather and assign certain marks of popular encroachments; by observing which, those who hold the balance in a state may judge of the degrees, and, by early remedies and application, put a stop to the fatal consequences that would otherwise ensue. What those marks are has been at large deduced, and need not be here repeated.

Another consequence is this, that (with all respect for popular assemblies be it spoken) it is hard to recollect one folly, infirmity, or vice, to which a single man is subjected, and from which a body of commons, either collective or represented, can be wholly exempt. For, beside that they are composed of men with all their infirmities about them, they have also the ill fortune to be generally led and influenced by the very worst among themselves, I mean popular orators, tribunes, or, as they are now styled, great speakers, leading men, and the like. Whence it comes to pass, that in their results we have sometimes found the same spirit of cruelty and revenge, of malice and pride, the same

blindness and obstinacy and unsteadiness, the same ungovernable rage and anger, the same injustice, sophistry, and fraud, that ever lodged in the breast of any individual.

Again, in all free states, the evil to be avoided is tyranny, that is to say, the *summa imperii*, or unlimited power solely in the hands of the One, the Few, or the Many. Now, we have shown, that although most revolutions of government in Greece and Rome began with the Tyranny of the People, yet they generally concluded in that of a single person ; so that a usurping populace is its own dupe, a mere underworker, and a purchaser in trust for some single tyrant, whose state and power they advance to their own ruin, with as blind an instinct as those worms that die with weaving magnificent habits for beings of a superior nature to their own.

## CHAP. V.

SOME reflections upon the late public proceedings among us, and that variety of factions into which we are still so intricately engaged, gave occasion to this discourse. I am not conscious, that I have forced one example, or put it into any other light than it appeared to me long before I had thought of producing it.

I cannot conclude, without adding some particular remarks upon the present posture of affairs and dispositions in this kingdom.

The fate of empire is grown a common-place : that all forms of government having been instituted by men, must be mortal like their authors, and have their periods of duration limited, as well as those of private persons. 'This is a truth of vulgar knowledge and observation : but there are few who turn their thoughts to examine how those diseases in a state are bred, that hasten its end ; which would, however, be a very useful inquiry. For, although we cannot prolong the period of a commonwealth beyond the decree of Heaven, or the date of its nature, any more than human life beyond the strength of the seminal virtue, yet we may manage a sickly constitution, and preserve a strong one ; we may watch and



prevent accidents ; we may turn off a great blow from without, and purge away an ill humour that is lurking within : and by these, and other such methods, render a state long-lived, though not immortal. Yet some physicians have thought, that if it were practicable to keep the several humours of the body in an exact equal balance of each with its opposite, it might be immortal, and so perhaps would a political body, if the balance of power could be always held exactly even. But, I doubt, this is as impossible in practice as the other.

It has an appearance of fatality, and that the period of a state approacheth, when a concurrence of many circumstances, both within and without, unite toward its ruin ; while the whole body of the People are either stupidly negligent, or else giving in with all their might to those very practices that are working their destruction. To see whole bodies of men breaking a constitution by the very same errors that so many have been broke before ; to observe opposite parties who can agree in nothing else, yet firmly united in such measures as must certainly ruin their country ; in short, to be encompassed with the greatest dangers from without, to be torn by many virulent factions within ; then to be secure and senseless under all this, and to make it the very least of our concern ; these, and some others that might be named, appear to me to be the most likely symptoms in a state of a sickness unto death.

*Quod procul a nobis flectat fortuna gubernans :  
Et ratio potius, quam res persuadeat ipsa.*

LUCRET.

There are some conjunctures, wherein the death or dissolution of government is more lamentable in its consequences, than it would be in others. And, I think, a state can never arrive to its period in a more deplorable crisis, than at a time when some prince in the neighbourhood, of vast power and ambition, lies hovering like a vulture to devour, or, at least, dismember its dying carcase ; by which means it becomes only a province or acquisition to some mighty monarchy, without hopes of a resurrection.

I know very well, there is a set of sanguine tempers, who deride and ridicule, in the number of fopperies, all such ap-



prehensions as these. They have it ready in their mouths, that the people of England are of a genius and temper never to admit slavery among them ; and they are furnished with a great many common-places upon that subject. But it seems to me, that such discoursers do reason upon short views, and a very moderate compass of thought. For, I think it a great error to count upon the genius of a nation as a standing argument in all ages, since there is hardly a spot of ground in Europe, where the inhabitants have not frequently and entirely changed their temper and genius. Neither can I see any reason, why the genius of a nation should be more fixed in the point of government than in their morals, their learning, their religion, their common humour and conversation, their diet and their complexion ; which do all notoriously vary almost in every age, and may every one of them have great effects upon men's notions of government.

Since the Norman conquest, the balance of power in England has often varied, and sometimes been wholly overturned. The part which the Commons had in it, that most disputed point in its original, progress, and extent, was, by their own confessions, but a very inconsiderable share. Generally speaking, they have been gaining ever since, although with frequent interruptions and slow progress. The abolishing of villanage, together with the custom introduced (or permitted) among the Nobles, of selling their lands in the reign of Henry the Seventh, was a mighty addition to the power of the Commons : yet I think a much greater happened in the time of his successor, at the dissolution of the abbey ; for this turned the clergy wholly out of the scale, who had so long filled it, and placed the Commons in their stead, who, in a few years, became possessed of vast quantities of those and other lands, by grant or purchase. About the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign, I take the power between the Nobles and the Commons to have been in more equal balance, than it was ever before or since. But then, or soon after, arose a faction in England, which, under the name of Puritan, began to grow popular, by moulding up their new schemes of religion with republican principles in government ; and, gaining upon the prerogative as well as the Nobles, under several denominations, for the space of about sixty years, did at last overthrow the constitution, and, according to the usual course

of such revolutions, did introduce a Tyranny, first of the People, and then of a single person.

In a short time after, the old government was revived. But the progress of affairs for almost thirty years, under the reigns of two weak princes,<sup>1</sup> is a subject of a different nature ; when the balance was in danger to be overturned by the hands that held it, which was at last very seasonably prevented by the late revolution. However, as it is the talent of human nature to run from one extreme to another, so in a very few years we have made mighty leaps from prerogative heights into the depth of popularity, and I doubt to the very last degree that our constitution will bear. It were to be wished, that the most august assembly of the Commons would please to form a Pandect of their own power and privileges, to be confirmed by the entire legislative authority, and that in as solemn a manner (if they please) as the *Magna Charta*. But to fix one foot of their compass wherever they think fit, and extend the other to such terrible lengths, without describing any circumference at all, is to leave us and ourselves in a very uncertain state, and in a sort of rotation, that the author of the *Oceana*<sup>2</sup> never dreamed on. I believe the most hardy tribune will not venture to affirm at present, that any just fears of encroachment are given us from the regal power, or the Few : and is it then impossible to err on the other side ? How far must we proceed, or where shall we stop ? The raging of the sea, and the madness of the people, are put together in Holy Writ ; and it is God alone who can say to either, *Hitherto shalt thou pass, and no farther*.

The balance of power in a limited state is of such absolute necessity, that Cromwell himself, before he had perfectly confirmed his tyranny, having some occasions for the appearance of a parliament, was forced to create and erect an entire new House of Lords (such as it was) for a counterpoise to the Commons. And, indeed, considering the vileness of

<sup>1</sup> Charles II. and James II. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Mr. James Harrington, who, in the time of the Commonwealth, published an Utopian scheme of government, entitled, "The Commonwealth of Oceana." Several speculative persons, and among others Mr. Henry Neville, embraced his visions, and held a club called the Rota, in Palace Yard, Westminster, to consider of means to make his plan efficient. One article was that a part of the senate should go out by rote, and become incapable of serving for a certain time. [S.]



the clay, I have sometimes wondered, that no tribune of that age durst ever venture to ask the potter, What dost thou make? But it was then about the last act of a popular usurpation; and Fate, or Cromwell, had already prepared them for that of a single person.

I have been often amazed at the rude, passionate, and mistaken results, which have at certain times fallen from great assemblies, both ancient and modern, and of other countries as well as our own. This gave me the opinion, I mentioned a while ago, that public conventions are liable to all the infirmities, follies, and vices of private men. To which, if there be any exception, it must be of such assemblies, who act by universal concert, upon public principles, and for public ends; such as proceed upon debates without unbecoming warmths, or influence from particular leaders and inflamers; such, whose members, instead of canvassing to procure majorities for their private opinions, are ready to comply with general sober results, though contrary to their own sentiments. Whatever assemblies act by these, and other methods of the like nature, must be allowed to be exempt from several imperfections, to which particular men are subjected. But I think the source of most mistakes and miscarriages in matters debated by public assemblies, ariseth from the influence of private persons upon great numbers, styled, in common phrase, leading men and parties. And, therefore, when we sometimes meet a few words put together, which is called the Vote or Resolution of an Assembly, and which we cannot possibly reconcile to prudence, or public good, it is most charitable to conjecture, that such a Vote has been conceived, and born, and bred in a private brain; afterward raised and supported by an obsequious party; and then with usual methods confirmed by an artificial majority. For, let us suppose five hundred men, mixed in point of sense and honesty, as usually assemblies are; and let us suppose these men proposing, debating, resolving, voting, according to the mere natural motions of their own little or much reason and understanding; I do allow, that abundance of indigested and abortive, many pernicious and foolish overtures would arise, and float a few minutes; but then they would die and disappear. Because, this must be said in behalf of human kind, that common sense and plain



reason, while men are disengaged from acquired opinions, will ever have some general influence upon their minds ; whereas the species of folly and vice are infinite, and so different in every individual, that they could never procure a majority, if other corruptions did not enter to pervert men's understandings, and misguide their wills.

To describe how parties are bred in an assembly, would be a work too difficult at present, and perhaps not altogether safe. *Periculosæ plenum opus aleæ.* Whether those, who are leaders, usually arrive at that station more by a sort of instinct or secret composition of their nature, or influence of the stars, than by the possession of any great abilities, may be a point of much dispute ; but when the leader is once fixed, there will never fail to be followers. And man is so apt to imitate, so much of the nature of sheep, (*imitatores, servum pecus,*) that whoever is so bold to give the first great leap over the heads of those about him, (though he be the worst of the flock,) shall be quickly followed by the rest. Besides, when parties are once formed, the stragglers look so ridiculous and become so insignificant, that they have no other way but to run into the herd, which at least will hide and protect them ; and where to be much considered, requires only to be very violent.

But there is one circumstance with relation to parties, which I take to be, of all others, most pernicious in a state ; and I would be glad any partizan would help me to a tolerable reason, that because Clodius and Curio happen to agree with me in a few singular notions, I must therefore blindly follow them in all : or, to state it at best, that because Bibulus the party-man is persuaded that Clodius and Curio do really propose the good of their country as their chief end ; therefore Bibulus shall be wholly guided and governed by them in the means and measures towards it. Is it enough for Bibulus, and the rest of the herd, to say, without further examining, "I am of the side with Clodius, or I vote with Curio" ? Are these proper methods to form and make up what they think fit to call the united wisdom of the nation ? Is it not possible, that upon some occasion Clodius may be bold and insolent, borne away by his passion, malicious and revengeful ? That Curio may be corrupt, and expose to sale his tongue or his pen ? I conceive it far below the dignity,

both of human nature and human reason, to be engaged in any party, the most plausible soever, upon such servile conditions.

This influence of One upon Many, which seems to be as great in a People represented, as it was of old in the Commons collective, together with the consequences it has had upon the legislature, has given me frequent occasion to reflect upon what Diodorus tells us of one Charondas, a lawgiver to the Sybarites, an ancient people of Italy, who was so averse from all innovation, especially when it was to proceed from particular persons : and, I suppose, that he might put it out of the power of men fond of their own notions to disturb the constitution at their pleasures, by advancing private schemes ; that he provided a statute, that whoever proposed any alteration to be made, should step out and do it with a rope about his neck : if the matter proposed were generally approved, then it should pass into a law ; if it went into the negative, the proposer to be immediately hanged. Great ministers may talk of what projects they please ; but I am deceived if a more effectual one could ever be found for taking off (as the present phrase is) those hot, unquiet spirits, who disturb assemblies, and obstruct public affairs, by gratifying their pride, their malice, their ambition, or their avarice.

Those who in a late reign began the distinction between the personal and politic capacity, seem to have had reason, if they judged of princes by themselves ; for, I think, there is hardly to be found through all nature a greater difference between two things, than there is between a representing commoner in the function of his public calling, and the same person when he acts in the common offices of life. Here he allows himself to be upon a level with the rest of mortals ; here he follows his own reason, and his own way , and rather affects a singularity in his actions and thoughts, than servilely to copy either from the wisest of his neighbours. In short, here his folly and his wisdom, his reason and his passions, are all of his own growth, not the echo or infusion of other men. But when he is got near the walls of his assembly, he assumes and affects an entire set of very different airs ; he conceives himself a being of a superior nature to those without, and acting in a sphere where the vulgar methods for the conduct of human life can be of no use. He is listed in a



party where he neither knows the temper, nor designs, nor perhaps the person, of his leader ; but whose opinions he follows and maintains with a zeal and faith as violent as a young scholar does those of a philosopher whose sect he is taught to profess. He has neither opinions, nor thoughts, nor actions, nor talk, that he can call his own, but all conveyed to him by his leader, as wind is through an organ. The nourishment he receives has been not only chewed, but digested, before it comes into his mouth. Thus instructed, he follows the party, right or wrong, through all his sentiments, and acquires a courage and stiffness of opinion not at all congenial with him.

This encourages me to hope, that, during the present lucid interval, the members retired to their homes may suspend a while their acquired complexions, and, taught by the calmness of the scene and the season, reassume the native sedateness of their temper. If this should be so, it would be wise in them, as individual and private mortals, to look back a little upon the storms they have raised, as well as those they have escaped : to reflect, that they have been authors of a new and wonderful thing in England, which is, for a House of Commons to lose the universal favour of the numbers they represent : to observe how those whom they thought fit to persecute for righteousness' sake have been openly caressed by the people ; and to remember how themselves sate in fear of their persons from popular rage. Now, if they would know the secret of all this unprecedented proceeding in their masters, they must not impute it to their freedom in debate, or declaring their opinions, but to that unparliamentary abuse of setting individuals upon their shoulders, who were hated by God and man. For it seems the mass of the people, in such conjunctures as this, have opened their eyes, and will not endure to be governed by Clodius and Curio, at the head of their myrmidons, though these be ever so numerous, and composed of their own representatives.

This aversion of the people against the late proceedings of the Commons is an accident, that, if it last a while, might be improved to good uses for setting the balance of power a little more upon an equality than their late measures seem to promise or admit. This accident may be imputed to two



causes : the first is a universal fear and apprehension of the greatness and power of France, whereof the people in general seem to be very much and justly possessed, and, therefore, cannot but resent to see it, in so critical a juncture, wholly laid aside by their ministers, the Commons. The other cause is a great love and sense of gratitude in the people toward their present King, grounded upon a long opinion and experience of his merit, as well as concessions to all their reasonable desires ; so that it is for some time they have begun to say, and to fetch instances where he has in many things been hardly used. How long these humours may last, (for passions are momentary, and especially those of a multitude,) or what consequences they may produce, a little time will discover. But whenever it comes to pass that a popular assembly, free from such obstructions, and already possessed of more power than an equal balance will allow, shall continue to think they have not enough, but by cramping the hand that holds the balance, and by impeachments or dissensions with the nobles, endeavour still for more ; I cannot possibly see, in the common course of things, how the same causes can produce different effects and consequences among us, from what they did in Greece and Rome.

THOUGHTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

THESE "Thoughts" were never issued in separate form, but were included in the various volumes of "Miscellanies" issued during and after Swift's lifetime. The "Miscellanies" of 1711 include those usually stated to have been "written in 1706," and end with "Censure is the tax a man pays to the public for being eminent." Other "Miscellanies," published after 1711, contain the further "Thoughts" as far as those of 1726. These are also to be found in volume one of Faulkner's edition (1735). The continuing "Thoughts" of 1726 are from Hawkesworth's edition (1766) of Swift's works. See also notes on p. 282 of present edition. [T. S.]



# THOUGHTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS, MORAL AND DIVERTING.<sup>1</sup>

(OCTOBER, 1706.)

WE have just religion enough to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another.

Reflect on things past, as wars, negotiations, factions, &c. We enter so little into those interests, that we wonder how men could possibly be so busy and concerned for things so transitory; look on the present times, we find the same humour, yet wonder not at all.

A wise man endeavours, by considering all circumstances, to make conjectures, and form conclusions; but the smallest accident intervening, (and in the course of affairs it is impossible to foresee all,) does often produce such turns and changes, that at last he is just as much in doubt of events, as the most ignorant and unexperienced person.

Positiveness is a good quality for preachers and orators, because he that would obtrude his thoughts and reasons upon a multitude, will convince others the more, as he appears convinced himself.

How is it possible to expect that mankind will take advice, when they will not so much as take warning?

I forget whether advice be among the lost things, which Ariosto says may be found in the moon; that, and time, ought to have been there.

No preacher is listened to but Time, which gives us the

<sup>1</sup> These maxims were jotted down in consequence of a resolution adopted by Swift and Pope, in conjunction, to mark down the loose thoughts which occurred to them through the day, without attending to any order or formality of expression. [S.]

same train and turn of thought that elder people have in vain tried to put into our heads before.

When we desire or solicit any thing, our minds run wholly on the good side or circumstances of it ; when it is obtained, our minds run wholly on the bad ones.

In a glass house, the workmen often fling in a small quantity of fresh coals, which seems to disturb the fire, but very much enlivens it. This may allude to a gentle stirring of the passions, that the mind may not languish.

Religion seems to have grown an infant with age, and requires miracles to nurse it, as it had in its infancy.

All fits of pleasure are balanced by an equal degree of pain or languor ; 'tis like spending this year, part of the next year's revenue.

The latter part of a wise man's life is taken up in curing the follies, prejudices, and false opinions he had contracted in the former.

Would a writer know how to behave himself with relation to posterity, let him consider in old books what he finds that he is glad to know, and what omissions he most laments.

Whatever the poets pretend, it is plain they give immortality to none but themselves ; 'tis Homer and Virgil we reverence and admire, not Achilles or Æneas. With historians it is quite the contrary ; our thoughts are taken up with the actions, persons, and events we read, and we little regard the authors.

When a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign, that the dunces are all in confederacy against him.

Men who possess all the advantages of life, are in a state where there are many accidents to disorder and discompose, but few to please them.

'Tis unwise to punish cowards with ignominy ; for if they had regarded that, they would not have been cowards : Death is their proper punishment, because they fear it most.

The greatest inventions were produced in the times of ignorance ; as the use of the compass, gunpowder, and printing ; and by the dullest nation, as the Germans.

One argument to prove that the common relations of ghosts and spectres are generally false, may be drawn from

the opinion held, that spirits are never seen by more than one person at a time ; that is to say, it seldom happens to above one person in a company to be possessed with any high degree of spleen or melancholy.

I am apt to think, that, in the day of judgment, there will be small allowance given to the wise for their want of morals, and to the ignorant for their want of faith, because both are without excuse. This renders the advantages equal of ignorance and knowledge. But some scruples in the wise, and some vices in the ignorant, will perhaps be forgiven, upon the strength of temptation to each.

The value of several circumstances in history, lessens very much by distance of time, although some minute circumstances are very valuable ; and it requires great judgment in a writer to distinguish.

'Tis grown a word of course for writers to say, This critical age, as divines say, This sinful age.

'Tis pleasant to observe how free the present age is in laying taxes on the next. Future ages shall talk of this ; this shall be famous to all posterity ; whereas their time and thoughts will be taken up about present things, as ours are now.

The chameleon, who is said to feed upon nothing but air, has of all animals the nimblest tongue.

When a man is made a spiritual peer, he loses his surname ; when a temporal, his Christian name.

It is in disputes, as in armies, where the weaker side sets up false lights, and makes a great noise, to make the enemy believe them more numerous and strong than they really are.<sup>1</sup>

Some men, under the notion of weeding out prejudices, eradicate virtue, honesty, and religion.

In all well-instituted commonwealths, care has been taken to limit men's possessions ; which is done for many reasons, and, among the rest, for one which, perhaps, is not often considered ; that when bounds are set to men's desires, after they have acquired as much as the laws will permit them, their private interest is at an end, and they have nothing to do but to take care of the public.

<sup>1</sup> In Faulkner's edition (1735) this passage is—"that the enemy may believe them to be more numerous," &c. [T. S.]



There are but three ways for a man to revenge himself of the censure of the world ;<sup>1</sup> to despise it, to return the like, or to endeavour to live so as to avoid it. The first of these is usually pretended, the last is almost impossible, the universal practice is for the second.

Herodotus tells us, that in cold countries beasts very seldom have horns, but in hot they have very large ones. This might bear a pleasant application.

I never heard a finer piece of satire against lawyers, than that of astrologers, when they pretend, by rules of art, to tell when a suit will end, and whether to the advantage of the plaintiff or defendant ; thus making the matter depend entirely upon the influence of the stars, without the least regard to the merits of the cause.

The expression in Apocrypha about Tobit and his dog following him, I have often heard ridiculed ; yet Homer has the same words of Telemachus more than once ; and Virgil says something like it of Evander. And I take the book of Tobit to be partly poetical.

I have known some men possessed of good qualities which were very serviceable to others, but useless to themselves ; like a sun-dial on the front of a house, to inform the neighbours and passengers, but not the owner within.

If a man would register all his opinions upon love, politics, religion, learning, &c., beginning from his youth, and so go on to old age, what a bundle of inconsistencies and contradictions would appear at last !

What they do in heaven we are ignorant of ; what they do *not* we are told expressly, that they neither marry, nor are given in marriage.

When a man observes the choice of ladies now-a-days in the dispensing of their favours, can he forbear paying some veneration to the memory of those mares mentioned by Xenophon,<sup>2</sup> who, while their manes were on, that is, while they were in their beauty, would never admit the embraces of an ass.

'Tis a miserable thing to live in suspense ; it is the life of a spider. *Vive quidem, pende tamen, improba, dixit.*<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faulkner's edition (1735) has it—"of a censorious world." [T.S.]

<sup>2</sup> De re equestri.

<sup>3</sup> Ovid. Metam.

The stoical scheme of supplying our wants by lopping off our desires, is like cutting off our feet, when we want shoes.

Physicians ought not to give their judgment of religion, for the same reason that butchers are not admitted to be jurors upon life and death.

The reason why so few marriages are happy, is, because young ladies spend their time in making nets, not in making cages.

If a man will observe as he walks the streets, I believe he will find the merriest countenances in mourning coaches.

Nothing more unqualifies a man to act with prudence, than a misfortune that is attended with shame and guilt.

The power of fortune is confessed only by the miserable ; for the happy impute all their success to prudence or merit.

Ambition often puts men upon doing the meanest offices ; so climbing is performed in the same posture with creeping.

Ill company is like a dog, who dirties those most whom he loves best.

Censure is the tax a man pays to the public for being eminent.<sup>1</sup>

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Although men are accused for not knowing their own weakness, yet, perhaps, as few know their own strength. It is in men as in soils, where sometimes there is a vein of gold, which the owner knows not of.

Satire is reckoned the easiest of all wit ; but I take it to be otherwise in very bad times : for it is as hard to satirize well a man of distinguished vices, as to praise well a man of distinguished virtues. It is easy enough to do either to people of moderate characters.

Invention is the talent of youth, and judgment of age ; so that our judgment grows harder to please, when we have fewer things to offer it : this goes through the whole commerce of life. When we are old, our friends find it difficult to please us, and are less concerned whether we be pleased or no.

No wise man ever wished to be younger.

An idle reason lessens the weight of the good ones you gave before.

<sup>1</sup> These are all the "Thoughts" that appeared in the "Miscellanies" printed in 1711. [T. S.]



The motives of the best actions will not bear too strict an inquiry. It is allowed, that the cause of most actions, good or bad, may be resolved into the love of ourselves ; but the self-love of some men, inclines them to please others ; and the self-love of others is wholly employed in pleasing themselves. This makes the great distinction between virtue and vice. Religion is the best motive of all actions, yet religion is allowed to be the highest instance of self-love.

When the world has once begun to use us ill, it afterwards continues the same treatment with less scruple or ceremony, as men do to a whore.

Old men view best at distance with the eyes of their understanding, as well as with those of nature.

Some people take more care to hide their wisdom, than their folly.

Arbitrary power is the natural object of temptation to a prince, as wine or women to a young fellow, or a bribe to a judge, or avarice to old age, or vanity to a female.

Anthony Henley's farmer dying of an asthma, said, " Well, if I can get this breath once *out*, I'll take care it shall never get *in* again."

The humour of exploding many things under the name of trifles, fopperies, and only imaginary goods, is a very false proof either of wisdom or magnanimity, and a great check to virtuous actions. For instance, with regard to fame : there is in most people a reluctance and unwillingness to be forgotten. We observe even among the vulgar, how fond they are to have an inscription over their grave. It requires but little philosophy to discover and observe that there is no intrinsic value in all this ; however, if it be founded in our nature, as an incitement to virtue, it ought not to be ridiculed.

Complaint is the largest tribute Heaven receives, and the sincerest part of our devotion.

The common fluency of speech in many men, and most women, is owing to a scarcity of matter, and a scarcity of words ; for whoever is a master of language, and has a mind full of ideas, will be apt, in speaking, to hesitate upon the choice of both ; whereas common speakers have only one set of ideas, and one set of words to clothe them in ; and these are always ready at the mouth ; so people come faster



out of a church when it is almost empty, than when a crowd is at the door.

Few are qualified to shine in company ; but it is in most men's power to be agreeable. The reason, therefore, why conversation runs so low at present, is not the defect of understanding, but pride, vanity, ill-nature, affectation, singularity, positiveness, or some other vice, the effect of a wrong education.

To be vain, is rather a mark of humility than pride. Vain men delight in telling what honours have been done them, what great company they have kept, and the like, by which they plainly confess that these honours were more than their due, and such as their friends would not believe, if they had not been told : whereas a man truly proud, thinks the greatest honours below his merit, and consequently scorns to boast. I therefore deliver it as a maxim, that whoever desires the character of a proud man, ought to conceal his vanity.

Law, in a free country, is, or ought to be, the determination of the majority of those who have property in land.

One argument used to the disadvantage of Providence, I take to be a very strong one in its defence. It is objected, that storms and tempests, unfruitful seasons, serpents, spiders, flies, and other noxious or troublesome animals, with many other instances of the same kind, discover an imperfection in nature, because human life would be much easier without them ; but the design of Providence may clearly be perceived in this proceeding. The motions of the sun and moon, in short, the whole system of the universe, as far as philosophers have been able to discover and observe, are in the utmost degree of regularity and perfection ; but wherever God hath left to man the power of interposing a remedy by thought or labour, there he hath placed things in a state of imperfection, on purpose to stir up human industry, without which life would stagnate, or indeed rather could not subsist at all : *Curis acuuntur mortalia corda.*

Praise is the daughter of present power.

How inconsistent is man with himself ?

I have known several persons of great fame for wisdom in public affairs and councils, governed by foolish servants.

I have known great ministers, distinguished for wit and learning, who preferred none but dunces.

I have known men of great valour, cowards to their wives.

I have known men of the greatest cunning, perpetually cheated.

I knew three great ministers, who could exactly compute and settle the accounts of a kingdom, but were wholly ignorant of their own economy.

The preaching of divines helps to preserve well inclined men in the course of virtue, but seldom or never reclaims the vicious.

Princes usually make wiser choices than the servants whom they trust for the disposal of places : I have known a prince, more than once, choose an able minister : but I never observed that minister to use his credit in the disposal of an employment to a person whom he thought the fittest for it. One of the greatest in this age<sup>1</sup> owned, and excused the matter to me from the violence of parties, and the unreasonableness of friends.

Small causes are sufficient to make a man uneasy, when great ones are not in the way : for want of a block he will stumble at a straw.

Dignity, high station, or great riches, are in some sort necessary to old men, in order to keep the younger at a distance, who are otherwise too apt to insult them upon the score of their age.

Every man desires to live long ; but no man would be old.

Love of flattery, in most men, proceeds from the mean opinion they have of themselves ; in women, from the contrary.

If books and laws continue to increase as they have done for fifty years past, I am in concern for future ages, how any man will be learned, or any man a lawyer.

Kings are commonly said to have long hands ; I wish they had as long ears.

Princes in their infancy, childhood, and youth, are said to discover prodigious parts and wit, to speak things that surprise and astonish : strange, so many hopeful princes, and so many shameful kings ! If they happen to die young, they would have been prodigies of wisdom and virtue : if they live, they are often prodigies indeed, but of another sort.

<sup>1</sup> Harley. [S.]



Politics, as the word is commonly understood, are nothing but corruptions, and consequently of no use to a good king, or a good ministry : for which reason all courts are so over-run<sup>1</sup> of politics.

Silenus, the foster-father of Bacchus, is always carried by an ass, and has horns on his head. The moral is, that drunkards are led by fools, and have a great chance to be cuckolds.

Venus, a beautiful, good-natured lady, was the goddess of love ; Juno, a terrible shrew, the goddess of marriage ; and they were always mortal enemies.

Those who are against religion, must needs be fools ; and therefore we read that of all animals, God refused the first-born of an ass.

A very little wit is valued in a woman, as we are pleased with a few words spoken plain by a parrot.

A nice man is a man of nasty ideas.

Apollo was held the god of physic, and sender of diseases. Both were originally the same trade, and still continue.

Old men and comets have been revered for the same reason ; their long beards, and pretences to foretell events.

I was asked at court, what I thought of an ambassador, and his train ; who were all embroidery and lace ; full of bows, cringes, and gestures ? I said, "it was Solomon's importation—gold and apes."<sup>2</sup>

There is a story in Pausanias of a plot for betraying a city discovered by the braying of an ass : the cackling of geese saved the Capitol, and Catiline's conspiracy was discovered by a whore. These are the only three animals, as far as I remember, famous in history for evidences and informers.

Most sorts of diversion in men, children, and other animals, are an imitation of fighting.

Augustus meeting an ass with a lucky name, foretold himself good fortune. I meet many asses, but none of them have lucky names.

If a man makes me keep my distance, the comfort is, he keeps his at the same time.

Who can deny that all men are violent lovers of truth,

<sup>1</sup> Scott has "full." [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Scott and Hawkesworth print this in the third person singular—"A person was asked," &c. The text is as Faulkner prints it. [T. S.]



when we see them so positive in their errors ; which they will maintain out of their zeal to truth, although they contradict themselves every day of their lives ?

That was excellently observed, say I, when I read a passage in an author, where his opinion agrees with mine. When we differ, there I pronounce him to be mistaken.

Very few men, properly speaking, *live* at present, but are providing to *live* another time.

As universal a practice as lying is, and as easy a one as it seems, I do not remember to have heard three good lies in all my conversation, even from those who were most celebrated in that faculty.<sup>1</sup>

## THOUGHTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS

CONTINUED. 1726.<sup>2</sup>

LAWs penned with the utmost care and exactness, and in the vulgar language, are often perverted to wrong meanings ; then why should we wonder that the Bible is so ?

A man seeing a wasp creeping into a vial filled with honey, that was hung on a fruit tree, said thus : “ Why, thou sottish animal, art thou mad to go into the vial, where you see many hundred of your kind dying before you ? ” — “ The reproach is just,” answered the wasp, “ but not from you men, who are so far from taking example by other people’s follies, that you will not take warning by your own. If after falling several times into this vial, and escaping by chance, I should fall in again, I should then but resemble you.”

An old miser kept a tame jackdaw, that used to steal pieces of money and hide them in a hole ; which the cat

<sup>1</sup> The “ Thoughts ” given in Faulkner’s edition of 1735 end here. These also are all that are given in volume iii. of Hawkesworth’s edition, 1766 (pp. 272-284). [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> From Hawkesworth’s edit. 1766, vol. xii. (vol. xxii. of complete edition), pp. 234-242. Hawkesworth suggests that these “ Thoughts,” with the “ Bons Mots de Stella,” formed part of Sheridan’s proposed collections of “ Contes à rire ” and “ Bon Mots.” Swift referred to these collections in a letter to Sheridan under date March 27, 1733 (Scott’s edit., 1824, vol. xviii., p. 100). [T. S.]

observing, asked, "Why he would hoard up those round shining things that he could make no use of?"—"Why," said the jackdaw, "my master has a whole chest full, and makes no more use of them than I."

Men are contented to be laughed at for their wit, but not for their folly.

If the men of wit and genius would resolve never to complain in their works of critics and detractors, the next age would not know that they ever had any.

After all the maxims and systems of trade and commerce, a stander-by would think the affairs of the world were most ridiculously contrived.

There are few countries, which, if well cultivated, would not support double the number of their inhabitants, and yet fewer where one-third part of the people are not extremely stinted even in the necessaries of life. I send out twenty barrels of corn, which would maintain a family in bread for a year, and I bring back in return a vessel of wine, which half a dozen good fellows would drink in less than a month, at the expense of their health and reason.

A motto for the Jesuits :

*Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris ?*

A man would have but few spectators, if he offered to shew for threepence how he could thrust a redhot iron into a barrel of gunpowder, and it should not take fire.

Query, Whether churches are not dormitories of the living as well as of the dead ?

Harry Killegrew said to Lord Wharton, "You would not swear at that rate, if you thought you were doing God honour."

A copy of verses kept in the cabinet, and only shewn to a few friends, is like a virgin much sought after and admired ; but when printed and published, is like a common whore, whom anybody may purchase for half-a-crown.

Lewis the XIVth of France spent his life in turning a good name into a great.

Since the union of divinity and humanity is the great article of our religion, it is odd to see some clergymen, in their writings of divinity, wholly devoid of humanity.

The Epicureans began to spread at Rome in the empire of Augustus, as the Socinians, and even the Epicureans too, did in England toward the end of King Charles the Second's reign ; which is reckoned, though very absurdly, our Augustan age. They both seem to be corruptions occasioned by luxury and peace, and by politeness beginning to decline.

Sometimes I read a book with pleasure, and detest the author.

At a bookseller's shop some time ago I saw a book with this title : "Poems by the author of *The Choice*." Not enduring to read a dozen lines, I asked the company with me, whether they had ever seen the book, or heard of the poem whence the author denominated himself ; they were all as ignorant as I. But I find it common with these small dealers in wit and learning, to give themselves a title from their first adventure, as Don Quixote usually did from his last. This arises from that great importance which every man supposes himself to be of.

One Dennis, commonly called "the critic," who had writ a threepenny pamphlet against the power of France, being in the country, and hearing of a French privateer hovering about the coast, although he were twenty miles from the sea, fled to town, and told his friends, "they need not wonder at his haste ; for the King of France, having got intelligence where he was, had sent a privateer on purpose to catch him."

Dr. Gee, prebendary of Westminster, who had writ a small paper against Popery, being obliged to travel for his health, affected to disguise his person, and change his name, as he passed through Portugal, Spain, and Italy ; telling all the English he met, "that he was afraid of being murdered, or put into the Inquisition." He was acting the same farce at Paris, till Mr. Prior (who was then secretary to the embassy) quite disconcerted the doctor, by maliciously discovering the secret ; and offering to engage body for body, that not a creature would hurt him, or had ever heard of him or his pamphlet.

A chambermaid to a lady of my acquaintance, thirty miles from London, had the very same turn of thought ; when talking with one of her fellow-servants, she said, "I hear it is all over London already that I am going to leave my lady :"



and so had a footman, who, being newly married, desired his comrade to tell him freely what the town said of it.

When somebody was telling a certain great minister that people were discontented, "Pho," said he, "half a dozen fools are prating in a coffeehouse, and presently think their own noise about their ears is made by the world."

The death of a private man is generally of so little importance to the world, that it cannot be a thing of great importance in itself; and yet I do not observe, from the practice of mankind, that either philosophy or nature have sufficiently armed us against the fears which attend it. Neither do I find anything able to reconcile us to it, but extreme pain, shame, or despair; for poverty, imprisonment, ill fortune, grief, sickness, and old age, do generally fail.

Whence comes the custom of bidding a woman look upon her apron-strings to find an excuse? Was it not from the apron of fig-leaves worn by Eve, when she covered herself, and was the first of her sex who made a bad excuse for eating the forbidden fruit?

I never wonder to see men wicked, but I often wonder to see them not ashamed.

Do not we see how easily we pardon our own actions and passions, and the very infirmities of our bodies; why should it be wonderful to find us pardon our own dulness?

There is no vice or folly that requires so much nicety and skill to manage, as vanity; nor any which, by ill management, makes so contemptible a figure.

Observation is an old man's memory.

Eloquence, smooth and cutting, is like a razor whetted with oil.

Imaginary evils soon become real ones by indulging our reflections on them; as he, who in a melancholy fancy sees something like a face on the wall or the wainscot, can, by two or three touches with a lead pencil, make it look visible, and agreeing with what he fancied.

Men of great parts are often unfortunate in the management of public business, because they are apt to go out of the common road by the quickness of their imagination. This I once said to my Lord Bolingbroke, and desired he would observe, that the clerks in his office used a sort of ivory knife with a blunt edge to divide a sheet of paper,

which never failed to cut it even, only requiring a steady hand : whereas if they should make use of a sharp pen-knife, the sharpness would make it go often out of the crease and disfigure the paper.

“He who does not provide for his own house,” St. Paul says, “is worse than an infidel.” And I think, he who provides only for his own house, is just equal with an infidel.

Jealousy, like fire, may shrivel up horns, but it makes them stink.

A footman’s hat should fly off to everybody : and therefore Mercury, who was Jupiter’s footman, had wings fastened to his cap.

When a man pretends love, but courts for money, he is like a juggler, who conjures away your shilling, and conveys something very indecent under the hat.

All panegyrics are mingled with an infusion of poppy.

I have known men happy enough at ridicule, who upon grave subjects were perfectly stupid ; of which Dr. Echard of Cambridge, who writ “The Contempt of the Clergy,” was a great instance.

One top of Parnassus was sacred to Bacchus, the other to Apollo.

Matrimony has many children ; Repentance, Discord, Poverty, Jealousy, Sickness, Spleen, Loathing, &c.

Vision is the art of seeing things invisible.

The two maxims of any great man at court are, always to keep his countenance, and never to keep his word.

I asked a poor man how he did ? He said, he was like a washball, always in decay.

Hippocrates, Aph. 32. Sect. 6, observes, that stuttering people are always subject to a looseness. I wish physicians had power to remove the profusion of words in many people to the inferior parts.

A man dreamed he was a cuckold ; a friend told him it was a bad sign, because, when a dream is true, Virgil says it passes through the horned gate.

Love is a flame, and therefore we say beauty is attractive ; because physicians observe that fire is a great drawer.

Civis, the most honourable name among the Romans ; a citizen, a word of contempt among us.

A lady who had gallantries and several children, told her husband he was like the austere man, who reaped where he did not sow.

We read that an ass's head was sold for eighty pieces of silver ; they have lately been sold ten thousand times dearer, and yet they were never more plentiful.

I must complain the cards are ill shuffled, till I have a good hand.

When I am reading a book, whether wise or silly, it seems to me to be alive and talking to me.

Whoever live at a different end of the town from me, I look upon as persons out of the world, and only myself and the scene about me to be in it.

When I was young, I thought all the world, as well as myself, was wholly taken up in discoursing upon the last new play.

My Lord Cromarty, after fourscore, went to his country house in Scotland, with a resolution to stay six years there and live thriftily, in order to save up money, that he might spend in London.

It is said of the horses in the vision, that "their power was in their mouths and in their tails." What is said of horses in the vision, in reality may be said of women.

Elephants are always drawn smaller than life, but a flea always larger.

When old folks tell us of many passages in their youth between them and their company, we are apt to think how much happier those times were than the present.

Why does the elder sister dance barefoot, when the younger is married before her ? Is it not that she may appear shorter, and consequently be thought younger than the bride ?

No man will take counsel, but every man will take money : therefore money is better than counsel.

I never yet knew a wag, (as the term is,) who was not a dunce.

A person reading to me a dull poem of his own making, I prevailed on him to scratch out six lines together ; in turning over the leaf, the ink being wet, it marked as many lines on the other side ; whereof the poet complaining, I bid him be easy, "for it would be better if those were out too."

At Windsor I was observing to my Lord Bolingbroke,



“that the tower where the maids of honour lodged (who at that time were very handsome) was much frequented with crows.” My lord said, “it was because they smelt carrion.”

A TRITICAL ESSAY  
UPON THE  
FACULTIES OF THE MIND.

TO\_\_\_\_\_.

SIR,

***B**EING so great a lover of antiquities, it was reasonable to suppose, you would be very much obliged with anything that was new. I have been of late offended with many writers of essays and moral discourses, for running into stale topics and threadbare quotations, and not handling their subject fully and closely: all which errors I have carefully avoided in the following essay, which I have proposed as a pattern for young writers to imitate. The thoughts and observations being entirely new, the quotations untouched by others, the subject of mighty importance, and treated with much order and perspicuity: it has cost me a great deal of time; and I desire you will accept and consider it as the utmost effort of my genius.*



# A TRITICAL ESSAY

UPON THE

## FACULTIES OF THE MIND.<sup>1</sup>

PHILOSOPHERS say, that man is a microcosm, or little world, resembling in miniature every part of the great ; and, in my opinion, the body natural may be compared to the body politic ; and if this be so, how can the Epicurean's opinion be true, that the universe was formed by a fortuitous concourse of atoms, which I will no more believe, than that the accidental jumbling of the letters in the alphabet, could fall by chance into a most ingenious and learned treatise of philosophy. *Risum teneatis amici—Hor.* This false opinion must needs create many more ; 'tis like an error in the first concoction, which cannot be corrected in the second ; the foundation is weak, and whatever superstructure you raise upon it, must, of necessity, fall to the ground. Thus, men are led from one error to another, until, with Ixion, they embrace a cloud instead of Juno, or, like the dog in the fable, lose the substance in gaping at the shadow. For such opinions cannot cohere ; but, like the iron and clay in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image, must separate and break in pieces. I have read in a certain author, that Alexander wept because he had no more worlds to conquer ; which he need not have done, if the fortuitous concourse of atoms could create one ; but this is an opinion, fitter for that many-headed beast, the vulgar, to entertain, than for so wise a man as Epicurus ; the corrupt part of his sect only

<sup>1</sup> This essay is a parody on the pseudo-philosophical essays of the time, in which all sense was lost in the maze of inconsequential quotations. It was written in 1707-8, and the "Miscellanies" of 1711 places its publication in August, 1707. [T. S.]

borrowed his name, as the monkey did the cat's claw to draw the chesnut out of the fire.

However, the first step to the cure, is to know the disease ; and though truth may be difficult to find, because, as the philosopher observes, she lives in the bottom of a well, yet we need not, like blind men, grope in open daylight. I hope I may be allowed, among so many far more learned men, to offer my mite, since a stander-by may sometimes, perhaps, see more of the game, than he that plays it. But I do not think a philosopher obliged to account for every phenomenon in nature, or drown himself with Aristotle, for not being able to solve the ebbing and flowing of the tide, in that fatal sentence he passed upon himself, *Quia te non capio, tu capies me.*

Wherein he was at once the judge and the criminal, the accuser and executioner. Socrates, on the other hand, who said he knew nothing, was pronounced by the oracle to be the wisest man in the world.

But to return from this digression. I think it as clear as any demonstration in Euclid, that nature does nothing in vain : if we were able to dive into her secret recesses, we should find that the smallest blade of grass, or more contemptible weed, has its particular use ; but she is chiefly admirable in her minutest compositions ; the least and most contemptible insect most discovers the art of nature, if I may so call it ; though nature, which delights in variety, will always triumph over art ; and as the poet observes,

*Naturam expellas furcâ licet, usque recurret.*—HOR.<sup>1</sup>

But the various opinions of philosophers have scattered through the world as many plagues of the mind, as Pandora's box did those of the body ; only with this difference, that they have not left hope at the bottom. And if Truth be not fled with Astrea, she is certainly as hidden as the source of Nile, and can be found only in Utopia. Not that I would reflect on those wise sages ; which would be a sort of ingratitude ; and he that calls a man ungrateful, sums up all the evil that a man can be guilty of.

*Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dicis.*

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. Epist. X. 24.

But, what I blame the philosophers for, (though some may think it a paradox,) is chiefly their pride ; nothing less than an *ipse dixit*, and you must pin your faith on their sleeve. And though Diogenes lived in a tub, there might be, for aught I know, as much pride under his rags, as in the fine-spun garments of the divine Plato. It is reported of this Diogenes, that when Alexander came to see him, and promised to give him whatever he would ask, the cynic only answered ; “ Take not from me what thou canst not give me, but stand from between me and the light ; ” which was almost as extravagant as the philosopher, that flung his money into the sea, with this remarkable saying——

How different was this man from the usurer, who, being told his son would spend all he had got, replied, “ He cannot take more pleasure in spending, than I did in getting it.” These men could see the faults of each other, but not their own ; those they flung into the bag behind ; *non videmus id manticæ quod in tergo est*. I may perhaps be censured for my free opinions by those carping Momuses whom authors worship, as the Indians do the devil, for fear. They will endeavour to give my reputation as many wounds, as the man in the almanack ; but I value it not ; and perhaps like flies, they may buzz so often about the candle, till they burn their wings. They must pardon me, if I venture to give them this advice, not to rail at what they cannot understand ; it does but discover that self-tormenting passion of envy, than which the greatest tyrant never invented a more cruel torment :

*Invidiâ Siculi non invenere Tyranni*  
*Tormentum majus—* JUVEN.<sup>1</sup>

I must be so bold to tell my critics and witlings, that they are no more judges of this, than a man that is born blind can have any true idea of colours. I have always observed, that your empty vessels sound loudest : I value their lashes as little as the sea did those of Xerxes, when he whipped it. The utmost favour a man can expect from them is, that

<sup>1</sup> This quotation is ascribed to Juvenal in Faulkner's edition (1735), as well as in the “ Miscellanies ” of 1711 and 1733, and Hawkesworth's edition (1766) ; but Scott places it correctly to Horace, Lib. I. Epist. II. 58. [T. S.]



which Polyphemus promised Ulysses, that he would devour him the last : they think to subdue a writer, as Cæsar did his enemy, with a *Veni, vidi, vici*. I confess I value the opinion of the judicious few, a R——r,<sup>1</sup> a D——s,<sup>2</sup> or a W——k ; but for the rest, to give my judgment at once, I think the long dispute among the philosophers about a *vacuum*, may be determined in the affirmative, that it is to be found in a critic's head. They are at best but the drones of the learned world, who devour the honey, and will not work themselves : and a writer need no more regard them, than the moon does the barking of a little senseless cur. For, in spite of their terrible roaring, you may, with half an eye, discover the ass under the lion's skin.

But to return to our discourse : Demosthenes being asked what was the first part of an orator, replied, Action : what was the second, Action : what was the third, Action, and so on, *ad infinitum*. This may be true in oratory ; but contemplation in other things, exceeds action. And, therefore, a wise man is never less alone, than when he is alone :

*Nunquam minus solus, quam cum solus.*

And Archimedes, the famous mathematician, was so intent upon his problems, that he never minded the soldiers who came to kill him. Therefore, not to detract from the just praise which belongs to orators, they ought to consider, that nature, which gave us two eyes to see, and two ears to hear, has given us but one tongue to speak ; wherein, however, some do so abound, that the *virtuosi*, who have been so long in search for the perpetual motion, may infallibly find it there.

Some men admire republics, because orators flourish there most, and are the great enemies of tyranny ; but my opinion is, that one tyrant is better than a hundred. Be-

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Rymer (1638 or 9—1713). Wrote an unsuccessful tragedy, "Edgar," and "A View of the Tragedies of the Last Age." But is noted for his edition of the "Fœdera," of which he published fifteen volumes during his lifetime. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> John Dennis, poet and critic (1657—1733-4). Wrote several dramatic pieces, including "Plot and no Plot" and "Liberty Asserted." He was an excellent critic, if a poor poet. He became blind in his old age and died in extreme poverty. [T. S.]

sides, these orators inflame the people, whose anger is really but a short fit of madness.

*Ira furor brevis est—* HOR.<sup>1</sup>

After which, laws are like cobwebs, which may catch small flies, but let wasps and hornets break through. But in oratory the greatest art is to hide art.

*Artis est celare artem.*

But this must be the work of time. We must lay hold on all opportunities, and let slip no occasion, else we shall be forced to weave Penelope's web, unravel in the night what we spun in the day. And therefore I have observed, that Time is painted with a lock before, and bald behind, signifying thereby, that we must take time (as we say) by the forelock, for when it is once past, there is no recalling it.

The mind of man is at first (if you will pardon the expression) like a *tabula rasa*, or like wax, which, while it is soft, is capable of any impression, till time has hardened it. And at length death, that grim tyrant, stops us in the midst of our career. The greatest conquerors have at last been conquered by death, which spares none, from the sceptre to the spade.

*Mors omnibus communis.*

All rivers go to the sea, but none return from it. Xerxes wept when he beheld his army, to consider that in less than a hundred years they would be all dead. Anacreon was choked with a grape-stone; and violent joy kills as well as violent grief. There is nothing in this world constant, but inconstancy; yet Plato thought, that if virtue would appear to the world in her own native dress, all men would be enamoured with her. But now, since interest governs the world, and men neglect the golden mean, Jupiter himself, if he came to the earth, would be despised, unless it were, as he did to Danae, in a golden shower. For men now-a-days worship the rising sun, and not the setting.

*Donec eris felix multos numerabis amicos.*

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<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. Epist. II. 62.

Thus have I, in obedience to your commands, ventured to expose myself to censure, in this critical age. Whether I have done right to my subject, must be left to the judgment of my learned reader: however, I cannot but hope, that my attempting of it may be encouragement for some able pen to perform it with more success.



THE BICKERSTAFF PAMPHLETS.

THE almanack-makers of the seventeenth century called themselves Philomaths. In reality they were quacks trading on the credulity of a public willing to pay for the information supplied. A particular "philomath," named John Partridge, who was a cobbler by trade, had made himself widely known by his works on astrology and as editor of the "Merlinus Liberatus." Indeed, his fame was European. Swift, ever ready to expose any form of humbug, took an opportunity early in the February of 1708 to tackle this of the philomath. Writing over the name of Mr. Isaac Bickerstaff, a name his eye had casually caught over the sign of a locksmith's shop, Swift, in admirable disguise, issued his "Predictions for the Year 1708." He assumes himself to be the only serious student of science. Among many of the events prophesied was "a trifle," which he only mentioned "to show how ignorant those sottish pretenders to astrology are in their own concerns." The "trifle" was the death of Partridge himself. "I have consulted the star of his nativity," solemnly remarks the astrologer Isaac, "by my own rules, and find that he will infallibly die upon the 29th of March next, about eleven at night, of a raging fever."

On the 30th of March promptly appeared "a letter to a person of honour," detailing "the accomplishment of the first of Mr. Bickerstaff's predictions." John Partridge had died, but Mr. Bickerstaff had made an error by four hours. The writer of the letter was, of course, Swift himself; and the town rose to the fun. Most people, who were not "in the know," took Bickerstaff quite seriously, and the Portuguese Inquisition even went so far as to order the burning of his pamphlet, no doubt because of the serious matters foretold of continental affairs and personages. The Stationers' Hall assumed Partridge to be really dead, and struck his name from its rolls. Following on this came a pamphlet entitled, "'Squire Bickerstaff Detected; or, the Astrological Impostor Convicted. By John Partridge." This was the joint production of three wits, the Reverend Thomas Yalden, Nicholas Rowe, and William Congreve. In the person of Partridge they carried on the fun excellently well, repudiating Bickerstaff, and complaining bitterly of the many inconveniences his pamphlet had caused him. He cannot leave his house without being dunned for his own funeral expenses.

Partridge himself was at last "drawn," and his almanack for 1709 contains an indignant protest against the shain astrologer Bickerstaff, and a solemn assertion that he, John Partridge, was, blessed be God, alive and in good health.

The "Almanack for 1709" gave Swift the opportunity for a "Vindication." Animadverting on the indecency of the language of the "almanack for the present year," Bickerstaff appeals to the learned world to justify him. With regard to Partridge's assertion about his being still alive, he argues five excellent points in proof that he cannot be.

Swift, in 1709, wound up the fun with "A Famous Prediction of Merlin," issued as a broadsheet with a pretended prophecy in black letter.

Scott, in his edition, reprints "An Answer to Bickerstaff. By a Person of Quality," but I cannot trace the authorship of it. Neither Forster nor Craik makes any reference to it. Whoever the writer was, he was keenly alive to the fun of the thing. It is certainly not by Swift.

[T. S.]

# PREDICTIONS

FOR THE

YEAR 1708.

Wherein the Month and Day of the Month are set down, the Persons named, and the great Actions and Events of next Year particularly related, as they will come to pass.

---

*Written to prevent the People of England from being further impos'd on by vulgar Almanack-makers.*

---

By ISAAC BICKERSTAFF *Esq;*

---

---

Sold by *John Morphew* near *Stationers-Hall*,  
MDCCVIII



*I* *T* is said, that the Author, when he had writ the following Paper, and being at a loss what name to prefix to it, passing through Long-Acre, observed a sign over a house where a locksmith dwelt, and found the name Bickerstaff written under it; which being a name somewhat uncommon, he chose to call himself Isaac Bickerstaff. This name was sometime afterward made use of by Sir Richard Steele, and Mr. Addison, in the TATLERS; in which Papers, as well as many of the SPECTATORS, it is well known, that the Author had a considerable part.

[Note by Faulkner in the Dublin edition of 1735.—T. S.]

## PREDICTIONS FOR THE YEAR 1708.

I HAVE considered the gross abuse of astrology in this kingdom, and upon debating the matter with myself, I could not possibly lay the fault upon the art, but upon those gross impostors, who set up to be the artists. I know several learned men have contended, that the whole is a cheat ; that it is absurd and ridiculous to imagine the stars can have any influence at all upon human actions, thoughts, or inclinations ; and whoever has not bent his studies that way may be excused for thinking so, when he sees in how wretched a manner that noble art is treated, by a few mean, illiterate traders between us and the stars ; who import a yearly stock of nonsense, lies, folly, and impertinence, which they offer to the world as genuine from the planets, though they descend from no greater a height than their own brains.

I intend, in a short time, to publish a large and rational defence of this art, and therefore shall say no more in its justification at present, than that it hath been in all ages defended by many learned men, and among the rest by Socrates himself, whom I look upon as undoubtedly the wisest of uninspired mortals : to which if we add, that those who have condemned this art, though otherwise learned, having been such as either did not apply their studies this way, or at least did not succeed in their applications : their testimony will not be of much weight to its disadvantage, since they are liable to the common objection of condemning what they did not understand.

Nor am I at all offended, or think it an injury to the art, when I see the common dealers in it, the *Students in astrology*, the *Philomaths*, and the rest of that tribe, treated by wise men with the utmost scorn and contempt ; but rather wonder, when I observe gentlemen in the country,

rich enough to serve the nation in Parliament, poring in Partridge's Almanack, to find out the events of the year, at home and abroad ; not daring to propose a hunting match, till Gadbury<sup>1</sup> or he have fixed the weather.

I will allow either of the two I have mentioned, or any other of the fraternity, to be not only astrologers, but conjurers too, if I do not produce an hundred instances in all their Almanacks, to convince any reasonable man, that they do not so much as understand common grammar and syntax ; that they are not able to spell any word out of the usual road, nor, even in their prefaces, to write<sup>2</sup> common sense, or intelligible English. Then, for their observations and predictions, they are such as will equally suit any age or country in the world. "This month a certain great person will be threatened with death or sickness." This the newspaper will tell them, for there we find at the end of the year, that no month passes without the death of some person of note ; and it would be hard, if it should be otherwise, when there are at least two thousand persons of note in this kingdom, many of them old, and the Almanack-maker has the liberty of choosing the sickliest season of the year, where he may fix his prediction. Again, "This month an eminent clergyman will be preferred ;" of which there may be many hundreds, half of them with one foot in the grave. Then, "Such a planet in such a house shews great machinations, plots, and conspiracies, that may in time be brought to light :" after which, if we hear of any discovery, the astrologer gets the honour ; if not, his predictions still stands good. And at last, "God preserve King William from all his open and secret enemies, Amen." When, if the king should happen to have died, the astrologer plainly foretold it ; otherwise it passes but for the pious ejaculation of a loyal subject : though it unluckily happened in some of their Almanacks, that poor King William was prayed for many months after he was dead, because it fell out, that he died about the beginning of the year.

To mention no more of their impertinent predictions, what

<sup>1</sup> John Gadbury was a tailor of Oxford who ran an almanack on similar lines to that published by Partridge, and in rivalry of the London shoemaker-philomath. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> "Correct" in first edition. [T. S.]



have we to do with their advertisements about “pills and drinks for the venereal disease?” or their mutual quarrels in verse and prose of Whig and Tory, wherewith the stars have little to do?

Having long observed and lamented these, and an hundred other abuses of this art too tedious to repeat, I resolved to proceed in a new way, which I doubt not will be to the general satisfaction of the kingdom: I can this year produce but a specimen of what I design for the future; having employed most part of my time, in adjusting and correcting the calculations I made for some years past, because I would offer nothing to the world, of which I am not as fully satisfied, as that I am now alive. For these two last years I have not failed in above one or two particulars, and those of no very great moment. I exactly foretold the miscarriage at Toulon,<sup>1</sup> with all its particulars; and the loss of Admiral Shovel,<sup>2</sup> although I was mistaken as to the day, placing that accident about thirty-six hours sooner than it happened; but upon reviewing my schemes, I quickly found the cause of that error. I likewise foretold the battle of Almanza<sup>3</sup> to the very day and hour, with the loss on both sides, and the consequences thereof. All which I shewed to some friends many months before they happened; that is, I gave them papers sealed up, to open at such a time, after which they were at liberty to read them; and there they found my predictions true in every article, except one or two very minute.

As for the few following predictions I now offer the world, I forebore to publish them, till I had perused the several Almanacks for the year we are now entered on. I found them all in the usual strain, and I beg the reader will compare their manner with mine: and here I make bold to tell the world, that I lay the whole credit of my art upon the truth of these predictions; and I will be content, that Partridge, and the rest of his clan, may hoot me for a cheat and impostor, if I fail in any single particular of moment. I believe, any man who reads this paper, will look upon me to be at least a

<sup>1</sup> The unsuccessful attempt on the part of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Savoy, assisted by the English fleet under Sir Cloudesly Shovel, to reduce Toulon in 1707. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Sir Cloudesly Shovel's fleet was wrecked Oct. 22, 1707. [S.]

<sup>3</sup> Fought on April 25, 1707. [T. S.]

person of as much honesty and understanding, as a common maker of Almanacks. I do not lurk in the dark ; I am not wholly unknown in the world ; I have set my name at length to be a mark of infamy to mankind, if they shall find I deceive them.

In one thing I must desire to be forgiven, that I talk more sparingly of home affairs ; as it would be imprudence to discover secrets of state, so it might be dangerous to my person ; but in smaller matters, and such as are not of public consequence, I shall be very free ; and the truth of my conjectures will as much appear from these as the other. As for the most signal events abroad in France, Flanders, Italy, and Spain, I shall make no scruple to predict them in plain terms : some of them are of importance, and I hope I shall seldom mistake the day they will happen ; therefore, I think good to inform the reader, that I all along make use of the Old Style observed in England, which I desire he will compare with that of the newspapers, at the time they relate the actions I mention.

I must add one word more : I know it hath been the opinion of several learned persons, who think well enough of the true art of astrology, that the stars do only incline, and not force, the actions or wills of men ; and therefore, however I may proceed by right rules, yet I cannot in prudence so confidently assure the events will follow exactly as I predict them.

I hope I have maturely considered this objection, which in some cases is of no little weight. For example : a man may, by the influence of an over-ruling planet, be disposed or inclined to lust, rage, or avarice, and yet by the force of reason overcome that evil influence ; and this was the case of Socrates : but the great events of the world, usually depending upon numbers of men, it cannot be expected they should all unite to cross their inclinations, for pursuing a general design, wherein they unanimously agree. Besides, the influence of the stars reacheth to many actions and events, which are not any way in the power of reason ; as sickness, death, and what we commonly call accidents, with many more needless to repeat.

But now it is time to proceed to my predictions, which I have begun to calculate from the time that the sun enters



into Aries. And this I take to be properly the beginning of the natural year. I pursue them to the time that he enters Libra, or somewhat more, which is the busy period of the year. The remainder I have not yet adjusted, upon account of several impediments needless here to mention : besides, I must remind the reader again, that this is but a specimen of what I design in succeeding years to treat more at large, if I may have liberty and encouragement.

My first prediction is but a trifle, yet I will mention it, to shew how ignorant those sottish pretenders to astrology are in their own concerns : it relates to Partridge the Almanack-maker ; I have consulted the star of his nativity by my own rules, and find he will infallibly die upon the 29th of March next, about eleven at night, of a raging fever ; therefore I advise him to consider of it, and settle his affairs in time.

The month of APRIL will be observable for the death of many great persons. On the 4th will die the Cardinal de Noailles, Archbishop of Paris : on the 11th, the young Prince of Asturias, son to the Duke of Anjou : on the 14th, a great peer of this realm will die at his country-house : on the 19th, an old layman of great fame for learning : and on the 23d, an eminent goldsmith in Lombard-Street. I could mention others, both at home and abroad, if I did not consider such events of very little use or instruction to the reader, or to the world.

As to public affairs : On the 7th of this month there will be an insurrection in Dauphine, occasioned by the oppressions of the people, which will not be quieted some months.

On the 15th will be a violent storm on the south-east coast of France, which will destroy many of their ships, and some in the very harbour.

The 19th will be famous for the revolt of a whole province or kingdom, excepting one city, by which the affairs of a certain prince in the alliance will take a better face.

MAY, against common conjectures, will be no very busy month in Europe, but very signal for the death of the Dauphin, which will happen on the 7th, after a short fit of sickness, and grievous torments with the strangury. He dies less lamented by the court than the kingdom.

On the 9th, a Mareschal of France will break his leg by a



fall from his horse. I have not been able to discover whether he will then die or not.

On the 11th will begin a most important siege, which the eyes of all Europe will be upon: I cannot be more particular: for, in relating affairs that so nearly concern the confederates, and consequently this kingdom, I am forced to confine myself, for several reasons very obvious to the reader.

On the 15th, news will arrive of a very surprising event, than which, nothing could be more unexpected.

On the 19th, three noble ladies of this kingdom will, against all expectation, prove with child, to the great joy of their husbands.

On the 23d, a famous buffoon of the playhouse will die a ridiculous death, suitable to his vocation.

JUNE. This month will be distinguished at home by the utter dispersing of those ridiculous deluded enthusiasts, commonly called the Prophets;<sup>1</sup> occasioned chiefly by seeing the time come, when many of their prophecies should be fulfilled, and then finding themselves deceived by contrary events. It is indeed to be admired, how any deceiver can be so weak to foretel things near at hand, when a very few months must, of necessity, discover the imposture to all the world; in this point less prudent than common almanack-makers, who are so wise to wander in generals, talk dubiously, and leave to the reader the business of interpreting.

On the 1st of this month, a French General will be killed by a random shot of a cannon-ball.

On the 6th, a fire will break out in the suburbs of Paris, which will destroy above a thousand houses; and seems to

<sup>1</sup> The Protestants in Dauphiné, called Casimars, mingled miracles and prophecies with their religious fervour. Those who took refuge in England attracted great attention under the title of the French prophets, and were subject of much discussion, both from the press and pulpit. In 1707-8, John Lacy, Esq., became a convert; and, in the preface to a work called "A Cry from the Desert," he confidently appeals to the "subject matter and economy of four or five hundred prophetic warnings, given under ecstasy in London." As impostors mingled among the enthusiasts, the consequences began to assume rather an alarming appearance. They undertook to raise a man from the dead, and, having of course failed, were exposed to general ridicule, to which a play, called "The Modern Prophets," written by Durfy, not a little contributed. [S. amended.]

be the foreboding of what will happen, to the surprise of all Europe, about the end of the following month.

On the 10th, a great battle will be fought, which will begin at four of the clock in the afternoon ; and last till nine at night, with great obstinacy, but no very decisive event. I shall not name the place, for the reasons aforesaid ; but the commanders on each left wing will be killed. . . . I see bon-fires, and hear the noise of guns for a victory.

On the 14th, there will be a false report of the French King's death.

On the 20th, Cardinal Portocarero will die of a dysentery, with great suspicion of poison ; but the report of his intention to revolt to King Charles will prove false.

JULY. The 6th of this month, a certain General will, by a glorious action, recover the reputation he lost by former misfortunes.

On the 12th, a great commander will die a prisoner in the hands of his enemies.

On the 14th, a shameful discovery will be made of a French Jesuit, giving poison to a great foreign general ; and when he is put to the torture, he will make wonderful discoveries.

In short, this will prove a month of great action, if I might have liberty to relate the particulars.

At home, the death of an old famous senator will happen on the 15th, at his country-house, worn out with age and diseases.

But that which will make this month memorable to all posterity, is the death of the French king, Louis the Fourteenth, after a week's sickness, at Marli, which will happen on the 29th, about six o'clock in the evening. It seems to be an effect of the gout in his stomach, followed by a flux. And, in three days after, Monsieur Chamillard will follow his master, dying suddenly of an apoplexy.

In this month likewise an ambassador will die in London ; but I cannot assign the day.

AUGUST. The affairs of France will seem to suffer no change for a while under the Duke of Burgundy's administration ; but the genius that animated the whole machine being gone, will be the cause of mighty turns and revolutions in the following year. The new King makes yet little change

either in the army or the ministry ; but the libels against his grandfather, that fly about his very court, give him uneasiness.

I see an express in mighty haste, with joy and wonder in his looks, arriving by break of day on the 26th of this month, having travelled in three days a prodigious journey by land and sea. In the evening I hear bells and guns, and see the blazing of a thousand bonfires.

A young admiral of noble birth does likewise this month gain immortal honour by a great achievement.

The affairs of Poland are this month entirely settled : Augustus resigns his pretensions, which he had again taken up for some time : Stanislaus is peaceably possessed of the throne ; and the King of Sweden declares for the Emperor.

I cannot omit one particular accident here at home ; that near the end of this month much mischief will be done at Bartholomew Fair, by the fall of a booth.

SEPTEMBER. This month begins with a very surprising fit of frosty weather, which will last near twelve days.

The Pope having long languished last month, the swellings in his legs breaking, and the flesh mortifying, will die on the 11th instant ; and in three weeks' time, after a mighty contest, be succeeded by a Cardinal of the imperial faction, but a native of Tuscany, who is now about sixty-one years old.

The French army acts now wholly on the defensive, strongly fortified in their trenches ; and the young French King sends overtures for a treaty of peace by the Duke of Mantua ; which, because it is a matter of state that concerns us here at home, I shall speak no farther of it.

I shall add but one prediction more, and that in mystical terms, which shall be included in a verse out of Virgil—

*Alter erit jam Tethys, et altera, quæ vehat, Argo,  
Delectos heroas.*

Upon the 25th day of this month, the fulfilling of this prediction will be manifest to everybody.

This is the farthest I have proceeded in my calculations for the present year. I do not pretend that these are all the great events which will happen in this period ; but that those I have set down will infallibly come to pass. It will perhaps



still be objected, why I have not spoke more particularly of affairs at home, or of the success of our armies abroad, which I might, and could very largely have done : but those in power have wisely discouraged men from meddling in public concerns, and I was resolved by no means to give the least offence. This I will venture to say, that it will be a glorious campaign for the Allies, wherein the English forces, both by sea and land, will have their full share of honour : that Her Majesty Queen Anne will continue in health and prosperity : and that no ill accident will arrive to any in the chief ministry.

As to the particular events I have mentioned, the readers may judge, by the fulfilling of them, whether I am on the level with common astrologers ; who, with an old paltry cant, and a few pot-hooks for planets to amuse the vulgar, have, in my opinion, too long been suffered to abuse the world : but an honest physician ought not to be despised, because there are such things as mountebanks. I hope I have some share of reputation, which I would not willingly forfeit for a frolic or humour ; and I believe no gentleman who reads this paper, will look upon it to be of the same cast or mould with the common scribbles that are every day hawked about. My fortune hath placed me above the little regard of writing for a few pence, which I neither value or want : therefore, let not wise men too hastily condemn this essay, intended for a good design, to cultivate and improve an ancient art, long in disgrace by having fallen into mean unskilful hands. A little time will determine whether I have deceived others or myself ; and I think it no very unreasonable request, that men would please to suspend their judgments till then. I was once of the opinion with those who despise all predictions from the stars, till, in the year 1686, a man of quality shewed me, written in his *album*,<sup>1</sup> that the most learned astronomer, Captain H[alley], assured him, he would never believe anything of the stars' influence if there were not a great revolution in England in the year 1688. Since that time I began to have other thoughts, and after eighteen

<sup>1</sup> *Album* is the name of a paper book, in which it was usual for a man's friends to write down a sentence, with their names, to keep them in his remembrance ; it is still common in some of the foreign universities. [S.]

years diligent study and application, I think I have no reason to repent of my pains. I shall detain the reader no longer than to let him know, that the account I design to give of next year's events, shall take in the principal affairs that happen in Europe; and if I be denied the liberty of offering it to my own country, I shall appeal to the learned world, by publishing it in Latin, and giving order to have it printed in Holland.

THE  
ACCOMPLISHMENT  
OF THE FIRST OF  
MR. BICKERSTAFF'S PREDICTIONS,  
BEING  
AN ACCOUNT  
OF THE DEATH OF  
MR. PARTRIDGE, THE ALMANACK-MAKER,  
UPON THE 29TH INSTANT,  
IN A LETTER TO A PERSON OF HONOUR.

[WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1708.]





THE  
ACCOMPLISHMENT  
OF THE FIRST OF  
MR. BICKERSTAFF'S PREDICTIONS.

MY LORD,

I N obedience to your Lordship's commands, as well as to satisfy my own curiosity, I have some days past enquired constantly after Partridge the almanack-maker, of whom it was foretold in Mr. Bickerstaff's Predictions, published about a month ago, that he should die the 29th instant, about eleven at night, of a raging fever. I had some sort of knowledge of him, when I was employed in the revenue, because he used every year to present me with his almanack, as he did other gentlemen, upon the score of some little gratuity we gave him. I saw him accidentally once or twice, about ten days before he died, and observed he began very much to droop and languish, though, I hear, his friends did not seem to apprehend him in any danger. About two or three days ago he grew ill, was confined first to his chamber, and in a few hours after to his bed; where Dr. Case<sup>1</sup> and Mrs. Kirleus<sup>2</sup> were sent for to visit and to prescribe to him.

<sup>1</sup> John Case was many years a noted practitioner in physic and astrology. He was looked upon as the successor of Lilly and of Saffold, and possessed the magical utensils of both. He erased the verses of his predecessor from the sign-post, and substituted in their stead this distich, by which he is said to have got more than Dryden did by all his works,

“Within this place  
Lives Doctor Case.”

[S.]

<sup>2</sup> Mary Kirleus, widow of John Kirleus, son of Dr. Thomas Kirleus, a collegiate physician of London. [S.]

Both Case and Mary Kirleus were famous quacks in London at the time Swift wrote. [T. S.]

Upon this intelligence I sent thrice every day one servant or other to inquire after his health ; and yesterday about four in the afternoon, word was brought me, that he was past hopes. Upon which I prevailed with myself to go and see him, partly out of commiseration, and, I confess, partly out of curiosity. He knew me very well, seemed surprised at my condescension, and made me compliments upon it, as well as he could in the condition he was. The people about him said he had been for some time delirious ; but when I saw him he had his understanding as well as ever I knew, and spoke strong and hearty, without any seeming uneasiness or constraint. After I had told him I was sorry to see him in those melancholy circumstances, and said some other civilities suitable to the occasion, I desired him to tell me freely and ingenuously, whether the predictions Mr. Bickerstaff had published relating to his death, had not too much affected and worked on his imagination. He confessed he had often had it in his head, but never with much apprehension, till about a fortnight before ; since which time it had the perpetual possession of his mind and thoughts, and he did verily believe was the true natural cause of his present distemper : for, said he, “I am thoroughly persuaded, and I think I have very good reasons, that Mr. Bickerstaff spoke altogether by guess, and knew no more what will happen this year than I did myself.” I told him, his discourse surprised me ; and I would be glad he were in a state of health to be able to tell me what reason he had to be convinced of Mr. Bickerstaff’s ignorance. He replied, “I am a poor ignorant fellow, bred to a mean trade, yet I have sense enough to know, that all pretences of foretelling by astrology are deceits, for this manifest reason : because the wise and the learned, who can only judge whether there be any truth in this science, do all unanimously agree to laugh at and despise it ; and none but the poor ignorant vulgar give it any credit, and that only upon the word of such silly wretches as I and my fellows who can hardly write or read.” I then asked him, why he had not calculated his own nativity, to see whether it agreed with Bickerstaff’s prediction ? At which he shook his head, and said, “Oh ! sir this is no time for jesting, but for repenting those fooleries, as I do now from the very bottom of my heart.”—“By what I can



gather from you," said I, "the observations and predictions you printed with your almanacks, were mere impositions on the people." He replied, "If it were otherwise, I should have the less to answer for. We have a common form for all those things: as to foretelling the weather, we never meddle with that, but leave it to the printer, who takes it out of any old almanack, as he thinks fit: the rest was my own invention, to make my almanack sell, having a wife to maintain, and no other way to get my bread; for mending old shoes is a poor livelihood; and," (added he, sighing,) "I wish I may not have done more mischief by my physic, than my astrology; though I had some good receipts from my grandmother, and my own compositions were such, as I thought could at least do no hurt."

I had some other discourse with him, which I now cannot call to mind; and I fear have already tired your lordship. I shall only add one circumstance, that on his death-bed he declared himself a nonconformist, and had a fanatic preacher to be his spiritual guide. After half an hour's conversation I took my leave, being almost stifled with the closeness of the room. I imagined he could not hold out long, and therefore withdrew to a little coffeehouse hard by, leaving a servant at the house with orders to come immediately and tell me, as near as he could, the minute when Partridge should expire, which was not above two hours after; when looking upon my watch, I found it to be above five minutes after seven: by which it is clear that Mr. Bickerstaff was mistaken almost four hours in his calculation. In the other circumstances he was exact enough. But whether he hath not been the cause of this poor man's death, as well as the predictor, may be very reasonably disputed. However, it must be confessed, the matter is odd enough, whether we should endeavour to account for it by chance, or the effect of imagination: for my own part, though I believe no man hath less faith in these matters, yet I shall wait with some impatience, and not without some expectation, the fulfilling of Mr. Bickerstaff's second prediction, that the Cardinal de Noailles is to die upon the fourth of April; and if that should be verified as exactly as this of poor Partridge, I must own I should be wholly surprised, and at a loss, and infallibly expect the accomplishment of all the rest.



A  
VINDICATION

O F

*Isaac Bickerstaff Esq;*

A G A I N S T

What is Objected to Him by  
Mr. *Partridge*, in his Almanack  
for the present Year 1709.

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*By the said ISAAC BICKERSTAFF Esq;*

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L O N D O N :

Printed in the Year MDCCIX.





A  
VINDICATION  
OF  
ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, ESQ.

MR. PARTRIDGE hath been lately pleased to treat me after a very rough manner, in that which is called his almanack for the present year : such usage is very indecent from one gentleman to another, and does not at all contribute to the discovery of truth, which ought to be the great end in all disputes of the learned. To call a man fool and villain, and impudent fellow, only for differing from him in a point merely speculative, is, in my humble opinion, a very improper style for a person of his education. I appeal to the learned world, whether, in my last year's predictions, I gave him the least provocation for such unworthy treatment. Philosophers have differed in all ages, but the discreetest among them have always differed as became philosophers. Scurrility and passion, in a controversy among scholars, is just so much of nothing to the purpose ; and at best a tacit confession of a weak cause : my concern is not so much for my own reputation, as that of the republic of letters, which Mr. Partridge hath endeavoured to wound through my sides. If men of public spirit must be superciliously treated for their ingenious attempts, how will true useful knowledge be ever advanced ? I wish Mr. Partridge knew the thoughts which foreign universities have conceived of his ungenerous proceeding with me ; but I am too tender of his reputation to publish them to the world. That spirit of envy and pride, which blasts so many rising geniuses in our nation, is yet unknown among professors abroad : the necessity of justifying myself will excuse my vanity, when I tell the reader, that

I have received near a hundred honorary letters from several parts of Europe, (some as far as Muscovy,) in praise of my performance. Beside several others, which, as I have been credibly informed, were opened in the post office, and never sent me. It is true, the inquisition in Portugal was pleased to burn my predictions,<sup>1</sup> and condemn the author and the readers of them: but I hope at the same time, it will be considered, in how deplorable a state learning lies at present in that kingdom: and with the profoundest veneration for crowned heads, I will presume to add, that it a little concerned his Majesty of Portugal to interpose his authority in behalf of a scholar and a gentleman, the subject of a nation with which he is now in so strict an alliance. But the other kingdoms and states of Europe have treated me with more candour and generosity. If I had leave to print the Latin letters transmitted to me from foreign parts, they would fill a volume, and be a full defence against all that Mr. Partridge, or his accomplices of the Portugal inquisition, will be ever able to object; who, by the way, are the only enemies my predictions have ever met with at home or abroad. But I hope I know better what is due to the honour of a learned correspondence, in so tender a point. Yet some of those illustrious persons will perhaps excuse me, for transcribing a passage or two in my vindication.<sup>2</sup> The most learned Monsieur Leibnitz thus addresses to me his third letter:—" *Illustrissimo Bickerstaffio astrologiæ instauratori,*" &c. Monsieur Le Clerc, quoting my predictions in a treatise he published last year, is pleased to say, "*Ita nuperrime Bickerstaffius, magnum illud Angliæ sidus.*" Another great professor writing of me, has these words: "*Bickerstaffius, nobilis Anglus, astrologorum hujusce sæculi facile princeps.*" Signior Magliabecchi, the Great Duke's famous library-keeper, spends almost his whole letter in compliments and praises. 'Tis true, the renowned professor of astronomy at Utrecht seems to differ from me in one article; but it is after the modest manner that becomes a philosopher; as, "*pace tanti viri dixerim:*" and, page 55, he seems to lay the

<sup>1</sup> This is fact. [S.]

<sup>2</sup> The quotations here inserted are in imitation of Dr. Bentley, in some part of the famous controversy between him and Mr. Boyle. [S.]



error upon the printer, (as indeed it ought,) and says, "*vel forsan error typographi, cum alioquin Bickerstaffius vir doctissimus,*" &c.

If Mr. Partridge had followed this example in the controversy between us, he might have spared me the trouble of justifying myself in so public a manner. I believe few men are readier to own their errors than I, or more thankful to those who will please to inform him of them. But, it seems, this gentleman, instead of encouraging the progress of his own art, is pleased to look upon all attempts of that kind as an invasion of his province. He has been indeed so wise as to make no objection against the truth of my predictions, except in one single point relating to himself: and to demonstrate how much men are blinded by their own partiality, I do solemnly assure the reader, that he is the only person from whom I ever heard that objection offered; which consideration alone, I think, will take off all its weight.

With my utmost endeavours I have not been able to trace above two objections ever made against the truth of my last year's prophecies: the first was, of a Frenchman, who was pleased to publish to the world, "that the Cardinal de Noailles was still alive, notwithstanding the pretended prophecy of Monsieur Biquerstaffe:" but how far a Frenchman, a Papist, and an enemy, is to be believed in his own case, against an English Protestant, who is true to the government, I shall leave to the candid and impartial reader.

✓ The other objection is the unhappy occasion of this discourse, and relates to an article in my predictions, which foretold the death of Mr. Partridge to happen on March 29, 1708. This he is pleased to contradict absolutely in the almanack he has published for the present year, and in that ungentlemanly manner (pardon the expression) as I have above related. In that work he very roundly asserts, that he "is not only now alive, but was likewise alive upon that very 29th of March, when I had foretold he should die." This is the subject of the present controversy between us; which I design to handle with all brevity, perspicuity, and calmness: in this dispute, I am sensible the eyes, not only of England, but of all Europe, will be upon us; and the learned in every country will, I doubt not, take part on that side where they find most appearance of reason and truth.

Without entering into criticisms of chronology about the hour of his death, I shall only prove that Mr. Partridge is not alive. And my first argument is thus: above a thousand gentlemen having bought his almanacks for this year, merely to find what he said against me, at every line they read, they would lift up their eyes, and cry out, betwixt rage and laughter, "they were sure no man alive ever writ such damned stuff as this." Neither did I ever hear that opinion disputed; so that Mr. Partridge lies under a dilemma, either of disowning his almanack, or allowing himself to be no man alive. Secondly, Death is defined by all philosophers, a separation of the soul and body. Now it is certain, that the poor woman, who has best reason to know, has gone about for some time to every alley in the neighbourhood, and sworn to the gossips, that her husband had neither life nor soul in him. Therefore, if an uninformed carcass walks still about, and is pleased to call itself Partridge, Mr. Bickerstaff does not think himself anyway answerable for that. Neither had the said carcass any right to beat the poor boy, who happened to pass by it in the street, crying, "A full and true account of Dr. Partridge's death," &c.<sup>1</sup>

Thirdly, Mr. Partridge pretends to tell fortunes, and recover stolen goods; which all the parish says, he must do by conversing with the devil, and other evil spirits: and no wise man will ever allow he could converse personally with either till after he was dead.<sup>1</sup>

Fourthly, I will plainly prove him to be dead, out of his own almanack for this year, and from the very passage which he produces to make us think him alive. He there says, "he is not only now alive, but was also alive upon that very 29th of March, which I foretold he should die on:" by this, he declares his opinion, that a man may be alive now who was not alive a twelvemonth ago. And, indeed, there lies the sophistry of his argument. He dares not assert he was alive ever since that 29th of March, but that he "is now alive, and

<sup>1</sup> In the "Miscellanies" (1711), and in the editions published by Faulkner and Hawkesworth, the passage beginning with "Death is defined by all philosophers," and ending with "neither life nor soul in him," is omitted. The paragraph here beginning "Thirdly" is in these issues headed "Secondly," and so on. The reading in text is that of the original edition, and this has been followed by Scott. [T. S.]

was so on that day :” I grant the latter ; for he did not die till night, as appears by the printed account of his death, in a letter to a lord ; and whether he be since revived, I leave the world to judge. This indeed is perfect cavilling, and I am ashamed to dwell any longer upon it.

Fifthly, I will appeal to Mr. Partridge himself, whether it be probable I could have been so indiscreet, to begin my predictions with the only falsehood that ever was pretended to be in them ? and this in an affair at home, where I had so many opportunities to be exact ; and must have given such advantages against me to a person of Mr. Partridge’s wit and learning, who, if he could possibly have raised one single objection more against the truth of my prophecies, would hardly have spared me.

And here I must take occasion to reprove the above-mentioned writer of the relation of Mr. Partridge’s death, in a Letter to a Lord ; who was pleased to tax me with a mistake of four whole hours in my calculation of that event. I must confess, this censure, pronounced with an air of certainty, in a matter that so nearly concerned me, and by a grave, judicious author, moved me not a little. But though I was at that time out of town, yet several of my friends, whose curiosity had led them to be exactly informed, (for as to my own part, having no doubt at all in the matter, I never once thought of it,) assured me, I computed to something under half an hour ; which (I speak my private opinion) is an error of no very great magnitude, that men should raise a clamour about it. I shall only say, it would not be amiss, if that author would henceforth be more tender of other men’s reputation, as well as his own. It is well there were no more mistakes of that kind ; if there had, I presume he would have told me of them with as little ceremony.

There is one objection against Mr. Partridge’s death, which I have sometimes met with, though, indeed, very slightly offered, that he still continues to write almanacks. But this is no more than what is common to all of that profession ; Gadbury, Poor Robin, Dove, Wing, and several others, do yearly publish their almanacks, though several of them have been dead since before the Revolution. Now, the natural reason of this I take to be, that, whereas it is the privilege of authors to live after their death, almanack-makers are alone



excluded ; because their dissertations, treating only upon the minutes as they pass, become useless as those go off. In consideration of which, Time, whose registers they are, gives them a lease in reversion, to continue their works after death. Or, perhaps, a name can *make* an almanack as well as it can *sell* one. And to strengthen this conjecture, I have heard the booksellers affirm, that they have desired Mr. Partridge to spare himself further trouble, and only lend them his name, which could make Almanacks much better than himself.<sup>1</sup>

I should not have given the public, or myself, the trouble of this vindication, if my name had not been made use of by several persons to whom I never lent it ; one of which, a few days ago, was pleased to father on me a new set of predictions. But I think these are things too serious to be trifled with. It grieved me to the heart, when I saw my labours, which had cost me so much thought and watching, bawled about by the common hawkers of Grub-Street, which I only intended for the weighty consideration of the gravest persons. This prejudiced the world so much at first, that several of my friends had the assurance to ask me whether I were in jest ? to which I only answered coldly, “that the event would shew.” But it is the talent of our age and nation, to turn things of the greatest importance into ridicule. When the end of the year had verified all my predictions, out comes Mr. Partridge’s almanack, disputing the point of his death ; so that I am employed, like the general who was forced to kill his enemies twice over, whom a necromancer had raised to life. If Mr. Partridge has practised the same experiment upon himself, and be again alive, long may he continue so ; that does not the least contradict my veracity : but I think I have clearly proved, by invincible demonstration, that he died, at farthest, within half an hour of the time I foretold, [and not four hours sooner, as the above-mentioned author, in his letter to a lord, has maliciously suggested, with a design to blast my credit, by charging me with so gross a mistake.]<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The passage beginning with “Or, perhaps,” and ending with “himself,” is omitted by Scott. [T. S.]

<sup>2</sup> The passage included in the square brackets is not in the first edition, but Faulkner, Hawkesworth, and Scott give it, and Professor Arber places it in square brackets also. [T. S.]

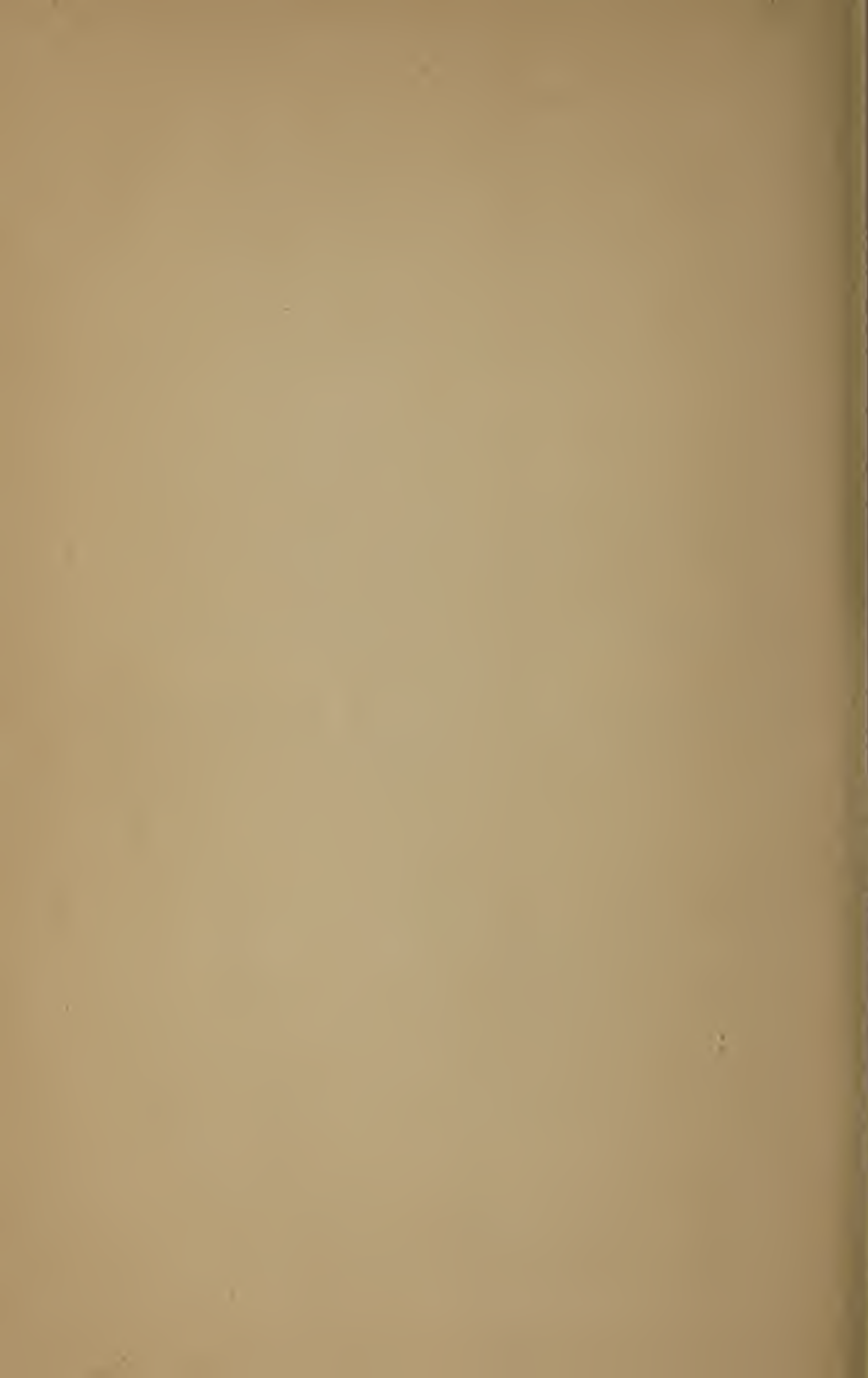
A FAMOUS PREDICTION OF MERLIN,  
THE BRITISH WIZARD.

WRITTEN ABOVE A THOUSAND YEARS AGO, AND RELATING TO

THE YEAR 1709.

WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES. BY T. N. PHILOMATH.

[WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1709.]





A  
FAMOUS PREDICTION  
OF  
MERLIN.

**L**AST year was published a paper of Predictions, pretended to be written by one Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq.; but the true design of it was to ridicule the art of astrology, and expose its professors as ignorant or impostors. Against this imputation Dr. Partridge has learnedly vindicated himself in his almanack for that year.

For a farther vindication of this famous art, I have thought fit to present the world with the following prophecy. The original is said to be of the famous Merlin, who lived about a thousand years ago ; and the following translation is two hundred years old, for it seems to be written near the end of Henry the Seventh's reign. I found it in an old edition of Merlin's prophecies, imprinted at London by Johan Haukyns, in the year 1530, page 39. I set it down word for word in the old orthography, and shall take leave to subjoin a few explanatory notes.

Seben and Ten addyd to nine,  
Of Fraunce hir Woe this is the Sygne,  
Tamps Ribere twys y=frozen,  
Walke sans wetynge Shoes ne Wozen.  
Then comyth forth, Ich understonde,  
From Towne of Stoffe to fattyn Londe,  
An herdie Chyftan, Woe the Morne  
To Fraunce, that eber he was born.  
Then shall the Fyshe beweple his Gosse ;  
Nor shall grin Berrys make up the Losse.  
Wonge Synnele shall again miscarrye :

And Norways Pryd again shall marry.  
 And from the Tree where Blossums feele,  
 Ripe Fruit shall come, and all is wele,  
 Keaums shall daunce Monde in Monde,  
 And it shall be merrye in old Inglonde,  
 Then old Inglonde shall be no more,  
 And no man shall be sorie therefore.  
 Gerpon shall have three Medes agayne,  
 Till Wapsburge makyth them but twayne.

#### EXPLANATORY NOTES.

**Seven and Ten.** This line describes the year when these events shall happen. Seven and ten make seventeen, which I explain seventeen hundred, and this number added to nine, makes the year we are now in ; for it must be understood of the natural year, which begins the first of January.

**Tamps Ribere twys, &c.** The River Thames frozen twice in one year, so as men to walk on it, is a very signal accident, which perhaps hath not fallen out for several hundred years before, and is the reason why some astrologers have thought that this prophecy could never be fulfilled, because they imagined such a thing would never happen in our climate.

**From Town of Stoffe, &c.** This is a plain designation of the Duke of Marlborough : one kind of stuff used to fatten and is called marle, and everybody knows that borough is a name for a town ; and this way of expression is after the usual dark manner of old astrological predictions.

**Then shall the Fyshe, &c.** By the fish is understood the Dauphin of France, as their kings' eldest sons are called : 'tis here said, he shall lament the loss of the Duke of Burgundy, called the Bosse, which is an old English word for hump-shoulder, or crook-back, as that Duke is known to be ; and the prophecy seems to mean that he should be overcome or slain. By the green berrys, in the next line, is meant the young Duke of Berry, the Dauphin's third son, who shall not

have valour or fortune enough to supply the loss of his eldest brother.

**Ponge Symnele, &c.** By Symnele, is meant the pretended Prince of Wales, who, if he offers to attempt anything against England, shall miscarry, as he did before. Lambert Symnele is the name of a young man, noted in our histories for personating the son (as I remember) of Edward the Fourth.

**And Norways Pryd, &c.** I cannot guess who is meant by Norway's pride;<sup>1</sup> perhaps the reader may, as well as the sense of the two following lines.

**Reaums shall, &c.** Reaums, or, as the word is now, realms, is the old name for kingdoms: and this is a very plain prediction of our happy union, with the felicities that shall attend it. It is added that Old England shall be no more, and yet no man shall be sorry for it. And indeed, properly speaking, England is now no more, for the whole island is one kingdom, under the name of Britain.

**Geryon shall, &c.** This prediction, though somewhat obscure, is wonderfully adapt. Geryon is said to have been a king of Spain, whom Hercules slew. It was a fiction of the poets, that he had three heads, which the author says he shall have again: that is, Spain shall have three kings, which is now wonderfully verified; for, beside the King of Portugal, which properly is part of Spain, there are now two rivals for Spain, Charles and Philip; but Charles being descended from the Count of Hapsburg, founder of the Austrian family, shall soon make those heads but two, by overturning Philip, and driving him out of Spain.

Some of these predictions are already fulfilled, and it is highly probable the rest may be in due time; and I think, I have not forced the words, by my explication, into any other sense, than what they will naturally bear. If this be granted, I am sure it must be also allowed, that the author (whoever he were) was a person of extraordinary sagacity; and that astrology, brought to such perfection as this, is by no means an art to be despised, whatever Mr. Bickerstaff, or other merry gentlemen, are pleased to think. As to the tradition of these lines having been writ in the original by Merlin, I

<sup>1</sup> Queen Anne. [H.]



confess I lay not much weight upon it ; but it is enough to justify their authority, that the book whence I have transcribed them, was printed 170 years ago, as appears by the title-page. For the satisfaction of any gentleman, who may be either doubtful of the truth, or curious to be informed ; I shall give order to have the very book sent to the printer of this paper, with directions to let anybody see it that pleases, because I believe it is pretty scarce.

A  
MEDITATION

U P O N A

Broom--Stick,

A N D

*Somewhat Beside;*

O F

The Same A U T H O R's.

---

*-----Utile dulci.*

---

L O N D O N,

Printed for E. CURLL at the *Dial* and *Bible*  
against St. *Dunstan's* Church in *Fleet-*  
*street*, 1710.

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THE circumstance which occasioned the composition of this famous parody is racily told by Mr. Thomas Sheridan. I cannot do better than quote his account. The parody itself was written in the year 1704.

“In the yearly visits which Swift made to London, during his stay there he passed much of his time at Lord Berkeley’s, officiating as chaplain to the family, and attending Lady Berkeley in her private devotions; after which the doctor, by her desire, used to read to her some moral or religious discourse. The Countess had at this time taken a great liking to Mr. Boyle’s Meditations, and was determined to go through them in that manner: but as Swift had by no means the same relish for that kind of writing which her ladyship had, he soon grew weary of the task; and a whim coming into his head, resolved to get rid of it in a way which might occasion some sport in the family; for which they had as high a relish as himself. The next time he was employed in reading one of these Meditations, he took an opportunity of conveying away the book, and dexterously inserted a leaf, on which he had written his own Meditation on a Broomstick; after which he took care to have the book restored to its proper place, and in his next attendance on my lady, when he was desired to proceed to the next Meditation, Swift opened upon the place where the leaf had been inserted, and with great composure read the title, ‘A Meditation on a Broomstick.’ Lady Berkeley, a little surprised at the oddity of the title, stopped him, repeating the words, ‘A Meditation on a Broomstick! What a strange subject! But there is no knowing what useful lessons of instruction this wonderful man may draw from things apparently the most trivial. Pray let us hear what he says upon it.’ Swift then, with an inflexible gravity of countenance, proceeded to read the Meditation, in the same solemn tone which he had used in delivering the former. Lady Berkeley, not at all suspecting a trick, in the fullness of her prepossession, was every now and then, during the reading of it, expressing her admiration of this extraordinary man, who could draw such fine moral reflections from so contemptible a subject; with which, though Swift must have been inwardly not a little tickled, yet he preserved a most perfect composure of features, so that she had not the least room to suspect any deceit. Soon after, some company coming in, Swift pretended business, and withdrew, foreseeing what was to follow. Lady Berkeley, full of the subject, soon entered upon the praises of those heavenly Meditations of Mr. Boyle. ‘But,’ said she, ‘the doctor has been just reading one to me, which has surprised me more than all the rest.’ One of the company asked which of the Meditations she meant? She answered directly, in the simplicity of her heart, ‘I mean, that excellent Meditation upon the Broomstick.’ The company looked at each other with some surprise, and could scarce refrain from laughing. But they all agreed that they had never heard of such a Meditation before. ‘Upon my word,’ said my lady, ‘there it is, look into that book, and convince yourselves.’ One of them opened the book, and found it there indeed, but in Swift’s handwriting; upon which a general burst of laughter ensued; and my lady, when the first surprise was over, enjoyed the joke as much as any of them.” [T. S.]



A  
MEDITATION

UPON A  
BROOM-STICK

ACCORDING TO THE STYLE AND MANNER OF THE HONOUR-  
ABLE ROBERT BOYLE'S MEDITATIONS.

THIS single stick, which you now behold ingloriously lying in that neglected corner, I once knew in a flourishing state in a forest ; it was full of sap, full of leaves, and full of boughs ; but now, in vain does the busy art of man pretend to vie with nature, by tying that withered bundle of twigs to its sapless trunk ; 'tis now, at best, but the reverse of what it was, a tree turned upside down, the branches on the earth, and the root in the air ; 'tis now handled by every dirty wench, condemned to do her drudgery, and, by a capricious kind of fate, destined to make other things clean, and be nasty itself : at length, worn to the stumps in the service of the maids, it is either thrown out of doors, or condemned to the last use, of kindling a fire. When I beheld this I sighed, and said within myself, *Surely man is a Broomstick!* Nature sent him into the world strong and lusty, in a thriving condition, wearing his own hair on his head, the proper branches of this reasoning vegetable, until the axe of intemperance has lopped off his green boughs, and left him a withered trunk : he then flies to art, and puts on a periwig, valuing himself upon an unnatural bundle of hairs, (all covered with powder,) that never grew on his head ; but now, should this our broomstick pretend to enter the scene, proud of those birchen spoils it never bore, and all covered with dust, though the sweepings of the finest lady's chamber,

we should be apt to ridicule and despise its vanity. Partial judges that we are of our own excellencies, and other men's defaults !

But a broomstick, perhaps, you will say, is an emblem of a tree standing on its head ; and pray what is man, but a topsyturvy creature, his animal faculties perpetually mounted on his rational, his head where his heels should be, groveling on the earth ! and yet, with all his faults, he sets up to be a universal reformer and corrector of abuses, a remover of grievances, rakes into every slut's corner of Nature, bringing hidden corruption to the light, and raises a mighty dust where there was none before ; sharing deeply all the while in the very same pollutions he pretends to sweep away : his last days are spent in slavery to women, and generally the least deserving, till, worn out to the stumps, like his brother besom, he is either kicked out of doors, or made use of to kindle flames for others to warm themselves by.

FINIS.



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