THE OCCASIONAL WRITER, &c.

CONTAINING

***'S LETTER,

AND A

REPLY to it;

PARAGRAPH by PARAGRAPH.

L O N D O N:

Printed for S. GREY in Old-Street;

And Sold by the Booksellers of London and Westminster.

1726
THE OCCASIONAL WRITER, &c.

Dear Sir,

I met with yours at a Bookseller's in print instead of receiving it at my Lodgings. When I wrote my Epistle I intended to be paid for it, but not in the Coin you sent me; I should have been much better pleased with a few lines directed to Mr. Maddox, importing Pray pay, &c. But I believe as you have read the Ancients you strive to imitate

An-
Augustus Caesar, who used to reward bad Panegyrics by endorsing them with worse. Your beginning is indeed very courteous: — 'Dear Sir,

'I cannot make you too early, nor ample acknowledgments, for the unlimited tender you are so kind to make me of your service, as a writer: And though you scrupled signing your name, yet the master-like strokes, with which you have delineated your picture, hindered me from being one moment at a loss to guess whose it was. The ingenious confession you make of being never actuated by any principles that sway the honest part of mankind; your having no regard to publick or private faith; your setting at nought fidelity to particulars; allegiance to Princes; love to your Country; together with all obli-


obligations, promises, oaths, and the rest of those foolish eyes, that bind weaker minds, and give laws to narrower Genius's; are marks by which it was impossible not to distinguish you. For tho' here and there, there may be some worthy Gentlemen, who may resemble you in this or that particular feature; yet the beautiful assemblage of them all is what you alone, Sir, can pretend to be master of.

This I am the more pleased with, as being almost my own very words, for you know we are all fond of our Brats.

When you say your first aim was to raise your reputation, I cannot sufficiently applaud your dexterity in making choice of that ambiguous word;
word; since it fully prevents the most detracting disposition from asserting with the least colour of truth, that you have missed of that aim: And if the method you pursued to establish it, had fully succeeded, according to your laudable and salutary schemes for this nation; History could not have furnished two heroes, worthy of making up a Triumvirate with you, if the names of Herostratus and Nero had been lost.

You cannot deny but I have succeeded in this since my Name is up, and so I may lie abed and sweat, and yet have all the Mischief laid at my Door.

But I cannot help remarking the too unfortunate extremities, to which this
this thirst of reputation and injudicious ambition, have alternately brought you: Since they first mounted you to a dangerous height, where the ignorant only envied you, and have since plunged you in an abyss, where the weak can only pity you.

As for ups and downs, highs and lows, I think there is nothing at all in them. We great Folks, as you are pleased to term me, are liable to these Vicissitudes, and are like Madam Violante, sometimes upon the Ladder, sometimes upon the Rope, and sometimes upon the Ground; and you know that nothing is so natural as a Transition of us Scribblers, who often remove from the Garret to the Cellar, and so back again to the Vault, which I suppose
is what you mean by your Abys.

I am extremely pleased at the News you tell me in what follows:

*When you boast that the first essays of your pen made a good deal of noise in the world, you do your self but justice; not only the Sorbonne, but all France, and Rome it self had reason to resound your praise and pay their humblest acknowledgments for the signal service you did them in those disputes you reconciled. But what your own country owed you, for the differences you composed abroad, and fomented at home, I believe you would not be so glad to claim, nor was it your modesty only that made you decline the reward she was preparing to bestow.*
I vow to gad, Sir, this is bran
ew to me, as I told you before,
for I never suspected my labours go-
ing farther than Grubstreet; I wish
this may not be only a put off to
save five Guineas. That you give me
Fame for Fame, which is too thin
diet for so sharp a stomach as
my aerial habitation gives me. My
dear Neighbour and Fellow Labourer
Mr. Mitchel, having so successfully
address'd you in Rhyme, I was in
hopes to have met with the like good
fortune by writing to you in Prose,
and setting your Merits in a true
light, but I perceive you hate so ful-
some a Ragoût as flattery, and can't
swallow it unless cooked up Braund
or the Muses.

YOUR next Paragraph which be-
gins with an—–
As to your conscience which you would so generously give up to my keeping, I think my self unspeakably obliged to you for so kind an offer. For tho’ most ambitious people wou’d be glad to part with that impertinent monitor, because they are apt to find him now and then a little troublesome, yet you have given such incontestible proofs of this not being your case, that I can never thank you enough for devoting to my service so indulgent a friend, and so tractable a companion: But unless you could divest me of my own and my reason to boot I fear I should not be able to make much use of this assignment.

I tell you, Sir, I have long had no use for it, and was willing to let you have it a Bargain, and therefore
fore left it in your hands; but as you seem to think it troublesome, I'll e'en take it back again, presuming it is not the worse for wearing.

'Upon the whole, Sir, I cannot but bemoan our mutual loss, that where there is so good a disposition to do me service, there should be so little ability. What would the World say of my Cause, if I should take a step that would betray my thinking it so desperate, as the calling in emancipated Slaves, proscribed Criminals, or insolvent Debtors, to support it? These Methods you know, Sir, are accounted as evident Marks of despair in Politicians, as the prescribing Kensington Gravel-Pits, or Pigeons to the Patient's Feet, are of
of despondency in Physicians: And was I so near sinking as to catch at such Reeds to support me, yet I fear I should find the Qualifications you boast of to recommend you, as little useful to a Minister, as you found them in one.

I fear by this particular that you mistake your Man, for I find myself but once mentioned in it, which is under the name of an Insolvent Debtor; for I am neither a Gravel-Pit nor a Pigeon. Nor did I ever take them for Reeds to support drowning Men; nor did I ever offer my self to serve a Minister in any capacity, being fit for no employment about him, not even that of a Sexton.
When Menas the freed-man of Pompey the younger, a man of parts without probity, and enterprising without conduct, revolted first from Pompey to Octavius, then from Octavius to Pompey, and then from Pompey to Octavius again; you may remember what was the consequence of receiving and listening to that Fugitive, and from thence may learn the reasons why I can never advise * * * * * * * * to do otherwise by you, than Augustus at last did by him; who, according to the laws of War, reaped the allowed benefit accruing from the treachery of that shameless deserter, but never put it in his power a second time to betray him.
That fame Menas you speak of I fancy must have been Valet de Chambre to Pompey, as I gather from the Name of Freed-Man, i.e. being taken out of livery; and if, Sir, you mean to recommend me to a Gentleman's service I should be much obliged to you, and think it a sufficient payment for my Panegyric; for I can assure you I can change Sides as nimbly as ever that same Gentleman could for his life. But as for Laws of War and benefits accruing from my Treachery, I could never do any thing more than stealing something out of my Master's Pocket. I am extremely flatter'd to think that the Nation honours me so much as to have so inconsiderable a Man in their thoughts; yet my Vanity flatters me so strongly that I am apt to believe you when you say,

Nor
Nor do I speak my single sentiments upon this occasion, but those of the whole nation: for believe me, dear Sir, (as hard a task as it is) you have united the opinions of mankind with regard to you, and the decent contempt which the better sort of them express for you, is as strong a mark of dislike, as the groser railing of the other: This being the case, Parthenius must be very drowsy indeed, if he could consent to trust the rudder one moment in the hands of such a Deputy, and would deserve to find that pilot's fate; a terrible one indeed, but not the worst; for who had not rather perish singly without involving the crew committed to his care, than sink all those poor confiding wretches, who had set him at the helm.
helm, and by a flameful scramble
save his own wretched Life, and
swim to shore?

You seem here by the mention
of that Man with an hard name to ac-
cuse me with getting drunk some-
times: Really, Sir, I acknowledge it
to be my misfortune, but as I never
intend to go beyond Sea again, it
won't be in my power to knock
a Ship o' th' head: Besides I hate
Water like a Cat. So, Sir, I beg
you will not think of recommending
me to a Sea Captain, for my Stom-
ach turns at the very thoughts of
the gears and biles-water, though if
I was there in a Wreck I'd scramble
for my life as well as the best of
them, and like the South-Sea Chaps
cry, the Devil take the hind-
most.

After
After giving you my reasons for not accepting your future service, I think my self oblig'd in gratitude to thank you for the good turns you have already done me. Your kind information of what is laid to my charge in the company you frequent (if it is not merely the consequence of your natural propensity to telling) is a mark of favour that claims my warmest acknowledgements: And when you next assemble that candid body, you will oblige me in telling them. I am as far from fearing the justice of any * * * scrutiny into my conduct, as I am from being hurt by the unjust reflections thrown out by those whose private envy is their only motive for public censure; and whatever contradictions these gentlemen may have observed
observed in my character; there is one which I'll venture to assure you, you will never discover, which is my ever being alarmed at an opposition from one in the importance of disgrace, who could never terrify me in the Zenith of his prosperity.

DEAR SIR, I vow to gad I am extremely your humble Servant for the obliging terms in which you here treat my poor services; which flows from your natural Benevolence not from my mean Abilities; its your Goodness more than my Deserts. But I should be obliged to you if you would give me fewer Words and more Money, for I am past the Age of loving Sugar-Plumbs. I wonder, Sir, you would call me Tell-tale, since it is extremely prejudicing
dicing my Reputation, and entirely incapacitating me from the Employment you seem to intend me of being *Valet de Chambre*, whose chief excellence must be holding his Tongue, since he is repository of his Master's dirty Secrets. As for the rest of this Paragraph it is all Heathen Greek to me, and I know no more of it than the Man in the Moon. You proceed to say,

"As to those wondering people who affect so much surprise at these changes in our Friendships and our Enemies abroad, that *France* should be now our dearest Friend, who was heretofore our most dreaded Enemy; and that the Emperor, who was so lately our darling Ally, should now become our most formidable foe; the answer to these gentle-
gentlemen is a very plain and short one, 'tis not the Emperor, nor France, nor Spain, nor this, nor t'other Potentate, to whom we must keep up a perpetual opposition, grant a constant assistance: Power will always be fluctuating amongst the Princes of Europe, and where-ever the present flow of it appears, (especially in open and direct Violations of our just rights) there is our enemy, there the proper object of our fears. And I can never think our having once lent a hand to raise the Emperor, is any argument why we should suffer him afterwards to climb what heights he pleases, at the expense and upon the ruins of this nation: The same Policy that suggested the one, justifies our putting a stop to the other; and I hope as he found our
assistance not unavailing in one situation. He may prove our opposition not insignificant in the other:

And that we may be able to set some bounds to his acquisitions, if we can't to his ambition. And therefore you will pardon me, Sir, for still differing from you as I have always done in foreign affairs; and for not thinking, that when our most valuable branches of trade are usurped, our possessions attacked, and our present happy establishment in the Protestant line threatened without provocation, and in defiance of the most solemn Treaties, we are in this case to sit still, and wait to see whether other Princes and States will quarrel and fight among themselves for our interests; and, remaining entirely indolent and indifferent
different our selves, leave to chance
and the care of other powers such
inestimable blessings, upon the pre-
servation or loss of which, the
riches, strength and security of this
nation so immediately and essen-
tially depend. But as self-love na-
turally disposes men to like those
best, next to themselves, who re-
semble them most, I do not won-
der at your having for the Empe-
or, whom you formerly so much
abhorred, so great a concern and
friendship, since he has acted so
ungrateful a part towards this na-
tion; and, by the same rule of
good Principle and Honesty, at
your appearing now so inveterate
against France, which so kindly
received and entertained you when
your guilt made you fly your own
country.
STAP my Vitals if you don't strike me stark dumb, deaf and blind! Why, Sir, Sir, are you awake! What can poor Pagan *** in his Garret have to do with France, Spain, Emperor, Treaties, Princes, States, &c. There are one or two words in it that I like very well, that fame of Riches, &c. And as to your saying that I fled for guilt from my own Country, I defy any Man to say that black is my Eye upon that account, for I only ran away for Horse-stealing. If your last Paragraph was long and related not at all to me, the following is short and pithy:

"If you will be so good to give these things in answer for me, whenever you hear me attacked upon this head, it will be all the ser-
vice I shall ever desire you to do me, and all the employment I shall ever trouble you with.

But faith, Sir, it is not quite so clear as 'tis short, be pleased to explain your self whether you'd have me get my Head broke in your service and give me no Employment but the pleasure of being beaten; at this rate one might be in the service of Honour where Folks get nothing but broken Bones and bloody Noses; and I can assure you, Sir, I always had a mortal aversion to those Bear-garden Entertainments, and tho' it is true I have lost my Teeth, yet was it neither at Fisticuffs nor Fighting; for I disposed of them in a generous way, laying them out in a noble purchase; for in lieu of them I had present
pleasure and a Wife in reversion, as Monsieur D— can tell, and Madam *, *, * testifies unto all Men. Besides, Sir, the loss of my Teeth gave me occasion to shew my her- roick Patience. Monsieur la Peroné knows how like Seneca I bore the being set in a Tub, whilst Sweat instead of Blood distilled from each Limb. With what temperance I abstained from my beloved Champagne; with what silence and heroick constancy I felt the burnings of my blister Mouth, sucked in my Nutri- ment, spit out my Teeth. Can you conceive, Sir, a Man of such Philosophy to be a dangerous Friend or a harmless Foe; tho' you treat me very despicably in the follow- ing Lines;
I know how natural it will be for a gentleman of your restless spirit, upon this repulse to turn the point of your zeal (in utrumque paratus) against the breast of him, in whose defence you offer’d to draw it: But I shall have many fewer apprehensions in making you my enemy, than I should have had in receiving you as a friend; because ’tis well known you are as harmless in one capacity as you are dangerous in the other.

I must inform you too, that if you design to be very scurrilous and abusive in your invectives, your changing your name in libels, as often as you have done your party in politicks, will not prevent your being discovered. When Proteus try’d successively the...
Flame, the Lyon and the Bear, to intimidate Aristæus. He was known baffled, conquered, and contemned in every shape; and found it as impossible to avoid doing his Victor the service he required of him, as you will find it to make me accept, or think I stand in need of any you can do me.

Yet I can tell you, Sir, that tho' I am neither a Bear or Lyon, I am a sort of a Bull I assure you, and have had my Horns gilt a la mode de Paris. What is there too dangerous for me to attempt who have ventured to marry—Believe me, Sir, it will be your best way either to take me into your own or to commend me into some other Gentleman's service, for I am capable of being either Pimp, Buffoon,
Soon, Scribbler, Poet, fathering other Men's Writings or Children, and, in fine, fit for any thing except Fighting and Fidelity. I am,

S I R,

Your most Obedient.

From my Habitation up
four pair of Stairs at
the Two fighting Cocks
in Grub-Street.

FINIS.