

Poor Richard Improved 1749

Wealth and Content are not always Bed-fellows.

Wise Men learn by others harms; Fools by their own.

On the 7th of this month 1692 died Robert Boyle, Esq; one of the greatest philosophers the last age produced. He first brought the machine called an Airpump, into use; by which many of the surprizing properties of that wonderful element were discovered and demonstrated. His knowledge of natural history, and skill in chymistry, were very great and extensive; and his piety inferior to neither.

BOYLE, whose pious search
Amid the dark recesses of his works
The great CREATOR sought:
Thomson.

is therefore an instance, that tho' Ignorance may in some be the Mother of Devotion, yet true learning and exalted piety are by no means inconsistent.

When we read in antient history of the speeches made by generals to very numerous armies, we sometimes wonder how they could be well heard; but supposing the men got together so close, that each took up no more ground than two foot in breadth, and one in depth, 45000 might stand in a space that was but 100 yards square, and 21780 on a single acre of ground. There are many voices that may be heard at 100 yards distance.

The end of Passion is the beginning of Repentance.

Words may shew a man's Wit, but Actions his Meaning.

On the 18th of this month, anno 1546 died that famous reformer, LUTHER: who struck the great blow to papal tyranny in Europe. He was remarkably temperate in meat and drink, sometimes fasting four days together; and at other times, for many days eating only a little bread and a herring. Cicero says, There was never any great man who was not an industrious man; to which may, perhaps, be added, There was never any industrious man who was not a temperate man: For intemperance in diet, abates the vigour and dulls the action both of mind and body.

OF SOUND.

Mr. Flamstead, Dr. Halley and Mr. Derham, agree that sound moves 1142 feet in a second, which is one English mile in 4 seconds and 5 8ths; that it moves in the same time in every different state of the atmosphere; that winds hardly make any difference in its velocity; that a languid or loud sound moves with the same velocity; and that different kinds of sounds, as of bells, guns, &c. have the same velocity, and are equally swift in the beginning as end of their motion.

'Tis a well spent penny that saves a groat.

Many Foxes grow grey, but few grow good.

Presumption first blinds a Man, then sets him a running.

The nose of a lady here, is not delighted with perfumes that she understands are in Arabia. Fine musick in China gives no pleasure to the nicest ear in Pennsylvania. Nor does the most exquisite dish serv'd up in Japan, regale a luxurious palate in any other country. But the benevolent mind of a virtuous man, is pleas'd, when it is inform'd of good and generous actions, in what part of the world soever they are done.

A cold April,
The Barn will fill.

Content makes poor men rich; Discontent makes rich Men poor.

Too much plenty makes Mouth dainty.

On the 7th of this month, 1626, died that great little man, Sir FRANCIS BACON; great in his prodigious genius, parts and learning; and little, in his servile compliances with a little court, and submissive flattery of a little prince. Pope characterises him thus, in one strong line;

If Parts allure thee, think how BACON shin'd,
The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind.

He is justly esteem'd the father of the modern experimental philosophy. And another poet treats him more favourably, ascribing his blemishes to a wrong unfortunate choice of his way of Life;

----- BACON, hapless in his choice,
Unfit to stand the civil storm of state,
And thro' the smooth barbarity of courts,
With firm, but pliant virtue, forward still
To urge his course. Him for the studious shade
Kind nature form'd, deep, comprehensive, clear,
Exact, and elegant; in one rich soul,
PLATO, the STAGYRITE, and TULLY join'd.
The great deliverer he! who from the gloom
Of cloister'd monks, and jargon-teaching schools,
Led forth the true Philosophy, there long
Held in the magic chain of words and forms,
And definitions void: He led her forth,
Daughter of HEAV'N! that slow ascending still,
Investigating sure the chain of things,
With radiant finger points to HEAV'N again.

If Passion drives, let Reason hold the Reins.

Neither trust, nor contend, nor lay wagers, nor lend;
And you'll have peace to your Lives end.

Drink does not drown Care, but waters it, and makes it grow faster.

Who dainties love, shall Beggars prove.

On the 27th anno 1564, died at Geneva that famous reformer, Mr. John Calvin, A man of equal temperance and sobriety with Luther, and perhaps yet greater industry. His lectures were yearly 186, his sermons yearly 286; he published besides every year some great volume in folio; to which add his constant employments, in governing the church, answering letters from all parts of the reformed world, from pastors, concerning doubts, or asking ocounsel, &c. &c. He ate little meat, and slept but very little; and as his whole time was filled up with useful action, he may be said to have lived lon, tho' he died at 55 years of age; since sleep and sloth can hardly be called living.

A Man has no more Goods than he gets Good by.

Welcome, Mischief, if thou comest alone.

Different Sects like different clocks, may be all near the matter, 'tho they don't quite agree.

On the 15th of this month, anno 1215, was Magna Charta sign'd by King John, for declaring and establishing English Liberty.

It was wise counsel given to a young man, Pitch upon that course of life which is most excellent, and CUSTOM will make it the most delightful. But many pitch on no course of life at all, nor form any scheme of living, by which to attain any valuable end; but wander perpetually from one thing to another.

Hast thou not yet propos'd some certain end,
To which thy life, thy every act may tend?
Hast thou no mark at which to bend thy bow?
Or like a boy pursu'st the carrion crow
With pellets and with stones, from tree to tree,
A fruitless toil, and liv'st extempore?
Watch the disease in time: For when, within
The dropsy rages, and extends the skin,
In vain for helebore the patient cries,
And sees the doctor, but too late is wise:
Too late for cure, he proffers half his wealth;
Ten thousand doctors cannot give him health.
Learn, wretches, learn the motions of the mind,
Why you were mad, for what you were design'd,
And the great moral end of human kind.
Study thy self; what rank or what degree,
The wise creator has ordain'd for thee:
And all the offices of that estate,
Perform, and with thy prudence guide thy fate.

If your head is wax, don't walk in the Sun.

Pretty & Witty,
will wound if they hit ye.

Having been poor is no shame, but being ashamed of it, is.

'Tis a laudable Ambition, that aims at being better than his Neighbours.

The wise Man draws more Advantage from his Enemies, than the Fool from his Friends.

PRIDE is said to be the last vice the good man gets clear of. 'Tis a meer Proteus, and disguises itself under all manner of appearances, putting on sometimes even the mask of humility. If some are proud of neatness and propriety of dress; others are equally so of despising it, and acting the perpetual sloven.

All would live long, but none would be old.

Declaiming against Pride, is not always a Sign of Humility.

Neglect kills Injuries, Revenge increases them.

9 Men in 10 are suicides.

Doing an Injury puts you below your Enemy; Revenging one makes you but even with him; Forgiving it sets you above him.

Most of the Learning in use, is of no great Use.

Great Good-nature, without Prudence, is a great Misfortune.

Keep Conscience clear,
Then never fear.

A Man in a Passion rides a mad Horse.

Reader farewell, all Happiness attend thee;
May each New-Year, better and richer find thee.

On the 25th of this month, anno 1642, was born the great Sir ISAAC NEWTON, prince of the modern astronomers and philosophers. But what is all our little boasted knowledge, compar'd with that of the angels? If they see our actions, and are acquainted with our affairs, our whole body of science must appear to them as little better than ignorance; and the common herd of our learned men, scarce worth their notice. Now and then one of our very great philosophers, an Aristotle, or a Newton, may, perhaps, by his most refined speculations, afford them a little entertainment, as it seems a mimicking of their own sublime amusements. Hence Pope says of the latter,

Superior beings, when of late they saw
A mortal man unfold all nature's law,
Admir'd such wisdom in a human shape,
And shew'd a Newton, as we shew an ape.

How to get RICHES.

The Art of getting Riches consists very much in THRIFT. All Men are not equally qualified for getting Money, but it is in the Power of every one alike to practise this Virtue.

He that would be beforehand in the World, must be beforehand with his Business: It is not only ill Management, but discovers a slothful Disposition, to do that in the Afternoon, which should have been done in the Morning.

Useful Attainments in your Minority will procure Riches in Maturity, of which Writing and Accounts are not the meanest.

Learning, whether Speculative or Practical, is, in Popular or Mixt Governments, the Natural Source of Wealth and Honour.

PRECEPT I.

In Things of moment, on thy self depend,
Nor trust too far thy Servant or thy Friend:
With private Views, thy Friend may promise fair,
And Servants very seldom prove sincere.

PRECEPT II.

What can be done, with Care perform to Day,
Dangers unthought-of will attend Delay;
Your distant Prospects all precarious are,
And Fortune is as fickle as she's fair.

PRECEPT III.

Nor trivial Loss, nor trivial Gain despise;
Molehills, if often heap'd, to Mountains rise:
Weigh every small Expence, and nothing waste,
Farthings long sav'd, amount to Pounds at last.