

THE LIFE OF BEAU NASH
by
OLIVER GOLDSMITH

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Frontispiece – Portrait of Beau Nash



A. Walker sculp

*Richard Nash Esq.
from an Original painted by Mr. Hoare and
presented to the Corporation of the City of Bath.*

THE LIFE OF BEAU NASH

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Foreword by Edmund Gosse

There are cases, not known to every collector of books, where it is not the first which is the really desirable edition of a work, but the second. One of these rare examples of the exception which proves the rule is the second edition of Goldsmith's *Life of Beau Nash*. Disappointment awaits him who possesses only the first; it is in the second that the best things originally appeared. The story is rather to be divined than told as history, but we can see pretty plainly how the lines of it must have run. In the early part of 1762, Oliver Goldsmith, at that time still undistinguished, but in the very act of blossoming into fame, received a commission of fourteen guineas to write for Newbery a life of the strange old beau, Mr Nash, who had died in 1761. On the same day, which was March 5th, he gave a receipt to the publisher for three other publications, written or to be written, so that very probably it was not expected that he should immediately supply all the matter sold. In the summer he seems to have gone down to Bath on a short visit, and to have made friends with the Beau's executor, Mr George Scott. It has even been said that he cultivated the Mayor and Aldermen of Bath with such success that they presented him with yet another fifteen guineas. But of this, in itself highly improbable, instance of municipal benefaction, the archives of the city yield no proof. At least Mr Scott gave him access to Nash's papers, and with these he seems to have betaken himself back to London.

It is a heart-rending delusion and a cruel snare to be paid for your work before you accomplish it. As soon as once your work is finished you ought to be promptly paid; but to receive your lucre one minute before it is due, is to tempt Providence to make a Micawber of you. Goldsmith, of course, without any temptation being needed, was the very ideal Micawber of letters, and the result of paying him beforehand was that he had, simply, to be popped into the mill by force, and the copy ground out of him. It is evident that in the case of the first edition of the *Life of Beau Nash*, the grinding process was too mercifully applied, and the book when it appeared was short measure. It has no dedication, no "advertisement," and very few notes, while it actually omits many of the best stories. The wise bibliophile, therefore, will eschew it, and will try to get the second edition issued a few weeks later in the same year, which Newbery evidently insisted that Goldsmith should send out to the public in proper order.

Goldsmith treats Nash with very much the same sort of indulgent and apologetic sympathy with which the late M. Barbey d'Aurevilly treats Brummell. He does not affect to think that the world calls for a full-length statue of such a fantastic hero; but he seems to claim leave to execute a statuette in terracotta for a cabinet of curiosities. From that point of view, as a queer object of *vertu*, as a specimen of the *bric-a-brac* of manners, both the one and the other, the King of Beaux and the Emperor of Dandies, are welcome to amateurs of the odd and the entertaining. At the head of Goldsmith's book stands a fine portrait of Nash, engraved by Anthony Walker, one of the best and rarest of early English line-engravers, after an oil-picture by William Hoare, presently to be one of the foundation-members of the Royal Academy, and now and throughout his long life the principal representative of the fine arts at Bath. Nash is here represented in his famous white hat -- *galero albo*, as his epitaph has it; the ensign of his rule at Bath, the more than coronet of his social sway.

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The breast of his handsome coat is copiously trimmed with rich lace, and his old, old eyes, with their wrinkles and their crow's feet, look demurely out from under an incredible wig, an umbrageous, deep-coloured ramillie of early youth. It is a wonderfully hard-featured, serious, fatuous face, and it lives for us under the delicate strokes of Anthony Walker's graver. The great Beau looks as he must have looked when the Duchess of Queensberry dared to appear at the Assembly House on a ball night with a white apron on. It is a pleasant story, and only told properly in our second edition. King Nash had issued an edict forbidding the wearing of aprons. The Duchess dared to disobey. Nash walked up to her and deftly snatched her apron from her, throwing it on to the back benches where the ladies' women sat. What a splendid moment! Imagine the excitement of all that fashionable company -- the drawn battle between the Majesty of Etiquette and the Majesty of Beauty! The Beau remarked, with sublime calm, that "none but Abigails appeared in white aprons." The Duchess hesitated, felt that her ground had slipped from under her, gave way with the most admirable tact, and "with great good sense and humour, begged his *Majesty's* pardon,"

Aprons were not the only red rags to the bull of ceremony. He was quite as unflinching an enemy to top-boots. He had already banished swords from the assembly-room, because their clash frightened the ladies, and their scabbards tore people's dresses. But boots were not so easily banished. The country squires liked to ride into the city, and, leaving their horses at a stable, walk straight into the dignity of the minuet. Nash, who had a genius for propriety, saw how hateful this was, and determined to put a stop to it. He slew top-boots and aprons at the same time, and with the shaft of Apollo. He indicted a poem on the occasion, and a very good example of satire by irony it is. It is short enough to quote entire:

FRONTINELLA'S INVITATION TO THE ASSEMBLY.

*Come, one and all,
To Hoyden Hall,
For there's th' Assembly to-night.
None but prude fools
Mind manners and rules,
We Hoydens do decency slight.
Come, Trollops and Slatterns,
Cocked hats and white aprons,
This best our modesty suits;
For why should not we
In dress be as free
As Hogs-Norton squires in boots?*

Why, indeed? But the Hogs-Norton squires, as is their wont, were not so easily pierced to the heart as the noble slatterns. Nash turned Aristophanes, and depicted on a little stage a play in which Mr Punch, under very disgraceful circumstances, excused himself for wearing boots by quoting the practice of the pump-room beaux. This seems to have gone to the conscience of Hogs-Norton at last; but what really gave the death-blow to top-boots, as a part of evening dress, was the incident of Nash's going up to a gentleman, who had made his appearance in the ball-room in this

unpardonable costume, and remarking, "bowing in an arch manner," that he appeared to have "forgotten his horse."

It had not been without labour and a long struggle that Nash had risen to this position of unquestioned authority at Bath. His majestic rule was the result of more than half a century of painstaking. He had been born far back in the seventeenth century, so far back that, incredible as it sounds, a love adventure of his early youth had supplied Vanbrugh, in 1695, with an episode for his comedy of *Aesop*. But after trying many forms of life, and weary of his own affluence, he came to Bath just at the moment when the fortunes of that ancient centre of social pleasure were at their lowest ebb. Queen Anne had been obliged to divert herself, in 1703, with a fiddle and a hautboy, and with country dances on the bowling-green. The lodgings were dingy and expensive, the pump-house had no director, the nobility had haughtily withdrawn from such vulgar entertainments as the city now alone afforded. The famous and choleric physician, Dr Radcliffe, in revenge for some slight he had endured, had threatened to "throw a toad into King Bladud's Well," by writing a pamphlet against the medicinal efficacy of the waters.

The moment was critical; the greatness of Bath, which had been slowly declining since the days of Elizabeth, was threatened with extinction when Nash came to it, wealthy, idle, patient, with a genius for organisation, and in half a century he made it what he left it when he died in his eighty-ninth year, the most elegant and attractive of the smaller social resorts of Europe. Such a man, let us be certain, was not wholly ridiculous. There must have been something more in him than in a mere idol of the dandies, like Brummell, or a mere irresistible buck and lady-killer, like Lauzun. In these latter men the force is wholly destructive; they are animated by a feline vanity, a tiger-spirit of egotism. Against the story of Nash and the Duchess of Queensberry, so wholesome and humane, we put that frightful anecdote that Saint-Simon tells of Lauzun's getting the hand of another duchess under his high heel, and pirouetting on it to make the heel dig deeper into the flesh. In all the repertory of Nash's extravagances there is not one story of this kind, not one that reveals a wicked force. He was fatuous, but beneficent; silly, but neither cruel nor corrupt.

Goldsmith, in this second edition at least, has taken more pains with his life of Nash than he ever took again in a biography. His *Parnell*, his *Bolingbroke*, his *Voltaire*, are not worthy of his name and fame; not all the industry of annotators can ever make them more than they were at first -- potboilers, turned out with no care or enthusiasm, and unconscientiously prepared. But this subtle figure of a Master of Ceremonial; this queer old presentment of a pump-room king, crowned with a white hat, waiting all day long in his best at the bow-window of the Smyrna Coffee-House to get a bow from that other, and alas! better accredited royalty, the Prince of Wales; this picture, of an old beau, with his toy-shop of gold snuff-boxes, his agate-rings, his senseless obelisk, his rattle of faded jokes and blunted stories -- all this had something very attractive to Goldsmith both in its humour and its pathos; and he has left us, in his *Life of Nash*, a study which is far too little known, but which deserves to rank among the best-read productions of that infinitely sympathetic pen, which has bequeathed to posterity Mr Tibbs and Moses Primrose and Tony Lumpkin.

from "Gossip in a Library" (1891)

THE LIFE OF BEAU NASH

Title Page

THE
LIFE
OF
RICHARD NASH, Esq;

LATE
Master of the Ceremonies at BATH.

Extracted principally from
HIS ORIGINAL PAPERS

*-- Non ego paucis
Offendar Maculis--* HOR.

THE SECOND EDITION

LONDON.

Printed for J NEWBERY, in St Paul's Churchyard,
W FREDERICK, at Bath, and
G FAULKENER, in Dublin

M DCC LXII

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Dedication

TO
THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL,
THE MAYOR,
RECORDER,
ALDERMEN,
AND
COMMON COUNCIL.
OF THE
CITY OF BATH;
THIS VOLUME
IS HUMBLY INSCRIBED
BY THEIR
MOST OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE EDITOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

We have the Permission of George Scott, Esq (who kindly undertook to settle the Affairs of Mr Nash, for the Benefit of his Family and Creditors) to assure the Public, that all the Papers found in the Custody of Mr Nash, which any ways respected his Life, and were thought interesting to the Public, were communicated to the Editor of this Volume, so that the Reader will, at least, have the Satisfaction of perusing an Account that is genuine, and not the Work of Imagination, as Biographical writings too frequently are.

PREFACE.

THE following memoir is neither calculated to inflame the reader's passions with descriptions of gallantry, nor to gratify his malevolence with details of scandal. The amours of coxcombs, and the pursuits of debauchees, are as destitute of novelty to attract us, as they are of variety to entertain, they still present us but the same picture, a picture we have seen a thousand times repeated. The life of Mr Nash is incapable of supplying any entertainment of this nature to a prurient curiosity. Though it was passed in the very midst of debauchery, he practised but few of those vices he was often obliged to assent to. Though he lived where gallantry was the capital pursuit, he was never known to favour it by his example, and what authority he had was set to oppose it. Instead therefore of a romantic history, filled with warm pictures and fanciful adventures, the reader of the following account must rest satisfied with a genuine and candid recital compiled from the papers he left behind, and others equally authentic; a recital neither written with a spirit of satire nor panegyric, and with scarce any other art, than that of arranging the materials in their natural order.

But though little art has been used, it is hoped that some entertainment may be collected from the life of a person so much talked of, and yet so little known as Mr Nash. The history of a man, who for more than fifty years presided over the pleasures of a polite kingdom, and whose life, though without any thing to surprise, was ever marked with singularity, deserves the attention of the present age; the pains he took in pursuing pleasure, and the solemnity he assumed in adjusting trifles, may one day claim the smile of posterity. At least such an history is well enough calculated to supply a vacant hour with innocent amusement, however it may fail to open the heart, or improve the understanding.

Yet his life, how trifling soever it may appear to the inattentive, was not without its real advantages to the public. He was the first who diffused a desire of society, and an easiness of address among a whole people who were formerly censured by foreigners for a reservedness of behaviour, and an awkward timidity in their first approaches. He first taught a familiar intercourse among strangers at Bath and Tunbridge, which still subsists among them. That ease and open access first acquired there, our gentry brought back to the metropolis, and thus the whole kingdom by degrees became more refined by lessons originally derived from him.

Had it been my design to have made this history more pleasing at the expense of truth, it had been easily performed; but I chose to describe the man as he was, not such as imagination could have helped in completing his picture; he will be found to be a weak man, governing weaker subjects, and may be considered as resembling a monarch of Cappadocia, whom Cicero somewhere calls, "the little king of a little people."

But while I have been careful in describing the monarch, his dominions have claimed no small share of my attention; I have given an exact account of the rise, regulation, and nature of the amusements of the city of Bath, how far Mr Nash contributed to establish and refine them, and what pleasure a stranger may expect

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there upon his arrival. Such anecdotes as are at once true and worth preserving are produced to their order, and some are added, which, though commonly known, more necessarily belong to this history, than to the places from whence they have been extracted. But it is needless to point out the pains that have been taken, or the entertainment that may be expected from the perusal of this performance. It is but an indifferent way to gain the reader's esteem, to be my own panegyrist, nor is this preface so much designed to lead him to beauties, as to demand pardon for defects.

THE LIFE OF RICHARD NASH, Esq.

HISTORY owes its excellence more to the writer's manner than the materials of which it is composed. The intrigues of Courts, or the devastation of armies, are regarded by the remote spectator, with as little attention as the squabbles of a village, or the fate of a malefactor, that fall under his own observation. The great and the little, as they have the same senses, and the same affections, generally present the same picture to the hand of the draughtsman; and whether the hero or the clown be the subjects of the memoir, it is only man that appears with all his native minuteness about him, for nothing very great was ever yet formed from the little materials of humanity.

Thus none can properly be said to write history, but he who understands the human heart, and its whole train of affections and follies. Those affections and follies are properly the materials he has to work upon. The relations of great events may surprise indeed; they may be calculated to instruct those very few, who govern the million beneath, but the generality of mankind find the most real improvement from relations which are levelled to the general surface of life; which tell, not how men learned to conquer, but how they endeavoured to live, not how they gained the shout of the admiring crowd, but how they acquired the esteem of their friends and acquaintance.

Every man's own life would perhaps furnish the most pleasing materials for history, if he only had candour enough to be sincere, and skill enough to select such parts as once making him more prudent, might serve to render his readers more cautious. There are few who do not prefer a page of Montaigne or Colley Cibber, who candidly tells us what they thought of the world, and the world thought of them, to the more stately memoirs and transactions of Europe, where we see Kings pretending to immortality, that are now almost forgotten, and statesmen planning frivolous negotiations, that scarce outlive the signing.

It were to be wished that ministers and Kings were left to write their own histories, they are truly useful to few but themselves, but for men who are contented with more humble stations, I fancy such truths only are serviceable as may conduct them safely through life. That knowledge which we can turn to our real benefit should be most eagerly pursued. Treasures which we cannot use but little increase the happiness or even the pride of the possessor.

I profess to write the history of a man placed in the middle ranks of life, of one, whose vices and virtues were open to the eye of the most undiscerning spectator, who was placed in public view, without power to repress censure, or command adulation, who had too much merit not to become remarkable, yet too much folly to arrive at greatness. I attempt the character of one, who was just such a man as probably you or I may be, but with this difference, that he never performed an action which the world did not know, or ever formed a wish which he did not take pains to divulge. In short, I have chosen to write the life of the noted Mr Nash, as it will be the delineation of a mind without disguise, of a man ever assiduous without industry, and pleasing to his superiors, without any superiority of genius or understanding.

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Yet if there be any who think the subject of too little importance to command attention, and had rather gaze at the actions of the great, than be directed in guiding their own, I have one undeniable claim to their attention Mr Nash was himself a King. In this particular, perhaps no Biographer has been so happy as I. They who are for a delineation of men and manners may find some satisfaction that way, and those who delight in adventures of Kings and Queens, may perhaps find their hopes satisfied in another.

It is a matter of very little importance who were the parents, or what was the education of a man who owed so little of his advancement to either. He seldom boasted of family or learning, and his father's name and circumstances were so little known, that Donor Cheyne used frequently to say, that Nash had no father. The Duchess of Marlborough one day rallying him in public company upon the obscurity of his birth, compared him to Gil Blas, who was ashamed of his father: "No, Madam," replied Nash, "I seldom mention my father in company, not because I have any reason to be ashamed of him; but because he has some reason to be ashamed of me."

However, though such anecdotes be immaterial, to go on in the usual course of history, it may be proper to observe, that Richard Nash, Esq, the subject of this memoir, was born in the town of Swansea, in Glamorganshire, on the 18th of October, in the year 1674*. His father was a gentleman, whose principal income arose from a partnership in a glass-house; his mother was niece to Colonel Poyer, who was killed by Oliver Cromwell, for defending Pembroke castle against the rebels. He was educated under Mr Maddocks at Carmarthen school, and from thence sent to Jesus college, in Oxford, in order to prepare him for the study of the law. His father had strained his little income to give his son such an education, but from the boy's natural vivacity, he hoped a recompense from his future preferment. In college, however, he soon showed that though much might be expected from his genius, nothing could be hoped from his industry. A mind strongly turned to pleasure, always is first seen at the university: there the youth first finds himself freed from the restraint of tutors, and being treated by his friends in some measure as a man, assumes the passions and desires of riper age, and discovers in the boy, what are likely to be the affections of his maturity.

[*Note: This account of his birth and parentage is confirmed by the following memorandum, written by Mr Nash himself in a book belonging to Mr Charles Morgan, at the Coffee-House in Bath, whence it was transcribed by George Scott, Esq, to whom we are indebted for this and many other anecdotes respecting the life of Mr Nash:

"My father was a Welch Gentleman, my mother niece to col. Poyer, who was murdered by Oliver for defending Pembroke. I was born Oct 18, 1674, in Swansea, Glamorganshire"]

The first method Mr Nash took to distinguish himself at college was not by application to study, but by his assiduity in intrigue. In the neighbourhood of every university there are girls who with some beauty, some coquetry, and little fortune, lie upon the watch for every raw amorous youth, more inclined to make love than to study. Our hero was quickly caught, and went through all the mazes and adventures of a college intrigue, before he was seventeen; he offered marriage, the offer was accepted, but the whole affair coming to the knowledge of his tutor, his happiness, or

perhaps his future misery, was prevented, and he was sent home from college, with necessary advice to him, and proper instructions to his father*.

[*Note: Since the publication of the first edition of this book, notice has been taken in some of the newspapers of Mr Nash's leaving the University without discharging a small debt which he owed to the college where he was placed, and which stands on their books to this day This is a circumstance, which we were informed of before the publication of our first Edition, but as our business was to write the life of Mr Nash, and not to settle his accounts, it seemed to us too immaterial to deserve any particular notice; besides, had we paid any regard to this, we ought also to have taken some notice of another anecdote, communicated to us, which was, that when he was sent from college he left behind him a pair of boots, two plays, a tobacco-box, and a fiddle, which had engaged more of his attention than either the public or private lectures. But as this, as well as the other, could afford neither entertainment nor education, they were purposely omitted.]

When a man knows his power over the fair sex, he generally commences their admirer for the rest of life. That triumph which he obtains over one, only makes him the slave of another, and thus he proceeds, conquering and conquered, to the closing of the scene. The army seemed the most likely profession in which to display this inclination for gallantry; he therefore purchased a pair of colours, commenced a professed admirer of the sex, and dressed to the very edge of his finances. But the life of a soldier is more pleasing to the spectator at a distance than to the person who makes the experiment, Mr Nash soon found that a red coat alone would never succeed, that the company of the fair sex is not to be procured without expense, and that his scanty commission could never procure him the proper reimbursements. He found too that the profession of arms required attendance and duty, and often encroached upon those hours he could have willed to dedicate to softer purposes. In short, he soon became disgusted with the life of a soldier, quitted the army, entered his name as a student in the Temple books, and here went to the very summit of second-rate luxury. Though very poor he was very fine; he spread the little gold he had, in the most ostentatious manner, and though the gilding was but thin, he laid it on as far as it would go. They who know the town, cannot be unacquainted with such a character as I describe, one, who, though he may have dined in private upon a banquet served cold from a cook's shop, shall dress at six for the side box, one of those, whose wants are only known to their laundress and tradesmen, and their fine clothes to half the nobility, who spend more in chair hire, than housekeeping; and prefer a bow from a Lord, to a dinner from a Commoner.

In this manner Mr Nash spent some years about town, till at last his genteel appearance, his constant civility, and still more, his assiduity, gained him the acquaintance of several persons qualified to lead the fashion both by birth and fortune. To gain the friendship of the young nobility little more is requisite than much submission and very fine clothes; dress has a mechanical influence upon the mind, and we naturally are awed into respect and esteem at the elegance of those, whom even our reason would teach us to contemn. He seemed early sensible of human weakness in this respect, he brought a person genteelly dressed to every assembly, he always made one of those who are called very good company, and assurance gave him an air of elegance and case.

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When King William was upon the throne, Mr Nash was a member of the Middle Temple. It had been long customary for the Inns of court to entertain our Monarchs upon their accession to the crown, or some such remarkable occasion, with a revel and pageant. In the earlier periods of our history, poets were the conductors of these entertainments; plays were exhibited, and complimentary verses were then written; but by degrees the pageant alone was continued, Sir John Davis being the last poet that wrote verses upon such occasion in the reign of James I.

This ceremony, which has been at length totally discontinued, was last exhibited in honour of King William, and Mr Nash was chosen to conduct the whole with proper decorum. He was then but a very young man, but we see at how early an age he was thought proper to guide the amusements of his country, and be the *Arbiter Elegantiarum* of his time, we see how early he gave proofs of that spirit of regularity, for which he afterwards became famous, and showed an attention to those little circumstances, of which, though the observance be trifling, the neglect has often interrupted men of the greatest abilities in the progress of their fortunes.

In conducting this entertainment, Nash had an opportunity of exhibiting all his abilities, and King William was so well satisfied with his performance, that he made him an offer of knighthood. This, however, he thought proper to refuse, which in a person of his disposition seems strange. "Please your Majesty," replied he, when the offer was made him, "if you intend to make me a Knight, I wish it may be, one of your poor Knights of Windsor, and then I shall have a fortune, at least able to support my title." Yet we do not find, that the King took the hint of increasing his fortune, perhaps he could not, he had at that time numbers to oblige, and he never cared to give money without important services.

But though Nash acquired no riches by his late office, yet he gained many friends, or what is more easily obtained, many acquaintances, who often answer the end as well. In the populous city where he resided, to be known was almost synonymous with being in the road to fortune. How many little Things do we see, without merit, or without friends, push themselves forward into public notice, and by self-advertising, attract the attention of the day. The wise despise them, but the public are not all wise. Thus they succeed, rise upon the wing of folly, or of fashion, and by their success give a new sanction to effrontery.

But beside his assurance, Mr Nash had in reality some merit and some virtues. He was, if not a brilliant, at least an easy companion. He never forgot good manners, even in the highest warmth of familiarity, and, as I hinted before, never went in a dirty shirt to disgrace the table of his patron or his friend. These qualifications might make the furniture of his head; but for his heart, that seemed an assemblage of the virtues which display an honest benevolent mind, with the vices which spring from too much good nature. He had pity for every creature's distress, but wanted prudence in the application of his benefits. He had generosity for the wretched in the highest degree, at a time when his creditors complained of his justice. He often spoke falsehoods; but never had any of his harmless tales tinged with malice.

An instance of his humanity is told us in the Spectator, though his name is not mentioned. When he was to give in his accounts to the masters of the temple, among other articles, he charged *For making one man happy 10l*. Being questioned about the

meaning of so strange an item, he frankly declared, that happening to overhear a poor man declare to his wife and a large family of children, that *10l.* would make him happy, he could not avoid trying the experiment. He added, that if they did not choose to acquiesce in his charge, he was ready to refund the money. The masters, struck with such an uncommon instance of good nature, publicly thanked him for his benevolence, and desired that the sum might be doubled as a proof of their satisfaction.

Another instance of his unaccountable generosity, and I than proceed. In some transactions with one of his friends, Mr Nash was brought in debt for twenty pounds. His friend frequently asked for the money, and was as often denied. He found at last, that assiduity was likely to have no effect, and therefore contrived an honourable method of getting back his money without dissolving the friendship that subsisted between them. One day, returning from Nash's chamber with the usual assurance of being paid tomorrow, he went to one of their mutual acquaintance, and related the frequent disappointments he had received, and the little hopes he had of being ever paid. "My design," continues he, "is that you should go, and try to borrow twenty pounds from Nash, and bring me the money. I am apt to think, he will lend to you, though he will not pay me. Perhaps we may extort from his generosity, what I have failed to receive from his justice." His friend obeys, and going to Mr Nash, assured him, that, unless relieved by his friendship, he would certainly be undone; he wanted to borrow twenty pounds, and had tried all his acquaintance without success. Mr Nash, who had, but some minutes before, refused to pay a just debt, was in raptures at thus giving an instance of his friendship and instantly sent what was required. Immediately upon the receipt, the pretended borrower goes to the real creditor, and gives him the money, who met Mr Nash the day after, our hero, upon seeing him, immediately began his usual excuses, that the billiard room had stripped him, that he was never so damnably out of cash, but that in a few days – "My dear Sir, be under no uneasiness," replied the other, "I would not interrupt your tranquillity for the world, you lent twenty pounds yesterday to our friend of the back stairs, and he lent it to me, give him your receipt, and you shall have mine." "Perdition seize thee," cried Nash, "thou hast been too many for me. You demanded a debt, he asked a favour; to pay thee, would not increase our friendship, but to lend him was procuring a new friend, by conferring a new obligation "

Whether men, at the time I am now talking of, had more wit than at present, I will not take upon me to determine; but certain it is, they took more pains to show what they had. In that age, a fellow of high humour would drink no wine, but what was strained through his mistress's smock. He would eat a pair of her shoes tossed up in a fricassee. He would swallow tallow-candles instead of toasted cheese, and even run naked about town, as it was then said, to divert the ladies. In short, that was the age of such kind of wit, as is the most distant of all others from wisdom.

Mr Nash, as he sometimes played tricks with others, upon certain occasions, received very severe retaliations. Being at York, and having lost all his money, some of his companions agreed to equip him with fifty guineas, upon this proviso, that he would stand at the great door of the Minster, in a blanket, as the people were coming out of church. To this proposal he readily agreed, but the Dean passing by unfortunately knew him. "What," cried the Divine, "Mr Nash, in masquerade?" "Only

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a Yorkshire penance, Mr Dean, for keeping bad company," says Nash, pointing to his companions.

Some time after this, he won a wager of still greater consequence, by riding naked through a village upon a cow. This was then thought an harmless frolic, at present it would be looked upon with detestation.

He was once invited by some gentlemen of the navy, on board a man of war, that had sailing orders for the Mediterranean. This was soon after the affair of the revels, and being ignorant of any design against him, he took his bottle with freedom. But he soon found, to use the expression then in fashion, that he was absolutely bitten. The ship sailed away before he was aware of his situation, and he was obliged to make the voyage in the company where he had spent the night.

Many lives are often passed without a single adventure, and I do not know of any in the life of our hero, that can be called such, except what we are now relating. During this voyage, he was in an engagement, in which his particular friend was killed by his side, and he himself wounded in the leg. For the anecdote of his being wounded, we are solely to trust to his own veracity, but most of his acquaintance were not much inclined to believe him, when he boasted on those occasions. Telling one day of the wound he had received for his country, in one of the public rooms at Bath, (Wiltshire's if I don't forget), a lady of distinction, that sat by, said it was all false. "I protest, Madam," replied he, "it is true, and if I cannot be believed, your ladyship may, if you please, receive farther information, and feel the ball in my leg."

Mr Nash was now fairly for life entered into a new course of gaiety and dissipation, and steady in nothing but in pursuit of variety. He was thirty years old, without fortune, or useful talents to acquire one. He had hitherto only a the life of expedients, he thanked chance alone for his support, and having been long precariously supported, he became, at length, totally a stranger to prudence, or precaution. Not to disguise any part of his character, he was now by profession, a gamester, and went on from day to day feeling the vicissitudes of rapture and anguish, in proportion to the fluctuations of fortune.

At this time, London was the only theatre in England, for pleasure, or intrigue. A spirit of gaming had been introduced in the licentious age of Charles II and had by this time thriven surprisingly. Yet all its devastations were confined to London alone. To this great mart of every folly, sharpers from every country daily arrived, for the winter, but were obliged to leave the kingdom at the approach of summer, in order to open a new campaign at Aix, Spa or the Hague. Bath, Tunbridge, Scarborough, and other places of the same kind here were then frequented only by such as really went for relief; the pleasures they afforded were merely rural, the company splenetic, rustic, and vulgar. In this situation of things, people of fashion had no agreeable summer retreat from the town, and usually spent that season amidst a solitude of country squires, parson's wives, and visiting tenants, or farmers, they wanted some place where they might each have each other's company, and win each other's money, as they had done during the winter in town.

To a person, who does not thus calmly trace themes to their source, nothing will appear more strange, then how the healthy could ever consent to follow the sick

to those places of spleen, and live with those, whose disorders are ever apt to excite a gloom in the spectator. The truth is, the gaming table was properly the salutary font, to which such numbers flocked. Gaming will ever be the pleasure of the rich, while men continue to be men, while they fancy more happiness in being possessed of what they want, than they experience pleasure in the fruition of what they have. The wealthy only stake those riches, which give no real content, for an expectation of riches, in which they hope for satisfaction. By this calculation, they cannot lose happiness, as they begin with none, and they hope to gain it, by being possessed of something they have not had already.

Probably upon this principle, and by the arrival of Queen Anne there for her health, about the year 1703, the City of Bath became in some measure frequented by people of distinction. The company was numerous enough to form a country dance upon the bowling green, they were amused with a fiddle and hautboy and diverted with the romantic walks round the city. They usually sauntered in fine weather in the grove, between two rows of sycamore trees. Several learned physicians, Doctor Jordan, and others, had even then praised the salubrity of the wells, and the amusements were put under the direction of a master of the ceremonies.

Captain Webster was the predecessor of Mr Nash. This I take to be the same gentleman, whom Mr Lucas describes in his history of the lives of the gamesters, by which it appears, that Bath, even before the arrival of Mr Nash, was found a proper retreat for men of that profession. This gentleman in the year 1704 changed the balls to the town hall, each man paying half-a-guinea each ball.

Still however, the amusements of this place were neither elegant, nor conducted with delicacy. General society among people of rank or fortune was by no means established. Smoking in the rooms was permitted, gentleman and ladies appeared at public entertainments in aprons and boots. With an eagerness common to those, whose pleasures come but seldom, they generally continued them too long, and thus they were rendered disgusting by too free an enjoyment. If the company liked each other, they danced till morning, if any person lost at cards, he insisted on continuing the game till luck should turn. The lodgings for visitants were paltry, though expensive, the dining rooms and other chambers were floored with boards, coloured brown with feet and small beer; to hide the dirt, the walls were covered with unpainted wainscot, the furniture corresponded with the meanness of the architecture, a few oak chairs, a small looking-glass, with a fender and tongs, composed the magnificence of these temporary habitations. The city was in itself mean and contemptible, no elegant buildings, no open streets, no uniform squares. The pump house was without any director, the chairmen permitted no gentlemen or ladies to walk home by night without insulting them, and to add to all this, one of the greatest physicians of his age conceived a design of ruining the city, by writing against the efficacy of the water. It was from a resentment of some affronts he had received that he took this resolution, by which he said, "he would cast a toad into the spring".

In this situation of things it was, that Mr Nash first came to the city, and hearing the threat of this physician, he humorously assured the people, that if they would give him leave, he would charm away the poison of the Doctor's toad, as they usually charmed the venom of the Tarantula, by music. He therefore was immediately empowered to set up the force of a band of music, against the poison of

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the Doctor's reptile, the company very sensibly increased, Nash triumphed, and the sovereignty of the city was decreed to him by every rank of people.

We are now to behold this gentleman as arrived at a new dignity for which nature seemed to have formed him, we are to see him directing pleasures, which none had better learned to share, placed over rebellious and refractory subjects, that were to be ruled only by the force of his address, and governing such as had been accustomed to govern others. We see a kingdom beginning with him, and sending off Tunbridge as one of its colonies.

But to talk more simply, when we talk at best of trifles. None could possibly conceive a person more fit to fill this employment than Nash. He had some wit, as I have said once or twice before, but it was of that sort which is rather happy than permanent. Once a week he might say a good thing, this the little ones about him took care to divulge, or if they happened to forget the joke, he usually remembered to repeat it himself. In a long intercourse with the world he had acquired an impenetrable assurance, and the freedom with which he was received by the Great, furnished him with vivacity, which could be commanded at any time, and which some mistook for wit. His former intercourse among people of fashion in town, had let him into most of the characters of the nobility, and he was acquainted with many of their private intrigues. He understood rank and precedence with utmost exactness, was fond of show and finery himself, and generally set a pattern of it to others. These were his favourite talents, and he was a favourite of such as had no other.

He was fond of advising those young men, who, by youth and too much money, are taught to look upon extravagance as a virtue. He was an enemy to rudeness in others, though in the latter part of his life he did not much seem to encourage a dislike of it by his own example. None talked with more humanity of the foibles of others, when absent, than he, nor kept those secrets with which he was entrusted more inviolably. But above all (if moralists will allow it among the number of his virtues) though he gamed high, he always played very fairly. These were his qualifications. Some of the nobility regarded him as an inoffensive, useful companion, the size of whose understanding was, in general, level with their own, but their little imitators admired him as a person of fine sense, and great good breeding. Thus people became fond of ranking him in the number of their acquaintance, told over his jests, and Beau Nash at length became the fashionable companion.

His first care, when made master of the ceremonies, or king of Bath, as it is called, was to promote a music subscription, of one guinea each, for a band which was to consist of six performers, who were to receive a guinea a week each for their trouble. He allowed also two guineas a week for lighting and sweeping the rooms, for which he accounted to the subscribers by receipt.

The pump-house was immediately put under the care of an officer, by the name of the Pumper, for which he paid the corporation an annual rent. A row of new houses was begun on the south side of the gravel walks, before which a handsome pavement was then made for the company to walk on. Not less than seventeen or eighteen hundred pounds was raised this year, and in the beginning of 1706, by subscription, and laid out in repairing the roads near the city. The streets began to be better paved, cleaned and lighted, the licences of the chairmen were repressed, and, by

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an act of parliament procured on this occasion, the invalids, who came to drink or bathe, were exempted from all manner of toll, as often as they should go out of the city for recreation.

The houses and streets now began to improve, and ornaments were lavished upon them even to profusion. But in the midst of this splendour the company still were obliged to assemble in a booth to drink tea and chocolate, or to game. Mr Nash undertook to remedy this inconvenience. By his direction, one Thomas Harrison erected a handsome Assembly-house for these purposes. A better band of music was also procured, and the former subscription of one guinea was raised to two. Harrison had three guineas a week for the room and candles, and the music two guineas a man. The money Mr Nash received and accounted for with the utmost exactness and punctuality. To this house were also added gardens for people of rank and fashion to walk in; and the beauty of the suburbs continued to increase, notwithstanding the opposition that was made by the corporation, who, at that time, looked upon every useful improvement, particularly without the walls, as dangerous to the inhabitants within.

His dominion was now extensive and secure, and he determined to support it with the strictest attention. But, in order to proceed in every thing like a king, he was resolved to give his subjects a law, and the following rules were accordingly put up in the pump-room:

RULES to be observed at BATH.

1. THAT a visit of ceremony at first coming and another at going away, are all that are expected or desired, by ladies of quality and fashion,-- except impertinents.
2. That ladies coming to the ball appoint a time for their footmen coming to wait on them home, to prevent disturbance and inconveniencies to themselves and others
3. That gentlemen of fashion never appearing in a morning before the ladies in gowns and caps, show breeding and respect.
4. That no person take it ill that any one goes to another's play, or breakfast, and not theirs,-- except captious by nature.
5. That no gentleman give his ticket for the balls, to any but gentlewomen.-- N.B. Unless he has none of his acquaintance.
6. That gentlemen crowding before the ladies at the ball, show ill manners, and that none do so for the future,-- except such as respect nobody but themselves.
7. That no gentleman or lady takes it ill that another dances before them;-- except such as have no pretence to dance at all.
8. That the elder ladies and children be content with a second bench at the ball, as being past or not come to perfection.

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9. That the younger ladies take notice how many eyes observe them. N.B. This does not extend to the Have-at-alls.

10. That all whisperers of lies and scandal, be taken for their authors.

11. That all repeaters of such lies, and scandal, be shunned by all company,-- except such as have been guilty of the same crime.

N.B. Several men of no character, old women and young ones, of questioned reputation, are great authors of lies in these places, being of the sect of levellers.

These laws were written by Mr Nash himself, and, by the manner in which they are drawn up, he undoubtedly designed them for wit. The reader, however, it is feared, will think them dull. Poor Nash was not born a writer, for whatever humour he might have in conversation, he used to call a pen his torpedo, whenever he grasped it, it numbed all his faculties.

But were we to give laws to a nursery, we should make them childish laws, his statutes, though stupid, were addressed to fine gentlemen and ladies, and were probably received with sympathetic approbation. It is certain, they were in general observed by his subjects, and executed by him with impartiality, neither rank nor fortune shielded the refractory from his resentment.

The balls, by his directions, were to begin at six, and to end at eleven. Nor would he suffer them to continue a moment longer, lest invalids might commit irregularities, to counteract the benefit of the waters. Every thing was to be performed in proper order. Each ball was to open with a minuet, danced by two persons of the highest distinction present. When the minuet concluded, the lady was to return to her seat, and Mr Nash was to bring the gentleman a new partner. This ceremony was to be observed by every succeeding couple, every gentleman being obliged to dance with two ladies till the minuets were over, which generally continued two hours. At eight, the country dances were to begin, ladies of quality, according to their rank, standing up first. About nine o'clock a short interval was allowed for rest, and for the gentlemen to help their partners to tea. That over, the company were to pursue their amusements till the clock struck eleven. Then the master of the ceremonies entering the ball-room, ordered the music to desist, by lifting up his finger. The dances discontinued, and some time allowed for becoming cool, the ladies were handed to the chairs.

Even the royal family themselves had not influence enough to make him deviate from any of these rules. The princess Amelia once applying to him for one dance more, after he had given the signal to withdraw, he assured her royal highness, that the established rules of Bath resembled the laws of Lycurgus, which would admit of no alteration, without an utter subversion of all his authority.

He was not less strict with regard to the dresses, in which ladies and gentlemen were to appear. He had the strongest aversion to a white apron, and absolutely excluded all who ventured to come to the assembly dressed in that manner. I have known him on a ball night strip even the duchess of Q---, and throw her apron at one of the hinder benches among the ladies' women; observing, that none but

Abigails appeared in white aprons. This from another would be insult, in him it was considered as a just reprimand, and the good natured duchess acquiesced in his censure, and with great good sense, and good humour, begged his Majesty's pardon.

But he found more difficulty in attacking the gentlemen's irregularities, and for some time strove, but in vain, to prohibit the use of swords. Disputes arising from love or play, were sometimes attended with fatal effects. To use his own expression, he was resolved to hinder people from doing, what they had no mind to, but for some time without effect. However, there happened about that time, a duel between two gamesters, whose names were Taylor and Clarke, which helped to promote his peaceable intentions. They fought by torch-light in the grove, Taylor was run through the body, but lived seven years after, at which time his wound breaking out afresh, it caused his death. Clarke from that time pretended to be a Quaker, but the orthodox brethren never cordially received him among their number, and he died at London, about eighteen years after, in poverty and contrition. From that time it was thought necessary to forbid the wearing of swords at Bath, as they often tore the ladies' clothes, and frightened them, by sometimes appearing upon trifling occasions. Whenever therefore Nash heard of a challenge given, or accepted, he instantly had both parties arrested.

The gentlemen's boots also made a very desperate stand against him, the country squires were by no means submissive to his usurpations; and probably his authority alone would never have carried him through, had he not reinforced it with ridicule. He wrote a song upon the occasion, which, for the honour of his poetical talents, the world shall see.

FRONTINELLA'S invitation to the Assembly.

Come, one and all, to Hoyden Hall,
For there's the assembly this night,
None but rude fools,
Mind manners and rules,
We Hoydens do decency slight.

Come Trollops and Slatterns,
Cocked hats and white aprons,
This best our modesty suits,
For why should not we,
In dress be as free,
As Hogs-Norton squires in boots?

The keenness, severity, and particularly the good rhymes of this little morçeau, which was at that time highly relished by many of the nobility at Bath, gained him a temporary triumph. But to push his victories, he got up a puppet-show, in which Punch came in booted and spurred, in the character of a country squire. He was introduced as courting his mistress, and having obtained her consent to comply with his wishes, upon going to bed, he is desired to pull off his boots. My boots, replies Punch, why, madam, you may as well bid me pull off my legs, I never go without boots, I never ride, I never dance without them, and this piece of politeness is quite the thing at Bath. We always dance at our town in boots, and the ladies often move

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minuets in riding-hoods. Thus he goes on, till his mistress, grown impatient, kicks him off the stage.

From that time few ventured to appear at the assemblies in Bath in a riding-dress; and whenever any gentleman, through ignorance, or haste, appeared in the rooms in boots, Nash would make up to him, and, bowing in an arch manner, would tell him, that he had forgot his horse. Thus he was at last completely victorious.

Dolisq, coacti
Quos nec Tydides nec Larissæus Achilles
Non anni domuere decem.

He began therefore to reign without a rival, and like other kings had his mistresses, flatterers, enemies and calumniators. The amusements of the place however wore a very different aspect from what they did formerly. Regularity repressed pride, and that lessened, people of fortune became fit for society. Let the morose and grave censure an attention to forms and ceremonies, and rail at those, whose only business it is to regulate them; but though ceremony is very different from politeness, no country was ever yet polite, that was not first ceremonious. The natural gradation of breeding begins in savage disgust, proceeds to indifference, improves into attention, by degrees refines into ceremonious observance, and the trouble of being ceremonious at length produces politeness, elegance and ease. There is therefore some merit in mending society, even in one of the inferior steps of this gradation, and no man was more happy in this respect than Mr Nash. In every nation there are enough who have no other business or care, but that of buying pleasure; and he taught them, who bid at such an auction, the art of procuring what they sought without diminishing the pleasure of others.

The city of Bath, by such assiduity, soon became the theatre of summer amusements for all people of fashion, and the manner of spending the day there must amuse any, but such as disease or spleen had made uneasy to themselves. The following is a faint picture of the pleasures that scene affords. Upon a stranger's arrival at Bath, he is welcomed by a peal of the Abbey bells, and in the next place, by the voice and music of the city waits. For these civilities the ringers have generally a present made them of half a guinea; and the waits of half a crown, or more, in proportion to the person's fortune, generosity, or ostentation. These customs, though disagreeable, are however generally liked, or they would not continue. The greatest incommodity attending them is the disturbance the bells must give the sick. But the pleasure of knowing the name of every family that comes to town recompenses the inconvenience. Invalids are fond of news, and upon the first sound of the bells, every body sends out to enquire for whom they ring.

After the family is thus welcomed to Bath, it is the custom for the master of it to go to the public places, and subscribe two guineas at the assembly-houses towards the balls and music in the pump-house, for which he is entitled to three tickets every ball night. His next subscription is a crown, half a guinea, or a guinea, according to

his rank and quality, for the liberty of walking in the private walks belonging to Simplon's assembly-house, a crown or half a guinea is also given to the booksellers, for which the gentleman is to have what books he pleases to read at his lodgings. And at the coffee-house another subscription is taken for pen, ink and paper, for such letters as the subscriber shall write at it during his stay. The ladies too may subscribe to the booksellers, and to a house by the pump-room, for the advantage of reading the news, and for enjoying each other's conversation.

Things being thus adjusted, the amusements of the day are generally begun by bathing, which is no unpleasing method of passing away an hour, or so.

The baths are five in number On the south-west side of the abbey church is the King's Bath; which is an oblong square, the walls are full of niches, and at every corner are steps to descend into it. This bath is said to contain 427 tons and 50 gallons of water, and on its rising out of the ground over the springs, it is sometimes too hot to be endured by those who bathe therein. Adjoining to the King's Bath there is another, called the Queen's Bath; this is of a more temperate warmth, as borrowing its water from the other.

In the south-west part of the city are three other baths, viz. The Hot Bath, which is not much inferior in heat to the King's Bath, and contains 53 tons 2 hogsheads, and 11 gallons of water. The Cross Bath, which contains 52 tons 3 hogsheads, and 11 gallons; and the Leper's Bath, which is not so much frequented as the rest.

The King's Bath (according to the best observations) will fill in about nine hours and a half, the Hot Bath in about eleven hours and a half; and the Cross Bath in about the same time.

The hours for bathing are commonly between six and nine in the morning; and the Baths are every morning supplied with fresh water; for when the people have done bathing, the sluices in each Bath are pulled up, and the water is carried off by drains into the river Avon.

In the morning the lady is brought in a close chair, dressed in her bathing clothes, to the Baths and, being in the water, the woman who attends, presents her with a little floating dish like a basin; into which the lady puts a handkerchief, a snuff-box, and a nosegay. She then traverses the bath; if a novice with a guide, if otherwise by herself; and having amused herself thus while she thinks proper, calls for her chair, and returns to her lodgings.

The amusement of bathing is immediately succeeded by a general assembly of people at the pump-house, some for pleasure, and some to drink the hot waters. Three glasses, at three different times, is the usual portion for every drinker; and the intervals between every glass are enlivened by the harmony of a small band of music, as well as by the conversation of the gay, the witty, or the forward.

From the pump-house the ladies, from time to time, withdraw to a female coffee-house, and from thence return to their lodgings to breakfast. The gentlemen withdraw to their coffee-houses, to read the papers, or converse on the news of the day, with a freedom and ease not to be found in the metropolis.

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People of fashion make public breakfasts at the assembly-houses, to which they invite their acquaintances, and they sometimes order private concerts; or when so disposed, attend lectures upon the arts and sciences, which are frequently taught there in a pretty superficial manner, so as not to tease the understanding, while they afford the imagination some amusement. The private concerts are performed in the ball-rooms, the tickets a crown each.

Concert breakfasts at the assembly-house, sometimes make also a part of the morning's amusement here, the expenses of which are defrayed by a subscription among the men. Persons of rank and fortune who can perform are admitted into the orchestra, and find a pleasure in joining with the performers.

Thus we have the tedious morning fairly over. When noon approaches, and church (if any please to go there) is done, some of the company appear upon the parade, and other public walks, where they continue to chat and amuse each other, till they have formed parties for the play, cards, or dancing for the evening. Another part of the company divert themselves with reading in the booksellers' shops, or are generally seen taking the air and exercise, some on horseback, some in coaches. Some walk in the meadows round the town, winding along the side of the river Avon, and the neighbouring canal, while others are seen scaling some of those romantic precipices that overhang the city.

When the hour of dinner draws nigh, and the company is returned from their different recreations, the provisions are generally served with the utmost elegance and plenty. Their mutton, butter, fish, and fowl, are all allowed to be excellent, and their cookery still exceeds their meat.

After dinner is over, and evening prayers ended, the company meet a second time at the pump-house. From this they retire to the walks, and from thence go to drink tea at the assembly-houses, and the rest of the evenings are concluded either with balls, plays or visits. A theatre was erected in the year 1705 by subscription, by people of the highest rank, who permitted their arms to be engraven on the inside of the house, as a public testimony of their liberality towards it. Every Tuesday and Friday evening is concluded with a public ball, the contributions to which are so numerous, that the price of each ticket is trifling. Thus Bath yields a continued rotation of diversions, and people of all ways of thinking, even from the libertine to the Methodist, have it in their power to complete the day with employments suited to their inclinations.

In this manner every amusement soon improved under Mr Nash's administration. The magistrates of the city found, that he was necessary and useful, and took every opportunity of paying the same respect to his fictitious royalty, that is generally extorted by real power. The same satisfaction a young lady finds upon being singled out at her first appearance, or an applauded poet, on the success of his first tragedy, influenced him. All admired him as an extraordinary charmer, and some who knew no better, as a very fine gentleman, he was perfectly happy in their little applause, and affected at length something particular in his dress, behaviour and conversation.

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His equipage was sumptuous, and he usually travelled to Tunbridge, in a post chariot and five greys, with out-riders and foot-men, French horns, and every other appendage of expensive parade. He always wore a white hat, and, to apologize for this singularity, said, he did it purely to secure it from being stolen, his dress was tawdry, though not perfectly genteel, he might be considered as a beau of several generations, and in his appearance he, in some measure, mixed the fashions of the last age with those of the present. He perfectly understood elegant expense, and generally passed his time in the very best company, if persons of the first distinction deserve that title.

But I hear the reader now demand, what finances were to support all this finery, or where the treasure, that gave him such frequent opportunities of displaying his benevolence, or his vanity? To answer this, we must now enter upon another part of his character, his talents as a gamester; for by gaming alone at that period, of which I speak, he kept up so very genteel an appearance. When he first figured at Bath, there were few laws against this destructive amusement. The gaming-table was the constant resource of despair and indigence, and the frequent ruin of opulent fortunes. Wherever people of fashion came, needy adventurers were generally found in waiting. With such Bath swarmed, and among this class Mr Nash was certainly to be numbered in the beginning, only with this difference, that he wanted the corrupt heart, too commonly attending a life of expedients; for he was generous, humane and honourable, even though by profession a gamester.

A thousand instances might be given of his integrity, even in this infamous profession, where his generosity often impelled him to act in contradiction to his interest. Wherever he found a novice in the hands of a sharper, he generally forewarned him of the danger, whenever he found any inclined to play, yet ignorant of the game, he would offer his services, and play for them. I remember an instance to this effect though too nearly concerned in the affair to publish the gentleman's name of whom it is related. In the year 1725, there came to Bath a giddy youth, who had resigned his fellowship at Oxford. He brought his whole fortune with him there, it was but a trifle, however he was resolved to venture it all. Good fortune seemed kinder than could be expected. Without the smallest skill in play, he won a sum sufficient to make any unambitious man happy. His desire of gain increasing with his gains, in the October following he was at all, and added four thousand pounds to his former capital. Mr Nash one night, after losing a considerable sum to this undeserving son of fortune, invited him to supper. "Sir," cried this honest, though veteran gamester, "perhaps you may imagine I have invited you, in order to have my revenge at home; but, sir! I scorn so inhospitable an action. I desired the favour of your company to give you some advice, which you will pardon me, Sir, you seem to stand in need of. You are now high in spirits, and drawn away by a torrent of success. But there will come a time, when you will repent having left the calm of a college life for the turbulent profession of a gamester. Ill runs will come, as sure as day and night succeed each other. Be therefore advised, remain content with your present gains, for be persuaded, that had you the Bank of England, with your present ignorance of gaming, it would vanish like a fairy dream. You are a stranger to me, but to convince you of the part I take in your welfare, I'll give you fifty guineas, to forfeit twenty, every time you lose two hundred at one sitting. The young gentleman refused his offer, and was at last undone."

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The late duke of B. being chagrined at losing a considerable sum, pressed Mr Nash to tie him up for the future from playing deep. Accordingly, the beau gave his grace an hundred guineas to forfeit ten thousand, whenever he lost a sum to the same amount at play, in one sitting. The duke loved play to distraction, and soon after at hazard lost eight thousand guineas, and was going to throw for three thousand more, when Nash, catching hold of the dice-box, entreated his Grace to reflect upon the penalty if he lost. The Duke for that time desisted, but so strong was the furor of play upon him, that soon after, losing a considerable sum at Newmarket, he was contented to pay the penalty.

When the late earl of T---d was a youth, he was passionately fond of play, and never better pleased than with having Mr Nash for his antagonist. Nash saw with concern his lordship's foible, and undertook to cure him, though by a very disagreeable remedy. Conscious of his own superior skill, he determined to engage him in single play for a very considerable sum. His lordship, in proportion as he lost his game, lost his temper too, and as he approached the gulf, seemed still more eager for ruin. He lost his estate; some writings were put into the winner's possession; his very equipage was deposited as a last stake, and he lost that also. But, when our generous gamester had found his lordship sufficiently punished for his temerity, he returned all, only stipulating, that he should be paid five thousand pounds whenever he should think proper to make the demand. However, he never made any such demand during his lordship's life, but some time after his decease, Mr Nash's affairs, being in the wane, he demanded the money of his lordship's heirs, who honourably paid it without any hesitation.

But whatever skill Nash might have acquired by long practice in play, he was never formed by nature for a successful gamester. He was constitutionally passionate and generous. To acquire a perfection in this art, a man must be naturally phlegmatic, reserved and cool, every passion must learn to obey control, but he frequently was unable to restrain the violence of his, and was often betrayed by this means into unbecoming rudeness, or childish impertinence; was sometimes a minion of fortune, and as often depressed by adversity. While others made considerable fortunes at the gaming-table, he was ever in the power of chance, nor did even the intimacy with which he was received by the great, place him in a state of independence.

The considerable inconveniences that were found to result from a permission of gaming, at length attracted the attention of the legislature, and in the twelfth year of his late majesty, the most prevalent games at that time were declared fraudulent and unlawful. Every age has had its peculiar modes of gaming. The games of Gleek, Primero, In and In, and several others now exploded, employed our sharpening ancestors, to these succeeded the Acc of hearts, Pharaoh, Basset, and Hazard, all games of chance like the former. But though in these the chances seemed equal to the novice; in general those who kept the bank were considerable winners. The act therefore, passed upon this occasion, declared all such games and lotteries illicit, and directed, that all who should set up such games, should forfeit two hundred pounds, to be levied by distress on the offender's goods, one third to go to the informer, the residue to the poor.

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The act further declared, that every person who played in any place, except in the royal palace where his majesty resided, should forfeit fifty pounds, and should be condemned to pay treble costs in case of an appeal

This law was scarcely made, before it was eluded by the invention of divers fraudulent and deceitful games, and a particular game, called Passage, was daily practised, and contributed to the ruin of thousands. To prevent this, the ensuing year it was enacted, that this and every other game invented, or to be invented, with one die, or more, or any other instrument of the same nature with numbers thereon, should be subject to a similar penalty, and at the same time, the persons playing with such instruments should be punished as above.

This amendment of the law soon gave birth to new evasions; the game of Rolly Polly, Marlborough's Battles, but particularly the E O, were set up, and strange to observe! several of those very noblemen, who had given their voices to suppress gaming, were the most ready to encourage it This game was at first set up at Tunbridge. It was invented by one C---k, and carried on between him and one Mr A---e, proprietor of the assembly-room at that place, and was reckoned extremely profitable to the bank, as it gained two and an half per cent on all that was lost or won.

As all gaming was suppressed but this, Mr Nash was now utterly destitute of any resource that he could expect from his superior skill, and long experience in the art. The money to be gained in private gaming is at best but trifling, and the opportunity precarious. The minds of the generality of mankind shrink with their circumstances; and Nash, upon the immediate prospect of poverty, was now mean enough (I will call it no worse) to enter into a base confederacy with those low creatures to evade the law, and to share the plunder. The occasion was as follows. The profits of the table were, as I observed, divided between C---k, the inventor, and A---e the room-keeper. The first year's profits were extraordinary, and A---e the room-keeper now began to wish himself sole proprietor. The combinations of the worthless are ever of short duration. The next year therefore A---e turned C---k out of his room, and set up the game for himself. The gentlemen and ladies who frequented the wells, unmindful of the immense profit gained by these reptiles, still continued to game as before, and A---e was triumphing in the success of his politics, when he was informed, that C---k and his friends hired the crier to cry the game down. The consequences of this would have been fatal to A---e's interest, for by this means frauds might have been discovered, which would deter even the most ardent lovers of play immediately, therefore, while the crier was yet upon the walks, he applied to Mr Nash to stop these proceedings, and, at the same time, offered him a fourth share of the bank, which Mr Nash was mean enough to accept. This is the greatest blot in his life, and this it is hoped will find pardon.

The day after, the inventor offered an half of the bank, but this Mr Nash thought proper to refuse, being pre-engaged to A---e. Upon which, being disappointed, he applied to one Mr J---e, and under his protection another table was set up, and the company seemed to be divided equally between them. I cannot reflect, without surprise, at the wisdom of the gentlemen and ladies, to suffer themselves to be thus parcelled out between a pack of sharpers, and permit themselves to be defrauded, without even the show of opposition. The company thus divided, Mr Nash once more

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availed himself of their parties, and prevailed upon them to unite their banks, and to divide the gains into three shares, of which he reserved one to himself.

Nash had hitherto enjoyed a fluctuating fortune; and, had he taken the advantage of the present opportunity, he might have been for the future not only above want, but even in circumstances of opulence. Had he cautiously employed himself in computing the benefits of the table, and exacting his stipulated share, he might have soon grown rich, but he entirely left the management of it to the people of the rooms, he took them, (as he says in one of his memorials upon this occasion) to be honest, and never enquired what was won or lost, and, it is probable, they were seldom assiduous in informing him. I find a secret pleasure in thus displaying the insecurity of friendships among the base. They pretended to pay him regularly at first, but he soon discovered, as he says, that at Tunbridge he had suffered to the amount of two thousand guineas.

In the mean time, as the E O table thus succeeded at Tunbridge, Mr Nash was resolved to introduce it at Bath, and previously asked the opinion of several lawyers, who declared it no way illegal. In consequence of this, he wrote to Mrs A---e, who kept one of the great rooms at Bath, acquainting her with the profits attending such scheme, and proposing to have a fourth share with her, and Mr W---, the proprietor of the other room, for his authority, and protection. To this Mr W--- and she returned him for answer, that they would grant him a fifth share, which he consented to accept. Accordingly, he made a journey to London, and bespoke two tables, one for each room, at the rate of fifteen pounds each table.

The tables were no sooner set up at Bath, than they were frequented with a greater concourse of gamblers than those at Tunbridge. Men of that infamous profession, from every part of the kingdom, and even other parts of Europe, flocked here to feed on the turns of each other's fortune. This afforded another opportunity for Mr Nash to become rich, but, as at Tunbridge, he thought the people here also would take care of him, and therefore he employed none to look after his interest. The first year they paid him what he thought just, the next, the woman of the room dying, her son paid him, and showed his books. Sometime after the people of the rooms offered him one hundred pounds a year each for his share, which he refused, every succeeding year they continued to pay him less and less, till at length he found, as he pretends, that he had thus lost not less than twenty thousand pounds.

Thus they proceeded, deceiving the public and each other, till the legislature thought proper to suppress these seminaries of vice. It was enacted, that after the 24th of June, 1745, none should be permitted to keep an house, room or place, for playing, upon pain of such forfeiture, as were declared in former acts instituted for that purpose.

The legislature likewise amended a law, made in the reign of queen Anne, for recovering money lost at play, on the oath of the winner. By this act, no person was rendered incapable of being a witness, and every person present at a gaming-table might be summoned by the magistrate, who took cognizance of the affair. No privilege of parliament was allowed to those convicted of having gaming-tables in their houses. Those who lost ten pounds at one time, were liable to be indicted within six months after the offence was committed, and being convicted, were to be fined

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five times the value of the sum won or lost, for the use of the poor. Any offender before conviction, discovering another, so as to be convicted, was to be discharged from the penalties incurred by his own offences.

By this wise and just act, all Nash's future hopes of succeeding by the tables were blown up. He had now only the justice and generosity of his confederates to trust to; but that he soon found to be a vain expectation, for, if we can depend on his own memorials, what at one time they confessed, they would at another deny; and though upon some occasions they seemed at variance with each other, yet when they were to oppose him, whom they considered as a common enemy, they generally united with confidence and success. He now therefore had nothing but a law-suit to confide in for redress; and this is ever the last expedient to retrieve a desperate fortune. He accordingly threw his suit into Chancery, and, by this means, the public became acquainted with what he had long endeavoured to conceal. They now found that he was himself concerned in the gaming tables, of which he only seemed the conductor; and that he had shared part of the spoil, though he complained of having been defrauded of a just share.

The success of his suit was what might have been naturally expected, he had but at best a bad cause, and as the oaths of the defendants were alone sufficient to cast him in Chancery, it was not surprising that he was nonsuited. But the consequence of this affair was much more fatal than he had imagined, it lessened him in the esteem of the public, it drew several enemies against him, and in some measure diminished the authority of any defence he could make. From that time (about the year 1745), I find this poor, good-natured, but misguided man involved in continual disputes, every day calumniated with some new slander, and continually endeavouring to obviate its effects.

Upon these occasions his usual method was, by printed bills handed about among his acquaintance, to inform the public of his most private transactions with some of those creatures, with whom he had formerly associated; but these apologies served rather to blacken his antagonists, than to vindicate him. They were in general extremely ill written, confused, obscure, and sometimes unintelligible. By these, however, it appeared, that W--- was originally obliged to him for the resort of company to his room; that lady H---, who had all the company before W---'s room was built, offered Mr Nash an hundred pound for his protection, which he refused, having previously promised to support Mrs W---. It appears by these apologies, that the persons concerned in the rooms made large fortunes, while he still continued in pristine indigence, and that his nephew, for whom he had at first secured one of the rooms, was left in as great distress as he.

His enemies were not upon this occasion contented with aspersing him, as a confederate with sharpers, they even asserted, that he spent and embezzled the subscriptions of gentlemen and ladies, which were given for useful or charitable purposes. But to such aspersions he answered, by declaring, to use his own expression, before God and man, that he never diverted one shilling of the said subscriptions to his own use, nor was he ever thought to have done it, till new enemies darted up against him. Perhaps the reader may be curious to see one of these memorials, written by himself, and I will indulge curiosity, merely to show a specimen of the style and manner of a man, whose whole life was passed in a round of

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gaiety and conversation, whose jests were a thousand times repeated, and whose company was courted by every son and daughter of fashion. The following is particularly levelled against those, who, in the latter part of his life, took every opportunity to traduce his character.

A MONITOR.

For the Lord hateth lying and deceitful lips.

PSAL.

"THE curse denounced in my motto, is sufficient to intimidate any person, who is not quite abandoned in their evil ways, and who have any fear of God before their eyes, everlasting burnings are a terrible reward for their misdoings and nothing but the most hardened sinners will oppose the judgments of heaven, being without end. This reflection must be shocking to such, as are conscious to themselves, of having erred from the sacred dictates of the Psalmist, and who following the blind impulse of passion, daily forging lies and deceit, to annoy their neighbour. But there are joys in heaven which they can never arrive at, whose whole study is to destroy the peace and harmony, and good order of society in this place."

This carries little the air of a bagatelle, it rather seems a sermon in miniature, so different are some men in the closet, and in conversation. The following I have taken at random from an heap of other memorials, all tending to set his combination with the afore-mentioned partners in a proper light.

"E O was first set up in A---e room, the profits divided between one C---k (the inventor of the game) and A---e.

The next year, A---e finding the game so advantageous, turned C---k out of his room, and set the game up himself, but C---k and his friends hired the crier to cry the game down; upon which A---e came running to me to stop it, after he had cried it once, which I immediately did, and turned the crier off the walks.

Then A---e asked me to go a fourth with him in the bank, which I consented to; C---k next day took me into his room which he had hired, and proffered me to go half with him, which I refused, being engaged before to A---e.

J---e then set up the same game, and complained that he had not half play at his room, upon which I made them agree to join their banks, and divide equally the gain and loss, and I to go the like share in the bank.

I taking them to be honest, never enquired what was won or lost, and thought they paid me honestly, till it was discovered, that they had defrauded me of 2000 guineas.

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I then arrested A---e, who told me I must go into Chancery, and that I should begin with the people of Bath, who had cheated me of ten times as much; and told my attorney, that J---e had cheated me of 500, and wrote me word that I probably had it not under his hand, which never was used in play.

Upon my arresting A---e, I received a letter not to prosecute J---e, for he would be a very good witness. I writ a discharge to J---e for 125l. in full, though he never paid me a farthing, upon his telling me, if his debts were paid, he was not worth a shilling.

Every article of this I can prove from A---e's own mouth, as a reason that he allow ed the bank keepers but 10 per cent because I went 20; and his suborning **** to alter his informations.

RICHARD NASH."

This gentleman's simplicity, in trusting persons whom he had no previous reasons to place confidence in, seems to be one of those lights into his character, which, while they impeach his understanding, do honour to his benevolence. The low and timid are ever suspicious, but a heart impressed with honourable sentiments, expects from others sympathetic sincerity.

But now that we have viewed his conduct as a gamester, and seen him on that side of his character, which is by far the most unfavourable, seen him declining from his former favour and esteem, the just consequence of his quitting, though but ever so little, the paths of honour; let me turn to those brighter parts of his life and character, which gained the affection of his friends, the esteem of the corporation which he assisted, and may possibly attract the attention of posterity. By his success we shall find, that figuring in life, proceeds less from the possession of great talents, than from the proper application of moderate ones. Some great minds are only fitted to put forth their powers in the storm, and the occasion is often wanting during a whole life for a great exertion: but trifling opportunities of shining, are almost every hour offered to the little sedulous mind; and a person thus employed, is not only more pleasing, but more useful in a state of tranquil society.

Though gaming first introduced him into polite company, this alone could hardly have carried him forward, without the assistance of a genteel address, much vivacity, some humour, and some wit. But once admitted into the circle of the Beau Monde, he then laid claim to all the privileges by which it is distinguished. Among others, in the early part of his life, he entered himself professedly into the service of the fair sex; he set up for a man of gallantry and intrigue, and if we can credit the boasts of his old age, he often succeeded. In fact, the business of love somewhat resembles the business of physic, no matter for qualifications, he that makes vigorous pretensions to either is surest of success. Nature had by no means formed Mr Nash for a *Beau Garçon*, his person was clumsy, too large and awkward, and his features harsh, strong, and peculiarly irregular, yet even, with those disadvantages, he made love, became an universal admirer of the sex, and was universally admired. He was possessed, at least, of some requisites of a lover. He had assiduity, flattery, fine clothes, and as much wit as the ladies he addressed. Wit, flattery, and fine clothes, he used to say, were enough to debauch a nunnery. But my fair readers of the present

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day are exempt from this scandal, and it is no matter now, what he said of their grandmothers.

As Nestor was a man of three ages, so Nash sometimes humorously called himself a beau of three generations. He had seen flaxen bobs succeeded by majors, which in their turn gave way to negligents, which were at last totally routed by bags and ramilees. [*Editor's note: These are different kinds of wig.*] The manner in which gentlemen managed their amours, in these different ages of fashion, were not more different than their periwigs. The lover in the reign of king Charles was solemn, majestic, and formal. He visited his mistress in state. Languished for the favour, kneeled when he toasted his goddess, walked with solemnity, performed the most trifling things with decorum, and even took snuff with a flourish. The beau of the latter part of queen Anne's reign was disgusted with so much formality, he was pert, smart and lively, his billet-doux were written in a quite different style from that of his antiquated predecessor, he was ever laughing at his own ridiculous situation, till at last, he persuaded the lady to become as ridiculous as himself. The beau of the third age, in which Mr Nash died, was still more extraordinary than either, his whole secret intrigue consisted in perfect indifference. The only way to make love now, I have heard Mr Nash say, was to take no manner of notice of the lady, which method was found the surest way to secure her affections.

However these things be, this gentleman's successes in amour were in reality very much confined in the second and third age of intrigue, his character was too public for a lady to consign her reputation to his keeping. But in the beginning of life it is said, he knew the secret history of the times, and contributed himself to swell the page of scandal. Were I upon the present occasion to hold the pen of a novelist, I could recount some amours, in which he was successful. I could fill a volume with little anecdotes, which contain neither pleasure nor instruction, with histories of professing lovers, and poor believing girls deceived by such professions. But such adventures are easily written, and as easily achieved. The plan even of fictitious novel is quite exhausted; but truth, which I have followed here, and ever design to follow, presents in the affair of love scarce any variety. The manner in which one reputation is lost, exactly resembles that by which another is taken away. The gentleman begins at timid distance, grows more bold, becomes rude, till the lady is married or undone, such is the substance of every modern novel, nor will I gratify the pruriency of folly, at the expense of every other pleasure my narration may afford.

Mr Nash did not long continue an universal gallant, but in the earlier years of his reign, entirely gave up his endeavours to deceive the sex, in order to become the honest protector of their innocence, the guardian of their reputation, and a friend to their virtue.

This was a character he bore for many years, and supported it with integrity, assiduity and success. It was his constant practice to do every thing in his power to prevent the fatal consequences of rash and inconsiderate love, and there are many persons now alive, who owe their present happiness to his having interrupted the progress of an amour, that threatened to become unhappy, or even criminal, privately making their guardians or parents acquainted with what he could discover. And his manner of disconcerting these schemes was such as generally secured him from the rage and resentment of the disappointed. One night, when I was in Wiltshire's room,

Nash came up to a lady and her daughter, who were people of no inconsiderable fortune, and bluntly told the mother, *she had better be at home*: this was at that time thought an audacious piece of impertinence, and the lady turned away piqued and disconcerted. Nash, however, pursued her, and repeated the words again, when the old lady, wisely conceiving there might be some hidden meaning couched under this seeming insolence, retired, and coming to her lodgings, found a coach and six at the door, which a sharper had provided to carry off her eldest daughter.

I shall beg leave to give some other instances of Mr Nash's good sense and good-nature on these occasions, as I have had the accounts from himself. At the conclusion of the treaty of peace at Utrecht, colonel M---- was one of the thoughtless, agreeable, gay creatures, that drew the attention of the company at Bath. He danced and talked with great vivacity, and when he gamed among the ladies, he showed, that his attention was employed rather upon their hearts than their fortunes. His own fortune however was a trifle, when compared to the elegance of his expense; and his imprudence at last was so great, that it obliged him to sell an annuity, arising from his commission, to keep up his splendour a little longer.

However thoughtless he might be, he had the happiness of gaining the affections of Miss L----, whose father designed her a very large fortune. This lady was courted by a nobleman of distinction, but she refused his addresses, resolved upon gratifying rather her inclinations than her avarice. The intrigue went on successfully between her and the colonel, and they both would certainly have been married, and been undone, had not Mr Nash apprised her father of their intentions. The old gentleman, recalled his daughter from Bath, and offered Mr Nash a very considerable present, for the care he had taken, which he refused.

In the mean time colonel M--- had an intimation how his intrigue came to be discovered; and by taxing Mr Nash, found that his suspicions were not without foundation. A challenge was the immediate consequence, which the king of Bath, conscious of having only done his duty, thought proper to decline. As none are permitted to wear swords at Bath, the colonel found no opportunity of gratifying his resentment, and waited with impatience to find Mr Nash in town, to require proper satisfaction.

During this interval, however, he found his creditors became too importunate for him to remain longer at Bath, and his finances and credit being quite exhausted, he took the desperate resolution of going over to the Dutch army in Flanders, where he enlisted himself a volunteer. Here he underwent all the fatigues of a private sentinel, with the additional misery of receiving no pay, and his friends in England gave out, that he was shot at the battle of ---.

In the mean time the nobleman pressed his passion with ardour, but during the progress of his amour, the young lady's father died, and left her heiress to a fortune of fifteen hundred a year. She thought herself now disengaged from her former passion. An absence of two years had in some measure abated her love for the colonel, and the assiduity, the merit, and real regard of the gentleman who still continued to solicit her, were almost too powerful for her constancy. Mr Nash, in the mean time, took every opportunity of enquiring after colonel M---, and found, that he had for some time been returned to England, but changed his name, in order to avoid the fury of his creditors,

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and that he was entered into a company of strolling players, who were at that time exhibiting at Peterborough.

He now therefore thought he owed the colonel, in justice, an opportunity of promoting his fortune, as he had once deprived him of an occasion of satisfying his love. Our Beau therefore invited the lady to be of a party to Peterborough, and offered his own equipage, which was then one of the most elegant in England, to conduct her there. The proposal being accepted, the lady, the nobleman, and Mr Nash, arrived in town just as the players were going to begin.

Colonel M---, who used every means of remaining incognito, and who was too proud to make his distresses known to any of his former acquaintance, was now degraded into the character of Tom in the *Conscious Lovers*. Miss L--- was placed in the foremost row of the spectators, her lord on one side, and the impatient Nash on the other, when the unhappy youth appeared in that despicable situation upon the stage. The moment he came on, his former mistress struck his view, but his amazement was increased, when he saw her fainting away in the arms of those who sat behind her. He was incapable of proceeding, and scarce knowing what he did, he flew and caught her in his arms.

"Colonel," cried Nash, when they were in some measure recovered, "you once thought me your enemy, because I endeavoured to prevent you both from ruining each other, you were then wrong, and you have long had my forgiveness. If you love well enough now for matrimony, you fairly have my content, and d--n him, say I, that attempts to part you." Their nuptials were solemnized soon after, and affluence added a zest to all their future enjoyments. Mr Nash had the thanks of each, and he afterwards spent several agreeable days in that society, which he had contributed to render happy.

I shall beg the reader's patience, while I give another instance, in which he ineffectually offered his assistance and advice. This story is not from himself, but told us partly by Mr Wood, the architect of Bath, as it fell particularly within his own knowledge, and partly from another memoir, to which he refers.

Miss Sylvia S--- was descended from one of the best families in the kingdom, and was left a large fortune upon her sister's decease. She had early in life been introduced into the best company, and contracted a passion for elegance and expense. It is usual to make the heroine of a story very witty, and very beautiful, and such circumstances are so surely expected, that they are scarce attended to. But whatever the finest poet could conceive of wit, or the most celebrated painter imagine of beauty, were excelled in the perfections of this young lady. Her superiority in both was allowed by all, who either heard, or had seen her. She was naturally gay, generous to a fault, good-natured to the highest degree, affable in conversation, and some of her letters, and other writings, as well in verse as prose, would have shone amongst those of the most celebrated wits of this, or any other age, had they been published.

But these great qualifications were marked by another, which lessened the value of them all. She was imprudent! But let it not be imagined, that her reputation of honour suffered by her imprudence, I only mean, she had no only knowledge of the

use of money, she relieved distress, by putting herself into the circumstances of the object whose wants she supplied.

She was arrived at the age of nineteen; when the crowd of her lovers, and the continual repetition of new flattery, had taught her to think she could never be forsaken, and never poor. Young ladies are apt to expect a certainty of success from a number of lovers, and yet I have seldom seen a girl courted by an hundred lovers, that found an husband in any. Before the choice is fixed, she has either lost her reputation, or her good sense, and the loss of either is sufficient to consign her to perpetual virginity.

Among the number of this young lady's lovers was the celebrated S--- who, at that time, went by the name of *the good-natured man*. This gentleman, with talents that might have done honour to humanity, suffered himself to fall at length into the lowest fate of debasement. He followed the dictates of every newest passion, his love, his pity, his generosity, and even his friendships were all in excess, he was unable to make head against any of his sensations or desires, but they were in general worthy wishes and desires, for he was constitutionally virtuous. This gentleman, who at last died in a gaol, was at that time this lady's envied favourite.

It is probable that he, thoughtless creature, had no other prospect from this amour, but that of passing the present moments agreeably. He only courted dissipation, but the lady's thoughts were fixed on happiness. At length, however, his debts amounting to a considerable sum, he was arrested, and thrown into prison. He endeavoured at first to conceal his situation from his beautiful mistress; but she soon came to a knowledge of his distress, and took a fatal resolution of freeing him from confinement by discharging all the demands of his creditors.

Mr Nash was at that time in London, and represented to the thoughtless young lady, that such a measure would effectually ruin both, that so warm a concern for the interests of Mr S---, would in the first place quite impair her fortune, in the eyes of our sex, and what was worse, lessen her reputation in those of her own. He added, that thus bringing Mr S--- from prison, would be only a temporary relief, that a mind so generous as his, would become bankrupt under the load of gratitude, and instead of improving in friendship or affection, he would only study to avoid a creditor he could never repay, that though small favours produce good-will, great ones destroy friendship. These admonitions however were disregarded, and she too late found the prudence and truth of her adviser. In short, her fortune was by this means exhausted, and, with all her attractions, she found her acquaintance began to disesteem her, in proportion as she became poor.

In this situation she accepted Mr Nash's invitation of returning to Bath; he promised to introduce her to the best company there, and he was assured that her merit would do the rest; upon her very first appearance, ladies of the highest distinction courted her friendship and esteem, but a settled melancholy had taken possession of her mind, and no amusements that they could propose were sufficient to divert it. Yet still, as if from habit, she followed the crowd in its levities, and frequented those places, where all persons endeavour to forget themselves in the bustle of ceremony and show.

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Her beauty, her simplicity, and her unguarded situation, soon drew the attention of a designing wretch, who at that time kept one of the rooms at Bath, and who thought, that this lady's merit, properly managed, might turn to good account. This woman's name was dame Lindsey, a creature, who, though vicious, was in appearance sanctified, and, though designing, had some wit and humour.

She began by the humblest assiduity to ingratiate herself with Miss S---, showed, that she could be amusing as a companion, and by frequent offers of money, proved, that she could be useful as a friend. Thus, by degrees, she gained an entire ascendant over this poor, thoughtless, deserted girl, and, in less than one year, namely about 1727, Miss S---, without ever transgressing the laws of virtue, had entirely lost her reputation. Whenever a person was wanting to make up a party for play at dame Lindsey's, Sylvia, as she was then familiarly called, was sent for, and was obliged to suffer all those slights, which the rich but too often let fall upon their inferiors in point of fortune.

In most, even the greatest, minds, the heart at last becomes level with the meanness of its condition, but, in this charming girl, it struggled hard with adversity, and yielded to every encroachment of contempt with sullen reluctance.

But though in the course of three years she was in the very eye of public inspection, yet, Mr Wood the architect, avers, that he could never, by the strictest observations, perceive her to be tainted with any other vice, than that of suffering herself to be decoyed to the gaming-table, and, at her own hazard, playing for the amusement and advantage of others. Her friend, Mr Nash, therefore, thought proper to induce her to break off all connections with dame Lindsey, and to rent part of Mr Wood's house, in Queen Square, where she behaved with the utmost complaisance, regularity, and virtue.

In this situation her detestation of life still continued, she found, that time would infallibly deprive her of part of her attractions, and that continual solicitude would impair the rest. With these reflections she would frequently entertain herself, and an old faithful maid in the vales of Bath, whenever the weather would permit them to walk out. She would even sometimes start questions in company, with seeming unconcern, in order to know what act of suicide was easiest, and which was attended with the smallest pain. When tired with exercise, she generally retired to meditation, and she became habituated to early hours of sleep and rest. But when the weather prevented her usual exercise, and her sleep was thus more difficult, she made it a rule to rise from her bed, and walk about her chamber, till she began to find an inclination for repose.

This custom made it necessary for her to order a burning candle to be kept all night in her room. And the maid usually, when she withdrew, locked the chamber door, and pushing the key under it beyond reach, her mistress by that constant method lay undisturbed till seven o'clock in the morning, then she arose, unlocked the door, and rang the bell, as a signal for the maid to return.

This state of seeming piety, regularity, and prudence, continued for some time, till the gay, celebrated, toasted Miss Sylvia was sunk into an housekeeper to the gentleman, at whose house she lived. She was unable to keep company for want of

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the elegancies of dress, that are the usual passport among the polite, and she was too haughty to seem to want them. The fashionable, the amusing, and the polite in society now seldom visited her, and from being once the object of every eye, she was now deserted by all, and preyed upon by the bitter reflections of her own imprudence.

Mr Wood and part of his family, were gone to London. Miss Sylvia was left with the rest as a governess at Bath. She sometimes saw Mr Nash, and acknowledged the friendship of his admonitions, though she refused to accept any other marks of his generosity, than that of advice. Upon the close of the day, in which Mr Wood was expected to return from London, she expressed some uneasiness at the disappointment of not seeing him, took particular care to settle the affairs of his family, and then as usual sat down to meditation. She now cast a retrospect over her past misconduct, and her approaching misery, she saw, that even affluence gave her no real happiness, and from indigence she thought nothing could be hoped but lingering calamity. She at length conceived the fatal resolution of leaving a life, in which she could see no corner for comfort, and terminating a scene of imprudence in suicide.

Thus resolved, she sat down at her dining-room window, and with cool intrepidity, wrote the following elegant lines on one of the panes of the window.

O death, thou pleasing end of human woe
Thou cure for life! Thou greatest good below!
Still may'st thou fly the coward, and the slave,
And thy soft slumbers only bless the brave.

She then went into company with the most cheerful serenity; talked of indifferent subjects till supper, which she ordered to be got ready in a little library belonging to the family. There she spent the remaining hours, preceding bed-time, in dandling two of Mr Wood's children on her knees. In retiring from thence to her chamber she went into the nursery, to take her leave of another child, as it lay sleeping in the cradle. Struck with the innocence of the little babe's looks, and the consciousness of her meditated guilt, she could not avoid bursting into tears, and hugging it in her arms; she then bid her old servant a good night, for the first time she had ever done so, and went to bed as usual.

It is probable she soon quitted her bed, and was seized with an alternation of passions, before she yielded to the impulse of despair. She dressed herself in clean linen, and white garments of every kind, like a bridesmaid. Her gown was pinned over her breast, just as a nurse pins the swaddling clothes of an infant. A pink silk girdle was the instrument with which she resolved to terminate her misery, and this was lengthened by another made of gold thread. The end of the former was tied with a noose, and the latter with three knots, at a small distance from one another.

Thus prepared, she sat down again, and read, for she left the book open at that place, in the story of Olympia, in the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto, where, by the perfidy and ingratitude of her bosom friend, she was ruined, and left to the mercy of an unpitiful world. This tragical event gave her fresh spirits to go through her fatal purpose; so standing upon a stool, and flinging the girdle, which was tied round her neck, over a closet-door that opened into her chamber, she remained suspended. Her

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weight however broke the girdle, and the poor despairer fell upon the floor with such violence, that her fall awakened a workman that lay in the house about half an hour after two o'clock.

Recovering herself, she began to walk about the room, as her usual custom was when she wanted sleep; and the workman imagining it to be only some ordinary accident, again went to sleep. She once more, therefore, had recourse to a stronger girdle made of silver thread; and this kept her suspended till she died.

Her old maid continued in the morning to wait as usual for the ringing of the bell, and protracted her patience, hour after hour, till two o'clock in the afternoon; when the workmen at length entering the room through the window, found their unfortunate mistress still hanging, and quite cold. The coroner's jury being empanelled, brought in their verdict lunacy, and her corpse was next night decently buried in her father's grave, at the charge of a female companion, with whom she had for many years an inseparable intimacy.

Thus ended a female wit, a toast, and a gamester, loved, admired, and forsaken. Formed for the delight of society, fallen by imprudence into an object of pity. Hundreds in high life lamented her fate, and wished, when too late, to redress her injuries. They who once had helped to impair her fortune, now regretted that they had assisted in so mean a pursuit. The little effects she had left behind were bought up with the greatest avidity, by those who desired to preserve some token of a companion, that once had given them such delight. The remembrance of every virtue she was possessed of was now improved by pity. Her former follies were few, but the last swelled them to a large amount. As the remains the strongest instance to posterity, that want of prudence alone, almost cancels every other virtue.

In all this unfortunate lady's affairs Mr Nash took a peculiar concern, he directed her when they played, advised her when she deviated from the rules of caution, and performed the last offices of friendship after her decease, by raising the auction of her little effects.

But he was not only the assistant and the friend of the fair sex, but also their defender. He secured their persons from insult, and their reputations from scandal. Nothing offended him more, than a young fellow's pretending to receive favours from ladies he probably never saw; nothing pleased him so much, as seeing such a piece of deliberate mischief punished. Mr Nash and one of his friends, being newly arrived at Tunbridge from Bath, were one day on the walks, and seeing a young fellow of fortune, with whom they had some slight acquaintance, joined him. After the usual chat and news of the was day over, Mr Nash asked him, how long he had been at the wells, and what company was there? The other replied, he had been at Tunbridge a month, but as for company, he could find as good at a Tyburn ball. Not a soul was to be seen, except a parcel of gamesters and whores, who would grant the last favour, for a single stake at the Pharaoh bank. "Look you there," continued he, "that Goddess of midnight, so fine, at t'other end of the walks, by Jove, she was mine this morning for half a guinea. And she there, who brings up the rear with powdered hair and dirty ruffles, she's pretty enough, but cheap, perfectly cheap, why, my boys, to my own knowledge, you may have her for a crown, and a dish of chocolate into the bargain. Last Wednesday night we were happy." Hold there, sir, cried the gentleman, as for

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your having the first lady, it is possible it may be true, and I intend to ask her about it, for she is my sister, but as to your lying with the other last Wednesday, I am sure you are a lying rascal -- she is my wife, and we came here but last night." The Buck vainly asked pardon, the gentleman was going to give him proper chastisement, when Mr Nash interposed on his behalf, and obtained his pardon, upon condition that he quitted Tunbridge immediately

But Mr Nash not only took care, during his administration, to protect the ladies from the insults of sex, but to guard them from the slanders of each other. He, in the first place, prevented any animosities that might arise from place and precedence, by being previously acquainted with the rank and quality of almost every family in the British dominions. He endeavoured to render scandal odious, by marking it as the result of envy and folly united. Not even Solon could have enacted a wiser law in such a society as Bath. The gay, the heedless, and the idle, which mostly compose the group of water-drinkers, seldom are at the pains of talking upon universal topics, which require comprehensive thought, or abstract reasoning. The adventures of the little circle of their own acquaintance, or of some names of quality and fashion, make up their whole conversation. But it is too likely, that when we mention those, we wish to depress them, in order to render ourselves more conspicuous, scandal must therefore have fixed her throne at Bath, preferable to any other part of the kingdom. However, though these endeavours could not totally suppress this custom among the fair, yet they gained him the friendship of several ladies of distinction, who had smarted pretty severely under the lash of censure. Among this number was the old duchess of Marlborough, who conceived a particular friendship for him, and which continued during her life. She frequently consulted him in several concerns of a private nature. Her letting leases, building bridges, or forming canals, were often carried on under his guidance, but she advised with him particularly in purchasing liveries for the footmen, a business to which the thought his genius best adapted. As any thing relative to her may please the curiosity of such as delight in the anecdotes and letters of the great, however dull and insipid, I shall beg leave to present them with one or two of her letters, collected at a venture from several others to the same purpose.

To Mr Nash, at the Bath
Blenheim, Sept 18, 1728

Mr Jennens will give you an account how little time I have in my power, and that will make my excuse for not thanking you sooner for the favour of your letter, and for the trouble you have given yourself in bespeaking the cloth, which I am sure will be good, since you have undertaken to order it. Pray ask Mrs Jennens concerning the cascade, which will satisfy all your doubts in that matter, she saw it play, which it will do in great beauty, for at least six hours together, and it runs enough to cover all the stones constantly, and is a hundred feet broad, which I am told is a much greater breadth than any cascade is in England, and this will be yet better than it is, when it is quite finished; this water is a great addition to this place, and the lake being thirty acres, out of which the cascade comes and falls into the canal that goes through the bridge, it makes that look as if it was necessary, which before seemed so otherwise.

I am
Your most humble Servant,
S. MARLBOROUGH

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To Mr Nash, at the Bath.

Marlborough house, May 17, 1735.

SIR,

I have received the favour of yours of the tenth of May, with that from Mr Harvey. And by last post I received a letter from Mr Overton, a sort of a bailiff and a surveyor, whom I have employed a great while upon my estates in Wiltshire. He is a very active and very useful man of his sort. He writes to me, that Mr Harvey has been with him, and brought him a paper, which I sent you. He says, that finding he was a man that was desirous to serve me, he had assisted him all he could, by informations which he has given, and that he should continue to assist him. I have writ to him that he did mighty well. There is likewise a considerable tenant of my lord Bruce's, his name is Cannons, who has promised me his assistance towards recommending tenants for these farms. And if Mr Harvey, happens to know such a man, he may put him in mind of it. I am sure you do me all the good you can And I hope you are sure that I shall always be sensible of the obligations I have to you, and ever be

Your most thankful and obliged

humble Servant,

S. MARLBOROUGH.

[PS] Mr Harvey may conclude to take any prices that were given you in the paper. But as I know that we have been scandalously cheated, if he finds that any thing can be let better than it has been let, I do not doubt but he will do it.

The duchess of Marlborough seems not to be a much better writer than Mr Nash, but she was worth many hundred thousand pounds, and that might console her. It may give splenetic philosophy, however, some scope for meditation, when it considers, what a parcel of stupid trifles the world is ready to admire.

Whatever might have been Mr Nash's other excellencies, there was one in which few exceeded him, I mean his extensive humanity. None felt pity more strongly, and none made greater efforts to relieve distress. If I were to name any reigning and fashionable virtue in the present age, I think it should be charity. The numberless benefactions privately given, the various public solicitations for charity, and the success they meet with, serve to prove, that though we may fall short of our ancestors in other respects, yet in this instance we greatly excel them. I know not whether it may not be spreading the influence of Mr Nash too widely to say, that he was one of the principal causes of introducing this noble emulation among the rich, but certain it is, no private man ever relieved the distresses of so many as he did.

Before gaming was suppressed, and in the meridian of his life and fortune, his benefactions were generally found to equal his other expenses. The money he got without pain, he gave away without reluctance, and whenever unable to relieve a wretch, who sued for assistance, he has been often seen to shed tears. A gentleman of broken fortune, one day standing behind his chair, as he was playing a game of picquet for two hundred pounds, and observing with what indifference he won the money, could not avoid whispering these words to another who stood by; "Heavens! how happy would all that money make me!" Nash, overhearing him, clapped the money into his hand, and cried, "go and be happy."

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About six and thirty years ago, a clergyman brought his family to Bath for the benefit of the waters. His wife laboured under a lingering disorder, which it was thought nothing but the Hot Wells could remove. The expenses of living there soon lessened the poor man's finances, his clothes were sold, piece by piece, to provide a temporary relief for his little family, and his appearance was at last so shabby, that, from the number of holes in his coat and stockings, Nash gave him the name of doctor Colander. Our beau, it seems, was rude enough to make a jest of poverty, though he had sensibility enough to relieve it. The poor clergyman combated his distresses with fortitude; and, instead of attempting to solicit relief, endeavoured to conceal them. Upon a living of thirty pounds a year, he endeavoured to maintain his wife and six children, but all his resources at last failed him, and nothing but famine was seen in the wretched family. The poor man's circumstances were at last communicated to Nash, who, with his usual cheerfulness, undertook to relieve him. On a Sunday evening, at a public tea-drinking at Harrison's, he went about to collect a subscription, and began it himself, by giving five guineas. By this means, two hundred guineas were collected in less than two hours, and the poor family raised from the lowest despondence into affluence and felicity. A bounty so unexpected had a better influence even upon the woman's constitution, than all that either the physicians or the waters of Bath could produce, and she recovered. But his good offices did not rest here. He prevailed upon a nobleman of his acquaintance, to present the Doctor with a living of an hundred and sixty pounds a year, which made that happiness, he had before produced, in some measure permanent.

In the severe winter, which happened in the year 1739, his charity was great, useful, and extensive. He frequently, at that season of calamity, entered the houses of the poor, whom he thought too proud to beg, and generously relieved them. The colliers were at this time peculiarly distressed, and, in order to excite compassion, a number of them yoked themselves to a wagon loaded with coals, and drew it into Bath, and presented it to Mr Nash. Their scheme had the proper effect. Mr Nash procured them a subscription, and gave ten guineas towards it himself. The weavers also shared his bounty at that season. They came begging in a body into Bath, and he provided a plentiful dinner for their entertainment, and gave each a week's subsistence at going away.

There are few public charities to which he was not a subscriber, and many he principally contributed to support. Among others, Mr Annesley, that strange example of the mutability of fortune, and the inefficacy of our laws, shared his interest and bounty. I have now before me a well written letter, addressed to Mr Nash, in order to obtain his interest for that unhappy gentleman, it comes from Mr Henderson, a Quaker, who was Mr Annesley's father's agent. This gentleman warmly espoused the young adventurer's interest, and, I am told, fell with him.

London, October 23, 1756

My Good friend,

WHEN I had the honour of conversing with thee at Tunbridge, in September last, concerning that most singular striking case of Mr Annesley, whom I have known since he was about six years old, I being then employed by the late Lord Baron of Altham, his father, as his agent. From what I know of the affairs of that family, I am well assured, that Mr Annesley is the legitimate son of the late Lord Baron of Altham, and, in consequence thereof, is entitled to the honours and estates of Anglesey. Were

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I not well assured of his right to those honours and estates, I would not give countenance to his claim.-- I well remember, that thou then madest me a promise to assist him in soliciting a subscription, that was then begun at Tunbridge, but, as that place was not within the limits of thy province, thou couldest not promise to do much there. But thou saidst, that in case he would go to Bath in the season, thou wouldest then and there show how much thou wouldest be his friend.

And now, my good friend, as the season is come on, and Mr Annesley now at Bath, I beg leave to remind thee of that promise, and that thou wilt keep in full view the honour, the everlasting honour, that will naturally redound to thee from thy benevolence, and crown all the good actions of thy life -- I say, now in the vale of life, to relieve a distressed young nobleman, to extricate so immense an estate, from the hands of oppression; to do this, will fix such a ray of glory on thy memory, as will speak forth thy praise to future ages -- This with great respect is the needful,

from thy assured Friend,

WILLIAM HENDERSON.

[PS]Be pleased to give my respects to Mr Annesley and his spouse.

Mr Nash punctually kept his word with this gentleman; he began the subscription himself with the utmost liberality, and procured such a list of encouragers, as at once did honour to Mr Annesley's cause, and their own generosity. What a pity it was, that this money, which was given for the relief of indigence only, went to feed a set of reptiles, who batten upon our weakness, miseries, and vice.

It may not be known to the generality of my readers, that the last act of the comedy, called *Æesop*, which was added to the French plot of *Boursault*, by Mr Vanburgh, was taken from a story told of Mr Nash, upon a similar occasion. He had in the early part of life made proposals of marriage to Miss V---, of D---; his affluence at that time, and the favour which he was in with the nobility, readily induced the young lady's father to favour his addresses. However, upon opening the affair to herself, she candidly told him, her affections were placed upon another, and that she could not possibly comply. Though this answer satisfied Mr Nash, it was by no means sufficient to appease the father; and he peremptorily insisted upon her obedience. Things were carried to the last extremity, when Mr Nash undertook to settle the affair, and desiring his favoured rival to be sent for, with his own hand presented his mistress to him, together with a fortune equal to what her father intended to give her. Such an uncommon instance of generosity had an instant effect upon the severe parent; he considered such disinterestedness as a just reproach to his own mercenary disposition, and took his daughter once more into favour. I wish, for the dignity of history, that the sequel could be concealed, but the young lady ran away with her footman, before half a year was expired, and her husband died of grief.

In general, the benefactions of a generous man are but ill bestowed. His heart seldom gives him leave to examine the real distress of the object which sues for pity, his good-nature takes the alarm too soon, and he bestows his fortune on only apparent wretchedness. The man naturally frugal, on the other hand, seldom relieves, but when he does, his reason, and not his sensations, generally find out the object. Every instance of his bounty is therefore permanent, and bears witness to his benevolence.

Of all the immense sums which Nash lavished upon real or apparent wretchedness, the effects, after a few years, seemed to disappear. His money was

generally given to support immediate want, or to relieve improvident indolence, and therefore it vanished in an hour. Perhaps towards the close of life, were he to look round on the thousands he had relieved, he would find but few made happy, or fixed by his bounty in a state of thriving industry, it was enough for him, that he gave to those that wanted; he never considered, that charity to some might impoverish himself without relieving them, he seldom considered the merit or the industry of the petitioner; or he rather fancied, that misery was an excuse for indolence and guilt. It was an usual saying of his, when he went to beg for any person in distress, that they who could stoop to the meanness of solicitation, must certainly want the favour for which they petitioned.

In this manner therefore he gave away immense sums of his own, and still greater, which he procured from others. His way was, when any person was proposed to him as an object of charity, to go round with his hat, first among the nobility, according to their rank, and so on, till he left scarce a single person unsolicited. They who go thus about to beg for others, generally find a pleasure in the task. They consider, in some measure, every benefaction they procure, as given by themselves, and have at once the pleasure of being liberal, without the self-reproach of being profuse.

But of all the instances of Mr Nash's bounty, none does him more real honour, than the pains he took in establishing an hospital at Bath, in which benefaction,, however, Doctor Oliver had a great share. This was one of those well guided charities, dictated by reason, and supported by prudence. By this institution the diseased poor might recover health, when incapable of receiving it in any other part of the kingdom. As the disorders of the poor, who could expect to find relief at Bath, were mostly chronic, the expense of maintaining them there was found more than their parishes thought proper to afford. They therefore chose to support them in a continual State of infirmity, by a small allowance at home, rather than be at the charge of an expensive cure. An hospital therefore at Bath it was thought would be an asylum, and a place of relief to those disabled creatures, and would, at the same time, give the physician more thorough insight into the efficacy of the waters, from the regularity with which such patients would be obliged to take them. These inducements therefore influenced Doctor Oliver, and Mr Nash, to promote a subscription towards such a benefaction. The design was set on foot so early as the year 1711, but not completed till the year 1742. This delay, which seems surprising, was in fact owing to the want of a proper fund for carrying the work into execution. What I said above, of charity being the characteristic virtue of the present age, will be more fully evinced, by comparing the old and new subscriptions for this hospital. These will show the difference between ancient and modern benevolence. When I run my eye over the list of those who subscribed in the year 1723, I find the subscription in general seldom rise above a guinea each person, so that, at that time, with all their efforts, they were unable to raise four hundred pounds, but in about twenty years after, each particular subscription was greatly increased, ten, twenty, thirty pounds, being the most ordinary sums subscribed, and they soon raised above two thousand pounds for the purpose.

Thus chiefly by the means of Doctor Oliver and Mr Nash, but not without the assistance of the good Mr Allen, who gave them the stone for building and other benefactions, this hospital was erected, and it is at present fitted up for the reception

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of patients, the cases most paralytic or leprous. The following conditions are observed previous to admittance:

I. The case of the patient must be described by some physician, or person of skill, in the neighbourhood of the place where the patient has resided for some time, and this description, together with a certificate of the poverty of the patient, attested by some persons of credit, must be sent in a letter post-paid, directed to the register of the General Hospital at Bath.

II. After the patient's case has been thus described, and sent, he must remain in his usual place of residence 'till he has notice of a vacancy, signified by a letter from the register.

III. Upon the receipt of such a letter, the patient must set forward for Bath, bringing with him this letter, the parish certificate duly executed, and allowed by two justices, and three pounds caution-money, if from any part of England or Wales, but if the patient comes from Scotland or Ireland, then the caution-money, to be deposited before admission, is the sum of five pounds.

IV. Soldiers may, instead of parish certificates, bring a certificate from their commanding officers, signifying to what corps they belong, and that they shall be received into the same corps, when discharged from the Hospital, in whatever condition they are. But it is necessary, that their cases be described, and sent previously, and that they bring with them three pounds caution-money.

Note, The intention of the caution-money is to defray the expenses of returning the patients after they are discharged from the Hospital, or of their burial in case they die there. The remainder of the caution-money, after these expenses are defrayed, will be returned to the person who made the deposit."

I am unwilling to leave this subject of his benevolence, because it is a virtue in his character, which must stand almost single against an hundred follies; and it deserves the more to be insisted on, because it was large enough to outweigh them all. A man may be an hypocrite safely in every other instance, but in charity; there are few who will buy the character of benevolence at the rate for which it must be acquired. In than, the sums he gave away were immense; and, in old age, when at last grown too poor to give relief, he gave, as the poet has it, all he had, a tear; when incapable of relieving the agonies of the wretched, he attempted to relieve his own by a flood of sorrow.

The sums he gave, and collected for the hospital, were great, and his manner of doing it was no less admirable. I am told that he was once collecting money in Wiltshire's room for that purpose, when a lady entered who is more remarkable for her wit than her charity, and not being able to pass by him unobserved, she gave him a pat with her fan, and said, "you must put down a trifle for me, Nash, for I have no money in my pocket." "Yes, madam," says he, "that I will with pleasure, if your grace will tell me when to stop." Then taking an handful of guineas out of his pocket, he began to tell them into his white hat, one, two, three, four, five. "Hold, hold, says the duchess, consider what you are about." "Consider your rank and fortune, madam," says Nash, and continued telling, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. Here the duchess called

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again, and seemed angry. "Pray compose yourself, madam," cried Nash, "and don't interrupt the work of charity, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen." Here the duchess stormed, and caught hold of his hand. "Peace, madam," says Nash; "you shall have your name written in letters of gold, madam, and upon the front of the building, madam. Sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty." "I won't pay a farthing more," says the duchess. "Charity hides a multitude of sins," replies Nash. "Twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four, twenty-five." "Nash," says she, "I protest you frighten me out of my wits, L-d, I shall die!" "Madam, you will never die with doing good, and if you do, it will be the better for you," answered Nash, and was about to proceed; but perceiving her grace had lost all patience, a parley ensued, when he, after much altercation, agreed to stop his hand, and compound with her grace for thirty guineas. The duchess, however, seemed displeas'd the whole evening; and when he came to the table where she was playing, bid him "stand farther, an ugly devil, for she hated the sight of him."

But her grace afterwards, having a run of good luck, called Nash to her. "Come, says she, I will be friends with you, though you are a fool, and to let you see I am not angry, there is ten guineas more for your charity. But this I insist on, that neither my name, nor the sum, shall be mentioned."

From the hospital erected for the benefit of the poor, it is an easy transition to the monuments erected by him in honour of the great. Upon the recovery of the Prince of Orange, by drinking the Bath waters, Mr Nash caused a small obelisk, thirty feet high, to be erected in a grove near the Abbey church, since called Orange Grove. This Prince's arms adorn the west side of the body of the pedestal. The inscription is on the opposite side, in the following words:

*In memoriam
Sanitatis
Principi Auriaco
Aquarum thermalium potu.
Favente Deo,
Ovante Britannia,
Feliciter restitutæ,
M. DCC. XXXIV.*

In English thus.

In memory
Of the happy restoration
Of the health of the
Prince of Orange,
Through the favour of God,
And to the great joy of Britain,

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By drinking the Bath waters.
1734.

I find it a general custom, at all Baths and Spas, to erect monuments of this kind to the memory of every Prince, who has received benefit from the waters. Aix, Spa, and Pisa, abound with inscriptions of this nature, apparently doing honour to the Prince, but in reality celebrating the efficacy of their springs. It is wrong, therefore, to call such monuments instances of gratitude, though they may wear that appearance

In the year 1738, the Prince of Wales came to Bath, who presented Mr Nash with a large gold enamelled snuff-box; and upon his departure, Nash, as king of Bath, erected an obelisk in honour of this Prince, as he had before done for the Prince of Orange. This handsome memorial in honour of that good-natured Prince is erected in Queen Square. It is enclosed with a stone balustrade, and in the middle of every side there are large iron gates. In the centre is the obelisk, seventy feet high, and terminating in a point. The expenses of this were eighty pounds; and Mr Nash was determined, that the inscription should answer the magnificence of the pile. With this view he wrote to Mr Pope, at London, requesting an inscription. I should have been glad to have given Mr Nash's letter upon this occasion; the reader, however, must be satisfied with Pope's reply; which is as follows.

SIR,

I Have received yours, and thank your partiality in my favour. You say words cannot express the gratitude you feel for the favour of his R H. and yet you would have me express what you feel, and in a few words I own myself unequal to the task; for even granting it possible to express an inexpressible idea, I am the worst person you could have pitched upon for this purpose, who have received so few favours from the great myself, that I am utterly unacquainted with what kind of thanks they like best. Whether the P--- most loves poetry or prose, I protest I do not know, but this I dare venture to affirm, that you can give him as much satisfaction in either as I can.

I am,

Sir,

Your affectionate Servant,

A. POPE.

What Mr Nash's answer to this billet was, I cannot take upon me to ascertain, but it was probably a perseverance in his former request. The following is the copy of Mr Pope's reply to his second letter.

SIR,

I Had sooner answered yours, but in the hope of procuring a properer hand than mine; and then in consulting with some, whose office about the P--- might make them the best judges, what sort of inscription to set up. Nothing can be plainer than the inclosed, it is nearly the common sense of the thing, and I do not know how to flourish upon it. But this you would do as well, or better yourself, and I dare say may mend the expression. I am truly,

Your affectionate Servant,

A. POPE.

I think I need not tell you my name should not be mentioned.

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Such a letter as this was what might naturally be expected from Mr Pope. Notwithstanding the seeming modesty towards the conclusion, the vanity of an applauded writer bursts through every line of it. The difficulty of concealing his hand from the clerks at the Post-office, and the solicitude to have his name concealed, were marks of the consciousness of his own importance. It is probable, his hand was not so very well known, nor his letters so eagerly opened by the clerks of the Office, as he seems always to think. But in all his letters, as well as those of Swift, there runs a strain of pride, as if the world talked of nothing but themselves. "Alas," says he, in one of them, "the day after I am dead, the sun will flare as bright as the day before, and the world will be as merry as usual!" Very strange, that neither an eclipse nor an earthquake should follow the loss of a poet!

The inscription referred in this letter, was the same which was afterwards engraved on the obelisk, and is as follows.

In memory of honours bestow'd,
And in gratitude for benefits conferred in
this city,
By his Royal Highness
Frederick, Prince of Wales,
And his Royal Consort,
In the Year 1738
This obelisk is erected by
Richard Nash, Esq.

I dare venture to say, there was scarce a common-council-man in the corporation of Bath, but could have done this as well. Nothing can be more frigid; though the subject was worthy of the utmost exertions of Genius.

About this period every season brought some new accession of honour to Mr Nash, and the corporation now universally found, that he was absolutely necessary for promoting the welfare of the city, so that this year seems to have been the meridian of his glory. About this time he arrived at such a pitch of authority, that I really believe Alexander was not greater at Persepolis. The countenance he received from the Prince of Orange, the favour he was in with the Prince of Wales, and the caresses of the nobility, all conspired to lift him to the utmost pitch of vanity. The exultation of a little mind, upon being admitted to the familiarity of the Great is inexpressible. The prince of Orange had made him a present of a very fine snuff-box. Upon this some of the nobility thought it would be proper to give snuff-boxes too, they were quickly imitated by the middling gentry, and it soon became the fashion to give Mr Nash snuff-boxes, who had in a little time a number sufficient to have furnished a good toy-shop.

To add to his honours, there was placed a full length picture of him, in Wiltshire's-Ball-room, between the busts of Newton and Pope. It was upon this occasion that the Earl of Chesterfield wrote the following severe but witty epigram.

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Immortal Newton never spoke
More truth than here you'll find;
Nor Pope himself e'er penned a joke
Severer on mankind.

This picture placed these busts between,
Gives satire its full strength,
Wisdom and wit are little seen,
But Folly at full length.

There is also a full length picture of Mr Nash in Simpson's Ball-room, and his Statue at full length in the Pump-room, with a plan of the Bath Hospital in his hand. He was now treated in every respect like a great man, he had his levee, his flatterers, his buffoons, his good-natured creatures, and even his dedicators. A trifling ill-supported vanity was his foible, and while he received the homage of the vulgar, and enjoyed the familiarity of the great, he felt no pain for the unpromising view of poverty that lay before him, he enjoyed the world as it went, and drew upon content for the deficiencies of fortune. If a cringing wretch called him his Honour, he was pleased, internally conscious, that he had the justest pretensions to the title. If a beggar called him my Lord, he was happy, and generally sent the flatterer off happy too. I have known him, in London, waste a whole day at a window in the Smyrna coffee-house, in order to receive a bow from the Prince, or the Duchess of Marlborough, as they passed by where he was standing, and he would then look round upon the company for admiration and respect.

But perhaps the reader desires to know, who could be low enough to flatter a man, who himself lived some measure by dependence. Hundreds are ready upon those occasions. The very needy are almost ever flatterers. A man in wretched circumstances forgets his own value, and feels no pain in giving up superiority to every claimant. The very vain are ever flatterers, as they find it necessary to make use of all their arts, to keep company with such as are superior to themselves. But particularly the prodigal are prone to adulation, in order to open new supplies for their extravagance. The poor, the vain, and extravagant, are chiefly addicted to this vice; and such hung upon his good nature. When these three characters are found united in one person, the composition generally becomes a great man's favourite. It was not difficult to collect such a group in a city, that was the centre of pleasure. Nash had them of all sizes, from the half pay captain in laced clothes, to the humble boot-catcher at the Bear.

I have before me a bundle of letters, all addressed from a pack of flattering reptiles, to *his Honour*, and even some printed dedications, in the same servile strain. In these *his Honour* is complimented as the great encourager of the polite arts, as a gentleman of the most accomplished taste, of the most extensive learning, and in short of every thing in the world. But perhaps it will be thought wrong in me, to unveil the blushing muse, to brand learning with the meanness of its professors, or to expose scholars in a state of contempt -- For the honour of letters, the dedications to Mr Nash are not written by scholars or poets, but by people of a different stamp.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Among this number was the highwayman, who was taken after attempting to rob and murder Doctor Hancock. He was called Poulter, alias Baxter, and published a book, exposing the tricks of gamblers, thieves and pick-pockets. This he intended to have dedicated to Mr Nash, but the generous patron, though no man loved praise more, was too modest to have it printed. However, he took care to preserve the manuscript, among the rest of his papers. The book was entitled, "The discoveries of John Poulter, alias Baxter, who was apprehended for robbing Doctor Hancock, of Salisbury, on Claverton Down near Bath, and who has since been admitted king's evidence, and discovered a most numerous gang of villains. Being a full account of all the robberies he committed, and the surprising tricks and frauds he has practised for the space of five years last past, in different parts of England, particularly in the West. Written wholly by himself." The dedication intended to be prefixed is as follows, and will give a specimen of the stile of an highwayman and a gambler.

To the Honourable Richard Nash, Esq,
May it please your Honour,

WITH humblest submission, I make bold to present the following sheets to your Honour's consideration, and well known humanity. As I am industriously careful, in respect to his Majesty, and good subjects, to put an end to the unfortunate misconducts of all I know, by bringing them to the gallows. To be sure some may censure, as if from self-preservation I made this ample discovery, but I communicate this to your Honour and gentry, whether the life of one person being taken away, would answer the end, as to let escape such a number of villains who has been the ruining of many a poor family, for whom my soul is now much concerned. If my inclinations was ever so inclined, what is it to so great a number of villains, when they consult together. As your Honour's wisdom, humanity, and interest are the friend of the virtuous, I make bold to lay, at your Honour's feet, the following; lines, which will put every honest man upon his defence against the snares of the mischievous, and am, with the greatest gratitude, honoured Sir,

Your Honour's
Most truly devoted and obedient Servant,
John Poulter, alias Baxter.
Taunton Gaoal,
June 24th

Flattery from such a wretch as this, one would think but little pleasing, however, certain it is, that Nash was pleased with it; he loved to be called your Honour: and Honourable, and the highwayman more than once experienced his generosity.

But since I have mentioned this fellow's book, I cannot repress an impulse to give an extract from it, however foreign from my subject. I take the following picture to be a perfectly humorous description of artful knavery affecting ignorance on one hand, and rustic simplicity pretending to great wisdom and sagacity on the other. It is an account of the manner in which countrymen are deceived by gamblers, at a game called Pricking in the Belt, or the Old Nob. This is a leathern strop, folded up double, and then laid upon a table; if the person who plays with a bodkin pricks into the loop of the belt he wins; if otherwise, he loses. However, by slipping one end of the strop, the sharper can win with pleasure.

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"THERE are generally four persons concerned in this fraud, one to personate a Sailor, called a Legg Cull, another called the Capper, who always keeps with the Sailor, and two pickers up, or Money-Droppers, to bring in Flats or Bubbles. The first thing they do at a fair, is to look for a room clear of company, which the Sailor and Capper immediately take, while the Money-Droppers go out to look for a Flat. If they see a country-man, whose looks they like, one drops a shilling, or half a crown, full before him, and picking it up again, looks the man in the face, and says, 'I have found a piece of money, friend, did you see me pick it up.' The man says, 'Yes;' Then says the sharper, 'If you had found it, I would have had half, so I will do as I would be done unto, come, honest friend, We will not part with dry lips.' Then taking him into the room where the other two are, he cries, 'By your leave gentlemen, I hope we don't disturb the company.' 'No,' cries the Sailor, 'No, brothers, Will you drink a glass of brandy, I don't like your weak liquors,' and then begins a discourse, by asking the Capper how far it is to London, who replies, 'I don't know, perhaps the gentleman there can tell you,' directing his discourse to the Flat; perhaps the Flat will answer, 'a hundred miles,' the Sailor cries, 'I can ride that in a day, ay, in four or five hours, for, says he, my horse will run twenty knots an hour for twenty-four hours together;' Capper, or the Sailor's supposed companion, says, 'I believe, Farmer you have not got such a horse as the Sailor has,' the Farmer cries 'No,' and laughs, and then the Sailor says, 'I must go and get half a pint of brandy, for I am griped,' and so leaves them. The Capper, affecting a look of wisdom in his absence observes, 'It is an old saying, and a true one, that sailors get their money like horses, and spend it like asses, as for that there sailor I never saw him till now, buying a horse of my man; he tells me he has been at sea, and has got about four hundred pounds prize-money, but I believe he will squander it all away, for he was gaming just now with a sharpening fellow, and lost forty shillings, at a single game of pricking in a string. Did either of you ever see it, gentlemen?' continued the Capper, 'if you two are willing, I will ask him to show it, for we may as well win some of his money as any body else.' The Flat and the Dropper cry, 'Do.' Then in comes the Sailor, staggering as if drunk, and cries, 'What cheer, brothers? I hate just seen a pretty girl in the fair, and went in to drink with her, we made a bargain, and I gave her a six and thirty shilling piece, but an old b---h her mother came and called her away, but I hope she will come back to me presently,' then the Capper laughs, and says, 'Have you got your money of her again?' The Sailor says, 'No; but she will come to me I'm sure,' then they all laugh. This is done to deceive the Flat; then says the Capper, 'What have you done with the stick and the string,' Sailor? he answers, 'What, that which I bought of the boys; I have got it here, but will not sell it,' and then he pulls out the Old Nobb, saying, 'What do you think I gave for it? I gave but six-pence, and as much brandy as the two boys could drink; it is made out of a monkey's hide, as the boys told me, and they told me, there is a game to be played at it, which no body can do twice together, I will go down aboard ship, and play with my Captain, and I do not fear but I shall win his ship and cargo:' then they all laugh, and the Sailor makes up the Old Nobb, and the Capper lays a shilling, and pricks himself and wins; the Sailor cries, 'You are a dab, I will not lay with you, but if you will call a stranger, I will lay again.' 'Why if you think me a dab, as you call it, I will get this strange gentleman, or this (pointing to the Flat).' 'Done,' cries the Sailor, 'but you shall not tell him,' then he makes up the Nob, and Capper lays a shilling, Flat pricks, being permitted to go six-pence; to which he agreeing, wins, and Capper says to the Flat, 'Can you change me half a crown?' This is done to find the depth of his pocket, if they see a good deal of gold, Flat must win three or four times, if no gold, but twice. Sometimes, if the Flat has no money, the Sailor cries, 'I have

more money than any man in the fair,' and pulls out his purse of gold, and saith, 'Not one of you can beg, borrow or steal half this sum in an hour for a guinea.' Capper cries, 'I have laid out all mine.' Farmer: 'Can you? I'll go your halves, if you think you can do it.' The Sailor saith, 'You must not bring any body with you;' then the Dropper goes with the Flat, and saith, 'you must not tell your friend it is for a wager, if you do, he will not lend it you.' Flat goes and borrows it, and brings it to the Sailor, shows it him, and wins the wager, then the Sailor pinches the Nob again, and the Capper whispers to the Flat, to prick out purposely this time, saying, 'It will make the Sailor more eager to lay on, we may as well win his money as not, for he will spend it upon whores.' Flat, with all the wisdom in the world, loses on purpose, upon which the Sailor swears, pulls out all his money, throws it about the room, and cries, I know no man can win for ever, and then lays a guinea, but will not let him prick, but throws down five guineas, and the Capper urging the Flat, and going his halves, the Sailor saith, 'My cabin boy will lay as much as that, I'll lay no less than twenty guineas;' the Capper cries, 'lay Farmer and take up forty;' which, being certain of winning, he instantly complies with, and loses the whole. When he has lost, in order to advise him, the Dropper takes him by the arm, and hauls him out of doors and the reckoning being in the mean time paid within, the Capper and Sailor follow after, and run another way. When they are out of sight, the Dropper saith to the Flat, 'Go you back, and play with the Sailor for a shilling, whilst I go and borrow money' but when the Flat goes to the house, he finds them gone, and then he knows that he is bit, but not till he has dearly paid for it."

By this fellow's discoveries Mr Nash was enabled to serve many of the nobility and gentry of his acquaintance, he received a list of all those houses of ill fame which harboured or assisted rogues, and took care to furnish travellers with proper precautions to avoid them. It was odd enough to see a gamester thus employed, in detecting the frauds of gamblers.

Among the Dedications, there is one from a Professor of Cookery, which is more adulatory than the preceding. It is prefixed to a work, entitled, "The complete preserver, or a new method of preserving fruits, flowers, and other vegetables, either with or without sugar, vinegar or spirits, &c."

To the very Honourable Richard Nash, Esq,
Honoured SIR,

So much as the oak exceeds the bramble, so much do you exceed the rest of mankind, in benevolence, charity, and every other virtue that adorns, ennobles, and refines the human species. I have therefore made bold to prefix your name, though without permission, to the following work, which stands in need of such a patron, to excuse its errors, with a candour, only known to such an heart as your own, the obligations I have received at your hands, it is impossible for me ever to repay, except by my endeavours, as in the present case, to make known the many excellent virtues which you possess. But what can my wit do to recommend such a genius as yours, a single word, a smile from yourself, outweighs all that I, or perhaps the best of our poets could express in writing in the compass of a year. It would ill become my sex, to declare what power you have over us, but your generosity is, even in this instance, greater than your desire to oblige. The following sheets were drawn up at my hours

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of leisure, and may be serviceable to such of my sex, as are more willing to employ their time in laudable occupations, and domestic economy, than in dress and dissipation. What reception they may receive from your honour, I am incapable of telling, however, from your known candour and humanity, I expect the most favourable

I am, Honoured SIR,
Your most obedient,
and obliged humble Servant,
H. W.

A musician in his dedication still exceeds the other two in adulation. However, though the matter may be some impeachment on his sincerity, the manner in which it is written reflects no disgrace upon his understanding.

To Richard Nash, Esq;
SIR,

THE kind partiality of my friends prevailed with me to present to the world these my first attempts in musical composition, and the generous protection you have been pleased to afford me, makes it my indispensable duty to lay them at your feet. Indeed, to whom could I presume to offer them, but to the great encourager of all polite arts, for your generosity knows no bounds, nor are you more famed for that dignity of mind, which ennobles and gives a grace to every part of your conduct, than for that humanity and beneficence, which makes you the friend and benefactor of all mankind. To you, the poor and the rich, the diseased and the healthy, the aged and the young, owe every comfort, every conveniency, and every innocent amusement, that the best heart, the most skilful management, and the most accomplished taste can furnish. Even this age, so deeply practised in all the subtleties of refined pleasure, gives you this testimony: even this age, so ardently engaged in all the ways of the most unbounded charity, gives you this praise. Pardon me then, if, amidst the crowd of votaries, I make my humble offering, if I seize this first opportunity of publicly expressing the grateful sentiments of my own heart and profound respect, with which,

I am, SIR,
Your most obliged, most denoted,
and most obedient Servant,
J. G.

I fancy I have almost fatigued the reader, and I am almost fatigued myself, with the efforts of those elegant panegyrists; however, I can't finish this run of quotation, without giving a specimen of poetry, addressed to him upon a certain occasion, and all I shall say in its defence is, that those, who are pleased with the prose dedications, will not dislike the present attempt in poetry.

To Richard Nash, Esq,
On his sickness at Tunbridge.
SAY, must the friend of human kind,
Of most refin'd,-- of most diffusive mind;
Must Nash himself beneath these ailments grieve?
He felt for all -- He felt -- but to relieve,
To heal the sick -- the wounded to restore,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

And bid desponding nature mourn no more.
Thy quick'ning warmth, O let thy patron feel,
Improve thy springs with double power to heal
Quick, hither all inspiring health, repair,
And save the gay -- and wretched from despair,
Thou only Esra's drooping sons can'st cheer,
And stop the soft-ey'd virgin's trickling tear,
In murmurs who their monarch's pains deplore,
While sickness faints -- and pleasure is no more;
O let not death, with hasty strides advance,
Thou, mildest charity, avert the lance;
His threat'ning power, celestial maid! defeat,
Nor take him with thee, to thy well known seat,
Leave him on earth some longer date behind,
To bless,-- to polish,-- and relieve mankind.
Come then kind health, O quickly come away,
Bid Nash revive -- and all the world be gay.

Such addresses as these, were daily offered to our titular King. When in the meridian of power, scarce a morning paired, that did not increase the number of his humble admirers, and enlarge the sphere of his vanity.

The man, who is constantly served up with adulation, must be a first-rate philosopher, if he can listen without contracting new affectations. The opinion we form of ourselves, is generally measured by what we hear from others; and when they conspire to deceive, we too readily concur in the delusion. Among the number of much applauded men in the circle of our own friends, we can recollect but few that have heads quite strong enough to bear a loud acclamation of public praise in their favour, among the whole list, we shall scarce find one, that has not this been made, on some side of his character, a coxcomb.

When the best head turns and grows giddy with praise, is it to be wondered that poor Nash should be driven by it almost into a frenzy of affectation? Towards the close of life he became affected He chiefly laboured to be thought a sayer of good things, and by frequent attempts was now and then successful, for he ever lay upon the lurch.

There never perhaps was a more silly passion, than this desire of having a man's jests recorded. For this purpose, it is necessary to keep ignorant or ill-bred company, who are only fond of repeating such stories, in the next place, a person must tell his own jokes, in order to make them more universal, but what is worst of all, scarce a joke of this kind succeeds, but at the expense of a man's good nature, and he who exchanges the character of being thought agreeable, for that of being thought witty, makes but a very bad bargain.

The success Nash sometimes met with led him on, when late in life, to mistake his own character. He was really agreeable, but he chose to be thought a wit. He therefore indulged his inclination, and never mattered how rude he was, provided he was thought comical. He [may have got?] the applause he sought for, but often found enemies, where he least expected to find them. Of all the jests recorded of him, I scarce find one that is not marked with petulance, he said whatever came uppermost, and in the number of his remarks it might naturally be expected that some were worth repeating, he threw often, and sometimes had a lucky cast.

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In a life of almost ninety years, spent in the very point of public view, it is not strange, that five or six sprightly things of his have been collected, particularly as he took every opportunity of repeating them himself. His usual way, when he thought he said any thing clever, was to strengthen it with an oath, and to make up its want of sentiment by asseveration and grimace. For many years he thus entertained the company at the coffee-house with old stories, in which he always made himself the principal character. Strangers liked this well enough, but those who were used to his conversation found it insupportable. One story brought on another, and each came in the same order that it had the day preceding. But the custom may be rather ascribed to the peculiarity of age, than a peculiarity of character, it seldom happens, that old men allure, at least by novelty, age that shrivels the body contracts the understanding, instead of exploring new regions, they rest satisfied in the old, and walk around the circle of their former discoveries. His manner of telling a story, however, was not displeasing, but few of those he told are worth transcribing. Indeed it is the manner, which places the whole difference between the wit of the vulgar, and of those who assume the name of the polite, one has in general as much good sense as the other, a story transcribed from the one, will be as entertaining as that copied from the other, but in conversation, the manner will give charms even to stupidity. The following is the story which he most frequently told, and pretty much in these words. Suppose the company to be talking of a German war, or Elizabeth Canning, he would begin thus.

"I'll tell you something to that purpose that I fancy will make you laugh. A covetous old parson, as rich as the Devil, scraped a fresh acquaintance with me several years ago at Bath. I knew him when he and I were students at Oxford, where we both studied damnationly hard, but that's neither here nor there. Well. Very well. I entertained him at my house in John's Court. (No, my house in John's Court was not built then) but I entertained him with all that the city could afford, the rooms, the music, and every thing in the world. Upon his leaving Bath, he pressed me very hard to return the visit, and desired me to let him have the pleasure of seeing me at his house in Devonshire. About six months after, I happened to be in that neighbourhood, and was resolved to see my old friend, from whom I expected a very warm reception. Well: I knocks at his door, when an old queer creature of a maid, came to the door, and denied him. I suspected, however, that he was at home, and going into the parlour, what should I see, but the Parson's legs up the chimney, where he had thrust himself to avoid entertaining me. This was very well. "My dear, says I to the maid, it is very cold, extreme cold indeed, and I am afraid I have got a touch of my ague, light me the fire, if you please." "La, Sir," says the maid, who was a model creature to be sure, "the chimney smokes monstrously, you could not bear the room for three minutes together. By the greatest good luck there was a bundle of straw in the hearth, and I called for a candle. The candle came "Well, good woman", says I, "since you won't light me a fire, I'll light one for myself," and in a moment the straw was all in a blaze. This quickly unkenelled the old fox, there he stood in an old rusty night gown, blessing himself, and looking like -- a -- hem -- egad."

He used to tell surprising stories of his activity when young. "Here I stand, gentlemen, that could once leap forty two feet upon level ground, at three standing jumps, backward or forward. One, two, three, dart like an arrow out of a bow. But I am old now. I remember I once leaped for three hundred guineas with Count Klopstock, the great leaper, leaping-master to the Prince of Passau, you must all have heard of him. First he began with the running Jump, and a most damnable bounce it

was, that's certain. Every body concluded that he had the match hollow, when only taking off my hat, stripping off neither coat, shoes, nor stockings, mind me, I fetches a run, and went beyond him one foot, three inches and three quarters measured, upon my soul, by Captain Pately's own standard."

But in this torrent of insipidity, there sometimes were found very severe satire, strokes of true wit, and lines of humour, *cum fluereut lutulentus*, &c. He rallied very successfully, for he never felt another's joke; and drove home his own without pity. With his superiors he was familiar and blunt, the inferiority of his station secured him from their resentment, but the same bluntness which they laughed at, was by his equals regarded as insolence. Something like a familiar boot-catcher at an inn, a gentleman would bear that joke from him, for which a brother boot-catcher would knock him down.

Among other stories of Nash's telling, I remember one, which I the more cheerfully repeat, as it tends to correct a piece of impertinence that reigns in almost every country assembly. The principal inhabitants of a market-town, at a great distance from the capital, in order to encourage that harmony which ought to subsist in society, and to promote a mutual intercourse between the sexes, so desirable to both, and so necessary for all, had established a monthly assembly in the Town Hall, which was conducted with such decency, decorum, and politeness, that it drew the attention of the gentlemen and ladies in the neighbourhood, and a nobleman and his family continually honoured them with their presence. This naturally drew others, and in time the room was crowded with, what the world calls, good company, and the assembly prospered, till some of the new admitted ladies took it into their heads, that the tradesmen's daughters were unworthy of their notice, and therefore refused to join hands with them in the dance. This was complained of by the town ladies, and that complaint was resented by the country gentlemen, who, more pert than wise, publicly advertised, that they would not dance with tradesmen's daughters. This the most eminent tradesmen considered as an insult on themselves, and being men of worth, and able to live independently, they in return advertised that they would give no credit out of their town, and desired all others to discharge their accounts. A general uneasiness ensued, some writs were actually issued out, and much distress would have happened, had not my Lord, who sided with no party, kindly interfered and composed the difference. The assembly however was ruined, and the families I am told are not friends yet, though this affair happened thirty years ago.

Nothing debases human nature so much as pride -- This Nash knew, and endeavoured to stifle every emotion of it at Bath. When he observed any ladies so extremely delicate and proud of a pedigree, as to only touch the back of an inferior's hand in the dance, he always called to order, and desired them to leave the room, or behave with common decency, and when any Ladies and Gentlemen drew off, after they had gone down a dance, without standing up till the dance was finished, he made up to them, and after asking whether they had done dancing, told them, they should dance no more unless they stood up for the rest; and on these occasions he always was as good as his word.

Nash, though no great wit, had the art of sometimes saying rude things with decency, and rendering them pleasing by an uncommon turn.-- But most of the good things attributed to him, which have found their way into the jest books, are no better

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than puns, the smartest things I have seen are against him. One day in the grove, he joined some ladies, and asking one of them, who was crooked, whence she came? She replied, strait from London. Confound me, madam, said he, then you must have been damnably warped by the way.

She soon, however, had ample revenge. Sitting the following evening in one of the rooms, he once more joined her company, and with a sneer and a bow, asked her, if she knew her Catechism, and could tell the name of Tobit's dog? His name, Sir, was Nash, replied the lady, and an impudent dog he was. This story is told in a celebrated romance; I only repeat it here to have an opportunity of observing, that it actually happened.

Queen Anne once asked him, why he would not accept of knighthood? To which he replied, lest Sir William Read, the mountebank, who had been just knighted, should call him brother.

An house in Bath was said to be haunted by the Devil, and a great noise was made about it, when Nash going to the Minister of St Michael's, entreated him to drive the Devil out of Bath for ever, if it were only to oblige the ladies.

Nash used sometimes to visit the great Doctor Clarke. The Doctor was one day conversing with Locke, and two or three more of his learned and intimate companions, with that freedom, gaiety and cheerfulness, which is ever the result of innocence. In the midst of their mirth and laughter, the Doctor, looking from the window, saw Nash's chariot stop at the door. Boys, boys, cried the philosopher, to his friends, let us now be wise, for here is a fool coming.

Nash was one day complaining in the following manner to the Earl of Chesterfield of his bad luck at play. "Would you think it, my Lord, that damned bitch fortune, no later than last night, tricked me out of 500. Is it not surprising," continued he, "that my luck should never turn, that I should thus eternally be mauled? "I don't wonder at your losing money, Nash," says his lordship, "but all the world is surprised where you get it to lose."

Doctor Cheney once, when Nash was ill, drew up a prescription for him, which was sent in accordingly. The next day the Doctor coming to see his patient, found him up and well, upon which he asked, if he had followed his prescription. "Followed your prescription," cried Nash, "No.-- Egad, if I had, I should have broke my neck, for I flung it out of the two pair stairs window."

It would have been well, had he confined himself to such sallies; but as he grew old he grew insolent, and seemed, in some measure, insensible of the pain his attempts to be a wit gave others. Upon asking a lady to dance a minuet, if she refused, he would often demand, if she had got bandy legs. He would attempt to ridicule natural defects, he forgot the deference due to birth and quality, and mistook the manner of settling rank and precedence upon many occasions. He now seemed no longer fashionable among the present race of gentry, he grew peevish and fretful, and they who only saw the remnant of a man, severely returned that laughter upon him, which he had once lavished upon others.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Poor Nash was no longer the gay, thoughtless, idly industrious creature he once was, he now forgot how to supply new modes of entertainment, and became too rigid, to wind with ease through the vicissitudes of fashion. The evening of his life began to grow cloudy. His fortune was gone, and nothing but poverty lay in prospect. To embitter his hopes, he found himself abandoned by the great, whom he had long endeavoured to serve, and was obliged to fly to those of humbler stations for protection, whom he once affected to despise. He now began to want that charity, which he had never refused to any and to find, that a life of dissipation and gaiety, is ever terminated by misery and regret.

Even his place of master of the ceremonies (if I can trust the papers he has left behind him) was sought after. I would willingly be tender of any living reputation; but these papers accuse Mr Quin of endeavouring to supplant him.

He has even left us a letter, which he supposed was written by that gentleman, soliciting a Lord for his interest upon the occasion. As I choose to give Mr Quin an opportunity of disproving this, I will insert the letter, and, to show the improbability of its being his, with all its fault, both of style and spelling. I am the less apt to believe it written by Mr Quin, as a gentleman, who has mended Shakespeare's plays so often, would surely be capable of something more correct than the following. It was sent, as it should seem, from Mr Quin to a nobleman, but left open for the perusal of an intermediate friend. It was this friend who sent a copy of it to Mr Nash, who caused it to be instantly printed, and left among his other papers.

The letter from the intermediate friend to Nash, is as follows.

London, October 8, 1760

Dear Nash,

Two posts ago I received a letter from Quin, the old player, covering one to my Lord, which he left open for my perusal, which after reading he desired I might seal up and deliver. The request he makes is so extraordinary, that it has induced me to send you the copy of his letter to my Lord, which is as follows:

Bath, October 3, 1760

My der Lord*,

OLD beaux Knash has mead himselfe so dissagreeable to all the company that comes here to Bath that the corperatian of this city have it now under thier consideration to remove him from beeing master of the cereymoines, should he be continuead the inhabitants of thiss city will be rueind, as the best companey declines to come to Bath on his acc^t.

Give me leave to show to your Lords'hip how he beheaved at the firs't ball he had here thiss' season which was Tus'day las't. A younge Lady was asked to dance a minueat she begg the gent^m would be pleased to exquise here, as' she did not choose to dance, upon thiss' old Nash called out so as to be head by all the companey in the room G-- dam yo Madam what buisness have yo here if yo do not dance, upon which the Lady was so afrighted, she rose and danced, the ress'et of the companey was so much offended at the rudeness of Nash that not one Lady more, would dance a

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minueat that night. In country dances' no person of note danced except two boys' Lords S--- and T---, the rest of the company that danced waire only the families of all the habberdashers' machinukes and inkeepers in the three kingdoms' brushed up and colected together.

I have known upon such an occasion as' thiss' seventeen Dutchess' and Contiss' to be at the opening of the ball at Bath now not one. This man by his' pride and extravagancis has outlived his' reasein it would be happy for thiss' city that he was ded, and is, now only fitt to reed Shirlock upon death by which he may leave his soul and gaine more than all the proffits he can make, by his white hatt, suppose it was to be died red.

The fav^r I have now to reques^t by what I now have wrote yo, is that your Lordship speke to Mr Pitt, for to recommend me to the corporeatian of this city to succede this old sinner as master of the cerremonies and yo will much oblige,

My Lord your

Lord^s and Hu^c

Ob^t Ser^t.

N. B. There were some other private matters and offers in Quin's letter to my Lord, which do not relate to you.

[*Note: Can any one, who has read what precedes and what follows this letter, suppose that we thought it was written by Mr Quin, or that it would give any uneasiness either to him or his friends?-- the letter was really found among Mr Nash's papers, as the Editor can at any time prove, and it was inserted here, to show what artifices were used, by those who had more levity than good nature, to impose upon a poor old man, and to embitter his last moments.

This Note has been rendered necessary, by a piece of criticism without candour, and an epigram without wit, which appeared on this occasion, in the public papers.]

Here Nash, if I may be permitted the use of a polite and fashionable phrase, was humm'd, but he experienced such rubs as these, and a thousand other mortifications every day. He found poverty now denied him the indulgence not only of his favourite follies, but of his favourite virtues. The poor now solicited him in vain, he was himself a more pitiable object than they. The child of the public seldom has a friend, and he who once exercised his wit at the expense of others, must naturally have enemies. Exasperated at last to the highest degree, an unaccountable whim struck him, poor Nash was resolved to become an author, he, who in the vigour of manhood, was incapable of the talk, now at the impotent age of eighty-six, was determined to write his own history! From the many specimens already given of his style, the reader will not much regret that the historian was interrupted in his design. Yet as Montaigne observes, as the adventures of an infant, if an infant could inform us of them, would be pleasing, so the life of a beau, if a beau could write, would certainly serve to regale curiosity.

Whether he really intended to put this design in execution, or did it only to alarm the nobility, I will not take upon me to determine; but certain it is, that his friends went about collecting subscriptions for the work, and he received several encouragements from such as were willing to be politely charitable. It was thought by many, that this history would reveal the intrigues of a whole age, that he had numberless secrets to disclose, but they never considered, that persons of public character, like him, were the most unlikely in the world to be made partakers of those

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secrets which people desired the public should not know. In fact, he had few secrets to discover, and those he had, are now buried with him in the grave.

He was now past the power of giving or receiving pleasure, for he was poor, old and peevish; yet still he was incapable of turning from his former manner of life to pursue his happiness. The old man endeavoured to practise the follies of the boy, he spurred on his jaded passions after every trifle of the day, tottering with age he would be ever an unwelcome guest in the assemblies of the youthful and gay, and he seemed willing to find lost appetite among those scenes where he was once young.

An old man thus striving after pleasure is indeed an object of pity, but a man at once old and poor, running on in this pursuit, excite astonishment. To see a being both by fortune and constitution rendered incapable of enjoyment, still haunting those pleasures he was no longer to share in, to see one of almost ninety settling the fashion of a lady's cap, or assigning her place in a country dance, to see him unmindful of his own reverend figure, or the respect he should have for himself, toasting demireps, or attempting to entertain the lewd and idle, a sight like this might well serve as a satire on humanity; might show that man is the only preposterous creature alive, who pursues the shadow of pleasure without temptation.

But he was not permitted to run on thus without severe and repeated reproof. The clergy sent him frequent calls to reformation; but the asperity of their advice in general abated its intended effects, they threatened him with fire and brimstone, for what he had long been taught to consider as foibles, and not vices, so, like a desperate debtor, he did not care to settle an account, that, upon the first inspection, he found himself utterly unable to pay. Thus begins one of his monitors:

"THIS admonition comes from your friend, and one that has your interest deeply at heart: It comes on a design altogether important, and of no less consequence than your everlasting happiness: so that it may justly challenge your careful regard. It is not to upbraid or reproach, much less to triumph and insult over your misconduct or misery; no, 'tis pure benevolence, it is disinterested good-will prompts me to write; I hope therefore I shall not raise your resentment. Yet be the consequence what it will, I cannot bear to see you walk in the paths that lead to death, without warning you of the danger, without sounding in your ear the lawful admonition, "Return and live! Why do you such things? I hear of your evil dealings by all this people." I have long observed and pitied you, and must tell you plainly, Sir, that your present behaviour is not the way to reconcile yourself to God. You are so far from making atonement to offended justice, that each moment you are aggravating the future account, and heaping up an increase of his anger. As long as you roll on in a continued circle of sensual delights and vain entertainments, you are dead to all the purposes of piety and virtue. You are as odious to God as a corrupt carcase that lies putrefying in the churchyard. You are as far from doing your duty, or endeavouring after salvation, or restoring yourself to the divine favour, as a heap of dry bones nailed up in a coffin is from vigour and activity -- Think, Sir, I conjure you, think upon this, if you have any inclination to escape the fire that will never be quenched. Would you be rescued from the fury and fierce anger of God? Would you be delivered from weeping and wailing, and incessant gnashing of teeth? sure you would! But be certain, that this will never be done by amusements, which at best are trifling and impertinent; and for that, if for no other reason, foolish and sinful. 'Tis by seriousness; 'tis by retirement and

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mourning, you must accomplish this great and desirable deliverance. You must not appear at the head of every silly diversion, you must enter into your closet, and shut the door, commune with your own heart, and search out its defects. The pride of life, and all its superfluity of follies must be put away. You must make haste, and delay not to keep every injunction of heaven. You must always remember, that mighty sinners must be mightily penitent, or else mightily tormented. Your example and your projects have been extremely prejudicial, I wish I could not say, fatal and destructive, to many: For this there is no amends but an alteration of your conduct, as signal and remarkable as your person and name."

"If you do not by this method remedy in some degree the evils that you have sent abroad, and prevent the mischievous consequences that may ensue -- wretched will you be, wretched above all men to eternity. The blood of souls will be laid to your charge, God's jealousy, like a consuming flame, will smoke against you, as you yourself will see in that day, when the mountains shall quake, and the hills melt, and the earth be burnt up at his presence."

"Once more then I exhort you as a friend, I beseech you as a brother, I charge you as a messenger from God, in his own most solemn words; 'Cast away from you your transgressions; make you a new heart, and a new spirit, so iniquity shall not be your ruin.'"

"Perhaps you may be disposed to contemn this, and its serious purport, or to recommend it to your companions as a subject for raillery -- Yet let me tell you beforehand, that for this, as well as for other things, God will bring you to judgment. He sees me now I write: He will observe you while you read. He notes down my words; he will also note down your consequent procedure. Not then upon me, not upon me; but upon your own soul, will the neglecting or despising my sayings turn. 'If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; if thou scornest, thou alone shall bear it.'"

Thus we see a variety of causes concurred to embitter his departing life. The weakness and infirmities of exhausted nature, the admonitions of the grave, who aggravated his follies into vices, the ingratitude of his dependants, who formerly flattered his fortunes, but particularly the contempt of the great, many of whom quite forgot him in his wants; all these hung upon his spirits and soured his temper, and the poor man of pleasure might have terminated his life very tragically, had not the corporation of Bath charitably resolved to grant him ten guineas the first Monday of every month. This bounty served to keep him from actual necessity, though far too trifling, to enable him to support the character of a gentleman. Habit, and not nature, makes almost all our wants, and he who had been accustomed in the early parts of life to affluence and prodigality, when reduced to an hundred and twenty-six pounds a year, must pine in actual indigence.

In this variety of uneasiness his health began to fail. He had received from nature a robust and happy constitution, that was scarce even to be impaired by intemperance. He even pretended, among his friends, that he never followed a single prescription in his life, however, in this he was one day detected on the parade, for boasting there of his contempt and utter disuse of medicine, unluckily the water of two blisters, which Dr Oliver had prescribed, and which he then had upon each leg,

oozed through his stockings, and betrayed him. His aversion to physic, however, was frequently a topic of raillery between him and Doctor Cheney, who was a man of some wit and breeding. When Cheney recommended his vegetable diet, Nash would swear, that his design was to send half the world grazing like Nebuchadnezzar. "Ay," Cheney would reply, "Nebuchadnezzar was never such an infidel as thou art. It was but last week, gentlemen, that I attended this fellow in a fit of sickness, there I found him rolling up his eyes to heaven, and crying for mercy, he would then swallow my drugs like breast-milk, yet you now hear him, how the old dog blasphemes the faculty." What Cheney said in jest was true, he feared the approaches of death more than the generality of mankind, and was generally very devout while it threatened him. Though he was somewhat the libertine in action, none believed or trembled more than he, for a mind neither schooled by philosophy, nor encouraged by conscious innocence, is ever timid at the appearance of danger.

For some time before his decease nature gave warning of his approaching dissolution. The worn machine had run itself down to an utter impossibility of repair, he saw, that he must die, and shuddered at the thought. His virtues were not of the great, but the amiable kind, so that fortitude was not among the number. Anxious, timid, his thoughts still hanging on a receding world, he desired to enjoy a little longer that life, the miseries of which he had experienced so long. The poor unsuccessful gamester husbanded the wasting moments, with an increased desire to continue the game, and to the last eagerly wished for one yet more happy throw. He died at his house in St. John's Court, Bath, on the 12th of February, 1761, aged eighty-seven years, three months, and some days.

His death was sincerely regretted by the city, to which he had been so long, so great a benefactor. The day after he died, the Mayor of Bath called the corporation together, where they granted fifty pounds towards burying their sovereign with proper respect. After the corpse had lain four days, it was conveyed to the abbey church in the city, with a solemnity somewhat peculiar to his character. About five the procession moved from his house, the charity girls two and two preceded, next the boys of the charity school singing a solemn occasional hymn. Next marched the city music, and his own band sounding at proper intervals a dirge. Three clergymen immediately preceded the coffin, which was adorned with sable plumes, and the pall supported by the six senior aldermen. The masters of the assembly-rooms followed as chief mourners, the beadles of that hospital, which he had contributed so largely to endow, went next, and last of all, the poor patients themselves, the lame, the emaciated, and the feeble, followed their old benefactor to his grave, shedding unfeigned tears, and lamenting themselves in him.

The crowd was so great, that not only the streets were filled, but, as one of the journals in a Rant expresses it, "even the tops of the houses were covered with spectators, each thought the occasion affected themselves most; as when a real king dies, they asked each other, 'where shall we find such another?' sorrow sat upon every face, and even children lisped that their Sovereign was no more. The awfulness of the solemnity made the deepest impression on the minds of the distressed inhabitants. The peasant discontinued his toil, the ox rested from the plough, all nature seemed to sympathise with their lots, and the muffled bells rung a peal of Bob Major."

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The HYMN sung at his Funeral.

I.

Most unhappy are we here,
Full of sin and full of fear,
Ever weary, ne'er at rest,
When, O Lord, shall we be blest.

II.

Earth's a clog, a pageant life,
Fill'd with folly, guilt, and strife;
'Till we all unite in thee,
With ourselves we disagree.

III.

What's our comfort here below,
Empy bubble, transient show,
Wrapt in the body's vile disguise,
None truly is until he dies.

IV.

Here we dwell, but not at home,
To other worlds ordain'd to roam,
Yet full we seek for joys that waste,
Fleeting as the vernal blast.

V.

Lord remove these shadows hence,
Give us faith instead of sense,
Teach us here in life to die.
That we may live eternally.

Our deeper solemnities have something truly ridiculous in them. There is somewhat ludicrous in the folly of historians, who thus declaim upon the death of kings and princes, as if there was any thing dismal, or anything unusual in it, "For my part," says Poggi, the Florentine, "I can no more grieve for another's death, than I could for my own. I have ever regarded death as a very trifling affair, nor can black staves, long cloaks, or mourning coaches, in the least influence my sprits. Let us live here as long, and as merrily as we can, and when we must die, why let us die merrily too, but die so as to be happy."

The few things he was possessed of were left to his relations. A small library of well chosen books, some trinkets and pictures, were his only inheritance. Among the latter (besides the box given him by the prince of Wales), were a gold box, which was presented to him by the countess of Burlington, with lady Euston's picture in the

lid. An etui mounted in gold, with a diamond to open it, and ornamented with another diamond at the top, given him by the princess dowager of Wales. He had also a silver tureen, which was given him by the princess, and some other things of no great value. The rings, watches, and pictures, which he formerly received from others, would have come to a considerable amount, but these his necessities had obliged him to dispose of: some family pictures, however, remained, which were sold by advertisement, for five guineas each, after Mr Nash's decease.

It was natural to expect, that the death of a person so long in the eye of the public, must have produced a desire in several to delineate his character, or deplore his loss. He was scarce dead, when the public papers were filled with elegies, groans and characters, and before he was buried, there were epitaphs ready made to inscribe on his stone. I remember one of those character writers, and a very grave one too, after observing, alas! that Richard Nash, Esq, was no more, went on to assure us, that he was "sagacious, debonair, and commode," and concluded with gravely declaring, that "impotent posterity would in vain fumble to produce his fellow." Another, equally sorrowful, gave us to know, that he was "indeed a man", an assertion, which I fancy none will be so hardy as to contradict. But the merriest of all the lamentations, made upon this occasion was that where he is called, "A constellation of the heavenly sphere."

One thing, however, is common almost with each of them, and that is, that Venus, Cupid, and the Graces, are commanded to weep, and that Bath shall never find such another.

But though he was satirised with the praises of those, yet there were some of real abilities, who undertook to do justice to his character, to praise him for his virtues, and acknowledge his faults. I need scarcely mention, that Doctor Oliver, and Doctor King are of this number. They had honoured him with their friendship while living, and undertook to honour his memory when dead. As the reader may choose to compare their efforts upon the same subject, I have subjoined them, and perhaps many will find in either enough, upon so unimportant a subject as Mr Nash's life, to satisfy curiosity. The first published, was that by Doctor Oliver, written with much good sense, and still more good nature. But the reader will consider, that he has assumed in his motto the character of a panegyrist, and spares his friend's faults, though he was too candid entirely to pass them over in silence.

A faint Sketch of the Life, Character, and Manners, of the late Mr NASH

*Imperium in Imperio--
De mortuis nil nisi bonum.*

Bath, February 13, 1761

This morning died RICHARD NASH, Esq, aged eighty eight. He was by birth a gentleman, an ancient Briton; by education, a student of Jesus College, in Oxford; by profession -- -- --. His natural genius was too volatile for any. He tried the army and the law, but soon found his mind

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superior to both -- He was born to govern, nor was his dominion, like that of other legislators, over the servility of the vulgar, but over the pride of the noble, and the opulent. His public character was great, as it was self-built, and self-maintained; his private amiable, as it was grateful, beneficent, and generous.

By the force of genius he erected the city of Bath into a province of pleasure, and became by universal consent, its Legislator, and ruler. He planned, improved, and regulated all the amusements of the place. His fundamental law was, that of good breeding; "Hold sacred decency and decorum," his constant maxim. Nobody, howsoever exalted by beauty, blood, titles, or riches, could be guilty of a breach of it, unpunished -- the penalty, his disapprobation, and public shame. To maintain the sovereignty he had established, he published rules of behaviour, which, from their propriety, acquired the force of laws, and which the highest never infringed, without immediately undergoing the public censure. He kept the men in order, most wisely, by prohibiting them wearing swords in his dominions, by which means he prevented sudden passion from causing the bitterness of unavailing repentance -- In all quarrels he was chosen the umpire -- so just were his decisions, that peace generally triumphed, crowned with the mutual thanks of both parties. He kept the ladies in good humour, most effectually by a nice observance of the rules of place and precedence, by ordaining scandal to be the infallible mark of a foolish head, and a malicious heart, always rendering more suspicious the reputation of her who propagated it, than that of the person abused. Of the young, the gay, the heedless fair, just launching into the dangerous sea of pleasure, he was ever, unsolicited (sometimes unregarded) the kind protector, humanely correcting even their mistakes in dress, as well as improprieties in conduct, nay, often warning them, though at the hazard of his life, against the artful snares of designing men, or an improper acquaintance with women, of doubtful characters. Thus did he establish his government on pillars of honour and politeness, which could never be shaken, and maintained it, for full half a century, with reputation, honour, and undisputed authority, beloved, respected, and revered.

Of his private character, be it the first praise, that, while by his conduct, the highest ranks became his subjects, he himself became the servant of the poor, and the distressed whose cause he ever pleaded amongst the rich, and enforced with all the eloquence of a good example. They were ashamed not to relieve those wants, to which they saw him administer with so noble an heart, and so liberal a hand. Nor was his munificence confined to particulars, he being, to all the public charities of this city, a liberal benefactor, not only by his own most generous subscriptions, but by always assuming, in their behalf, the character of a sturdy beggar, which he performed with such an authoritative address to all ranks, without distinction, that few of the worst hearts had courage to refuse what their own inclinations would not have prompted them to bestow.

Of a noble public spirit and a warm grateful heart, the obelisk in the grove, and the beautiful needle in the square, are magnificent testimonies. The one erected to preserve the memory of a most interesting event to his country, the restitution of health, by the healing waters of this place, to the illustrious prince of Orange, who came hither in a most languishing condition; the other, a noble offering of thanks to the late Prince of Wales, and his royal consort, for favours bestowed, and honours by them conferred, on the city.

His long and peaceful reign of absolute power, was so tempered by his excessive good nature, that no instance can be given either of his own cruelty, or of his suffering that of others to escape its proper reward -- example unprecedented amongst absolute monarchs.

READER, this monarch was a man, and had his foibles, and his faults; which we would wish covered with the veil of good nature, made of the same piece with his own. But truth forceth us unwillingly to confess, his passions were strong, which, as they fired him to act strenuously in good, hurried him to same excesses of evil. His fire, not used to be kept under by an early restraint, burst out too often into flaming acts, without waiting for the cool approbation of his judgment. His generosity was so great, that prudence often whispered him, in vain, that she feared it would enter the neighbouring confines of profusion; his charity so unbounded, that the severe might suspect it sometimes to be the offspring of folly, or ostentation. With all these, be they foibles, follies, faults, or frailties, it will be difficult to point out, amongst his contemporary Kings of the whole earth more than ONE who hath fewer, or less pernicious to mankind.

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His existence (or life it scarcely might be called) was spun out to so great an age, that the man was sunk, like many former heroes, in the weakness and infirmities of exhausted nature; the unwilling tax all animals must pay for multiplicity of days. Over his closing scene, charity long spread her all-covering mantle, and dropped the curtain, before the poor actor, though he played his part, was permitted to quit the stage. Now may she protect his memory! Every friend of Bath, every lover of decency, decorum, and good breeding, must sincerely deplore the loss of so excellent a governor, and join in the most fervent wishes (would I could say hopes) that there may soon be found a man able and worthy, to succeed him.

The reader sees in what alluring colours Mr Nash's character is drawn, but he must consider, that an intimate friend held the pencil, the Doctor professes to say nothing of the dead, but what was good, and such a maxim, though it serves his departed friend, is but badly calculated to improve the living. Dr King in his Epitaph, however, is still more indulgent, he produces him as an example to kings, and prefers his laws, even to those of Solon, or Lycurgus.

The following translation of this Epitaph, will give the English reader an idea of its contents, though not of its elegance.

The Epitaph of Richard Nash, Esq.

Here lies Richard Nash, born in an obscure village, and from mean ancestors. To whom, however, strange to relate, both the vulgar, and the mighty, without bribe or compulsion, unanimously gave a kingdom, equally rich and flourishing. A kingdom which he governed more than fifty years, with universal approbation and applause. To his empire also was added, by the consent of all orders, a celebrated province [Tunbridge]. Which he ever swayed with great prudence, not by delegated power, but in person. He deigned to visit it every year, and while the necessities of state demanded his presence, he usually continued there. In such greatness of fortune his pride discovered itself by no marks of dignity, nor did he ever claim the honours of prostration. Despising at once titles of adulation, and laying aside all royal splendour, wearing not even the diadem, he was content with being distinguished only by the ornamental ensign of a white hat; a symbol of the candour of his mind. He was a most prudent legislator, and more remarkable even than Solon or Lycurgus. He at once established and authorized whatever laws were thought convenient, which were equally serviceable to the city, and grateful to strangers who made it their abode. He was at once a provider and a judge of pleasures, but still concluded them with gravity and elegance, and repressed licentiousness with severity. His chief care was employed, in preventing obscenity or impudence from offending the modesty or the morals of the fair sex, and in banishing from their assemblies tumult, clamour, and abuse. He not only adorned this city, which he loved, with beautiful structures, but improved it by his example; as no man knew, no man taught what was becoming better than he. He was just, liberal, kind, and facetious, a friend to all, but particularly to the poor. He had no enemies, except some of the trifling great, or dull declaimers, foes to all mankind. Equally a lover of peace and of his country, he fixed a happy and lasting concord in his kingdom, so that none dare convey scandal, or injure by open violence the universal peace, or even by carrying arms appear prepared for war, with impunity.

But though his power was boundless, yet never did liberty flourish more, which he promoted, both by his authority, and cultivated for his fame. He found out the happy secret (a thing not to be considered without surprise) of uniting the vulgar and the great, the poor and the rich, the learned and ignorant, the cowardly and the brave, in the bonds of society, an equal king to all.

Whatever his faults were, for we have all faults, they were rather obnoxious to himself than others. They arose neither from imprudence nor mistake, never from dishonesty or corrupt principle, but so harmless were they, that though they failed to create our esteem, yet can they not want our pardon.

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Could other kings and governors but learn to imitate his example, (would to heaven they could) then might they see themselves happy, and their people still enjoying more true felicity.

Ye muses and graces mourn his death, ye powers of love, ye choirs of youth and virgins. But thou, O Bathonia, more than the rest, cease not to weep your king, your teacher, patron, friend, never, ah, never, to behold his equal.

Whatever might have been justly observed of Mr Nash's superiority as a governor, at least it may be said, that few cotemporary kings have met with such able panegyrists. The former enumerates all his good qualities with tenderness; and the latter enforces them with impetuosity. They both seem to have loved him, and honourably paid his remains the last debt of friendship. But a cool biographer, unbiased by resentment or regard, will probably find nothing in the man either truly great, or strongly vicious. His virtues were all amiable, and more adapted to procure friends and admirers, they were more capable of raising love than esteem. He was naturally endued with good sense, but by having been long accustomed to pursue trifles, his mind shrunk to the size of the little objects on which it was employed. His generosity was boundless, because his tenderness and his vanity were in equal proportion; the one impelling him to relieve misery, and the other to make his benefactions known. In all his actions, however virtuous, he was guided by sensation, and not by reason; so that the uppermost passion was ever sure to prevail. His being constantly in company had made him an easy though not a polite companion. He chose to be thought rather an odd fellow, than a well-bred man; perhaps that mixture of respect and ridicule, with which his mock royalty was treated, first inspired him with this resolution. The foundations of his empire were laid in vicious compliance, the continuance of his reign was supported by a virtuous impartiality. In the beginning of his authority, he in reality obeyed those whom he pretended to govern; towards the end, he attempted to extort a real obedience from his subjects, and supported his right by prescription. Like a monarch Tacitus talks of, they complied with him at first because they loved, they obeyed at last because they feared him. He often led the rich into new follies, in order to promote the happiness of the poor, and served the one at the expense of the other. Whatever his vices were, they were of use to society; and this neither Petronius, nor Apicius, nor Tigellius, nor any other professed voluptuary, could say. To set him up, as some do, for a pattern of imitation, is wrong, since all his virtues received a tincture from the neighbouring folly, to denounce peculiar judgments against him, is equally unjust, as his faults raise rather our mirth than our detestation. He was fitted for the station in which fortune placed him. It required no great abilities to fill it, and few of great abilities, but would have disdained the employment. He led a life of vanity, and long mistook it for happiness. Unfortunately he was taught at last to know, that a man of pleasure leads the most unpleasant life in the world.

*A Letter from Mr **** in Tunbridge, to Lord --- in London, found among the Papers of Mr Nash, and prepared by him for the press.*

MY LORD,

WHAT I foresaw has arrived, poor Jenners, after losing all his fortune, has shot himself through the head. His losses to Bland were considerable, and his playing soon after with Spedding contributed to hasten his ruin. No man was ever more

enamoured of play, or understood it less. At whatever game he ventured his money, he was most usually the dupe, and still foolishly attributed to his bad luck, those misfortunes that entirely proceeded from his want of judgment.

After finding that he had brought on himself irreparable indigence and contempt, his temper, formerly so sprightly, began to grow gloomy and unequal, he grew more fond of solitude, and more liable to take offence at supposed injuries; in short, for a week before he shot himself, his friends were of opinion, that he meditated some such horrid design. He was found in his chamber fallen on the floor, the bullet having glanced on the bone, and lodged behind his right eye.

You remember my Lord, what a charming fellow this deluded man was once. How benevolent, just, temperate, and every way virtuous; the only faults of his mind arose from motives of humanity, he was too easy, credulous and good-natured, and unable to resist temptation, when recommended by the voice of friendship. These foibles the vicious and the needy soon perceived, and what was at first a weakness they soon perverted into guilt; he became a gamester, and continued the infamous profession, till he could support the miseries it brought with it no longer.

I have often been not a little concerned to see the first introduction of a young man of fortune to the gaming-table. With what eagerness his company is courted by the whole fraternity of sharpers, how they find out his most latent wishes, in order to make way to his affections by gratifying them; and continue to hang upon him with the meanest degree of condescension. The youthful dupe no way suspecting, imagines himself surrounded by friends and gentlemen, and incapable of even suspecting that men of such seeming good sense, and so genteel an appearance, should deviate from the laws of honour, walks into the snare, nor is he undeceived till schooled by the severity of experience.

As I suppose no man would be a gamester unless he hoped to win, so I fancy it would be easy to reclaim him, if he was once effectually convinced, that by continuing to play he must certainly lose. Permit me, my Lord, to attempt this task, and to show, that no young gentleman by a year's run of play, and in a mixed company, can possibly be a gainer.

Let me suppose in the first place, that the chances on both sides are equal, that there are no marked cards, no pinching, shuffling, nor hiding; let me suppose that the players also have no advantage of each other in point of judgment, and still further let me grant, that the party is only formed at home, without going to the usual expensive places of resort frequented by gamesters. Even with all these circumstances in the young gamester's favour, it is evident he cannot be a gainer. With equal players after a year's continuance of any particular game it will be found, that, whatever has been played for, the winnings on either side are very inconsiderable, and most commonly nothing at all. Here then is a year's anxiety, pain, jarring, and suspense, and nothing gained; were the parties to sit down and professedly play for nothing, they would condemn the proposal, they would call it trifling away time, and one of the most insipid amusements in nature; yet in fact, how do equal players differ; it is allowed that little or nothing can be gained; but much is lost, our youth, our time, those moments that may be laid out in pleasure or improvement are foolishly squandered

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away, in tossing cards, fretting at ill luck, or, even with a run of luck in our favour, fretting that our winnings are so small.

I have now stated gaming in that point of view in which it is alone defensible, as a commerce carried on with equal advantage and loss to either party, and it appears, that the loss is great, and the advantage but small. But let me suppose the players not to be equal, but the superiority of judgment in our own favour. A person who plays under this conviction, however, must give up all pretensions to the approbation of his own mind, and is guilty of as much injustice, as the thief who robbed a blind man, because he knew he could not swear to his person.

But in fact, when I allowed the superiority of skill on the young beginner's side, I only granted an impossibility. Skill in gaming, like skill in making a watch, can only be acquired by long and painful industry. The most sagacious youth alive was never taught at once all the arts, and all the niceties of gaming. Every passion must be schooled by long habit into caution, and phlegm; the very countenance must be taught proper discipline; and he who would practice this art with success, must practice on his own constitution, all the severities of a martyr, without any expectation of the reward. It is evident therefore every beginner must be a dupe, and can only be expected to learn his trade by losses, disappointments, and dishonour.

If a young gentleman therefore begins to game, the commencements are sure to be to his disadvantage, and all that he can promise himself is, that the company he keeps, though superior in skill, are above taking advantage of his ignorance, and unacquainted with any sinister arts to correct fortune. But this, however, is but a poor hope at best, and what is worse, most frequently a false one. In general, I might almost have said always, those who live by gaming are not beholden to chance alone for their support, but take every advantage which they can practise without danger of detection. I know many are apt to say, and I have once said so myself, that after I have shuffled the cards, it is not in the power of a sharper to pack them; but at present I can confidently assure your Lordship, that such reasoners are deceived. I have seen men, both in Paris, the Hague, and London, who, after three deals, could give whatever hands they pleased to all the company. However, the usual way with sharpers is to correct fortune thus but once in a night, and to play in other respects without blunder or mistake, and a perseverance in this practice always balances the year in their favour.

It is impossible to enumerate all the tricks and arts practised upon cards, few but have seen those bungling poor fellows who go about at coffee-houses perform their clumsy feats. and yet, indifferently as they are versed in the trade, they often deceive us; when such as these are possessed of so much art, what must not those be, who have been bred up to gaming from their infancy, whose hands are not like those mentioned above, rendered callous by labour, who have continual practice in the trade of deceiving, and where the eye of the spectator is less upon its guard.

Let the young beginner only reflect by what a variety of methods it is possible to cheat him, and perhaps it will check his confidence. His antagonists may act by signs and confederacy, and this he can never detect, they may cut to a particular card after three or four hands have gone about, either by having that card pinched, or broader than the rest, or by having an exceeding fine wire thrust between the folds of

the paper, and just peeping out at the edge. Or the cards may be chalked with particular marks, which none but the sharper can understand, or a new pack may be slipped in at a proper opportunity. I have known myself in Paris, a fellow thus detected with a tin case, containing two packs of cards concealed within his shirt sleeve, and which, by means of a spring, threw the cards ready packed into his hands. These and an hundred other arts may be practised with impunity, and escape detection.

The great error lies in imagining every fellow with a laced coat to be a gentleman. The address and transient behaviour of a man of breeding are easily acquired, and none are better qualified than gamesters in this respect. At first, their complaisance, civility, and apparent honour is pleasing, but upon examination, few of them will be found to have their minds sufficiently stored with any of the more refined accomplishments, which truly characterize the man of breeding. This will commonly serve as a criterion to distinguish them, though there are other marks which every young gentleman of fortune should be apprized of. A sharper, when he plays, generally handles and deals the cards awkwardly like a bungler, he advances his bets by degrees, and keeps his antagonist in spirits by small advantages and alternate success at the beginning; to show all his force at once, would but fright the bird he intends to decoy; he talks of honour and virtue, and his being a gentleman, and that he knows great men, and mentions his coal mines, and his estate in the country; he is totally divested of that masculine confidence, which is the attendant of real fortune; he turns, yields, assents, smiles, as he hopes will be most pleasing to his defined prey; he is afraid of meeting a shabby acquaintance, particularly if in better company; as he grows richer, he wears finer clothes; and if ever he is seen in an undress, it is most probable he is without money; so that seeing a gamester growing finer each day, is a certain symptom of his success.

The young gentleman who plays with such men for considerable sums, is sure to be undone, and yet we seldom see even the rook himself make a fortune. A life of gaming must necessarily be a life of extravagance; parties of this kind are formed in houses, where the whole profits are consumed; and while those who play, mutually ruin each other, they only who keep the house or the table acquire fortunes. Thus gaming may readily ruin a fortune, but has seldom been found to retrieve it. The wealth which has been acquired with industry and hazard, and preserved for ages by prudence and foresight, is swept away on a sudden; and when a besieging sharper sits down before an estate, the property is often transferred in less time, than the writings can be drawn to secure the possession. The neglect of business, and the extravagance of a mind which has been taught to covet precarious possession, brings on premature destruction, though poverty may fetch a compass and go somewhat about, yet will it reach the gamester at last; and though his ruin be slow, yet it is certain.

A thousand instances could be given of the fatal tendency of this passion, which first impoverishes the mind, and then perverts the understanding. Permit me to mention one, not caught from report, or dressed up by fancy, but such as has actually fallen under my own observation, and of the truth of which, I beg your Lordship may rest satisfied.

At Tunbridge, in the year 1715, Mr J. Hedges made a very brilliant appearance, he had been married about two years to a young lady of great beauty and

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large fortune; they had one child, a boy, on whom they bestowed all that affection, which they could spare from each other. He knew nothing of gaming, nor seemed to have the least passion for play; but he was unacquainted with his own heart, he began by degrees to bet at the tables for trifling sums, and his soul took fire at the prospect of immediate gain, he was soon surrounded with sharpers, who with calmness lay in ambush for his fortune, and coolly took advantage of the precipitancy of his passions.

His lady perceived the ruin of her family approaching, but, at first, without being able to form any scheme to prevent it. She advised with his brother, who, at that time, was possessed of a small fellowship in Cambridge. It was easily seen, that whatever passion took the lead in her husband's mind, seemed to be there fixed unalterably; it was determined therefore, to let him pursue fortune, but previously take measures, to prevent the pursuits being fatal.

Accordingly every night this gentleman was a constant attender at the hazard table, he understood neither the arts of sharpers, nor even the allowed strokes of a connoisseur, yet still he played. The consequence is obvious, he lost his estate, his equipage, his wife's jewels, and every other moveable that could be parted with, except a repeating watch. His agony upon this occasion was inexpressible, he was even mean enough to ask a gentleman, who sat near, to lend him a few pieces, in order to turn his fortune, but this prudent gamester, who plainly saw there were no expectations of being repaid, refused to lend a farthing, alleging a former resolution against lending. Hedges was at last furious with the continuance of ill success, and pulling out his watch, asked if any person in company, would set him sixty guineas upon it: the company were silent; he then demanded fifty, mill no answer; he sunk to forty, thirty, twenty, finding the company still without angering, he cried out, by G--d it shall never go for less, and dashed it against the floor, at the same time, attempting to dash out his brains against the marble chimney-piece.

This last act of desperation immediately excited the attention of the whole company; they instantly gathered round, and prevented the effects of his passion; and after he again became cool, he was permitted to return home, with sullen discontent, to his wife. Upon his entering her apartment, she received him with her usual tenderness and satisfaction; while he answered her caresses with contempt and severity, his disposition being quite altered with his misfortunes. "But my dear Jemmy," says his wife, "perhaps you don't know the news I have to tell; My Mamma's old uncle is dead, the messenger is now in the house, and you know his estate is settled upon you." This account seemed only to increase his agony, and looking angrily at her, he cried, "There you lie, my dear, his estate is not settled upon me." "I beg your pardon," says she, "I really thought at was, at least you have always told me so." "No," returned he, "as sure as you and I are to be miserable here, and our children beggars hereafter, I have sold the reversion of it this day, and have lost every farthing I got for it at the hazard table." "What all!" replied the lady. "Yes, every farthing," returned he, "and I owe a thousand pounds more than I have to pay." Thus speaking, he took a few frantic steps across the room. When the lady had a little enjoyed his perplexity. "No my dear," cried she, "you have lost but a trifle, and you owe nothing. Our brother and I have taken care to prevent the effects of your rashness, and are actually the persons, who have won your fortune; we employed proper persons for this purpose, who brought their winnings to me, your money, your equipage, are in my possession, and here I return them to you, from whom they were unjustly taken. I

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only ask permission to keep my jewels, and to keep, you, my great jewel, from such dangers for the future." Her prudence had the proper effect, he ever after retained a sense of his former follies, and never played for the smallest sums, even for amusement.

Not less than three persons in one day, fell a sacrifice at Bath, to this destructive passion. Two gentlemen fought a duel, in which one was killed, and the other desperately wounded, and a youth of great expectation, and excellent disposition, at the same time ended his own life by a pistol. If there be any state that deserves pity, it must be that of a gamester, but the state of a dying gamester is of all situations the most deplorable..

There is another argument which your lordship, I fancy, will not entirely despise, beauty, my lord, I own is at best but a trifle, but such as it is, I fancy few would willingly part with what little they have. A man with an healthful complexion, how great a philosopher soever he be, would not willingly exchange it for a sallow hectic phyz, pale eyes, and a sharp wrinkled visage. I entreat you only to examine the faces of all the noted gamblers round one of our public tables; have you ever seen any thing more haggard, pinched, and miserable? and it is but natural that it should be so. The succession of passions flush the cheek with red, and all such flushings are ever succeeded by consequent paleness; so that a gamester contrasts the sickly hue of a student, while he is only acquiring the stupidity of a fool.

Your good sense, my lord, I have often had an occasion of knowing, yet how miserable is it to be in a set of company where the most sensible is ever the least skilful. Your footman, with a little instruction, would, I dare venture to affirm, make a better and more successful gamester than you, want of passions, and low cunning, are the two great arts, and it is peculiar to this science alone, that they who have the greatest passion for it, are of all others the most unfit to practise it.

Of all the men I ever knew, Spedding was the greatest blockhead, and yet the best gamester: he saw almost intuitively the advantage on either side, and ever took it, he could calculate the odds in a moment, and decide upon the merits of a cock or an horse, better than any man in England; in short, he was such an adept in gaming, that he brought it up to a pitch of sublimity it had never attained before; yet, with all this, Spedding could not write his own name. What he died worth, I cannot tell, but of this I am certain, he might have possessed a ministerial estate, and that won from men, famed for their sense, literature, and patriotism.

If after this description, your Lordship is yet resolved to hazard your fortune at gaming, I beg you would avert to the situation of an old and luckless gamester. Perhaps there is not in nature a more deplorable being, his character is too well marked, he is too well known to be trusted. A man that has been often a bankrupt, and renewed trade upon low compositions, may as well expect extensive credit as such a man. His reputation is blasted, his constitution worn, by the extravagance and ill hours of his profession, he is now incapable of alluring his dupes, and like a superannuated savage of the forest, he is starved for want of vigour to hunt after prey.

Thus gaming is the source of poverty, and still worse, the parent of infamy and vice. It is an inlet to debauchery, for the money thus acquired is but little valued.

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Every gamester is a rake, and his morals worse than his mystery. It is his interest to be exemplary in every scene of debauchery, his prey is to be courted with every guilty pleasure; but these are to be changed, repeated, and embellished, in order to employ his imagination, while his reason is kept asleep, a young mind is apt to shrink at the prospect of ruin, care must be taken to harden his courage, and make him keep his rank, he must be either found a libertine, or he must be made one. And when a man has parted with his money like a fool, he generally sends his conscience after it like a villain, and the nearer he is to the brink of destruction, the fonder does he grow of ruin.

Your friend and mine, my Lord, had been thus driven to the last reserve, he found it impossible to disentangle his affairs, and look the world in the face; impatience at length threw him into the abyss he feared, and life became a burden, because he feared to die. But I own that play is not always attended with such tragical circumstances, some have had courage to survive their losses, and go on content with beggary, and sure those misfortunes, which are of our own production, are of all others most pungent. To see such a poor disbanded being an unwelcome guest at every table, and often flapped off like a fly is affecting; in this case the closest alliance is forgotten, and contempt is too strong for the ties of blood to unbind.

But however fatal this passion may be in its consequence, none allures so much in the beginning, the person once listed as a gamester, if not soon reclaimed, pursues it through his whole life; no loss can retard, no danger awaken him to common sense; nothing can terminate his career but want of money to play, or of honour to be trusted.

Among the number of my acquaintance, I knew but of two who succeeded by gaming; the one a phlegmatic heavy man, who would have made a fortune in whatever way of life he happened to be placed; the other who had lost a fine estate in his youth by play, and retrieved a greater at the age of sixty-five, when he might be justly said, to be past the power of enjoying it. One or two successful gamesters are thus set up in an age to allure the young beginner; we all regard such, as the highest prize in a lottery, unmindful of the numerous losses that go to the accumulation of such infrequent success.

Yet I would not be so morose, as to refuse your youth all kinds of play; the innocent amusements of a family, must often be indulged, and cards allowed to supply the intervals of more real pleasure; but the sum played for in such cases should always be a trifle, something to call up attention, but not engage the passions. The usual excuse for laying large sums is, to make the players attend to their game, but in fact, he that plays only for shillings, will mind his cards equally well, with him that bets guineas; for the mind, habituated to stake large sums, will consider them as trifles at last, and if one shilling could not exclude indifference at first, neither will an hundred in the end.

I have often asked myself, how it is possible that he who is possessed of competence, can ever be induced to make it precarious, by beginning play with the odds against him, for wherever he goes to sport his money, he will find himself overmatched and cheated, either at White's, Newmarket, the Tennis-Court, the Cockpit, or the Billiard-Table, he will find numbers who have no other resource, but

their acquisitions there, and if such men live like gentlemen, he may readily conclude it must be on the spoils of his fortune, or the fortunes of ill-judging men like himself. Was he to attend but a moment to their manner of betting at those places he would readily find the gamester seldom proposing bets, but with the advantage in his own favour. A man of honour continues to lay on the side on which he first won, but gamesters shift, change, lie upon the lurch, and take every advantage, either of our ignorance or neglect.

In short, my Lord, if a man designs to lay out his fortune in quest of pleasure, the gaming table is, of all other places, that where he can have least for his money. The company are superficial, extravagant, and unentertaining; the conversation flat, debauched, and absurd; the hours unnatural, and fatiguing; the anxiety of losing is greater than the pleasure of winning; friendship must be banished from that society, the members of which are intent only on ruining each other, every other improvement, either in knowledge or virtue, can scarce find room in that breast, which is possessed by the spirit of play; the spirits become vapid, the constitution is enfeebled, the complexion grows pale, till, in the end, the mind, body, friends, fortune, and even the hopes of futurity sink together! Happy, if nature terminates the scene, and neither justice nor suicide are called in to accelerate her tardy approach.

I am,
my Lord, &c.

Among other Papers in the custody of Mr Nash, is the following angry Letter, addressed to him in this manner.

To Richard Nash, Esq,
King of Bath.
SIRE,

I must desire our Majesty to order the enclosed to be read to the great Mr Hoyle, if he be found in any part of your dominions. You will perceive, that it is a panegyric on his manifold virtues, and that he is thanked more particularly for spending his time so much to the emolument of the public, and for obliging the world with a book more read than the Bible, and which so eminently tends to promote Christian knowledge, sound morality, and the happiness of mankind.

(The enclosed we have omitted, as it contains a satire on gaming, and may probably give offence to our betters.)

This author, however (continues the letter writer) has not set forth half the merits of the piece under consideration, nor is the great care which he has taken to prevent our reading any other book, instead of this, been sufficiently taken notice of "Beware of counterfeits, these books are not to be depended on, unless signed by *E. Hoyle*," is a charitable admonition. As you have so much power at Bath, and are absolute, I think you should imitate other great monarchs, by rewarding those with honours who have been serviceable in your state, and I beg that a new order may be established for that purpose. Let him who has done nothing but game all his life, and has reduced the most families to ruin and beggary, be made a *Marshal of the Black Ace*, and those who are every day making proselytes to the tables, have the honour of

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knighthood conferred on them, and be distinguished by the style and title of *Knights of the four Knaves*.

The moment I came into Bath, my ears were saluted with the news of a gentleman's being plundered at the gaming table, and having lost his senses on the occasion. The same day a duel was fought between two gentlemen gamesters on the Downs, and in the evening another hanged himself at the Bear; but first wrote a note, which was found near him importing that he had injured the best of friends. These are the achievements of your *Knights of the four Knaves*. The Devil will pick the bones of all gamesters, that's certain! -- Ay! -- and of duellers too! but in the mean time let none think that duelling is a mark of courage, for I know it is not. A person fenced under me in Flanders who had fought four duels, and depended so much on his skill, the strength of his arm, and the length of his sword, that he would take up a quarrel for any body, yet, in the field, I never saw one behave so like a poltroon. If a few of these gamesters and duellers were gibbeted, it might perhaps help to amend the rest. I have often thought, that the only way, or at least, the most effectual way, to prevent duelling, would be to hang both patties, the living and the dead, on the same tree*, and if the winner and the loser were treated in the same manner, it would be better for the public, since the tucking up of a few R---ls might be a warning to others, and save many a worthy family from destruction.

I am yours, &c.

[*Note: A scheme to prevent duelling, similar to this, was attempted by Gustavus Adolphus, and is thus recorded by the writer of his life:

"In one of the Prussian Campaigns, when the irrational practice of duelling arose to a considerable height in the Swedish army, not only amongst persons of rank and fashion, but even amongst common soldiers, this prince published a severe edict, and denounced death against every delinquent. Soon after a quarrel arose between two officers of very high command, and as they knew the king's firmness in preserving his word inviolable, they agreed to request an audience, and besought his permission to decide the affair like men of honour. His majesty took fire in a moment, but repressed passion with such art, that they easily mistook him, of course with some reluctance, but under the appearance of pitying brave men, who thought their reputation injured, he told them, that he blamed them much for their mistaken notions, concerning Fame and Glory, yet as this unreasonable determination appeared to be the result of deliberate reflection, to the best of their deluded capacity, he would allow them to decide the affair at the time and place specified, "and, gentlemen," said he, "I will be an eye witness myself of your extraordinary valour and prowess."

At the hour appointed Gustavus arrived, accompanied by a small body of infantry, whom he formed into a circle round the combatants "Now," says he, "fight till one man dies," and calling the executioner of the army to him (or the provost marshal, as the language then ran) "Friend," added he, "the instant one is killed, behead the other before my eyes "

Astonished with such inflexible firmness, the two generals, after pausing a moment, fell down on their knees, and asked the king's forgiveness, who made them embrace each other, and give their promise to continue faithful friends to their last moments, as they did with sincerity and thankfulness."]

The author of this letter appears to have been very angry, and not without reason, for, if I am rightly informed, his only son was ruined at Bath, and by sharpers. But why is Nash to be blamed for this? It must be acknowledged, that he always took pains to prevent the ruin of the youth of both sexes, and had so guarded against duelling, that he would not permit a sword to be worn in Bath.

As the heart of a man is better known by his private than public actions, let us take a view of Nash, in domestic life, among his servants and dependants, where no gloss was required to colour his sentiments and disposition, nor any mask necessary to conceal his foibles. Here we shall find him the same open-hearted, generous, good-natured man we have already described; one who was ever fond of promoting the interests of his friends, his servants, and dependants, and making them happy. In his own house no man perhaps was more regular, cheerful, and beneficent than Mr Nash. His table was always free to those who sought his friendship, or wanted a dinner, and after grace was said, he usually accosted the company in the following extraordinary manner, to take off all restraint and ceremony. "Come, gentlemen, eat and welcome, spare, and the Devil choke you." I mention this circumstance for no other reason, but because it is well known, and is consistent with the singularity of his character and behaviour.

As Mr Nash's thoughts were entirely employed in the affairs of his government, he was seldom at home but at the time of eating or of rest. His table was well served, but his entertainment consisted principally of plain dishes. Boiled chicken and roast mutton were his favourite meats, and he was so fond of the small sort of potatoes, that he called them English pineapples, and generally eat them as others do fruit, after dinner. In drinking he was altogether as regular and abstemious. Both in this, and in eating, he seemed to consult nature, and obey only her dictates. Good small beer, with or without a glass of wine in it, and sometimes wine and water, was his drink at meals, and after dinner he generally drank one glass of wine. He seemed fond of hot suppers, usually supped about nine or ten o'clock, upon roast breast of mutton and his potatoes, and soon after supper went to bed; which induced Dr Cheney to tell him jestingly, "that he behaved like other brutes, and lay down as soon as he had filled his belly." "Very true," replied Nash, "and this prescription I had from my neighbour's cow, who is a better physician than you, and a superior judge of plants, notwithstanding you have written so learnedly on the vegetable diet."

Nash generally arose early in the morning, being seldom in bed after five; and to avoid disturbing the family, and depriving his servants of their rest, he had the fire laid after he was in bed, and in the morning lighted it himself, and sat down to read some of his few, but well chosen books. After reading some time he usually went to the pump-room and drank the waters, then took a walk on the parade, and went to the coffee-house to breakfast, after which, till two o'clock (his usual time of dinner) his hours were spent in arbitrating differences amongst his neighbours, or the company resorting to the wells, directing the diversions of the day, in visiting the newcomers, or receiving friends at his own house, of which there were a great concourse till within six or eight years before his death.

His generosity and charity in private life, though not so conspicuous, was as great as that in public, and indeed far more considerable than his little income would admit of. He could not stifle the natural impulse which he had to do good, but frequently borrowed money to relieve the distressed; and when he knew not conveniently where to borrow, he has been often observed to shed tears, as he passed through the wretched supplicants who attended his gate.

This sensibility, this power of feeling the misfortunes of the miserable, and his address and earnestness in relieving their wants, exalts the character of Mr Nash, and

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draws an impenetrable veil over his foibles. His singularities are forgotten when we behold his virtues; and he who laughed at the whimsical character and behaviour of this Monarch of Bath, now laments that he is no more.

FINIS.