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THE TABLET.

No. LXXIII.

"I hate a drinking companion, says the Greek proverb, who never forgets."

I KNOW not a more fallacious opinion than that men entertain, than that there is a great degree of friendship and generosity among persons, who mingle in parties of dissipation and intemperance. The warm professions of attachment and good will that flow so easily, in moments of festivity, are apt to lead a by-stander to imagine there is some serious friendship, at heart. Many an imprudent youth has fallen a victim to the affections he heard at convivial meetings. There is perhaps no description of men who proclaim their own generosity so loudly, and yet who realize fewer substantial acts of it, from each other, than those who enter circles, under the title of bottle-companions. It is hardly credible to one, who has not strictly noticed it, how slender the ties are, that are created by such a connection.

The idea conveyed in my motto may be taken in two different senses; and the reader may make his choice of them. It is true, that when persons are engaged in a drinking match, they should wish to forget their cares and misfortunes; and it will heighten their hilarity, if they can so far drown their reflection, as to forget the duty they owe their character and family. And it is likewise true, that such associates desire that whatever passes at their scenes of conviviality should not be repeated elsewhere. In either of these constructions, that companion who does not lose his recollection will be hated by the rest. What can be more offensive, in the jollity of a debauch, than remonstrances of reason, or lectures of morality! What can be more disgusting, when the debauch is over, than a just description of the actions, and recital of the expressions, with which it was attended. If a vociferous person throws off all restraint in the hours of his merriment, he certainly cannot wish to behold a portrait of himself, when he is sober. His own conduct; his own conversation are the last things in the world, that he can hear or recollect with approbation and pleasure. I would advise all such clubs, that the first article of their association should be a solemn oath of secrecy. Otherwise they may often be shocked at a view of their own picture. But the greatest advantage of forgetfulness consists in freeing one from the pain and inconvenience of being reminded of promises, that are made, when the heart is opened by mirth and intemperance. When this kind of openness and generosity discover themselves, among Bacchanalians over the bottle, it is not intended they should afford any claim upon the person, in whom they are exhibited.

I lately met with my old college acquaintance, JOculus. As he did not appear with his former dignity and sprightliness, I had the curiosity to enquire into his circumstances and prospects. I found him destitute of money and friends; and that he had neither character to deserve the one, nor industry to procure the other. He complained of ill-health; and his constitution was too much wrecked with intemperance to be reclaimed. It was difficult for him to assume resolution enough to relate his vices and misfortunes; and his appearance was so mean and slovenly, that he was not willing to be recognized, even when I called him by name. The terms of intimacy on which we had formerly associated made us both communicative.

When I knew JOculus, some years ago, he dressed handsomely, possessed an easy flow of spirits, and was generally esteemed for his amiable qualifications. His patrimonial estate was sufficient, with care and attention, to have afforded him a decent support. It happened unfortunately that he loved pleasure more than business; and knew better how to squander a fortune, than to keep, or to gain one. Though he was born and educated in the country, he early conceived an idea, that he could enjoy life in greater perfection, by taking a residence in some populous town. He followed his inclination, and entered at once into scenes of dissipation and extravagance. Soon after he fixed himself in a city, he fell into company with a set of profligate youngsters, who called themselves *choice spirits*. This appellation accorded so well with the feelings of JOculus, that he eagerly solicited an admission into the club. As he appeared a light-hearted, accommodating young man, his comrades viewed him as an acquisition. They soon discovered the depth of his purse, and knew intimately his hopes and intentions. It was their first attempt to persuade him that he had too noble a spirit to submit to the drudgery of business, and that when he had spent his property, he could not be at a loss for friends.

Thus he was beguiled into a course of idleness and debauchery, which soon plunged him into debt, and alienated him from his old friends and connections.

The honest, unsuspecting temper of JOculus, though it gave his new comrades a controul over his time and money, was still a source of much altercation. From his ignorance of human nature, he supposed that men never spoke but with sincerity; never promised but with an intention to fulfil. He would often repeat in the day, what he had heard in the revels of the night; and sometimes called in good earnest for the assistance that was so lavishly offered, when he stood in no need of it. In this way, he mortified them by the recital of their folly and imprudence; and vexed them by his demands on their justice to reimburse his advances; and by his appeal to their generosity to put him into better circumstances. But neither their justice, their generosity, or their pity afforded the least relief to JOculus, and he now remains as wretched as vice and poverty can render him. The *choice spirits* have totally discarded him, and ridicule him as a low-bred fellow who remembers too well.

THE OBSERVER.

No. IX.

TO THE PUBLIC CREDITORS.

FROM many of the evils which happen to a good citizen, he extracts a happiness as they pass. The patriotic creditor, who deposited his property with the public, has the happiness of reflecting that his loss contributed to the safety of millions, and laid the foundation of an empire, in which we hope science and virtue will perpetuate freedom. There have been many delays, and many things done on the part of the public, which ought not to have been; still you have no reason to despair of national justice. Some there may be who would sponge the whole, and obliterate your claims—these men are of small number, and still less influence—they act not from principle, and falsely supposing the measure would be popular, have baulked their own expectations of performance. As the case is circumstanced, if there were no sense of justice, a principle of policy would support your claim with every considerate man; for to drive to despair two hundred thousand creditors and influential citizens, is an event too great to be hazarded, and might produce worse consequences than the most rigorous payment. Convinced of these facts, the creditors ought not to be too hasty in their expectations from the present government. Let it be seen that your patience hath not been the effect of necessity, but from a conviction of the deranged state of the National finances. The mind is apt to vibrate in extremes, and from too great despondency rise into sanguine hopes, which never can be realized. Something of this I have observed in the creditors of the nation. To arrange a scheme of finance—to liquidate many unfettered claims—to search from anew, the resources of this great country, and to adjust the whole into a system beneficial to agriculture, commerce and manufactures, requires great ability and industry in the official departments, and the most candid indulgence of all parties concerned. The gentlemen who have these duties in trust, possess too much good sense to hazard their own responsibility in a sudden manner, and before they can possibly ascertain the means which may be exerted. Returning order in the treasury department, is the first thing necessary—this you may see, and for the rest, there must be time to adjust measures which will be durable. If the legislature were to decide without previous information from its executive, or the executive to endanger its existence by recommending without knowledge, it would betray a want of the proper capacity, to relieve a nation from such confusion as we have experienced. Certainly it will be for the public advantage to stop the accumulation of interest on a great debt, speedily as can be; you may therefore depend on every thing which is consistent with justice and humanity to the people, and more than this ought not to be granted. The resources of the United States are increasing, and in a few years may do what is at present impossible. You have no right to expect, that funds can be suddenly erected and formalized, sufficient to answer the literal promises of the public; but ought for the present to be satisfied with what in this country hath been esteemed small interest for property: On the other hand, national honor and justice require, that the funds provided should be in their nature increasing ones, that the dividend you receive may increase with the public ability, until it arrives to the point of equitable interest; after which, all increase in

the national revenue, may become a sinking fund to do away the general debt, if that be judged best. By funds thus constituted and sacredly appropriated, a compromise may be made between the nation and its creditors, honorable for one, and safe for the other. In a country of increasing commerce and population, and in which every year brings a million acres of new land into taxable improvement, there is the best opportunity for funds of the above description. The State Creditors appear to me in the most hazardous situation, and ought immediately to unite their influence, that they may be placed on the same footing with the creditors of the United States—the measure must take place now or never,—You have a reasonable demand—Your property was advanced for the common defence, and if an application is made in season, you must be heard. I can foresee but one objection to be made to this measure, which is, that it will increase the value of State securities, and make them of equal goodness with the Continental: But he must be a churl indeed, who objects on this ground, when it is considered how much the State creditors have lost in the principal of their debt, and that the appreciation will arise from the simple circumstances of giving them a more extended circulation, and placing them on the credit of a known government, and not from laying any new burdens on the people. The National and State securities ought to be considered as negotiable bank stock, and one circumstance on which its credit and consequent value depends, is the extensiveness of its circulation, and the credit of the government pledged for its redemption. For these reasons, one hundred pounds placed in the funds of the United States, will be of greater value than the same sum bearing the same interest, in the funds of a single State. I am not an advocate for increasing the demands on the people—they have already been too great, and as a friend of the people I shall endeavor to shew still more plainly the impositions they have suffered. The people pay a certain sum annually for interest on the State debt, and it is of little consequence to them, whether this centers in the treasury of the United States, or of a particular State. If by the adoption of one general system, both people and creditors may be benefited, every friend of his country will give an influence to complete it.

From a Hartford Paper.

ENGLISH ARTICLE.

A Gentleman from the West of England went to London a few weeks ago, to receive a legacy of 500l. which he proposed to bring with him into the country. His servant, apprised of his masters errand, imprudently talked of it at an inn upon the road. A person in the room, to appearance a tradesman, but in reality a highwayman, overheard the conversation, and determined to possess himself of the booty. Pursuing the gentleman to London, he watched all his motions, and on his return into the country was ready to follow him. On the other side of Hounslow, near the turnpike on Smallberry Green, the robber came up with the chaise, and passed it full gallop, but at the gate, not having a single penny to pay the toll, appearing confused, he took out his handkerchief and begged the turnpikeman to take it as a pledge. The gentleman in the chaise having observed the transaction, on his coming up inquired the cause; and promising to return the handkerchief to the owner, paid the penny for him. He presently overtook the highwayman, and ordered his chaise to stop. Pray, Sir, said he, is this your handkerchief? If so, I fear you are in great distress. I am indeed, Sir, replied the man, in the greatest that is possible. Allow me, then, replied the gentleman, to relieve your immediate wants; and, drawing out his purse, presented him with five guineas. Your generosity, said the highwayman, disarms me; your five guineas have saved you five hundred:—and, turning his horse immediately rode off.

LONDON.

OCTOBER 20.

PERHAPS there is no part of Europe where such an unrestrained toleration is allowed to persons of every religious denomination as in the seven United Provinces: Amsterdam may be given as an epitome of the whole. The established religion is Calvinism, and the people of that persuasion make up one third of the inhabitants, the Roman Catholics another third, and the Lutherans, Arminians, Anabaptists, Quakers and Jews, compose the remainder. Each sect has its particular places of worship, whose pastors may walk the public streets with those distinctions of dress which immediately characterizes them. No ad-