

told part of it, for its curiosity, was preserved in the Tower of London; and it is certain, that he had a complete suit made of polished plates of solid silver. His civil wardrobe was, if possible, still richer. In another picture he appears in a suit of white sattin, which he had ornamented with jewels to the value of sixty thousand pounds; and a certain author observes, that upon some great assemblies at court, his very shoes were bedecked with precious stones, that were worth more than six thousand six hundred pieces of gold.

When we consider the great number of works which this great man published, it appears wonderful how he could find time to collect so much strength of mind and so much attention as were necessary to compose them; but the wonder will cease when

AN ALLEGORY ON THE DISPUTE RESPECTING PRECEDENCY  
BETWEEN THE BELLES LETTRES AND THE FINE ARTS.

By MR. KLOPSTOCK. Translated from the GERMAN.

THE Belles Lettres and the Fine Arts had often solicited Taste, to decide their ancient quarrel respecting precedency; but she had always address enough to defer passing sentence. The exhibition of a painting, and a poem in her temple, revived the dispute with more warmth than ever, and the judge could no longer find any pretence for delay. It is said, that some eager glances which she cast upon the poem, at the time she ought to have been employed in examining the painting, awakened the former animosity of the two parties, and that she was then forced to allow them to plead their cause.

Painting, Architecture, Engraving, and Music, commissioned Sculpture to defend their rights; and Philosophy, not that who, disdain the assistance of the Belles Lettres, teaches useless things in volumes never read, and who, never sacrificing to the Graces, delivers her precepts in the most barbarous style, but that Philosophy

we are informed how he divided his time. Four hours only he allowed to sleep, four hours he devoted to reading and study, two to discourse, and the remainder to business and other necessary avocations. Besides military, maritime, geographical, political and philosophical treatises, he wrote also several poems. His best performance in this way is his *Silent Lover*; the following stanza in which is justly admired.

Silence in love, betrays more woe  
Than words, though e'er so witty;  
The beggar that is dumb, you know,  
Deserves a double pity.

Sir Walter had an excellent library, which was of use sometimes to Mr. Selden, and to others of the Society of Antiquaries, of which he was a member.

which was the friend of Socrates, spoke for Poetry, Eloquence, and History.

The Belles Lettres having consented that Sculpture should open the cause, she began in the following manner: "Our judge will doubtless permit us to take notice of the reproach often thrown upon us, of being sometimes uncertain respecting the object of our present contest. As we have no share in this reproach, we have so much the greater reason to hope that she will decide in our favor. Our claims are, indeed, founded upon the most incontestible rights; do not thy favorites the connoisseurs, and those who are fond of the beautiful, when they travel through cities that are honored with thy particular protection, stop there only to admire our productions? It is to us that cities are indebted for their celebrity and fame. It is not the proprietors of those sumptuous palaces, en-

enriched with our treasures that attract the attention of the stranger, for few, indeed, are worthy of his attention; but the eye of the connoisseur is fixed with complacency upon the orders and beautiful proportions of Architecture. He by turns admires the creative pencil of the painter, the sweet and bold strokes of the engraver, and the chissel, which, in my hands, can give animation even to the hardest marble. He there also finds our companion Music, who alone has power to retain him by her melodious harmony; but he soon hastens to traverse gardens embellished by Venus and the Graces, or to return to some gallery where works of art exhibit a faithful representation of nature. Can the sight of a library afford to those who are fond of beauty so delicious an enjoyment? They there see buried in dust, works of pretended immortality, dismal monuments of the weakness and vain efforts of the human mind, which a perusal of authors alone, or their insatiable avidity, revive periodically, under new forms, and in other languages; but notwithstanding these shifts, they would scarcely find purchasers, did not Engraving deign to ornament them with the productions of her art. Besides, nothing is so common as books; their cheapness places them within the reach of every one, and what is their utility, but to amuse idleness, and often to suggest false ideas to the reader, who, by his own reflections, might have more easily discovered the truth? With how much greater advantages are our works attended! Architecture renders the habitations of men agreeable, by the conveniences and ornaments which she distributes in them with taste. Painting, Sculpture and Engraving immortalize genius and great men of all conditions. Would the remembrance of those who are the benefactors of mankind be preserved, did we not continually exhibit to admiration and gratitude, their lasting images in public places, in collections of the works of art, and

even in the houses of private individuals? Pleasure and gaiety would be banished from the earth, did not Music detain them by the melody of her songs, and the harmony of her concert. The most savage breast is touched by them, and it is their enchanting power which softens the manners of man, by awakening his sensibility. An ill-timed modesty would hurt our cause, let us, therefore, boldly say, that we are entitled to pre-eminence over our rivals. The flowers which with a liberal hand, we scatter in the thorny path of life never fade, and every age is delighted with their charms. We imitate nature better than our rivals; our productions speak directly to the senses, and by their assistance we afford agreeable employment to the imagination and the heart. Truth adds new charms to our imitations, whilst the Belles Lettres make painful efforts to give a faint copy of nature; as they labor only for the heart, and the imagination, it is the vivacity of the latter which must finish the picture. But let us not lose ourselves in philosophical researches concerning this valuable advantage which distinguishes our productions; It is sufficient that it exists, and is universally acknowledged. The esteem in which we are held is equal to that of which the Belles Lettres can boast, and we often are even superior to them, by the number and importance of the suffrages which we obtain. We may be reproached, perhaps, with being less sensible than our rivals of the value of glory. Glory without doubt animates our labors, but after their example, we hope, we shall be permitted to join it to utility; it is an additional motive, to excite emulation, and our master pieces by encreasing our fame, add also to our fortune."

Philosophy next addressed the judge, in the following words: "Our rivals have supported their pretensions with a vivacity and attention which, in a good cause, pleaded before a judge such as ours, would

be unnecessary. In general they do not disallow that at all times we have rendered them more justice than they have rendered us. The genius necessary for producing their works, acts in a smaller circle, and has not, perhaps, the same elevation, as that which characterises us. It appears, therefore, that this observation alone, may prove the arrogant tone which they have assumed. As for us, we think more nobly, and far from refusing them that merit which is their due, we will mention some circumstances which they have omitted, and which they might have undoubtedly turned to their advantage.

Religion may acquire more force by the assistance of the fine arts, and its sublime truths, rendered sensible, as one may say, in their productions, make a much greater impression on the hearts of men.

The subjects which Painting and Sculpture take from the holy scriptures, to ornament those sacred monuments raised by Architecture, excite and keep alive piety. The graver cannot appear upon so large a scene, but by acting in a more confined sphere, its success will receive additional increase, if whatever it represents unites truth to expression. And what elevation may not the soul receive from Music in our churches, when, stripped of its superfluous ornaments, it speaks to the heart by a simple and affecting melody, and displays all its resources to celebrate in a becoming manner the sublime Object of its songs?

Notwithstanding this impartial justice which we render to our antagonists, we conceive, that we deserve the preference, and we shall proceed to explain upon what grounds our pretensions are founded.

Our rivals pretend to be possessed of more beauty than we. The sagacity of our judge, renders any discussion upon this subject needless. The effects produced by beauty are certain perceptions, and agreeable sensations, the vivacity, delicacy, and force of

which determine its different degrees. By proving that we produce these effects, with more success, and by observing, that the number of our means in that which is susceptible of being represented in a beautiful manner, surpasses the number of those of our rivals, they will we trust, without hesitation, allow us the superiority. They labor for the imagination and the heart, so do we, but we act directly, and they by the assistings of the senses. This circumstance, which they consider as so favorable to their cause, in another point of view turns to their disadvantage. The soul, too much engaged with the impressions conveyed by the senses, is incapable of feeling with the same warmth, as when an effect is produced by immediate action. It enjoys without distraction and in a superior manner, every impression that we give it.

But even setting aside this advantage, we should still have that of modifying without end, the representation of objects, and of presenting them to the imagination under new relations, whilst our rivals assume much consequence to themselves for adhering to one only. By what kind of image or harmony can they follow us through the different degrees to which we are capable of rising? and with regard to the heart, can they move it with the same force as we? What statue, or what painting has ever been known to call forth a tear? In that respect Music alone approaches us.

Every action that they represent is, and can be only the action of a moment. What a series of similar situations, and each more beautiful than the other, is contained in the *Eneid*. How many artists, and how much time would be required to paint them? Do you think, that any one who had never read the *Eneid* would have a perfect knowledge of it, after having surveyed this gallery? How many new things which painting cannot represent, would be found upon

upon reading Virgil? If we observe, that it is impossible for the greatest masters to express, by their arts, intellectual beauty, they will, perhaps, tell us that this kind of expression does not belong to them; but shall it cease to be a merit, because it is beyond their powers and ability? Ought not the sublime thoughts of our great authors charm men of taste in all ages, because their paintings, statues and songs cannot express them?

But let us hasten to make known our most important claim, and that which gives the greatest support to our cause. We teach virtue with more success than our rivals can ever expect to obtain, even when their labors are directed to that noble end. We are then more useful than they. To give perfection to the moral sense in man, is our principal object; we are even constrained to renounce our desire of pleasing, when it happens to interfere with the cause of virtue.

A nation may become flourishing by agriculture, commerce, wise laws, and an application to the learned sciences. But will this nation be happy? It can only become so by virtue. Neither riches, science, nor laws, the power of which is confined to the actions of men, can procure it this inestimable advantage; it must be indebted for it to Religion and to moral truths, the investigation of which has been left by the former to the human mind. It is not only useful but even necessary to render virtue amiable; whoever will maintain the contrary, must be little acquainted with the heart of man.

The sacred scripture presents sublime models of poetry and eloquence, the beauty and force of which surpasses every thing that the most enlightened connoisseurs admire in that kind. It is thus, that in teaching her eternal truths, Religion hath conformed to the manner of thinking among men, in order to have more influence upon the soul. It is, therefore, a great honor for us, that this

daughter of heaven hath deigned to make use of our language. Our favorites by imitating, even at a distance, these grand models, rise to the summit of glory, because their labors then become generally useful. Religion hath revealed every important truth that concerns those duties which man ought to discharge, and she hath left only for the exercise of his faculties, the explanation of a few of her sublime lessons. To render this study easy and agreeable is our task. The advantage which we have of directing the mind and heart of man in these important researches, of making him fond of his duty, and of continually leading him towards that happiness which awaits him, is the only just title we have to assume an air of pride, and without which all our efforts would be attended neither with advantage nor glory. We wish pleasure allow, that the Fine Arts are able also to diffuse certain charms over virtue, but we will venture to maintain, without dread of being refuted, that the means of our rivals are insufficient to extend her empire. According to their nature, beauty rather than utility seems to be the object of their productions; for what they can express is very much circumscribed, and incapable of producing that series of ideas and sensations, which must be excited in the mind of man, to make him sensible of the charms of virtue. Music, generally cultivated, serves indeed to soften the character of man, and to render him more sociable. Sculpture, and her amiable sisters, correct and form his taste, by directing it to beauty, continually represented under new forms, and they render him more delicate in the choice of his pleasures. This merit belongs also to our productions, even to those of them which are more agreeable than useful. All their efforts, however, are confined to a simple preparation, which disposes the heart to receive, with more facility, impressions of moral beauty, and are not sufficient to render a nation virtuous;

rious; but let our best works be dispersed through it, and it will soon enjoy that happiness.

It will be objected to us, perhaps, that we forget the force of the example of great men; but how can we forget that from which we derive most glory? Have we not always scattered with a liberal hand the most valuable gifts among those privileged beings who do honor to humanity? And who transmits better than we the example of their virtues to future ages? Our rivals have this advantage also, but in a much smaller degree. Is it by their works or by ours that posterity beholds Socrates such as he was?

These great men even, whose example is of so much importance to morality, are much less so when they do not enjoy our favor. They do not indeed, on that account, cease to be virtuous, but they are deprived of a very powerful motive for continuing to be so. Suppose we were strangers to a whole nation, its language will be poor and weak, without force and without energy, and equally unfit for poetry as for prose; it will be incapable of embellishing any moral beauty, or it will speak in an ignoble style; every useful and important thing, which might be happily communicated in prose, will remain unknown; History, by not bringing past ages before the tribunal of the public, will not make great events serve for the instruction of posterity, or she will disguise them entirely; and, lastly, for at present I am permitted to instance myself, disguised under a scholastic dress, I shall be employed only in futile researches and vain subtleties, tending neither to promote the knowledge nor happiness of man. I should then be no longer the guide and friend of sound reason, and I should in vain attempt to check the imagination heated by excessive curiosity. A false taste would take possession of every mind, and wretched quibbling, or indecent pleasantries, would obscure every idea of moral beauty. But let a few only of our

productions be given to this nation, what happy revolution will they not operate by rectifying its taste, making it acquainted with real beauty, and rendering virtue more amiable?

Our rivals have considered our productions in a very unfavorable point of view, and yet they may serve to ornament the mind with the most beautiful images, and to captivate the heart with charms more irresistible than those produced by all their forces united. The long duration of our works is, without doubt, the greatest fault they have in their eyes. Could we indeed know that Greece, so famous in history, had not the works of its great men been handed down to us? What remains at present of that country, formerly the mother of the Arts, the Sciences, and the Belles Lettres? Fields, once fertile, converted into barren deserts by ignorance, barbarity and despotism, under which slaves spring up who are unworthy of the name of their glorious ancestors. Horace says of his works, "I have erected a monument more durable than brass, and loftier than the pyramids of Egypt, which will brave the destruction of time." Our rivals, doubtless, will not dispute the truth of this prediction, accomplished according to the unanimous consent of all civilized nations.

Are our authors, who immortalize themselves by excellent works, to be less esteemed because they procure them glory without much profit? Many of them leave their Raphael far behind; are they therefore less entitled to just preference, because certain fortuitous circumstances, which favored that artist, did not concur to augment their fortunes? It would be as ridiculous to condemn the desire which one has of being paid for one's labor, as to establish upon the importance of that price, the exclusive measure of the merit of a work.

Philosophy having ended her harangue, both parties waited for the decision of the judge with that anxiety, which Virgil has described in so beautiful a manner:

*Enu-*

*Exultantique haurit  
Corda pavor pulsans, laudumque arrepta  
cupido.*

The Goddess of Taste appeared lost in a profound reverie; not that she was uncertain in whose favor she should determine; for it is said, that she cast a soft look, mixed with pity, upon the rivals of the Belles Lettres, but her hesitation was probably occasioned, by doubting whether she should not pronounce equally respecting the merit which the latter claimed, of being serviceable to the public by their moral utility. This hesitation was not, however, of long duration, and she was going to pass sentence, when an unforeseen event prevented her.

Dancing, who had not assisted at the contest, suddenly appeared with her usual vivacity. She soon understood what was going forward. The Belles Lettres could not conceal their

uneasiness when she entered, nor could their rivals conceal the joy which they felt from her presence; for though they had not a very clear idea of the preference founded upon moral beauty, yet intimidated by the compassionate glance with which Taste had honored them, they began to suspect that this preference might have a certain weight. But Dancing was astonished to find, that they had mentioned a beauty of which she had not the least notion, and she could not conceal her discontent, at not having been invited to be present at the dispute. With that winning air which is peculiar to her, she pointed out the successful manner in which she would have pleaded her cause, and that of her friends, and she requested in so pressing a manner, the affair to be put off till another day that the judge consented, and permitted the fair pleaders to retire.

#### OBSERVATIONS ON THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE CUCKOO:†

From the PHILOSOPHICAL TRANSACTIONS.

THE first appearance of cuckoos in Gloucestershire (the part of England where these observations were made) is about the 17th of April. The song of the male, which is well known, soon proclaims its arrival. The song of the female (if the peculiar notes of which it is composed may be so called) is widely different, and has been so little attended to that I believe few are acquainted with it. I know not how to convey to you a proper idea of it by a comparison with the notes of any other bird; but the cry of the dabchick bears the nearest resemblance to it.

Unlike the generality of birds, cuckoos do not pair. When a female appears on the wing, she is often attended by two or three males, who

seem to be earnestly contending for her favors. From the time of her appearance, till after the middle of summer, the nests of the birds selected to receive her eggs are to be found in great abundance; but like the other migrating birds, she does not begin to lay till some weeks after her arrival. I never could procure an egg till after the middle of May, though probably an early-coming cuckoo may produce one sooner.

The cuckoo makes choice of the nests of a great variety of small birds. I have known its egg intrusted to the care of the hedge-sparrow, the water-wagtail, the tit-lark, the yellow-hammer, the green-linnet, and the whinchat. Among these it generally selects the three former; but shews

\* Now pres'd with heaving fears they sink away,  
Now thro' with rising hopes to win the day.

Vir. ENRID. B. v. l. 137.

† Communicated by Mr. Edward Jenner, in a letter to John Hunter, Esq; F.R.S. and read March 13th, 1788.