

THE PARROT

ELIZA HAYWOOD



YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY

Critical Editions

Series Note

York St John University Critical Editions is an ongoing project directed by Dr Adam James Smith, Associate Professor of English Literature.

The project sees undergraduate students from the York St John University English Literature degree and postgraduate students from the York St John University Masters in Publishing working under Dr Smith's supervision to produce totally accessible modern editions of eighteenth-century texts by diverse and lesser-known authors.

Working from facsimiles of the original eighteenth-century materials, the students carefully transcribe, annotate and represent these texts so that they can be used for university teaching, scholarly research and so that they can be freely accessed by the public for the very first time.

Whilst this project gives our students an opportunity to develop a range of transferable skills and rehearse the various ways in which the skills, they acquire during their studies are applicable to a wide range of career contexts, we also hope that the editions themselves will make it easier to diversify our understanding of eighteenth-century print culture.



YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY

CRITICAL EDITIONS

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ELIZA HAYWOOD

The Parrot

A Modern Edition

§

Edited with an Introduction by

CHARANJOTH BATTI

HANNAH ROBERTS

MADDISON WARLEY

LAUREN WILSON

With a Foreword by MANUSHAG N. POWELL

and a Preface by ADAM JAMES SMITH

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FOREWORD

Everyone should read *The Parrot*, and it is one of the great felicities of our time that now we can. *The Parrot: With a Compendium of the Times* (1746) makes two things clear: 1) even before the miscellany magazine came to dominance, the Anglophone periodical was a wild form that could contain almost anything, up to and including talking animals with potentially seditious political leanings and 2) even despite the dominance of her 20th-century reputation as an amatory writer prone to churning out formulaic fiction, Eliza Haywood was a wildly experimental writer whose canny grasp of market trends never quashed her willingness to change things up. Interest in Haywood's work is often driven by the idea that she was an early example of a woman writing for women, but it would be more accurate to understand her as a woman who worked with and for men, yet who remained keenly aware of women's subjectivities, and who was better than many at thinking through what it meant for almost anyone to experience passion within a rigidly patriarchal culture. Scholars have begun to rethink our grasp of Haywood's long and prolific career as having done more than march inexorably towards the mid-century novel of manners. Being able to place *The Parrot* in context with some of her other experiments in form—*A Spy upon the Conjuror* (1724), *The Dramatic Historiographer* (1735), *Eovaai* (1736), *Epistles for the Ladies* (1749), or *The Invisible Spy* (1754)—shows that in Haywood we have not simply a writer of amatory amusements, but arguably the one with the most inventive approach to different forms to one side of Sarah Fielding.

On the other hand, even if we had no guesses at all as to the identity of its author (given as "The Authors of *The Female Spectator*," which had concluded only three months prior), *The Parrot* would still be well worth the experience of its reading. *The Parrot*'s audience was an English reading public both shocked and bloody-minded following the unsuccessful "Forty-Five" Jacobite Rebellion. Given the cultural consensus towards retribution and paranoia, few texts—let

alone one that purported to be in part a newspaper—dared sympathize with the captured rebels, or condemn the Butcher of Culloden. *The Parrot*, though it is never really openly Jacobite, arguably does both these things, and that may have gotten the author in trouble. And yet *The Parrot* also tells stories that were more generalizable as the kind of broad social satire comprising the essay periodical genre's bread-and-butter, praising women's capacity for improvement, problematizing national and ethnic hierarchies, and generally holding up the mirror of folly to its readers. The effect of the nine *Parrot* essays is to watch a highly self-conscious form of writing meditate at length over just who is authorized to speak or write, and about what. Happily, it does so both economically and with a judicious seasoning of wry humor. The fact that modern audiences around the world can access this work at home, at work, or in between is a marvel that would have confirmed to the psittacine editor his just deserts.

By Manushag N. Powell (Arizona State University)

"Whatever faults [women] are guilty of in this kind, ought, me thinks, in a greater measure to be imputed to the men."

Eliza Haywood, *The Parrot*, No 7.

The history of eighteenth-century print is littered with striking instances in which women used cheap print—such as magazines and periodicals—to deliver stunning satirical blows to the male-dominated status quo and signal solidarity to the women living quietly and politely within it.

Eliza Haywood (c. 1693-1756) was such a woman. Haywood's best-known novella, *Fantomina*, tells the story of a young lady who falls for a dashing gallant who, unfortunately, doesn't like sleeping with the same woman twice. Our heroine therefore adopts a series of disguises so she can sleep with him again and again. By presenting a scenario in which a young woman gratifies her sexual appetites without sacrificing her reputation, *Fantomina* asks why it is that society expects "constancy" in women but not in men. Ultimately, our heroine falls pregnant and is sent to live out her days in a convent abroad. The apparent lesson is that vice is vice, even if nobody knows about it. For this reason, the tale could be circulated as a work of conduct literature: a genre designed to teach readers—usually women—how to behave. Along the way, however, Haywood has stealthily foregrounded a serious double standard to her readers.

Haywood was not alone in smuggling subversive content into conduct books. In 1753, Jane Collier published *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*, a guide designed to teach women how to torment their husbands. As Collier explains, a true tormentor does not kill their enemy, but instead "wastes them by degrees" over as long a period as possible by teasing, nagging and embarrassing them. "The cat doth play," she writes, "and later slays."

In 1741-46, Haywood ran a monthly periodical called *The Female Spectator*, which courted an audience of female readers. This was a practice Jonathan Swift disparagingly called "fair sexing": appealing to a second-hand readership of women who might inherit the paper when their husbands had finished with it. Proudly presenting itself as a magazine by women and for women, however, Haywood self-consciously carved out a space to celebrate female readers and campaign for female education.

Haywood followed *The Female Spectator* with *The Parrot* (1746), a periodical written from the perspective of a green parrot. By the time we meet Haywood's parrot he has lived for decades and been owned by hundreds of different people from across the

globe. This has left him with a sour view of humanity, whom he considers far too keen to judge a person's qualities on their external appearances. Often disregarded as a "pretty prattler" who can only repeat words without understanding and appreciated primarily as an object if not ignored entirely, the parrot feels a keen solidarity with the women he observes. He concedes that women are by no means perfect, but that they do what they must to survive in a world ruled by men, concluding that "whatever faults [women] are guilty of in this kind, ought, me thinks, in a greater measure to be imputed to the men."

In 1760-1761 Charlotte Lennox, published *The Lady's Museum*, a periodical promising to teach and entertain female readers. Pre-empting by three decades Mary Wollstonecraft's famous condemnation in the *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) of the "false education" which had historically taught women that they are inferior, Lennox declares that "We live no longer in an age when prejudice condemned woman [to] shameful ignorance." However, though Lennox hopes that this new print culture offers an opportunity for female education, she also warns against assuming that women of prior eras were not keen and capable thinkers. There have always been women, she writes, who could be found "shaking off the yoke of fashion", who "ventured to think justly, and speak with propriety", and who are "not ashamed of being more learned than the idle man of fashion." These women existed in history, Lennox assure us, they just need to be "found."

We would do well to remember Lennox's appeal to broaden our historical assumptions and remember that progressive values are not merely a phenomenon of our own time only. Reading eighteenth-century women writers like Haywood, Ingram and Lennox reveals that we don't need fantasies like *Bridgeton* to find these values in the eighteenth century, there were voices expressing them at the time. We just need to find them. And *The Parrot*, which you now hold in your hands, is a very fine example indeed.

By Adam James Smith (York St John University)

KEY HISTORICAL EVENTS

1688

Beginning of the Long Eighteenth Century.

1707

Act of Union joins England and Wales with Scotland.

1714

House of Hanover begins their reign as George I becomes king of Britain.

1715

The Whigs Party win Parliament majority and stay in power until the 1760s.

KEY LITERARY EVENTS

1693

Eliza Haywood is born (born as Eliza Fowler).

1702

Daniel DeFoe publishes his satirical pamphlet *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* and is subsequently pilloried for it the following year.

1711

The periodical *The Spectator* is founded by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele.

Eliza Haywood performs in Thomas Shadwell's adaptation of *Timon of Athens; or, The Man Hater* by William Shakespeare. She played the character Chloe.

1719

Eliza Haywood publishes *Love in Excess*.

1725

Eliza Haywood publishes *Fantomina; or, Love in a Maze*. A story of an unnamed woman that assumes multiple identities to explore her sexuality.

1728

Alexander Pope publishes *The Dunciad*, a mock-epic poem that references Haywood multiple times. She is referred to as a 'scribler' (someone that writes for money, seen as derogatory at the time) and likened to the Greek Goddess Hera (not flattering, she is called cow-eyed). It is speculated that this hurt Haywood's reputation.

1744

Haywood published began her monthly periodical *The Female Spectator* which is considered the first periodical by a woman addressed to women.

1745

The Jacobite Rising was an attempt for the House of Stuart to regain control of the throne. It has been speculated that Eliza Haywood was a Jacobite sympathiser.

1746

The first issue of *The Parrot* is published.

1751

Haywood publishes *The History of Betsy Thoughtless*. It coincided with the release of *An Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* by Thomas Gray which popularised fiction centring themes of mourning. Blackwells about *The History of Betsy Thoughtless*: "one of the first novels to depict a heroine struggling with the consequences of marrying the wrong man" and therefore is suspected to have inspired novels such as *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë.

1755

Start of American War of Independence.

1756

February 25th Eliza Haywood dies due to illness.

1789

The French Revolution begins.

1807

Due to a twenty-year campaign by William Wilberforce The Slave Trade Act is abolished.

1815

End of the Long Eighteenth Century.

1837

Queen Victoria takes to the throne.

INTRODUCTION

During this brief pause before the text begins, we are certain that you, the reader, are sitting there with many questions.

- ◇ *What is so special about Eliza Haywood?* It is unlikely that you have heard of her before, especially when canonically great Eighteenth-Century literature is attributed to male authors such as Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope and Samuel Richardson to name a few.
- ◇ *Why a periodical and not a proper novel?* It is a strange one, considering it is unlikely that you will be studying the NME in seminars any time soon.
- ◇ And most importantly... *why is she pretending to be a parrot?* We are not quite sure why Haywood would pretend to be a parrot, especially considering women that use their voices are often accused of 'parrotting on'... Oh, that might be why.

We are confident that at the end of this introduction you will be equipped with the answers to these questions and ready to fly forth and enjoy the text at hand. So, let us begin...

What is so special about Eliza Haywood?

Eliza Haywood is a figure surrounded by rumour and controversy, largely because very little is known about her personal life. She was born as Eliza Fowler to a mercantile family in 1693 and later married a Mr. Haywood, who also remains shrouded in rumour but may have been Reverend Valentine Haywood whose wife eloped from him around 1721. She started her career as an actress in Dublin and evolved to become a print polymath: her repertoire includes plays, translations, fiction, conduct novels, and periodicals such as *The*

Parrot which allegedly caused her to be questioned by the Government for statements regarding the Jacobite rising – which she was rumoured to be a sympathiser of. Haywood was a major writer of amatory fiction and following the success of her salacious novellas she lived 'by the pen.' This means her works were published in volumes to secure a wage as writers were not paid royalties beyond the fee earned from the initial print run. Haywood was condemned to infamy by Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift, the former represented her as a grotesque bovine creature and insinuated that she had two illegitimate 'babes of love' in his *Dunciad* and the latter referred to her in correspondence to the Duchess of Suffolk as "a stupid, infamous, scribbling woman". This slander and infamy did not prevent Haywood from writing, she continued to produce fiction and political writing until her death in 1756.

Why a periodical and not a proper novel?

The Periodical was a popular form of print in the eighteenth-century, often read and discussed by men in coffee houses: male-dominated spaces for socialising and discussing recent news. They generally took question-and-answer or essay formats, and were used to discuss a range of contemporary social and political ideas. The combination of the popularity of the form with the focus on social commentary made this an excellent fit for *The Parrot*, which directly addresses the public to discuss flaws and hypocrisies in the behaviour of English society. The periodical is often considered a male form, but they were actually heavily influenced by the work and readership of women, who worked as printers, distributors and occasionally editors as well as contributing as audiences for these texts. Writing as a woman in the eighteenth century addressing a largely male-focused audience therefore allows Haywood's work to become all the more disruptive to eighteenth-century English society.

The Parrot was printed weekly by Thomas Gardner at Crowley's-Head in London, a printer who Haywood had worked closely with to publish several of her other works, such as another periodical: *The Female Spectator* (1745) and later a novel: *The History of Miss Betsy the Thoughtless* (1751).

Why is she pretending to be a parrot?

As aforementioned, the most significant dilemma our readers may face reading the periodical is the importance of Eliza Haywood's utilisation of the titular *Parrot*. Therefore, we feel inclined to give some insight into her intentions. Haywood uses a parrot as a proxy to communicate her discontent with the social conventions restricting a woman's ability to have a voice that would be taken earnestly. A parrot typically is acknowledged for its intelligence, however beneath that they are known for their capacity to recite what they have heard spoken previously. Akin to this, women would be derogatorily called 'Parrot' due to their articulation being predominantly gossip overheard or shared between confidants. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge how Haywood reclaims the misogynistic phrase in the periodical, where she uses a gossip-like tone that ironically highlights the significance of women's speech.

A NOTE ON THE TEXT

This edition is transcribed from original text published in 1746. The volume consulted is held by Adam Matthew Publications, available as a facsimile via Historical Texts Online/Eighteenth-Century Collections online (ESTC: T135293). The long 's' has been modernized, as has the spelling and capitalization. A few clear printing errors have been silently corrected. The punctuation and italicization have been preserved. In general, we have tried to keep this edition as close to the original as possible whilst rendering it accessible to modern audiences.



THE
PARROT
No. I.

WELL, I am got upon my swing, – the Town are gathering thick about me, and I have Liberty to prate (as my Publisher flatters himself) to a very crowded Audience; – but as vain as he, and some others would make me, I am sensible that the greatest part come only to divert themselves.—Be it so, I shall make it my Endeavor that they may not be disappointed, and at the same time also to answer the expectations of those who have a better Opinion of my Abilities: – I say *Abilities*, for most People who know me, will allow me to be a *Bird of Parts*; and, indeed, I cannot well be otherwise, considering the various Scenes of Life I have gone through,—the many different Nations I have lived among, – the Conversation I have had with all De-

grees of People, – the Opportunities Fortune has thrown in my Way of improving myself, under the most learned and witty Persons of their Times, and the wonderful Events that have fallen within the Compass of my Observation.

But in order to give a more perfect Idea of what I am, it will not, I think, be amiss to make a brief Recital of my Travels, and the Company I have kept during the Course of a long Series of Years.

I drew my first Breath in *Java*, a large Island in the *East-Indies*, but was taken so very young from my Parents, that I have nothing to say in regard to my Family: All my Remembrance furnishes me with, of those early Years of Life, is, that I was carried to *Batavia*, a *Dutch* Settlement, and was a great Favourite with the Governor of that Place; but his Lady, happening to take a Disgust to me, obliged him to give me away to a *French* Merchant, who came there on some Affairs of Commerce, and on his Return home, was again presented to a Widow of Quality at *Versailles*.

I believe I should not wrong this Lady if I said she had gained the better Side of fifty, but in *France* there are no old Women.—Her House was a Scene of perpetual Gaiety, and as I then began to have some distinguishing Notion of the World, and the Manners of Mankind, was highly diverted with the Gallantries of those who visited her. But my Mirth lasted not long; – she happened one Day to strike me, on which I grew sullen, would not speak either to herself or any of her Friends, and was at last turned out of Doors.

I then fell to the Lot of an *Abbeé*¹, eminent for his Wit and Learning: – With him I improved myself very much; – he took great Delight in me, and I

¹ The male head of a monastery.

believe we should never have parted, if the Wife of a certain great Officer, with whom he had an Amour, had not begged me from him.

For a time this Lady was extremely fond of me, but unluckily breaking off with her Lover, she grew out of Humour with me for his sake, used me very ill, and gave me to one who was indeed a great Philosopher, but withall quite whimsical, in-somuch as I may truly say my Life was a Burthen to me.

A few Months, however, released me from that uneasy Situation, and I became the Property of a Gentleman who was going to make the Tour of *Germany*: – he took me with him, – we called at all the different Courts which compose that huge Empire, – and I had the Opportunity of observing in some of them such Cabals and Intrigues², as might have amazed a Creature of much more Experience than I had then to boast of.

We afterwards passed through *Flanders*, saw *Brussels*, *Antwerp*, and several other fine Cities, then fell down into Holland, from thence took shipping for England, and so home again by the way of Calais.

The Curiosity of this benevolent Patron not being yet sufficiently gratified, we set out again, crossed some Part of the *Pyrenæan* Mountains and proceeded to *Madrid*, where, in spite of the *Spanish* Formality and Stiffness, I had the Honour of being taken Notice of by most of the *Grandeés*, and even by the Infants *Don Carlos*, and *Don Philip*, who were at that Time too young to have entertained any of those ambitious Views their Moth-

² "Cabals and Intrigues" both refer to groups meeting in secret to conspire. Samuel Johnson defined "Cabal" as "a body of men united in some close design" (Johnson's Dictionary, 1773).

er-Queen has since instilled into them³.

Here we stayed several Months, and there was no talk of our removing, when all at once I was disposed of to a Nobleman who was going to *Holland* in a public Capacity; but soon after our Arrival, I fell into Disgrace with him, was confined in a dark Room for eight Days, then sent to the House of a Burgo-Master⁴, whose Daughter, for he had no Wife, was sole Manager of the Family. – She had little, or rather no Taste at all of my Qualifications, and exchanged me for a Bird, I must say, of much less Value than myself, and was brought a second Time to *England*; where, happening into various Families successively, I had the Pleasure of seeing several Parts of this beautiful Island, to which before I had been a Stranger.

After many Changes, I was at length recommended to a young Nobleman, who being just come to his Estate, was impatient to make a Figure in foreign Parts; – with him I revisited *France*, – stayed there a considerable Time, – thence passed the *Alps* into *Italy*, a Country, which, with great Justice, is stiled⁵ the Garden of the World: – At one of those polite Courts I had the Satisfaction of pleasing the most lovely and accomplished Person, that Nature ever framed, or Education polished; – it was at his own Request that I was taken into his Retinue, and there it was that I had all could flatter my Ambition: – whoever had any Favour to solicit of him, were sure to make their Court first to me: – I was complimented, admired, and caressed infinitely beyond what one of my Species could expect; and to crown the Blessings I enjoyed, was (what very few in elevated Stations can

3 Charles III and Philip, Duke of Parma. Sons of Philip V and Elisabeth Farnese, who was known for her political ambition.

4 The mayor of a Dutch, Flemish, German, Austrian, or Swiss town.

5 Obsolete, Old French spelling of 'Styled'.

boast of) perfectly contented. But the Felicity was too great to be permanent; – an *English* Lady, who had too many Charms to be refused any thing, would needs have me from my Master, and with her I returned once more into this Country, where I have experienced almost as frequent Vicissitudes of Fortune as there are to be found in the Climate, having been, in the space of three Years, in no less than fifty-five Families of vastly different Ranks and Dispositions.

You will wonder, and with reason, that being in such high Estimation as I pretend to have been, I was so readily and so often parted with by those who had me in Possession; it appearing that my so frequent Change of Place was not at my own Option, but that of those to whom I belonged. In answer, therefore, to any Query may be made on this Point, I shall as freely lay open my Errors, as I am willing to publish my Perfections; for you will always find I scorn the mean Subterfuges of Evasion and Evasion, and, above all Things, detest a Lye, how much soever practised and brought into Fashion by my Superiors.

My great Facility in learning the Languages, joined with a happy Memory, and a voluble Delivery, doubtless it was that rendered me so acceptable among Strangers, and my Conversation so agreeable on a first Acquaintance: – Certain it is, that could I have been as secret as I was accounted learned and eloquent, I might have been entrusted in the Quality of an Interpreter to a first Minister, (as some have known who understood no other than their Mother-Tongue;) but, to my very great Misfortune, I never was blest with the retentive Faculty; – I was sure to report whatever I heard, and not seldom to those in whose Presence I ought to have been most cautious; so that

I was soon looked upon as a dangerous Bird, and I must indeed confess, that very great Disappointments, Dissensions, and Mischiefs of various Kinds have sometimes been occasioned meerly by my blabbing. This unlucky Quality it was, and only this, which brought me into Disgrace, where, otherwise, I should have been most beloved, and obliged those who had any thing to conceal, to get rid of me as soon as possible.

You see, good People, what you are to expect: – I deal ingeniously with you; therefore, if any one among you communicates to me what he would not have a Matter of universal *Chit-Chat*, let him blame himself when he finds it is so.

Philosophers may argue as they please, but there is no such thing as totally changing Nature: – What is born with us will sometimes peep out, in spite of Precept⁶ or Education; unless, as some have endeavoured to prove, the *Humours* and *Will of Action* is lodged in the *Blood*, which, by being drained out and exchanged for that of another Creature, the System of the *Mind* would be reversed, and different *Propensities* arise with the different *Animalculæ*⁷; but should I; in order to get rid of this Tale-telling Inclination, submit to such an Experiment, which (by the bye) not the whole Royal Society, nor all the *Virtuosoes*⁸ in the World should prevail on me to do, pray who can answer that I might not imbibe⁹ some other as *bad*, or perhaps worse Property than that which had been expunged?

Besides, I am apt to think, that in mature Examination I shall not be found to deserve half the Blame that has been charged upon me; for, if by

6 Rules of behaviour.

7 A microscopic animal.

8 A musician, or other profession, who holds exceptional skill.

9 Assimilate.

Chance, (for I never do Mischief by *Design*) some unhappy Consequences may have attended my Talkativeness, it has rarely happened, but where Persons *Actions* justly incur Punishment of some kind or other; and being out of the Letter of the Law, can only suffer through the Shame of Discovery. – The truly *Wise* and *Virtuous* have nothing to apprehend from me, and I will venture to maintain, even to the Teeth of my most virulent Accusers, that what they represent as so unpardonable a Transgression, is in reality productive of more *Good* than *Evil*.

For Example; If a laudable Enterprize miscarries through my inadvertent Discovery of it, may not be a pernicious one also be prevented from taking Effect by the same Means? – And which of these two Sorts most abound in the World, I appeal to your own Observation, and am pretty confident you need go no farther to answer, whether I have not more frequent Opportunities of *preserving* than *prejudicing* Mankind by my communicative Faculty. – The Midnight Whisper through the Bars of a Window, or the Keyhole of a Door, by me repeated the next Morning, has saved many a Husband's Honour, a Virgin's Chastity, and a whole Family's Disgrace.

In fine, it is certain, and must be owned by every one who consults his Reason, and is willing to judge without Partiality, that I am capable of conferring very great Obligations on those in *public* as well as private Life, if listened to with due Attention.

Mark me¹⁰ then, and suppose me not a meer *Parrot*, which without Distinction utters all he hears, and is the Eccho of every foolish Rumour; but a Thing, – a Thing to which I cannot give a Name, but I mean a Thing sent by the Gods, and by them

10 Take note.

inspired to utter only sacred Truths. – I must not say an *Oracle*, because it would favour too much of *Paganism*.—I would with you, however, to imagine me somewhat extraordinary, because what I say will have the greater Weight with you.

I dare answer that you will all acknowledge, none are above the Benefit of Information. – A *Courtier* then may learn from me whether the Preference¹¹ he is about to receive, is granted as the Reward of his Merit, or as the Bait to ensnare his *Honesty*. – A *Statesman*, who sacrifices all to his *ambitious Views*, may be told by me, on what a dangerous Precipice he stands; and even a Sovereign Prince be apprized of that which perhaps none else about him have Courage or Integrity enough to acquaint him with: – I mean, what generally said of his Government, and by that useful Knowledge be enabled to pursue such Measures as will make his *People happy*, and consequently *himself truly great*.

But what is all this to us, you will say; those at the Head of *our Affairs* stand in no need of such a Monitor. – Every *Courtier* here desires *Grandeur* only to have more Opportunities of doing Good to *the Public*; all our *Statesmen* are perfect *Patriots*.—We have a *Sovereign*¹², who centres all his Wishes in the Peace, Opulence and Glory of his *Subjects*; who loves us as his *Children*, and is so far from encroaching on our Rights, that he is himself the best Guardian of Laws and Liberties; and we, in return *revere* him as a *Father* and almost *adore* him as a *God*. – What can be added to the Felicity of our present Condition? We know the Blessings we enjoy, and want not to be told any thing would diminish our Content. Far be it from the *Parrot* to attempt it.

11 Promotion.

12 George II.

You may be assured I shall never report Grievances till they are generally complained of, and that is not likely to be the Case, while his present Majesty, or any of his truly royal and magnanimous Issue remain; – yet as what *has been, may again be*, and it is impossible that the most sanguine should answer for Futurity, it is good to have a Remedy at Hand in all Events; and it cannot, therefore, be thought too presuming in me to say, that the Disturbances I may sometimes create, are more than attoned for by my Power of doing Service, if ever an Occasion should demand it.

Much with Justice might be alledged in Vindication of my Character, but Time and your own Experience will best speak for me; – and I shall add no more, for fear of appearing too tedious on a Matter, which, to some People, will seem of so little Importance.

As I take upon me, however, to harangue¹³ you in this public Manner, it is highly expedient I should give you the Motives which induce me to do so; and as I never will forfeit my Sincerity for the sake of Compliment, I will declare, though it may be thought a little unpolite; that the *principal* one is to gratify my own insatiable Itch of talking.

The *others*, no less genuine, and a great deal more obliging, stand in the following Rank.

First, Because I have gathered from the many different Characters, Circumstances, and Behaviour of the Persons I have been among, a Number of various Occurrences equally instructive and entertaining in the Relation.

Secondly, Because I have treasured up in my Mind a very choice Collection of curious Pieces, both ancient and modern, which cannot fail of

13 Lecture, tirade.

being an agreeable Amusement to the learned Part of Mankind, while they improve and enlarge, at the same Time, the Understanding of the less knowing.

Thirdly, Because, if I were silent, the Town would, in all probability, be deprived of the Pleasure and Emolument¹⁴ these elegant Pieces will afford, some of which I brought with me from very distant Realms, and others that I am sure have been imparted only to me.

Fourthly, And as a Consequence of the other to draw *modest Merit* from the Obscurity it often lies under, and to humble the Pride of those who assume too much on the Indulgence of the Town.

Fifthly, As since my being in this Country, some of my Kindred, who live in very great Repute, have done me the Favour to own me, and have promised me their Assistance, I would not neglect the Favours they offer, and through their Means the Opportunity of obliging the Public.

And *lastly*, To rectify several Errors and Mistakes which Prejudice has introduced, to the Disgrace of Reason, whether it be either in serious or trifling Matters; whether in your Mode of Dress and Behaviour to each other, or in the higher Concerns of Religion and Morality.

If I succeed in any one of these Propositions, I hope to be allowed not to prate insignificantly; but if in all of them, you cannot without Ingratitude refuse me the Praise of having spoke to very great purpose.

I am no Stranger to the Difficulties of the Task I undertake; – I hear from all Hands, that one ought to be endued with extraordinary Talents, indeed, to please in a Nation where there are many very

¹⁴ Profit.

great Judges, and infinitely more who imagine themselves so: – It is not the former I am so much afraid of; Good Sense is for the most Part, accompanied with Good Nature, but the Would-be-Wits, are of all Animals, that I know of, the most troublesome and dangerous.

A whole *Posse* of these, whom I think you call *Critics*, will likely fall upon me;—they will cavil at my *Stile*, my *Manner*, perhaps hunt out a Verb misplaced, and then triumph in my want of *Grammar*; – they will quote Rules on Rules against me, quarrel with my *Figures in Speech*, find Fault with this *Contrast*, and that *Antithesis*, and cry Shame on my ill *Rhetoric*. – But let them look to themselves; every Thing, when attacked, has a Right to make use of what Weapons of Defence are in their Power: – If they rail against the *Diction* of the *Parrot*, the *Parrot* will cry out against the *Vices* and *Follies* of *Humanity*: – If they bring down their *Horace*, their *Cicero*, and their *Virgil*, I shall be obliged to have recourse to *Socrates*, *Seneca*, *Epictetus*, *Juvenal*, and some other old Gentlemen, who, perhaps, they will like as little to be told of.—I can set *Maxim* against *Mode*¹⁵, and am able to produce undeniable Proofs, that the *Parrot* cannot be more unskilled in *Oratory*, than some *Men* are in *Mortality*, or the Precepts of right Reason.—A very strong, and withal mortifying Contrast (which, however disagreeable to the *Ear*, could not be disputed by the *Understanding*;) might be made between the Customs and Manners practised by the *former* and the *present* Race of *Britons*; but I am sensible, that it is not by cutting Strokes any Error is to be reformed, and shall therefore sacrifice to the general Good, whatever Resentments some few particular

¹⁵ 'Maxim' refers to a general principle, whilst 'Mode' refers to logic. The Parrot is therefore suggesting that he has compared and applied both commonly held beliefs and his own logic and still drawn the same conclusion.

Persons may happen to excite in me.

But whither am I running? – It is more than probable all this might have been spared: Twenty to one but you'll say, I am a Creature beneath Envy, and consequently Detraction; and that I only affect to imagine myself in Danger of Abuse, in order to provoke it. – Well, if this should be the Case, I have the Example of some of your greatest Wits to keep me in Countenance. – It is well known, that many a fine Genius owes its *Eclat*¹⁶ to the anonymous nailing of a Bosom Friend and Confidante; or for want of such a one, to the being turned against itself; and I can see no Reason why I should be debarred from making use of this innocent Stratagem to raise my Reputation, if I had a Mind to it, any more than any other of my Fellow-Labourers, for the Entertainment of the Public.

I might, however, give you Assurances, on Assurances, that I am wholly free from all Vanity of this sort; that I would not attempt to impose on the Understanding of any of my Hearers, and no way aim at popular Applause, farther than as I may be found to deserve it; but after all, few, perhaps, will give Credit to what I say upon this score; so upon the whole, believe it will be the best way to drop the Matter, and leave every one to judge as he thinks proper, both in regard to myself and the Discourses I shall hereafter present the Public with.

End of No I. of the PARROT.

¹⁶ Social distinction.



THE PARROT No. II.

WHO would have thought the Apprehensions I discovered, would so soon have been found real; and that to appear in public, and to submit to become the *Butt* of a thousand Shafts, are one and the same Thing! – Yet so it is, – the poor *Parrot* has but just peeped out his Head, and lo! two are already levelled at him; – but though they are of a sort I could not expect, and consequently was least armed against, are notwithstanding too weak in themselves to ruffle even a Feather about me.

They should, however, in common Decency methinks, have waited till some farther, or more material Cause had provoked Enmity: – But the falling on me thus early, and for Things which are not essentially Faults, or if they were so, are quite out of

my Power to remedy, looks like meer Malice, and an Intention to blast my Undertaking in its Infancy. So true are the Words of a certain celebrated Wit,

*Degenerate Times are ever worst to please;
As vapourish Fancies hug their own Disease¹.*

But not this, nor a great deal more, is capable of discouraging me; and I think it is no small Proof of my *Intrepidity*, as well as *Impartiality*, that I shall never go about to conceal whatever is said of myself, any more than of other People. The most plausible Objection of the two, which are all I hear of yet, that has been made against me, is built on a Suspicion that I must be of very mean Extraction, because in the little Narrative I gave you of my Life, I mentioned nothing of my Parents, who, doubtless, I might have had an Account of, they say, how young soever I either were, or pretend to be when I was taken from them, if I had thought the Repetition would have been at all to my Advantage.

Indeed I have an utter Aversion to Boasting, nor though, as I told you before, I have been a great while in this Country, never knew that the Distemper, known by the Name of the *Family Madness*, which taints some of the neighbouring Nations, had spread its Infection here; but, as I now find no Provision having been made against it, either by *Quarentine* or otherwise, it has unhappily been imported with some foreign Goods, I shall comply with the reigning Humour, how far soever contrary to my own. But take notice, my good Friends, that my doing so will prove wholly to the Mortification of *human* Vanity and Pride.

In the first Place, I am a *Parrot*; – my Father, Grandsire, great Grandsire, and so back for near

¹ These lines are a translation of Juvenal's Tenth satire, which John Dryden contemporarily popularised in his poem "To Henry Higden, Esq., On His Translation Of The Tenth Satire Of Juvenal".

six thousand Years, were all *Parrots*; and if Antiquity be looked upon as a necessary Qualification for a great Name, it is easy to make appear, even from your own Chronology, that our Race was prior to *Adam*, the first Man.

In the next, it is well known, that before you came to be what can be called a People, you had a Blot in your Escutcheon², – were degraded from your native Dignity, – turned most shamefully out of your first Mansion, – and reduced to hard Labour for Subsistence; – all your Ancestors, for several Hundred Years, being no better than Gardeners, Shepherds, Blacksmiths, Graziers, and such like mean Vocations; – the Titles of Distinction, some among you of later Times enjoy, were invented and conferred only by yourselves, and even those are sometimes dearly purchased, and not maintained without an Infinity of Toil, Care and Vexation, if no worse.

Whereas we, free Denizens of Earth and Air, live in a State of perfect Indolence and Ease; – indulgent Nature opens to us all her unbounded Stores: – Be our Family ever so numerous, we are under no Necessity of breeding the younger Branches to Business, as they do in many Nations, or thrusting them into Convents, as they do in others: – The beneficent Creator has bestowed an equal and luxuriant Patrimony on all, nor have we, in so long a space of Time, done any Thing to forfeit the Blessings he at first ordained us for.

This, I think, is sufficient to convince you of the *Gentility* of our Nation in general, and consequently of my own; for, as to any particular Superiority or Precedence, there is none among us; – we have no Governor, nor supreme Magistrate; every *Par-*

² 'Escutcheon' refers to a shield bearing a coat of arms, so this means 'a stain on your reputation'.

rot is King of himself, and obliged to obey no other Laws than those of Nature; and, let me tell you by the way, this is a Happiness, a true Freedom, which none but those who possess are capable of conceiving. Not but I must acknowledge you have many singular Advantages over us, if you would be prevailed upon to make a right Use of them; but you have the Misfortune not to know how to set a just Value on such Things as are in reality the Glory of your Species, to pervert some, and even to deny others, while you set your Hearts on Trifles, and neglect the *Substance* for the *Shadow*.

However displeasing this Truth may seem, I have heard it confessed by the most reasonable among you; and I will undertake to maintain, may be proved, not only by the Authority of those, who in other Things you look upon as Oracles, but also from daily Instances demonstratable to every one. Does not one of your best Writers confess the human Species is utterly incapable of judging what is best for itself! – Hear his emphatical Complaint on this Score.

*Ah what is Man when his own Wish prevails!
How rash, how swift to plunge himself
in Ill!
Proud of his Power, and boundless in his Will!³
O why did Heaven leave Man so weak
Defence,
To trust frail Reason with the Rule of
Sense?
'Tis over-poised, and kick'd up in the
Air;
While Sense weighs down the Scale,
and keeps it there.*

³ There is no clear source for this poem although it shares traits with fragments of poetry that has been attributed to John Dryden.

But more of this hereafter. – I have not yet done with my own proper Concerns; – there is a second Aspersion thrown upon me, the Mistake of which it behoves me to obviate before I enter into any other Topic.⁴

The Colour I brought into the World with me, and shall never change, it seems, is an Exception against me; – some People will have is that a *Negro* might as well set up for a *Beauty*, as a *green Parrot* for a *good Speaker*;—Preposterous Assertion! as if the *Complection* of the *Body* had any Influence over the *Faculties* of the *Mind*; yet meerly on this Score they resolve, right or wrong, to condemn all I say beforehand.—How I could laugh now, if I took half as much Pleasure in ridiculing the Follies of Mankind, as you do in those of each other!

But pray how comes it that green is a Colour so much disrelished in England at present? – Time was when it was otherwise. – Can any Arguments, drawn from Reason, be given why red, yellow, or even blue, much less a motley Mixture of various Tinctures, should have the Preference?—Fancy, indeed, may be allowed to go a great way in Things which affect the Senses only; but then, it never should sway the Judgment so far as to make us ascribe a real Merit to what has the good Fortune to gratify a Caprice. This, however, is an objection against me, that those it can have any weight with, are not worth the Pains of confuting, and I should have been wholly silent on the Occasion, if it had not reminded me how predominant this Humour is in Mankind, in relation to Things of more Consequence than the *Parrot*.

There is a Nation in the World, I won't say the

⁴ 'Aspersion' refers to an attack on the reputation, 'behooves' means requires and to 'obviate' is to remove or prevent, so here the Parrot is saying that they need to resolve the attack on their reputation before changing the topic.

English, because I have always heard it was unmannerly to expose People's Faults before their Faces; – but there is a certain Nation, who notwithstanding their Reputation and good Sense in some Things, have rendered themselves pretty remarkable for their liking and *disliking* to an Excess: – Whatever they take into their Heads to approve, is, for a time, magnified into a *Divinity*; and whatever has not the good Fortune to be agreeable to them, is represented by the worst Images can be drawn from *Hell*; and if any one should go about to shew them the Injustice of their Opinion, either way, till they are pleased to change it of themselves, would run a greater Hazard by that Contradiction, than by depreciating the God that made them.

It is *Fancy*, indeed, that has the sole Dominion over the Minds of the People I am speaking of, yet not their own neither; for few, very few of them, either think or judge for themselves, but are entirely influenced by the Voice of others.

It is in the Power of any five or six leading Persons among them, to establish the most gross and palpable Absurdities, if either Interest or Caprice makes them desirous of propagating it for Truth, – make *black* appear *white*, or *white black*, – an *Ideot* pass for a *Wit*, – a *Coward* for a *Hero*, – a *Violater* of all *Laws* for the *Preserver of them*, – a truly *great Genius* for a *mean Capacity*, – the *Honest* and the *Brave* for *Knaves* and *Braggers*; – in fine, they can, as they please, convert *wrong* into *right*, and *right* into *wrong*; the infatuated Crowd catch the first Whisper, and then bellow it in Shouts till it becomes the general Cry. Is not this *Infallibility* with a witness!

I dare answer, none of you who hear this Character, but despite such a blind Bigottry, – such a slavish Dependence on the Breath of others; and

it is likely too, that those most notoriously guilty of it, would do the same.—Every Body has a better Opinion of their own Understanding, than knowingly to pay an implicit Obedience to that of his Neighbour; and nothing is more certain, than that those, who suffer themselves to be thus led by the Will of others, imagine they are all the while following their own. *Reason*, therefore, like *Strength*, is of no manner of Advantage, when the Possessor is too indolent to exert it.

If every Man would give his Thoughts fair Play, they would doubtless present him with more impartial Images of Things, and he would not be hurried precipitately into Resolutions, in the Defence of which, no good or substantial Argument can be brought, and which afterwards he is ashamed to have ever entertained.

I heard a very wise man, though pretty much given to Metaphors, say, that the Ears were placed on each Side the Head, and the Seat of Judgment in the Middle; to the end, that whatever Reports were made concerning any Question in Debate, might be equally attended to, and examined before a definitive Sentence was passed in favour of either.

The Justice of this Sentiment must be allowed, for when the Mind unwarily yields itself to the Direction of the first Ideas, those, which succeed, cannot possibly make any Impression; – Prejudice will shut up all the Avenues to Argument and Reason, and Reflection will then have no Power to operate.

I hope Nobody will wrong me so far as to imagine I am endeavouring to suggest, that any one in the Nation, I have at present the Honour to address, is weak enough to be misled in that wild Fashion I have been describing;—No,—No, I have a

better Opinion of your Intellects, – I know, and it cannot be denied, that you are extremely vehement in whatever Cause you are pleased to espouse; but then, I suppose, you always previously weigh the Merits of it, and can answer to yourselves, as well as to the World, all the Lengths to which it may transport you.

It would not be high Treason against the Laws of common Sense among you, to say that *Grandemer* was not a profound *Politician*, *Lyfmond* a great *Wit*, – *Tryphonious* a perfect honest Man; if an extraordinary Penetration did not enable you to discover those Perfections in them, which are entirely hid from the less quick sighted.

Foreigners, but I pity their Ignorance, have the Boldness to accuse you of being under this partial Influence, and would fain make it appear, if they could, by representing many of your *Modes* and *Customs*, as affected and farcical⁵; nay, persuade themselves that even the Choice of some of your Magistrates is too injudicious to have been consulted beforehand; but all this is wholly owing to their being unacquainted with the secret Merit of the Things and Persons they condemn, and which, indeed, none but yourselves have Discernment enough to comprehend.

It is a common Rule, that Things are not to be judged according to Appearances, and I cannot forbear giving you an Instance of the Truth of it, though by doing so, I expose my own Ignorance and want of Discernment.

I happened once to live in a Family, where a very famous *Courtezan* had Lodgings; – *Oram*, the admired, the universally beloved *Oram*, came one Day to visit her, but she being at that Time not in order to receive him, he was conducted into a

5

Ludicrously futile.

Parlour where I was; but he took not the least Notice of me, nor would I presume to begin a Conversation: – The Sun shining very hot, a great Number of Flies were buzzing about the Room, some of whom had the Insolence to come upon the Face and Hands of *Oram*; – to punish this want of Respect, and, at the same time, to amuse himself, he frequently attempted to seize them; but soon perceiving their extreme Agility constantly eluded his Grasp, and also that they had little Stings, which, if provoked, would annoy him more, he had recourse, to a Stratagem. – He went to the Tea-table, took a Lump of Sugar, which having wetted, he laid on the Frame of the Window; – the poor Insects immediately settled about it, and, tempted with the Sweetness, fell into the Power of him who stood ready to catch them, as they indulged themselves in sucking the dangerous Bait. – The manner in which he treated them, when in his Hands, was various, pulling off the Legs of some, the Wings of others, and the Heads of the largest; – with this he seemed highly diverted, and laughed very heartily to see the severed Limbs and mangled Carcasses lye spread upon the Field of Action; – for any Part, I said nothing all the while, for fear of incurring a Displeasure, which might have been no less fatal to me, but rejoiced when a Summons from the Lady called him up Stairs, and I was eased of the Presence of so formidable a Guest.

One who had been a Stranger to the Character of *Oram*, would, from this, have been apt to compare him with that *Roman* Emperor, who, it is said, delighted himself with plucking out the Eyes of these Insects; and I must acknowledge that his Behaviour appeared to me at first to have somewhat in it of Cruelty; but when I considered how much he is extolled for Compassion, Generosity, and every humane Virtue, I presently accused my

premature Supposition, and concluded that these Wretches dis not only deserve their Fate, but also that *Oram*, in his great Wisdom, knew it was better even for themselves to be divested of those Limbs, which while they were Masters of, enabled them to be exposed to continual Hazards of the Death they now sustained, and, when once past, they could have no more to apprehend.

The only Objection that remained was, wherefore, since they were not to die, he did not kill them at one Blow, and not prolong their Misery, by destroying first one Part of them, and then another; but when I remembered how numerous a Race they were, and that the Sun was continually raising them fresh recruits, I judged he did this by the way of *Terrorem*⁶ to the rest, who, seeing the Fate of their Brothers, would bend their Flight another Way, and no more molest a Place sacred Love and *Oram*.

These reasons, which undoubtedly are such as the Friends of *Oram* would give, may, perhaps, be looked upon by his Enemies, and somewhat farfetched; but if People consider how difficult it is to find Arguments to *excuse*, much less to *excite Applause* for Actions of this kind, mine will be the better relished.

I could, however, with all my Endeavours, find none more plausible, nor indeed any other at all; and as I was willing to reconcile, if possible, the Character of *Oram* with his Behaviour, did not give myself much Trouble to examine how far the Sentiments were just, but took them upon trust, a Privilege which I thought I might allow to my own, as well as to those of other People's.

I flatter myself, this will serve as a great Proof of the Deference I pay to your profound Penetra-

⁶ Latin for "terror", this means through intimidation.

tion, and entirely clear me form all Suspicion of any Intention to depreciate it to the rest of the World. – I am not certain, notwithstanding, but this Dissertation on a foreign Foible⁷, may not be looked upon as impertinent, by those who, by my own Confession, are not tainted with it. In answer to this Cavil⁸, that is, if any such should be made, I beg Leave to remind you, that as *Antidotes*, in case of any Danger from *Poison*, are absolutely necessary, so shewing the Absurdity of *judging* without *thinking*, may serve as an *Orvietan*⁹ against the Contagion of ill Example, and help to prevent you from ever adopting a Meanness so unworthy of you.

It is the great Respect I bear you, makes me take this Liberty; – for, as I have already hinted; the Impetuosity which is so natural to you, would, in all Probability, hurry you to Extravagancies, not altogether allowable in a *good* Cause, but monstrous in a *bad* one. – You, therefore, I say, above all other Nations, should be more than ordinarily cautious how you attach yourself to any one Principle, and very sure you have made Choice of that which is right, before you venture to defend it, or pretend to impose it on others; which nothing is more plain than that you would attempt, when you had once taken it for granted in your own Minds; and as your Opinions would be various, and each Man equally tenacious, hence would arise continual Jarrs¹⁰, Quarrels, and every kind of Mischief to yourselves, besides exposing you to the ridicule of all your laughing Neighbours. A melancholy Proof of this fell under my Observation, which, because it may serve as a Warning to others not to fall into the same ungovernable Rashness, I think it will be kind to relate.

⁷ A weak point.

⁸ A trivial, petty objection.

⁹ A popular medical concoction for many poisons.

¹⁰ Conflicts.

On my first coming into *England*, I was acquainted with two young Gentlemen, who, though they were not at all of kin, loved each other as Brothers: – They were not only inseparable Companions, but such Friends as one shall seldom hear of since the Days of *Castor* and *Pollux*, or the famed *Pylades* and *Orestes*¹¹.—Whatever the World calls Pleasure, would have been no Pleasure to either, had the other not partook of it; – their Comforts, – their Disappointments were mutual, and the only Difference between them, was, that the Person to whom either of these happened, seemed less affected with it than his Friend; – in fine, none that knew them, but believed that, had such an Exigence¹² made trial of their Sincerity, neither would have refused any Danger, or even Death itself, for the Safety of the other's Life.

But see how little Dependence is to be placed on human Resolutions, or even Inclinations! – how one unhappy Moment may cancel the Work of many Years, and utterly erase what seemed most indelible!—These two, whose Friendship no adverse Turns of Fortune, no Considerations of Self-Interest, nor any new Engagements could have broken off; – these two, I say, did, for a very Trifle, an idle Whim, in which neither had Concern, suffer themselves to be so far provoked, as to point the murdering sword against each other's Breast.

A passage in the *Roman History*, differently related by *Justin* and *Tacitus*¹³, occasioned a warm Dispute between them, each strenuously maintaining the Credit of his favourite Author, and tenacious of his own Opinion; at length it came to that unpardonable Expression of *You-lye*, which being given by one, was that Instant returned by

11 Fraternal figures in Greek mythology.

12 Urgent need.

13 Roman historians.

the other; the Swords of both were immediately drawn,— they made but one Pass, but it was a fatal one, and reached the Heart of the younger of the two:—He fell immediately, and the House being alarmed at the Noise, several of the Family came into the Room, and found one of these dear Companions breathing his last, and the other in Agonies not to be described, about to give himself that Fate, his tumultuous Passion had inflicted on his Friend; – they prevented this Act of Desperation, but were obliged to yield him to that Confinement and Examination, the Law exacts from those who are guilty of the Crime he was. He took his Trial, pleaded Guilty, as to the Fact, but it being easily seen to be unpremeditated, his Life was spared; though both in public and private, he declared he desired nothing so much as Death. How terrible an Effect was here of that Impatience of Opposition I have been speaking of! – What, alas! – as the Poet says,

Was Justin to the one, or Tacitus to the other?

Yet, for the Reputation of Authors, long since dead, and of whose Veracity in reciting Facts, neither of these Gentlemen could be certain, were they rendered wholly forgetful of all Considerations of their former Amity, and each happened, by his wild Fury, to attempt the Destruction of that Life, which, not an Hour before, he would have risked, more than his own, for the Preservation of.

It is a true Characteristic of the People of *England*, that they are easily *led*, but impossible to be *drove* to any thing; – they *yield* on *soothing*, but are *obstinate* on *controul*:—How careful ought they to be, therefore, that they imbibe no Notions, which to persevere in, would be either shameful or prejudicial.

Perhaps you will call this a Nobleness of Mind, a Stability of Resolution: – I grant it is so, and highly praise-worthy in the Defence of just and laudable Principles, such as it must be acknowledged, yours are at present. – But if ever a Change should be as virulent in asserting a quite contrary Opinion, how dreadful would it be! And I must put you in remembrance, however you may take it, that I have not complimented you so far as to say, you have ever been famous for continuing long in the same Mind.

Neither were this so much to be lamented Impetuosity of Nature, ever attended with any of those dismal Consequences we often see it is; nothing is more strange than that every one who finds it in himself will not, for the sake of the very thing he espouses, endeavour to suppress, or at least to restrain it as much as possible from breaking out, wither in Words or Actions, – None ever yet got the better in an Argument, by seeming to enforce it: – Disdain will then shut up the Heart of his Antagonist against all Conviction, and he will think it a Meanness of Spirit to give his Assent even to the best Reasons, when delivered in an authoritative Way.

Moderation, therefore, Good Manners, and Gentleness of Behaviour to those of different Principles, of what kind soever, is certainly not only the best and the wisest way, but also the most likely to bring them over; and as there are some shining Examples of this Virtue among you, it is a great Misfortune they are not more generally *admired*, and then they could not fail of being more generally *imitated*.

End of No II. of the PARROT.



THE PARROT No. III.

THOUGH I prattled a good deal last Week on the Folly and Danger of adopting Principles, without previously weighing the Justness of them, on account of that *Vehemence* with which some People are apt to defend whatever they have established in their own Minds as right; yet I would not from thence be thought to infer, that when thoroughly convinced they are so, to swerve or vary from them is even excusable, much less commendable. – On the contrary, nothing is so truly contemptible as the Character of a *giddy Head*, and an *unstable Heart*; but I cannot forbear observing here, that the World is frequently mistaken in accounting for that vague and self-contradictory Behaviour which is to be found in some People.

Nothing is more common than for you to say,

*That Man has no Ideas of his own, who is continually influenced by what he hears from others, and is always of the same Opinion with him who spoke last; but this Assertion is far from being a Rule to be depended upon: — I am confident there are many People of this unhappy Cast, who are capable of as clear a Sense of Things, as those can have by whom they suffer themselves to be directed. — This, however you may at first think a Paradox, is very easily reconciled, when a little considered: - There is an *Indolence* in some Natures, which renders a serious Examination of any thing painful to them; and a *Timidity* in others, which makes them so very cautious of incurring the Censure of Obstinacy, that they yield Assent to whatever has the least Appearance of Reason in it; a mere Shadow indeed will suffice: —Therefore, as the worst Tenets that can possibly be propagated, want not some Arguments to support them, they cannot fail of making Proselytes¹, where either of these Dispositions hinder that Scrutiny which is so absolutely necessary to discover how far they ought, or ought not to be adhered to.*

Two of those unfortunate Peers now in the *Tower*, under Sentence of Death, appear to me to be of either the one or the other of the Tempers I have mentioned: —There is somewhat in their Speeches at the Bar, moving as they are, which betrays a strange uncertainty of Mind, - an *Irresolution*, - a kind of *I would* and *I would not*, utterly unworthy of their Education, or their Characters as Men of Sense, or Honour. - Neither of them are too *young* to have attained a true Understanding of Things, nor so *old* as to leave any room to suppose that Understanding any way impaired; but in that Prime of Life, when the Mind is capable of acting

¹ A person who has converted from one thing (opinion, religion, etc.) to another.

with the greatest Vigour, - when *Fancy* is, or ought to be, under the Dominion of *Judgment*, and *Reason* is ripened by Experience and Observation into Maturity; - yet what strange Inconsistencies, - what a wild Fluctuation of Sentiments do their own Words confess!

They urge, as an Alleviation of their Crime, *That they entered into a Service so contrary to their Allegiance, without Thought, without Consideration; - That; indeed, I am very ready to believe was the Case: - That they had no sooner engaged themselves, than they repented of what they had done; - that may be, yet they returned not to their Duty: That they fought, yet were not desirous of Victory: - that appears a little incredible, but if true, is an undeniable Argument, that what I alleged was just: - That they prevented all the Mischief they could; - yet still they persevered in Measures, which it was easy to foresee would be the Ruin of their Country: - That after the Defeat at Culloden, they might easily have escaped the King's Forces if they had been so minded, but chose rather to be made Prisoners than preserve their Liberty; - which it is ten to one but they have also repented them of since.*

One of them pleads his bringing up his Son in Revolution Principles, and a strict Attachment to the present Royal Family: —If he thought those Principles *wrong*, why did he do so? - and if he thought them right, why did he himself act on such as were altogether the reverse? - It cannot, therefore, be otherwise, than that neither the *one* nor *the other* were the result of any sound Reasoning within himself; and whenever a Person enters into an Affair of Moment, without having duly reflected how far it is conformable to Justice, it is not Breach of Charity to say, that any laudable Action in him is to be attributed to nothing but mere Chance.

I speak not this with a Design to take away any part of that Pity their unhappy Fate deserves; but only to show, that as all Errors, as well as Virtues, are more conspicuous in the *Great* than in those of an inferior Station, they, above all others, should most carefully examine every Thing before they bring it into Principle; and when they have once established it as such, on the Rules of Honour and Justice, to adhere strictly to it, in scorn of all Temptations, and in defiance of all Dangers; - every Attempt to disguise or palliate² it, is mean and cowardly; and renders even a good Cause contemptible by being so ill maintained.

Human Nature has certainly its Ebbs and Flows, and most Men are to be wrought upon by the Example and Persuasion of others; - the Passions are often touched by some prevailing Object, and difficult it is, without a more than ordinary Guard over the Heart, to keep it constant to any one Principle.

Mr. Dryden, who, I have heard say, was a very famous Poet, it is likely spoke by Experience, when he dictated these Lines.

*Man is but man, unconstant still and various;
There's no To-morrow in him like To-day:
Perhaps the Atoms, rolling in his Brain,
Make him think honestly this present Hour;
The next a Swarm of base unworthy Thoughts
May mount aloft.
Who would trust Chance, since all Men have the Seeds*

² Concealing, disguising or misrepresenting the seriousness of an offence or fault, especially by making an excuse. Johnson's dictionary, which would have been available to Haywood and readers at the time of writing, makes a point of noting that it "cure[s] imperfectly or temporarily, not radically; to ease, not cure."

*Of Good or Ill, which should work upward first?*³

To be able, therefore, to choose that which is right, — to persevere, through all Events, in the same way of thinking, - to support it by all laudable Means, and to render every Action perfectly consistent with each other, it must be confessed is rarely to be found; but where it is so, it denotes a Mind as near approaching the Divinity as Human Nature can possibly do.

Some such I have known, - Men equally free from *Avarice*, as from *Luxury*, and consequently free from any Temptations from *within*, of affronting *Virtue* for the Gratification of favourite *Vice*; - Men who had too much *Pride* to barter real *Honour* for empty *Titles* and Show of *Grandeur*, and too much *Humility* to be ambitious of, or elated with *shining in a Court*; — Men who *feared* nothing so much, as being guilty of any Act of *Meanness* or *Injustice*, and *loved* nothing so much as the Power of being serviceable to the *general Interest* of Mankind. — That there are still some such existing, I make no doubt, even in all Nations, but more particularly in this, where that Religion is so zealously asserted which above all things recommends Sincerity, Up-

³ This quote appears to be taken from John Dryden's 1692 play *Cleomenes, The Spartan Heroe* (Act III, Scene 1), spoken by Cassandra, however it misses out a line or two of dialogue. The original text reads:

Man is but Man; Unconstant still, and Various;
There's no to Morrow in him, like to Day.
Perhaps the Atoms rowling in his Brain,
Make him think Honestly this present Hour;
The next a Swarm of Base, Ungrateful Thoughts
May mount aloft: And where's our Ægypt then?
Who would trust Chance? since all Men have the Seeds
Of Good and Ill, which should work upward first.

The play was supposedly temporarily banned for its perceived sympathy toward the Jacobite rebellion.

rightness, both in Words and Actions, and Good-Will to each other.

It must be owned, and even the Law in some Cases allows, that Crimes committed through *Inadvertency*, and for want of that due Consideration I have been speaking of, deserve a greater Share of Compassion than those which are the result of a long *Premeditation*. —The one, indeed, discovers a Deficiency of good or generous Sentiments, and is also a *Weakness* to a very great Degree; but the other, a Mind delighting in Mischief, and is consummate *Wickedness*.

When a Man, or any Set of Men act in downright Contradiction of the Principles they profess, - get into Trust merely to betray that Trust, - endeavour to ruin that Cause they would be thought to promote, and countermine an Interest they are, perhaps, paid largely for supporting, it is certainly Villainy of so black a Dye, as no Words are capable of describing.

Yet that such Men have been, History, even of our own Times, affords but too many Testimonies; whether any such now are, a little while may possibly discover. - The *Parrot* has heard strange whispers, - I hope occasioned by Surmises without Foundation, otherwise, we may very well conclude,

*No Tye would then be left on Human Kind,
When Trust and Gratitude shall fail to bind.*⁴

Whether in high or low Life, whether in great

⁴ I am unsure where this quote originates from. It's possible that this Haywood's own work, as I have been unable to find a source that matches it.

or small Moment, Breach of Confidence has ever been base and ignominious; - no Provocation can excuse it, - no Circumstance whatever is sufficient to palliate the Heinousness of the Crime, or render the Person guilty of it, a worthy Member of Society.

Even in Cases of Plots against the Government, when they reach to High Treason, and an Intention of subverting the whole Fabric of public Affairs, the *Informer*, however useful his Information may be, is yet pointed at, and his Conversation shunned by all Persons of true Honour and Reputation; which shows the Abhorrence Human Nature has of this Vice in all Shapes, when though what would have brought on Ruin if concealed, renders the Discoverer obnoxious.

Why, indeed, do People enter so hastily into Schemes, which, on second Thoughts, they disapprove, and which either their *persisting* in or *betraying*, are equally detestable; but because they do not examine, as I said before, the Justice of the Cause they are about to espouse.⁵

Nothing is more tremendous, or more terrible to Man and Beast, than that Clash of Elements which is called Thunder and Lightning; yet when the noxious Vapours are exhaled from the corrupted Parts of the Earth, obscuring the beautiful Face of the Hemisphere, and at the same time scattering their Venom on every Thing below, then, I say, even those dreadful Coruscations⁶ are beheld with Pleasure, as they are the only Relief afflicted Nature finds in her Extremity, and we are sure of receiving the future Benefits of a serene and wholesome Air.

By a parallel Case, therefore, Informers of this

⁵ To associate with or adopt an opinion, course of action, etc. Johnson's Dictionary furthers this with a second definition of "To maintain; to defend."

⁶ A sudden flash of light, lightning.

sort must not be totally discouraged, because their Intelligence is for the general Welfare; but I know not whether those who discover what perhaps they have it in their Power no longer to keep secret, and for the Preservation of a precarious Life, sacrifice that of Numbers, merit so much Lenity of Censure.

It is a known Maxim, that how much 'soever People are benefited by the *Treason*, they despise and detest the *Traitor*; for whoever reveals what is entrusted to him as a Secret, is in some Degree a *Traitor*⁹, to those whose Confidence he abuses; therefore ought to be treated as such, and kept forever from the Conversation and Society of all honest Men.

But I forgot myself, and grow too grave to present Humour of the Persons to whom I am speaking: - You are now too full of Mirth and Jollity to relish any thing that has the Air of Precept, - the quashing of the Insurrection in *Scotland*⁷ must be a little forgot before serious Matters will go down, and then, perhaps, they will be more agreeable than ever.

You may possibly say, indeed, *Is it from a Parrot we are to expect them?*- Why not? Many fine Things have been said, - Things which have had the greatest Influence over you, by those who have been as much *Parrots* as myself⁸, though they have not vouchsafed⁹ to own the Name; but what am I able to do depends upon the Proof: - I would not wish you to take any thing upon the bare Word of Persons of greater Consideration than myself, es-

⁷ This references the Jacobite Risings which took place from August 1745-April 1746.

⁸ This is likely a metaphorical reference to women, due to the suggestion that women simply 'parroted' information and opinions. You can read more about this in the introduction of this critical edition.

⁹ Disclosing a piece of information

pecially in Matters which tend to the Emolument¹⁰ of the Speaker.

But till more learned Discourses become seasonable, I think it will not be improper to entertain you with the History of a late Adventure, which, though it may appear a little romantic in some Particulars, is in reality more exactly true than many of those Things you most depend upon.

*Climene*¹¹, a celebrated Toast, was sitting one Evening in her Chamber, full of tender Languishments, and possibly debating within herself which, among her Train of Admirers, she should make the happy Man; when *Lysander*¹² came to visit her: - She was, at that Time, too indolent to quit her Chair, and not thinking herself obliged to use any Ceremony with a Person who declared himself her Lover, ordered he should be showed into the Room where she was. On his first Approach, he entertained her, as usual, with the Violence of his Passion, which, influenced by the Humour she was in, more than any Preference she gave him above the others who addressed her, she received with greater Condescensions than he had ever found in her before. - He is a Man of Intrigue, and too much acquainted with the Sex not to perceive that this was the Crisis in which, if ever he could do so, might accomplish his Design; - resolving not to let it slip, he plied her with Protestations of the most dying Love, - vowed the Impossibility of living without her, - run into extravagant Encomiums¹³ of her every Charm, but dwelt the most on those of her Neck and Breast, till the transporting Contempla-

¹⁰ Salary or profit.

¹¹ Likely a reference to the Greek mythological character Clymene, one of the daughters of the Titans Oceanus and Tethys. She is the mother of Atlas and Prometheus.

¹² This is the name of a Spartan general who won the final victory for Sparta in the Peloponnesian War, and who went on to hold a lot of power in Greece.

¹³ Words which highly praise someone.

tion made the Liberty he took in pressing them with his Lips and Hands seem to her as not altogether inexcusable. – Finding the Repulses she gave him were not accompanied with much Resentment, and that she every Moment abated somewhat of her Fierceness, he became still bolder, and regarding more the Language of her Eyes than Tongue¹⁴, desisted not till he had nothing farther to implore or wish for.

This doubtless was, what Lovers call the lucky Moment, and put the amorous *Lysander* in Possession of all those Joys which not an Hour before he half despaired of ever being Master of, even by the most honourable Means; for in Truth there were others who had made Suit to her with greater Advantages of Birth, Fortune, and even Comeliness of Person to recommend them.

He it was, however, who was destined to triumph, not only over her Heart, but also over a Virtue which was looked upon as impregnable. Certain it is, that till that fatal Juncture, he had no other View in his Addresses, than to make her his Wife, and happy would he have thought himself to have that way completed his Desires; but now it was quite otherwise with him: - He thought no more on Marriage; and when she pressed him to it, as she often did with Tears and bitter Agonies, his whole Care was to find some Pretence or other for a plausible *Excuse* for the *Delay* of what was far from his Intentions ever to perform. – As he had some Awe upon him, however, of her Friends, one of whom in particular had it in his Power to prejudice him in a very advantageous and honourable Post he holds under him, he durst not by a plain

¹⁴ There was a trend in literature in the Eighteenth-Century, especially in conduct literature which aimed to teach 'proper' behaviour (usually addressed to women), of writing sex scenes with dubious or no consent. Haywood presents a similar situation to this in her earlier work *Fantomina, or Love in a Maze* (1725).

Refusal of what she expected from him drive her to such Extremes, as might endanger her flying to that Person for Revenge; therefore artfully evaded her Importunities, till his fertile Wit at length enabled him to form a Stratagem to get rid of them entirely without Danger, which was this.

He hired a House, ready furnished, in a genteel Part of the Town, and placed the oldest and most deformed Woman he could find as Mistress of it, with Servants and every Thing else befitting the Condition of a Person of Fashion. — Having given her proper Instructions for her Behaviour, he went one Day to *Climene*, and entreated she would accompany him in a Visit he was to make that Afternoon to a Female Relation who lived for the most Part in the Country and was lately come to *London*. This was a Request which she made no Scruple to comply with, and was accordingly conducted by him to the Scene where the Plot he had contrived was to be acted.

As soon as they entered into a very handsome Dining-Room, the old Creature came in, dressed in so gay and tawdry a Manner, as rendered her, if possible, more disagreeable than Nature and Time had made her. – *Madam*, said *Lysander*, presenting *Climene* to her, *I have brought a young Lady to you, whose Conversation will oblige you to have a better Opinion of this Town than you have hitherto entertained.*

On this the mock Gentlewoman saluted her fair Guest, and they being seated, *My Dear*, said she to *Lysander*, taking him fondly by the Hand at the same Time, *I should have no Aversion to London, if I had more of your Company when I am in it; but if this pretty Lady would vouchsafe to spend some Time with me, I should hope to see you less seldom.*

You must endeavour to persuade her then, replied he, with a Smile, *if you imagine her Presence will have so much Attraction; - but come, where is your Tea? - you know I always drink it early.*

She made no Answer, but went out of the Room as if to order what he desired; but in reality that he might have an Opportunity, as had been agreed between them, to give the finishing Stroke to the Confusion poor *Climene* was already involved in, by what she had seen and heard.

You perceive Madam, I am certain, said he, with the most seeming Timidity in his Face and Voice, *the reason of my evading to accept a Happiness, which, had it been in my Power, I would otherwise have died to maintain; - I had not Courage to relate the Story of my Misfortune, therefore brought you to be a Witness of it.*

Good God! cried she, *is it possible you are married, - and to such a Creature! - But what is her Age or Ugliness to me? - How dare you think of making your Court to a Woman of my Birth, knowing yourself under such Circumstances?*

To which he replied, that he was married before he ever saw her, and that when he did so, was too much in Love to be able to conceal his Passion; - that his Wife was, at that Time, sick and given over by the Physicians, and that he believed Death would soon have set him at Liberty to give his *Hand* where he had given his *Heart*; - and concluded with laying the Blame of all he had done on her Beauty and his own resistless Passion: But his Flatteries had now lost all their Force; she could neither forgive him nor herself, and the Emotions of mingled Rage, Surprise and Grief, were so violent, that it threw her into a kind of Convulsion; -

the pretended Wife and Servants were all called in to her Assistance, and applying proper Remedies, she was at last brought to herself: - As soon as she was so, she desired a Chair might be called, nor could all their Persuasions prevail on her to stay in a House where she had received so cruel a Shock, nor to permit the perjured¹⁵ Author of it to attend her Home.

This was no more than *Lysander* expected, and indeed, less than he could in Reason have expected in so trying an Affair; but having a consummate Assurance, he went to visit her the next Day: The Confusion her Mind was still in had made her forget to give Orders to be denied to him, and he was admitted as usual. - He stood her Upbraidings¹⁶, conscious how much he merited them, till finding she had railed herself out of Breath, he made use of all the soothing Argument he is Master of to bring her to more Moderation, but none had so much Effect as the Impossibility of recalling what was past, and that Patience was the only Remedy for an irretrievable Misfortune. - When she was grown, by degrees, into a Disposition of Mind capable of listening to such a Request, he entreated she would not discover his Marriage, which though he told her had been consummated some Years, he had kept an inviolable Secret to all the World, on account of his Wife's Age and Deformity: - To this she at last consented, not to oblige him, or for his Sake, for she now hated him enough to have rejoiced in an Opportunity of rendering his supposed Choice the Subject of Ridicule among all who knew him; but for the sake of her own Reputation, thinking it would be a Reflection on her Character to have it said that a married Man thought so slightly of it, as to presume to offer his Addresses.

¹⁵ Someone guilty of wilfully lying or misrepresenting the truth.

¹⁶ Scoldings.

It was to this little Pride alone, *Lysander* owed the accomplishing his Point, which having done, he took his Leave of her for the last Time, she insisting on never seeing him any more, except Chance threw him in her Way, and then to behave to each other as Persons perfectly indifferent.

Climene's Vexation was not so violent as to hinder her from considering what would become her to do, in order to stop any Discourse on her so suddenly breaking off with a Man, whose Addresses, it was publicly known, she had for a long time encouraged; she therefore told all her Friends and Acquaintance, that she never had an Intention to marry *Lysander*, but had permitted him to see her, merely to make Trial of the Love and Fidelity of *Horatio*, which since she had sufficiently proved by this Means, she would no longer delay making him as happy as it was in her Power to do.

This gained an easy Belief with every one, and even with *Horatio* himself, to whom she is now married, and both either are, or seem to be, very much devoted to each other.

All *Lysander* had to wish, is now completed, by her having disposed of herself, and put it out of her Power to interfere with any Thing he should do, - his inconstant Heart having entertained a Passion for *Mariana*, whom he is now at Liberty to pursue without any Fears what the Resentment of the other, for the Trick he had put upon her, might act against him. - I hope, however, the Object of his new Flame may be Mistress of a greater Share of Reserve and Caution, than either to be seduced from her Virtue by his Pretensions of Constancy, or from doing herself Justice on his Falsehood, by the like Artifice he practised on *Climene*.

This Story I dedicate entirely to the Use of

the Fair-Sex, in order to remind them how one unguarded Moment may destroy the Peace of their whole Lives; for doubtless *Climene*, as she is a Woman of Honour, is not without Reflections full of Shame and Remorse for her Misconduct. 20- I would fain, therefore, have the *Ladies*, as well as the *Men*, well weigh the Consequences of every thing they are about to do, before they bring it into Action: - But, as Human Nature is frail, and I have heard say that there are Times in which the wisest and most resolute may be overcome, I would give every Woman this Advice, - that whenever she finds in herself the least Propensity to a too tender Inclination, to avoid seeing the Object, - to fly his dangerous Approach, and though Love pleads never so strongly in his Favour, to repel the sweet Impulse, and be persuaded to do a short Violence on herself, rather than run any Hazard of incurring those lasting Pains, which must infallibly attend a Condescension ill repaid.

End of No III. of the Parrot.



THE PARROT No. IV.

POOR *Poll* is very melancholy, - all the Conversation I have heard for I know not how long, has been wholly on Indictments, - Trials, - Sentences of Death, and Executions: - Disagreeable Entertainment to a Bird of any Wit or Spirit! - Yet how do some People dwell upon it! - I have always been told that true *Bravery*, and true *Good Sense* were accompanied with *Compassion* and *Benevolence*; and cannot help being surprised that a Nation, so justly famous for the two *former* Virtues, should give any room to have it said they are deficient in the *latter*. - I am afraid, on Examination, they will be found to do this but too palpably; - else why this Stagnation of all Pursuits, - all Avocations, all Subjects of Discourse, but such as relate to those unhappy Persons, who either actually have, or are expected to suffer under the Hands of the Executioner!

Why, when any of those Spectacles of Horror are exhibited, does the Tradesman forsake his Shop, - the Merchant his Counting-House, - the Physician his Patient, - the fine Lady her Toilet, and the Man of Pleasure his Mistress and his Bottle? - Why is the Exchange, the Markets, and even the Streets left empty, by those accustomed to occupy them?

It is not so much to be wondered at, that low People run to make a Holiday on these mournful Occasions, because better cannot be expected from their Education and way of Life; but for those who boast a superior Knowledge of Things, - are no Strangers to the Value of Life and Death, and the tremendous Consequences which must inevitably attend the latter: - These, methinks, should avoid giving any Suspicion that they take Pleasure in such dreadful Sight, because it would shew a Taste miserably depraved, and that they either did not think at all, or thought to very bad Purpose.

Oh, but you will answer, these who of late have engrossed the Attention of the Town were *Rebels*, - a Set of Wretches who would have subverted your Religion and your Laws, - dethroned the best of Kings, - turned your Parliament out of Doors, and in fine, thrown all Things into Confusion. - Grant them such, the greater their Crimes, the greater need had they of Heaven's Mercy; and I will appeal to yourselves, if it would not have been more conformable to the Principles and Duties of that Religion you profess, and seem so zealous in preserving, to have shut yourselves up in your Closets, and passed those Hours in Prayers for their immortal Welfare, which were taken up in gaping at their Fate.

But were there nothing after Death remaining, were there no future Sense when once the

mortal Blow was past, is there no Pity due to the living Relatives of those unhappy Persons, who, though innocent, must suffer in their Kindreds Fate. – Few but have a Parent, a Brother, a Sister, a Wife, or Children; – some who have many who survive, to endure the Shame of a Guilt they are wholly free from themselves: – How then can you behold a Man, – a Man, perhaps of Family and Fortune, – a Man, once esteemed among you, dragged to the most ignominious¹ Death, without reflecting on the Agonies of those dear Persons he has left behind? – And will not such Reflections raise Emotions within you to destroy all the Satisfaction of gratifying a foolish and unjustifiable Curiosity?²

Compassion, and a Fellow-feeling of the Miseries of those of the same Species with ourselves, seem natural to the whole Creation: – Those Animals, which are looked upon as most contemptible, are not without some Share of it; but[3] it is, indeed, most peculiar to Man; – as one of your Laureats[4] justly expresses it, though, perhaps, not without some Partiality to his own Mind.

*Compassion proper to Mankind appears,
Which Nature witness'd when she lent us Tears.
Of tender Sentiments we only give
This Proof; to weep is our Prerogative:
To show by pitying Looks and melting Eyes,
How with our Neighbours Woes we sympathize.*

¹ Humiliating, shameful.

² Haywood appeals to sensibility here to make her point, a popular concept in the second half of the Eighteenth-Century. Sensibilities are spontaneous overwhelming emotional and compassionate responses to witnessing or hearing about suffering.

*Who can all Sense of others Ills escape,
Is but a Brute at best in Human Shape.
This natural Piety did first refine
Our Wit, and rais'd our Thoughts to
Things divine.
This proves our Spirit of the gods Descent,
While that of Beasts is prone and downward bent.
To them, but Earth-born Life they did dispense:
To us, for mutual Aid, celestial Sense.³*

His Majesty has been most graciously pleased to grant his Pardon to one of the Lords taken in *Scotland*, and to respite the Execution of several others of the lower Class of those unhappy Criminals, who were condemned at the same time they were whom you have seen suffer at *Kennington-Common*⁴; which Act of truly Royal Clemency, I should think, must not only endear him more to all his good and faithful Subjects, but also convert the most Virulent Malcontent, and turn the Voice of *Faction* into *Admiration*. – I am astonished, therefore, to find that any one can express the least Dissatisfaction at it, nor can account for such a Behaviour any other way, than that expecting a greater Number of Holidays, and consequently fresh Matter of Discourse for a long Time after they were over, is such a Disappointment as you cannot brook without Chagrin.

Strange, unnatural Propensity! – I am loth to say *what* such a Disposition resembles, but *what it does not*, even the meanest and the most illiterate among you is not so ignorant as not to know, how

³ This appears to be taken from Juvenal's *Satire Fifteen* which was translated by Nahum Tate in 1693.

⁴ This likely referring to the Jacobite rebellion.

much 'soever you may attempt to palliate it.

Mercy, you confess yourselves, is the darling attribute of *Heaven*; and if the King, Heaven's Delegate, and who, it must also be acknowledged, had much more Reason to be offended than any of his Subjects can pretend to be; if he, I say, discovered an Inclination to extend it, I cannot help being of Opinion that it was a Presumption both to Heaven and to the King, to urge too much on the Side of *Justice*; as by the same Parity of Reason, it would be equally unjustifiable in any one to entertain a hard Thought of his Majesty, for his refusing Clemency in some Cases. – The *Law*, it is true, *condemns*, but it is the *King's* undoubted Prerogative to *save*, and is, indeed, the richest Jewel in his Crown. – The Author of *Hudibrass*⁵ was a Man of great Humour, but his Sentiments were always allowed to be extremely just, as well as elegant, whenever he had a Mind to be serious: – What he delivers on the Subject now upon the *Tapis*⁶, are not, I think, less so than any in his Poem, for which Reason I take the Liberty to repeat them.

*The Laws that are inanimate,
And feel no Sense of Love or Hate,
That have no Passions of their own,
Nor Pity to be wrought upon,
Are only proper to inflict
Revenge on Criminals, as strict.
But, to have Power to forgive,
Is Empire and Prerogative:
And 'tis in Crowns a nobler Gem,
To grant a Pardon than condemn.*

I observe, however, and with very great

5 A poem by Samuel Butler.

6 A decorative tapestry or carpet.

Pleasure, that the noble and genteel Part of the Town are far from being so rigid; many of the *former* have used their utmost Endeavours to excite that Compassion which has since been found; and a great Number of the *latter* testify their Satisfaction at its being accomplished: It is only your little Authors, – Hackneys⁷ for the Publishers of News-Papers, who, by their Writings, would fain influence the low and unthinking Part of their Readers to imagine that his Majesty does an Injury both to himself and People, in pardoning even any one of those who have been led astray from their Duty, however the Circumstances which induced them to it, either really is, or may have been represented to him.

These Remonstrances⁸, as well as the Papers they contribute to the filling up, will soon be buried in Oblivion; but if they should have any Weight, as I hope they never will, I could with might be immortalized to the Shame and Confusion of the Authors; since I can never be brought to believe they write in this Manner, inspired by any true Affection to his Majesty's Person or Government, but rather that so unseasonable a Zeal is calculated to serve Purposes neither for the *Glory* of the *one*, or true Interest of the other.

The Number, however, of those who *preach* this Doctrine of *severe justice*, is but small to that of those who unwarily are *seduced* by it. – To them I therefore speak at this Time, and should think myself happy if I could prevail on them to see the Fallacy of it.

I would not have you imagine, that because I have mentioned those who have been convicted of High-Treason, I mean to particularize them

7 A horse/pony commonly used for hackney carriages.

8 A strong opposition or complaint.

as the most proper Objects of Compassion: - No, I abhor, equally with yourselves, a Crime of so black and heinous a Nature; it was only as at present they engross the Attention of the Town, and Places were advertised to be let out to such as were desirous of beholding the Execution, and were actually hired for that Purpose, by some Persons whom it would better have become to have employed their Time and Money in a different Manner, that I took the Liberty of expressing my Sentiments of the Matter; - for in Truth, it is not the Fate of the Guilty, but the Humour of such who testify an Impatience and kind of Fondness for being Eye-witnesses of it, that gives me the most Concern. -The meanest and most common Malefactors, who are condemned every Sessions, are yet your Fellow Creatures, have the same Share in Futurity with yourselves, and that Depravity of Human Nature which has brought them to so sad an End; should, methinks, rather excite in you Emotions of Shame and Sorrow, than any of a contrary Sort.

It is not, therefore, this *Person*, nor *that Crime*, be the *one* never so *dangerous*, nor the *other* never so *detestable*, that, according to my way of thinking, can excuse beholding the Punishment with any sort of *Pleasure*, or even with *Indifference*.

Besides, as I believe there is no one so wholly void of natural Affection, as to be a willing Spectator of any of his Kindred's Fate in this Manner, though never so justly incurred; the running to behold that of others, denotes such a Selfishness, such an Unconcern for every Body, in whose Life or Honour you have no immediate Interest, as you ought, methinks, to be ashamed of testifying; and would take off great Part of the Pity all Calamities have a Right to claim, should any Person of this Stamp meet with the same Incident that one, who

took too much Delight in such Shews, did a few Years ago.

A poor Labouring-Man in the *West of England* had a Son, who, when he came to be about eleven or twelve Years of Age, discovered a quickness of Apprehension and ready Wit, beyond what could be expected in a Boy that had never been at any School, and could neither write nor read; - the smart Answers he gave whenever he was asked any Question, and many Things were told of him, made him be taken Notice of by a neighbouring Gentleman of a good Estate, who, when he saw him with his Father in the Field, would often call to him and talk to him.

This worthy Person thought it a Pity that a Lad, of so good a Capacity, should be brought up to follow the Plough; he therefore took him from his Father, clothed him in clean, decent Apparel, and had him instructed as far as was necessary for an ordinary Tradesman, then sent him to *London* to a Pewterer⁹, of whom he had some Knowledge, and soon after coming up himself to *Parliament*, bound him Apprentice.

The Charity was not thrown away, — the young Man was extremely ingenious at his Business, very honest and obliging, and had no other Fault than an insatiable Curiosity of seeing every thing he found others eager to be Spectators of; but his Master overlooked this in him, in Consideration of his good Qualities, and they agreed extremely well the whole Time they were together. — His Apprenticeship being expired, he married a young Woman, to whom he had a better Portion than his Circumstances could have given him room to hope for, and his Patron making a considerable Addition to the Sum she brought, set him up in a handsome

9

A tradesman that makes pewter utensils.

Manner; and being so, his Honesty, Industry and Frugality soon improved his Stock, and in a very few Years, he became a Man of Consequence among those of his Trade.

Finding himself perfectly at ease, and having a good Journeyman whom he could entrust with his Business, he began to have a Desire of seeing his old Father, and the Place which had given him Birth, and to take his Wife with him on this Visit; she was a good sort of Woman, and perhaps, like most of her Sex, fond of a Jaunt into the Country, did not oppose his Inclination to it in the least; and the Matter being soon agreed upon between them, he hired a Horse, mounted her behind him, and set out for *Devonshire*. — I shall pass over the Particulars of their Journey, as having nothing in it material to my Purpose, and only tell you, that when they came within a few Miles of the Village, to which they were going, they saw a great Number of People, some riding, others running towards a Road which turned out of that they were in; on asking the Occasion of this unusual Concourse, he was told they were going to see the Execution of a Man who was to be hanged for Sheep-stealing.

His natural Curiosity for such Spectacles would not suffer him to pursue his Journey without gratifying that prevailing Passion, and in spite of all his Wife, who would not go with him, could say, to hinder him, he left her at the first Inn they came to, and followed the Crowd he saw before him with all the Speed he could, till he came to the Gallows, which he very well remembered, having, when a Boy, seen many a one brought to it. — He got thither almost at the same Time with the condemned Person, but what was his Astonishment, when, no sooner casting his Eyes upon him, he knew him to be his own Father. — He flung himself off his Horse,

without regarding what became of him, - flew to those who had the Care of conducting the Malefactor, and begged the Liberty of speaking to him; which being granted, he made himself known to him, and there passed between them all that could be expected on so mournful an occasion. — The Son expressed the utmost Concern that his Father had not acquainted him, by Letter, with his Misfortune, that he might have come sooner down in order to endeavour to save him from so shameful an End, if all he had in the World could have done it; and the Father answered, that he did not repent his not having done so, because as he had never any thing to give him, he should not have had any Comfort in Life, if prolonged, by the Ruin of so dutiful a Child, and that he was only grieved at the Disgrace, which the Crime he suffered for must entail on him. — He told him that it was extreme Poverty, and the Unwillingness he had of being burdensome to him, as he had a Wife and Children, which had made him do that in his old Age, which in his Youth he should have trembled at the Thoughts of; and uttered many other Expressions of Grief and Tenderness, which drew Tears from all who were near enough to hear them, till the Officers of Justice obliging them to break off any farther Discourse, they embraced and parted; the old Man was dragged to his Fate, and the young one, struck with Horror, fell that Instant into Violent Convulsion Fits; the People about him had Charity enough to give him what Assistance was in their Power, and hearing that, in his Intervals of Reason, he desired to be carried to that Inn where he had left his Wife, some of them took him up and bore him on their Shoulders.

The poor Woman was extremely frightened, as you may suppose, to see her Husband in this Condition; but on enquiring where , and in what

Manner they had found him, and being informed of the dreadful Occasion, fell into Agonies little inferior to his. – A Physician was immediately sent for to them both; the Wife was soon upon her Legs, but the Man lay a long Time ill; at length, however, he recovered enough to return to *London*, - which was all could be done for him; - the sad Success of his Journey had such an Effect upon him, that it turned his Brain, and he died soon after in a Mad-House, leaving a Wife and three Children, in Circumstances very much impaired by the Expenses this Misfortune had rendered unavoidable.

How dreadful was the Consequence that attended this Man's unhappy Propensity, to make one among the Crowd at such Spectacles! But though this was an Incident which, perhaps, the Generality of those who hurry to see Executions have no Reason to apprehend; yet there are many others, such as breaking Legs or Arms &c. which frequently happen at such Times, and are sufficient, one would think, to deter the reasonable Part of Mankind from going to such Places, if, as I have said before, human Compassion wanted the Power to stifle any Desire of it.

But as no Considerations of any Kind are of weight enough, to keep the Generality of the common People, at least in their own Houses, when any of those Sightings are exhibited to the Public; frequent as they are, it cannot be wondered at, that Foreigners are so apt to accuse this Nation of a certain Coldness and Indifference, if no more, for whatever Misfortunes fall to the Share of one another.

They take Notice that, except the *English*, there is scarce any Nation in the habitable World, who, if they happen to meet one of the same Country Abroad, will not rejoice in seeing him, do

him all the good Offices in their Power, and, in fine, treat him, in every respect, with a Brotherly Tenderness and Affection; - whereas some of you have been known to act in direct Opposition to the Interest of one another, each endeavouring only to ingratiate¹⁰ himself with the People of the Country, though to the utter Ruin of those in his own, whom Chance, Business, or adverse Fortune, may have brought there.

They go yet farther, and pretend to aver that it is a kind of Maxim among you to lose *two Friends* for the sake of destroying *one Enemy*; and that notwithstanding your extreme Lukewarmness for all that concerns the *one*, you carry your Vehemence against the *other* to the greatest Excess that can be.

How far this may be Fact, in regard to a few particular Persons, I will not take upon me to determine; but what is done by *Individuals*, ought not to be a Reflection on the *whole*. — It must be owned by all Lovers of Truth, that in *general* you have given Instances not only of your *Sincerity*, but also of your *Warmth* in Friendship, greater than perhaps any Nation whatever; and I am very sure, infinitely more than any have ever been, even by those who accuse you of the want of it; and that, however violent you may be when provoked, you have always been found a most fair and generous Enemy.

They say too, that even in your most elegant Diversions, a sanguinary Disposition is discoverable in you, those of the Theatre I mean, and for Proof of this Assertion, mention several Plays, particularly those entitled *The Libertine*¹¹ and *Titus Androni-*

10 Deliberately attempting to gain favour or acceptance with someone.

11 A play by Thomas Shadwell, written in 1675.

*cus*¹², both which contain only a Series of the most shocking Murders, from their first to their last Acts, and yet seldom fail of being honoured with the most crowded Audiences, and Numbers frequently turned away for want of room in the House to contain them.

I am ready, notwithstanding this, which cannot be denied, to have so much Charity for you as to believe, that is rather owing to the Names of the Authors, some of whom have wrote many excellent Things, than to any liking of these particular Pieces, that they either continue to be acted, or to meet with the Encouragement which seems to be given them whenever they are so.

It is a certain Truth indeed, that to draw the tender Tear, to meliorate Nature, and excite soft Emotions in the Heart, there is no manner of Occasion for making the Theatre a kind of Slaughter-House; — the Soul is more effectually moved, by the Representation of some great and generous Action, which unexpectedly averts impending Fate, than by seeing it fall with dreadful Weight, on some unhappy Persons Head; and it must be acknowledged that those Gentlemen who, at present, write for the Stage, or who have done so for some Years last past, are sensible of the Error their Predecessors were guilty of; and, wholly unwilling to encourage a Blood-thirsty Disposition, by dressing Destruction in a pleasing Shape, avoid as much possible, in their Tragedies, those murdering Scenes which with so much Reason are complained of in several of the celebrated *Shakespeare's*, *Lee's*, *Dryden's*, and even *Otway's* Plays.

This Reformation, so happily begun in the *Drama*, will, it is to be hoped, extend by Degrees

¹² A play by William Shakespeare believed to be written between approx. 1590-93.

to other Things, till Manners in general become unexceptionable, and such as will leave no Possibility of Cavil to be made by those, who, jealous and envious of your *good Qualities*, industriously seek to find out some *bad* ones, in order to make the Ballance between them turn on the Side of the latter. — The Power of averting their Endeavours, is lodged entirely in yourselves, and it seems to be merely owing to a want of serious Reflection, that you have ever failed to exert it to their Confusion and your own Glory.

End of No IV. of the Parrot.



THE
PARROT
No. V.

AMONG all the unreasonable Things that we see Men of good Reason in other Matters are sometimes guilty of, there is none productive of more unhappy Consequences than that of delaying the settling their Affairs while they have Power to do it; so that what they have to bequeath shall descend to those whom either the Tyes of Blood, Friendship, Gratitude, Regard to personal Merit, or any other Motive, makes them desirous should be their Heirs. — While the Mind is in its full Strength, not debilitated by old Age, nor the Infirmities of the Body, is the Time when this ought to be done; yet what a Reluctance do many People discover at the bare mention of it? — How apt are they to misconstrue the Admonitions of their best Friends on this Point, into a secret Impatience for their Death. — I can hardly believe there is any

one so weak as to imagine the ordering in what Manner his Effects, after his Decease, should be disposed of, would any way contribute to bring on or hasten his End; yet the Neglect of doing it, especially when there is the least room to suspect the not doing it may occasion any litigious¹ Conceits, looks as if that were indeed the Case.

I am, notwithstanding what some People say, rather inclined to think such a Delay proceeds either merely from an unhappy Indolence of Temper, or a lothness² to do any Thing which reminds them of the inevitable Hour. — There is, no doubt, a Repugnance in Human Nature to the Thoughts of being no more, of quitting all the dear Enjoyments of this Life, and of that Body, so pampered perhaps, and so indulged, lying consuming, and soon forgotten in the Grave; yet, as it is a Fate to which all are alike destined, though by various Ways inflicted, it is a Pity that People will not endeavour to render it more familiar.— Every one hears daily of the Death of some of his Acquaintance, perhaps attend them to their Funerals; — this must surely put him in Mind that his own Turn must necessarily come, and that he knows not how soon it may happen, be he never so robust: Why then does he neglect the *present Now*, the only *Moment* he can call his own, to do a Thing of so much Importance to his Posterity, and also to the Peace of his own Soul, in that tremendous Time, when he shall find the King of Terrors has seized upon his vital Springs, and that it is then too late to comply with the Persuasions of his Friends, or satisfy either the Demands of Justice, of Charity, or Inclination.

It may doubtless seem a little odd to you, that I have made Choice of a Topic for your Entertainment, which I allow to be so universally disrelished;

¹ Eager to take legal action to settle disputes.
² A reluctance to do something.

and indeed I should have been far from risking your Displeasure this way, if I had not found myself obliged to it, in order to introduce the History of a late Adventure, which I thought ought to be made as public as possible, to the end, every one may take such prudent Measures, as will disappoint whatever Aims ill-designing Men might otherwise be encouraged to attempt.

A gentleman who had no real Estate but had acquired a very large Fortune by his Skill and Industry in the Business to which he was educated, had no other Heir to enjoy the Benefit of his long Cares and Pains, than one Daughter, whom he loved with all the Tenderness a Parent is capable of feeling.— Her beauty, Good Sense, and Sweetness of Behaviour, very well justified the Tenderness he shewed to her; and every one that knew her, thought that her Person, Education, and the Wealth which was supposed must infallibly descend to her, would render her a fit Match for one of much greater Birth than herself. — Such a Thing was however intended, a certain young Baronet was extremely charmed with Miss, his Guardians were not at all averse and her Father was infinitely satisfied with the Proposal; but she was yet too young for Marriage, being, when the Affair was in a Manner agreed upon, not quite thirteen Years of Age.

The old Gentleman, however, thought himself extremely happy in having, as he imagined, provided so well for this Darling of his Heart; yet as flattering as this Belief was to him, he neglected the chief Essential for bringing it to pass, the settling of her Portion:— It is true, he had often told the Friends of the Baronet, that he would give his Daughter five thousand Pounds on the Day of her Marriage, two more on the Birth of her first Child, and at his Decease all he was possessed of, ex-

cepting some few Legacies; but this was not put into Writing, and Death striking him before he was aware, gave a terrible Turn to this young Lady's Circumstances.— Without a Will to the contrary, she was the undoubted Heiress, and as nobody had ever heard there was one, she had no other Disquiet than what the Lots of so good a Father gave her, till the Day of his Interment³; when, as soon as the Company returned from doing that last melancholy Office, a Fellow, who had long lived in the House as a Clerk, came into the Room and brought a Lawyer with him, desiring all that were present to be attentive to the Testament of his deceased Master:— Everyone seemed surprized, as having good Reason to believe that none had been made; but as it was not in their Power to offer any Objections, permitted it to be read by the Lawyer, who pretended he had wrote it at the Request of the Deceased three Months before he died.

The Substance of this fallacious Will was to constitute the Clerk, whose Name was there inserted, his sole Executor, and to bequeath to him his whole Effects except two thousand Pounds to his Daughter, to whom he was also to be Guardian; nor was she to receive that Sum without she consented to live with him till she married, and if not with his Approbation⁴ to forfeit it entirely.

Not a single Person but saw into the Forgery, and exclaimed loudly against it, but that was all they did;— they considered that Law was not only very chargeable, but also uncertain in its Event, and none was willing to run the Hazard, merely for the sake of Justice, of attempting any Thing in the Behalf of this injured Orphan, especially as they found he bore it with a consummate Assurance. So true are the Words of *Hudibras's*,

3 The act of placing a corpse into a grave.

4 Approval.

*For be that has but Impudence
To all Things has a fair Pretence;
And put among his Wants but Shame,
To all the World may lay his Claim.*⁵

Seeing no Remedy, the poor young Lady was obliged to submit to those hard Conditions specified in the pretended Will, and lived with this Wretch, rather as a Prisoner, than a Person to whom he was made Guardian:— She was never suffered to stir out of Doors without he was with her, and that too was a Favour but seldom granted,— nor was she permitted to see any of her Relations or Acquaintance at Home,— every Servant who had lived in the House in her Father's Time was discharged, and such put in their Places, as young as she was, she soon perceived were too much his Creatures for her to communicate any Part of her Mind to them, without incurring worse Treatment than she at present suffered.

Thus debarred from all Diversions,— all Friends to whom she might complain,— all Company but that of him, whose Sight, with so much Reason, was hateful to her, did she mope away her Days till she attained the Age of fourteen; at which Time, the Villain, to add to the other Wrongs he had done her, a greater yet, entertained the monstrous Design of debauching her:— Marry her he could not, having a Wife living, though he had been parted from her several Years; therefore, being possessed of a brutal Passion for this pretty young Creature, he made not the least Scruple of sacrificing her Innocence to his *Lust*, as he had done the best Part of her Fortune to his *Avarice*;— but being unwilling however,

⁵ Here is an extract from *An Heroical Epistle of Hudibras to Sidrophel* by Samuel Butler. It is a mock-heroic, satirical poem about the hypocrisy of Puritanism.

doubtless more for his own than her Sake, to make use of Force for the Accomplishment of his horrid Purpose, if he could obtain her by more plausible Means, he began to endeavour to insinuate himself into her good Graces by all those Arts Men usually put in Practice when they have an Intention to betray, and which the most ignorant are too well skilled in:— He took her frequently to *Ranelagh*, *Vaux-Hall Gardens*, and in fine, to all the Places of Entertainment; treated her, when there, in a profuse rather than genteel Manner;— brought Books to her for her Amusement at Home, but then, they were such as tended only to corrupt the Morals, and fill the Mind with Ideas unbecoming a Woman of Honour.—He took all imaginable Pains to render Marriage contemptible to her, and was continually telling her how handsome she was, and that it was a great Pity she should ever know the Anxieties of a slighted Affection, which she must inevitably undergo if ever she married, assuring her that no Man in the World ever loved a Woman to whom he was a Husband;— that all that secured the Affection of his Sex, was the Fears of being deprived of what they loved, and those Fears ceasing by the irrevocable Tye of Wedlock, all the Ardency of the Passion ceased with them, and Desire was consequently palled.

These were some of the Methods he took to seduce her, hoping, by this pernicious Doctrine, to overthrow all those virtuous Principles had been instilled into her more early Years, and, by degrees, wear off that native and unaffected Modesty, which, more than any Thing else, seemed a Bar to his Designs.

How far such Artifices, if made use of by any other Man, might have had their desired Effect, is not for the *Parrot* to determine; but certain it is, that

the secret and fixed Aversion she had conceived against him for the flagrant Injustice he had done her, greatly contributed to her Abhorrence of his Suit.— She immediately saw into the Motive of his so sudden Complaisance, but pretended not to understand what it was he meant, even when he spoke most plain, and cunningly evaded giving any direct Answer whenever he talked to her, as he often did, on the Subject of those Amours which he either was told of, or invented on some of the great World: As she found he did this only to make the Crime he aimed to make her guilty of appear less odious in her Eyes, by the Example of those above her, she would not seem to be any way affected with the relation, and whenever she could do so, without being suspected to do it with Design, turned the Conversation on some other Topic.

Tired, at length, with this distant way of wooing a Person whom he considered as wholly in his Power, he declared to her, one Day, his Mind in Terms which obliged her to be more serious in her Replies, than she had occasion to be while he left her any room to pretend she took what he said as Raillery⁶.— She now accused him of the utmost Ingratitude to the Memory of her Father, and Baseness⁷ to herself, and threatened, that if he ever talked to her more in that Strain, friendless as she was, she would apply to my Lord Chancellor in Person, throw herself at his Feet, and implore his Protection.

The Manner, as well as the Words in which she expressed her Detestation of his Offers, making him see, in spite of all he had flattered himself with, that there was nothing to be hoped for from her Condescension, destroyed all the Remains of Respect he had till now preserved for her, and he be-

⁶ Good-humoured teasing.

⁷ Bad moral character.

gan to treat her with such Rudeness, as convinced her he would not scruple to seize that by Violence, which he could not obtain by Consent.— It is likely, indeed, he had at that Time completed her undoing, if Word had not been brought him, that a Gentleman, who was about purchasing a House of him, waited for him, with a Lawyer, at an adjacent Tavern, in order to settle the Affair.

This fortunate Interruption saved her Honour, but when she reflected how near she had been to being made the most miserable Creature upon Earth, and how impossible it would be for her always to escape his villainous Prosecutions, and that even that very Night might leave her nothing worse to fear, she wept bitterly; but considering that to bewail her Condition would not contribute to amend it, she took a Resolution, as she only saw Means of avoiding him, to get out of the House before his Return:— To that end, she bundled up those Things she most valued, and tied them round her Waist under her Hoop-Petticoat; and it happening luckily for her, that there was but one Servant at Home, she contrived to send her out on some little Errand, telling her she would take Care to answer any one that should come to the Door while she was out; but as soon as the Absence of this Wench gave Opportunity, went hastily away, slipped into a Hackney-Coach at the end of the Street, drew up the Windows, and ordered to be drove to the House of one, who, though a very distant Relation, was yet the nearest she had living, and therefore the most proper Person to whom she could apply.

To this Kinsman and his Wife she related her unhappy Story, intreating their Advice how to proceed, that she might get even that Portion of her Father's Wealth which the pretended Will had allotted her, out of the Hands of this wicked Guardi-

an; and added, in the utmost Agony of Spirit, that if there was no Court of Judicature capable of relieving her, she would work for her Bread in the meanest Capacity, or even starve for the want of it, rather than ever be again in the Power of so detestable a Monster.

Her Tears, and the moving Terms in which she expressed herself, would have excited Compassion in any Heart not altogether divested of Humanity; and as neither of these were so, but well-meaning honest People, though somewhat covetous⁸, they were very much moved at her Distress, and assured her of all the Assistance in their Power; and as the first Proof of it, told her she should be welcome to stay with them till they had tried what could be done for her.

She gladly accepted their Invitation, and the very next Day, as they had promised, a Lawyer was consulted on the Occasion, who being informed at full of all the Circumstances relating to that infamous Will, and having well considered every Thing, told them, that though it was true that nothing could be a more gross and palpable Forgery, yet as no *Caveat* had been entered against it, and many Months had elapsed since it had been registered in the Commons, he was afraid there would be no Possibility of setting it aside; and also, as the two thousand Pounds was left the young Lady on certain Conditions therein specified, he did not see how she could recover anything, at least by Common Law, without fulfilling those Conditions.— He added, however, that an Appeal to Chancery⁹, with her Oath of an attempted Rape, perhaps might give her some redress.

⁸ Greedy.

⁹ The Court of Chancery had jurisdiction to attend to all matters of equity including heritance and guardianship.

The Kinsman shook his Head at this, and presently cried, that the Expenses of that Court run very high, and besides, was tedious in its Decision;— the Lawyer replied, it was so, yet advised him to go to the Guardian, and threaten him with a Declaration, *which perhaps, knowing his Guilt, said he, may fright him into some Compliance for the Relief of the young Lady.*

This the Gentleman readily agreed to, and accordingly went the next Day, and took a Friend with him, who, though he could not in reality do much, could yet *speak* in such a Fashion, as often had served to intimidate those who did not perfectly know him, or his Character.

All that either of them could say, however, did not seem to affect this wicked Man; and when they urged the Baseness of attempting to betray, or force the Virtue of his Charge, he answered, that he was sorry the poor Girl had recourse to such Shifts to justify her own Conduct, for the sake of her Father, who had been his dear Master, and most worthy Friend and Patron; but he supposed she had raised this cruel Accusation against him, merely to have a Pretence for quitting his House; because, he said, that perceiving in her an Inclination to ramble Abroad more than became a young Woman who would preserve her Reputation, he had sometimes been obliged to use his Authority, in order to restrain her too frequent Sallies.¹⁰

These Pretences were justly laughed at by those to whom he made them, and they told him, that being determined to do Justice to the Orphan, whom it was certain he had greatly wronged, they would immediately apply to Chancery; but he seemed not at all concerned at the Menace, and calmly told them, that whenever they pleased to

¹⁰ Witty remarks.

file a Bill against him, he should be ready to give in his Reply.

Finding what they said had so little Effect, and firmly believing he would stand it out to the last, the Kinsman was fearful of commencing a Suit, and was resolved to meddle no farther in it; so the Affair was entirely dropped, to the great Grief of the unhappy injured Person, who had it not in her Power to do anything of herself.

The cruel Wretch however, notwithstanding all the careless Airs he gave himself, shuddered at his Soul; and not doubting but they would do as they said, and sensible within himself that a Court of Equity would distinguish between the Truth and all the Evasions he could make, thought proper not to put it to the venture, but retire to some Place where he might enjoy the Fruits of his Deception in Safety. To that end, he turned every Thing into ready Money with all the Speed and Privacy he could, and got off to *Holland*, whence he afterward embarked for *Bologne*, and now resides there in great Pomp, and doubtless will remain while Heaven vouchsafes¹¹ to permit him to do so.

The News soon reached the Ears of the young Lady and her Friends, who now perhaps repented them of their Timidity, but if they did, the Satisfaction was but small to her who had now no Hope, nor even a Possibility of Redress. To add to her Affliction, they began by degrees to cool in their Civilities to her, and at last hinted that she must think of doing something for her Support, since there now remained no Hope of getting any Part of what had been her Father's: as she was but too sensible of this Truth, and had experienced ever since the Death of her Father, how difficult it was to find anyone who would take much Pains, or

¹¹ Something granted in a gracious or condescending manner.

run any risk where their own personal Interest was not concerned, she therefore endeavoured, as much as was in her Power, to resign herself to her hard Fate, —Accordingly she enquired for a Service, and went soon after to be Chambermaid in a Family, where those she waited upon, were not born to half the Expectations she had been.

She that was accustomed only to command, now obeys the Commands of others;— she who was once so indulged, so complimented, so admired, is now employed in bringing the Devoirs¹² of those who are the Followers of Fortune, while her own Beauty and Accomplishments are totally neglected;— that young Baronet, who imagined himself her Lover while sparkling in Jewels, now wonders at his Mistake, and cannot think there is anything in the plain, humble Chambermaid, worthy the Attachment of a Man of Fashion:— How sad a Reverse! How unexpected! — but as *Cowley* says,

*What God alas! Will Caution be
For living Man's Security,
Or will ensure his Vessel in this faithless
Sea?*

*Where Fortune's Favour, and her Spite
Roll with alternate Waves like Day and
Night.*¹³

What Parent, who hears this Story, will neglect making that Provision he intends to do, while the Power of so necessary an Action is permitted?— I believe no one who has lived any Time in the World, and made any Observations on it, but will own, that it scarce ever happens, but the not making a Will either emboldens some Villian to frame a fictitious one, or the Effects the Deceased

¹² Somone's duty.

¹³ An extract from *The Second Olympique Ode of Pindar* by Abraham Crowley.

leaves behind, occasion Contentions and Law-Suits among different Claimants, to the Ruin of all the Parties concerned in them.

Even the little Acquaintance I have had in this Kingdom furnishes me with a great Number of Instances of the Truth of this Observation, and I may be so bold as to say, that it is next to miraculous, when without fixing it by those Means which Law and Custom has ordained, the Estate, the personal one at least, of any one descends to those who have the most just Claim to it, either by Blood, or the Intention of the former Possessor.

Besides, when once this Bone of Contention is thrown in the Way, how few are there that have any Regard to former Friendship, or even natural Affection?— Those who seemed to love each other with the greatest Fondness, become mortal Enemies, and from the Prince down to the Peasant, plot the Destruction of those it is their Province to protect;— but all Ties, all Obligations are swallowed up in the dear Consideration of Self-Interest;— all Duties, both Divine and Human, bow down before the prevailing Power of Gold!— Gay glittering Gold! Which more or less influences the whole human Species. — As one of the Poets makes *Jupiter* say, in a dramatic Entertainment,

———*When I made this Gold,
I made a greater God than Jove;
And gave my own Omnipotence
away.*¹⁴

But it would be endless to enumerate the long Train of ill Consequences which dying without making a Will infallibly bring on all those who had any Dependence on the deceased Person.

¹⁴ An extract from *Amphitryon, or, The Two Sosia's* by John Dryden.

—Everyone is sensible of them whenever he gives himself the Trouble of the least Reflection; and the want of doing *that*, is all that can possibly prevent the doing the *other* also; since it would be the utmost Uncharitableness to imagine, that there is any one Man so entirely void of all Concern for his Posterity, or even those he has called his Friends, to be easy and contended with the Thoughts of involving them in Confusion after his Death, and giving them the greatest Reason in his Power of hating both his Name and Memory.

As you, therefore, of all sublunary¹⁵ Beings have alone the Faculty of *Reasoning*, exert that divine Quality; and however you may have lived, *die* at least, as becomes the Dignity of your Nature, and prove you have a Soul that wears its Maker's Image.

End of No V. of the PARROT.

¹⁵ Belonging to this world rather than a fairer one.



THE PARROT No. VI.

A PARROT of my Acquaintance has got somebody (for I am sure he never learned to write himself) to send me a whimsical sort of a Letter, which, for that very Reason, knowing how fond you are of all Oddities, I will repeat to you Word for Word.

“DEAR POLL,

I have observed many Things since my Arrival in these Parts, which I confess are utterly beyond the reach of my Comprehension; therefore, as I know you to be a Bird of much greater Sagacity and Experience than myself, I take the Liberty of intreating you will satisfy my

Curiosity, in answering some few Queries I now send you; nor is this all the Favour I request of you, I must also desire that you illustrate the Solutions you give, with such demonstrative Proofs, as may convince me they are just; for I must tell you, I am a Foe professed to Infallibility, and have heard so many Untruths of late, which have been delivered with the greatest Solemnity, that I cannot now yield Assent to any Thing, merely because it is asserted, how good an Opinion soever I may be inclined to have of the Person that says it.

I should also be glad you will do this with as much speed as the Thing will possibly admit; for I have learned so much of the Fashion of this Country, as to be intolerably impatient at the least Delay in anything I once set my Heart upon:— But I will not keep you in a Suspense I am so very little able to bear myself, — therefore, without any Ceremony, conclude me

Your Friend and Servant,

A PARROT.”

This was the Epistle, and now for the enclosed Queries.

“1st. What is in general most dear to the People of *England*?

2nd. What is the chief Object of their Detestation?

3rd. What is capable of giving them the greatest Pleasure?

4th. What is it inflicts on them the severest Mortification?

5th. What is the most effectual Method of getting into their Favour?

6th. Who are the proudest People in this Kingdom?

7th. Of what are Mankind in general most tenacious?"

"These (*he goes on*) are very material Points, and highly necessary I should be fully informed of, in order to my living happily in this Kingdom; — I therefore beg you will dispatch these first, and at your Leisure discuss the others, which are as follow:

1st. Does the Policy of the *French* Court really merit the high Reputation it has in the World?

2nd. Has the *Empress of Germany* (for the *Emperor* is out of the Question) a Peace most at Heart, or pursuing the Advantages she has lately gained in *Italy*?

3rd. If a Peace should take Place, what Recompense will *Great-Britain* have for all the Expense of Men and Money she has been at in carrying on the War?

4th. What will become of the Infant *Don Philip*, if the new King of *Spain* consents to an Accommodation, without consulting of a proper Settlement for him?

5th. What Reason is, by the *Ceremonials*, assigned, for the *British* Minister *Plenipotentiary*¹ at the approaching Congress, to attend there the coming of the Person appointed by the Court of *France*? — It is not, sure, that the former is to appear most solicitous for a Peace, or that she is any way inferior to the other, whose Arms, for so many Years, she has quartered with her own by Right of Conquest?

6th. What Part the King of Prussia and the States General, at last, will take in the Affair?

7th. Whether the Empress of *Russia* gives herself any Concern for the Tranquillity of *Europe*, any farther than where her own Dominions extend; or whether the Compliments she makes are only mere Words of course?"

Well, notwithstanding the Ambition most People have of being thought wiser, and more witty than their Neighbours, it is a Character which costs a great deal of Trouble and Fatigue to maintain;— the less knowing are perpetually persecuting you for Information of some kind or other;— you are consulted as an Oracle, and if you happen sometimes not to be able to give all the Satisfaction required of you, (as a *Fool* may puzzle a *Philosopher*;) then all your Reputation falls to the Ground at once, and you are despised in proportion as you have been revered.

My Friend's Queries, some of them at least are such as I am as little able to resolve as he that

¹ A diplomat that has the power to act independently on behalf of a country's government.

makes them; yet will he not believe this if I should tell him so, and consequently I should incur his Displeasure by my Refusal:— And if I should give any Solution which may afterward be confuted by a Person of superior Judgement, I shall not only forfeit his good Opinion, but also that of every Body else; for Things to one's Disadvantage are very rarely kept a Secret.—I have been, therefore, in a sort of Dilemma how to proceed; and I know not, if I have not found as much Difficulty in the Determination, as I shall be at complying with his Request, which, at length, I have prevailed on myself to do, arduous as the Talk undoubtedly is, and vain as I may be thought for presuming to attempt it.

His first Proposition, easy as it may seem to be resolved, has an almost inextricable Perplexity couched in it;— *What is in general most dear to the People of England?*— Why that Passion is so fluctuating among you, that there is no Possibility of fixing on any one Object as the Standard:— *Glory* in the Days of the third *Edward*, and *Henry* the fifth, was the darling Idol of your Souls;— in those of that unfortunate Prince, *Charles* the first, *Enthusiasm* prevailed, add *Religion* was the only Cry;— *Liberty* and *Property* at the Revolution;— beating the *French* in *Queen Anne's* Time,— and at present it is— I really cannot say what,— but a great Noise is made,— a kind of a confused something but if some of you do lend me your Assistance in unfolding the Meaning it must be left to Conjecture:— All the Answer I am able to give to it myself is, that whichever of these Propensities happens to be the MODE, is, and ever will be, the most dear to you, while it continues to be the MODE: so that in effect the MODE is all that excites Love, Esteem, Reverence, and every Inclination which is comprehended in the Nomination of *dear*.

The second and third *Queries* require no more than a single Word for the Solution of each;— *What is the chief Object of your Detestation?* — POPERY². — *What is capable of giving you the greatest Pleasure?* — A PARADE. — As to the Proofs, my Friend requires that I neither deceive him, nor am deceived myself; let him reflect on the Millions cheerfully raised, and continued to be raised, ever since the Revolution³, for preventing that Doctrine from prevailing, and he will soon be convinced my Answer is just in this Article; and as for the other, let him but give himself the Trouble to look out of his Cage, and see the transported Numbers which run to be Spectators when any Shew is made to the Public, whether it be a Wedding or an Execution, it is the fame Thing, and he will entertain no Suspicious either of my Veracity or Penetration.

As to the fourth.— *What is your severest Mortification?*—I must reply, that the Motives are different, according to the Rank you hold in the World.—To a *Person of Quality*, nothing is more grating than to be obliged to yield Precedence to one of an inferior Birth;— to the middling *Gentry*, the want of Money to imitate those above them in every expensive Pleasure, is the most cruel Vexation;— and to the *Mob*, what can be a greater Disappointment than rainy Weather in the Holidays. —For the Testimony of this, I also appeal to *Poll's* own Observation.

The fifth, indeed, is not so easily answered; he wants to be informed— *What is the most effectual Method of getting into their Favour?* — Alas! I wish I knew it myself:— I have long laboured for this useful Part of Learning, but find *Algebra*, the *Ara-*

² Matters relating to the Pope or the papal system.

³ Henry VIII led the Protestant religious reformation in the UK, and therefore from the 1530s to the 1820s, Catholics were scrutiny to harsher laws that meant they could not purchase land, hold seats in Parliament or practice their religion freely.

bic, Syrian, or Chaldean Languages, much more easily attained: All these, by dint of Labour and a constant Application, you may, in Time, be tolerable Masters of; but to please the English, that is, the Body of the People, including all Degrees, from the Prince to the Peasant, is an Art which no Mortal could ever be possessed of.— Astronomy and the Power of Travelling, in Idea, through all the starry Regions, is infinitely less difficult,— in fine, it is among the Number of those Things which are out of Nature, and are not to be done.— If I leave it so, however, it may be likely to occasion another Query. —I may be asked if you are so churlish and ill-natured a sort of People, as nothing will oblige?— No, I should be sorry to have said anything that would give the least room for such a Supposition;— on the contrary, it is my Opinion, and that grounded on the most exact Observation, that you are but too easily pleased, and give into every Offer of Friendship or Good-Will with a readiness, which, it often happens you have very great Reason to repent: But this is not what I believe my Friend means; for I observe that he does not, in this Point, confine himself to Individuals, but would find out a way, if such a Thing could be, of being agreeable to the whole, that is, to all Sects, all Parties, all Ages, and all Degrees; which to arrive at, he must be able to turn himself into more Shapes than every Proteus⁴ is said to have. —To please all Men, he must be like all Men, and, as the Poet says,

*Completely various, and must seem to
be
Not one, but all Mankind's Epitome:
Stiff in Opinion, whether right or wrong,
Be everything by Starts, and nothing
long;*

⁴ A sea god in Greek mythology that was known for assuming many different forms.

*Be in the Course of half the changing
Moon,
A Fidler, Chymist, Statesman, and Buffoon,
By Turns, for Women, Painting, Rhyming,
Drinking,
Besides ten thousand Freaks that die in
thinking.
To praise and rail must be his darling
Themes,
And both, to shew his Judgement in Ex-
tremes.
Be over violent and over civil,
And all he speaks of, make a God or
Devil.⁵*

Yet must all this be well dissembled too; for to appear to any one Person with different Faces, will presently forfeit forever all the Favour he had before acquired: For to do you Justice, you are in general great Lovers of Sincerity, and are more often deceived yourselves, than guilty of deceiving others.— So, as I said before, there is no sure and certain Method of attaining it; —if ever it happens, *Chance*, not *Endeavour*, does the Work, and he is most likely to succeed who takes the least Pains for it; because, for the most Part, to discover a want of anything is the way to be denied.

The Answer I find myself obliged to give to his sixth Query, will doubtless give Offence to a very numerous Body;— *Who are the proudest People in this Kingdom?* — demands he: —To which I am under a Necessity of replying, especially as I am called upon to produce a Proof of what I say,— those who hold petty Places under the Govern-

⁵ This is an extract from *Portrait of Zimri* by John Dryden however the original poem has slightly different word choices and Haywood has omitted two of the lines.

ment. — I make use of the word *petty*, because those who are in high Offices, either are, or ought at least to be Persons of such a Birth and Education, as will not suffer them to exert their delegated Authority, in Acts of Insolence, Oppression, or even ill Manners: If my Correspondent is in doubt of the Truth of this Assertion, let him ask those who have Business to solicit at any of the public Offices, they will tell him the wearisome and lavish Attendance they are obliged to pay, the many Entreaties and Submissions to which they are reduced, and sometimes accompanied with Presents also, before they can get that done, which perhaps required no more than a single Moment to determine, and which has long since passed the Hands of their Superiors:— Let him have recourse for Satisfaction to those who are any way subjected to the Laws of the *Excise* or *Customs*, and they will soon inform him what Treatment they frequently receive from those little Justiciaries;— let him enquire of every Man who rents a Tenement, in what Manner even the *Tax-gatherers* demand the Tribute assessed on Housekeepers, and he will easily be convinced that the basest Metal, when stamped with the King's Name, assumes an Air of Grandeur which seems to exact Homage from all others.

And now I have mentioned the *Tax-gatherers*, I cannot forbear relating a pleasant Story I have heard averred for Truth, and indeed, find nothing so improbable in it, as to make a Doubt of it, as it was in the Reign of *Charles* the second, a Prince so remarkable for his Love of Wit and Humour. — One of these Persons happening, it seems, to demand the Impost he was commissioned to collect from a *Quaker*, with somewhat more Arrogance than the Friend thought becoming of his Office, he refused to pay it, on which the other threatened to make a Distress on his Goods.— *That thou mayest*

do, said the *Quaker*, *if thou thinkest fit; but if I must pay the Money, it shall be only to thy Master.* — Whether the Collector made good his Menace, or not, I cannot say; but the honest *Quaker*, who had no Design to defraud his Majesty, went the next Day into St. *James's-Park*, where he knew the King seldom failed of walking an Hour of two, and going up to him with ten Shillings in his Hand, which was the Sum had been demanded of him, *Friend Charles*, said he, *one of thy Men tells me I am indebted to thee this small Matter of Money, therefore I pray thee take it*, and with these Words presented it to him.— The King was a little surprized, and asked how he came to be his Creditor, which the *Quaker* having informed him of, that good natured Prince was highly pleased with the Jest, and with the most benignant Smile, took the Money out of his Hand, which when he had counted over, *It is very well*, said his Majesty, *but take back nine Shillings; for I am sure no more than one comes to my Share.*— So the *Quaker* had his Joke, got the better of the *Tax-gatherer*, and saved himself nine Shillings into the Bargain.— Some other Princes might perhaps not so well have relished a Whim of this Nature, but the *Quaker* knew whom he had to deal with, and it may be, was emboldened by what he might have heard of his Predecessor and Grandfather, King *James* the first; who, as he was passing through the Street, found his Coach impeded in its Passage by a String being tied cross the Way to the Posts on each Side, and on asking the meaning, a Tradesman came to the Coach, and told him that a large Sum of Money having been due to him a long Time, for which he had often, in vain, solicited his Majesty's Treasurer, and was like to break for the want of, he knew of no other way of getting it than that which the Law directed on Persons not Liable to an Arrest.—Very

true, Man— I cannot blame you, —said the King, laughing heartily, those who make Laws ought not to break them; and immediately ordered the Man should be paid the full of his Demands:- An Example worthy the Imitation of all Princes.

But this is a Digression, for which my impatient Correspondent may not thank me;— to make him some Atonement, therefore, I promise him it shall be the last: And now having given him, according to his Desire, all the Proofs in my Power concerning the foregoing *Queries*, I will endeavour to be equally convincing as to the seventh, which is,— *Of what are Mankind most tenacious?*— I will answer at once, it is their *Wit*, of which all Men think they have enough, and in which they can the least bear any Suspicion of a Deficiency.— The late Earl of *Rochester*⁶, who was allowed by every Body to know Human Nature better, or at least as well as any Man of his Time, gives a very beautiful Description of the innate Satisfaction which everyone feels at the Portion of Understanding he either possesses in reality, or imagines he is possessed of, as indeed, to have it or have it not, is the same Thing to him.— These are his Lordship's Words.

*Unequally th' impartial Hand of Heaven,
Has all but this one only Blessing given.
In Wit alone't has been munificent,
Of which so just a Share to each is sent,
That the most Avaricious are content:
For none e'er thought, the due Division's such,
His own too little, or his Friend's too much.*

Many, indeed, are tenacious of their *Wealth*,— some of their *Virtue*,— and most People of the Reputation of it;— but all, not one except-

ed, are tenacious of their *Understanding*:— Whoever presumes to call *that* in Question, gives the most unpardonable Affront:— Nothing can persuade a Man of *weak* Intellects, that he is not, in this Article, as much indebted to Nature, as any of his more sagacious, discreet, or discerning Neighbours, though perhaps he may acknowledge they may have greater Advantages of Education than himself. —And a Man of *real Sense*, whatever Humility he may affect, when not opposed, if once what he has said or wrote comes to be a Subject of Debate, and his Capacity is called in Question, will then exert himself in the Defence of it, with a Vehemence which shews how sensible he is of it, and the Contempt he has for those who have a contrary Opinion of any Testimonies he imagines he had given of it.

I know very well that no Body will confess this of themselves; everyone will tell you, that the Character of an *Opinionatre*, as the *French* term it, or as you say, a *Self-conceited* Person, is very justly despised; yet is this among the Number of some other Things, which all carry about them, without knowing they have it: — It is certain there is a Justice to be done to ourselves, as well as to others; but the Difficulty of throwing of all Prejudice and Partiality in so tender a Point, renders all, the *Wife* *Man* as well as the *Fool*, in a more or less degree, liable to overrate his Talent.

I come now to that roll of *Queries* which are divided into a second Class, which, though the sender of them seems less hasty for the Solution of, I think I may as well dispatch at this Time as another. — I shall, therefore, begin to give my Answers to them, to such of them at least, as will admit of an Answer, in the Order he has set them down: The first is, *Does the Policy of the French Court really*

⁶ John Willmot, and the following extract of poetry is authored by him.

merit the high Reputation it has in the World?

I may, perhaps, be severely censured for what I am going to say on this Head: The Policy of the *French Court* has always been such as has buoyed up the most sanguine Expectations of their Friends, and struck a kind of Terror into their Enemies, and is so universally allowed, that I could not keep myself from being a good deal surprized to find it brought into a *Query*;— yet, notwithstanding all has been urged in praise of it, I must confess it has always, but more especially of later Years, seemed to me a Policy only fatal to themselves and those who have depended on it.— They are, without all Possibility of Contradiction, a People extremely alert by Nature, of a quick and ready Genius, fertile in Invention, and never at a Loss for Expedients.— Those who are set at the Head of Affairs, are such as have been practiced in all those Artifices, Wiles, Evasions, and Turns which constitute what they call *Policy*; but, according to my Judgement, is no more than one half of the Mystery: They frequently contrive excellent Schemes, begin to carry them into Execution with the greatest Alacrity⁷; but you will find they seldom, if ever, pursue them to the Accomplishment: They are in Council as they are in *Battle*, vigorous at the first Onset, but soon repulsed;— and discover such an Irresolution and Inconstancy in prosecuting those Designs which they have been longest concerting, that I once heard a Gentleman, who knows the Nation very well, say, *that to trace the many different Schemes they have, for these last fourteen or fifteen Years, pretended to have had at Heart, one would imagine they studied to do and to undo.*— Others again will tell you, that, fluctuating as they may seem, they have always one fixed Point in View, and never lose Sight of, which is the

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A cheerful readiness.

enlarging their Dominions; that they have the Ambition, like the old *Romans*, to extend their Empire from East to West, render themselves Masters of the World, and whether they have the *best* or *worst* of it in the Field, they are always sure, by their Address in Negotiation, to be Gainers by the Conclusion of it. I am afraid, indeed, when we consider what *France* was two hundred Years ago, and what she now is, we shall find but too much Truth in this Assertion;— yet what brave or generous Nation would envy them any Advantages attained, not by true Policy, but *low Chicane*? Or who would wish to live under the Power of a Monarch, who, merely to swell his own Titles and the sake of a false Glory, sacrifices the Blood and Treasure of his People, in unnecessary, and frequently unjust Wars.

Upon the whole, therefore, I give it as my Opinion, and do not think I hazard my Reputation by doing so, that their Policy is far from deserving the many fine Things said of it, since every Addition to their Monarchy, costs them much more than it is worth; and nothing can be more obvious to everyone who reflects, than that if they continue to persevere in the same Measures they have lately taken, they may, indeed, have a great deal of Land, but neither Men nor Money to defend or maintain it.

The second *Query* is, — *Has the Empress of Germany, (for the Emperor, he says, is out of the Question) a Peace most at Heart, or pursuing the Advantages she has lately gained in Italy?*

To answer this, one must be able to look into the Heart of her Imperial Majesty; but, if we may judge of the Disposition of that Princess by her past Actions, the Event must be determined entirely by the Resolution those Powers shall take, who have hitherto supported and enabled her to make such

unexpected Acquisitions.

As to the third,—*If a Peace should take Place, what Recompense will Great Britain receive for all the Expense of Men and Money she has been at in carrying on the War?*— I should be glad I were Soothsayer or Conjuror enough to be able to give any satisfactory Reply to this Article, for the Sake of the Merchants, and the whole trading Part of the Nation who has suffered so much; but the *Parrot* never pretended to the Art of Divination, and as to my own little Conjectures about it, I must beg leave to keep them to myself, till I shall hear some Sanction given to them, either by the Event, or the Opinion of those who are better read in Futurity than anyone can expect me to be.

His fourth Demand is full as impossible to be gratified, and may be answered as the last. — *What, says he, will become of the Infant Don Philip, if the new King of Spain should consent to an Accommodation without consulting on a proper Settlement for him?*— Why really I see no other Remedy than Patience for him in such a Case, and quietly submitting to the Fate of *Stanislaus*, and other distressed Princes, who, to serve a Turn, have been fed up with the Hopes of imaginary Greatness, and were at last obliged to sing, *Fortune my Foe*.—But to be serious, is it not very probable the Royal *Ferdinand* will totally abandon him,—he will remember he is his Father's Son, and consequently regard him as a Brother.

What a strange whimsical *Query* is the fifth he has put to me! —*What Reason is assigned by the Ceremonials, that the British Minister Plenipotentiary, at the approaching Congress, should attend there the coming of the Person appointed by the Court of France? — It is not, sure, that the former is to appear most solicitous for a Peace, or that*

she is any way inferior to the other, whole Arms she has, for so many Years, quartered with her own, by Right of Conquest?

He seems here, methinks, to give a kind of Answer to himself, by way of a second *Query* on the same Subject; but if he meant it so, I pity his Ignorance very heartily,—since I am certain, whatever the Motive of the Earl of *Sandwich* being at *Breda* before Monsieur *de Peyseux* arrives, it is not that which he seems to be apprehend.—The Court of *Great-Britain*, I am positive, will never yield to that of *France*, nor has Reason, in any respect whatever, so to do; but, as I think a Curiosity in this Point extremely trifling, and beneath the Notice of a *Parrot* of any Understanding, I shall refer him, for the Gratification of it, to those who attend more to Shadows than Things of *real Substance*, of whom he will find but too many in the present Age.

The sixth, if I did not know him too much my Friend to be capable of it, I should imagine he inserted only to puzzle me;—*What Part the King of Prussia and the States General, at last, will take in the Affair?*— To which I can only answer, that I have never yet heard the least guess concerning the Designs of either of those Powers, and will presume to say no farther of my own Head, than that if they should yet continue to uniform to their past Conduct, they are not out of some kind of Suspense themselves, which way it will best suit their Interest to proceed, especially the latter.

Now for the seventh, which I heartily thank Heaven is the last, for his Time at least, and I hope for ever, unless he finds some others of a Nature more agreeable to my Talent:— He here desires me to inform him, — *Whether the Empress of Russia (What an Indecorum is he guilty of, not to say both the Russias?) It is well for him he is not in her Power;*

but I will rectify that Omission for him.)— *Whether the Empress of both the Russias gives herself any sincere Concern for the Tranquillity of Europe, any farther than her own Dominions extend; or whether the Compliments she makes are only mere Words of Course?*

You may see this poor *Parrot* has never been accustomed to Courts, by his making such a *Query*:— If he had ever had the Honour of conversing among the Great World, he would not need to be told that they are often most complaisant where they most hate.— The very Custom of wearing dismal Black, and appearing in all the Pomp of Sorrow for the Death of an Enemy, whom they inwardly rejoice is no more, might however, methinks, have made him save both himself and me the Trouble of this *Query*.— But I will make the best Excuse for him in my Power;— he might, it is very probable, imagine that the People of the frozen North had not the Softness in their Composition and Behaviour, that those born and bred up in warmer Climes are taught to practise, and is become a second Nature.— The Poet tells us, that

*Flattery is the very Food of Courts,
And every Sense is full of it: — There,
To live without it, is to live a Monster
Pointed and hissed at. —*

We are not, however, to suppose her Imperial Majesty has less Sincerity than her Neighbours; nor yet to think that, though she was not educated with the Hopes of that Dignity she now enjoys, she is ignorant of the Forms of appertaining to a Throne, or any of that *Parade* so much admired by the inferior World; — so that we are to take what she says, as said by a Monarch, and this, I think, is a

sufficient Answer to the Question.

And now I must tell him, with my usual Sincerity, that if I were not influenced by a Regard for all those who are Natives of my own Country, much more than I observe in most of those I have conversed with, since my Residence in these Parts at least, I should have rather chose to employ my Brain in finding out some plausible Pretence for refusing his Request, than in complying with it; — but, in my Opinion, this is a very laudable Partiality, and as such, I shall not repent of any Lengths to which it either has already, or may hereafter carry me.

I know not, however, how far I may stand excused to you, for what I have been doing in Complaisance to him; or whether you will so readily absolve me for taking up your Time in this Manner, instead of entertaining you with some more learned, or more edifying Discourse: For which Reason, I here give Warning to all the *Parrots* in the Kingdom, in what high Stations soever they may happen to be placed, not to expect, I shall henceforward communicate to the Public, anything that will not fully answer the Promise I made on my first Appearance, which was either to agreeably instruct, to improve, or to divert.

Indeed, whoever pretends to be a public Speaker or Writer, ought always to have, if no more, one of these three Points in View; for if he once loses Sight of them all entirely, how well soever he may express himself, not all his Rhetoric will atone; whatever he says will be trifling, insignificant, mere Words without Meaning,— and serve only to *amuse*, not *refine*, nor give any true Delight to the Mind.

Yet how many Poems, Dramatic Pieces, as well as others, I am sorry to say some Sermons too,

have no other Merit than barely an Affluence of well-chosen Words happily put together. — The Sound is apt to enchant the Ear, the Audience are well pleased, but go away no better than they came; — not but I pay to a good *Style* all the Deference it can expect, and am willing to give any Man who possesses it, that Applause Mr Cowley did to Sir *Philip Sidney*,

*His candid Style like a clear Stream
does slide,
And his bright Fancy all the way
Does like the Sun-shine on it play:
It does, like Thames, the best of Rivers,
glide;
Where the God does not rudely over-
turn,
But gently pour the chrystal Urn,
And with judicious Hands does the
whole Tor-rent guide.
'T has all the Beauties Nature can im-
part,
And all the comely Dress, without the
Help of Art.*

But then I would have his Elegance of Expression the cloathing of fine and nervous Sentiments, otherwise it is no more than Varnish, which, on a little Examination, will wear off and lose all its Charms, shewing the Meanness of the Metal it covered over.

Much less does it desrve any Praise, but rather Detestation, when it is made use of to convey Ideas to the Prejudice of Religion or Morality; such a pernicious Agreeableness of Expressions the admirable *Milton* describes in his Poem of *Paradise-Lost*.

—*His Tongue*
Dropt Manna, and could make the
worse appear
The better Reason, to perplex and dash
Matrest Councils: For his Thoughts
were low
To Vice industrious, but to noble Deeds
Timorous and slothful, yet he pleas'd
the Senses,
In her, beguil'd attentive Ears the Sound
Yet rung of his persuasive Words, im-
pregn'd
With Reason, to her seeming, and with
Truth.

Whatever, therefore, will any way contribute to inspire just and generous Sentiments, to set froth the Amiability of Virtue, and the Deformity of Vice, or will afford and innocent Delight, I shall be very thankful to have an Opportunity of imparting; but shall utterly reject the most elegant and polite Piece, if it discovers the least Tendency to a contrary View, without any Regard from what Hand it may come.

DEAR SIR.

Unless I were to give Ear to mere Speculations, which I am loth to do, what I have to acquaint you with this Week is so very trifling, that it is scarce worth putting into a Letter, much less the Name of a *Compendium*; and, if something more material does not speedily occur, shall be obliged to drop the Correspondence for want of Matter; there is, however, no great Danger of

that, because those Affairs which are in Agitation, must infallibly produce some extraordinary Events.

What is chiefly talked of, at present, by the Politicians, is the Confirmation of that glorious Victory gained by the *Austrians* on the Banks of the *Tidona*, and the unhappy Condition to which the *Genoese* have reduced themselves by their Compliance to *France*; about being forsaken by the *Spaniards*, and over-run by the *Austrians* and *Piedmontese*, they will soon, it is expected, accept of any Terms that shall be offered for the Safety of the Republic, and indeed they may be thankful if any are granted on their Solicitation.— A Report is spread, which, they say, came originally from *Paris*, that his *Catholic Majesty* had made a separate Peace with *England*, the House of Austria, and the King of *Sardinia*; this, I confess, would be great News if it were confirmed, but we must wait a little while for that.

The *Scotch Officers*, mentioned, in my last, had Copies of their Indictments on *Tuesday* last, but their Trials are suspended till the 13th of *October*, that they may have Time to prepare their Witnesses.

The gay Part of the World are very much taken up with a late Marriage, the *Eclat*⁸ of which seems to be a good deal owing to an Ode, wrote, as they tell me, by a Person of great Distinction: You may probably hear more of it in

my next, as well as some other Matters, which, as yet, I have no more than the Hints of, and am willing to be more explanatory before I trouble you with anything concerning them.

I am, SIR, Yours, &c.

End of No VI. of the PARROT.



THE PARROT No. VII.

AS I have always considered WoMAN as the last, and most finished Work of the omnipotent and all-wise Creator, I thought it my Duty, as well as found it in my Inclination, to pay a peculiar Homage to that Sex; and, induced by both these Motives, have felt an infinite Satisfaction, not only in contemplating, but also in blazoning whatever Perfections I found in them; and an equal Proportion of Sorrow on the Discovery of any Foible¹ which seemed to me a Disgrace to the Dignity of their Species, and those Charms with which Heaven has so bounteously adorned and distinguished them. —This sincere, and I may venture to say, *zealous*² Concern for their Welfare, has made me more than ordinarily inquisitive into the Dis-

¹ A small flaw or peculiarity in someone's personality.

² Demonstrating great energy or vigour in pursuit of a cause or goal.

positions, Manners, and Conduct of those I have been among; which being various, according to the different Climates in which they were born and educated, I thought it would not be disagreeable to you to be informed of those Observations that have occurred to me on the most strict and impartial Examination, in relation to a Sex which makes so great a Part of the Happiness or Misery of the other.

I shall begin with those of my own Country, as my first Acquaintance; though I would not have you think that has any way prejudiced me in their Favour, any more than the many Favours I have received from the Ladies of other Places; for it has ever been a Maxim³ with me, that whoever pretends to draw a Character, wither of Persons or Things, should entirely divest himself of all Manner of Passions, and stick only to the Matters of *Fact* he sees before him: For if he gives the least Latitude to his own particular *liking* or *disliking*, he will be in great Danger of injuring the Truth; or if, with Care, he should be able to avoid any gross Misrepresentations, he will however exaggerate, *magnify* the *Virtues*, or give worse Colours than they merit, to the Errors he describes. —In *Poetry*, indeed, every Figure will very well bear heightening; but History and Characteristics will allow of no such Liberty, — all ought to appear exactly what it is, without the least Gloss or Shadowing.

This, though somewhat digressive from my Purpose, I was led into by the Complaints I am continually hearing, of the little Dependence there is on History, whether Ancient or Modern; but as I intend to entertain you some other Time more fully with my Sentiments on that Subject, I shall quit it at present, and return to the Ladies.

³ A guideline for morality or reason, particularly when it takes the shape of a proverb.

Every one knows the *Indians* are just as they come out of the Hands of Nature, wild and untaught; yet there is a native Simplicity in such of them, as have not been corrupted by the Vices of the many different Foreigners who come among them, which is becoming enough; and it is a great Pity that this very artless Innocence is often the Means of their falling into the Snares laid for them by those who take a kind of Pride in their undoing, without being instigated there to by any other Motive whatsoever; —But this, if the Men would be prevailed upon to consider, is a double Cruelty; because it generally happens that if one of these poor Creatures is once seduced from her Virtue, she becomes utterly abandoned to all Sense of Shame for ever after, and is impossible to be reclaimed. —I was myself a Witness of an Instance of this, which I think remarkable enough to deserve repeating.

A Young Maid, to escape the brutal Violence a Sailor was about to treat her with, ran with all her Force to the Side of a great River, at some Distance from them, and was going to plunge herself into it, having no other visible Means of preserving her Chastity⁴, when Providence⁵, in the very Instant, conducted an *English* Merchant that way: —He had beheld the Behaviour of the Sailor, and the vigorous Resistance she had made while he was yet far off, and hastening to her Relief with all the Speed he could, arrived Time enough to prevent her from perpetrating that intended Act of Desperation. —The Terror she had been in; having not yet quite fortook her Heart, joined with the present Rush of Joy at being delivered from so imminent a Danger, spread a most pleasing Confusion over

4 The act of abstaining from all extramarital, or especially all, sexual activity.

5 God's direction or protection.

all her Face: —She threw herself at the Feet of her Protector, and knew not how to express sufficiently the Gratitude she felt for what he had done. —The Modesty and Humility of her Carriage won very much on this Gentleman, insomuch that after having severely chid⁶ the Sailor for his base Attempt, he conducted her safe Home, and agreed with her Parents for her as a Servant. — She had not been long in his Family before her Zeal and Care to please, and to do more than even her Duty required, or was expected from her, made him prefer her to be his Housekeeper, and to give her the Command over all his other Slaves: In this Station also she behaved with her former Humility and Integrity, managed all his Affairs so well, gave him so good an Account of every Thing, and was, in all respects, so frugal⁷, and so just towards him, that he used frequently to say to his Acquaintance, he looked upon the Minute of his meeting with her, as one of the most fortunate of his whole Life. — His Affairs, soon after, obliging him to leave *Batavia*⁸, her Request conforming with his own Inclinations, he brought her with him into *Europe*, where, for a Time, she behaved as formerly; but, at last, happening unfortunately to be beguiled⁹ by one of her Fellow-Servants, she immediately became the perfect reverse of what she had been: —That Chastity she once had set so high a Value upon, as to choose Death rather than be deprived of, was now prostituted, not only to him who had first betrayed her, but to as many as attempted it: — That modest Timidity, which had served to recommend her to the Favour of her Master, was now perverted into a vain, pert, and arrogant Air, both in Words and Actions: —That Fidelity, for which she

6 To express outward displeasure or outrage.

7 Economically conscious.

8 The former name of Jakarta, when it was a colony of the Netherlands.

9 The act of charming someone with the intention of deceiving them.

had been so much valued, was now turned to Thievishness:—She pilfered all she could, and grew, by degrees, so audacious, that when detected in any flagrant¹⁰ Act of Deception, she showed not the least Signs of Contrition¹¹, but behaved in so saucy and impudent a Fashion, that her Master, finding there was no Possibility of keeping her with any Safety to himself, and unwilling she should be made a public Example of Justice, was obliged to send her away to the *Indies* by the first Ship that sailed.

I had not troubled you with this little Narrative, but to show how very necessary good Education is; for though an innate Modesty may render a Woman Proof against all Temptations for a long Time, (it is possible for Life,) yet without she is able to give a Reason for what she does, and maintains her Virtue from Principle, as well as Inclination, all the Dependence on her is but precarious; and if she once falls, she falls forever, incapable for want of the Power of comparing her past with her present State, ever to return into the Paths of Honour.

But now to Characters more amiable and interesting. —Nature has cast the *Spanish* Ladies in so exact a Mould, that through the wide Extent of that Monarchy, you shall rarely meet with one that is any way deformed or distorted, unless by some extraordinary Accident; nor are their faces less worthy Admiration than their Shapes: They have also a great deal of Wit and Spirit, but whether it is in their Composition, or occasioned by their Manner of Education, I will not pretend to say; but have good Reason to believe it is owing to a Mixture of both, that they are too frequently apt to put these Qualifications to a very bad Use, degenerating into a kind of low cunning, which is, for the

10 Very apparent or prominent.

11 The feeling of regret and repentance.

most part, fatal to themselves and Families. — So delighted they are, generally speaking, with little Tricks and Evasions, that they will descend almost to any thing, grant almost any thing, merely for the dear Opportunity of deceiving and circumventing those who have the Care for them. —I have, notwithstanding, so much Charity for them, as to believe, were they laid under less Restrictions, they would act with greater Reserve and Prudence;¹² but there is a certain Obstinacy¹³ in their Tempers, which renders them averse to any thing which is enjoined, —I have seen a young Lady swoon, die away, at being obliged to give her Hand to a Man, whom. Perhaps, had she been at her own Liberty, would have been her Choice; —and I have known both Wives and Virgins run the greatest Lengths, not only to the Hazard of their Reputation, but their Lives also, if discovered, for the sake of Men, who, had they not been forbid to converse with, might have been wholly indifferent to them. —The severe Restraint, therefore, that is put upon the Females, both here and in *Portugal*, I am ready to think, is the Occasion that so many Fathers and Husbands fall under the Misfortune they dread; for though without it, in these as well as other Nations, there would doubtless be a great Number who would endeavour to choose for themselves, yet I cannot believe but such Examples would be less common; so that whatever Faults they are guilty of in this kind, ought, methinks, in a great measure to be imputed to the Men.

The Women of *Italy* labour under little less Hardships, on account of Liberty, than those in *Spain*, and are at least equally amorous by their Constitutions; but then they have a much greater Share of Pride in the Choice of those they make

12 Cautiousness

13 Stubbornness

their Favourites: —You rarely find any of them will sin beneath their Dignity; and as the Opportunities Men have of addressing them are very scarce, and the Advances must be made first by the Women, the Fan or Glove is never dropped but to a Person equal, if not superior to themselves in Condition. —They have, besides, more policy in conducting their Intrigues, than, perhaps, any Nation in the World; and indeed they have need of it, to combat against the Penetration of an *Italian* Husband. —It must be confessed, that there is a very conspicuous Greatness of Soul in most of them; and if they had but half that Regard for Virtue that they have for the Reputation of it, or were their Sincerity equal to their Beauty or their Wit, they would be valuable Women, and justly bear the Praise from all other Nations; but they are inconstant and deceitful by Nature: The former of these Propensities¹⁴ they will not give themselves the Pains to correct, and the latter they take Care to improve by Art.

The *German* Ladies, as they have less Softness in their Constitutions, consequently are less liable to fall into those Errors so much complained of in the *Spanish* and *Italians*; but then, they are not free from others, equally grievous to those obliged to bear with them, —Proud of a Chastity, for which, without being censorious¹⁵, one may say, they are more indebted to *Temperament* than *Principle*, they place all Merit in that one Virtue, and take little Care to acquire any other: —A heavy dull Stupidity reigns for the most part in all their Words and Actions, and seldom are they acquainted with the Joys which flow from a Warmth, wither in Love or Friendship, therefore cannot bestow them: —And this Coldness deprives their Conversation of the greatest Part of its Charms, renders them sul-

14 An inherent inclination or desire to act in a specific manner.

15 Harshly critical and reproachable.

len and morose, insensible of Obligations done to themselves, and equally incapable of conferring them on others.

The Women of *Russia* have yet less Tenderness in their Nature, but a much greater Share of Spirit, so much, indeed, that it arrives to a certain Degree of Fierceness, which is altogether unbecoming in their Sex, —Their Air, their Mien, their Walk, their Eating, and particularly their Drinking, has somewhat in it too masculine to be agreeable; and those of them who pass for the most lovely, and are the best bred, cannot avoid behaving with a Robustness, which, among politer Nations, would be looked upon as Rudeness. —They are easily provoked to Anger, and not without great Difficulty appeased' —the softer Passions have small Dominion over them' —rarely they love or grieve to an Excels; —yet, to do them Justice, there is a Generosity in their Dispositions, and if their present or some future Empress shall ever think it worth her while to take the same Pains with the *Ladies*, as *Peter* the Great¹⁶ did with the *Men*, to wear off that Barbarism which obscures their other good Qualities, their Character in general would afford little room for Cavil.¹⁷

What I have said of the *Russians*, includes also those of *Denmark*, *Norway* and *Sweden*, who partake of the same Nature, except in their Love of strong Liquors and practise much of the same Manners in other Things, though in a less Degree.

The *Dutch* Women are frugal, chaste, and perhaps more industrious¹⁸ than those of all the Nations I have yet mentioned put together; they are

16 Tsar of Russia from 1682 to 1725, he was notably the first Emperor of Russia and decreed men to modify their facial hair to the standard of Western characteristics.

17 To voice insignificant and pointless objections.

18 Conscientious and productive.

also the cleanest in their Houses and Persons, and for the most part very sincere; but then their plain Dealing is apt to exceed all the Bounds of Decency and Decorum, and those which even accounted most polite, both say and do Things, in meer Friendship and Good-Will, which, in any other Nation, would be resented as the most gross Affronts.

The Behaviour and Disposition of the *French Ladies* is too well known to stand in need of any Description; yet to omit saying any thing of those Ornaments of a People, who make so great a Figure in *Europe*, would, perhaps, be more severely resented by them, than even exposing much worse Failings than I ever knew them guilty of would be, —Great Things might doubtless be said in their Commendation; but it is not my Business, at present, to make Encomiums¹⁹ on the Perfections, but point out those Mistakes which are the Blemishes of the Fair-Sex.

As to their Persons, if we go to regularity of Features, it must be owned that they are less beautiful than the *Italian* or *Spanish*, yet they are more charming than either; —they have a certain *Je ne scay quoy*,²⁰ as they themselves term it, which is perfectly enchanting; and a Wit so ready and sparkling, illustrated with and Aptitude of Expression, and graceful Delivery, as cannot fail of gaining, through the Ears, a speedy entrance to the Heart: —They have also all that Softness which is the most amiable and peculiar Characteristic of Womanhood; yet free from those guilty Emotions which agitate the Minds of the more warm: —They look all Love, all Gentleness, and sweet Compliance; but should any one presume to take Advantage of their imagined Easiness of Nature, they know how

19 A formal declaration of praise.

20 French phrase meaning 'I don't know what': a pleasing attribute that is difficult to describe.

to assume an Awe sufficient to dash the most bold Pretender, and make him repent and be ashamed of his having mistaken their Courtesy for the Effect of a vicious Propensity. —But notwithstanding all these Perfections, which even Envy must allow, they give into a Spirit of Gallantry,²¹ which, were I Man and a Husband; I could by no Means allow of, much less be pleased with: — It is, indeed, the Custom of the Country; yet it is such a Custom, as whenever I have reflected on, it amazed me should ever be encouraged by so wise and politic a People. — We hear, it is true, of but few eloping Wives in *France*, yet I am certain there would be fewer still, were it not for the unbounded Liberty the Women there enjoy: —Restraint, I confess, provokes a generous Mind to Actions which it would not otherwise be guilty of; but too great a Latitude may, on the other hand, encourage Temptations which had better be avoided. —The Frailty of Human Nature is allowed, even by those most tenacious of their Understanding; and as there are few Men who can resist the Force of Youth and Beauty, so it is not all Women that are proof against the Solicitations of a lover, whose Addresses it is the Mode of the Country to encourage, and whose Person is not disagreeable to her, —As they have, therefore, a great Share of solid Reason, it were to be wished they would exert it in breaking through a Custom which is attended with many Inconveniencies; but this is scarce to be hoped, because their natural Vivacity²² will not permit them to deny themselves a Satisfaction for which they have so good a Sanction.

There is a Vanity in most People of Spirit, which makes them fond of displaying whatever Perfections they are possessed of; —it cannot,

21 Bravery when faced with peril.

22 The trait of being vibrant and dynamic, especially in women.

therefore, be wondered at, that the *French Ladies*, who are in general Mistresses of a very large Share of ready Wit, should be willing to continue a Custom of Behaviour which abounds with so many Opportunities of showing it. —The High-bred of them have, indeed, a Delicacy which gives an Infinity of Sweetness to every thing they say and do, and their most gay Expressions never exceed the Bounds of Modesty; but those who have less Advantages from Education frequently launch out with a Freedom Strangers are apt to censure, and impute to a certain Libertinism²³ of Inclination, which, however, they are as a seldom guilty of in reality as those of any Country.

I Come now to the *English*, who, without any Adulation, have the fewest Defects, either in Person or Behaviour, of any I have been among: There is a happy Medium in their Constitution, which, like the Climate, renders them neither too warm nor cold; and if, like that too, they are sometimes more variable than could be wished in a complete Character, it is greatly owing to the ill Management of those who have the Care of them, when young, —Those of Condition are, for the most part, bred up to think they merit more Homage than can be paid them, and that Vanity which is inherent to the Sex, and which ought in Prudence to be checked as much as possible, is, by their Parents, Governors, and Tutors, and afterwards by those who make their Addresses to them, so flattered and encouraged, that when they come to be married, they are apt to expect the same: —This rarely happens; the Man has lavished all the fine Things he had to say beforehand, and, though he may be a very good *Husband*, does not think himself obliged to act altogether up to the *Lover*. —The admired, long-toasted *Belle* looks on this falling off from his former

23 A self-indulgent lifestyle.

Obsequiousness²⁴, as an Indignity to her Charms, becomes Pettish and uneasy at it, reproaches him in her Heart for his want of Taste; —what Love so ever she before had for him, degenerates into Indifference, —too often into Contempt; —she sly his Conversation, and, greedy of those Flatteries to which she has been accustomed, vouchsafes to receive them from the first who lies in wait for an Opportunity to offer them, —Every one knows that she who loves the Praise, is in very great Danger of loving the Mouth which feeds her with it; —and then, —but let the Number of Wives who, of late, have separated from their Husbands, answer for the Consequence.

It is that Vanity which arises from a too great Consciousness of Merit, that, for the most part, occasions any Error in the Conduct of an *English Woman*, who, either by her Quality, Beauty, Wit, or Fortune, is ranged among the Number of those we call in High Life, —This unhappy Propensity of endeavouring to attract universal Admiration, it is that deprives them of the just Pretension, they otherwise would have to it, and renders them too indolent in acquiring such Qualifications as are truly deserving that Regard they are so ambitious of: —They content themselves with receiving Praises, without, perhaps, even a Wish that all the fine Things said to them were true, or even considering whether they are so or not. —To be the Envy of her own Sex, and the Desire of the other, is the chief, I am sorry to say, the sole Aim of many a fine Lady; and though Examples attending such a Disposition are but too frequent, those who are even on the Brink of the same Precipice, will not take Warning by the Fate of others, but run blindly on, till down at once they plunge into the irretrievable Abyss of Shame and Sorrow, —I have often heard some Lines repeat-

24 Too quick to give compliments or follow orders.

ed from a Tragedy wrote by a late Poet Laureat²⁵, and ought to be remembered by every Woman who would preserve her Reputation, without which she can have little Expectation of preserving the Esteem she is so desirous of, —His Words are these, in the Character of *Jane Shore*²⁶, that celebrated Mistress of *Edward* the fourth.

—*Man, the lawless* Libertine, may rove
Free and unquestion'd through the
Wilds of Love;
But if weak Women chance to go
astray,
It Strongly charm'd she leave the thorny
Way,
And in the softer Paths of Pleasure*
stray,
Ruin ensues, Reproach and endless
Shame;
And one false Step entirely damns her
Fame:
In vain, with Tears, the Loss she may de-
plore,
In vain look back to what she was be-
fore,
She sets, like Stars that fall, to rife no
more!*

Virtuous both by Nature and Principle, the Ladies of this Country are not to be conquered by fair and open Means; but they may be betrayed by such sinister ones, as Men who know them may easily put in Practice, yet which would be wholly ineffectual, if it were not for that Vanity which is the Bar of all the useful and worthy Accomplishment,

²⁵ An honoured poet appointed to devise poetry by an English sovereign.

²⁶ A mistress of King Edward IV, who had to endure public penance after being accused of conspiracy

the innate Traitor, which gives up the Heart without seeming to do so, and is the sure Bane of Honour, Happiness, and every Thing which should be dear to Womankind, —I dare venture to affirm, from the Observations I have made, that meer *Love*, as much as that *Passion* is condemned, never did a thousandth Part of the Mischief to the Sex that *Vanity* has done; and it is not so much the liking of the Person of any Man, as the too great liking of her own, that every Woman should make it her Care to guard against.

Who does not know *Amarantha*, descended from a Family, on the Mother's Side at least, to which Beauty is no less hereditary than their illustrious Titles, —*Amarantha*, in whom all the Perfections, not only of her own distinguished Race, but also of her whole Sex, seemed to be united; all know and confess the Superiority of her Charms, — few are ignorant in what Manner they have been disposed: —But let us take a little Survey of her Conduct, from sixteen to forty Years of Age, which may be very well allowed her, and it will easily appear from what Motive those many Incidents in her Life have happened, which have so much engrossed the Conversation of the Town.

At the former of those Periods, or very near it, she was married; more, it must be confessed, to the Approbation²⁷ of her Parents than her own Choice. —She had, however, no Aversion to her illustrious Consort, and they lived very well together, at least for the first Years of their Marriage, but she afterwards growing more sensible of the Power of her Beauty, by the Sighs and Languishments²⁸ she found it occasioned, gave into a Spirit of Gallantry, which, as I was informed by a *Parrot* who lived in the Family, cost her Lord many a bitter Pang: —She

²⁷ Commendation.

²⁸ Loss of strength.

was sensible of it herself, but the disquiet she gave him, was so far from being any Trouble to her, that she rather triumphed in it; and I have been told, that when some of their common Friends took the Liberty of remonstrating to her, that it was the Duty of a Wife to endeavour to make her Husband's Life as happy possible, she would only burst into a loud Laughter, and reply, *that if a Man of indifferent Parts would needs marry a fine Woman, he ought to be made sensible of her Value, by some little Anxieties on her Account.*

To do justice to her Character, notwithstanding the Libertines she indulged herself in taking, and the Construction some ill-natured People have put upon them, I never could find, on the strictest Enquiry, that she gave into any criminal Correspondence, or was particularly attached to any one Person, though it was too obvious not to be owned that she permitted the Addresses of a great Number.

The Death of her Lord leaving her sole Mistress of herself, and at full Liberty to pursue her Inclinations without Scandal, her House became the Rendezvous of all the Young and Gay, especially of the other Sex: —All those who had before endeavoured to ingratiate themselves, on finding her in a Condition to reward their Passion, prosecuted it with double Vigour; and many, whose Timidity, till then, had smothered their Desires, perceiving now no Obstacle, gained Courage to make their amorous Declarations, —For a Time all were equally encouraged, but as none had Reason to despair from her Behaviour to them, so none could flatter himself with an assured Hope of obtaining her, till the Merit of *Honorius* rose too conspicuous to admit of Rivalship: —She knew and confessed that he alone was worthy of her, and dismissed that

Crowd of Adorers, which she now testified she had suffered only to fill the Number of her Train, —*Honorius*²⁹, doubtless, was the first who had the Power to make any real Impression on her Heart; and as he had all the Qualifications necessary to justify her Choice, she had the Congratulations of her Friends upon it: —A Day was assigned for their Marriage, and the usual Preparations for their Marriage, and the usual Preparations for that Solemnity were making, when an unhappy and unlooked-for Accident shifted the gay Scene of approaching Bliss, into a terrible reverse.

Honorious had been entrusted with a Secret of State, which obliged him to go very often to the House of a Person who had a very beautiful Female Relation lived with him, —*Illyonus*, one of the most busy and most watchful Observers that ever frequented a Court, and a bitter Enemy to this Nobleman, on Account of his Virtue and Integrity, presently found that he was more in Favour than he had been for several Years, and also that he was now employed in carrying on something, which with all his Penetration, he had not Skill to fathom. —As he had; on all Occasions, endeavoured to misrepresent him to the Royal Ear, he began to tremble, left the Artifices he made use of for that Purpose, should be detected, and resolved to make one more Push for his Removal, —which he unhappily effected by his Means. —He went to *Amarantha*, and after having artfully prepared her for his Purpose, by the most profuse Encomiums on her Beauty, told her, nothing could be so great an Affliction to him, as to see such Charms bestowed on a Person who seemed insensible of their Value; —that he wished *Honorius* might have all the Esteem he pretended, but begged for her own Sake, she would make some Enquiry into his conduct before

29

Roman Emperor from 393 to 423.

she gave herself entirely to him. —The deceived *Amarantha* immediately took Fire at these Insinuations, and conjured him to explain himself, and let her know what he had discovered to her Prejudice: —This was what he wanted, though he affected to be sorry to see her so much alarmed, and after a little pause, *Madam*, said he, *I may be deceived in my Conjectures³⁰; but it is in your own Power, more than in mine, to be convinced whether I am so or not, —Please to ask Honorius, what Affair, except a Passion for Irene, carries him every Day, sometimes twice in the four and twenty Hours, to the House of Lucillo. —If he does not readily align some other Motive than what I have mentioned, I leave yourself to judge of his Sincerity.*

I shall not go about to describe the jealous Rage this cruel Insinuation excited in the Bosom of *Amarantha*, and only say that *Illyonus* had no sooner left her, than she sent in all haste for *Honorius*, reproached him in the severest Terms Words could form, and insisted on his never seeing *Irene* more, or telling on what Account he had, of late, so frequently visited her, —The Surprise he was in at this unexpected Demand, was such as prevented him from giving any ready Answer; and this Hesitation confirming her in the belief that all she had been told was true, she called him perjured and ungrateful, and vowed, from that Moment, to break off all Conversation. —When he assured her, as he might do with all the Sincerity imaginable, that he never, in his whole Life, had visited *Irene*, nor entertained the least Thought of that Lady to the Prejudice of that Affection he had given elsewhere, she grew beyond all Patience at the supposed Evasion, and asked what other Business that his Love for the Kinswoman, made him pass half his Days at the House of *Lucillo*, —It was in vain that

Honorius endeavoured to pacify her, by protesting in the most solemn Manner, that there was a Business he had to negotiate with that Person, and that it was of a Nature very remote from Love; —all he could say was ineffectual, unless he convinced her it was so, by letting her know the whole of the Affair.

He was now in the utmost Dilemma, he found he must either betray the Trust reposed in him, or lose forever what was dearer to him than his Life; —severe was the Struggle between *Love* and *Duty*, in a Breast so truly devoted to both: —At length, however, the former got the better, and the Charms of *Amarantha* triumphed over the Fidelity he owed his Prince: —He unravelled to her the whole of the Mystery, and by doing so, made her entirely easy; she returned this Proof of his assion with renewed Endearments, accompanied with a thousand Promises never to drop the least Hint of what he had revealed.

The very next Morning *Illyonus*, impatient to know the Success of his Plot, came to visit her, and not doubting, by the Composure he saw in her Countenance, but that she had prevailed, began to enter again on some Discourse concerning *Irene*: —At first she only smiled, and permitted him to go on without Interruption, but on his mentioning something of that Lady's Perfections, her Pride began to be touched; —she could not bear he should imagine, even for a Moment, that any Woman in the World had Power to supplant her in the Affections of the Man she loved, and this fatal Vanity rendering her utterly forgetful of the Assurance, she had given *Honorius*, or the Ruin she might bring upon him, cryed, *No, Illyonus, I am perfectly satisfied as to the Fidelity of Honorius, and I believe you will not wonder I am so, when you*

bear what Affair he is transacting, and then proceeded to repeat to him all which that too tender Lover had entrusted to her.

The Statesman exulted³¹ at having thus accomplished his End, and went directly to complete the undoing of the Men he hated: —The consequence is, alas, too well known; —*Honorius* received a Reprimand, which the Greatness of his Spirit could ill support, and his Disgrace, joined with the bitter Reflection that he owed it to the Weakness of the Woman he adored, threw him into a Despair, that would not suffer him to live. —Before he put in Execution that terrible Resolution which deprived his Country of one of its greatest Ornaments, he wrote a Letter to *Amarantha*, wherein he gently upbraided the Levity³² of her Nature, and took his everlasting Leave.

The Distraction she was in, was such as might be expected from the sad Occasion; but it soon wore off, and in the Multiplicity of those Addresses, which on the Death of *Honorius* were renewed, forgot both him, and how much she had been guilty of towards him. —Could any thing have been potent enough to conquer that invincible Vanity which had caused the Destruction of so worthy a Person, an Accident which happened to herself some few Years after, would have prevailed. —Among the Number of her Admirers was Count *Egario*, and though the Encouragement he received was no more than what he plainly saw she vouchsafed to others, yet, whether his Temper was less able to brook Delays, or that he imagined he could do nothing she would resent beyond Forgiveness, is uncertain; but, upon finding himself alone with her one Evening, and she in a perfect good Humour, he had the Boldness to lock the Door of the Room

31 To express triumph.

32 An injection of humour into a serious matter.

where they were sitting, and attempt the taking of Liberties which she was obliged to ring her Bell for her Servants in order to prevent.

What Effect the agreeable Person and Conversation of *Coriolo* had on her Inclinations, I will not pretend to say; but the Favours she bestowed on him in *public*, were such as gave some People room to suggest he received yet greater in *private*. —*Carlos*, *Supinus*, and a Roll too tedious to mention, had also a Freedom of Access to her; which made the World, and perhaps themselves, by Turns, believe that each would be the happy Man who should bear her from all his Rivals in Triumph to the Altar. —For a long Series of Years, this has been the Conduct she has pursued, so that it may be said she has been perfectly consistent with herself, and constant to Inconstancy.

Break through it at last, she has, however, and has yielded to give her Hand to *Valerius*, whether from a Conviction of the Errors of her past Behaviour, or that she continues to think Marriage no Restraint from innocent Gallantry, Time only can determine. —The Nuptials³³ have occasioned a good deal of Surprise, not so much on the Account of the Bridegroom, who is undoubtedly a Gentleman of Family and Fortune, as that she could, out of so great a Number, all equally encouraged, be able to fix on any one.

In the Character of *Amarantha*, too many are included, and may see themselves as in a Glass: As Vanity, therefore, is the general and most distinguished Foible of the *British Fair*, I would sain³⁴ persuade them to correct it in some Measure, and be as Nature ordained them, all angelic.

33 A wedding.

34 To make the sign of the cross in order to guard against sin and evil, or to bless.

SIR,

I have, at present only Time to acquaint you, that the *Sardinian*³⁵ Hero, as also the Generals *Brown*, *Botta*, and *Nadasti*, are doing Wonders, and in *Italy* Fortune seems wholly on the *Austrian* Side; if that can be called Fortune which is accomplished by *Piedmontese*³⁶ Bravery and *British* Gold. —Ever since the Action at *Tortona*³⁷ they have been pursuing the Enemy and harassing them in their Retreat; —*Novi* and *Saravalla*, with all its Garrison, Ammunition, &c. has been abandoned to them; and they are believed to be, by this Time, in Possession of *Genoa*³⁸. —See the Effects of *French* Policy as well as *French* Faith!

I am, SIR, Yours, &c.

End of No VII. of the PARROT.



THE
PARROT
No. VIII.

TO praise or to condemn has ever been the chief Subjects on which the greatest Part of the Wits in all Ages have been employed; and it is hard to say which of these two is of the most general Service to the Morals and Behaviour of Mankind: —As nothing is a more lively Encouragement to *noble* and *virtuous* Actions, than the Thoughts of having them perpetuated by some eminent Pen, nor more deters People from being guilty of such as are *mean* and *wicked*, than the Odium¹ they will cast on themselves, and devolve on their Posterity, by being transmitted to after Times in the Colours they deserve. —But then I must premise, whatever is said, on either of these Heads, should be not only *strictly*, but also *undeniably* just. —To make *Vice* seem pompous, or rob *Virtue* of any Part of its Beauty, is, either way, a

35 Inhabitant of the Western Mediterranean Island, Sardinia.
36 Inhabitants of Piedmont, a region of Northwest Italy.
37 Comune of Piedmont.
38 City in Italy.

¹ Contempt incurred by the despicable actions of a person.

Profanation, which I know of nothing can exceed, as it is utterly reversing *Good* and *Evil*, giving to *Hell* and the Attributes of *Heaven* on the *one* Side, and obscuring *Heaven* with the Gloominess of *Hell* on the *other*.

It is Pity, methinks, that the Wisdom of the Legislature has not yet thought fit to take so material a Point into Consideration, and inflict some Pains and Penalties on those who are guilty of lavishing undeserved Encomiums, as well as it has done on such who have been too free in their Censures. — If the Gentlemen of the long Robe were to prefer Bills of Indictment against the *Panegyrist*² of this Age, as often as they do against *Libellers*,³ how vast would be their Profits? At least till the Writers of them found themselves obliged to desist, by having been made to pay as dear for the *one*, as they have done for the *other*.

I Believe Nobody will deny but that it would be well if some Method could be contrived to put a stop to such absurd and preposterous Eulogies as have, of late Years, issued from the Press; and as none has hitherto been found out, I will venture to propose one myself, which I am pretty confident would effectually do the Business; which is this. — As the Authors of fulsom⁴ and licentious⁵ Praises are, for the most part, I believe I may say *always*, instigated thereto by meer venal⁶ Views I would have every Person, to whom they are addressed, instead of rewarding, order them to be turned out of Doors, after having thrown the inscribed Pieces into the Fire before their Faces.

2 A biased piece of writing which serves to praise and ignores any bad attributes.

3 A person who publishes written defamation.

4 Abundant.

5 Sexually unrestrained.

6 Susceptible to bribery.

Though I have all imaginable Regard for the Character and Memory of King *Charles* the Second, yet I cannot forbear thinking his *Majesty* guilty of a faulty Good Nature in his Treatment of Mr. *Waller*. That Gentleman was, indeed, a very great Scholar and Poet, and the Praises he bestowed were always accompanied with the utmost Delicacy; but he was too much a Follower of Fortune, — a Timeserver.

After that remarkable and never to be forgotten Period of Time, in which the most unfortunate of Kings fell Sacrifice to the Fury of a bigoted and incensed People, and he had some Reason to imagine the Royal Family of the *Stuarts*⁷ was for ever extirpated from these Kingdoms, how did he prostitute his Pen to make a Servile Court to the Protector, as he was called! — What lavish Encomiums did he bestow on that Monster of Mankind! — How did he deck Tyranny, Murder, and Usurpation, with the Trophies of Mercy, Justice, and Benevolence! Yet when the truly Royal *Charles* returned to take Possession of his own, and bless, even in spite of their own Wishes, a long blinded, and mistaken People, how immediately did the Poet change his Note, and congratulate the happy Event!

He got himself and a fine Poem, he had wrote on the Occasion, presented to the King soon after the Restoration, — Many were in the Drawing-Room when it was delivered and doubtless were a good deal impatient to see how it would be received, as they knew his Majesty was not unacquainted with the Meanness of this Man's Soul, and the Pained he had taken to ingratiate himself, not only with *Cromwell*,⁸ but, after his Death, with his Son Richard also. Some there were who expected he would have been forbid the Court, and the Per-

7 An English dynasty that reigned from 1603 to 1714.

8 A prominent English statesman.

son who had introduced him, received a severe Reprimand; but those who thought in this Manner, did not well know the Humour of that Prince. —He read the Verses to himself, and when he had finished, contented himself with making the Author sensible, that as he was incapable of *resenting Affronts*, with Severity, he was likewise so of being *deceived by Flatteries*; and, looking on Mr. Waller with a Smile, which, notwithstanding, had nothing in it of Contempt, *These Limes*, said he, *are extremely good; but I think several of those you wrote on the Protector were yet better.* —It must be confessed that here Mr. Waller discovered a Presence of Mind, equal to his other great Talents; for, instead of being abashed any way, or going about to deny what he had done, he replayed, with a low Bow, —*O, may it please your Majesty, we Poets always write better on Fiction than on Truth.*

This Answer, and the Manner in which it was, entirely dissipated all the Remains of Discontent the King might have conceived against him for his former Behaviour, and whatever he wrote afterward, was very well received by him, —*Wit* being, to that Prince, a sufficient Sanction for almost any Offence which was committed only to himself, as might easily be seen by the Libertines taken by the Earl of *Rochester*⁹ and several others.

I Am always sorry when I see Poetry, which I look upon to be the noblest Product of Wit and Imagination, prostituted to base Purposes. —Nothing is certainly more estimable, when it records great and magnanimous Actions, whether of Princes or private Persons; but when it is made use of to pervert Truth, to palliate Vice, or to depreciate Virtue, it becomes justly contemptible.

Panegyric, therefore, and *Satire* are equally

commendable and useful in each of their different Modes, only according to their Impartiality; for it there appears the least Tendency on either to particular Favour or particular Prejudice, the one will be taken for *Adulation*, and the *other* for *Malice*; and no way answer the Intention of its Author with People of Understanding: —How much soever glossed over with all the Pomp of Words, the base Meaning will be seen through, and Rhetoric lose all its Force.

But as to *Praise*, in what Manner soever it is expressed, —whether in Writing, Speaking, Painting, Carving, or Engraving, when once it goes beyond the real Merit of the Thing it would represent, and magnifies a Mole-Hill to a Mountain, what Respect is due to it is rather diminished than increased by the enormous Honours which seem to be exacted, and, as it were, forced from the World. —I own that I cannot help being of the same way of thinking with that celebrated Abbot who used frequently to say, *be looked upon extravagant Compliments as disguised Affronts*; and, it is certain, that if it were not for that Vanity, so inherent to Human Nature, and which some *Men* as well as *Women* indulge to an Excess, they would examine their own Actions, weigh the Merit of them in the Balance of Equity, and rather punish than reward those who exaggerated the Value of them. —They would give the same Answer Mr. *Dryden* puts in the Mouth of *Torrismond*, when *Bertram*, the then Manager of public Affairs, but his secret Enemy, offered him a Statue in Commemoration of an Advantage he had gained over the *Moors*. —The words, I think, are these:

*A Statue for a Battle blindly fought,
Where Riot and Excels made Conquest*

*cheap,
Let nobler Proofs deserve; — I now
should blush
To see myself in Marble.*

To refuse Offers of this Sort, is a laudable Modesty, no doubt, and it has also a Mixture of Policy in it; for when extravagant Applause is given to any Action, it puts People on an Enquiry how, and by what Means it was accomplished; and though it is a Maxim among the Religious, that no *Evil should be done that Good may come of it*, yet there is such a Thing as Bribery, and corrupting by Gifts in Hand and future Promises, and the Persons entrusted by the Enemy, so as to make Conquest cheap indeed, and acquire Fame at a much easier Rate than Life, or even odious¹⁰ disfiguring Wounds.

Be it, however, in the Field or the Cabinet, in public or private Life, a truly wise Man will despise all the Encomiums which transgress the Standard of his Actions and Capacity: —None but Fools, whatever they may imagine themselves, or be esteemed by others, are like Bubbles, blown up with every Wind of popular Applause; and I heard Sir *Issac Newton*,¹¹ who was, perhaps, one of the most truly great Men of his Time, say, *that there was nothing shewed so much of the Philosopher as not to be elated by Praises, even though deserved; nor either dejected or engraved at Aspersions*,¹² *whether feigned or real*. I am sorry to observe that there are but few who judge in this Manner, and that there is so much Reason to make this Parody on the Comparison between *Saul* and *David*, in the first Book of *Samuel*, chap. 18 ver. 7.

10 Extremely revolting.

11 Physicist and mathematician who is most famous for forming the laws of gravity.

12 An assault on someone's reputation.

*Saul hath slain his Thousands, and David his ten Thousands!
Satire has ruined Thousands, but Applause ten Thousands.*

Nothing, however, can be more cruel, or more villainous than to take away the Merit of a great Action, whether in a Friend or an Enemy, by ascribing it to Chance, or to any Measures unworthy of the End attained: —Whoever does this is a *Zoylus*,¹³ a *Thersites*,¹⁴ and ought to be exposed to public Infamy and private Detestation. —But then the Guilt of such a Theft of Reputation ought to be fully proved upon them; —it is not, methinks, because he has *said* such Things, but because the Things he has said are *false*, and can be proved so, to a Demonstration, that he should incur the Punishment inflicted on the Authors of Liberty; for this seems to be tying up the Mouth of just *Satire*, a way of correcting Vice which has been useful in all Ages, and giving such a full Latitude to every kind of Immorality and Profaneness, as Heaven forbid should ever be suffered in a *Christian* Country. Is *Avarice*¹⁵ in a *Prelate*,¹⁶ —*Partiality* in a *Judge*, —*Corruption* in a Member of *Parliament*, —refusing the Payment of *just Debts* in a *Nobleman*, —less criminal, on account of their Function or Quality? Surely, No: —On the contrary, the vices of the *Great* are doubly hateful to God and all good Men, not only as they are more conspicuous, but also as their Example gives a kind of Sanction to their Inferiors to behave in the same Manner; and, indeed, as it renders Virtue, in the Eyes of many People, no more than imaginary, a meet Garment, and either to be worn or thrown off, according as it suits with

13 A Greek grammarian.

14 A soldier of the Greek army during the Trojan War.

15 Severe desire for materialism or wealth.

16 A Bishop.

Interest or Pleasure.

Are not, therefore, *Panegyric* and *Satire* to be equally approved of or punished as they correspond with Truth; —for my Part, I never could hear any Argument, deduced from Reason, why the former, if unjust, should be passed over in Silence, and the latter chastised with so much Severity. —But there is yet a greater Partiality, even than this, for it *Panegyric* is never so apparently false, it is but laughed at, at the worst; but if *Satire* points out the most flagrant and known Vice of any particular Person, Prosecutions, Fines, Imprisonments, and what not, are the Consequence. —I am as great an Enemy to personal Invectives,¹⁷ as any one can be; —I think them inhuman and cruel and that their Truth cannot atone for their Barbarism. —A *Satirist*, whose Aim is to reform, will paint the *Offence* in its strongest Colours, but draw, as much as possible, a Veil over the Face of the *Offender*; —so *Juvenal* did, yet *Juvenal*¹⁸ was banished; and so others since him have done, whose Delicacy has not been better treated.

Panegyric also, in my Opinion, should be as little particular: let the Writer describe a Character truly amiable, and adorn it with all the gorgeous Epithets¹⁹ his fertile Fancy can supply him with; let it be such as every one, who desires Applause, may endeavour to form himself by; —in fine, let it be such as Man should be, and it may possibly make some Men what they should be: Whereas a too beautiful Picture with a Name at the bottom, either wounds the Modesty, or excites the Vanity of him it is designed to represent, while, at the same Time, it draws on him the Envy of others.

17 Highly critical language.

18 A Roman Poet known for his satirical descriptions of the Roman lifestyle.

19 An adjective added to a person's name.

The Mischief which exorbitant Encomiums are capable of bringing about, is very strongly demonstrated in the Character of *Absalom*, the Son of King *David*, as it is set down, at full, in the second book of *Samuel*. —That Prince was blown up by the *Praises* he revived, to such a height of Pride, that he imagined he might do any thing, and that what in another would have been the worst of Crimes, was sanctified by his committing it. —After having murdered his eldest Brother *Ammon*, and being banished for that Deed, he was at length recalled, entirely by the Intercession and Influence of *Joab*; yet, on that General's not coming immediately to him when he sent for him on some Occasion, he gave Orders, that all his Corn-Fields, &c. should be consumed with Fire. But this was an Instance of Arrogance and Ingratitude not to be wondered at, when it was succeeded by an open Rebellion against his Father, who, though a Man after God's own Heart, he thought less worthy of the Throne of *Israel* than himself. —Mr. *Dryden*, in his Paraphrase of this Part of sacred History, makes one of his Flatterers, in order to prevail on him to take Arms, accost him in these Terms.

*Thou art thy longing Country's Darling
and Desire,
Their cloudy Pillar, and their guardian
Fire:
Their second Moses, whose intended
Wand
Divides the Seas, and shews the
promis'd Land:
Whose dawning Day, in every distant
Age,
Has exercised the sacred Prophets
Rage;
The Peoples Pray'r, the glad Diviner's*

*Theme,
The young Men's Vision, and the old
Men's Dream!
Thee, Saviour! Thee, the Nation's Vows
confess;
And never satisfied with seeing, bless!
Swift, unbespoken Poms thy Steps
proclaim, And stamm'ring Babes are
taught to lisp thy Name!*

Who knows but the late Troubles in these Kingdoms were instigated by the same Means, which excited the unfortunate *Absalam*: —The Person who appeared at the Head of the Insurrection was born, and chiefly bred up in the Country, where not to flatter is not to speak; and, they say, is also formed by Nature in such a Mould as might make him, without the Imputation of over much Vanity, easily give Credit to whatever fine Things were said of him. —Be that as it may, I am perfectly convinced, both from Reason and Observation, that extravagant Praises are, for the most part, fatal to the Virtue, of the Person to whom they are given, and therefore ought not to be encouraged, or even tolerated, by any wise Nation.

What then, you will say, when we see Marks of an extraordinary Merit in any one, are we to seem blind, and not to testify our Sensibility and Approbation of it? —Next to the possessing great Qualities ourselves, is certainly to distinguish, admire, and love them in another; and how will it appear we do so, if we are forbid to praise? —Very true, indeed; —not to acknowledge and give any worthy Action its due Plaudit, is an Injustice and an Ingratitude, which I would be far from attempting to inculcate; but then, as it is not in Nature, and no Mortal can possibly be altogether divine, I would not have the

Storehouse of Perfection ransacked, and every Virtue, every Grace, crowded into a Wreath to adorn the Brows of any one Person. —*One* may excel in Wit, *another* in Good-Nature and Benevolence; *some* may be eminent Example of Temperance, others of Magnanimity; —*some* may shine in the Field, *others* in the Cabinet; —but I dare affirm, that one was never yet known, who, as the Duke of *Buckingham* says, could be both *Moonshine* and *Wall* at the same Time. —The Talents of Men are as different as their Faces, and can only appear to Advantage under those Classes to which they properly belong. —A *Hero* might defend Religion, yet make but an odd Figure in a *Pulpit*; and a *Saint*, who knows how to combat Heaven in his Closet, would, perhaps, be little able to fight the Battles of the Lord with *Sword and Pistol*. —The Praises, therefore, that are bestowed, ought methinks, in some measure, to be confined to that peculiar Action, Disposition, or Accomplishment which has excited them; for to huddle what *is*, and what *is not* together, will, in spite of the Art with which it may be conducted, spread Confusion through the whole, give an Air of Fiction, even to the Truth, and render all alike liable to the Censure of Adulation.

Satire had no need of any such Restrictions, because, as I have already observed, it ought never to be *personal*; and *Vice*, in every Shape, cannot be deciphered too foul and deformed, as Virtue, when also it is not personal cannot be painted too amiable; but either Praise or Dispraise, when confined to individuals, ought rather to fall somewhat short of the reality, than go beyond it in the least.

To praise judiciously, to give Merit what is exactly due to it, and yet to do it in such a Manner as not to prejudice the Person praised, requires, in

my Mind, the greatest Genius of any one Thing. —It cannot be done without a strong Fancy, and lively imagination; and if both these are not corrected by a found Judgement, they will infallibly launch beyond the bounds in which they ought to be circumscribed, in order to avoid the ill Consequences I have mentioned, and which otherwise rarely fail to ensue.

I Have the Pleasure of seeing sometimes a Gentleman, than whom none is better acquainted with Human Nature, and I heard him, in some Company who were talking on this Head, say, that *Encouragement* (by which he meant *Praise*) was the Sun, *beneath whole warm and auspicious Influence, the Bays and Laurel could only be expected to flourish.* —But then, added he, *that Sun must not dart his Beams with too much Fierceness in the young aspiring Plant; for the Extremity of Het would wither and decay it, instead of giving Vigour.*

The Allusion between Men of Merit, and those *Trees* which are the Emblems, or rather *Trophies* of Merit, is certainly extremely just, Without the Encouragement it receivers from a moderate Applause, the Soul would grow languid, and lukewarm in its Affections; as by being loaded with an Excess, it becomes intoxicated, and utterly unable to persevere in the same Measures by which it rose to Fame.

People, therefore, should never be told they had attained the full *Zenith* of their Glory, but that they were growing towards it. —Some room should still be left in the Praises bestowed on them for more, and some little Difficulty thrown in the way to Fame, to keep the Mind still active and intent on its Pursuit; —for according to the Poet,

Few are found virtuous when Rewards away.

He, indeed, who thinks he has *all*, will scarcely toil for more; or, like *Colombus*, go in search of new and undiscovered Worlds of Honour. —He will sit down quiet and content, with the Thoughts that others believe him at the Top of Perfection, whether he does to himself or not. —But this seldom happens: —Few are so un-complacent as to call in Question the Truth if any Thing that is said in favour of themselves; —they rather think the Tribute of *Panegyric*, be it ever so exorbitant, too little than too much, and to Men of this Cast, even the most minute Praise is extremely dangerous in relation to their future Behaviour; as not only the Example I have already mentioned, but also a great Number of others of a much later Date, may sufficiently demonstrate to any one who will take the Trouble of observing and if making the necessary Reflections thereupon.

It is Time now to take my Leave of a Subject, at which, perhaps, more will be offended than pleased; I cannot, however, prevail on myself to break off without adding something farther in regard, to that sort of Writing, which is called Satire, and which: I have not as yet, at least in my own Opinion, sufficiently, expatiated upon. And this Part of my Discourse, I take the Liberty to address, in particular, to the Clergy²⁰, as I believe there are some of that reverend Body who vouchsafe to listen to the *Parrot*.

To you, the awful Expounders of the Gospel, and Pastors of the purest and most reasonable Church! —To you, the Directors and Guardians of the Soul, I now appeal, and beg Leave to ask,

20

A person authorised to conduct religious services.

how comes it that licentious and unbridled Satire dare point its envenomed Shafts, not only against the venerable Function of the *Priesthood*, but also against the *Doctrine*²¹ they preach? —Why is it so strictly bound up from lashing the fancied Great-Ones of the World, yet let lose to traduce²² *sacred* Majesty? —(the Majesty of Heaven, I mean.) —Why is it criminal, when enquiring into the Conduct of a mortal *Officer of State*, yet allowed the Liberty of prying into the secret Things of *God*? —the Government, that is, the Providence of the Omnipotent Ruler of Heaven and Earth, disputed? and even his Prescience made a Doubt of? —Wherefore is the *Civil* Law so severe on every Reflection cast on mortal sinful *Man*, and he *Ecclesiastica*²³ one so passive, when the Divinity of the second Person in the *Trinity* is called in Question, his Miracles ridiculed, and his Resurrection represented as a Fraud? —Strange it appears to me, and doubtless to all Foreigners, that some Men have been obliged to do a kind of Penance round *Westminster-Hall*, with a Paper pinned upon their Backs relating the Nature of their Offence; that others have been scourged, many made to stand in the Pillory, and others fined and imprisoned for what they call *Scandalum magnatum*²⁴, and it has often happened merely for endeavouring to prove that *black is black*; while *Toland*, *Woolafton*, the *Moral Philosopher*, and a great Number of other modern Writers have, with *Impunity*, contemned and made a Jest of all the *Mysteries*, by which either *Jews* or *Christians* hope Salvation.

Does it not seem a little inconsistent, that a People who express such Tenaciousness of their *Religion*, have lost so much Blood; and paid such

21 A set of beliefs usually taught by a church.

22 To falsely spread lies in order to tarnish a reputation.

23 Relating to the Christian Church.

24 A speech or piece of writing that is published to do harm to a peer.

immense Sums for preserving the free Exercise of it, should themselves depreciate that Religion, by quietly permitting the very Fundamentals of it to be sapped, by a Set of Men who profess an utter Disbelief of any *Redemption* of the World by *God made Man*, (which, as I take it, is the .. Ground-work and Essence of *Christianity*)? Who write and speak in direct Opposition of all the sacred Tenets²⁵ contained both in the *Old* and *New-Testament*, and labour with their whole Might to propagate their pernicious²⁶ Opinions, and render Faith of no Effect, and good Works a Matter of mere Indifference to Eternity? —How far they have succeeded, I need not say, but am extremely sorry for: —How much farther they may succeed, if suffered to go on in the fame open and avowed Profaneness they have done for near these last thirty Years, will not presume to say, but leave every thinking Person to judge according to his own Observation.

Does it not (pardon the Question which my Concern for the *Christian* Religion enforces me to make,) does it not, I say, look less like a *pious Zeal for the free Use of the Bible*, than the *Pride of Free-thinking* and *Free-Speaking* on that *Bible*, which some Men are so wonderfully fearful of being debarred the Enjoyment of? —Heaven, indeed, forbid that all should be of that Mind, or that the Inspired Writings should ever be refused to those who search into them with an humble Heart, and a real Desire of being instructed by them; but yet, the little Share of Reason I am Master of informs me, that it would have been more happy, both for themselves, and all those who *have been*, or *are* at present, weak enough to be contaminated with Misrepresentations and invidious Constructions, that the abovementioned Gentlemen had

25 A principle or belief.

26 Highly destructive.

never read them.

I Am far from having any thing of the Spirit of Perfection in my Nature, and would not, for more than I care to mention, attempt to inculcate it in others; yet cannot keep myself from both thinking and saying, however it may be taken, and the ill Will I may incur by so doing, that there seems an absolute Necessity of taking some Measures for putting an immediate Stop to the amazing and enormous Growth of *Infidelity* in these Nations; and that the Authors of such Books as have any Tendency that way, in the room of being encouraged, as I grieve to say they have been, ought, at least, to have the Mortification of seeing their Works, instead of passing through several Editions unnoticed, committed to the Flames by the Hands of the common Hangman.

These are a Sort of *Libels*, which, it must be owned, deserve no better Fate; and, even though a much worse were to attend them, could no way take from the Lenity²⁷ of the Legislature, or be, with any Shadow of Reason, termed an Infringement on that Liberty of the Press, which is so justly dear to all Nations, who either are, or would be free, or even fancy they are so.

As I am an Alien, however, in these Kingdoms, and the Bill has not yet passed for the *naturalising* those of all Nations and Religions whatsoever, *Papists* excepted, I may, perhaps, be looked upon by some People as too presuming for imparting my Sentiments in the Manner I have done; but I have the Consolation of imagining I shall be as much commended by others, whose Favour will very well compensate for the Effects of any Displeasure from those of a different way of thinking; and if even this Hope should prove too flattering in its

27 Gentleness.

Consequences, as it possibly may, Nobody has the Power to deprive me of the Pleasure which arises from a Consciousness of having discharged a Duty I thought incumbent on me, to a People, whom I have so much Reason both to love and revere, from the Hospitality of their Nature in general to all Strangers, and the many Favours I have received from them in particular.

SIR,
1746.

Saturday, Sept. 20,

While the Emperor (or the Husband of the Empress, which you will,) is amusing himself with Hunting in the Woods of *hollitsch*, his Imperial Consort is sending Orders to the Generals of her Armies to prosecute the War with Vigour, and at the same Time giving Instructions to her Minister-Plenipotentiary²⁸ how to act in relation to a Peace; which latter is as much talked of through all the Courts of *Europe*, as it certainly is wished for by some of them. —I believe it is now past all doubt that *Genoa* is taken, and that the *Austrians* and *Piedmontese* are in Possession of it. The *French* King, they say, has promised to reimburse the Republic, for any Damage it has, or may hereafter sustain, by its inviolable²⁹ Attachments to his Interests; but if they comfort themselves with such an Expectation, they have less of the *Italian* Sagacity than their Neigh-

28 A person possessing the authority to act independently on their government's behalf, typically in a foreign country.

29 The state of safety or defence against harm.

bours: —The Ministers of the King of *Sardinia*, and those of the Empress Queen, being already on an Agreement for dividing the Territories of that unhappy and deluded People. —The Marquisate of *Final*, they tell us, is to be the Portion of the former, and that of the District of *Sarsana* is to be united to *Tuscany*, with a certain Sum of Money by way of Satisfaction to the Empress Queen.

But, in the midst of all this good News, I have one Thing to tell you, not quite for pleasing, which is, that notwithstanding the repeated Declarations, under the Seal of the Queen of *Hungary*, that the Produce of the Copper Mines in that Kingdom should be strictly applied. to discharge the principal Debt and Interest owing to the *British* Subjects thereupon; yet there has been no Payment these four Years, nor even the Interest for above a Twelvemonth: And also that no Part of the Principal or Interest due to the *British* Subjects, on the *Silesian* Loan, has been paid for a great many Years, though the strictest Assurances have been given, from Time to Time, that it should be so. But they are our good Allies. — *England* has Money enough, and nothing is lost that a Friend gets.

The Intentions of his *Catholic* Majesty begin now to show themselves more plainly, at least, if we may give any Credit either to public or private Intelligence. —The Marquis *de las Minas* is put at the Head of the Forces, and

has Orders to separate from the French and *Genoese*. —A terrible reverse for the Queen *Dowager*!

An Article from *Maestricht* has given me a great deal of Pleasure, as I doubt not but it will every one who has the Glory of his Country at Heart. —A Body of about 6 or 7000 *French* attacked a Port of the Allies near *Viset*, maintained by about 6 or 700 Men, partly *English* and partly *Dutch*: They defended themselves so well, that the Enemy were obliged to get a Reinforcement, which increased to ten Thousand Men, before they gained their Point. — This handful of brave Soldiers killed a great Number, and had not been at last reduced, but by the heavy Artillery, which played with dreadful Fury on them. —The Action was long and obstinate, and when the gallant little Corps found no other Remedy, they plunged themselves into the *Maese*, rather than surrender themselves Prisoners: About an hundred and fifty of them got safely to the opposite Shore, and great Pity it is that any of them perished.

They say, for certain, that *Namur* is invested, that Batteries are erected against it at three different Places, and that the Count *de Clermont* has the Direction of the Siege, who has under him, Messieurs *Segur*, *Lowendabhl*, *L'Atrek*, and *Velemer*, with sixty-one Battalions and forty Squadrons; they have already made themselves Masters of two advanced Posts, and taken

two Serjeants and twenty-four private Men. —Brigadier *Burmanio*, who is chief Commander in that Place, desired Permission to send the Sick and Disabled out of Town, but the Count *de Clermont* has absolutely refused to comply with his Request.

Other Accounts inform us, that an Express was sent from *Paris* with an Order to raise the Siege of *Namur*, to detach 30,000 Men *Dauphiny* with all Expedition, and to act only on the Defensive, during the rest of the Campaign: —So that which of these two contradictory Reports we are to give most Credit to, a little Time may probably show; but, at present, there seems to be a thick Veil cast between us and the Certainty of any thing.

As to Domestic Transactions, the most material ones that I know of, are, that a great Consultation was held, a few Days since, at the House of the Duke of *Argyle*, at which the Lord *Harrington* and several other of our Ministers assisted. —That Captain *Monro* of *Culcarin* was shot dead at the Head of his Company, at Mid-day, as he was marching by the Side of a Wood, from *Lockarkaig* to *Fort-Augustus*. —That the Earl of *Ancram*, as he was handing a Lady out of the Playhouse in *Edinburgh*, had a Pistol fired at him, but the Ball did not reach him. See what Revenge will attempt! —That Affairs in the North are now quite settled. —That a Messenger, dispatched by the Lords of the Admi-

rality, with a Bag of Letters to the Post Office, for the Sea-Ports, was way-laid, knocked down, and his Collar Bone broke. —That the Squadron under Admiral *Anson*, has miffed the *French* Ships they went to intercept, which are now all safely arrived at *Brest*; and that Earl Marshal *Keith* is arrived at *Mittau*, whence he is to proceed to *Petersburgh* with his Brother, General *Keith*, who is gone to meet him, whether to enter into the Service of the Empress, or any other Business, is not yet known in these Parts, though probably it soon will; for the Earl of *Hyndford*, our Ambassador there, has been, it seems, a little alarmed at it, and has had a Conference with the Ministers on this Occasion.

I am, SIR, Yours, &c.

P.S. I have just now heard, that several Prisoners of Condition, taken since the Battle of *Culloden*³⁰, are put on Board some of our Men of War, in order to be brought hither; and that the Duchess of *Perth*, Lady *Mackinnon*, the Lady *Clanronald*, and Miss *Florence Macdonald*, are among the Number: —The Beauty of this latter might possibly excite a great many of the young *Highland* Clans to take Arms, she being, next to Lady *Mackintosh*, the most celebrated Toast of those Parts, and a great Fortune also, to set her Charms off to more Advantage; but that will scarce be of any Service at the Bar, either to

³⁰ The Jacobite Rising of 1745 came to an end when a British Government force defeated a Jacobite Army.

herself or her Admirers, some of whom, it seems, are in the same Ship with her.

End of No VIII. of the Parrot.



THE
PARROT
No. IX.

SINCE the last Time I had the Honour of speaking to the Public, I have received two Letters, one from an *American* Poll, with whom I had an intimate Acquaintance in my Youth, and another from one who lives in a very great Family in *England*; both which I think worthy of imparting to the Public, as the first has in it somewhat deserving the Consideration of all Friends to Commerce, the Life and Soul of these lands; and the second, besides a great deal of Humour, contains a Moral, which I could with might be as easily put in Practice by those whom it concerns, as it will be understood by every one.

My dear Friend and old Acquaintance,

I Will not take up my own or your Time with telling you, how much I have been afflicted that your continual hurrying from Place to Place has, for a long Series of Years, prevented our Correspondence; I shall only say that I now rejoice to hear you are settled in a Kingdom so abounding with all the Pleasures as well as the Conveniences of Nature; and what I look upon as yet a greater Blessing, a Kingdom where the Sovereign himself presides, beneath whose awful Eye, we may presume to believe, no inferior Officer dare to abuse his Authority in any open Act of Violence, Injustice, or secret Oppression. —Whereas we, who have the inexpressible Misfortune of living under a Delegated Power, whence there is no Appeal without insuperable¹ Difficulties, must either submit patiently to the Yoke laid on us by our imperious and arbitrary Governor, how heavy soever it may happen to prove, or gall ourselves still more by vainly struggling with it.

These, I say, are Felicities², on which your Friends can never too much congratulate you, nor you yourselves sufficiently acknowledge; yet, in the midst of your Enjoyment of them, the Sufferings of your Sister-Islands ought not, methinks, to be altogether forgot: —It should, in my Opinion, be the *Glory*

1 Insurmountable.
2 Great happiness.

of *Great-Britain*, as I am sure it is her true and real *Interest*, to preserve, protect, and encourage her Plantations on this Side the Globe. —We have both a natural and political Claim to her Care and Attention, —first, as we are Fellow-Subjects, —and next, as the Welfare and Profits of the Trading (which I look upon as the greatest and most useful) Part of the Nation, is so closely connected with ours, that if we fall, they must also, in proportion, link of course.

I Do not mention this as supposing you to be ignorant of any part of those Advantages *Great-Britain* receives from the Colonies in *America*; or that you do not see of how much greater yet they would be, were Persons of true Honour, Ability, and Experience always sent over for their Rulers; but only to put you in remembrance, that the Dity owing from you to your native Country, and that which the Obligations I hear you receive from the brave and generous People you are among, equally unite to exact from you every thing in your Power for the Service of both; and in my Opinion, you can discharge these Duties no better way, than in laying open some of the many Pressures and Difficulties which are the Bars of our Progress in Improvement, and are thrown by the very Hands which ought to defend as from them.

You are no Stranger to that exorbitant Power which is vested in a Governor of one of these Islands, nor

to the Tyranny with which that Power has sometimes been exerted. You also have been witness to the repeated Complaints that have been made on this Occasion; and, I am certain, have not been dim sighted to the Artifices put in practice to stifle them. —The Business, therefore, of this Epistle, and in Consideration of which I postpone all private Affairs, is to urge you to a Representation of our Grievances in the most public and pathetic Manner you can. —I will not offer it as an Argument of any Weight with you, that the Station you are in exempts you from all Apprehensions of Danger from the Resentment of such as may happen to be affected by your Remonstrances³; —I think I know you enough to assure myself that all particular Regards will be thrown aside whenever they oppose what is for the general Utility. —So, depending on your ready Compliance with my Request, I take my Leave, and am,

(With great Sincerity,)

Dear POLL,

Yours Affectionately,

POLL-AMERICANA.

P. S. Among the many extraordinary Cafes which have, with great Justice, made some Noise in our Part of the World, I have selected one, and sent it

³ A strongly rebuking protest.

to you by way of Specimen of the Misfortunes which attend those Countries where many large Powers, I may add too, unlimited ones, for the Time they continue, are lodged in any one Man; and that not, with us, even those who have the Honour of bearing his Majesty's Commission are exempted from sharing in the general Oppression; as for those Hardships which the Traders labour under. I leave it to you to expatiate as you shall judge most proper to answer the End.

As my Intention is only to expose the *Vice*, not the *Person* of any one, my Correspondent must excuse the Names of all those concerned in the following Cafe being omitted.

The CASE of a late Lieutenant in one of the American Islands.

This Complainant being left a minor, was under the Care and Guardianship of his Uncle, a law Governor, and on his Decease, received a Letter of Advice; on which he waited on the Governor, showed the Letter to him, informed his Excellency of the Necessity there was for his going to *England* in order to settle his Affairs, and intreated⁴ Leave of Absence: This the Governor peremptorily refused, on the Pretence, that there being so few Officers, it was not consistent with his Honour, nor his

⁴ An outdated version of entreated.

Majesty's Service, to permit any one of them to leave the Place. —The Complainant was very sensible this was not the true Motive, and that he had, on other Instances, showed little Consideration of either, there being, since the Year 1743, forty-nine Men wanting to complete Company according to the Establishment, four of whom had been discharged by this very Governor for an hundred Pieces of Eight each Man: Perceiving, therefore, that there was no Hope of obtaining the Favour he demanded, without purchasing it, he offered to make his Excellency a Present of a fine *Negro Slave*; and he then began a little to recede from his former Stiffness, yet only coolly said, he would consider of it, and ordered the Complainant to attend him the next Day for an Answer.

Accordingly he went in the Morning, pleasing himself with the Hopes that he had now hit on the effectual Method for the gaining his Suit; but how great was his Disappointment, when the Governor saluted him with a — "*Twill not do!*" —He then repeated the Urgency which required his Presence in *England*, and omitted nothing that he thought might work on his Good-Nature and Humanity; but these were Emotions which had long since been swallowed up in Avarice, and the View of making a large Fortune by his Post: — The more the young Gentleman pleaded the strong Necessity of his going, the more the Governor found the Value of the

Favour he wanted him to grant; and resolved to be deaf to all Entreaties till he should bid up to his Price. —This, the Complainant being convinced of, not only by his Behaviours to himself, but also by what he had observed of him on other Occasions, and seeing no other Remedy, at least for the present, told him that that he would give him a hundred Pounds, besides half his Pay, during the Time of Absence. —*Well then, said the other, more mildly, I'll consider what I can do for you in this Business, and in three or four Days you shall know the Result.*

About the Expiration of the Time prefixed, a Vessel being ready to let Sail, the Complainant was desirous of taking a Passage in it; and having asked the Governor if he had yet determined on the Matter, was told by him that he had, and then was ordered to draw up a Memorial in Form, relating the Motives, at full, which induced him to leave the Island; which done, and the promised Acknowledgment duly paid, he said he would give him a *Furloe*⁵.

The Complainant saying he was unacquainted with the Manner in which such a Memorial was to be wrote, the Governor went into his Closet, and drew it up himself, then delivered it to him, in order to copy and present to him at a Time he appointed; which when the Complainant had done, he

5

Suspension or termination of an employee or employees.

asked him for the Original; but the other, imagining it might be of use hereafter, in case the Affair should come to light, pretended he had burnt it. —The Governor suspected no Design in this, and told him very cheerfully, that when he was ready to fail, his *Furloe* should be signed; but demanded how he proposed to pay the Money, *for, as yet, I have only your bare Word*, said he, *and you cannot expect your Dispatch till I have some Security*. On which the Complainant offered to give him a Bill upon *England*, offering him, at the same Time, his Choice of two Gentlemen of undeniable Characters; but this was not what the Governor approved of, doubtless apprehending that some Questions might be asked concerning the owing of this Money, the Answers to which would no way redound to his Honour, and said there was no occasion to give him the Trouble of Remittances from *England*. —He had three *Negro Slaves*, which, said he, *you will now have no occasion for, and if you will let me have them, you and I will be quit*.

The Exorbitancy of this Demand might very well startle the Complainant, but he dissembled his Chagrin⁶ as well as he could, and only remonstrated to his Excellency, in the mildest Terms, that he could sell his Slaves for much more than a hundred Pounds; yet could not the haughty Man brook, with any Patience, the Backwardness the other ex-

6 Irritation or discomfort at humiliation or failure.

pressed at complying with his Proposal, —He flew in to a Passion, told him he would take no Bills, nor any Security whatever, and utterly refused to sign his *Furloe* till he had disposed of the *Negroes*, which he did for an hundred and fifty Pounds, an hundred of which he paid him in Specie, with an Assignment, as above said, of one Moiety⁷ of his Pay, and then, at last, obtained what he had so long been soliciting.

All whom the Complainant entrusted with the Secret of this Negotiation, exclaimed against the Extortion of the Governor, and advised him, that since the Necessity of his Affairs compelled him to comply with it, to publish, on his Arrival in *England*, the whole Truth of this Business, and also some other Matters, which, though not immediately relating to himself, were highly injurious, both to his Majesty and the Island committed to his Care, and therefore could not fail of exciting the Attention of the Legislature.

I WAS the more encouraged to present the Public with this Letter, and the Cafe enclosed in it, by a moral Certainty of its being a real Fact; the fame Saip which brought me the Account, brought also the Gentleman in Question: —He is now preferred to a better Post in the Army, has given a Memorial of the Transaction, between him and the Governor, to a certain Right Honourable Person, who, after an Affidavit made before one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace, has presented it Above; and

7 One of two equal parts.

it is not to be doubted but proper Methods will be taken to enquire further into the Conduct and Behaviour of a Person, who seems, not only in this, but in many other Instances likewise, to have discovered a Meanness of Soul unworthy of a Gentleman, much more of a Magistrate, to whom the Care of a whole Island is entrusted.

When one considers indeed the many extraordinary Qualifications which are requisite to complete the Character of a *good* Governor, and the many Temptations which the vast Power of that Office lays in his Way, it is not to be wondered at, that so few are able to discharge the Duties of their Function, and maintain an inviolable Uprightness. —As he is *Captain-General* over all the Forces of the Island, he ought to be endued with Courage and Conduct: And as by that Post he has also the Power of appointing, or removing, all Officers of the *Militia*, he must be wholly free from Prejudice and Partiality. —As he is *Chancellor*, he determines all Causes in the *Court of Equity* under three Hundred Pounds, without Appeal: His Understanding therefore in the Laws should be extensive, as well as his Adherence to Justice steady and inflexible. As he is *Vice-Admiral*, he ought to be well skilled in Maritime Affairs. —As he is the sole *Judge* of the Probate of Wills, and has the Administration of the Estates of Persons who die intestate⁸, how great ought his Integrity to be! —As he has the Presentation of all Church Livings, he should be both learned and religious, to know how to make Choice of such as will be Ornaments to the Pulpit. — And, in fine, as he is Governor, he appoints all Justices, Sheriffs, and other Civil Officers: —Has the Power of summoning, proroguing⁹, or dissolving Assemblies, of punishing or pardoning Crimes of

8 Failing to draft a will prior to death.

9 Ending a parliament session with dissolving it.

whatever Nature (Murder and Treason excepted) ; to issue Commissions to Privateers in Time of War, and to send Vessels out to take Pirates in Time of Peace; to act in all respects with Sovereign Authority; to preside solely and uncontrollably in all Affairs both of Church and State, Sea and Land, and not only so, but has centred in himself all those Powers, and is the Supreme of all those Officers, which in great States are divided into so many different Hands. To discharge them all, I say, with equal Skill and Fidelity, he must not only have a perfect Knowledge of all, but that Knowledge must also be joined with an Honesty, inexorable, un intimidated, unmoved, and incorruptible.

But as Perfection is not to be expected in Human Nature, and no Man scarce ever was known to excel in all Sciences, all Arts; you may say, that there never was, nor ever can be, a good Governor, according to my Sense of the Duties of his Post: To which I answer, that as much a Paradox as it may seem by what I have alleged, yet the Thing is not in itself incompatible with Probability; nay, has sometimes been demonstrable in the Behaviour of a few, I wish I could say of many, who have been set in this high and dangerous Station.

Great Abilities it doubtless requires. —Whoever undertakes this Post, ought to have a general, or at least a superficial Knowledge of what appertains to every Branch of it; but that is no more than what a careful Observation and Application will easily make him Master of: But above all, he must have strong Penetration and found Judgment, to distinguish Men and Designs; because that in every one of these great Offices, of which he is the Head, there are Subalterns¹⁰ who act under him, and know in their respective Places what is prop-

10 A British army officer below the rank of captain.

er to be done, to which he only gives his Assent, or countermands, according as he sees fit. —A watchful Eye, therefore, over these Persons, and a clear Discernment into their Faults or Virtues will be sufficient to enable a Governor to behave well, so far as relates to his Skill.

But there is another Requisite, of infinitely more Consequence to the constituting a good Governor, which is *Disinterestedness*: —Tho' he were a *Machiavel*¹¹ in Politics, an *Alexander* in Courage, a *Scipio* in Temperance, a *Solon*, a *Licurgus*, or even a Solomon in Wisdom: tho' he excelled all Men that ever went before him in all the Abilities of a Statesman, or a Soldier; yet if his great Qualities were tainted with *Avarice*, it would be impossible for him either to think, or act for the Service of the Public. —*Avarice*, the fatal Rock on which every Virtue, every fine Quality of the Mind is wrecked, and from which springs, as from their Fountain-Head, all manner of Injustices and Oppressions.

A Man that is avaricious can neither be a good Neighbour, a sincere Friend, or even a good Husband or Father: Both social and natural Ties will loosen and give way, when this Vice has once gained any Dominion over the Mind. Whoever gives himself the Trouble of looking into the World, will find daily and melancholy Instances of this Truth in private Life; what must it then be, when a Person of such a Disposition has the Effects of perhaps Thousands in his Power! —When the Rights, the Privileges, the Properties of a whole People are, in a manner, at his Disposal! —May they not, beside labouring under a Load of Oppressions at home, be subjected to the Danger of foreign Depredations, and even Invasions. —May not a Governor, who is so wicked as so to impoverish them to fill his

¹¹ A theatrical antagonist prevalent in Elizabethan and Jacobean plays, named after Niccolò Machiavelli.

own Coffers, be also so base as to tell or deliver them up to be a Prey to others, and suffer the small Remainder he has left them to be destroyed, or ravished from them by their open and avowed Enemies, either for the sake of sharing in the second Plunder, or because he may flatter himself that an Invasion will screen, or render less observed the Extortions he has been guilty of, and in the general Calamity, the Remembrance of particular ones be swallowed up!

In a word, there is no Action, whether of Meanness, Injustice, or Barbarity, that *Avarice* is not capable of producing. It is, as the Poet says of *Ambition*,

—*A Lust that's never quench'd,
Grows mor inflam'd, and madder by
Enjoyment;
Will stop at nothing in its wild Career,
Barr'd by no Laws, — by no Obligements bound,
Rapacious and insatiate, centres all
Within itself.*

A Person, therefore, of this way of thinking, is, of all others, least qualified to fill that high and important Station I have been speaking of. How far the Governor of this Island may be guilty of it, I will not pretend to say, as I am entirely a Stranger to him: but if the Cafe now under Consideration contains real Matter of Fact, as there seems no room to doubt it does, I am afraid his Excellency will find a great deal of Difficulty to clear himself in the Eyes of the World of the Imputation of a Vice so injurious to his Dignity, how well soever he may behave up to it in all other respects.

My *American* Friend seems to expect I should say something of the great Advantages or Disadvantages this Kingdom receives from the good or bad Management of its Colonies abroad; but these are so well known, and have already, on many Occasions, been so fully demonstrated, that I think it needless to add any thing on the Subject, and shall now take my Leave of it, with sincerely wishing, that every Person at the Head of a common Wealth will look on himself as no more than one of the Community, and that, however dignified and distinguished by his Title, he is, in effect, no other than the first Servant of the Public, and bound to do them all the good Offices in his Power.

The other Letter I promised so impart contains these Lines.

DEAR PRATTLER,

If any Bird has Reason to be proud of his Family, certainly you have; and though I take you to have too great a Share of Understanding to value yourself merely on that Score (as you have very wittily taken Notice too many do,) yet, considering the Multitude of dignified Relations you have among the human Species, I could easily forgive you if you betrayed a little Vanity on that Head: —For instance, methinks I should take a singular Pleasure in hearing you boast of the *Parrots* there are in *Parliament-Houses* as well as *Play-Houses*, —in *Privy-Councils* as well as *Common-Councils*, and likewise of the popular and loud-voiced *Parrots* there are

in *Law, Physic* and *Divinity*.

The Proof of this Position, I imagine, is not very difficult; and therefore wonder you have not yet been under any Temptation to give it us in your facetious and agreeable Manner; but since, as yet, you have been quite silent on the Matter, permit me to offer one Hint, at least, which I leave you to improve and expatiate upon as you see convenient. —It is this:

I Suppose, with all due Deference, that a *Parrot* is an Animal, whose Organs are just capable of attaining so much of Speech as to give a Sort of Articulation to whatever he hears, without the least Sentiment of his own; and having only such Ideas as are communicated to him by others, he is eternally ringing Changes upon what he has so acquired, to the no Small Diversion of his Auditors, who doubtless will, in recompense, present him with an Apple or a Nut, or whatever best pleases his Fancy, and is most likely to bribe him to persevere in his Manner of obliging them.

My Conclusion, therefore, cannot be looked upon as unjust, that all those of the human Species who are too indolent to think for themselves, —to make any Comparison between Things and Things, —who never form any Judgement but what they first hear has been given by others, and chose to sacrifice the Dignity of their Natures, by serving as meer Machines to convey the Sentiments of those who find their

Account in making use of them this way, rather than take the Pains to consult their own; —all such, I say, —*are*, — and *ought* to be *deemed*, to all Intents and Purposes, *so many Parrots*.

A *parrot* as also a strong Propensity to getting the Goods of others into his Possession, and, like the *human Felons*, does it always in a Manner as little liable to Detection as possible. —Thus has *Instinct* in the *one*, the Force of *Honour* in the *other*, and the Secrecy and Caution with which the *Bird* commits his Thievery, almost amounts to, or has at least the Appearance of, that conscious Shame which most *Men*, till they become thorough-paced in Villany, feel on being guilty of it.

The little Depredations¹² made by a *Parrot*, you may, indeed, say, are not to come in any Degree of Competition with those which *Men* frequently make on each other, even from those of the most exalted Stations, down to the lowest Class of Interlopers; yet I have known Instances where these petty Felonies have been attended with fatal Consequences, one of which I will trouble you with a Repetition of, as it may serve as a Lesson for People never to be too positive in any thing, nor suffer themselves to be so far strayed by a partial good Opinion of any one Person, as to lay all the Faults he may be guilty of on those who are innocent.

An eminent *Lapidary* had a *Par-*

12

Plundering causing damage or destruction

rot, whom the extremely loved; and imagining this favourite Bird could be capable of doing nothing to his Prejudice, trusted him with all he was worth. He frequently sat by him when he was cutting and polishing his Diamonds, and the Conversation with which he entertained him, made his Work more easy and pleasing to him, nor did this cunning Creature ever molest him in it, or impertinently take up, or meddle with any of the precious Stones which lay scattered about.

He had a large Shell of *Mother of Pearl*, in which he always put a Parcel of precious Stones after he had prepared them for setting: These stood on a Shelf in his Shop behind the Counter, and it was seldom that a Day passed without his missing one or more of them. —His whole Family consisted only of himself, *Poll*, and one Servant Maid, who had lived with him a great Number of Years. —As the Depredations committed were constant, they could be no pretended Customer who could be guilty of them. —The Thief must therefore be an Inmate. —The *Parrot*, he thought quite out of the question; so the Suspicion lay wholly on the Maid. He taxed her with it, however, in the gentlest Terms he could, and she avowed her Innocence with such a modest Confidence, and expressed so much real Concern that he had entertained such cruel Thoughts of her, as together with the Fidelity he had found in her on other Occasions, very much staggered his

Opinion. —He knew not what to think; but finding that every Day discovered a new Decrease of his Treasure, he renewed his Accusation with more Severity, and added, that if he would not confess, he would directly send her to Prison: To which she replied, that she would never wrong herself so far as to acknowledge a Crime she was wholly free from. On which he searched her Box, and her Pockets, obliged her to unrip her very Stays and Petticoats, imagining she might have Artifice enough to conceal what she had taken in some of those Places: Nothing, however, with all this Scrutiny was to be found upon her; yet being assured in his own Mind that she was guilty, and had some Conveyance for the Theft which he had not Penetration enough to discover, or even to form any Guess of, he resolved to be convinced, if possible, or at least to be revenged on a Person who had so grossly betrayed and abused the Trust he had reposed in her.

In fine, he got a Warrant for her, and carried her before a Justice of the Peace, who, on hearing the Story, committed her to *Newgate*, and the General Quarter-Sessions of *Oyer* and *Terminer* coming on in a Day or two, she was tried and condemned to be hanged; the Fact she was accused of appearing demonstrable to the whole Court: Nor could all her repeated Protestations of Innocence, even to the Day, and even to the very Moment of her Execution, make those most in-

clined to favour her, give any Credit to what she said.

But whatever other secret Transgressions this poor Wretch had been guilty of, that she was thus abandoned by Providence, is unknown; but she had not suffered the Punishment of this many Hours, before her Innocence of it was fully cleared. —Her too rash and mistaken Master being fitting in his Shop in a kind of a half Slumber, a sort of little rustling Noise made him start; and as he was just opening his Eyes, saw this wicked *Parrot* on the Shelf, and at the Shelf which contained those loose Jewels, so many of which he had been deprived of. —The Sight very much surprised him, but he had presence enough of Mind to sit still, and observe, without seeming to do so, what the Bird was about. —He soon quitted the Place, and the Jeweller following him with his Eye, saw him creep in at a small Opening there was between the Partition of the Shop, and a Counting-house behind it, and went up into a Cavity of the Wall; on which he rose up, pulled out the *Parrot*, and thrusting his Hand into that Hole, found there every one of those Stones he had miffed, and for which the poor Maid had been condemned. —It would be in vain to go about to represent the Confusion he was in at this Discovery; he wrung off the Neck of the Bird, ran immediately to *Newgate*, proclaiming all the Way the strange Accident and the sad Mistake he had been guilty of, and vowing to make the Maid all the

Reparation in his Power, for he knew not that Sentence had been executed upon her; but when he was informed it was over, and that his Accusation had been a kind of Murder, he fell instantly distracted, and, as I was informed, never after recovered his Senses.

The Despair this Jeweller fell into on the Discovery of the Injustice he had done to a poor faithful Creature, showed he had in him the Sentiments of Humanity; but how many are there in this great World, who make Millions of their innocent Fellow-Creatures groan under Hardships worse than Death itself, without feeling the least Remorse, or imagining themselves bound to make either them or their Posterity any kind of Reparation.

BUT I shall postpone what Reflections this Subject demands till some other Time, when, perhaps, I may do myself the Pleasure of sending you a second Epistle¹³, if this meets with the favourable Reception I have Reason to expect from your accustomed Good-Nature.

THE chief Motive I had for relating this little Story, which, I assure you, I had from very good Hands, was to show the Danger of being too certain of any thing; —to prevail on People to have that laudable Scepticism of doubting all, —examining into all, and waiting Time, the only faithful Solver of Difficulties, before they set down any in their Minds as real Facts. —Nothing can

13 A letter.

be more obvious, and indeed, more amazing, than the strange Credulity which has, of late Years, possessed the People of these Kingdoms: —With what Facility do they swallow the most gross Absurdities, yet shut every Sense against the most glaring Truths! —How do they adore the worst of Crimes, when acted by some; yet how rail, how vilify others, only for being *said* to be guilty of them! —Strange Inconsistency of depraved Nature, —destructive Partiality! —But I grow too serious, —the Theme too much transports me, and I must go back while I have the Power of doing so, to the *Parrots*.

All the Species, which, to do them justice, cannot be denied them, have one excellent Quality, which is, that of free speaking, and being no Respector of Persons; —a Faculty, that it were to be wished, those of the human Race were either more endued with, or found it more for their Convenience to practise. —But of that, likewise, no more; it is a Subject too touching and too delicate for the present Times, —though, to tell you the Truth, I have a great deal in my Head concerning it, and, as the Divines tell us, Self-denial is a Virtue, I think I give no small Proof of mine this way, when I can resolve to smother in my Breast, what I have so violent an Inclination to communicate in the most public Manner I possibly could.

It is ten to one now, but you will cry, this is not among the Number of

Things in which this Virtue ought to be put in Practice, and that only allege it by way of Excuse for my own Timidity: —Be it so, —I am not alone in this Particular, for if every one durst to utter all he thinks without Reserve, what wild Work would be among us! —Remember what your old Acquaintance, the celebrated *Monsieur de St. Aube* said, —*That in some Times, and on some Occasions, Silence was the most significant Oratory.*

I Am, notwithstanding, an Admirer and Lover of *free Speaking*, and, since all but *Parrots* and some other Animals, of much the same Nature, find it not proper to exercise their Faculty this way; I say, let not only every *Parrot*, but also other Birds throughout the Kingdom, which have the Organs of Articulation, found forth whatever they hear whispered in the Cabinets of Princes, or the yet more close Cabals of Great-Men: —Let the Public know for what it is they pay, —what it is they have to rejoice at, what to deplore, —what they have to hope, and what they have to fear. —The meanest and most abject Man contributes his Mite to whatever is told him is for the general Utility, and has an equal Right, in a Land of Liberty, to know in what Manner it is disposed on ; —let then, I once more repeat, these *Birds*, since no other will undertake the Task, correct the false and ridiculous Rumours of Coffee House Politicians, as well as the lying Legends which issue from the Press, and be the Pipes,

through which the sacred Oracles of Truth may be conveyed. —As the imitable *Shakespeare* makes his *Hotspur* say, in his historical Play of *Henry the Fourth*.

—*Not hear of Mortimer!*

Yes, be shall hear of Mortimer, —I'll have

A prating Starling, who shall every Day Sound nothing in his Ears but — Mortimer!

Mortimer! - Mortimer! —t' awake his Soul,

And rouze lethargic Consience.

Whether you choose to be one of those, I leave to yourself, as indeed I cannot do otherwise, not having any Authority to command you; but am very sensible you know not only what is your Duty, but also what is expected from you to the Public. —I desire, however, that you will make no Secret of this Epistle, because, if you should have, as I do not conceive you can, any particular Reasons not to expatiate on this latter Part of it yourself, other *Parrots* may possibly be excited by it to an Undertaking so much wanted, and which, I am certain, will tend to their own Praise and Emolument in the End. —In the mean time I am, (with all due regard for your good Qualities,)

DEAR POLL,

*Your Well-wisher, and Humble
Servant,*

AMICUS VERITAS

It would require more Time than I can at present spare, and render me also too tedious to my Readers, to take that Notice it deserves, of all the various Particulars hinted at in this Letter: My Friend must therefore excuse me if I only skim, as it were, cursorily over each, and not pretend to say any thing in a decisive Manner, because I am sensible I could not give my Opinion without incurring the Displeasure of People whose Sentiments might happen to differ from mine, and I would willingly avoid that, except in Things which will not bear even a Shadow of Indifference.

His first Position I can by no means allow, that the *Parrots of Parliament Houses, Privy Councils, Common Councils, &c.* ought to be deemed to all Intents and Purposes *Parrots*; because I look upon it there is a wide Difference between them and us, and that we are not only more innocent, but likewise that we sometimes do a great deal of Good by reporting indiscriminately, and without Partiality to any Party, Side, or Person, whatever we hear: Whereas they are bound to say always the same thing, be it right or wrong, and dare never convey the Sentiments of any other than those by whom they are supported. —But, as I propose, hereafter, to entertain you with some few Thoughts on the Subject of Liberty, I shall postpone what I could offer on the Score of these kind of *Parrots* till then.

As to his charging us with a Propensity to Thieving, I must confess there have been some of us not altogether free from it, and also that the In-

nocent have frequently bore the Reproach and Punishment of our Crimes: But this ought not to be charged on us, so much as on those who give the Sentence. —I cannot here keep myself from repeating a little Tale that the ludicrous Author of *Hudibras* tells us, on an Occasion that has some kind of Parity with this of ours.

*Justice gives Sentence many Times
On one Man for another's Crimes.
As late it happened in a Town
Where liv'd a Cobler, and but one;
That out of Doctrine could cut Use,
And mend Men's Lives as well as Shoes:
This precious Brother having slain
In Time of Peace an Indian,
The mighty Tottipotymoy,
Sent to our Elders an Envoy,
Complaining sorely of the Breach
Of League, held forth by Brother Patch,
Against the Articles in Force
Between both Churches, his and ours.
For which he crav'd the Saints to render
Into his Hands, or bang the Offender.
But they, maturely having weigh'd,
They had no more but him o'the Trade;
(A Man that serv'd them in a double
Capacity, to teach, and cobble,)
Resolv'd to Spare him, yet to do
The Indian Hogan Mogan too
Impartial Justice, in his stead did
Hang an old Weaver that was bedrid.
Justice then, while she winks at Crimes,
Stumbles on Innocence sometimes.*

But, after all, it does not seem to me that *Theft*, in the common Acceptation of the Word, is very

rightly understood, and requires to be defined and rendered more intelligible than at present it is, by some masterly Hand. —There is, I think, such a Thing as an *Overt Act*, and a *Covert Act*. —By which I take it, is meant an Act *within* the Law, and an Act *without* the Law. The *one*, the Law has the Power of censuring; —the *other* is beyond its Reach. —But how to make the due Distinction between these two, nothing but the Law can determine. It is certain that there are Thefts of *Money*, —of *Plate*, —of *Jewels*, of *Apparel*, —of *Cattle*, —of *Furniture*, and such like. — And it is also as certain, that there are Thefts of Reputation, —of *Rights*, —of *Privileges*, —of *Immunities*, —of *Characters*, —of whole *Lands* and *Tenements*, — and even of all kinds of *Posts* and *Employments*, —Now, as the *latter* Class of these Thefts differs widely from the *former*, and are, for the most part, committed by a quite different Rank and Order of Men; they may perhaps have some other Denomination, which I confess myself unacquainted with, as I find many, even among the Natives here likewise are, whom I have heard speak on the Occasion. —I should be extremely glad, however, to be let right in this Point, for I should be loth to imagine, that all Degrees of People, without Exception, even of those for whom I have the most particular Regard and Veneration, should in some measure or other, be guilty of Larceny¹⁴.

The late witty and ingenious Mr. *Gay*, in his most diverting *Dramatic* Entertainment, intitled, *The Beggar's Opera*, tells us, I very well remember,

*Your little Villains must submit to Fate,
That great Ones may enjoy the World
in State.*

14 Theft of one's own belongings.

I Should be extremely sorry indeed to be assured that this Piece of Satire were as *just* as it is *severe*; but till I am so, will not give myself the Mortification of thinking it any more than the Overflowings of a momentary Spleen; —a short Sally of luxuriant Fancy, which the Author himself, who was doubtless a Man of great Good-nature, did not enough consider to correct. —Whoever, notwithstanding, examines with any Attention the whole Piece, will find that there is a constant Strain runs through it, of putting the whole Species pretty much upon a Level in this Particular: —Yet, be that as it may; —as I cannot pretend, so neither do I desire to dive into that Gentleman's real Sentiments: —Whatever they were, I should never pin my Faith on the Sleeve of any one, according to the vulgar Phrase, and therefore choose rather to continue in Uncertainty, unless I hear some substantial Reasons, and those too backed with Proofs for my Conviction on either Side of the Question.

As to what my Friend *Amicus Veritas* mentions concerning *Free-speaking*, I own, with Pride, the Propensity every *true-born Parrot* has to it; for as for the *Human Parrots*, as they put off their own Nature, to assume ours, even the most adroit¹⁵ of them, do it in that awkward Manner, with which every thing else that is assumed, must necessarily appear. — Besides, the very Maxims on which they are retained, forbid them any real Sense of it. An Author, whose Name I do not call to Mind, speaking of the *French* Parliaments, says,

*A Paris Parliament's a Power decay'd,
A Name, a Nothing, but to serve the
King,*

15 Clever or skillful.

*Who cries, I'll have it so: —I'll be obey'd.
To work they go, — none dare dispute
the Thing.
If you would show Oppression with Con-
tempt, Express it by a Paris Parliament.*

Happy Constitution! Blessed Privilege of *Brit-
ons*, who may safely utter the real Sentiments of
their Souls within the Sanction of *St. Stephen's* Pre-
cinct, that Asylum of Liberty; — who have nothing
to fear while *there*, either from the Sovereign him-
self, or even from his Ministers, when they may hap-
pen to deviate from what is commonly called the
Court Interest. — Yet will the Lines I have quoted
equally serve for any Parliament, or great Coun-
cil of a Nation, when they are found to be safe
or mean enough, to give up the Welfare of their
Constituents, and sacrifice, even their own Con-
science, Honour, and Reputation of Probity, to the
Will of an arbitrary Monarch, whether it be for mer-
cenary Aims, partial Affection, or the vain Ambi-
tion of apeing their Elders, or Superiors; which last
Inducement, in my Opinion, as frequently as any of
the former, has had Influence over the Voices: —
But let what will be the Motive, the Effect is still the
same. — *Slavery* imposed upon us by *Parliament*
is entailing Slavery upon us by Law, and becomes
constitutional, said a certain *late Patriot*, but a *living*
great Man; and however he may retract his Words,
or endeavour to evade the Meaning of them, will
be always understood and remembered.

However, as neither my Correspondent, nor
myself, can ever hope to be of the Number of
those who may be indulged in this Particular, it is
undoubtedly best for us both to be silent. — He has
shown me the Way, for which I heartily thank him,
and will not fail of following his Example, tho', per-

haps, my Spirit and Good-will renders the Restraint
no less uneasy to me, than he assures me it is to
him; and as I am very certain it is to a great many
other loyal Subjects to the *King*, Lovers of the *Royal*
Family, and zealous Friends to the *true* and *real* In-
terest of the *Nation*.

Every thing that breathes would, doubtless,
be *sui juris*¹⁶ if he might; — yet, where there is no
Confinement, no Padlock on the Tongue or Pen,
what Lengths might both run into! — Might not the
indivious¹⁷ *Malcontent* be as impudently bare-
faced in his *Aspersions* on *sovereign* Authority,
as we see the *Arians*¹⁸ are on that of *Jesus Christ*,
and what Dangers might not attend such a Licen-
tiousness!¹⁹ — Who, indeed, can answer for the
Consequences? — Experience convinces us how
prejudicial an unbridled Freedom has been to
the *Church*, and we may have Cause, by a Parity
to Reason, of apprehending it might also be the
same to the *State*.

Seech, they say, was given by Heaven to
express the Sentiments of the Mind, so was the Air
for the Benefit of our Respiration; yet, as we pay
pretty highly for the Enjoyment of the latter, from
our Windows at least, and must suffer a Distress of
our Goods and Chattels on a Non-Payment, how
can it be expected we should have the free Use
of the other without Pains and Penalties also! — All
these Things are determined by our Superiors; and
Passive Obedience, and *Non-Resistance*, I am told
by the *Casuists*²⁰, is the Doctrine of the Church of
England. — I have heard the said Church, in the
thirty-fifth Article, affirms the Book of Homilies to

16 Latin for 'of its own right'.

17 Likely to incite or cause others to become resentful or angry.

18 A Christological theory that is rejected by all the major Christian denom-
inators.

19 Unprincipled and promiscuous in their sexual dealings.

20 Someone who employs clever but flawed logic.

contain good and wholesome Maxims, and which ought to be put in practice by all Christians; and there it is expressly said, that Obedience is due to our Rulers and Governors, not only to such as are *wife* and *good*, but also to the *froward*²¹ and *indiscreet*, provided, at the same time, that they have a lawful and natural Claim to the Dignity they enjoy.

These Reflections, as I am a perfect Lover of Conformity, will, in a great Measure, moderate my excessive Love of prating; and, I should think, would even have more Weight with those who boast a greater Share of Reason. — Others, however, may act as they think proper, or according to the Dictates of the Judge within: I pretend to no Right of giving Advice in this Particular; but for my own Part, I assure the Public, that I shall take Care not to be the Vehicle through which any thing offensive shall be transmitted, and whoever expects it from me, will find themselves very much mistaken.

And so much for my Correspondents, at present; — the next Time I have the Honour to salute the Town, I propose to offer something to them of great Antiquity; which, however, the Enemies to old Things may easily modernise, if they think fit to do so.

End of No IX. of the Parrot.

RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING

British Women Satirists in the Long Eighteenth Century, edited by Amanda Hiner and Elizabeth Tasker Davis, Cambridge University Press, 2022.

Impolite Periodicals, edited by Emrys Jones, Katarina Stenke and Adam James Smith, Bucknell University Press, 2025.

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²¹ Unmanageable.

CONTRIBUTORS

EDITORIAL TEAM

Maddison Warley. Maddison is a second year English Literature student who counts Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* as her favourite eighteenth-century text. Maddison says "there are so many underrated female authors in the Eighteenth Century, so it's been incredibly rewarding (and often emotional) to help bring the words of one of them to a wider audience." Maddison is also co-host of *Dogearied: A Bookish Podcast* and Secretary of the YSJ Dead Poets Society.

Charanjoth Batth. Charanjoth is a second year English Literature student who was drawn to the project after studying Eliza Haywood's novella *Fantomina* on the module Dawn of Print. Charanjoth says "studying *Fantomina* showed me how genuinely enjoyable (and scandalous) eighteenth-century literature can be!"

Lauren Wilson. Lauren is a second year English Literature student at York St John University. She was also drawn to the project after first encountering Eliza Haywood via her novella *Fantomina*. "I just love the drama, scandal and outrageousness of *Fantomina*", Lauren says. "I'm happy we've played a part in sharing Haywood's work. We have all worked very hard to make it accessible to everyone with an interest in eighteenth-century literature."

Hannah Roberts. Hannah is a second year English Literature and Film Studies student at York St John University who, though new to the eighteenth century, is an avid reader of modern print culture (especially Total Film Magazine).

PRODUCTION TEAM

Charlotte Tunks. Charlotte is a postgraduate student on the York St John University MA in Publishing and Creative Writing. Her short stories have been published in anthologies such as the York Literary Review 2024, and Beyond the Walls 2024. She has written work that has been performed at York Theatre Royal and co-written another piece also performed at the venue.

Lauren Fenton. Local artist Lauren Fenton is a qualified illustrator, known for her contemporary treatment of historical works. She has produced popular art based on British folklore and obscure eighteenth-century texts, such as Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote*. Her keen interest in introducing lesser-known texts to modern audiences makes her ideal for this project. Furthermore, her ability to blend the real and the absurd makes her an especially appropriate fit for Haywood's periodical (a paper which claims to present serious news and opinion but has been edited by a parrot!).

SCHOLARLY CONTRIBUTORS

Dr Adam James Smith. Adam is an Associate Professor of English Literature at York St John University. His work explores the role played by cheap print in mediating the relationship between the citizen and the state in the long eighteenth century. He has published on the work Eliza Haywood, Joseph Addison, Jonathan Swift, James Montgomery and Virginia Woolf, amongst others. He co-edited *Print Culture, Agency and Regionality in the Hand Press Period* (Palgrave, 2022), *People of Print: Seventeenth Century England* (CUP, 2023) and the forth-

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coming volumes *Impolite Periodicals* (Bucknell, 2024) and *People of Print: Eighteenth Century England* (CUP, 2024). He is Chief Editor of *BSECS Criticks* and the co-editor of the eighteenth-century pages of the journal *Literature Compass*. He is also co-director of the York Research Unit for the Study of Satire and co-host of the ongoing monthly podcast *Smith & Waugh Talk About Satire*.

Professor Manushag N. Powell. Manushag is a Professor of English at Arizona State University. Her books include *Performing Authorship in Eighteenth-Century English Periodicals* (Bucknell, 2012), *British Pirates in Print and Performance* (Palgrave, 2015) and *Women's Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain, 1690–1820s* (ed. with Jennie Batchelor: Edinburgh, 2018). She is the editor of the Broadview Press edition of Daniel Defoe's *Captain Singleton* (2019) and is currently working on a new edition of *The Buccaneers of America*.

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