

obtain, that is, because our poets write so ill in it. This indeed may prove a more prevailing argument than all others which are used to destroy it, and therefore I am only troubled when great and judicious poets, and those who are acknowledged such, have writ or spoke against it: as for others, they are to be answered by that one sentence of an ancient author: *Sed ut primo ad consequendos eos quos priores ducimus, accendimur, ita ubi aut praeteriri, aut aequari eos posse desperavimus, studium cum spe senescit: quod, scilicet, assequi non potest, sequi desinit;—praeteritoque eo in quo eminare non possumus, aliquid in quo nitamur, conquirimus.*¹

Lisideus concluded in this manner; and Neander, after a little pause, thus answered him:

I shall grant Lisideus, without much dispute, a great part of what he has urged against us; for I acknowledge, that the French contrive their plots more regularly, and observe the laws of comedy, and decorum of the stage, (to speak generally,) with more exactness than the English. Farther, I deny not but he has taxed us justly in some irregularities of ours, which he has mentioned; yet, after all, I am of opinion, that neither our faults, nor their virtues, are considerable enough to place them above us.

For the lively imitation of nature being in the definition of a play, those which best fulfil that law, ought to be esteemed superior to the others. 'Tis true, those beauties of the French poesy are such as will raise perfection higher where it is, but are not sufficient to give it where it is not: they are indeed the beauties of a statue, but not of a man, because not animated with the soul of poesy, which is imitation of humour and passions: and this Lisideus himself, or any other, however biassed to their party, cannot but acknowledge, if he will either compare the humours of our comedies, or the characters of our serious plays, with theirs. He who will look upon theirs which have been written till these last ten years, or thereabouts, will find it an hard matter to pick out two or three passable humours amongst them. Corneille him-

¹ But as at first we are incited to follow those whom we regard as superior, so when we have despaired of being able either to surpass or to equal them, zeal weakens as hope does: what, forsooth, cannot be overtaken is not pursued;—and abandoning that in which we cannot excel, we seek something in which we may contend.

self, their arch-poet, what has he produced except "The Liar," and you know how it was cried up in France; but when it came upon the English stage, though well translated, and that part of Dorant acted to so much advantage as I am confident it never received in its own country, the most favourable to it would not put it in competition with many of Fletcher's or Ben Jonson's. In the rest of Corneille's comedies you have little humour; he tells you himself, his way is, first to show two lovers in good intelligence with each other; in the working up of the play, to embroil them by some mistake, and in the latter end to clear it, and reconcile them.

But of late years Molière, the younger Corneille, Quinault, and some others, have been imitating afar off the quick turns and graces of the English stage. They have mixed their serious plays with mirth, like our tragi-comedies, since the death of Cardinal Richelieu, which Lisideus, and many others, not observing, have commended that in them for a virtue, which they themselves no longer practise. Most of their new plays are, like some of ours, derived from the Spanish novels. There is scarce one of them without a veil, and a trusty Diego, who drolls much after the rate of the "Adventures." But their humours, if I may grace them with that name, are so thin sown, that never above one of them comes up in any play. I dare take upon me to find more variety of them in some one play of Ben Jonson's, than in all theirs together: as he who has seen the "Alchemist," "The Silent Woman," or "Bartholomew Fair," cannot but acknowledge with me.

I grant the French have performed what was possible on the ground-work of the Spanish plays; what was pleasant before, they have made regular: but there is not above one good play to be writ on all those plots; they are too much alike to please often, which we need not the experience of our own stage to justify. As for their new way of mingling mirth with serious plot, I do not, with Lisideus, condemn the thing, though I cannot approve their manner of doing it. He tells us, we cannot so speedily recollect ourselves after a scene of great passion and concernment, as to pass to another of mirth and humour, and to enjoy it with any relish: but why should he imagine the soul of man more heavy than his senses? Does not the eye pass from an unpleasant object to a pleasant, in a much shorter time than is required to this? and does not the unpleasantness of the

first commend the beauty of the latter? The old rule of logic might have convinced him, that contraries, when placed near, set off each other. A continued gravity keeps the spirit too much bent; we must refresh it sometimes, as we bait in a journey, that we may go on with greater ease. A scene of mirth, mixed with tragedy, has the same effect upon us which our music has betwixt the acts; which we find a relief to us from the best plots and language of the stage, if the discourses have been long. I must therefore have stronger arguments, ere I am convinced that compassion and mirth in the same subject destroy each other; and in the meantime, cannot but conclude, to the honour of our nation, that we have invented, increased, and perfected, a more pleasant way of writing for the stage, than was ever known to the ancients or moderns of any nation, which is tragi-comedy.

And this leads me to wonder why Lisideus and many others should cry up the barrenness of the French plots, above the variety and copiousness of the English. Their plots are single, they carry on one design, which is pushed forward by all the actors, every scene in the play contributing and moving towards it. Our plays, besides the main design, have under-plots, or by-concernments, of less considerable persons and intrigues, which are carried on with the motion of the main plot: as they say the orb of the fixed stars, and those of the planets, though they have motions of their own, are whirled about by the motion of the *primum mobile*, in which they are contained. That similitude expresses much of the English stage; for if contrary motions may be found in nature to agree; if a planet can go east and west at the same time;—one way by virtue of his own motion, the other by the force of the first mover;—it will not be difficult to imagine how the under-plot, which is only different, not contrary to the great design, may naturally be conducted along with it.

Eugenius has already shown us, from the confession of the French poets, that the unity of action is sufficiently preserved, if all the imperfect actions of the play are conducing to the main design; but when those petty intrigues of a play are so ill ordered, that they have no coherence with the other, I must grant that Lisideus has reason to tax that want of due connection; for coördination in a play is as dangerous and unnatural as in a state. In the meantime he must acknowledge, our variety,

if well ordered, will afford a greater pleasure to the audience.

As for his other argument, that by pursuing one single theme they gain an advantage to express and work up the passions, I wish any example he could bring from them would make it good; for I confess their verses are to me the coldest I have ever read. Neither, indeed, is it possible for them, in the way they take, so to express passion, as that the effects of it should appear in the concernment of an audience, their speeches being so many declamations, which tire us with the length; so that instead of persuading us to grieve for their imaginary heroes, we are concerned for our own trouble, as we are in tedious visits of bad company; we are in pain till they are gone. When the French stage came to be reformed by Cardinal Richelieu, those long harangues were introduced, to comply with the gravity of a churchman. Look upon the "Cinna" and the "Pompey"; they are not so properly to be called plays, as long discourses of reason of state; and "Polieucte" in matters of religion is as solemn as the long stops upon our organs. Since that time it is grown into a custom, and their actors speak by the hour-glass, like our parsons; nay, they account it the grace of their parts, and think themselves disparaged by the poet, if they may not twice or thrice in a play entertain the audience with a speech of an hundred lines. I deny not but this may suit well enough with the French; for as we, who are a more sullen people, come to be diverted at our plays, so they, who are of an airy and gay temper, come thither to make themselves more serious: and this I conceive to be one reason, why comedies are more pleasing to us, and tragedies to them. But to speak generally: it cannot be denied, that short speeches and replies are more apt to move the passions, and beget concernment in us, than the other; for it is unnatural for any one, in a gust of passion, to speak long together; or for another, in the same condition, to suffer him without interruption. Grief and passion are like floods raised in little brooks by a sudden rain; they are quickly up, and if the concernment be poured unexpectedly in upon us, it overflows us: But a long sober shower gives them leisure to run out as they came in, without troubling the ordinary current. As for comedy, repartee is one of its chiefest graces; the greatest pleasure of the audience is a chace of wit, kept up on both sides, and swiftly managed. And this our forefathers, if not we, have had

in Fletcher's plays, to a much higher degree of perfection, than the French poets can reasonably hope to reach.

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But to leave this, and pass to the latter part of Lisideus's discourse, which concerns relations, I must acknowledge with him, that the French have reason to hide that part of the action which would occasion too much tumult on the stage, and to choose rather to have it made known by narration to the audience. Farther, I think it very convenient, for the reasons he has given, that all incredible actions were removed; but, whether custom has so insinuated itself into our countrymen or nature has so formed them to fierceness, I know not; but they will scarcely suffer combats and other objects of horror to be taken from them. And, indeed, the indecency of tumults is all which can be objected against fighting: for why may not our imagination as well suffer itself to be deluded with the probability of it, as with any other thing in the play? For my part, I can with as great ease persuade myself, that the blows are given in good earnest, as I can, that they who strike them are kings or princes, or those persons which they represent. For objects of incredibility, — I would be satisfied from Lisideus, whether we have any so removed from all appearance of truth, as are those of Corneille's "Andromede"; a play which has been frequented the most of any he has writ. If the Perseus, or the son of an heathen god, the Pegasus, and the Monster, were not capable to choke a strong belief, let him blame any representation of ours hereafter. Those indeed were objects of delight; yet the reason is the same as to the probability; for he makes it not a ballet, or masque, but a play, which is to resemble truth. But for death, that it ought not to be represented, I have, besides the arguments alleged by Lisideus, the authority of Ben Jonson, who has forborne it in his tragedies; for both the death of Sejanus and Catiline are related; though, in the latter, I cannot but observe one irregularity of that great poet; he has removed the scene in the same act, from Rome to Catiline's army, and from thence again to Rome; and besides, has allowed a very considerable time after Catiline's speech, for the striking of the battle, and the return of Petreius, who is to relate the event of it to the senate; which I should not animadvert on him, who was otherwise a painful observer of τὸ πρεπόν, or the decorum of the stage, if he had not used extreme severity in his judgment

on the incomparable Shakespeare for the same fault. To conclude on this subject of relations, if we are to be blamed for showing too much of the action, the French are as faulty for discovering too little of it; a mean betwixt both should be observed by every judicious writer, so as the audience may neither be left unsatisfied by not seeing what is beautiful, or shocked by beholding what is either incredible or undecent.

I hope I have already proved in this discourse, that though we are not altogether so punctual as the French, in observing the laws of comedy, yet our errors are so few, and little, and those things wherein we excel them so considerable, that we ought of right to be preferred before them. But what will Lisideus say, if they themselves acknowledge they are too strictly bounded by those laws, for breaking which he has blamed the English? I will allege Corneille's words, as I find them in the end of his Discourse of the three Unities: *Il est facile aux speculatifs d'estre severes*, etc. "It is easy for speculative persons to judge severely; but if they would produce to public view ten or twelve pieces of this nature, they would perhaps give more latitude to the rules than I have done, when, by experience, they had known how much we are limited and constrained by them, and how many beauties of the stage they banished from it." To illustrate a little what he has said: — by their servile observations of the unities of time and place, and integrity of scenes, they have brought on themselves that dearth of plot, and narrowness of imagination, which may be observed in all their plays. How many beautiful accidents might naturally happen in two or three days, which cannot arrive with any probability in the compass of twenty-four hours? There is time to be allowed also for maturity of design, which amongst great and prudent persons, such as are often represented in tragedy, cannot, with any likelihood of truth, be brought to pass at so short a warning. Farther, by tying themselves strictly to the unity of place, and unbroken scenes, they are forced many times to omit some beauties which cannot be shown where the act began; but might, if the scene were interrupted, and the stage cleared for the persons to enter in another place; and therefore the French poets are often forced upon absurdities: for if the act begins in a chamber, all the persons in the play must have some business or other to come thither, or else they are not to be shown that act; and sometimes their characters are very unfitting to

appear there: as suppose it were the king's bed-chamber, yet the meanest man in the tragedy must come and despatch his business there, rather than in the lobby, or court-yard, (which is fitter for him,) for fear the stage should be cleared, and the scenes broken. Many times they fall by it into a greater inconvenience; for they keep their scenes unbroken, and yet change the place; as in one of their newest plays, where the act begins in the street. There a gentleman is to meet his friend; he sees him with his man, coming out from his father's house; they talk together, and the first goes out: the second, who is a lover, has made an appointment with his mistress; she appears at the window, and then we are to imagine the scene lies under it. This gentleman is called away, and leaves his servant with his mistress: presently her father is heard from within; the young lady is afraid the serving-man should be discovered, and thrusts him into a place of safety, which is supposed to be her closet. After this, the father enters to the daughter, and now the scene is in a house: for he is seeking from one room to another for this poor Philipin, or French Diego, who is heard from within, drolling and breaking many a miserable conceit on the subject of his sad condition. In this ridiculous manner the play goes forward, the stage being never empty all the while: so that the street, the window, the two houses, and the closet, are made to walk about, and the persons to stand still. Now, what, I beseech you, is more easy than to write a regular French play, or more difficult than to write an irregular English one, like those of Fletcher, or of Shakespeare?

If they content themselves, as Corneille did, with some flat design, which, like an ill riddle, is found out ere it be half proposed, such plots we can make every way regular as easily as they; but whenever they endeavour to rise to any quick turns and counter-turns of plot, as some of them have attempted, since Corneille's plays have been less in vogue, you see they write as irregularly as we, though they cover it more speciously. Hence the reason is perspicuous, why no French plays, when translated, have, or ever can succeed on the English stage. For, if you consider the plots, our own are fuller of variety; if the writing, ours are more quick and fuller of spirit; and therefore 'tis a strange mistake in those who decry the way of writing plays in verse, as if the English therein imitated the French. We have borrowed nothing from them; our plots are weaved

in English looms: we endeavour therein to follow the variety and greatness of characters, which are derived to us from Shakespeare and Fletcher; the copiousness and well-knitting of the intrigues we have from Jonson; and for the verse itself we have English precedents of elder date than any of Corneille's plays. Not to name our old comedies before Shakespeare, which were all writ in verse of six feet, or Alexandrines, such as the French now use, — I can show in Shakespeare, many scenes of rhyme together, and the like in Ben Jonson's tragedies: in "Catiline" and "Sejanus" sometimes thirty or forty lines, — I mean besides the chorus, or the monologues; which, by the way, showed Ben no enemy to this way of writing, especially if you read his "Sad Shepherd," which goes sometimes on rhyme, sometimes on blank verse, like an horse who eases himself on trot and amble. You find him likewise commending Fletcher's pastoral of "The Faithful Shepherdess," which is for the most part rhyme, though not refined to that purity to which it hath since been brought. And these examples are enough to clear us from a servile imitation of the French.

But to return whence I have digressed: I dare boldly affirm these two things of the English drama; — First, that we have many plays of ours as regular as any of theirs, and which, besides, have more variety of plot and characters; and, secondly, that in most of the irregular plays of Shakespeare or Fletcher, (for Ben Jonson's are for the most part regular,) there is a more masculine fancy, and greater spirit in the writing, than there is in any of the French. I could produce even in Shakespeare's and Fletcher's works, some plays which are almost exactly formed; as the "Merry Wives of Windsor," and "The Scornful Lady": but, because (generally speaking) Shakespeare, who writ first, did not perfectly observe the laws of comedy, and Fletcher, who came nearer to perfection, yet through carelessness made many faults; I will take the pattern of a perfect play from Ben Jonson, who was a careful and learned observer of the dramatic laws, and from all his comedies I shall select "The Silent Woman;" of which I will make a short examen, according to those rules which the French observe.

As Neander was beginning to examine "The Silent Woman," Eugenius, earnestly regarding him: I beseech you, Neander, said he, gratify the company, and me in particular, so far as, before you speak of the play, to give us a charac-

ter of the author; and tell us frankly your opinion, whether you do not think all writers, both French and English, ought to give place to him?

I fear, replied Neander, that, in obeying your commands, I shall draw some envy on myself. Besides, in performing them, it will be first necessary to speak somewhat of Shakespeare and Fletcher, his rivals in poesy; and one of them, in my opinion, at least his equal, perhaps his superior.

To begin then with Shakespeare. He was the man who of all modern, and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of nature were still present to him, and he drew them not laboriously, but luckily: when he describes anything, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards, and found her there. I cannot say he is everywhere alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of mankind. He is many times flat, insipid; his comic wit degenerating into clenches, his serious swelling into bombast. But he is always great, when some great occasion is presented to him: no man can say, he ever had a fit subject for his wit, and did not then raise himself as high above the rest of poets,

*Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi.*¹

The consideration of this made Mr. Hales of Eton say, that there was no subject of which any poet ever writ, but he would produce it much better done in Shakespeare; and however others are now generally preferred before him, yet the age wherein he lived, which had contemporaries with him, Fletcher and Jonson, never equalled them to him in their esteem: and in the last king's court, when Ben's reputation was at highest, Sir John Suckling, and with him the greater part of the courtiers, set our Shakespeare far above him.

Beaumont and Fletcher, of whom I am next to speak, had, with the advantage of Shakespeare's wit, which was their precedent, great natural gifts, improved by study; Beaumont especially being so accurate a judge of plays, that Ben Jonson, while he lived, submitted all his writings to his censure, and 'tis thought, used his judgment in correcting, if not contriving, all his plots. What value he had for him,

¹ As do the tall cypresses above the laggard shrubs.

appears by the verses he writ to him; and therefore I need speak no farther of it. The first play that brought Fletcher and him in esteem, was their "Philaster"; for before that, they had written two or three very unsuccessfully: as the like is reported of Ben Jonson, before he writ "Every Man in his Humour." Their plots were generally more regular than Shakespeare's, especially those which were made before Beaumont's death; and they understood and imitated the conversation of gentlemen much better; whose wild debaucheries, and quickness of wit in repartees, no poet before them could paint as they have done. Humour, which Ben Jonson derived from particular persons, they made it not their business to describe: they represented all the passions very lively, but above all, love. I am apt to believe the English language in them arrived to its highest perfection; what words have since been taken in, are rather superfluous than ornamental. Their plays are now the most pleasant and frequent entertainments of the stage; two of theirs being acted through the year for one of Shakespeare's or Jonson's: the reason is, because there is a certain gaiety in their comedies, and pathos in their more serious plays, which suits generally with all men's humours. Shakespeare's language is likewise a little obsolete, and Ben Jonson's wit comes short of theirs.

As for Jonson, to whose character I am now arrived, if we look upon him while he was himself, (for his last plays were but his dotages,) I think him the most learned and judicious writer which any theatre ever had. He was a most severe judge of himself, as well as others. One cannot say he wanted wit, but rather that he was frugal of it. In his works you find little to retrench or alter. Wit and language, and humour also in some measure, we had before him; but something of art was wanting to the drama, till he came. He managed his strength to more advantage than any who preceded him. You seldom find him making love in any of his scenes, or endeavouring to move the passions; his genius was too sullen and saturnine to do it gracefully, especially when he knew he came after those who had performed both to such an height. Humour was his proper sphere; and in that he delighted most to represent mechanic people. He was deeply conversant in the ancients, both Greek and Latin, and he borrowed boldly from them: there is scarce a poet or historian among the Roman authors of those times, whom he has not translated in

"Sejanus" and "Catiline." But he has done his robberies so openly, that one may see he fears not to be taxed by any law. He invades authors like a monarch; and what would be theft in other poets, is only victory in him. With the spoils of these writers he so represents old Rome to us, in its rites, ceremonies, and customs, that if one of their poets had written either of his tragedies, we had seen less of it than in him. If there was any fault in his language, it was, that he weaved it too closely and laboriously, in his comedies especially: perhaps too, he did a little too much Romanize our tongue, leaving the words which he translated almost as much Latin as he found them: wherein, though he learnedly followed their language, he did not enough comply with the idiom of ours. If I would compare him with Shakespeare, I must acknowledge him the more correct poet, but Shakespeare the greater wit. Shakespeare was the Homer, or father of our dramatic poets; Jonson was the Virgil, the pattern of elaborate writing; I admire him, but I love Shakespeare. To conclude of him; as he has given us the most correct plays, so in the precepts which he has laid down in his "Discoveries," we have as many and profitable rules for perfecting the stage, as any wherewith the French can furnish us.

JOHN LOCKE (1632-1704)

OF THE CONDUCT OF THE UNDERSTANDING

1. *Introduction.* — The last resort a man has recourse to, in the conduct of himself, is his understanding; for though we distinguish the faculties of the mind, and give the supreme command to the will, as to an agent, yet the truth is, the man, who is the agent, determines himself to this or that voluntary action, upon some precedent knowledge, or appearance of knowledge, in the understanding. No man ever sets himself about anything but upon some view or other, which serves him for a reason for what he does: and whatsoever faculties he employs, the understanding, with such light as it has, well or ill informed, constantly leads; and by that light, true or false, all his operative powers are directed. The will itself, how absolute and uncontrollable soever it may be thought, never fails in its obedience to the dictates of the understanding. Temples have their sacred images, and we see what influence they have always had over a great part of man-

kind. But in truth, the ideas and images in men's minds are the invisible powers that constantly govern them, and to these they all universally pay a ready submission. It is therefore of the highest concernment that great care should be taken of the understanding, to conduct it right in the search of knowledge, and in the judgments it makes.

The logic now in use has so long possessed the chair, as the only art taught in the schools, for the direction of the mind in the study of the arts and sciences, that it would perhaps be thought an affectation of novelty to suspect that rules that have served the learned world these two or three thousand years, and which, without any complaint of defects, the learned have rested in, are not sufficient to guide the understanding. And I should not doubt but this attempt would be censured as vanity or presumption, did not the great Lord Verulam's authority justify it; who, not servilely thinking learning could not be advanced beyond what it was, because for many ages it had not been, did not rest in the lazy approbation and applause of what was, because it was, but enlarged his mind to what it might be. In his preface to his *Novum Organum*, concerning logic, he pronounces thus: "*Qui summas dialecticæ partes tribuerunt, atque inde fidissima scientiis præsidia comparari putarunt, verissime et optime viderunt intellectum humanum, sibi permissum, merito suspectum esse debere. Verum infirmior omnino est malo medicina; nec ipsa mali expers. Siquidem dialectica, quæ recepta est, licet ad civilia et artes, quæ in sermone et opinione positæ sunt, rectissime adhibeatur; naturæ tamen subtilitatem longo intervallo non attingit, et prensando quod non capit, ad errores potius stabiliendos et quasi figendos, quam ad viam veritatis aperiendam valuit.*"

"They," says he, "who attributed so much to logic, perceived very well and truly that it was not safe to trust the understanding to itself without the guard of any rules. But the remedy reached not the evil, but became a part of it, for the logic which took place, though it might do well enough in civil affairs and the arts, which consisted in talk and opinion, yet comes very far short of subtlety in the real performances of nature; and, catching at what it cannot reach, has served to confirm and establish errors, rather than to open a way to truth." And therefore a little after he says, "That it is absolutely necessary that a better and perfecter use and employ-

ment of the mind and understanding should be introduced." "*Necessario requiritur ut melior et perfectior mentis et intellectus humani usus et adoperatio introducat.*"

2. *Parts.*—There is, it is visible, great variety in men's understandings, and their natural constitutions put so wide a difference between some men in this respect, that art and industry would never be able to master, and their very natures seem to want a foundation to raise on it that which other men easily attain unto. Amongst men of equal education there is great inequality of parts. And the woods of America, as well as the schools of Athens, produce men of several abilities in the same kind. Though this be so, yet I imagine most men come very short of what they might attain unto, in their several degrees, by a neglect of their understandings. A few rules of logic are thought sufficient in this case for those who pretend to the highest improvement, whereas I think there are a great many natural defects in the understanding capable of amendment, which are overlooked and wholly neglected. And it is easy to perceive that men are guilty of a great many faults in the exercise and improvement of this faculty of the mind, which hinder them in their progress, and keep them in ignorance and error all their lives. Some of them I shall take notice of, and endeavour to point out proper remedies for, in the following discourse.

3. *Reasoning.*—Besides the want of determined ideas, and of sagacity and exercise in finding out and laying in order intermediate ideas, there are three miscarriages that men are guilty of, in reference to their reason, whereby this faculty is hindered in them from that service it might do and was designed for. And he that reflects upon the actions and discourses of mankind will find their defects in this kind very frequent and very observable.

1. The first is of those who seldom reason at all, but do and think according to the example of others, whether parents, neighbours, ministers, or who else they are pleased to make choice of to have an implicit faith in, for the saving of themselves the pains and trouble of thinking and examining for themselves.

2 The second is of those who put passion in the place of reason, and being resolved that shall govern their actions and arguments, neither use their own, nor hearken to other people's reason, any further than it suits their humour, interest, or party; and these one

may observe commonly content themselves with words which have no distinct ideas to them, though in other matters, that they come with an unbiassed indifference to, they want not abilities to talk and hear reason, where they have no secret inclination that hinders them from being tractable to it.

3. The third sort is of those who readily and sincerely follow reason, but for want of having that which one may call large, sound, roundabout sense, have not a full view of all that relates to the question, and may be of moment to decide it. We are all shortsighted, and very often see but one side of a matter; our views are not extended to all that has a connection with it. From this defect I think no man is free. We see but in part, and we know but in part, and therefore it is no wonder we conclude not right from our partial views. This might instruct the proudest esteemer of his own parts, how useful it is to talk and consult with others, even such as come short of him in capacity, quickness, and penetration; for since no one sees all, and we generally have different prospects of the same thing according to our different, as I may say, positions to it, it is not incongruous to think, nor beneath any man to try, whether another may not have notions of things which have escaped him, and which his reason would make use of if they came into his mind. The faculty of reasoning seldom or never deceives those who trust to it; its consequences, from what it builds on, are evident and certain; but that which it oftenest, if not only, misleads us in, is, that the principles from which we conclude the grounds upon which we bottom our reasoning, are but a part; something is left out which should go into the reckoning, to make it just and exact. Here we may imagine a vast and almost infinite advantage that angels and separate spirits may have over us, who in their several degrees of elevation above us may be endowed with more comprehensive faculties; and some of them perhaps, having perfect and exact views of all finite beings that come under their consideration, can, as it were, in the twinkling of an eye, collect together all their scattered and almost boundless relations. A mind so furnished, what reason has it to acquiesce in the certainty of its conclusions!

In this we may see the reason why some men of study and thought, that reason right and are lovers of truth, do make no great advances in their discoveries of it. Error and truth are uncertainly blended in their minds;

their decisions are lame and defective, and they are very often mistaken in their judgments: the reason whereof is, they converse but with one sort of men, they read but one sort of books, they will not come in the hearing but of one sort of notions; the truth is, they canton out to themselves a little Goshen in the intellectual world, where light shines, and as they conclude, day blesses them; but the rest of that vast expansum they give up to night and darkness, and so avoid coming near it. They have a pretty traffic with known correspondents, in some little creek; within that they confine themselves, and are dexterous managers enough of the wares and products of that corner with which they content themselves, but will not venture out into the great ocean of knowledge, to survey the riches that nature hath stored other parts with, no less genuine, no less solid, no less useful than what has fallen to their lot, in the admired plenty and sufficiency of their own little spot, which to them contains whatsoever is good in the universe. Those who live thus mewed up within their own contracted territories, and will not look abroad beyond the boundaries that chance, conceit, or laziness has set to their inquiries, but live separate from the notions, discourses, and attainments of the rest of mankind, may not amiss be represented by the inhabitants of the Marian Islands, who, being separated by a large tract of sea from all communion with the habitable parts of the earth, thought themselves the only people of the world. And though the straitness of the conveniences of life amongst them had never reached so far as to the use of fire, till the Spaniards, not many years since, in their voyages from Acapulco to Manilla, brought it amongst them; yet, in the want and ignorance of almost all things, they looked upon themselves, even after that the Spaniards had brought amongst them the notice of variety of nations, abounding in sciences, arts and conveniences of life, of which they knew nothing; they looked upon themselves, I say, as the happiest and wisest people of the universe. But for all that, nobody, I think, will imagine them deep naturalists or solid metaphysicians; nobody will deem the quickest-sighted amongst them to have very enlarged views in ethics or politics; nor can any one allow the most capable amongst them to be advanced so far in his understanding as to have any other knowledge but of the few little things of his and the neighbouring islands

within his commerce; but far enough from that comprehensive enlargement of mind which adorns a soul devoted to truth, assisted with letters, and a free generation of the several views and sentiments of thinking men of all sides. Let not men, therefore, that would have a sight of what every one pretends to be desirous to have a sight of, truth in its full extent, narrow and blind their own prospect. Let not men think there is not truth but in the sciences that they study, or books that they read. To prejudge other men's notions, before we have looked into them, is not to show their darkness, but to put out our own eyes. "Try all things, hold fast that which is good," is a divine rule, coming from the Father of light and truth, and it is hard to know what other way men can come at truth, to lay hold of it, if they do not dig and search for it as for gold and hid treasure; but he that does so must have much earth and rubbish before he gets the pure metal; sand and pebbles and dross usually lie blended with it, but the gold is nevertheless gold, and will enrich the man that employs his pains to seek and separate it. Neither is there any danger he should be deceived by the mixture. Every man carries about him a touchstone, if he will make use of it, to distinguish substantial gold from superficial glitterings, truth from appearances. And, indeed, the use and benefit of this touchstone, which is natural reason, is spoiled and lost only by assuming prejudices, overweening presumption, and narrowing our minds. The want of exercising it in the full extent of things intelligible, is that which weakens and extinguishes this noble faculty in us. Trace it and see whether it be not so. The day-labourer in a country village has commonly but a small pittance of knowledge, because his ideas and notions have been confined to the narrow bounds of a poor conversation and employment: the low mechanic of a country town does somewhat outdo him: porters and cobblers of great cities surpass them. A country gentleman who, leaving Latin and learning in the university, removes thence to his mansionhouse, and associates with neighbours of the same strain, who relish nothing but hunting and a bottle: with those alone he spends his time, with those alone he converses, and can away with no company whose discourse goes beyond what claret and dissoluteness inspire. Such a patriot, formed in this happy way of improvement, cannot fail, as we see, to give notable decisions upon

the bench at quarter-sessions, and eminent proofs of his skill in politics, when the strength of his purse and party have advanced him to a more conspicuous station. To such a one, truly, an ordinary coffee-house gleaner of the city is an arrant statesman, and as much superior to as a man conversant about Whitehall and the court is to an ordinary shopkeeper. To carry this a little further: here is one muffled up in the zeal and infallibility of his own sect, and will not touch a book or enter into debate with a person that will question any of those things which to him are sacred. Another surveys our differences in religion with an equitable and fair indifference, and so finds, probably, that none of them are in everything unexceptionable. These divisions and systems were made by men, and carry the mark of fallible on them; and in those whom he differs from, and till he opened his eyes had a general prejudice against, he meets with more to be said for a great many things than before he was aware of, or could have imagined. Which of these two now is most likely to judge right in our religious controversies, and to be most stored with truth, the mark all pretend to aim at? All these men that I have instanced in, thus unequally furnished with truth and advanced in knowledge, I suppose, of equal natural parts; all the odds between them has been the different scope that has been given to their understandings to range in, for the gathering up of information and furnishing their heads with ideas and notions and observations, whereon to employ their mind and form their understandings.

It will possibly be objected, "who is sufficient for all this?" I answer, more than can be imagined. Every one knows what his proper business is, and what, according to the character he makes of himself, the world may justly expect of him; and to answer that, he will find he will have time and opportunity enough to furnish himself, if he will not deprive himself by a narrowness of spirit of those helps that are at hand. I do not say, to be a good geographer, that a man should visit every mountain, river, promontory, and creek upon the face of the earth, view the buildings and survey the land everywhere, as if he were going to make a purchase; but yet every one must allow that he shall know a country better that makes often sallies into it and traverses up and down, than he that like a mill-horse goes still round in the same track, or keeps within the narrow bounds of a field

or two that delight him. He that will inquire out the best books in every science, and inform himself of the most material authors of the several sects of philosophy and religion, will not find it an infinite work to acquaint himself with the sentiments of mankind concerning the most weighty and comprehensive subjects. Let him exercise the freedom of his reason and understanding in such a latitude as this, and his mind will be strengthened, his capacity enlarged, his faculties improved; and the light which the remote and scattered parts of truth will give to one another will so assist his judgment, that he will seldom be widely out, or miss giving proof of a clear head and a comprehensive knowledge. At least, this is the only way I know to give the understanding its due improvement to the full extent of its capacity, and to distinguish the two most different things I know in the world, a logical chicaner from a man of reason. Only, he that would thus give the mind its flight, and send abroad his inquiries into all parts after truth, must be sure to settle in his head determined ideas of all that he employs his thoughts about, and never fail to judge himself, and judge unbiassedly, of all that he receives from others, either in their writings or discourses. Reverence or prejudice must not be suffered to give beauty or deformity to any of their opinions.

4. *Of Practice and Habits.* — We are born with faculties and powers capable almost of anything, such at least as would carry us further than can easily be imagined: but it is only the exercise of those powers which gives us ability and skill in anything, and leads us towards perfection.

A middle-aged ploughman will scarce ever be brought to the carriage and language of a gentleman, though his body be as well-proportioned, and his joints as supple, and his natural parts not any way inferior. The legs of a dancing-master and the fingers of a musician fall as it were naturally, without thought or pains, into regular and admirable motions. Bid them change their parts, and they will in vain endeavour to produce like motions in the members not used to them, and it will require length of time and long practice to attain but some degrees of a like ability. What incredible and astonishing actions do we find rope-dancers and tumblers bring their bodies to! Not but that sundry in almost all manual arts are as wonderful; but I name those which the world takes notice of

for such, because on that very account they give money to see them. All these admired motions, beyond the reach and almost conception of unpractised spectators, are nothing but the mere effects of use and industry in men whose bodies have nothing peculiar in them from those of the amazed lookers-on.

As it is in the body, so it is in the mind: practice makes it what it is; and most even of those excellencies which are looked on as natural endowments, will be found, when examined into more narrowly, to be the product of exercise, and to be raised to that pitch only by repeated actions. Some men are remarked for pleasantness in raillery; others for apologues and apposite diverting stories. This is apt to be taken for the effect of pure nature, and that the rather because it is not got by rules, and those who excel in either of them never purposely set themselves to the study of it as an art to be learnt. But yet it is true, that at first some lucky hit, which took with somebody and gained him commendation, encouraged him to try again, inclined his thoughts and endeavours that way, till at last he insensibly got a facility in it, without perceiving how; and that is attributed wholly to nature which was much more the effect of use and practice. I do not deny that natural disposition may often give the first rise to it, but that never carries a man far without use and exercise, and it is practice alone that brings the powers of the mind, as well as those of the body, to their perfection. Many a good poetic vein is buried under a trade, and never produces anything for want of improvement. We see the ways of discourse and reasoning are very different, even concerning the same matter, at court and in the university. And he that will go but from Westminster-hall to the Exchange will find a different genius and turn in their ways of talking; and yet one cannot think that all whose lot fell in the city were born with different parts from those who were bred at the university or inns of court.

To what purpose all this but to show that the difference so observable in men's understandings and parts does not arise so much from their natural faculties as acquired habits. He would be laughed at that should go about to make a fine dancer out of a country hedger at past fifty. And he will not have much better success who shall endeavour at that age to make a man reason well, or speak handsomely, who has never been used to it, though you should lay before him a collection

of all the best precepts of logic or oratory. Nobody is made anything by hearing of rules or laying them up in his memory; practice must settle the habit of doing without reflecting on the rule; and you may as well hope to make a good painter or musician extempore, by a lecture and instruction in the arts of music and painting, as a coherent thinker or a strict reasoner by a set of rules showing him wherein right reasoning consists.

This being so that defects and weakness in men's understanding, as well as other faculties, come from want of a right use of their own minds, I am apt to think the fault is generally mislaid upon nature, and there is often a complaint of want of parts when the fault lies in want of a due improvement of them. We see men frequently dexterous and sharp enough in making a bargain who, if you reason with them about matters of religion, appear perfectly stupid.

5. *Ideas.* — I will not here, in what relates to the right conduct and improvement of the understanding, repeat again the getting clear and determined ideas, and the employing our thoughts rather about them than about sounds put for them, nor of settling the signification of words which we use with ourselves in the search of truth, or with others in discoursing about it. Those hindrances of our understandings in the pursuit of knowledge I have sufficiently enlarged upon in another place, so that nothing more needs here to be said of those matters.

6. *Principles.* — There is another fault that stops or misleads men in their knowledge which I have also spoken something of, but yet is necessary to mention here again, that we may examine it to the bottom and see the root it springs from, and that is, a custom of taking up with principles that are not self-evident, and very often not so much as true. It is not unusual to see men rest their opinions upon foundations that have no more certainty and solidity than the propositions built on them and embraced for their sake. Such foundations are these and the like, viz., the founders or leaders of my party are good men, and therefore their tenets are true; it is the opinion of a sect that is erroneous, therefore it is false; it hath been long received in the world, therefore it is true; or, it is new, and therefore false.

These, and many the like, which are by no means the measures of truth and falsehood, the generality of men make the standards by

which they accustom their understanding to judge. And thus, they falling into a habit of determining of truth and falsehood by such wrong measures, it is no wonder they should embrace error for certainty, and be very positive in things they have no ground for.

There is not any who pretends to the least reason, but when any of these his false maxims are brought to the test, must acknowledge them to be fallible, and such as he will not allow in those that differ from him; and yet after he is convinced of this you shall see him go on in the use of them, and the very next occasion that offers argue again upon the same grounds. Would one not be ready to think that men are willing to impose upon themselves, and mislead their own understandings, who conduct them by such wrong measures, even after they see they cannot be relied on? But yet they will not appear so blamable as may be thought at first sight; for I think there are a great many that argue thus in earnest, and do it not to impose on themselves or others. They are persuaded of what they say, and think there is weight in it, though in a like case they have been convinced there is none; but men would be intolerable to themselves and contemptible to others if they should embrace opinions without any ground, and hold what they could give no manner of reason for. True or false, solid or sandy, the mind must have some foundation to rest itself upon, and, as I have remarked in another place, it no sooner entertains any proposition but it presently hastens to some hypothesis to bottom it on; till then it is unquiet and unsettled. So much do our own very tempers dispose us to a right use of our understandings if we would follow, as we should, the inclinations of our nature.

In some matters of concernment, especially those of religion, men are not permitted to be always wavering and uncertain, they must embrace and profess some tenets or other; and it would be a shame, nay a contradiction too heavy for any one's mind to lie constantly under, for him to pretend seriously to be persuaded of the truth of any religion, and yet not to be able to give any reason of his belief, or to say anything for his preference of this to any other opinion: and therefore they must make use of some principles or other, and those can be no other than such as they have and can manage; and to say they are not in earnest persuaded by them, and do not rest upon those they make use of, is contrary to experi-

ence, and to allege that they are not misled, when we complain they are. . . .

SAMUEL PEPYS (1633-1703)

FROM HIS DIARY

Aug. 22d., 1661. To the Privy-Seale, and sealed:¹ so home at noon, and there took my wife by coach to my uncle Fenner's, where there was both at his house and the Sessions great deal of company, but poor entertainment, which I wonder at; and the house so hot, that my uncle Wight, my father, and I were fain to go out, and stay at an alehouse awhile to cool ourselves. Then back again and to church — my father's family being all in mourning, doing him² the greatest honour, the world believing that he did give us it: so to church, and staid out the sermon.

23d. To W. Joyce's, where my wife was, and I took her to the Opera, and showed her the "Witts,"³ which I had seen already twice, and was most highly pleased with it.

24th. Called to Sir W. Batten's, to see the strange creature that Captain Holmes hath brought with him from Guiny; it is a great baboon, but so much like a man in most things, that, though they say there is a species of them, yet I cannot believe but that it is a monster got of a man and she-baboon. I do believe that it already understands much English, and I am of the mind that it might be taught to speak or make signs. To the Opera, and there saw "Hamlet, Prince of Denmark," done with scenes⁴ very well, but above all, Betterton did the Prince's part beyond imagination.

25th. (Lord's day.) Home; found my Lady Batten and her daughter to look something askew upon my wife, because my wife do not buckle to them, and is not solicitous for their acquaintance.

27th. Casting up my father's accounts, and upon the whole I find that all he hath in money of his own due to him in the world is 45^{l.}, and he owes about the same sum: so that I cannot but think in what a condition he had left my mother, if he should have died before

¹ Pepys was deputy for his kinsman and patron, the Earl of Sandwich, Keeper of the Great Wardrobe and Clerk of the Privy Seal. ² Pepys's Uncle Robert, who had died early in July. ³ a play by Davenant ⁴ The use of modern painted scenes had only recently been introduced on the English stage.

my uncle Robert. To the Theatre, and saw the "Antipodes,"¹ wherein there is much mirth, but no great matter else. I found a letter from my Lord Sandwich, who is now very well again of his fever, but not yet gone from Alicante, where he lay sick, and was twice there bled. This letter dated the 22nd. July last, which puts me out of doubt of his being ill.

27th. This morning to the Wardrobe, and there took leave of my Lord Hinchinbroke and his brother, and saw them go out by coach toward Rye in their way to France, whom God bless. Then I was called up to my Lady's² bedside, where we talked an hour about Mr. Edward Montagu's disposing of the 5000^{l.} for my Lord's preparation for Portugal, and our fears that he will not do it to my Lord's honour, and less to his profit, which I am to inquire a little after. My wife and I to the theatre, and there saw "The Jovial Crew," where the King, Duke, and Duchess, and Madame Palmer, were; and my wife, to her great content, had a full sight of them all the while. The play full of mirth.

28th. This day, I counterfeited a letter to Sir W. Pen, as from the thief that stole his tankard lately, only to abuse and laugh at him.

29th. My aunt Bell came to dine with me, and we were very merry. Mr. Evans, the taylor, whose daughter we have had a mind to get a wife for Tom, told us that he hath not to except against us or our motion, but that the estate that God hath blessed him with is too great to give, where there is nothing in present possession but a trade and house; and so we friendly ended.

30th. My wife and I to Drury Lane to the French comedy, which was so ill done, and the scenes and company and everything else so nasty and out of order and poor, that I was sick all the while in my mind to be there. Here my wife met with a son of my Lord Somerset, whom she knew in France, a pretty gentleman, but I showed him no great countenance, to avoid further acquaintance. That done, there being nothing pleasant but the foolery of the farce, we went home.

31st. To Bartholomew fair,³ and there met with my Ladies Jemimah and Paulina, with Mr. Pickering and Mademoiselle, at seeing

¹ a comedy by Brome ² the Countess of Sandwich ³ a famous fair, held in Smithfield, London, from 1133 to 1853

the monkeys dance, which was much to see, when they could be brought to do so, but it troubled me to sit among such nasty company. After that, with them into Christ's Hospital, and there Mr. Pickering brought them some fairings, and I did give every one of them a bauble, which was the little globes of glass with things hanging in them, which pleased the ladies very well. After that, home with them in their coach, and there was called up to my Lady, and she would have me stay to talk with her, which I did I think a full hour. . . .

Thus ends the month. My mayde Jane newly gone, and Pall¹ left now to do all the work till another mayde comes, which shall not be till she goes away into the country with my mother. No money comes in, so that I have been forced to borrow a great deal for my own expenses, and to furnish my father, to leave things in order. I have some trouble about my brother Tom, who is now left to keep my father's trade, in which I have great fears that he will miscarry for want of brains and care. At Court things are in very ill condition, there being so much emulation, poverty, and the vices of drinking, swearing, and loose amours, that I know not what will be the end of it, but confusion. And the Clergy so high, that all people that I meet with do protest against their practice. In short, I see no content or satisfaction any where, in any one sort of people. The Benevolence² proves so little, and an occasion of so much discontent everywhere, that it had better it had never been set up. I think to subscribe 20^{l.} We are at our Office quiet, only for lack of money all things go to rack. Our very bills offered to be sold upon the Exchange at 10 per cent. loss. We are upon getting Sir R. Ford's house added to our office; but I see so many difficulties will follow in pleasing of one another in the dividing of it, and in becoming bound personally to pay the rent of 200^{l.} per annum, that I do believe it will yet scarce come to pass. The season very sickly everywhere of strange and fatal fevers.

September 1st. (Lord's day.) Last night being very rainy, (the water) broke into my house, the gutter being stopped, and spoiled all my ceilings almost. At church in the morning. After dinner we were very merry with Sir W. Pen about the loss of his tankard,

¹ Pepys's sister Paulina ² a voluntary contribution of the people to the King

though all be but a cheate, and he do not yet understand it; but the tankard was stole by Sir W. Batten, and the letter, as from the thief, wrote by me, which makes very good sport. Captain Holmes and I by coach to White Hall; in our way, I found him by discourse to be a great friend of my Lord's, and he told me there was a many did seek to remove him; but they were old seamen, such as Sir J. Minnes, but he would name no more, though he do believe Sir W. Batten is one of them that do envy him, but he says he knows that the King do so love him, and the Duke of York too, that there is no fear of him. He seems to be very well acquainted with the King's mind, and with all the several factions at Court, and spoke all with so much frankness, that I do take him to be my Lord's good friend, and one able to do him great service, being a cunning fellow, and one, by his own confession to me, that can put on two several faces, and look his enemies in the face with as much love as his friends. But, good God! what an age is this, and what a world is this! that a man cannot live without playing the knave and dissimulation.

2d. Mr. Pickering and I to Westminster Hall again, and there walked an hour or two talking, and, though he be a fool, yet he keeps much company, and will tell all he sees or hears, and so a man may understand what the common talk of the town is. And I find that there are endeavours to get my Lord out of play at sea, which I believe Mr. Coventry and the Duke do think will make them more absolute; but I hope for all this, they will not be able to do it. My wife tells me that she met at Change with my young ladies of the Wardrobe, and there helped them to buy things, and also with Mr. Somerset, who did give her a bracelet of rings, which did a little trouble me, though I know there is no hurt yet in it, but only for fear of further acquaintance.

3d. Dined at home, and then with my wife to the Wardrobe, where my Lady's child was christened, my Lord Crewe and his lady, and my Lady Montagu, my Lord's mother-in-law, were the witnesses, and named Catherine, the Queen elect's name; but to my and all our trouble, the Parson of the parish christened her, and did not sign the child with the sign of the cross. After that was done, we had a very fine banquet.

4th. My wife come to me to Whitehall, and we went and walked a good while in St. James's Parke to see the brave alterations.

5th. Put my mother and Pall into the wagon, and saw them going presently—Pall crying exceedingly. To my uncle Fenner's to dinner, in the way meeting a French footman with feathers, who was in quest of my wife, and spoke with her privately, but I could not tell what it was, only my wife promised to go to some place to-morrow morning, which do trouble my mind how to know whither it was. My wife and I to the fair, and I showed her the Italians dancing the ropes, and the women that do strange tumbling tricks.

6th. I went to the Theatre, and saw "Elder Brother" acted; meeting here with Sir J. Askew, Sir Theophilus Jones, and another knight, with Sir W. Pen, we to the Ship taverne, and there staid, and were merry till late at night.

7th. Having appointed the young ladies at the Wardrobe to go with them to the play to-day, my wife and I took them to the Theatre, where we seated ourselves close by the King, and Duke of York, and Madame Palmer, which was great content; and, indeed, I can never enough admire her beauty. And here was "Bartholomew Fayre,"¹ with the puppet-showe, acted to-day, which had not been these forty years, it being so satirical against Puritanism, they durst not till now, which is strange they should already dare to do it, and the King to countenance it, but I do never a whit like it the better for the puppets, but rather the worse. Thence home with the ladies, it being by reason of our staying a great while for the King's coming, and the length of the play, near nine o'clock before it was done.

8th. (Lord's day.) To church, and coming home again, found our new mayd Doll asleep, that she could not hear to let us in, so that we were fain to send a boy in at a window to open the door to us. Begun to look over my accounts, and, upon the whole, I do find myself, by what I can yet see, worth near 600*l*, for which God be blessed.

9th. To Salisbury Court play-house, where was acted the first time, "'Tis pity she's a W—e,"² a simple play, and ill acted, only it was my fortune to sit by a most pretty and most ingenious lady, which pleased me much. To the Dolphin, to drink the 30*s*. that we got the other day of Sir W. Pen about his tankard. Here was Sir R. Slingsby, Holmes, Captain

¹ a comedy by Ben Jonson ² a tragedy by John Ford

Allen, Mr. Turner, his wife and daughter, my Lady Batten, and Mrs. Martha, &c., and an excellent company of fiddlers; so we exceeding merry till late; and then we begun to tell Sir W. Pen the business, but he had been drinking to-day, and so is almost gone, that we could not make him understand it, which caused us more sport.

11th. To Dr. Williams, who did carry me into his garden, where he hath abundance of grapes: and he did show me how a dog that he hath do kill all the cats that come thither to kill his pigeons, and do afterwards bury them; and do it with so much care that they shall be quite covered; that if the tip of the tail hangs out, he will take up the cat again, and dig the hole deeper, which is very strange; and he tells me, that he do believe he hath killed above 100 cats. Home to my house to dinner, where I found my wife's brother Balty as fine as hands could make him, and his servant, a Frenchman, to wait on him, and come to have my wife visit a young lady which he is a servant¹ to, and have hope to trepan, and get for his wife. I did give way for my wife to go with him. Walking through Lincoln's Inn Fields, observed at the Opera a new play, "Twelfth Night," was acted there, and the King there: so I, against my own mind and resolution, could not forbear to go in, which did make the play seem a burthen to me; and I took no pleasure at all in it: and so, after it was done, went home with my mind troubled for my going thither, after my swearing to my wife that I would never go to a play without her. My wife was with her brother to see his mistress to-day, and says she is young, rich, and handsome, but not likely for him to get.

12th. To my Lady's to dinner at the Wardrobe; and in my way upon the Thames, I saw the King's new pleasure-boat that is come now for the King to take pleasure in above bridge, and also two Gundaloes,² that are lately brought, which are very rich and fine. Called at Sir W. Batten's, and there hear that Sir W. Pen do take our jest of the tankard very ill, which I am sorry for.

13th. I was sent for by my uncle Fenner to come and advise about the burial of my aunt, the butcher, who died yesterday. Thence to the Wardrobe, where I found my wife, and thence she and I to the water to spend the

afternoon in pleasure, and so we went to old George's, and there eat as much as we would of a hot shoulder of mutton, and so to boat again and home.

14th. Before we had dined comes Sir R. Slingsby, and his lady, and a great deal of company, to take my wife and I out by barge, to show them the King's and Duke's yachts. We had great pleasure, seeing all four yachts, viz., these two, and the two Dutch ones.

15th. (Lord's day.) To my aunt Kite's in the morning, to help my uncle Fenner to put things in order against anon for the burial. After sermon, with my wife to the burial of my aunt Kite, where, besides us and my uncle Fenner's family, there was none of any quality, but poor and rascally people. So we went to church with the corps, and there had service read at the grave, and back again with Pegg Kite, who will be, I doubt, a troublesome carrier to us executors, but if she will not be ruled, I shall fling up my executorship.

16th. Word is brought me from my brother's, that there is a fellow come from my father out of the country, on purpose to speak with me, and he made a story how he had lost his letter, but he was sure it was for me to come into the country, which I believed, but I afterwards found that it was a rogue that did use to play such tricks to get money of people, but he got none of me. Letters from my father informing me of the Court,¹ and that I must come down and meet him at Impington, which I presently resolved to do.

17th. Got up, telling my wife of my journey, and she got me to hire her a horse to go along with me. So I went to my Lady's, and of Mr. Townsend did borrow a very fine side-saddle for my wife, and so, after all things were ready, she and I took coach to the end of the town towards Kingsland, and there got upon my horse, and she upon her pretty mare that I hired for her, and she rides very well. By the mare at one time falling, she got a fall, but no harm; so we got to Ware, and there supped, and went to bed.

18th. Up early, and begun our march: the way about Puckridge very bad, and my wife, in the very last dirty place of all, got a fall, but no hurt, though some dirt. At last, she begun, poor wretch, to be tired, and I to be angry at it, but I was to blame; for she is a very good companion as long as she is well. In

¹ suitor ² Two gondolas, presented to the King by the Duke of Venice.

¹ The manorial court under which Pepys held some of his copyhold estates.

the afternoon, we got to Cambridge, where I left my wife at my cozen Angier's, while I went to Christ's College, and there found my brother in his chamber, and talked with him, and so to the barber's, and then to my wife again, and remounted for Impington, where my uncle received me and my wife very kindly.

19th. Up early, and my father and I alone talked about our business, and then we all horsed away to Cambridge, where my father and I, having left my wife at the Beare, with my brother, went to Mr. Sedgewicke, the steward of Gravely, and there talked with him, but could get little hopes from anything that he would tell us; but at last I did give him a fee, and then he was free to tell me what I asked, which was something, though not much comfort. From thence to our horses, and, with my wife, went and rode through Sturbridge fayre, but the fayre was almost done. Set out for Brampton, where we come in very good time.

20th. Will Stankes and I set out in the morning betimes for Gravely, where to an alehouse and drank, and then, going to the Court House, met my uncle Thomas and his son Thomas, with Bradly, the rogue that had betrayed us, and one Young, a cunning fellow, who guides them. I said little, till by and by that we come to the Court, which was a simple meeting of a company of country rogues, with the Steward, and two Fellows of Jesus College, that are lords of the towne; and I producing no surrender, though I told them I was sure there is and must be one somewhere, they found my uncle Thomas heire at law, as he is; and so my uncle was admitted and his son also in reversion. The father paid a year and a half for his fine, and the son half a year, in all, 48*l.*, besides about 3*l.* fees; so that I do believe the charges of his journeys, and what he gives those two rogues, and other expenses herein, cannot be less than 70*l.*, which will be a sad thing for him, if a surrender be found. After all was done, I openly wished them joy in it.

21st. After dinner (there coming this morning my aunt Hanes and her son from London, that is to live with my father), I rode to Huntingdon, and so to Hinchinbroke, where Mr. Barnwell showed me the condition of the house, which is yet very backward, and I fear will be very dark in the cloyster when it is done.

22d. (Lord's day.) To church, where we had common prayer, and a dull sermon by one Mr. Case, who yet I heard sing very well.

23d. We took horse, and got early to Baldwick, where there was a fair, and we put in,

and eat a mouthful of porke, which they made us pay 14*d.* for, which vexed me much. And so away to Stevenage, and staid till a shower was over, and so rode easily to Welling. We supped well, and had two beds in the room, and so lay single.

24th. We rose, and set forth, but found a most sad alteration in the roade, by reason of last night's rains, they being now all dirty and washy, though not deep. So we rode easily through, and only drinking at Holloway, at the sign of a woman with cakes in one hand, and a pot of ale in the other, which did give good occasion of mirth, resembling her to the maid that served us, we got home very timely and well, and finding there all well, and letters from sea, that speak of my Lord's being well; and his Action, though not considerable of any side, at Algiers.

25th. Sir W. Pen told me that I need not fear any reflection upon my Lord for their ill success at Argier, for more could not be done. Meeting Sir R. Slingsby in St. Martin's Lane, he and I in his coach through the Mewes, which is the way that now all coaches are forced to go, because of a stop at Charing Crosse, by reason of digging of a drayne there to clear the streets. To my Lord Crewe's, and dined with him, where I was used with all imaginable kindness both from him and her. And I see that he is afraid my Lord's reputacon will a little suffer in common talk by this late successe; but there is no help for it now. The Queen of England, as she is now owned and called, I hear, doth keep open court, and distinct at Lisbone. To the Theatre, and saw "The Merry Wives of Windsor" ill done.

26th. With my wife by coach to the Theatre, to show her "King and no King," it being very well done.

27th. At noon, met my wife at the Wardrobe; and there dined, where we found Captain Country, my little Captain that I loved, who carried me to the Sound, with some grapes and millions¹ from my Lord at Lisbone, the first that ever I saw; but the grapes are rare things. In the afternoon comes Mr. Edward Montagu, by appointment this morning, to talk with my Lady and me about the provisions fit to be bought and sent to my Lord along with him. And told us, that we need not trouble ourselves how to buy them, for the King would pay for all, and that he would take care to get them: which put my Lady and me into a great

¹ melons

deal of ease of mind. Here we stayed and supped too; and, after my wife had put up some of the grapes in a basket for to be sent to the King, we took coach and home, where we found a hamper of millions sent to me also.

28th. Sir W. Pen and his daughter, and I and my wife, to the Theatre, and there saw "Father's own Son,"¹ a very good play, and the first time I ever saw it.

29th. (Lord's day.) What at dinner and supper I drink, I know not how, of my own accord, so much wine, that I was even almost foxed, and my head ached all night; so home and to bed, without prayers, which I never did yet, since I come to the house, of a Sunday night: I being now so out of order that I durst not read prayers, for fear of being perceived by my servants in what case I was.

ROBERT SOUTH (1634-1716)

FROM A SERMON PREACHED ON MAY 9,
1686

OF THE FATAL IMPOSTURE AND FORCE OF WORDS

The generality of mankind is wholly and absolutely governed by *words* and names; *without*; nay, for the most part, even *against* the knowledge men have of things. The multitude, or common rout, like a drove of sheep, or an herd of oxen, may be managed by any noise, or cry, which their drivers shall accustom them to.

And, he who will set up for a skilful manager of the rabble, so long as *they have but ears to hear*, needs never inquire, whether they have any *understanding* whereby to judge; but with two or three popular, empty words, such as *popery and superstition, right of the subject, liberty of conscience, Lord Jesus Christ* well tuned and humoured; may whistle them backwards and forwards, upwards and downwards, till he is weary; and get up upon their backs when he is so.

As for the *meaning* of the word itself, that may shift for itself; and, as for the *sense and reason of it*, that has little or nothing to do here; only let it sound full and round, and chime right to the humour, which is at present agog, (just as a big, long, rattling name is said to command even adoration from a *Spaniard*;) and, no doubt, with this powerful, senseless engine the *rabble-driver* shall be able to carry all be-

¹ an old play, by an unknown author

fore him, or to draw all after him, as he pleases. For, a plausible, insignificant word, in the mouth of an expert demagogue, is a dangerous and a dreadful weapon.

You know, when Cæsar's army mutinied, and grew troublesome, no argument from interest, or reason, could satisfy or appease them: but, as soon as he gave them the appellation of *Quirites*, the tumult was immediately hushed; and all were quiet and content, and took that *one word* in good payment for all. Such is the trivial slightness and levity of most minds. And indeed, take any passion of the soul of man, while it is predominant, and afloat, and, just in the critical height of it, nick it with some *lucky*, or *unlucky* word, and you may as certainly overrule into your own purpose, as a spark of fire, falling upon gunpowder, will infallibly blow it up.

The truth is, he who shall duly consider these matters, will find that there is a certain *bewitchery*, or fascination in words, which makes them operate with a force beyond what we can naturally give an account of. For, would not a man think, ill deeds, and shrewd turns, should reach further, and strike deeper than ill words? And yet many instances might be given, in which men have much more easily pardoned ill things *done*, than ill things *said* against them: such a peculiar rancour and venom do they leave behind them in men's minds, and so much more poisonously and incurably does the serpent bite with his *tongue*, than with his *teeth*.

Nor are men prevailed upon at this odd, unaccountable rate, by bare words, only through a *defect* of knowledge; but sometimes also do they suffer themselves to be carried away with these *puffs of wind*, even *contrary* to knowledge and experience itself. For otherwise, how could men be brought to surrender up their reason, their interest, and their credit to flattery? Gross, fulsome, abusive flattery; indeed more abusive and reproachful upon a true estimate of things and persons, than the rudest scoffs, and the sharpest invectives. Yet so it is, that though men know themselves utterly void of those qualities and perfections, which the imprudent sycophant, at the same time, both ascribes to them, and in his sleeve laughs at them for believing; nay, though *they know* that the flatterer himself knows the falsehood of his own flatteries, yet they swallow the fallacious morsel, love the impostor, and with both arms hug the abuse; and that to such a degree, that no offices of friendship, no real

services shall be able to lie in the balance against those luscious falsehoods, which flattery shall feed the mind of a fool in power with; the sweetness of the one infinitely overcomes the substance of the other.

And therefore, you shall seldom see, that such an one cares to have men of worth, honesty, and veracity about him; for, such persons cannot fall down and worship stocks and stones, though they are placed never so high above them. But their yea is yea, and their nay, nay; and, they cannot admire a fox for his sincerity, a wolf for his generosity, nor an ass for his wit and ingenuity; and therefore can never be acceptable to those whose whole credit, interest, and advantage lies in their not appearing to the world, what they are really in themselves. None are, or can be welcome to such, but those who speak paint and wash; for that is the thing they love; and, no wonder, since it is the thing they need.

There is hardly any rank, order, or degree of men, but more or less have been captivated, and enslaved by words. It is a weakness, or rather a fate, which attends both high and low. The statesman, who holds the helm, as well as the peasant who holds the plough. So that if ever you find an ignoramus in place or power, and can have so little conscience, and so much confidence, as to tell him to his face, that he has a wit and understanding above all the world beside; and that what his own reason cannot suggest to him, neither can the united reasons of all mankind put together; I dare undertake, that, as fulsome a dose as you give him, he shall readily take it down, and admit the commendation, though he cannot believe the thing: Blanditiæ etiam cum excluduntur placent; says Seneca. Tell him, that no history or antiquity can match his policies and his conduct; and presently the sot (because he knows neither history, nor antiquity) shall begin to measure himself by himself, (which is the only sure way for him not to fall short); and so immediately amongst his outward admirers, and his inward despisers, vouched also by a teste me ipso, he steps forth an exact politician; and, by a wonderful, and new way of arguing, proves himself no fool, because, forsooth, the sycophant, who tells him so, is an egregious knave.

But to give you a yet grosser instance of the force of words, and of the extreme variety of man's nature in being influenced by them,

Flattery pleases even when rejected.

hardly shall you meet with any person, man or woman, so aged, or ill-favoured, but if you will venture to commend them for their comeliness; nay, and for their youth too; though time out of mind is wrote upon every line of their face; yet they shall take it very well at your hands, and begin to think with themselves, that certainly, they have some perfections, which the generality of the world are not so happy as to be aware of.

But now, are not these (think we) strange self-delusions, and yet attested by common experience, almost every day? But whence, in the meantime, can all this proceed, but from that besotting intoxication, which this verbal magic (as I may so call it) brings upon the mind of man? For, can anything in nature have a more certain, deep, and undeniable effect, than folly has upon man's mind, and age upon his body? And yet we see, that in both these, words are able to persuade men out of what they find and feel, to reverse the very impressions of sense, and to amuse men with fancies and paradoxes even in spite of nature, and experience. But, since it would be endless to pursue all the particulars in which this humour shows itself; whatsoever would have one full, lively, and complete view of an empty, shallow, self-opinioned grandee, surrounded by his flatterers, (like a choice dish of meat by a company of fellows commending, and devouring it at the same time), let him cast his eye upon Ahab in the midst of his false Prophets, 1 Kings 22. Where we have them all with one voice for giving him a cast of their court-prophecy, and sending him, in a compliment, to be knocked on the head at Ramoth Gilead.

But, says Jehoshaphat, (who smelt the parasite through the prophet) in the 7th verse, Is there not a Prophet of the Lord besides, that we may inquire of him? Why, yes, says Ahab, there is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the Lord; but I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. Ah! that was his crime; the poor man was so good a subject, and so bad a courier, as to venture to serve, and save his Prince, whether he would or no; for, it seems, to give Ahab such warning, as might infallibly have prevented his destruction, was esteemed by him evil, and to push him on headlong into it, because he was fond of it, was accounted good. These were his new measures of good and evil. And therefore, those who knew how to make their court better, (as the word is) tell him a bold lie in God's name, and therewith sent him packing to his

certain doom; thus calling evil good at the cost of their Prince's crown, and his life too. But what cared they? they knew that it would please, and that was enough for them; there being always a sort of men in the world, (whom others have an interest to serve by,) who had rather a great deal be pleased, than be safe. Strike them under the fifth rib; provided at the same time you kiss them too, as Joab served Abner, and you may both destroy and oblige them with the same blow.

Accordingly in the 30th of Isaiah we find some arrived to that pitch of sottishness, and so much in love with their own ruin, as to own their powder and bullets, their small-stones and cutlasses; and as for their men, we always took the surgeon and the carpenter, as persons who were of particular use to us upon many occasions; nor were they always unwilling to go with us, though for their own security, in case of accidents, they might easily pretend they were carried away by force; of which I shall give a pleasant account in the course of my other expeditions.

We had one very merry fellow here a Quaker, whose name was William Walters, whom we took out of a sloop bound from Pennsylvania to Barbados. He was a surgeon employed in the sloop as a surgeon, but was and they called him doctor; but he was not going to Barbados to get a berth, as the sailors call it. However, he had all his surgeon's chests on board, and we made him go with us, and take all his implements with him. He was a comic fellow indeed, a man of very good soft sense, and an excellent surgeon; but what was worth all, very good-humoured and pleasant in his conversation, and a bold, stout, brave fellow too, as you will find among us.

I found William, as I thought, not very averse to go along with us, and yet resolved to do it so that it might be apparent he was taken away by force, and to this purpose he comes to me "Friend," says he, "thou sayest I must go with thee, and it is not in my power to resist thee if I would; but I desire thou wilt oblige the master of the sloop which I am on board to certify under his hand, that I was taken away by force and against my will." And this he said with so much satisfaction in his face, that

plainly and roundly what they would be at; in the 10th verse; Prophecy not unto us, say they, right things, but prophecy to us smooth things. As if they had said, do but oil the razor for us, and let us alone to cut our own throats. Such an enchantment is there in words; and so fine a thing does it seem to some, to be ruined plausibly, and to be ushered to their destruction with panegyric and acclamation; a shameful, though irrefragable argument of the absurd empire and usurpation of words over things; and, that the greatest affairs, and most important interests of the world, are carried on by things, not as they are, but as they are called.

We cruised near two years in those seas chiefly upon the Spaniards; not that we made any difficulty of taking English ships or Dutch, or French, if they came in our way; and particularly Captain Wilmore attacked a New England ship bound from the Madagascars to Jamaica, and another bound from New York to Barbados, with provisions; which last was a very happy supply to us. But the reason why we meddled as little with English vessels as we could, was first, because if they were ships of any force, we were sure of more resistance from them; and secondly, because we found the English ships had less booty when taken, for the Spaniards generally had money on board, and that was what we best knew what to do with. Captain Wilmore was indeed more particularly cruel when he took any English vessel, that they might not too soon have advice of him in England; and so the men-of-war have orders to look out for him. But this part I bury in silence for the present.

We increased our stock in these two years considerably, having taken 60,000 pieces of eight in one vessel, and 100,000 in another; and being thus first grown rich, we resolved to be strong too, for we had taken a brigantine built at Virginia, an excellent sea-boat, and a good sailer, and able to carry twelve guns; and a large Spanish frigate-built ship, that sailed incomparably well, and which afterwards carried twenty-eight guns. And now we wanted more hands, so we put way for the Bay of Campeachy, not doubting we should ship as many men there as we pleased; and so we did.

Here we sold the sloop that I was in; and Captain Wilmore keeping his own ship, I took the command of the Spanish frigate as captain, and my comrade Harris as eldest lieutenant, and a bold enterprising fellow he was as any the word afforded. Our cutterline was put