



THE
MAN of TASTE.

Occasion'd by an

EPISTLE

Of Mr. POPE's on that Subject.

By the Same.

W Hoe'er he be that to a Taste aspires,
Let him read this, and be what he desires.
In men and manners vers'd from life I write,
Not what was once, but what is now polite.
Those who of courtly France have made the tour,
Can scarce our English awkwardness endure.
But honest men who never were abroad,
Like England only, and its Taste applaud.
Strife still subsists, which yields the better goût;
Books or the world, the many or the few.

True Taste to me is by this touchstone known,
That's always best that's nearest to my own.
To shew that my pretensions are not vain,
My father was a play'r in Drury-lane.

Pears

Pears and pistachio-nuts my mother fold,
 He a dramatick poet, she a scold.
 His tragic Muse could countesses affright,
 His wit in boxes was my lord's delight.
 No mercenary priest e'er join'd their hands,
 Uncramp'd by wedlock's unpoetick bands.
 Laws my Pindarick parents matter'd not,
 So I was tragi-comically got.
 My infant tears a sort of measure kept,
 I squall'd in distichs, and in triplets wept.
 No youth did I in education waste,
 Happy in an hereditary Taste.
 Writing ne'er cramp'd the sinews of my thumb,
 Nor barbarous birch e'er brush'd my tender bum.
 My guts ne'er suffer'd from a college cook,
 My name ne'er enter'd in a buttery-book.
 Grammar in vain the sons of Priscian teach,
 Good parts are better than eight parts of speech :
 Since these declin'd, those undeclin'd they call,
 I thank my stars, that I declin'd them all.
 To Greek or Latin tongues without pretence,
 I trust to mother wit and father sense.
 Nature's my guide, all sciences I scorn,
 Pains I abhor, I was a poet born.

Yet is my goût for criticism such,
 I've got some French, and know a little Dutch.
 Huge commentators grace my learned shelves,
 Notes upon books out-do the books themselves.

Criticks

Criticks indeed are valuable men,
 But hyper-criticks are as good agen.
 Tho' Blackmore's works my soul with raptures fill,
 With notes by Bentley they'd be better still.
 The Boghouse-Miscellany's well design'd.
 To ease the body, and improve the mind.
 Swift's whims and jokes for my resentment call,
 For he displeases me that pleases all.
 Verse without rhyme I never could endure,
 Uncouth in numbers, and in sense obscure.
 To him as nature, when he ceas'd to see,
 Milton's an universal blank to me.
 Confirm'd and settled by the nation's voice,
 Rhyme is the poet's pride, and people's choice.
 Always upheld by national support,
 Of market, university, and court :
 Thomson, write blank ; but know that for that reason,
 These lines shall live when thine are out of season.
 Rhyme binds and beautifies the poet's lays,
 As London ladies owe their shape to stays.

Had Cibber's self the Careless Husband wrote,
 He for the laurel ne'er had had my vote :
 But for his epilogues and other plays,
 He thoroughly deserves the modern bays.
 It pleases me, that Pope unlaurell'd goes,
 While Cibber wears the bays for play-house prose :
 So Britain's monarch once uncover'd fate,
 While Bradshaw bully'd in a broad-brimm'd hat.

Long

Long live old Curl ! he ne'er to publish fears
 The speeches, verses, and last will of peers.
 How oft has he a publick spirit shewn,
 And pleas'd our ears, regardless of his own ?
 But to give merit due, though Curl's the fame,
 Are not his brother book-sellers the same ?
 Can statutes keep the British press in awe,
 While that sells best, that's most against the law ?

Lives of dead play'rs my leisure hours beguile,
 And Sessions-papers tragedize my stile.
 'Tis charming reading in Ophelia's life,
 So oft a mother, and not once a wife :
 She could with just propriety behave,
 Alive with peers, with monarchs in her grave :
 Her lot how oft have envious harlots wept,
 By prebends bury'd, and by generals kept.

T'improve in morals Mandevil I read,
 And Tyndal's scruples are my settled creed.
 I travell'd early, and I soon saw through
 Religion all, ere I was twenty-two,
 Shame, pain, or poverty shall I endure,
 When ropes or opium can my ease procure ?
 When money's gone, and I no debts can pay,
 Self-murder is an honourable way.
 As Pasaran directs I'd end my life,
 And kill myself, my daughter, and my wife.
 Burn but that Bible which the parson quotes,
 And men of spirit all shall cut their throats.

But not to writings I confine my pen,
 I have a Taste for buildings, musick, men.
 Young travell'd coxcombs mighty knowledge boast,
 With superficial smattering at most.
 Not so my mind, unsatisfied with hints,
 Knows more than Budgel writes, or Roberts prints.
 I know the town, all houses I have seen,
 From High-Park corner down to Bednal-Green.
 Sure wretched Wren was taught by bungling Jones,
 To murder mortar, and disfigure stones !
 Who in Whitehall can symmetry discern ?
 I reckon Covent-garden church a barn.
 Nor hate I less thy vile cathedral, Paul !
 The choir's too big, the cupola's too small :
 Substantial walls and heavy roofs I like,
 'Tis Vanbrug's structures that my fancy strike :
 Such noble ruins ev'ry pile wou'd make,
 I wish they'd tumble for the prospect sake.
 To lofty Chelsea, or to Greenwich dome,
 Soldiers and sailors all are welcom'd home.
 Her poor to palaces Britannia brings,
 St. James's hospital may serve for kings.
 Buildings so happily I understand,
 That for one house I'd mortgage all my land.
 Dorick, Ionick, shall not there be found,
 But it shall cast me threescore thousand pound.
 From out my honest workmen, I'll select
 A Bricklay'r, and proclaim him articheft ;

First bid him build me a stupendous dome,
 Which having finish'd, we set out for Rome;
 Take a week's view of Venice and the Brent,
 Stare round, see nothing, and come home content.
 I'll have my Villa too, a sweet abode,
 Its situation shall be London road:
 Pots o'er the door I'll place like Cits balconies,
 Which ^a Bentley calls the Gardens of Adonis.

I'll have my gardens in the fashion too,
 For what is beautiful that is not new?
 Fair four-legg'd temples, theatres that vye
 With all the angles of a Christmas-pye.
 Does it not merit the beholder's praise,
 What's high to sink? and what is low to raise?
 Slopes shall ascend where once a green-house stood,
 And in my horse-pond I will plant a wood.
 Let misers dread the hoarded gold to waste,
 Expencc and alteration shews a Taste.

In curious paintings I'm exceeding nice,
 And know their several beauties by their price.
 Auctions and sales I constantly attend,
 But chuse my pictures by a skilful friend.
 Originals and copies much the same.
 The picture's value is the painter's name.

My Taste in sculpture from my choice is seen,
 I buy no statues that are not obscene.

^a Bentley's Milton, Book 9. ver. 439.

In spite of Addison and ancient Rome,
 Sir Cloudefly Shovel's is my fav'rite tomb.
 How oft have I with admiration stood,
 To view some city-magistrate in wood !
 I gaze with pleasure on a lord-mayor's head,
 Cast with propriety in gilded lead.
 Oh could I view through London as I pass,
 Some broad Sir Balaam in Corinthian brass :
 High on a pedestal, ye freemen, place
 His magisterial paunch and griping face ;
 Letter'd and gilt, let him adorn Cheapside,
 And grant the tradesman, what a king's deny'd.

Old coins and medals I collect, 'tis true,
 Sir Andrew has 'em, and I'll have 'em too.
 But among friends if I the truth might speak,
 I like the modern, and despise th' antique.
 Tho' in the drawers of my japan bureau,
 To lady Gripeall I the Cæsars shew,
 'Tis equal to her ladyship or me,
 A copper Otho, or a Scotch baubeè.

Without Italian, or without an ear,
 To Bononcini's musick I adhere :
 Musick has charms to sooth a savage breast,
 And therefore proper at a sheriff's feast.
 My soul has oft a secret pleasure found,
 In the harmonious bagpipe's lofty sound.
 Bagpipes for men, shrill German-flutes for boys,
 I'm English born, and love a grumbling noise.

The

The stage should yield the solemn organ's note,
 And scripture tremble in the Eunuch's throat.
 Let Senefino sing, what David writ,
 And hallelujahs charm the pious pit.
 Eager in throngs the town to Hester came,
 And Oratorio was a lucky name.
 Thou, Heidegger ! the English Taste hast found,
 And rul'st the mob of quality with sound.
 In Lent, if masquerades displease the town,
 Call e'm Ridotto's, and they still go down.
 Go on prince Phiz ! to please the British Nation,
 Call thy next Masquerade a Convocation.

Bears, lions, wolves, and elephants I breed,
 And Philosophical Transactions read.
 Next lodge I'll be Free-mason, nothing less,
 Unless I happen to be F. R. S.

I have a palate, and (as yet) two ears,
 Fit company for porters or for peers.
 Of ev'ry useful knowledge I've a share,
 But my top talent is a bill of fare.
 Sir loins and rumps of beef offend my eyes,
 Pleas'd with frogs fricasseed, and coxcomb-pies.
 Dishes I chuse though little, yet genteel,
 Snails the first course, and peepers crown the meal.
 Pigs heads with hair on, much my fancy please,
 I love young colly-flow'rs if stew'd in cheese,
 And give ten guineas for a pint of peas.

}

No tattling servants to my table come,
 My grace is silence, and my waiter dumb.
 Queer country-puts extol queen Befs's reign,
 And of lost hospitality complain.
 Say thou that dost thy father's table praise,
 Was there mahogena in former days ?

Oh ! could a British barony be sold !
 I would bright honour buy with dazling gold.
 Could I the privilege of peer procure,
 The rich I'd bully, and oppress the poor.
 To give is wrong, but it is wronger still,
 On any terms to pay a tradesman's bill.
 I'd make the insolent mechanicks stay,
 And keep my ready money all for play.
 I'd try if any pleasure could be found,
 In tossing up for twenty-thousand pound.
 Had I whole counties, I to White's would go,
 And set land, woods, and rivers, at a throw.
 But should I meet with an unlucky run,
 And at a throw be gloriously undone ;
 My debts of honour I'd discharge the first,
 Let all my lawful creditors be curs'd :
 My title would preserve me from arrest,
 And seizing hired horses is a jest.

I'd walk the morning with an oaken stick,
 With gloves and hat, like my own footman, Dick.
 A footman I wou'd be, in outward show,
 In sense, and education, truly so.

As for my head it should ambiguous wear
 At once a perriwig and its own hair.
 My hair I'd powder in the women's way,
 And dress and talk of dressing more than they.
 I'll please the maids of honour, if I can;
 Without black velvet breeches, what is man?
 I will my skill in button-holes display,
 And brag how oft I shift me every day.
 Shall I wear cloaths in aukward England made?
 And sweat in cloth, to help the woollen trade?
 In French embroid'ry and in Flanders lace
 I'll spend the income of a treasurer's place.
 Deard's bill for baubles shall to thousands mount,
 And I'd out-di'mond even the di'mond count.
 I would convince the world by tawdry cloaths
 That belles are less effeminate than beaux,
 And doctor Lamb should pare my lordship's toes.

To boon companions I my time would give,
 With players, pimps, and parasites I'd live.
 I would with jockeys from Newmarket dine,
 And to rough-riders give my choicest wine;
 I would carefs some stableman of note,
 And imitate his language and his coat.
 My ev'nings all I would with sharpers spend,
 And make the thief-catcher my bosom friend.
 In Fig the prize-fighter by day delight,
 And sup with Colley Cibber ev'ry night.

Should I perchance be fashionably ill,
 I'll send for Misaubin, and take his pill.
 I should abhor, though in the utmost need,
 Arbuthnot, Hollins, Wigan, Lee, or Mead ;
 But if I found that I grew worse and worse,
 I'd turn off Misaubin and take a nurse.
 How oft when eminent physicians fail,
 Do good old women's remedies prevail ?
 When beauty's gone, and Chloe's struck with years,
 Eyes she can touch, or she can syringe ears.
 Of graduates I dislike the learned rout,
 And chuse a female doctor for the gout.

Thus would I live, with no dull pedants curs'd,
 Sure, of all blockheads, scholars are the worst.
 Back to your universities, ye fools,
 And dangle arguments on strings in schools :
 Those schools which Universities they call,
 'Twere well for England were there none at all.
 With ease that loss the nation might sustain,
 Supply'd by Goodman's fields and Drury-lane.
 Oxford and Cambridge are not worth one farthing,
 Compar'd to Haymarket and Covent-garden :
 Quit those, ye British youth, and follow these,
 Turn players all, and take your 'squires degrees,
 Boast not your incomes now, as heretofore,
 Ye book-learn'd feats ! the theatres have more :
 Ye stiff-rump'd heads of colleges be dumb ;
 A single Eunuch gets a larger sum.

Have

Have some of you three hundred by the year;
 Booth, Rich, and Cibber, twice three thousand clear,
 Should Oxford to her sister Cambridge join
 A year's rack-rent, and arbitrary fine:
 Thence not one winter's charge would be defray'd,
 For play-house, opera, ball, and masquerade.
 Glad I congratulate the judging age,
 The players are the world, the world the stage.

I am a politician too, and hate
 Of any party, ministers of state:
 I'm for an Act, that he, who sev'n whole years
 Has serv'd his king and country, lose his ears.

Thus from my birth I'm qualified you find,
 To give the laws of Taste to human kind.
 Mine are the gallant schemes of politesse,
 For books, and buildings, politicks, and dress.
 This is true Taste, and who so likes it not,
 Is blockhead, coxcomb, puppy, fool, and sot.

