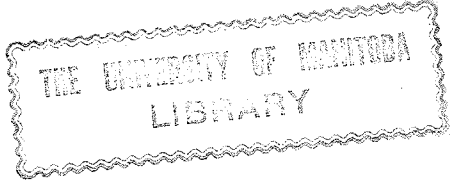


SOCIAL LIFE IN ENGLAND DURING
THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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THE SOCIAL LIFE IN ENGLAND DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AS SHOWN BY THE PERIODICALS
OF THE TIMES, THE TATLER, THE
SPECTATOR, AND THE
GUARDIAN.



The Tatler, the Spectator and the Guardian, periodicals published in England during the years 1709-1713, were produced mainly by the efforts of Sir Richard Steele, the English essayist and playwright. In all these publications, Steele was admirably supported by Addison, and, when associated with Addison, soon rose to the dignity of a teacher of wisdom and morals. In his character sketches, social delineations and critical discussions, Steele evinced quick observation, literary insight, and an easy and virile grip of his theme: and if his form was sometimes loose even to crudeness, his treatment was at any rate invariably fresh and enjoyable. In the sphere of the social essay also, Addison's art was consummate. To an unflinching tact of style he added a perception of character not at all dramatic, but marked by well-bred humor and nice discrimination.

These papers, however, were not merely the work of Steele and Addison. They indeed created the literary form, but the ideas and spirit of their essays were produced in

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collaboration with the whole age. It was a time when the middle class, triumphant in society as in politics, set itself to create a culture and a civilization of its own. All through the seventeenth century the bourgeois, advancing in wealth and education, had looked with little sympathy on the Renaissance ideals of self assertion and irresponsibility; and after the Civil War when the whole nation was utterly sick of mediaeval lawlessness and savagery, this body of opinion grew in power and extent.

A mere accident gave point and direction to the whole movement. During the war an eastern merchant imported coffee to London and set up a coffee house in imitation of the taverns. Others followed his example and the bourgeois frequently repaired to these institutions to exchange views on politics. Before the end of the century the custom had grown so universal that every educated Londoner had some such resort at which he could always be found at certain hours. While citizens were vaguely aspiring to a higher standard of manners and ideas, it was of the utmost importance that they should have such centres of intercommunication. By argument and discussion they soon began to understand their own aims more clearly; the middle class became conscious of itself; it found its own public opinion; it gained a distinct point of view.

But what was even more important the coffee houses

opened up a new world of humor and character. Never before in English society had eccentricity enjoyed free play. But now whether the bourgeois came to discuss politics or religion, they generally ended by studying each other's idiosyncrasies of thought and manner.

The coffee house did not only encourage a curiosity in the intricacies of individuality. Conversation and argument require a special code of manners. Consequently men began to value tolerance, self-suppression and docility, and learned that consideration for others was a necessity in all social relations worthy of the name of civilization.

Thus thousands of intelligent Londoners who drank coffee and smoked at White's, Stm James, Will's or Jenny Mann's had cultivated new tastes and new ideals. Along with these new interests had crept in unavoidably foreign fopperies, ignorance of the rules of propriety, and indecorous affectations, which had introduced many absurdities into public and private life. For these absurdities no remedy had been provided in the funds of general instruction, and consequently they prevailed with impunity until the appearance of Sir Richard Steele and the other essayists.

In the year 1709, Steele, while planning a tri-weekly newspaper, had the happy inspiration of adding to each number discussions on manners, literature, gallantry and the

thousand other topics daily canvassed in the coffee houses. In fact this paper was to contain discussions on everything that interested the people of that day. This purpose was happily and concisely stated in the motto of The Tatler--

"Whate'er men do, or think, or say, or dream,
Our motely paper seizes for its theme".

So far there was nothing essentially new in this enterprise of discussing every day topics. "Ana" jest books, essays, Theophrastian characters, and exposures such as Greehe's coney-catching pamphlets or Dekker's Bellman, had already for nearly a century familiarized the reading public with such miscellaneous comments, counsels and anecdotes. Steele was merely producing these types of literature in a journalistic form.

Steele realized that the new reading public did not merely want to be amused. They were bent on creating a new and more humanized standard of culture and morals. They had acquired in their discussions the habit of investigating people's characteristics and motives, of ridiculing bad taste and exposing affectation and hypocrisy. Nay, more, they were learning how to think. But before Steele no writer had really succeeded in appealing to their interests. Whatever attempts had been made to reform the manners and customs seemed to have been accompanied by a repulsive and unaccommodating sternness. The more serious duties of religion had not

been neglected by those who wrote to reform the age; but for common life and manners no precepts had been laid down, except what were too general or too precise. The instructions contained in the systematic writers on morality were not devoid of force or argument; but this style was unpolished and with the gay and idle ill-calculated to agree.

Steele's paper gave the people exactly what they had been waiting for. They not only interested themselves in the art of courtesy and in the creation of a sense of honour, but they wanted to know what books to read and what plays to admire. Steele was ready to treat all such topics in a progressive and critical spirit. Instead of deriving his material from books as former humanists and moralists (even Bacon and Ben Johnson) had done, he drew it directly from the conversations and discussions of the coffee houses, and, in this sense, collaborated with his whole age.

He did not seek in any way to conceal that his purpose was to ridicule the absurdities practised by his fellow citizens. In Tatler number 226, his aim is clearly stated:- "It is one of the designs of this paper to transmit to posterity an account of everything that is monstrous in my own times", and again in Spectator No. 435:- "I look upon myself as one sent to watch the manners and behaviours of my countrymen and contemporaries, and to mark down every absurd fashion, ridiculous custom or affected form of speech that makes its ap-

appearance in the world during the course of these my speculations." Also in Tatler No. 3 he declares that he belongs to the society for Reformation of manners, and that he intends to have notices from all public assemblies, and that he will write about indecorums, improprieties and negligences in such as should give better examples. "After this declaration, if a fine lady thinks fit to giggle in church, or a great beau come in drunk to a play, either shall be sure to hear of it in my ensuing paper."

By this the general opinion was created that all the characters delineated or alluded to were real. This certainly kept up the public attention to these papers, and the authors, being aware that nothing can render a work more popular than the supposition that it contains a proportion of scandal or personal history, were not very anxious to deprive themselves of a hold on the public mind, which they could and had the virtue to turn to the best of purposes. In writings of this kind it is essential that vice and folly should be illustrated by characters; and to readers of a certain description it is a delightful employment to reduce fictitious to real names, conjecture wisely on place or person and find resemblances where none were meant.

The Tatler ran for two years, (April 12, 1709 - Jan. 2, 1711) and was then succeeded by The Spectator (March 1711 - Dec. 6, 1712). The new periodical followed the same ideal as

its predecessor but with infinitely more success. To begin with, the paper definitely established its character by excluding all political discussions and confining itself to questions of morals, manners and culture. Secondly, it appeared every day, and by sheer frequency intertwined itself with the habits of its readers till it became, as a matter of course, the intellectual accompaniment of morning tea and evening coffee. And thirdly, Addison contrived to introduce a more lucid and elegant style. The Tatler had been nearly always composed in a hurry; and its papers had all the freedom and diffusiveness of conversation. The Spectator retained this air of informality but chastened it with art. Every thought is reduced to its simplest and clearest form of expression; every sentence has its proper place in forming the main idea of the essay and yet each theme, despite this concentration, seems to find its way almost negligently into the thoughts of the reader. Some of Steele's papers still betray the consequence of "The Tatler", but all Addison's best work is characterized by this studied felicity.

But if the Spectator surpassed its predecessor in style, it achieved an even greater advance in thought. The moralists of the seventeenth century had drawn their wisdom from books; Steele had drawn his from experience, but Addison showed how to draw from both sources. He combined curiosity with reflection and thus gave the eighteenth century the new

ideal of culture for which they were searching. Steele followed the example of his collaborator with the result that their work marks an epoch in English literature. All the activities of life, - commerce, art, literature, society, home-life, education, love, marriage, vice, religion; all sorts and conditions of men - statesmen, courtiers, soldiers, noblemen, prentices, merchants, fops, lovers, servants, yokels and gipsies, - are depicted by a penetrating but humorous observer in the eight volumes of *The Spectator*. But English society is not only portrayed to the life. It is judged, criticised and illustrated by the light of other nations and times. It was an age when Latin, Italian and French were read extensively and the *Spectator* showed how the wisdom, humor and experience of these literatures could be used as a guide to their own thought and conduct. These essayists succeeded in supplying the lesser wants of society, which were overlooked by graver writers and more bulky theorists, or, in the language of Addison, in "bringing philosophy out of libraries, schools and colleges to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea tables and in coffee houses".

Among the most conspicuous members of society in the period we are studying were the pretty fellow, the very pretty fellow, the smart fellow, the fine gentleman and the esquire. "A very pretty fellow was a character by himself, a person exalted above a pretty fellow by a peculiar sprightliness, as

one who by a distinguishing valor outstrips his companions". Colonel Brunett, one of the chief of these, a man of fashion, practised a very jaunty way of behavior because he was too careless to know when he offended and too sanguine to be mortified if he did know it. He was cordially received in the town, and successful among the wits, familiar among the ladies and dissolute among the rakes. He was treated well by everybody just because others treated him well. He himself could no more account for his success than those by whom he succeeded. This was a true woman's man and in the first degree a very pretty fellow.

"Next to this man was another who was peculiarly formed for the service of the ladies. His chief merit was to be of no consequence. He was admitted at all hours; all he said or did which would offend in another was passed over in him, and whatever pleased, doubly pleased if it came from him. No one noticed when he was wrong, and all admired when he was right". All who opposed him got the character of fools.

The term "Smart Fellow" was applied to a man of double capacity. "One would be sure to know him when his livelihood or education was in the civil list, and he expressed vivacity or mettle above his position by a little jerk in his motion, short trip in his steps, well-fancied

lining of his coat, or any other indications which might be given in a vigorous dress. He was exactly what his tailor, his hosier and his milliner conspired to make him*.

It happened one day to be the fate of the Guardian to fall in with a circle of young ladies at their afternoon tea-table. At first the young ladies indulged in various motions of the fan, and tossing of the head, intermixed with all the pretty kinds of laughter as a modish way of shining and being witty. However, they at last settled into something like conversation, and the talk ran upon fine gentlemen. From the opinion given and the exceptions made he found the ladies were not difficult to please, and that the town swarmed with fine gentlemen. "A nimble pair of heels, a smooth complexion, a full-bottomed wig, a laced shirt, an embroidered suit, a pair of fringed gloves, a hat and feather, anyone or more of these and the like accomplishments ennobled a man and raised him above the vulgar in the imagination of those ladies. On the contrary, a modest, serious behaviour, a plain dress, a thick pair of shoes, a leathern belt, a waistcoat not lined with silk, and such like imperfections, degraded a man, and were so many blots in his escutcheon. One of the liveliest of that gay assembly took exception to the gentility of Sir Wm. Harty, because he wore a frieze coat and breakfasted upon toast and ale*.

In connection with the above a rather odd advertisement was inserted at the end of Guardian 34 for the benefit of the female readers, namely, that "the gilt chariot, the diamond ring, the gold snuff-box and brocade sword-knot were no essential parts of a fine gentleman, but might be used by him provided he cast his eye upon them but once a day".

To be fashionable one had to have a title. Consequently the rank of esquire was intruded upon by such as had no pretence to that honour. In the Middle Temple there were five thousand esquires; in the Inner four thousand; in the King's Bench Walks the whole buildings were inhabited by esquires only. In the counties the esquires were more imposed upon. Those who worked in the fields, or rode madly after foxes, or ventured their necks full speed after a hawk immediately called themselves esquires. Instead of being temperate, cleanly, sober and chaste as true esquires, these wore shirts half a week, and were drunk twice a day. They were also excessive in their food. They did not know that it was not the quantity they ate, but the manner of eating that made an esquire. In fact, almost everybody, even office clerks, were esquires.

No doubt also many of these numerous esquires were to be found at the dazzling social functions of the times. As the manners of the would-be esquire revealed the falsity of his claims to that title, so did the behaviour of the county beau

in company distinguish him plainly from the polished courtier of the city. To these differences in the codes of manners we are indebted for many amusing instances derived from the behaviour of people in company. In Spectator 240 there is a letter from Rustic Sprightly complaining of the unhappy arrival of a courtier or town gentleman in their company. On entering a room, this person always made a profound bow, and fell back, then recovered with a soft air and made a bow to the next, and likewise to one or two more, and then took in the larger portion of the room by passing them in a continual bow until he reached the person he wished particularly to entertain. All this was done so gracefully and with such assurance that, of course, his manners immediately became the fashion. This aroused the anger of Rustic Sprightly, who previously had been quite a favorite with the ladies, all of whom he had been accustomed to salute by kissing no matter how large the gathering was. He boasted that he had always genteely avoided hampering his spurs in their skirts, and they had courtesied prettily and received him cordially. But since the arrival of this courtier, everything was changed and not a lady would be kissed.

Quite a contrast to this genteel behaviour of the drawing room was the impudent behaviour of the people in the

(Spectator No. 240).

streets . Anyone walking on the streets of London at that time could easily discern in the countenances of all the young fellows blustering airs, big looks and bold fronts which bespoke a courage above the Grecians. Any man in a red coat would tell you by a full stare that he was a bold man. Contempt was met in every street, expressed in different manners by the scornful look, the elevated eyebrow, and the swelling nostrils of the proud and prosperous. The prentice spoke his disrespect by an extended finger and the porter by stealing out his tongue. If a country gentleman appeared a little curious in observing the edifices, signs, clocks, coaches and dials, the polite rabble of the town who were acquainted with those objects ridiculed his rusticity. The Spectator once saw a fellow with a burden on his head steal a hand down from his load and slyly twirl the feather of a squire's hat behind him; while the offended person was swearing or angry , all the wag wits on the highway were grinning in applause of the ingenuous rogue that gave him the tip and the folly of him who had not eyes all around his head to prevent receiving it. These things arose from a general affectation of smartness, wit and courage.

Among many of the illustrious young men of the city, especially the young gentlemen belonging to the inns of court,

it became quite the fashion to drive a hackney-coach. The Spectator one day met several of these young men upon Hampstead-Heath and was finally persuaded by them to get into a coach box. With the good instructions of his tutors, who were on all sides encouraging him and assisting him, and through his own natural sagacity, he managed to drive fifty paces with tolerable success. Then of course, he had to use the whip. This the horses resented so much, that they gave a sudden start and thereby pitched him directly on his head, as he remembered about half an hour after. This not only deprived him of all the knowledge he had gained for fifty yards before, but almost broke his neck.

The Spectator had almost forgotten this incident, when, one day, a lively young fellow in a fustian coat shot past him, beckoned a coach, and told the coachman he wanted to go as far as Chelsea. They agreed upon the price; the young fellow mounted the coach box and insisted on driving, and ordered the coachman to sit inside. The fellow thereupon surrendered his whip, scratched his head, and crept inside the coach. As the Spectator had occasion to go to the Strand about the same time, he followed this young fellow, and observed how he behaved himself in his high station. He got along with great composure until he came to the pass, which was a military term the coachmen had given to the strait at St. Clements' church. At that place there were always coaches waiting, and as he approached the drivers smiled and winked at

each other, as if they had some roguery in their heads. When our smart young coachman came within reach, the first of them struck him full across the shoulders with his whip. This action he ingeniously termed endorsing; and, indeed, not one of them failed to endorse him as he passed through this gauntlet. The young coachman was at first a little uneasy under this and was going to take all the numbers of the coaches, but his anger was at last assuaged by the worthy gentleman inside the coach, and he was prevailed upon to continue the journey. It was a custom among the coachmen when they saw a brother tottering in his seat to lend him a hand to settle him again in it.

Servants were only in a lower degree what their masters were; and usually affected an imitation of their manners, so that there were in liveries beaux, fops and coxcombs in as high perfection as among people that kept equipage. It was a common custom for servants when they were out of their master's sight to assume their master's title in a humorous way. On account of this custom, characters and distinctions became so familiar to them that a certain insolence arose among servants and they took no notice of any man, unless he was an acquaintance of their master.

While the Spectator was dining one day near the house of peers, he heard the maid come down and tell the landlady at

the bar that my lordship swore he would throw her out at the window if she did not bring up more mild beer, and that my lord duke would have a double mug of puri. At the same time his surprise was increased by hearing low and rustic voices speaking and answering to each other upon the public affairs, by the names of the most illustrious of the nobility. Then, suddenly, one came running in to announce that the house was rising. Immediately clamor filled the place, and one mug was scored to the marquis of such a place, oil and vinegar to such an earl, three quarts to my new lord for wetting his title and so forth. It was a thing almost too notorious to mention the crowds of servants and their insolence, near the courts of justice, and the stairs towards the supreme assembly where there was a universal mockery of all order, such riotous clamour and licentious confusion, that one would think the whole nation lived in jest and that there was no such thing as rule or distinction.

To Hyde Park the gentry brought their lackeys and there all they said at their tables or acted in their houses was communicated to the whole town. Among these people, coquettes and prudes were as well rallied, and insolence and pride exposed (allowing for their want of education) with as much humor and good sense as in the politest companies. Lovers and men of intrigue could be met among the lackeys as well as at White's or in the side boxes. Then, as now, it was

recognized as a general observation that all servants ran in some measure into the manners and behaviour of those whom they served.

"In the fashionable world of the eighteenth century fans were very popular. Indeed, women were armed with fans as men with swords and sometimes did more execution with them. In order that ladies might be entire mistresses of the weapon which they bore, there was established an acadamey for training young women in the exercise of the fan, according to the most fashionable airs and motions that were practised at court. The ladies who carried fans were drawn up twice a day in a great hall, where they were instructed in the use of their arms and exercised by the following words of command:- "Handle your fans;" "Unfurl your fans;" "Discharge your fans;" "Flutter your fans;" "Ground your fans;" "Recover your fans." By the right observation of these few plain words a woman of tolerable genius who would apply herself diligently to her exercise for the space of one half year could give herfan all the graces that might possibly enter into that little modish machine. There was scarcely any emotion of the mind which did not produce a suitable agitation in the fan; so that if one saw only the fan of a disciplined lady, one could tell whether she laughed, frowned or blushed. A fan was either a prude or a coquette according to the nature of the person who bore it."

"The snuff box among men was almost as great a favorite as the fan among the women. This is evidenced by the following advertisement taken from *The Spectator* 138. "The exercise of the snuff box according to the most fashionable airs and motions, in opposition to the exercise of the fan, will be taught with the best plain or perfumed snuff at Charles Lillie's perfumer, at the corner of Beaufort buildings in the Strand, and attendance will be given for the benefit of the young merchants about the exchange for about two hours every day at noon, except Saturdays, at a toy shop near Garroway's coffee house. There will likewise be taught the ceremony of the snuff box, or rules for offering snuff to a stranger, a friend or a mistress, according to the degree of familiarity or distance, with an explanation of the carelessness, the scornful, the politic and the surly pinch, and the gestures proper to each of them.

N.B. The undertaker does not doubt but that in a short time he will have formed a body of regular snuff boxes ready to meet and make head against all the regiment of fans which have been lately disciplined and are now in motion."

Fashionable affectations were also very prevalent. This fantastical humor was so general that there was hardly a man who was not more or less tainted with it. "The first of this order of men were the valetudinarians, who were never in health, but complained of illness, and rested every day till

noon and then devoured all that came before them. Lady Dainty was convinced that it was necessary for a gentlewoman to be out of order, and to preserve that character, she dined every day in her closet at twelve, that she might adorn her table at two, and be unable to eat anything in public. About five years before, it was the fashion to be short-sighted. A man would not own an acquaintance until he had first examined him with his glass. At a lady's entrance into the theatre, you might see tubes levelled at her from every quarter of the pit and side boxes. However, that mode of infirmity went out, and the age recovered its sight; but the blind seemed to be succeeded by the lame, and a jaunty limp was considered beautiful. A cane was part of the dress of a prig, and was always worn upon a button for fear he should be thought to have occasion for it, and be esteemed really and not genteelly a cripple. As for these peaceable cripples there was no foundation for their behaviour, except that it might be supposed that in such a warlike age some thought a cane the next honor to a wooden leg. This sort of affectation ran from one link or member to another. Before the limpers came in there was a race of lispers, fine persons, who took an aversion to particular letters in our language. Some never uttered the letter H and others had as mortal a hatred of S. Others had their fashionable defect in their ears, and would have you repeat all that you had said twice over."

A very amusing account is given by Isaac Bickerstaff in "The Tatler" of calls made by his friend, Sam Trusty, on two old ladies who had formerly been leaders in society. "Returning home this evening a little before my usual hour, I scarcely had seated myself in my easy chair, stirred the fire and stroked my cat, when I heard somebody come rumbling upstairs. I saw my door opened, and a human figure advancing towards me, so fantastically put together that it was some minutes before I discovered it to be my old and intimate friend, Sam Trusty. Immediately I rose up and placed him in my own seat, a compliment I pay to few. The first thing he uttered was, "Isaac, fetch me a cup of your cherry brandy before you offer to ask me a question. "He drank a lusty draught, sat silent for some time, and at last broke out: "I am come", quoth he, "to insult thee for an old dotard as thou art in ever defending the women. I have this evening visited two widows, who are in that state which you call an 'after life'; I suppose you mean by it an existence which grows out of past entertainments and is an untimely delight in the satisfactions upon which they once set their hearts too much to be ever able to relinquish. Have pat patience", continued he, "till I give you a succinct account of my ladies and this night's adventure. They are much of an age but very different in their characters. The one of them, with all the advances that years have made upon her, goes on in a certain romantic road of love and friendship which she fell into in her teens; the other has transferred

the amorous passions of her first years to the love of cronies
 pets and favorites with which she is always surrounded. But
 the genius of each of them will best appear by what happened
 to me at their houses. About five this afternoon, being tired
 with study, the weather inviting and time lying a little upon
 my hands, I resolved, at the instigation of my evil genius, to
 visit them, their husbands having been our contemporaries.
 This I thought I could do without much trouble for both live
 in the next street. I went first to my Lady Canomile; and the
 butler, who had lived long in the family and had seen me often
 in his master's time, ushered me very civilly into the parlor
 and told me, though my lady had given strict orders to be
 denied, he was sure I might be admitted and bade the black
 boy acquaint his lady that I had come to wait upon her. The
 boy soon returned with his lady's humble service to me, desir-
 ing I would excuse her, for she could not possibly see me or
 anybody else for it was opera night.

I soon got to Mrs. Feeble's, she that was formerly
 Betty Frisk. You surely remember her. Tom Feeble of Brazen
 Nose fell in love with her for her fine dancing. Well,
 Mistress Ursula, without further ceremony carries me up to her
 mistress' chamber, where I found her environed by four of the
 most mischievous animals that can ever infest a family: an old
 shock dog with one eye, a monkey chained to one side of the
 chimney, a grey squirrel to the other, and a parrot waddling

in the middle of the room. However, for a while, all was in profound tranquillity. Upon the mantle, for I am a pretty curious observer, stood a pot of lambetive electuary, with a stick of licorice and near it a phial of rose water and powder of tutty. Upon the table lay a pipe filled with betony and colt's-foot, a roll of wax candle, a silver spitting pot, and a seville orange. The lady was placed in a huge wicker chair, and her feet were wrapped up in flannel, supported by cushions; and in this attitude would you believe it Isaac, she was reading a romance. The first compliments over, as she was industriously endeavoring upon conversation, a violent fit of coughing seized her. This wakened Shock and in a trice the whole room was in an uproar; for the dog barked, the squirrel squealed, the monkey chattered, the parrot screamed, and Ursula to appease them was more clamorous than all the rest. At length quiet was restored. A chair was drawn for me, where I was no sooner seated than the parrot fixed his horny beak as sharp as a pair of scissors in one of my heels, just above the shoe. I sprang from the place with an unusual agility, and so being within the monkey's range he snatches off my new bob wig and throws it upon two apples that were roasting by a sullen sea-coal fire. I was nimble enough to save it from further damage than singeing the foretop. I put it on and composing myself as well as I could, I drew my chair towards the other side of the chimney. The good lady as soon as she recovered

breath, used it in making apologies, and with great eloquence and a numerous train of words lamented my misfortune. In the middle of her harangue, I felt something scratching near my knee, and, feeling what it should be, found the squirrel had got into my coat pocket. As I endeavored to remove him from his burrow, he made his teeth meet through the fleshy part of my forefinger. This gave me an inexpressible pain. The Hungary water was immediately brought to bathe it and gold beaters skin applied to stop the blood. The lady renewed her excuses, but being out of all patience I abruptly took my leave, and, hobbling downstairs with needless haste, I set my foot in a pail of water, and down we came to the bottom together."

Before the appearance of the essayists few moral writers had penetrated into domestic circles. In examining the manners of domestic life, a very copious fund of ridicule was derived from observing the various effects of a taste for expense and show which was voluntary rather than compelled by the mandates of fashion. This naturally induced the consideration of dress, furniture, equipage, and the luxury of the table; subjects which do not court privacy, but obtrude themselves with proud ostentation, and are therefore the fairest game of the literary sportsman. At the commencement of the eighteenth century, the distinction of ranks was much more

strictly observed than it has been since. The man of title or fortune and the citizen were characters essentially different. In the one appeared state, splendour, show, a manly spirit and high sense of family honour, yet sometimes with notions rather gay and loose; in the other, economy, snugness, integrity and some prejudices of pretty high antiquity. When, however, successful commerce afforded the latter the means, then soon appeared an affected imitation of the manners and expenses of the great; and such imitations at first could not fail to be ludicrous as well as pernicious, but they were not to be attacked except by serious argument. They were not always worthy of it, and it is perhaps as wholesome to show a man that he is vain as to prove that vanity is a great folly. During the progress of this change in manners, if an expense was fashionable that sanction was sufficient, and the splendour and style of a suite of rooms were attempted in confined parlors and closets; entertainments in miniature were given in such rooms to persons who would only laugh at the folly of the host; while the youth of both sexes began to be trained up with notions of high life, which, by destroying industry and perverting the use of wealth, soon left them in a motely beggary with an outside show neither splendid nor squalid. These examples of high life below stairs occurred with such frequency as to afford Steele and Addison opportunities of exposing them to just ridicule, as well as of pointing out the

more fatal effects of stepping out of the rank in which education and circumstances have placed us.

In all changes of English manners, a foreign influence had long been predominant. The earliest accounts inform us that those who were allowed to prescribe the modes in dress, language or sentiment collected their knowledge on their travels, and were not ashamed of being conquered by the follies of a nation whose arms they despised.

The dress of ladies is dealt with in very many papers, but we shall consider only a very few of these from which we can obtain a good general idea of the extravagance in dress. At the opera one night, the Spectator noticed a cluster of women sitting together in the prettiest colored hoods imaginable. One of them was blue, another yellow, the third was of a pink color and the fourth of a pale green. This fashion spread quickly and the Whig and Tory ladies began to hang out different colours and to show their principles in their head dress.

In another paper he complained that ladies dressed themselves in a hat and feather, or at least tied up their hair in a bag or riband, in imitation of the smart set of the opposite sex.

A reply was given to his attacks on the ladies' hoods and commodes. His correspondent wrote that men of all ages had not been less whimsical in adorning their heads than the ladies. This opinion was confirmed by the different forms of
 (Spec. 265) (Spec. 435)

their wigs and the various cocks of their hats. An humble admirer of this lady had the previous summer first declared himself in a full-bottomed wig, but the following day accosted her in a thin natural one. Had it not been for his speech, she would have thought him a perfect stranger. The same evening, while walking in the park, he appeared to her in a wig called a night cap, which had altered him more effectually than those worn by him before. He afterwards adorned himself with a couple of black riding wigs, and, in short, assumed a new face almost every day in the first month of his courtship. The variety of cocks into which he had moulded his hat also contributed to his impositions upon her. Men of dress vied with each other in having courage enough to introduce a new fashion. When one succeeded in doing this, it was said that Mr. Such-a-one had struck a bold stroke. Accordingly, when tailors took the measures of their customers they always demanded whether they would have a plain suit or strike a bold stroke. One correspondent boasted that he had struck some of the boldest and most successful strokes of any man in Great Britain. He was the first that struck the long pocket, and was likewise the author of the frosted button. When he saw this readily accepted by the town, having resolved to strike while the iron was hot, he immediately produced the scallop flap, the knotted cravat, and made a fair push for the silver-clocked stocking.

Two or three young fellows at the other end of the town continually watched him and answered him stroke for stroke. One of these fellows even stole his idea concerning a new-fashioned surtout, and by that means prevented his intended stroke. Nothing daunted by this, he announced that he would very speedily appear at White's in a cherry-coloured hat. This hint he took from the ladies' colored hoods, which he considered the boldest stroke that that sex had struck for a hundred years past.

The country people were cruelly led astray in following the fashions of the town, and were equipped in a ridiculous habit when they fancied themselves in the height of the mode. A lawyer of the Middle Temple gave the following observations on the dress of people whom he met on his circuits:-

"One of the most fashionable women I met with in all the circuit was my landlady at Staines, where I chanced to be on a holiday. Her commode was not half a foot high, and her petticoat within some yards of a modish circumference. In the same place I observed a young fellow with a tolerable periwig, had it not been covered with a hat that was shaped in the Romilie-cock. As I proceeded on my journey, I observed that the petticoat grew scantier and scantier, and about three-score miles from London was so very unfashionable that a woman might walk in it without any manner of inconvenience.

"Not far from Salisbury I took notice of a justice of peace's lady, who was at least ten years behind-hand in her dress, but at the same time as fine as hands could make her. She was flounced and furbelowed from head to foot; every ribbon was wrinkled, and every part of her garments in curl, so that she looked like one of those animals which in the country we call a Friezland hen.

"Not many miles beyond this place I was informed that one of the last year's little muffs had by some means or other straggled into those parts, and that all the women of fashion were cutting their old muffs in two, or retrenching them, according to the little model which was got among them. I cannot believe the report they have there, that it was sent down franked by a parliament-man in a little packet; but probably by next winter this fashion will be at the height in the country, when it is quite out at London".

"The greatest beau at our next country sessions was dressed in a most monstrous flaxen periwig, that was made in King William's reign. The wearer of it goes, it seems, in his own hair when he is at home, and lets his wig lie in a buckle for a whole half year, that he may put it on upon occasion to meet the judges in it ."

"I must not here omit an adventure that happened to us in a country church upon the frontiers of Cornwall. As we were in the midst of the service a lady, who is the chief woman in

the place and had passed the winter in London with her husband, entered the congregation in a little head-dress and a hooped petticoat. The people who were wonderfully startled at such a sight, all rose up. Some stared at the prodigious bottom, and some at the little top of this strange dress. In the meantime the lady of the manor filled the area of the church, and walked up to her pew with an unspeakable satisfaction, amidst the whispers, conjectures, and astonishment of the whole congregation".

"Upon our way from hence we saw a young fellow riding towards us ~~with~~ at full gallop with a bob wig and a black silken bag tied to it. We had only time to observe his black silk waist-coat, which was unbuttoned in several places, to let us see he had a clean shirt on, which was ruffled down to his middle".

"During our progress through the most western parts of the kingdom, we fancied ourselves in King Charles the Second's reign, the people having made very little change in their dress since that time. The smartest of the country squires appears still in the Monmouth-cock and when they go a wooing (whether they have any post in the militia or not) they generally put on a red coat. We were, indeed, very much surprised at the place we lay at last night, to meet with a gentleman that had accoutred himself in a night-cap wig, a coat with long pockets and slit sleeves, and a pair of shoes with high scallop

tops; but we soon found by his conversation that he was a person who laughed at the ignorance and rusticity of the country people, and was resolved to live and die in the mode".

The luxuries displayed at the table were almost more extravagant than those adopted in dress. Tatler 148 gives a discussion on the diet of the English. It seems that the rules among these false Delicates were to be as contradictory as they could be to nature. They did not eat when they were hungry, for they never waited for the return of hunger. Dishes were prepared to excite their appetites rather than to allay hunger. They allowed nothing at their tables in its natural form, but managed in some way to disguise it. They ate everything before it came in season, and stopped as soon as it was fit to eat. Nothing that was agreeable to ordinary palates would suit them.

The Tatler attended a dinner at a friend's house, who was a great admirer of the French cooking. His interesting description is worth giving in full. "At our sitting down, I found the table covered with a great variety of unknown dishes I was mightly at a loss to learn what they were and therefore did not know where to help myself. That which stood before me, I took to be a roasted porcupine, however, did not care for asking questions and have since been informed that it was only a larded turkey. I afterwards passed my eye over several hashes, which I do not know the names of to this day; and hear-

ing that they were delicacies, did not think fit to meddle with them."

"Among other dainties, I saw something like a pheasant and therefore desired to be helped to a wing of it; but to my great surprise, my friend told me it was a rabbit, which is a sort of meat I never cared for. At last, I discovered with some joy, a pig at the lower end of the table, and begged a gentleman that was near it to cut me a piece of it. Upon which the gentleman of the house said with great civility, 'I am sure you will like the pig for it was whipped to death.' I must confess I heard him with horror and could not eat of an animal that had died such a tragical death. I was now in great hunger and confusion, when methought I smelled the agreeable savour of roast beef, but could not tell from which dish it arose, though I did not question but it lay disguised in one of them. Upon turning my head, I saw a noble sirloin on the side table smoking in the most delicious manner. I had recourse to it more than once and could not see without some indignation that substantial English dish banished in so ignominious a manner to make way for French kickshaws."

"The dessert was brought up at last and in truth was as extraordinary as anything that had come before it. The whole, when ranged in its proper order, looked like a very beautiful winter piece. There were several pyramids of candied sweetmeats that hung like icicles, with fruits scattered up and down and hid in an artificial kind of frost. At the same

time there were great quantities of cream beaten up into a snow, and near them, little plates of sugar plums, disposed like so many heaps of hail stones, with a multitude of congelations in jellies of various colors. I was indeed so pleased with the several objects which lay before me, that I did not care for displacing any of them; and was half angry with the rest of the company, that, for the sake of a piece of lemon peel, or a sugar plum, would spoil so pleasing a picture. Indeed, I could not but smile to see several of them cooling their mouths with lumps of ice, which they had just before been burning with salts and peppers.

"As soon as this show was over, I took my leave, that I might finish my dinner at my own house. For as I in every thing love what is simple and natural, so particularly in my food; two plain dishes, with two or three good-natured cheerful, ingenious friends, would make me more pleased and vain, than all that pomp and luxury can bestow".

After such feasts people generally sat down to talk. On such occasions it was a very ordinary thing for men to make no other use of a close acquaintance with each other's affairs but to tease one another with unacceptable allusions. People might have passed over patiently such as conversed like animals and saluted each other with bangs on the shoulder, sly raps with canes or other robust pleasantries practised

by the rural gentry; but even among those who should have had more polite ideas of things, one might have seen a set of people who inverted the design of conversation, and made frequent mention of ungrateful subjects, nay, mentioned them because they were ungrateful; as if the perfection of society were in knowing how to offend on the one part and how to bear an offence on the other.

In all parts of the town the merry world was made up of an active and a passive companion; one who had good nature enough to suffer all his friend had to say and one who was resolved to make the most of his good humor to show his parts. This evil proceeded from an indiscreet familiarity, whereby one man was allowed to say the most grating thing to another and it was considered weakness to show any resentment for the unkindness.

As the people of the country were much behind the inhabitants of the city in dress, they were likewise out of date in their manners. "Several obliging differences, condescensions and submissions, with many outward forms and ceremonies that accompany them, were first of all introduced by the politer part of mankind, who lived in courts and cities and distinguished *hed* themselves from the rustic part of the species (who on all occasions acted bluntly and naturally) by such a mutual complaisance and intercourse of civilities. These forms of conver

versation by degrees multiplied and grew troublesome; the modish world found too great a restraint in them and therefore threw most of them aside. Conversation, like the Romish religion, was so encumbered with show and ceremony, that it stood in need of a reformation to retrench its superfluities, and restore it to its natural good sense and beauty. Therefore, in a short time, an unconstrained carriage and a certain openness of behaviour became the height of good breeding. The fashionable world grew free and easy and their manners were unrestrained. Nothing was so modish as an agreeable negligence. In a word, good breeding showed itself most where to an ordinary eye it appeared the least".

But people of mode in the country had just caught up to the manners of the last age in the city. Thus, excess of good breeding was sure to denote a man who had never been in society. A polite country esquire would make as many bows in half an hour as would serve a courtier for a week. Indeed, there was infinitely more trouble concerning place and precedence in a meeting of justice's wives, than in an assembly of duchesses. Country dinners were almost spoiled before the company could adjust the ceremonial and be prevailed upon to sit down.

Relating to the conversation of men of mode, there was another revolution in the point of good breeding. Well-bred men before this age expressed everything that had the most remote appearance of being obscene in modest terms and

distant phrases; while the clown said bluntly what he meant. This kind of good manners was also carried to excess and made conversation too formal and stiff. Going to the other extreme, several of the polished men began to use the coarsest and most uncivilized language and terms that a clown would blush at. If such a fashion as this had ever reached the country gentlemen, they would have been thought a parcel of lewd clowns, while they fancied themselves talking together like men of wit and pleasure.

In Spectator 557 people were advised to take good care not to polish themselves out of their veracity, nor to refine their behaviour to the prejudice of their virtue. The Spectator mourned that the old English plainness and sincerity, that generous integrity of nature and honesty of disposition, which always argued true greatness of mind and was usually accompanied with undaunted courage and resolution, was in a great measure lost among them.

The dialect of conversation was so swelled with vanity and compliments and so surfeited with expressions of kindness and respect that if a man that lived an age or so previously had returned into the world he would really have needed a dictionary to help him understand his own language and to know the true intrinsic value of the phrase in fashion, and would hardly at first have believed at what a low rate the highest strains and expressions of kindness passed in current payment.

The following letter written by the ambassador at Bantam well illustrates the above statements.

"Master, the people where I now am have tongues further from their hearts than from London to Bantam. They call thee and thy subjects barbarians because we speak what we mean, and account themselves a civilized people because they speak one thing and mean another; truth they call barbarity, and falsehood politeness. Upon my first landing, one who was sent from the king of this place to meet me told me that he was extremely sorry for the storm I had met with just before my arrival. I was troubled to hear him grieve and afflict himself on my account; but in less than a quarter of an hour he smiled, and was as merry as if nothing had happened. Another who came with him, told me by my interpreter, that he should be glad to do me any service that lay in his power. Upon which I desired him to carry my portmanteaus for me; but instead of serving me according to his promise, he laughed, and bid another do it. I lodged for the first week at the home of one who desired me to think myself at home and to consider his house as my own. Accordingly, I, the next morning began to knock down one of the walls of it to let in some fresh air and had packed up some of the household goods, of which I intended to have made thee a present, but the false varlet no sooner saw me falling to work, but he sent word to desire me to give over for that he would have no such doings in his house. I had not been long in this notion before I was told by one, for

whom I had asked a certain favor from the chief of the king's servants, that I had eternally obliged him. I was so surprised at his gratitude that I could not forbear saying, what service is there which one man can do for another that can oblige him to all eternity? At my first going to court, one of the great men almost put me out of countenance, by asking ten thousand pardons of me for only treading by accident upon my toe. They call this kind of lie a compliment; for when they are civil to a great man they tell him untruths. When I go to see the king's scribe, I am generally told that he is not at home, though perhaps I saw him go into his house the very moment before. Thou wouldst fancy that the whole nation were physicians; for the first question they ask me is, how I do; I have this question put to me above a hundred times a day; nay they are not only thus inquisitive after my health, but wish it in a more solemn manner, with a full glass in their hands, every time I sit with them at table, though at the same time they would persuade me to drink their liquors in such quantities as I have found by experience would make me sick. They often pretend to pray for thy health also in the same manner, but I have more reason to expect it from thy goodness of thy constitution than the sincerity of their wishes. May thy slave escape in safety from this double tongued race of men, and live to lay himself once more at thy feet in the royal city of Bantam".

It was a great convenience for those who lacked wit to

help conversation, that there was something or other in all companies where it is wanted substituted in its stead, which, according to their taste, did the business just as well. Of this nature was the agreeable pastime in country halls of cross-purposes, questions and commands and the like. A little superior to these were those who could play at crambo, or cap verses. Then above them were such as could make verses, that is, rhyme, and among those who could use Latin, such as used to make what they called golden verses. We must not omit also those who had not brains enough for any of these exercises, and yet did not give up their pretensions to mirth. These could slap you on the back unawares, laugh loud, ask you how you did with a twang on your shoulders, say you were dull to-day and laugh a voluntary to put you in humor; not to mention the laborious way among the minor poets, of making things come in to such and such a shape, as that of an egg, a hand, an axe, or anything that nobody had ever thought of before, for that purpose, or which would have cost a great deal of pains to accomplish if they did. But all these methods though they were mechanical and might be arrived at with the smallest capacity, do not satisfy an honest gentleman who wanted wit for his ordinary occasions; therefore it was absolutely necessary that the poor in imagination should have something which might be serviceable to them at all hours upon all common occurrence. That which we call punning was therefore greatly used by men of small intellects. These men did not need to hear your whole

sentence; but if they could say a quaint thing or bring in a word which sounded like anything you had spoken to them, they could turn the discourse, or distract you so that you could not go on, and by consequence, if they could not be as witty as you were, they hindered your being any wittier than they were.

"There were others of small faculties, who supplied want of wit with want of breeding: and because women are both by nature and education more offended at anything which is immodest than men are, these were ever harping upon things they ought not allude to, and dealt mightily in double meanings. These double meaners were dispersed up and down through all parts of the town or city where there were any to offend, in order to show off themselves. These men were very loud laughers and were considered very pretty gentlemen by the silly and unbred part of womankind. But, above all already mentioned, or any who ever were, or ever could be in the world, the happiest and surest to be pleasant were a sort of people called biters".

"A biter was one who told you a thing you had no reason to disbelieve in itself and perhaps had given you, before he bit you, no reason to disbelieve it for his saying it; and, if you gave him credit, laughed in your face, and triumphed that he had deceived you. In a word, a biter was one who thought you a fool because you did not think him a knave".

"This kind of wit was called "biting" by a metaphor

taken from beasts of prey, which devour harmless and unarmed animals and looked upon them as their food wherever they met them. The sharpers about town very ingeniously understood themselves to be to the undesigning part of mankind what foxes are to lambs, and therefore used the word biting to express any exploit wherein they had robbed any innocent and inadvertent man of his purse. These rascals were the gallants of the town, and conducted themselves with a fashionable haughty air, to the discouragement of modesty and all honest arts. Shallow fops who were governed by the eye and admired everything that strutted in vogue, took up from the sharpers the phrase of biting and used it upon all occasions, either to disown any nonsensical stuff they should talk themselves, or evade the force of what was reasonably said by others. Thus, when one of these cunning creatures had entered into a debate with you, whether it was practicable in the present state of affairs to accomplish such a proposition, and you thought he had let fall what destroyed his side of the question, as soon as you looked with an earnestness ready to lay hold of it, he immediately cried, "Bite", and you were immediately to acknowledge all that part was a jest.

To treat of love was the peculiar province of the Essayists. That passion, although acknowledged to be the same in its effects in all ages and conditions, has nevertheless

been more regulated by custom in its modes of address, than any other that can be mentioned.

Instead of being regulated by certain and almost invariable formalities, courtships came to be practised in a thousand various ways, and the transfer of affections, being subjected to cool calculations and expedience, soon partook of the fate of other bargains, and was sometimes a lucky hit and sometimes an unfortunate speculation. Our essayists naturally availed themselves of incidents like this, which every day produced and which were generally made public; and which afforded so happy a mixture of the serious and the jocose, exhibited such a variety of characteristic foibles, so many traits of affectation and such modifications of avarice, simplicity, skill and weakness, as do not appear in any other business of human life.

The interests of virtue seemed to have been supplanted by common custom and regard for indifferent things. Thus, mode and fashion refined the most absurd and unjust proceedings, and nobody was out of countenance for doing what everybody practised, though at the same time there was no one who was not convinced in which he went on with the multitude.

The following letter will serve to explain all the little arts that were used by the parents of young women who were ready to be married.

To Noster Ironside, Esq.,

Dear Sir,-

"I have for some time retired myself from the town and business to a little seat, where a pleasant, open country good roads, and healthful air, tempt me often abroad; and being a single man, have contracted more acquaintance than is suitable to my years, or agreeable to the intentions of retirement I brought down with me hither. Among others, I have a young neighbor, who yesterday imparted to me the history of an honourable amour, which had been carried on a considerable time with a great deal of love on his side, and, as he says he has been made to believe, with something very unlike aversion on the young lady's. But such matters have been contrived, that he could never get to know her mind thoroughly. When he was first acquainted with her, he might be as intimate with her as other people; but since he first declared his passion, he has never been admitted to wait upon her or see her, other than in public. If he went to her father's house, and desired to visit her, she was either to be sick or out of the way, and nobody would come near him in two hours, and then he should be received as if he had committed some strange offence. If he asked her father's leave to visit her, the old gentleman was mute. If he put it negatively, and asked if he refused it, the father would answer with a smile, "No, I do not say so neither". If they talked of the fortune, he had

considered his circumstances and it every day diminished. If the settlements came into the debate, he had considered the young gentleman's estate, and daily increased his expectations. If the mother was consulted, she was mightily for the match, but affected strongly to show her cunning in perplexing matters. It went off seemingly several times, but my young neighbor's passion was such that it easily revived upon the least encouragement given him; but tired out with writing, the only liberty allowed him, and receiving answers at cross purposes, destitute of all hopes, he at length wrote a formal adieu; but it was very unfortunately timed, for soon after he had the long wished opportunity of finding her at a distance from her parents. Struck with the joyful news, in heat of passion resolute to do anything rather than leave her, down he comes post, directly to the house where she was, without any preparatory intercession after the provocation of an adieu. She in a premeditated anger, to show her resentment refused to see him. He, in a kind of fond frenzy, absent from himself, and exasperated into rage, cursed her heartily, but returning to himself, was all confusion, repentance, and submission. But in vain; the lady continued inexorable, and so the affair ended in a manner that renders them very unlikely ever to meet again. Through the pursuit of the whole story, whereof I give but a short abstract, my young neighbor appeared so touched and discovered such certain marks of unfeigned love, that I ~~ea~~

cannot but be heartily sorry for them both". -----

----- "I desire leave to observe that the mistakes of this courtship, which might otherwise probably have succeeded happily, seem chiefly these four viz. -----

(1) The father's close equivocal management, so as always to keep a reservation in use upon occasion, when he found himself pressed.

(2) The mother's affecting to appear extremely artful.

(3) A notion in the daughter, who is a lady of singular good sense and virtue, that no man can love her as he ought, who can deny anything her parents demand.

(4) Carrying on the affairs by letters and confidants, without sufficient interviews.

I think you cannot fail obliging many in the world, besides my young neighbor and me, if you please to give your thoughts upon treaties of this nature, wherein all the nobility and gentry of this nation, in the unfortunate method marriages are at present in, come at one time or other unavoidably to be engaged; especially it is my humble request you will be particular in speaking to the following points to wit:-

(1) Whether honorable love ought to be mentioned first to the young lady, or her parents ?

(2) If to the young lady first, whether a man is obliged

to comply with all the parents demand afterwards, under pain of breaking off dishonourably ?

(3) "If to the parents first, whether the lover may insist upon what the father pretends to give, and refuse to make such settlement as must incapacitate him for any thing afterwards; without just imputation of being mercenary, or putting a slight upon the lady, by entertaining views upon the contingency of her death?"

(4) "What instructions a mother ought to give her daughter upon such occasions, and what the old lady's part properly is in such treaties, her husband being alive ?"

(5) "How far the young lady is in duty obliged to observe her mother's directions, and not to receive any letters or messages without her knowledge.?"

(6) "How far the daughter is obliged to exert the power she has over her lover, for the ease and advantage of her father and her family; and how far she may consult and endeavour the interest of the family she is to marry into?"

(7) How far letters and confidants of both sexes may regularly be employed and wherein they are improper?"

(8) "When a young lady's pen is employed about settlement fortunes, or the like, whether it be an affront to give the same answers as if it had been in the handwriting of those that instructed her ?"

"Lastly, be pleased at your leisure to correct that too common way among fathers, of publishing in the world, that

they will give their daughters twice the fortune they really intend, and thereby drawing young gentlemen, whose estates are often in debt into a dilemma, either of crossing a fixed inclination, contracted by a long habit of thinking upon the same person, and so being miserable that way; or else beginning the world under a burden they can never get quite rid of".

"Thus sage Sir, have I laid before you all that does at present occur to me on the important subject of marriage; but before I seal upon my epistle, I must desire you to further consider, how far treaties of this sort come under the head of bargain and sale; and whether you cannot find out measures to have the whole transacted in fairer and more open market than at present".-----

I am, sagacious Sir,

Your most obedient and

Most humble servant

T.L.

Marriage has been considered by our essayists in every possible light. The various circumstances which constitute its happiness or misery are illustrated by examples sketched with singular humor and acknowledged fidelity. The dignity of the state is at the same time vindicated from the sneers of libertines by fair argument and pathetic representation as well as by powerful ridicule.

For stage scribblers marriage was one of the common topics of ridicule in which every one might find his share. The wits, instead of correcting the vices of the times, did all they could to inflame them. Consequently, ⁱⁿ the plays, whenever there was an occasion for a laugh, an impertinent jest upon matrimony was sure to raise it. Pernicious consequences could not fail to attend such a practice. A kind husband was looked upon as a clown and a good wife as a domestic animal unfit for the company or conversation of the beau monde, while a man of the world could go home in the gayety of his heart and beat his wife. In short, separate beds, silent tables and solitary homes were introduced by the men of wit and pleasure of that age.

One correspondent wrote to the Spectator saying that he was ready to enter into the bond of matrimony provided that the Spectator would pledge him his word that a man might show himself in good company after he was married and that he need not be ashamed to treat a woman with kindness who put herself in his power for life. To the Spectator it seemed that there had been an association of wits formed to harry legitimacy out of the land. A state of wedlock was the common mark of all adventures in a farce or comedy, as well as for the essayists lampooners and satirists to shoot at; and nothing was a more standing jest in all clubs of fashionable mirth and gay conversation.

The Spectator strove to restore the proper idea of things so that a bashful fellow upon changing his condition might be no longer puzzled how to stand the raillery of his facetious companions, and that he might not have to own he married only to plunder an heiress of her fortune, nor pretend that he used her ill in order to avoid the ridiculous name of a fond husband.

These false impressions of marriage were not only held by men. A levity of thought concerning marriage was entertained by many young women of quality. Several of these faults are exposed in a letter written by a girl in the city to a friend who had married and settled in the country and had become a devoted wife. To the city girl to be married seemed to be buried alive. She could not believe it would be more dismal to be shut up in a vault to converse with the shades of her ancestors than to be carried down to an old manor house in the country and confined to the conversation of a sober husband and an awkward chambermaid. For variety, she supposed the lady of the manor might entertain herself with the wife of the parish vicar, who, no doubt, had already given receipts for making salves and possets, distilling cordial waters, making syrups and applying poultices. She thought her friend must be out of her mind to talk of love and paint the country scenes so softly after having been married six months. The city girl invited her friend to come to town in order to live and talk

like other mortals, but as she was extremely interested in her married friend's reputation she wished to give her some advice as to her first appearance as a married woman. In order that our manor lady might not make a silly appearance as a fond wife she was advised never to appear any place in public with her husband, and never to saunter about St.. James' park together; if they presumed to enter the ring at Hyde Park together, they would be ruined forever; nor might they take the least notice of one another at the play-house or opera, unless they wished to be laughed at for a very loving couple, most happily paired in the yoke of wedlock. A mutual friend was recommended to her for imitation. This lady was the most negligent and fashionable wife in the whole world; she was hardly ever seen in the same place as her husband, and if they happened to meet, one would think them perfect strangers; she was never heard to name him in his absence, and took care that he should never be the subject of any discourse that she had a share in. Our readers might be glad to know that all this advice was refused, and our manor lady resolved to continue living happily, with her husband rather than be fashionable.

Many good young men like Sir Henry Lizard were disinclined to marry because they saw matches all around them in which the parties lived so insipidly or so vexatiously that others were afraid to venture into matrimony. Nostor had

chosen a fine young woman for Sir Harry, but Sir Harry had been informed that she was soon to be disposed of elsewhere. Of all the other young ladies in the town, whom he could think of as a wife, there was not one who was not prepossessed with some inclination for some other man or affected pleasures and entertainments which she preferred to the conversation of any man living.

By papers such as these, in which he exposed the tricks of the parents and the false ideas of the young people, the Spectator was able once more to raise marriage to the proper state of dignity.

Several essays are devoted to the evils that attend the superstitious follies of mankind, showing how they subject people to imaginary afflictions and additional sorrows that do not properly fall to them. The natural calamities of life ought to be sufficient without turning the most indifferent circumstances into misfortunes, and suffering as much from trifling accidents as from real evils.

In Tatler 21 we are given an interesting and amusing account of a trial for witch-craft. Three young ladies were indicted for witchcraft. The witness against the first swore that she kept spirits locked up in vessels, which sometimes appeared in flames of blue fire; that she used magical herbs, with some of which she drew in hundreds of men to her daily, who went out from her presence inflamed, their mouths parched

and a hot steam issuing from them, attended with a grievous stench; that many of the said men were by force of that herb, metamorphosed into swine and lay wallowing in kennels for twenty four hours, before they could resume their shapes or their senses.

The information laid against the second was that she cut off by night the limbs from dead bodies that were hanged, and was seen to dig holes in the ground, to mutter some conjuring words, and bury pieces of the flesh according to the usual custom of witches.

A notorious peice of sorcery long practised by hags, of moulding pieces of dough into shapes of men, women and children, then heating them at a gentle fire which had a sympathetic power to torment the bowels of those in the neighborhood, was the accusation brought against the third.

Of course, the ladies denied all these charges, but it might have gone ill with them, had not the parson of that parish interpreted these facts in their favour. Indeed, his odd solution of the matter almost brought him into trouble with the bishop. The first lady kept a brandy and tobacco shop. In his opinion men went out smoking, and got drunk towards evening, and then made beasts of themselves. The second lady was a butcher's daughter and sometimes carried a quarter of beef from the slaughter house at night, and once buried a bit of beef in the ground, which, as we all know, is a sure cure for warts. The third sold ginger bread, and to please the child-

ren stamped it with figures before it was baked. If it burned their stomachs, it was because they ate too much, or did not drink enough after it.

"On the estate of Sir Roger de Coverley lived a very old woman who had the reputation of a witch all over the country. It was said that her lips were always in motion, and her neighbors believed that every switch near her house had carried her several hundreds of miles. If she chanced to stumble they always found sticks or straws that lay crosswise in the path before her. If she made a mistake at church and said 'amen' in the wrong place, they were convinced that she was saying her prayers backwards. Not a maid in the parish would take a pin of her, even if she offered therewith a bag of money. Her name was Moll White, and she was famous for certain exploits ascribed to her. Moll White was the cause of every trouble in the parish. If the butter would not come quickly, Moll was in the churn. If a horse sweat in the stable Moll had been on his back. In fact she was cursed for every disappointment".

The Spectator and Sir Roger made her a visit one day. On entering her house, Sir Roger pointed to something which stood behind the door— an old broom staff—, and at the same time whispered to the Spectator to notice the tabby cat, which sat in the chimney corner. This cat had as bad a reputation for sorcery as Moll herself. Indeed, it was said that the cat

had even spoken once or twice and played several pranks above the power of an ordinary cat.

On their way home Sir Roger told the Spectator that Moll had often been brought before him for making children spit pins and giving maids the nightmare, and the people would have experimented on her by throwing her in the pond to see if she would come to the surface, had it not been for the rector and himself.

At that time there was scarcely a village in England which did not have a Moll White in it. When an old woman began to doat, and was a burden to the parish, she was generally turned into a witch, and filled the whole country with extravagant fancies, imaginary distempers and terrifying dreams. In the meantime, the poor witch who was the innocent cause of so many misfortunes, became frightened at herself and frequently confessed secret communications with the evil one- the delirious imagination of an old age. Thus those in the sorest need were often cut off from charity, and people were inspired with malevolence towards those poor decrepid, infirm old creatures.

Many women made themselves and their families miserable by their belief in omens. In one family where the Spectator visited he found them all dejected, and on inquiring the reason was told that the wife had dreamt a strange dream the night before, which they were all afraid portended some ill for the family. When the wife entered and they sat down at the

table she said to her husband that he might then see the stranger who was in the candle the night before.

In the midst of the meal, she asked the Spectator to pass her a little salt on the point of his knife. As he was in such a trepidation and such a hurry to obey, he unfortunately let it drop by the way. Immediately she was startled and said it fell towards her. This seemed to bring a disaster upon the whole family. After this, he hurriedly and silently finished his dinner, and crossed his knife and fork on his plate. To his utter confusion the lady asked him to humor her so far as to take them out of that figure and place them side by side. Seeing that the lady considered him odd and had taken an aversion to him, he soon departed.

Another popular error was believing in dreams. One paper is devoted to uprooting this evil by exposing the follies and superstitions of people who in ordinary life lay stress on things of such a shadowy and chimerical nature as dreams.

An onerio-critic, or revealer of dreams, established himself on one part of the town, for he had found out that there were many people who were puzzled over the meaning of their dreams. He considered himself well qualified for that office, for he had studied by candle light all the rules that had been laid down on that art. As additional qualifications, his great uncle on his wife's side was a Scotch Highlander and second-sighted, He had four fingers and two thumbs on one hand

and was born on the longest night of the year. His Christian name and his sir-name began and ended with the same letters; and best of all he lodged in a house which had been inhabited for fifty years by a conjurer.

Among many of the women of the town, it was a habit on hearing or seeing anything unexpected to cry, "My dream is out". They could not sleep in ease until their dreams of the previous night had been expounded. Others were troubled because they could not remember the circumstances of a dream, by which they had been greatly impressed. Many employed their whole waking thoughts on their sleeping ones. This conjurer of dreams was prepared to interpret all dreams, tell what people dreamed of, supply missing links in a dream, and expound the good or ill fortune which dreams portended.

Steele's admirable papers on duelling were among the first successful attacks on that remnant of barbarism. In his opinion this practice had its foundation neither in true reason nor solid fame; but was an imposture made up of cowardice, falsehood and want of understanding. Most quarrels proceeded from some valiant coxcombs persisting in the wrong to defend some prevailing folly and preserve himself from the ingenuity of owning a mistake.

To illustrate the ridiculous point at which duelling had arrived, a letter was published from one who desired to

know whether calling a gentleman a Smart Fellow was an affront or not. While the writer was sitting in a coffee-house, there entered a youth with his cane tied at his button, and wearing red-heeled shoes. This correspondent immediately thought of the Tatler's description and could not refrain from telling a friend. 'There enters a Smart Fellow:' The gentleman referred to, overhearing this, immediately wished to pick a quarrel and desired satisfaction, for it would have been contrary to his good breeding to allow such a trivial remark to pass unchallenged. Such letters as these serve to show from what insignificant causes many duels arose, and were thus instrumental in checking that custom.

In the church, the social life was a very important factor. Indeed, we might almost believe that those who attended divine service paid more attention to their social than to their religious duties. In proof of this statement, we have many examples in the periodicals of that time. A dissenter of rank and distinction, who had been prevailed upon by a friend of his to come to one of the greatest congregations of the Church of England about town, after the service was over, said he was very well satisfied with the little service that was used towards God Almighty, but at the same time he feared he should not be able to go through the ceremonies required towards one another. As to this point he was in a state of despair and feared he was not accomplished enough to be a con-

vert. Realizing this great need for breeding in the congregations, an Anabaptist who with all his family intended to come over into the church sent his two eldest daughters to learn to dance, in order that they might not misbehave themselves at church. This fear of appearing at a disadvantage is not surprising when we know that the custom of saluting one another during the service was prevalent. One lady wrote a very angry letter to the Spectator telling of one of her acquaintance, who, "out of mere pride and pretence to be rude, takes it upon herself to return no civilities done to her in time of divine service, and is the most religious woman for no other reason but to appear a woman of the best quality in the church.

The following extract from "The Guardian" gives a vivid and characteristic description of the conduct of a congregation during an ordinary service. "When we poor souls had presented our worthlessness, some pretty ladies in mobs popped in here and there about the church, clattering the pew doors after them and squatting into a whisper behind their fans. Among others, one of Lady Lizard's daughters and her hopeful maid entered; the young lady did not omit the ardent frown behind the fan, while the maid immediately gaped round her to look for some other devout person whom I saw at a distance. He was very well dressed; his air and habit were a little military, but in the pertness not the true possession of the martial character. This jackanapes was fixed at the end of a pew,

with the utmost impudence, declaring, by a fixed eye on that seat, where our beauty was placed, the object of his devotion. This obscene sight gave me all the indignation imaginable, so that I could attend to nothing but the reflection that greatest affronts are those of which one cannot take notice. Before I was out of such vexations inadvertencies to the business of the place, there was a great deal of new company now come in. Among these were two or three sets of whisperers who carry on most of their calumnies by what they entertain one another with in the place. There were indeed a few in whose faces there appeared a heavenly joy and gladness upon the entrance, of a new day, as if they had gone to sleep with the expectation of it, and for the sake of these it is worth while that the church keep up such early matins".

"In divers parts of the town there were vociferous sets of men called "Rattling Clubs", and they also had the audacity to invade the church. These gay fellows, from humble lay professions without any tincture of letters or reading, set themselves up for critics, and had the vanity to think they might lay hold of something from the preacher which might be turned into ridicule. They would all listen attentively, and whenever anything uttered by him passed the limits of their theology or was not suited to their taste they would all look at one another. Soon their noddles would meet in the centre of the pew; then, as by beat of drum, with exact dis-

cipline, they would rear up into a full length of stature, and with odd looks and gesticulations confer together in so loud and clamorous a manner to the close of the discourse and during the after-psalm as could not be silenced by the ringing of the bells. Whatever followed in the sermon was lost, for no after explanation could avail to quell the tumultuous disturbance thus aroused."

The peculiar accent of one grave and reverend man attracted the attention of a Set of Gigglers. They thought this peculiarity was the most noticeable thing in his whole discourse, and during the whole sermon amused themselves by it. One seemed ready to burst behind her fan; another pointed to a companion in a different seat, and still a fourth displayed an arch composure, as if she would if possible stifle her laughter. Many gentlemen looked at them steadfastly but this they took for ogling and admiring them.

A member of a small, pious congregation near one of the north gates of the city wrote a complaint about starers, a kind of men who without any regard to time, place or modesty disturbed a large company with their impertinent eyes. She said that the greater part of that congregation were females, and they had always been attentive until one of these monstrous starers came to disturb them. Although a head taller than anyone else, he stood on a hassock to watch the whole congregation. The blushing, confusion and vexation caused by such

behaviour distracted their attention from the prayers and sermon.

A reformed starrer thought that the manners of women at church should not be wholly overlooked. How could men help looking at them if they did everything possible to attract the attention of the men. One Sunday he happened to be shut in a pew full of young and beautiful ladies. When confession came he had no room to kneel, but, even while standing, resolved to keep his eyes from wandering until one lady, who was a Peeper, exerted every effort to attract his attention, and fix his devotion on her. She worked with her hands, eyes and fan, and even placed herself so as to be kneeling right before him, and there displayed a beautiful bosom, which heaved and fell with some fervour, while a delicate and well-shaped arm held a fan over her face. It was impossible for him to keep his eyes off this beautiful object, and even when he did try to turn his sight another way, he was recalled by the fascination of the Peeper's eyes. In his opinion a Peeper was more pernicious than a starrer, as an ambuscade is more to be feared than an open assault.

Much annoyance was caused at St. Paul's by the imprudent conduct of Stentor. This gentleman was very exact and zealous in his devotion, but he was accustomed to roar and bellow so terribly loud in the responses, that he frightened even those in the congregation who were daily used to him. One

canon called his way of worship a bull-offering. His harsh, untunable pipe was no more fit than a raven's to join with the music of a choir, but, when present, he never failed to drown the harmony of every hymn and anthem by an inundation of sound beyond that of the bridge at the ebb of the tide, or the neighboring lions in the anguish of their hunger.

The peculiar fashions of the city even invaded the rural churches. The peace of mind of one country clergyman was greatly disturbed by a widow lady who had straggled into his parish that summer from London for the benefit of the air. She appeared every Sunday at church with the most fashionable extravagances to the great astonishment of his congregation.

But what gave the most offence was her theatrical manner of singing the psalms. Let us quote his words:- "She introduces about fifty Italian airs into the hundredth psalm; and whilst we begin, 'All people' in the old solemn tune of our forefathers, she in quite a different key, runs divisions on the vowels, and adorns them with the graces of Nicolini: if she meets with 'eke' or 'aye' which are frequent in the metre of Hopkins and Sternhold, we are certain to hear her quavering them half a minute after us, to some sprightly airs of the opera". The clergyman also feared that the infection would spread, for Squire Squeekum who by his voice seemed cut out for an Italian singer, was the previous Sunday practising the same airs.

(Spec. 205)

(Tatler 54)

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The conductors of public amusements have seldom been ambitious of a rank among the reformers of mankind. Abuses had crept in to the amusements of the people which were beneath the attention of the pulpit or the bar. Public amusements are not indifferent to the manners of a nation. These have been disgraced by absurdities, which impeded their usefulness even as vehicles of mere entertainment. Though purified from much of their licentiousness by the indefatigable zeal of Collier, they were not yet rational, and beyond the waste of an hour, (which to the idle, is of great importance) their influence was unperceived.

Dancing was very fashionable. Every one who wished to be in society had to dance. But the stately minuets of their forefathers had been changed to suit the fashions of the times. One honest gentleman, who had by hard work succeeded in giving his children an education, wrote to the Spectator concerning the abuses which had been introduced into the entertainment of country dancing. His eldest daughter, a girl of sixteen, had been taking dancing lessons for some time and one night persuaded her father to accompany her to the ball. In the French dances there were several young men and women whose limbs seemed to have no other motion but purely what the music gave them. With this performance he was much pleased. After this they began a diversion called country dancing, which was also not disagreeable. In "Hunt the Squirrel" the woman would run

away and the man would pursue her; but as soon as she turned the man would flee, and the woman was obliged to follow.

But soon the honest gentleman was amazed to see his daughter handled by and handling young fellows with so much familiarity that he could scarcely believe the child was capable of it. They very often made use of a most impudent and lascivious step called "setting", which he describes as the very reverse of "Back to Back". At last an impudent young dog bade the fiddlers play a dance called "Moll Pately", and after having made two or three capers ran to his partner, locked his arms in hers, and whisked her around cleverly above the ground, so that this gentleman who was sitting on the lowest bench could see farther above her shoes than he thought fit to tell. These enormities so incensed him that just as his daughter was going to be made a whirligig, he seized her and carried her home.

The kissing dance might have angered him more, for in these the men were obliged to dwell almost a minute on the fair one's lips or they would be too quick for the music.

The midnight mask was held in one of the most conspicuous parts of the town and all who attended this lawless assembly were masked. The women either came by themselves or were introduced by friends, who were obliged to leave them as soon as they entered to the conversation of anybody that addressed them. There were rooms where they might retire if they

liked and show their faces to each other. Whispers, squeezes, nods and embraces were the innocent freedoms of that place.

Timothy Doodle wrote to the Spectator No. 245, desiring to know his opinion on several innocent diversions which were indulged in by those who did not wish to attend a play on a winter evening. Among these amusements he mentioned hot-cockles, questions and commands, mottos, similes and cross purpose. He considered that these diversions had more merit in them than those which were at that time so very fashionable. His wife was young, handsome and good humored, but did not care for gadding around like most of her sex. A friend of Timothy, a colonel in the army, used to visit them almost every night, and they three often played Blind Man's Buff. This was a sport which contained a great deal of exercise. The Colonel and Timothy were blinded in turns. The colonel often hit his nose against a post, which made them nearly die laughing. Timothy usually escaped unhurt, but it was generally half an hour before he could catch one, for they hid in corners and ran all over.

There is no method in the world of knowing the taste of an age or period of time so well as by the observations of the persons represented in their comedies. No where could that matter been more observable than in the difference between the characters of the women on the stage in the eighteenth century and those of the previous age. The women of

Shakespeare had a very small part in his dialogues. His women were merely mothers, daughters, sisters and wives, who had not the freedom of conversation later acquired by the female sex. There were not then among the ladies shining wits and politicians, free thinkers and disputants; nay, there was then hardly such a creature as a coquette; but vanity had another turn and the most conspicuous woman at that time was only the best housewife.

In the minds of women of this period, there was such levity, that they seldom attended any plays but impertinences. It is indeed astonishing to observe how little notice was taken of the most exalted parts of the best tragedies in Shakespeare. Nay, it is not only visible that sensuality had devoured all greatness of soul, but the under passion of a noble spirit, pity, seems to have been a stranger to the generality of an audience. Thus, there was a numerous assembly lost to all serious entertainments, and such incidents, as should have moved one sort of concern, excited in them a quite contrary one. In the tragedy of "Macbeth" one night, when the lady who was conscious of the crime of murdering the king seemed utterly astonished at the news, and made an exclamation at it, instead of with the indignation, which is natural to the occasion, that expression was received with a loud laugh. They were as merry when a criminal was stabbed.

The female part of the audience was divided into four classes, the prude, the coquette, the leader of fashion and

the mimic. The prude was always gravely silent at a comedy and extravagantly gay at a tragedy. The coquette was so much taken up with throwing her eyes around the audience and considering the effect of them, that she could not be expected to observe the actors except as they were her rivals and took off the observation of the men from herself. The leaders of fashion were supposed to be too well acquainted with what the actor was going to say to be moved at it. After these might be mentioned a certain flippant set of females who were mimics, and who were wonderfully diverted with the conduct of all the people around them, and were spectators only of the audience. No wonder that such an audience was afraid of letting a tear fall, thus shunning as a weakness the best and worthiest part of our nature.

An interesting description of an evening spent at the theatre is given by the Spectator. "Some years ago I was at the tragedy of "Macbeth", and unfortunately placed myself under a woman of quality who is since dead. I found by the noise she made that she had just returned from France. A little before the rising of the curtain, she broke into a loud soliloquy, "When will the dear witches enter?", and immediately upon their appearance asked a lady who sat three boxes away from her on the right hand, if those witches were not charming creatures. A few minutes later, as Betterton was in one of the first speeches of the play, she shook her fan at another lady

who sat as far on the left hand, and told her, with a whisper that might be heard all over the pit, 'We must not expect to see Balloon to-night'. Not long after, calling out to a young baronet by his name who sat three seats before me, she asked him whether Macbeth's wife were still alive, and before he could give an answer fell to talking of the ghost of Banquo. She had by this time formed a little audience to herself, and fixed the attention of all about her. But as I had a mind to hear the play, I got out of the sphere of her impertinence, and seated myself in one of the remotest corners of the pit".

One of the reigning entertainments of the politer part of Great Britain at the theatre was the combat between the lion and Hydaspes. In strolling behind the scenes, the Spectator accidentally jostled against a monstrous animal which extremely frightened him. On seeing his surprise, the lion told him in a very gentle voice that he did not intend to hurt anyone and that he might pass him if he liked. Soon after the lion leaped upon the stage and played his part tolerably well and with great applause. Many noticed that the lion had changed his mode of acting, but this could be explained by the fact that the lion was changed several times. The first lion was a candle-snuffer, who was a choleric fellow and would not let himself be killed as easily as he should have done, and consequently overdid the part. Besides it was objected that he reared himself so high upon his hind paws that he looked more

like an old man than a lion.

The second lion was a tailor by trade. He was as much too meek as the first lion had been too furious. At the first touch of Hydaspes he would fall upon the stage and not give Hydaspes an opportunity of showing his variety of Italian trips.

In Spectator 240 we have an account of a beau's behaviour at a theatre. The Spectator had gone there to see a famous trunk-maker but was disappointed. Instead he saw a person who was ambitious to attract attention to himself, partly by talking loud and partly by bodily agility. This lusty beau ~~go~~ got into one of the side boxes on the stage before the curtain rose. Then he succeeded in displaying his activity by leaping over the spikes. He then went to one of the entrance doors, where he took snuff rather gracefully, then made two or three feint passes at the curtain with his cane, and finally faced the audience. There he bowed, smiled, and showed his teeth, and then retired behind the curtain where he displayed himself from every opening. Even during the time of acting, he appeared frequently in the prince's apartment, took part in the hunting match and was very forward in the rebellion.

A most amusing complaint was made by one, James Easy, in Spectator 268, concerning a peculiar custom which we are

sure could have been in vogue only in the theatres of London and at the time we are studying. Our correspondent did not wear a sword but often diverted himself at the theatre, and there saw a set of fellows pull plain people by way of humor and frolic by the nose. A friend of his one night was applauding the graceful exit of Mr. Wilkes, when one of these nose-wringers overheard him, and pinched him by the nose. James himself, was in the pit one night when it was very much crowded. A gentleman was leaning on him very heavily, and James very civilly requested him to remove his hands; for which he was pulled by the nose. He could not resent it in so public a place, but considered it a thing unmanly and disingenuous, and which rendered the nose-puller odious, and made the person pulled by the nose look little and contemptible.

The coffee-houses of the eighteenth century were a very popular resort for all classes of men. Here a man of any temper was in his element, for, if he could not talk, he could still be more agreeable to his company, as well as pleased in himself in being only a hearer. The coffee house was the place of rendezvous to all who lived near it, who wished to relish calm and ordinary life. All sorts of questions were discussed here by the minor orators, who loved to display their eloquence before their numerous auditors.

In some coffee-houses men differed in the time of day in which they distinguished themselves rather than in any real difference in greatness. At one place Beaver, the haberdasher,

held his levee at six o'clock in the morning, and was surrounded by a host of admiring friends, who listened to his every word as he declared what measures the allies must adopt in any new condition of affairs. At a quarter to eight he was interrupted by the students of the house, some of whom were already dressed for Westminster, and looked as anxious as if they were retained in every case there. Others came in their nightrobes and sauntered away their time as if they never intended to go anywhere. The sole purpose of these young fellows in rising early seemed to be to publish their laziness. To them a gay cap and slippers with a scarf and party-colored gown seemed to be the ensigns of dignity. Later on these students gave place to men of business, who came to the coffee-house to transact business or enjoy conversation.

There was a silly habit prevalent among these orators which proved no small annoyance to a considerable number of her Majesty's subjects, and that was a humor they had of twisting off the buttons of the person to whom they were speaking. A correspondent to "The Guardian" says that these ingenious gentlemen were not able to advance three words until they had first taken hold of one of your buttons, but as soon as they had secured such an excellent handle for discourse they would indeed proceed with great elocution. This writer did not know how well some might have escaped, but he had often met with them to his cost having been argued out of

several dozens; insomuch that he had ordered his tailor to bring home with every suit a dozen at least of spare ones, to supply the place of such as were detached from time to time as a help to discourse by the vehement gentlemen before mentioned. This way of holding a man in conversation was much practised among the small politicians in the coffee-houses within the city. You had to be, therefore, somewhat cautious of entering into a controversy with this species of statesman, for if you offered in the least to dissent from anything that one of these advanced he would immediately step up to you, take hold of your buttons, and would indeed soon convince you of the strength of his argument. In the coffee-houses about the temple you might harangue even among the dabblers in politics for about two buttons a day, and many times for less. In most of the eminent coffee-houses at the other end of the town the company was so refined that you might hear and be heard and not be a button the worse.

There were others, who, while they were improving your understanding were at the same time setting off your person; they would new-plait and adjust your neck cloth. One might endure this kind of orator, who was so humble as to aim at the good will of his hearer by being his valet de chambre. But there was another set who did not stick to take a man by the collar, when they had a mind to persuade him. These were simply intolerable.

(Spec. 9 March 10 1710-11)

Man is said to be a social animal, and, as an instance of this, we may observe that the people of the early part of eighteenth century seized all occasions and pretences of forming themselves into little nocturnal meetings, commonly called clubs. When a set of men found themselves agreeing in any particular no matter how trivial, they established themselves into a kind of fraternity, and met once or twice a week on account of such a fantastic resemblance. In a considerable market town there was a club of fat men, who did not come together to entertain one another with sprightliness and wit, but to keep one another in countenance. The room where the club met was very large, and had two entrances, the one by a door of moderate size, and the other by a pair of folding doors. If the candidate for this corpulent club could make his entrance through the first, he was looked upon as unqualified; but if he stuck in the passage, and could not force his way through it, the folding doors were immediately thrown open for his reception, and he was saluted as a brother. This club though it consisted of but fifteen persons weighed above three tons.

"In opposition to this society there sprang up another composed of scarecrows and skeletons. These men, being very meagre and envious, did all they could to thwart the designs of their bulky brethren, whom they represented as men of dangerous principles, till at length they worked them out of the favor of the people and consequently out of the magistracy.

These factions tore the corporation for many years, but at last they came to this agreement, that the two bailiffs of the town should be annually chosen out of the two clubs. In this way the principal magistrates were coupled like rabbits, one fat and one lean".

"Everyone has heard of the club or rather the confederacy of the kings. This grand alliance was formed a little after the return of King Charles II., and admitted into it men of all qualities and professions, provided they agreed in this surname King, which, as they imagined, sufficiently declared the owners of it to be altogether untainted with republican or anti-monarchical principles".

"A Christian name was likewise used as a badge of distinction, and made the occasion of a club. That of the Georges which used to meet at the sign of the George on St. George's day and swear before George, is a good example of this".

"In several parts of the city, there were what were called street clubs, in which the chief inhabitants of the street conversed together every night. When the Spectator inquired after lodgings in Ormond St., the landlord, in recommending that part of the town, said there was at that time a very good club in it. Upon further conversation, he also said that two or three noisy country squires who had been settled there the year before had considerably sunk the price of house rent, and that the club, to prevent similiar inconveniences for the future, had thought of taking every house that became vacant

into their own hands, till they found a tenant for it of a sociable nature".

"The Hum-drum Club was made up of very honest gentlemen of peaceable disposition, who used to sit together, smoke their pipes and say nothing till midnight. The Mum Club was an institution of the same nature and as great an enemy to noise."

"There was a very mischievous club erected in the reign of King Charles. II, known as the Club of Duellists, into which no person was to be admitted who had not fought his man. The president of it was said to have killed half a dozen in a single combat; and, as for the other members, they took their seats according to the number of their slain. There was also a side table for such as had only drawn blood, and shown a laudable ambition of taking the first opportunity of qualifying themselves for the first table. This club, as it consisted only of men of honor, did not continue long, most of its members being put to the sword or hanged, a little after its institution."

"Many of the celebrated clubs were founded on eating and drinking, which are points wherein most men agree, and in which the learned and the illiterate, the dull and the airy, the philosopher and the buffoon, can all bear a part. The Kit-Cat itself is said to have originated from a mutton pie. The Beefsteak and October clubs were neither of them adverse to eating and drinking, if we may form a judgment of them from their respective titles".

The following set of rules, found upon the walls of an ale house, were enacted by a knot of artisans and mechanics, who used to meet every night. As they give a pretty picture of low life, I shall quote them in full.

"Rules to be observed in the Two Penny Club, erected in this place for the preservation of friendship and good neighborhood."

- 1st. "Every member at his coming in shall lay down his two pence."
- 2nd. "Every member shall fill his pipe out of his own box."
- 3rd. "If any member adsents himself, he shall forfeit a penny for the use of the club."
- 4th. "If any member swears or curses, his neighbor may give him a kick upon the shins."
- 5th. "If any member tells stories in the club that are not true, he shall forfeit for every third lie a half penny."
- 6th. "If any member strikes another wrongfully he shall pay his club for hum."
- 7th. "If any member brings his wife into the club, he shall pay for whatever she drinks or smokes"
- 8th. "If any member's wife come to fetch him home from the club, she shall speak to him without the door."
- 9th. "No one shall be admitted into the club who is

of the same trade as any member of it."

10th. "No member of the club shall have his clothes or shoes mended but by a brother member."

11th. "No non-juror shall be capable of being a member."

In Oxford University there were several societies, such as the Punning Club and the Witty Club. Amongst the more conspicuous ones was the Handsome Club, as a burlesque upon which a certain merry species, that seemed to have come into the world in masquerade, associated themselves together and assumed the name of Ugly Club. This ill-favored fraternity consisted of a president and twelve fellows, the choice of whom was not confined by patent to any particular foundation, but liberty was left to elect from any school in Great Britain, provided the candidate was within the rules of the club, as set forth in a table entitled the "Act of Deformity," a clause of two of which I shall quote.

1st. "That no person whatsoever shall be admitted without a visible queerity in his aspect, or peculiar cast of countenance, of which the president and officers for the time being are to determine, and the president to have the casting vote.

2nd. "That if the quantity of any man's nose be eminently miscalculated, either as to length or

breadth, he shall have a just pretence to be elected."

3rd. "Lastly, that if there shall be two or more competitors for the same vacancy, caeteris paribus, he that has the thickest skin to have the preference."

Every member upon his first night was to entertain the company with a dish of codfish, and a speech in praise of ~~the~~ esop, whose portrait they had in full proportion or rather disproportion over the chimney.

The Trumpet Club consisted originally of fifteen members, but gradually dwindled down to five. Sir Jeffrey Notch had been in possession of the right hand chair time out of mind, and was the only man among them who had the liberty of turning the fire. He was a gentleman of an ancient family, who came to a great estate some years before he had discretion, and ran it out in hounds, horses and cock-fighting; for which reason he looked upon himself as an honest, worthy gentleman, who had had misfortunes in this world, and called every thriving man a pitiful upstart.

"Major Matchlock, the next senior, had served in the last civil war, and had all the battles by heart. He thought no action in Europe worth talking about since the fight of Marston Moor; and every night he told of his having been knocked off his horse at the rising of the London apprentices.

"Honest old Dick Reptile was a good natured, indolent man, who spoke little himself but laughed at the jokes of others. He always brought his young nephew, a youth of eighteen years, along with him to show him good company and give him a taste of the world. This young fellow sat generally silent, but whenever he opened his mouth or laughed at anything that passed, he was constantly told by his uncle after a jocular manner, "Ay, Ay, Jack, you young men think us fools, but we old men know you are ."

"Then there was a bencher of a neighboring inn, who in his youth had frequented the ordinaries of Charing Cross, and pretended to have been intimate with Jack Ogle. He had about ten Distichs of Hudibras by heart, and never left the club till he had applied them all. If any modern wit was mentioned or any town frolic spoken of, he shook his head at the dulness of the age and told a story of Jack Ogle."

The Spectator was the fifth member of this club, and gives the following account of one of their meetings. "Our club meets precisely at six in the evening; but I did not come last night till half an hour after seven, by means of which I escaped the battle of Naseby, which the Major usually begins about three quarters after six. I found also that my good friend the bencher had already spent three of his distichs, and only wanted an opportunity to hear a sermon spoken of where a "stick" rhymes with "ecclesiastic". At my entrance

into the room they were naming a red petticoat and cloak, by which I found that the bencher had been diverting them with a story of Jack Ogle."

"I had no sooner taken my seat, but Sir Jeffrey, to show his good will towards me, gave me a pipe of his own tobacco, and stirred up the fire. I looked upon it as a point of morality to be obliged by those who endeavor to oblige me, and therefore in requital for his kindness, and to set the conversation going, I took the best occasion I could to put him upon telling us the story of old Gauntlett, which he always does with very particular concern. He traced up his descent on both sides for several generations, describing his diet and manner of life, with his several battles, and particularly that in which he fell. This Gauntlett was a game rooster, upon whose head, the knight, in his youth, had won Five Hundred Pounds and lost Two Thousand Pounds. This naturally set the Major upon an account of Edge Hill fight, and ended in a duel of Jack Ogle's.

"Old Reptile was extremely attentive to all that was said, although it was the same he had heard every night for these twenty years, and upon all occasions winked upon his nephew to mind what passed."

The members of the Amorous Club at Oxford were all votaries of Cupid, and admirers of the fair sex. They were obliged to live under secrecy, since their constitution ran

counter to that of the University. The president-ship was bestowed according to the dignity of the passion. Their number was unlimited, and their statutes like those of the Druids, recorded in their own breasts only, and explained by the majority of the company. A mistress with a poem in her praise would introduce any candidate. Without a poem no one could be admitted, for he that was not in love enough to rhyme was unqualified for their society. To speak disrespectfully of any woman meant immediate expulsion. As they were all gown men, instead of duelling when they were rivals, they drank together the health of their mistress. The manner of doing this sometimes caused debates. However, the method of a glass to every letter of her name was generally favored, but even this often occasioned a dispute of some warmth. A young student who was in love with Mistress Elizabeth Dimple was so unreasonable as to begin her health under the name Elizabetha, which so exasperated the club that by common consent they retrenched it ~~t~~ to Betty. They looked upon a man as no company who did not sigh five times in a quarter of an hour; and considered a member very absurd, who was so much himself as to make a direct answer to a question. In short, the whole assembly was made up of absent-minded men, that is of persons who had lost their locality, and whose minds and bodies never kept company with one another.

The Everlasting Club was one of the greatest curiosities of the age. A gentleman, complaining of a tradesman who was related to him, after having represented him as a very idle and worthless fellow who neglected his family and spent most of his time over a bottle, concluded his character by saying that he was a member of the Everlasting Club. So very odd a title aroused the Spectator's curiosity, and on enquiring into the nature of the club this gentleman gave him the following account.

"The Everlasting Club consisted of one hundred members who divided the whole twenty four hours among them in such a manner that the club sat night and day from one end of the year to the other, no party presuming to rise until they were relieved by those who were to succeed them. By this means, a member of the Everlasting Club never wanted company; for though he was not on duty himself, he was sure to find some who were. If he were disposed to take a whet, a mooning, an evening's draught, or a bottle after midnight, he went to the club and found a knot of friends to his taste."

"It was a maxim in this club that the steward never died; for, as they succeeded one another by way of rotation, no man was to vacate the great elbow chair which stood at the upper end of the table till his successor was in readiness to fill it. Thus, there had not been a sede vacante in the memory of man."

The Everlasting Club treated all other clubs with an eye of contempt, and talked of the Kit-Cat and October as a couple of upstarts. Their ordinary discourse turned altogether upon such adventures as had happened in their own assembly; of members who had taken the glass in their turn for a week together without stirring out of the Club; of others who had smoked one hundred pipes at a sitting; of others who had not missed their morning draught for twenty years together. Sometimes they spoke in raptures of a run of ale in King Chas^r. Reign; and sometimes reflected with astonishment upon games of whist which had been miraculously recovered by members of the society, when in all human probability the cause was desperate.

They delighted in several old catches which they sang at all hours to encourage one another to moisten their clay and grow immortal by drinking, with many other edifying exhortations of the like nature. There were four general clubs held in a year, at which times they filled up vacancies, appointed waiters and settled contributions for coals, pipes, tobacco and other necessaries."

The Silent Club met in Dumb Alley in Holborn. The members considered themselves the relics of the old Pythagoreans, and had this maxim as the foundation of their design, that talking spoils company. The President was born deaf and dumb, and owed that blessing to nature, which in the rest was owing to industry alone. The greater number of the members

were married men whose wives were particularly loud at home. To the club they fled for refuge and enjoyed at once the two greatest and most valuable blessings, company and retirement. They managed their debates with their fingers, which were as nimble and infallible interpreters of their thoughts as were other men's tongues. Yet, even this mechanical exercise was only allowed upon the weightiest occasions. They admired the wise institutions of the Turks and other eastern nations, where all commands were performed by officious mutes. Every member had to be silent while the club was sitting, but at home might talk as much and as fast as his family occasions required, without breach of statute. The advantages from the Quaker-like assembly were many. Considering that the understanding of man is liable to mistakes, and his will fond of contradictions, that disputes which are of no weight in themselves are often very considerable in their effects, they decided that the disuse of the tongue was the only effectual remedy against these. All party concerns, all private scandal, all insults over another man's weaker reasons must there be lost where no disputes arose. Another advantage was that they were all upon the same level in conversation. There had been but one word spoken since the foundation, for which the member was expelled by the old Roman custom of bending back the thumb. He had just received the news of the battle of Hochstadt, and, being too impatient to communicate his joy, was unfortunately betrayed into a lapsus linguae. They acted on the principles of the Roman Manlius, and though they app-

proved the cause of his error as just, they condemned the effect as a manifest violation of his duty.

"Another set of men formed a society whose members swore to dare to be short, and boldly bear out the dignity of smallness under the noses of those engrossers of manhood, those hyperbolical monsters of the species, the tall fellows who overlooked the short. The day of their institution was the twenty-first of December, the shortest day in the year, on which they were to hold an annual feast over a dish of shrimps. They chose a small piazza as their meeting place. At their first meeting an old woman brought her son to the club room, desiring that he might be educated in this school, for she saw there finer boys than ordinary. However, this incident in no way discouraged their designs, They began with sending invitations to those of a stature not exceeding five feet to repair to their assembly; but the greater part returned excuses or said they were not qualified."

One said he was indeed but five feet at present but he should soon exceed that proportion as his periwig maker and his shoemaker had lately promised him three inches more between them."

"Another alleged that he was so unfortunate as to have one leg shorter than the other, and whoever had determined his stature at five feet had taken him at a disadvantage, for when he was mounted on the other leg he was at least five feet two and one half inches."

"In fitting up the club room, they caused a total removal of all chairs, stools and tables, which had served the gross of mankind for many years."

"The disadvantages these short people had undergone while making use of these were unspeakable. The President's whole body was sunk in the elbow chair, and when his arms were spread over it, he appeared, to the great lessening of his dignity, like a child in a go-cart. It was also so wide in the seat, that in spite of the fact that the President sat in it, there was still a *sede vacante*. They had the room newly furnished in all respects, and had the door made lower, so as to admit no man above five feet, ^{high,} without breaking his foretop.

A better idea of this club can be had from the following statutes taken from "The Guardian."

1st. "If it be proved upon any member no matter how duly qualified he may be, that he strives as much as possible to get above his size, by stretching, etc., or that he hath stood on tip-toe in a crowd, with a design to be taken for as tall a man as the rest; or hath privily conveyed any large book, cricket or other device under him to exhalt him on his seat; every such offender shall be sentenced to walk on pumps for a whole month."

2nd. "If any member shall take advantage from the fullness or length of his wig, or any part of his

dress, or immoderate extent of his hat, or otherwise to seem larger or higher than he is, it is ordered he shall wear red heels to his shoes, and a red feather in his hat, which may apparently mark and set bounds to the extremities of his small dimensions, that all people may readily find him out between his hat and his shoes."

3rd. "If any member shall purchase a horse for his own riding above fourteen and one-half hands in height, that horse shall forthwith be sold, a Scotch galloway bought in its stead for him, and the overplus of the money shall treat the club."

4th. "If any member, in direct contradiction to the fundamental laws of society, shall wear the heels of his shoes exceeding one and one-half inches, it shall be interpreted as an open renunciation of littleness, and the criminal shall be instantly expelled.

N.B. The form to be used in expelling shall be in these words: "Go from among us and be tall if you can."

It is the unanimous opinion of this society that since the race of mankind is granted to have decreased in stature from the beginning to this present, it is the intent

of nature itself that men should be small; and we believe that all human kind shall at last grow down to perfection, that is to say to be reduced to our measure."

The Chit-Chat club was a female society, and in inviting the Spectator one evening to their meeting, they unanimously agreed to allow him one minute in ten for conversation without interruption.

The lawyer's club, which consisted only of attorneys, met at a certain tavern in the city. At the meeting every one proposed to the board the cause he had then in hand. Each member gave his judgment upon the case according to the experience he had met with. If it happened that any one put a case of which they had no precedent, it was noted down by their clerk, Will Goosequill, that one of them might go with it the next day to a counsel. This indeed was commendable, and ought to have been the principal end of their meeting, but you should have been there to hear them relate their methods of managing a case, their manner of drawing out their bills, and in short their arguments upon the several ways of abusing their clients, with the applause that was given to him, who had done it most artfully.

Another set of men formed themselves into a nocturnal fraternity known as the Mohock Club, a name borrowed, it seems from a sort of cannibals in India, who subsisted by plundering

and devouring all the nations about them. The president was styled "Emperor of the Mohocks". His arms were a Turkish crescent which His Imperial Majesty wore in a very extraordinary manner engraven upon his forehead. Agreeable to their name, the avowed design of their institution was mischief, and upon this foundation all their rules and orders were formed. An outrageous ambition of doing all possible hurt to their fellow creatures was the great cement of their assembly, and the only qualification required in the members. In order to carry out this intention in its full strength and perfection, they took care to drink themselves to a pitch, that is, beyond the possibility of attending to any motions of reason or humanity; then they would make a general sally, and attack all those who were so unfortunate as to walk the streets through which they parolled. Some were knocked down, others stabbed, others cut and carbonaded. To put the watch to a total rout and mortify some of those inoffensive militia was reckoned a coup d'état. The particular talent by which these misanthropes were distinguished from one another consisted in the various kinds of barbarities which they executed upon their prisoners. In this manner they carried on a war against mankind. ~~¶~~

Frequent complaints were sent to the "Guardian" by men of discretion and sobriety in most of the coffee-houses from St. James' to Jonathans' that there had sprung up a very

numerous race of young fellows about the town who had the confidence to walk the streets and come into public places in open daylight with swords of such immoderate length as struck terror into a great many good subjects. Besides this half a dozen of this fraternity in a room or a narrow street were as inconvenient as so many turn stiles, because you could pass neither backward nor forward, until you had first put their weapons aside. These men united under the name of the Terrible Club.

In the majority of these clubs, men were knit together by a love of society, not a spirit of faction. Generally they did not meet to censure or annoy those who were absent, but to enjoy one another; and when they were thus combined for their own improvement, or for the good of others, or at least to relax themselves from the business of the day by an innocent and cheerful conversation, we must confess that there was something ^{very} useful in these little institutions and establishments of the eighteenth century.

In conclusion, we must notice that although the topics which engaged the attention of the essayists were very numerous, no subject connected with the general good of mankind was ^{left} untouched, and by means less noxious than what are usually employed, they succeeded in conveying that knowledge of the world which is esteemed by many an indispensable accomplishment.

To correct the vices, ridicule the follies, and dissipate the ignorance which too generally prevailed at the beginning of the eighteenth century was the great and noble object of these papers. By enlivening morality with wit and tempering wit with morality, not only were those objects attained in a most eminent degree, but the authors conferred a lasting benefit on their country by establishing and rendering popular a species of writing, which has materially tended to cultivate the understanding, refine the taste and augment and purify the moral feeling of successive generations.

The effects however, on the manners of the age of this new species of popular instruction would have been very inconsiderable and the authors could have inculcated neither the moral virtues nor the social obligations successfully had they trusted merely to the powers of wit and humor, and disregarded the more important considerations that errors in manners are not far removed from degeneracy in morals, and that there is no substantial foundation for the utility of the one or the integrity of the other, but in the principles of the pure religion of our ancestors - a religion beyond all controversy more admirably adapted than any institution can boast to direct us in every duty of life and in every dispensation of providence. Of this solid and only source of real happiness it does not appear that our authors ever lost sight.