



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### **Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

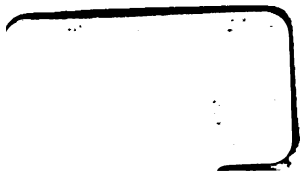
We also ask that you:

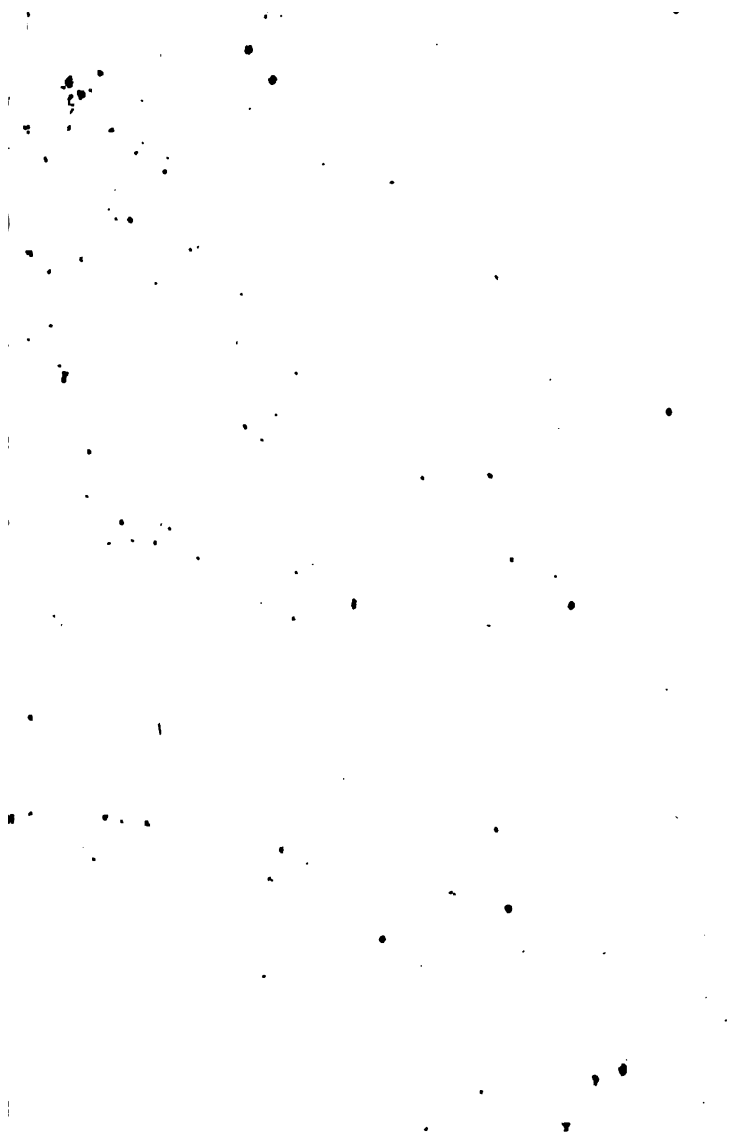
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### **About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>







1

2

3

4

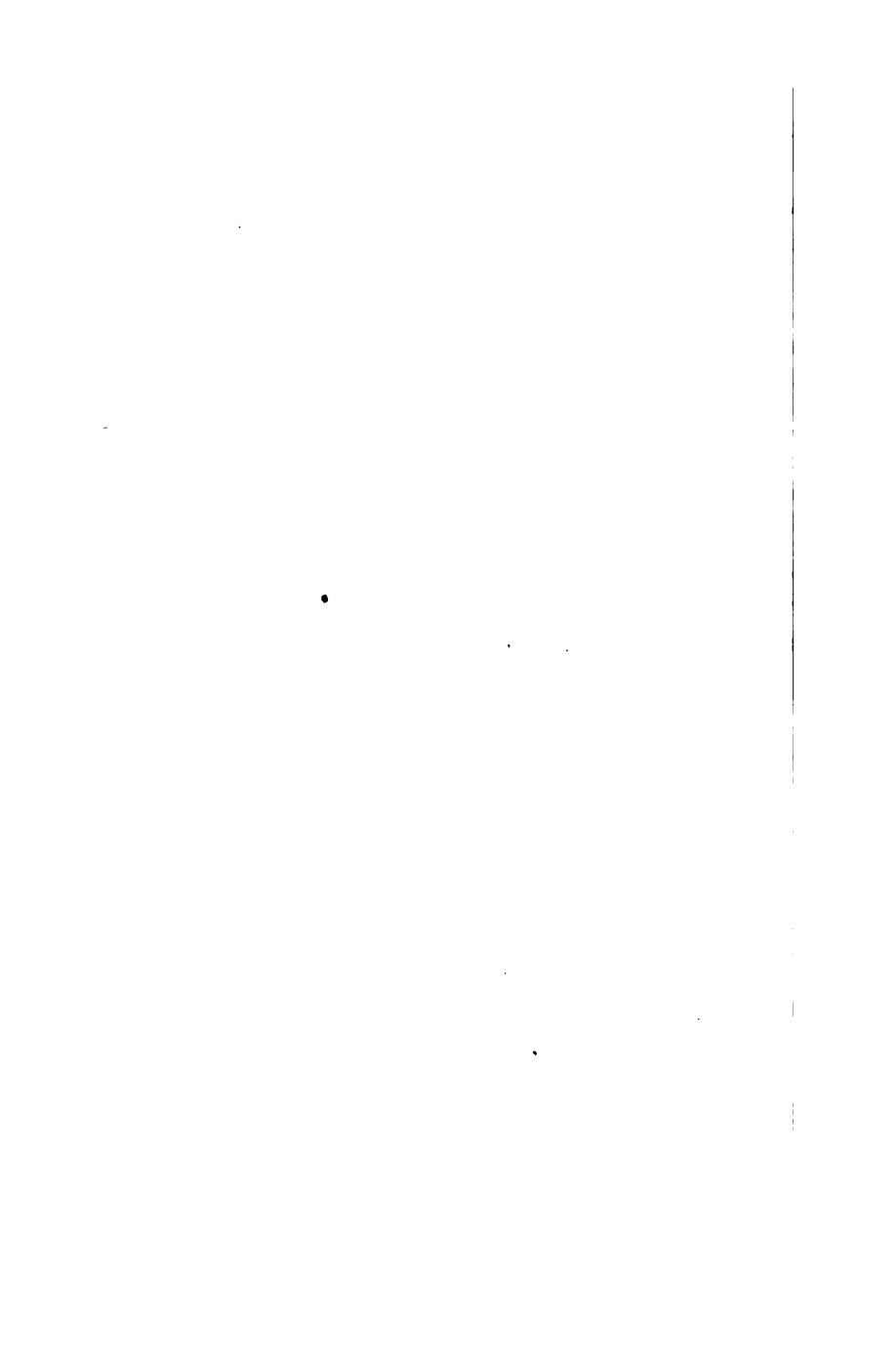
5

6

7

8





60.

---

---

**THREE DIALOGUES**

ON THE

**AMUSEMENTS.**

OF

**CLERGYMEN.**

---

---





*C. Keate*

# THREE DIALOGUES

ON THE

AMUSEMENTS

OF

## CLERGYMEN.

---

SECOND EDITION.

---

*Renounce the world, the preacher cries.  
We do — a multitude replies.  
But one, as innocent regards  
A snug, and friendly game at cards.  
Another can, what'er you say,  
Perceive no mischief in a play.  
Some love a concert, or a race,  
And others, shooting, and the chase.  
Revelled, yet loved; renounced, yet followed,  
Thus, bit by bit, the world is swallowed.  
Each thinks his neighbour makes too free;  
Yet likes a slice as well as he.*

COWPER.

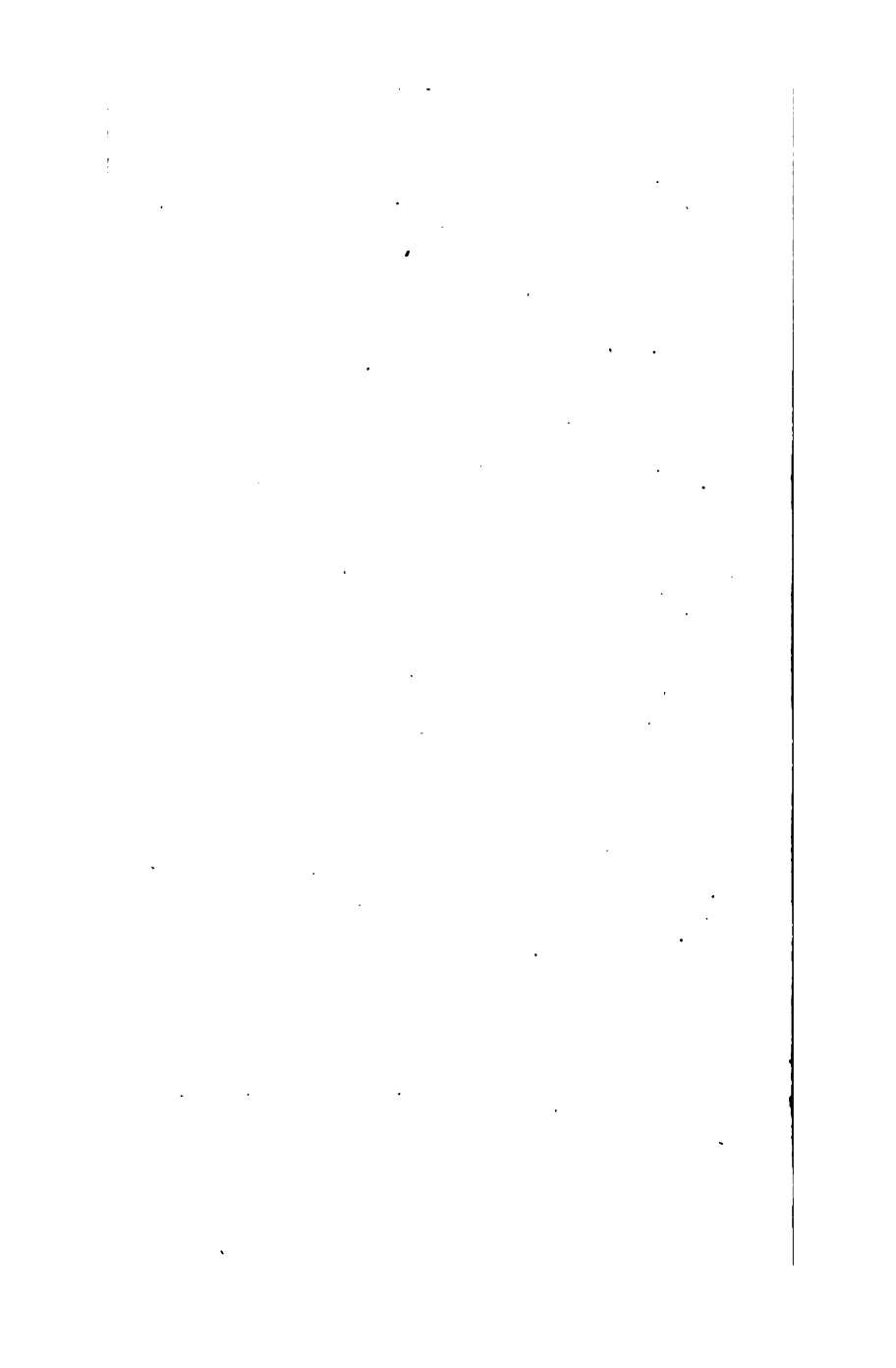
---

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. CADELL, jun. and W. DAVIES,  
in the Strand.

M. DCC. XCVII.

370 . g . 950 .



---

ON THE  
AMUSEMENTS  
OF  
CLERGYMEN.

---

*WHEN* Dr. Josiah Frampton's library was sold in London (in the year 1729 or 1730) his divinity books were classed in seven lots; one of which was purchased by Dr. Edwards. The catalogue of this lot mentioned a parcel of MSS. Among these the Doctor found one in Dr. Frampton's own hand-writing, On the Amusements of Clergymen. But the Doctor being afraid of giving offence by printing it, it lay in his study till his death. It has now, however, fallen into hands, which are less scrupulous; and the following exact copy of it is presented to the Public.

September 23, 1686.

I ALWAYS thought it one of the most fortunate circumstances of my life (or rather the most providential, as I ought to call it) that soon after my leaving college, I was led by various, and singular accidents, to the curacy of Wroxal in Warwickshire. Here I met with many civilities from the gentlemen of the country, particularly from Sir Roger Burgoin, who was equally distinguished for his piety, and learning. At his house I frequently saw that truly venerable man, Dr. Edward Stillingfleet, afterwards Bishop of Worcester, but at that time Dean of Paul's. He had been early connected with the Burgoin family,

nily, and ever preserved a great intimacy with them; which he commonly renewed, every year, by a visit of two or three weeks.

What Dr. Stillingfleet saw in me, I know not: but I thought myself very unworthy of the civilities he shewed me. I was certainly, at that time, a very incorrect young man. I had entered into the ministry with little attention to the duties, I had taken on me to discharge. I loved society, and was fond of country diversions: and though I was fond also of my book, I would at any time have left it for a day's diversion with the hounds—a ramble in the woods with

my gun—of a game of cards, and a dance in the evening. Such as I was however Dr. Stillingfleet was particularly obliging to me; and friendly enough to give me a hint, now and then, with regard to my conduct, which, I hope I may with truth say, was not lost upon me.—An opportunity however occurred, which enabled me to receive more than *casual* advantage from his conversation.

During one of his annual visits to the Burgoin family, he was seized with a violent fit of the gout, to which his latter years were very subject. It happened at this critical time, that Sir Roger Burgoin and his lady were called into Worcestershire to attend their

their mother, who lay at the point of death: and as the Dean expressed a desire for my company, in their absence, I gave him as much of it, as I could; following not more his desire, than my own inclination. He was at that time engaged in correcting his *Origines Sacrae*\* for a new edition; and had brought down with him several Latin books to consult. As I could read that language

---

\* This very learned work was written, when Stillingfleet was under thirty years of age. A story is told, of his having been put to the blush by bishop Sanderson, his diocesan; who seeing a young man at his visitation, of the name of Stillingfleet, and not knowing his person, asked him, whether he were related to the great Stillingfleet, who wrote the *Origines Sacrae*?



with accuracy enough, I was of some little use to him. While I read, he noted with his pen the passages he wanted. The intervals were filled with conversation.

We were sitting together, one day, after dinner; and the Dean laying up his feet on a cushion, and being tolerably free from pain, began to rally me a little on my attachment to country diversions—a subject he had often before casually introduced; and on which he knew I had a weak side. I had brought him two young partridges that day for his dinner; and he began by expressing his obligations to me for my attention to him;

him; and then asked me some question, which led me to give him an account of my day's exploits. I did not see his drift; and in the spirit of a sportsman, told him, that the late rainy season had made game very scarce—that the two covies, from which I had shot the brace I had brought to him, were the only birds I had seen the whole day, though I had been out from five in the morning till eleven at noon; and had walked upwards of fifteen miles.

Well, said the Dean, with an affected gravity of countenance, I only wished to know the extent of my obligation to you; and I find your  
B 4                    philan-

philanthropy has done more for me in giving me six hours of your time to procure me a delicacy, than I could have done (even were I as able to walk as you are) for any man in Christendom.

From being a little jocular, he became, by degrees, serious. I have often thought, said he, Mr. Framp-ton, (and I know your candor will excuse me) that the Clergy have rather injured the respectability of their characters by mixing too much with the *amusements* of laymen. They not only get into a trifling way of spending their time; but by making themselves cheap, they di-  
minish

minish the weight of their instructions; and often give a sort of sanction by their presence to gaieties, and improprieties, which were better checked. It is a common speech in the mouths of licentious people, that they must be right, because they have gotten the parson along with them.—Indeed a clergyman cannot be too cautious with regard to his character. It is a matter of the greatest delicacy, and easily sullied. If he act contrary to it, he always has a consciousness about him, which makes him jealous of every eye: and if he become hardened, he is among the most contemptible of mankind.— Besides, *amusements* in their own nature, have

a wonderful effect on manners. In young minds especially they soon form habits: and habits as quickly form characters\*. I could point out to you a young clergyman, whom I believe you must have seen here, as he is unhappily related to this worthy family, who came from the university every thing his friends could wish: but unhappily, being placed near some of the joyous fraternity of the horn, he became in a little time a mere fox-hunter, and has nothing of the clergyman now about him, but a dark-coloured-coat,

---

\* Habits are soon assumed; but when we strive  
To strip them off, 'tis being flayed alive.

coat, and hardly that.—You will easily, however, understand, that when I restrict the clergyman from joining too freely with the amusements of the laity, I am equally hurt with every appearance of haughtiness, and moroseness. If the character of the clergyman is not marked with modesty, and humility, it is bereft of its most distinguished graces.

But, said I, Sir, may not example work the other way; and the presence of a grave clergyman be a check upon licentiousness?

Sometimes, replied the Dean, it may:

may: and when a clergyman mixes in improper company *with this view*, and is conscious of his own powers of control, he imitates that bright example, which sorted with *publicans and sinners*. A very respectable clergyman, a friend of mine, having heard that a favourite youth had been decoyed by bad company into a disreputable house, went thither himself; and pretending business with the young man, sat down on a slight invitation, among a set of debauchees, trusting his character to its credit. He was a man of severe aspect, strong sense, and ready expression; and therefore well fitted for the office he undertook.

Awhile

While he overawed, by the suddenness of his appearance, the vice and folly he was mixed with. But well knowing, that in a little time the impression he made, would go off, and he might be liable to affronts, he retired, before the company could rally their impudence; and carried off with him his young friend; who would frequently declare afterwards, that he believed this very circumstance brought him more to recollection, than any event of his life; and perhaps saved him from ruin.—But now, my dear Sir, though I have accommodated your argument with an example, I must add, that I think the accommodation gives it little support.

I fear.



I fear the *motive exemplified here*, has little weight in the common intercourse of amusements between the clergy and laity.

But may not this intercourse, said I, Sir, though without any *direct view* of leading out of *immediate mischief*, still have its use? Even the presence of a respectable clergyman, I should think, might often be a happy restraint.

Why, yes, answered the Dean; but then, my good friend; you will consider, that a *young* clergyman can rarely act this part. Years are necessary to give respectability to *this mode* of instructive

fructiye intercourse. Natural talents too, which few people possess, are necessary. A man of morose character may perhaps be of service with his pen in his closet, or by his discourses in a pulpit; but, however pious, and well-meaning, he will hardly be of much use in any of the scenes of common life. If again, we avoid moroseness by assuming the colour of our company (which must, in a degree, always be done, when we wish to reform in this way); I fear, instead of doing good to others, we shall only injure ourselves.

But it is a difficult matter, said I, Sir, especially for a young man, to preserve

preserve those exact bounds of intercourse, which his character may require. When he enters first into the world, and is taken notice of by those, who are in a station above him, it is hardly possible for him to resist the importunities he meets with to enter into various amusements; to drink his glass freely; or make one in parties, which in fact perhaps he may not approve.

No doubt, said the Dean, it may be difficult. But do you believe, that when God placed you in a state of trial, he meant that you should live without difficulties? The whole of life is a conflict: and if we do not  
begin

begin early to brace on our moral armour, and accustom ourselves to it, when are we to enter the field? —I should hope it is for want of consideration, more than any thing else, that so many young clergymen err in this matter. I could wish them to fix in their own minds certain bounds to their amusements, and remember the poet's caution,

*Quos ultra, citraque, nequit consistere rectum.*

Aye, Sir, said I, these *certi fines*—this narrow path between the *citra*, and the *ultra*, I have often in vain endeavoured to pursue. And if you can give me any instruction to guide my footsteps better through the  
 c amuse-

amusements of life, than they have hitherto been conducted, I shall kindly receive them, and lay them up in a grateful memory.

It is very probable, my dear Sir, replied the Dean, that my rules may be stricter, than you would wish to comply with. I have thought often on the subject lately for the sake of a young clergyman, in whose well-doing I was much interested: but I had not all the success I hoped for.

I assured the Dean, I should endeavour to be a more observant disciple. I did indeed spend too much of my time, I feared, in amusements of various

rious

rious kinds ; but I was hopeful, that my errors proceeded more from inattention (the apology he was pleased to furnish) than from any bad disposition.

The good Dean was pleased to say, he believed me ; and added some other friendly expressions, which not being to our present purpose, I omit. He then asked me, what was my idea of an *amusement* ; or how I should *define* it ?

This was a puzzling question to one, who had trespassed so much on this head ; and who having never thought much on the subject, seldom

had any end, but barely to please himself. I *could* have given him a definition of *amusement*; but I was afraid of bringing my own practice too much within its censure. To gain therefore a little time for reflection, I asked, Whether he meant *amusement in general*, or confined the question to the *amusements of clergymen*?

Why, truly, said the Dean, the amusements of all people require regulation enough. But my question, at present, relates only to the *amusements of the clergy*.

I answered, that I thought *bodily exercise* was one end; and as to the  
*amusement*

*amusement* of the mind, I thought its only end was to relax, and fit it the better for study.

Your definition, said the Dean, is so far good: but it does not go far enough. It considers only the *purpose* of amusement: whereas it should also take in the *quality*. You will allow, I suppose, that the *clerical amusement* should be suited to the *clerical profession*?

I allowed it certainly.

Well, then, said the Dean, we have now, I think, obtained a full definition of *clerical amusement*. It



should intend the *exercise of the body,*  
*and the recreation of the mind;* but it  
should also be *suited to the genius of*  
*the profession.* As the first member  
however of this definition relates  
to amusement in general; and  
applies as well *ad populum,* as *ad*  
*clerum,* we will, if you please, pass  
it over at present. If we can esta-  
blish the second part, I hope there  
will be no great danger of mistaking  
the first. I shall only therefore en-  
deavour to shew you, that all *clerical*  
*amusements* should be suited to the  
*clerical profession.*—Now, in order to  
throw the best light on this subject, I  
should wish to consider amusements  
under the three heads of *riotous and*  
*cruel*

*cruel—of trifling and seducing—and lastly, of innocent and instructive:* for I think it very possible, that an amusement may be characterized with both these latter epithets, though either may be sufficient. Are these heads, added he, comprehensive enough to include all kinds of amusement? Or do you recollect any other?

I thought them sufficiently comprehensive.

Well, then, said the Dean, we will begin with such amusements as are *riotous*, and *cruel*: and among these I should be inclined to assign the first rank to *hunting*. It is an unfeeling

exercise, derived from our savage ancestors, who hunted at first for *food*, and consigned the barbarous practice to their posterity for *pastime*. Its giving birth to forest laws, and game laws—its injuring corn-lands, and destroying fences—its setting squires, and their tenants; gentlemen, and their neighbours, at variance—its consuming the forage of a country in breeding destructive, or useless animals in the room of such as are really useful—the riotous uproar of the chase, so opposite to the mild serenity, which should characterize the clergyman—and the noisy, intemperate evening, to which it often leads; add such an accumulation of mischief

mischief to hunting, that I should be sorry any clergyman should give his countenance to it.—To this we may add the cruelty exercised both on the animals, that pursue, and the animals, that are pursued—the horse pushed to the last extremity—the hound trained to the chase with savage barbarity\*—and the wretched fugitive agonizing in the extremity of distress.

But there is still a greater mischief, which often attends these riotous amusements. When the squire hunts with his neighbours, he introduces no  
more

---

\* ————— At his foot  
The spaniel dying for some venial fault,  
Under dissection of the knotted scourge.

more corruption into the parish than he found. But I have sometimes known *annual bunts* established in sporting countries, which draw together hundreds of profligate people from different parts, who call themselves *gentlemen*, but are really *pests* of the neighbourhood, to which they resort; introducing new vices into the villages, and every kind of debauchery. Their servants, who are commonly of the same stamp, spread the corruption among the peasants, and servant-girls, which their masters spread among the farmer's sons, and daughters.—The clergyman, who mixes in such scenes, is far out of  
fight

light of the bare decency of his profession.

But pray, Sir, said I, may not some little plea be offered in favour of hunting? Is it not a manly exercise? Does it not furnish our tables with food; and rid the country of noxious animals?

I beseech you, replied the Dean, do not call in argument to defend a pastime, which has no alliance with reason. Call it a wild passion—a brutal propensity—or any thing that indicates its nature. But to give it any connection with reason, is making a union between black and white.—

white.— But it is *manly* forsooth to hunt. *Manliness*, I should suppose, implies some mode of action, that *becomes a man*. Hunting might formerly, for aught I know, have been a manly exercise, when the country was overrun with boars, and wolves, and it was a *public service* to extirpate them. But to honour with the name of *manliness*, the cruel practice of pursuing timid animals to put them to death merely for *amusement*, is, in my opinion, perverting the meaning of words. There are many ways surely of using manly exercise, at least as healthful—and far more innocent, and less expensive, and dangerous, than galloping over hedges, gates,

gates, and ditches. If the *manliness* of the action lie in the risk you run of breaking your neck, for *no end*, it would still be greater manliness to jump down a precipice.—The fox-hunter, I doubt not, would ridicule the man, who runs about with a hand-net, hunting a butterfly: but I protest, I see not for what reason. The exercise of the butterfly-hunter is as good; and the pleasure of the chase is, to him at least, equal.—But you alledge, that hunting supplies the table with food. I dare say, Sir Roger's game-keeper will tell you, he could supply it better in twenty other ways. I have certainly no objection to take the lives of  
animals



animals for food; and grant, that if they were suffered to multiply, they would become noxious. What I mean is, that I cannot allow turning the *destruction* of them into an *amusement*—and least of all into a *clerical amusement*.—I knew a gentleman, who took great delight in knocking down an ox; which he performed with much dexterity: and it was his common *amusement* to go among the butchers on a slaughtering-day, and give two or three of them a shilling a-piece, to let him be their substitute in that operation. You call such a man a brute: and he surely was one. But you would find it difficult to shew, that the circumstance of riding

riding on a horse, and bawling after a pack of dogs, makes the amusement less brutal.

Surely, said I, Sir, there is a difference between the pleasure of a pursuit; and a pleasure, which consists merely in the act of inflicting death?

Why, yes, answered the Dean, there is a difference; but I know not, on which side of it the advantage lies. If hunting be a more *genteel* species of butchery, it is certainly a more *cruel* one. The ox receives its death by an instant stroke; whereas the hare is first thrown into convulsions of terror, for four or five hours together;

ther; and then seized, in the midst of its agony, and torn piece-meal by a pack of ravenous blood-hounds\*.— As to your last argument, that hunting rids the country of noxious animals, I apprehend you are mistaken in the fact. I rather think it tends to replenish the country with them. As  
 one

---

\* ————— Detested sport,  
 That owes its pleasure to another's pain!  
 That feeds upon the sobs, and dying shrieks  
 Of harmless nature! —————

COWPER.

The savage soul of game is up at once:  
 The pack full opening, various: the shrill horn  
 Resounding from the hills: the neighing steed,  
 Wild for the chace; and the loud hunter's  
 shout;  
 O'er a weak, harmless, flying creature, all  
 Mixed in mad tumult, and discordant joy.

THOMPSON.

one instance at least I can testify, that I offended a whole club of sporting neighbours, in a manner that was hardly ever to be gotten over, by giving a man half-a-crown for killing a fox, which had thinned my poultry-yard. And I dare say, there is not a hunting squire in the country, who would not, at any time, suffer a dozen of his tenant's lambs to be worried, to save half the number of foxes' cubs. Nay, I have often known covers of considerable extent, left purposely in fields, or perhaps planted, merely to decoy foxes into a neighbourhood by providing a proper shelter for them.—But you have provoked me to say all this, by aiming to establish an alliance be-

tween hunting and rationality. I intended not to disturb the squire either in his riotous day, or his roaring night. I consider *bis* malady, as a surgeon does a mortification, which has seized the vitals—beyond all hope of recovery\*. What I mean, is only to admonish the clergyman not to follow his example.

It is but just however to say, that examples to warn him might also be found in our own profession. I remember a clergyman in a neighbourhood, where I once lived, who had

two

---

\* For tho' the fox he follows, may be tamed,  
The man fox-follower never is reclaimed.

two benefices; but he spent little time at either of them, because neither happened to be in a sporting country. The hunting-season he always spent near a squire in the parish next to mine, whose disciplined pack was famous. With this gentleman, and his hounds, he lived on terms of the greatest intimacy. Indeed both the squire and his dogs looked up to him, as their ablest leader. Though he was a miserable preacher, he was uncommonly musical in the field; and could cheer, and animate his sonorous friends with an eloquence beyond the huntsman himself, whose associate he always was; and whose place, on any emergency, he could amply supply. He was

much readier at finding a hare, than a text of Scripture; and though he was scarce acquainted with the face of one of his parishioners, he knew exactly the character of every hound in the squire's pack; and could run over their names with much greater readiness, than those of the twelve apostles\*. He had at length the misfortune to break his neck at the end of a fox chase; but not till he had first  
broken

---

\* Oh laugh, or mourn with me, the rueful jest,  
A cassock'd huntsman!—

He takes the field, the master of the pack,  
Cries, Well done, Saint—and claps him on the  
back.

Is this the path of sanctity? Is this  
To stand a way-mark in the road to bliss?

COWPER:

broken the heart of a very amiable woman, who had unhappily connected herself with him.

Such a clergyman, said I, is hardly to be paralleled in a century. But in an inferior degree, I fear, there are many of our brethren, who allow themselves great indulgence. I remember a hunting-clergyman, who received a very proper rebuke from one of his brethren; and which I have reason to believe was of service to him, as long as he lived. He had been lamenting his unfortunate lot, in being stationed in a country where there was no hunting. The other looking him full in the face, said, with



great gravity of countenance, and in a deliberate tone of voice; "At the great day of accounts, the question will not be, *where* have you lived; but *how* have you lived?"—All this however is carrying amusement to excess. But suppose, Sir, when you are riding out, you happen to hear the hounds, is there any harm merely in taking a little exercise with them, if you do not join in the riot of the chase?

I hate, said the Dean, to see a man do any thing by halves. Is it right, or is it wrong? If it be right, do it boldly. If it be wrong, turn your horse another way, and take your exercise

ercise in a contrary direction. Never go to the edge of a precipice. You can hardly help going a little farther than you intended. I remember a clergyman, who was not remarkable for neglecting, at least the outward part of his duty; but once unhappily forgot it through his love for hunting. He was eagerly engaged in a fox-chase, when the fox *took to earth*, as they call it: on which he cried out, "Gentlemen, I must leave you: This puts me in mind, that I have a corpse to bury at four o'clock this evening; and I fear I shall be an hour too late."— Besides, continued the Dean, you cannot well avoid, in this field of riot,

at least if you are often seen in it, making an acquaintance with several, to whom, for your character's sake, you would not wish to be known.— But indeed, as I observed, to mix, in any degree, in these scenes of cruelty, and riotous exultation, is unbecoming the clerical profession.— And (to close my argument with scripture) I should wish you to consider, that as many good people, as well as I, disapprove a clergyman's mixing in these riotous amusements, so of course it will give offence to all these good people. No man therefore, who has the honour of his profession at heart, would give offence, where the matter in question is of so  
little

little consequence as a mere amusement. Let him consider how strict St. Paul was in matters of this kind. St. Paul's example is certainly not very fashionable; but with a clergyman, I should hope it might have some weight. He gives us many hints, which come home to the point we are now discussing. Hunting was out of the question. He would not certainly have permitted Timothy or Titus to hunt, if they had been so disposed. But he forbids us to give offence in matters, that are of much more concern than mere amusement. *If meat, says he, make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the*

4 *world*

*world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.*

If you will give me leave, said I, Sir, I will just mention one argument more. As the hound is endowed with the sagacity of following its game, it seems as if Providence had intended it for hunting.

Aye, said the Dean, that is true: and in the same way Providence encourages horse-racing, by making horses swift; and cock-fighting, by making cocks courageous.— My dear Mr. Frampton, I hope you are a better naturalist, than to pay any attention to these flimsy apologies.

God

God Almighty has given various instincts to his creatures—all of them for wise purposes, though some of them are beyond our comprehension. That thirst of blood in the rapacious kind seems intended to preserve an equilibrium among animals: and as they all owe a death to nature, it is of little consequence whether the defenceless tribe die in a natural way, or by the jaws of a tiger.—Among the savage kind is the dog. We reclaim him from the forest, and a useful servant he is. He guards our houses—he protects our cattle—he assists us in destroying noxious animals. He was formerly of great use in procuring food for our ancestors;

tors, and I know no objection to his still taking wild animals for our food, if they can be taken in no easier way. But if we make his tractable disposition an excuse for our own cruelty, and sanguinary amusements, we surely use him in a way which God Almighty never intended.

I told the good Dean, he had silenced me. I was afraid my partiality for the diversion, had been founded rather on inclination than argument. But nobody again, I hoped, should ever *take offence* at my following a pack of hounds.—But pray, said I, Sir, do you allow shooting?

ing? It is a much less riotous amusement; nay, it may even be a solitary one.

To speak plainly, replied the Dean, I cordially allow no *amusement* to a clergyman that has any thing to do with *shedding blood*.—Besides, I think a peculiar cruelty attends this diversion. You may wound, and maim, as well as kill. My *heart*, I am sure, would be strongly affected—indeed, even my *conscience*—if I should make a poor animal miserable all the days of its life, for the sake of giving myself a momentary amusement.—It was but the last autumn, when riding down a lane, I saw two poor miserable  
partridges



partridges—both bleeding, and one trailing a shattered leg after it—fluttering, and running before me. Poor wretches, said I, I wish the person, who put you into this miserable situation, may never feel the distress he has occasioned! I then ordered my servant to dismount, and run after them. The lame one he caught; the other crawled into a hedge, where it probably lingered out its miserable life a few days longer.

But the expert marksman, I told the Dean, never shoots among a covey, but takes his aim at a single bird.

And

And are all shooters, said he, *expert marksmen*? And does the expert marksman himself never maim the bird he aims at, or the bird that is near it? Often, no doubt, he maims both.—To repel the attack of a bird, or beast of prey, I have certainly no objection; nor to take the life of an animal for food: though I should not wish to make a clergyman the butcher, whether an ox or a partridge is to be slaughtered. But to take the life of an animal, except in one or the other of these cases, I hold to be absolutely immoral. And I think equally so to run the risk of maiming it, and making it miserable for life. The most humane way  
therefore

therefore of taking birds is with a net, which allows you to discharge such as you wish, and put to a speedy death those you take for food.

But to take birds in a net, said I, Sir, is not at all in the spirit of sportsmen.—Besides, there are some species of game, as pheasants particularly, which cannot be taken in nets.

Do not tell me, replied the Dean, of the *spirit of sportsmen*. Though the ties of humanity, no doubt, equally bind them; yet to such hopeless hearers I should no more attempt to  
 preach,

preach, than I should to their spaniels.—Nor do I pretend to know, what kind of game may be taken in one way, and what in another: though, I have no doubt, my friend Robert \* could inform me, how pheasants might be taken without shooting them, But what I labour at chiefly is to convince such sober-minded clergymen, as I conceive you to be, that every species of bloody, and cruel amusement is unsuitable to the genius, and temper of a Christian divine; and enters more by habit into a character, than is commonly supposed. It is under the idea of  
tainting

---

\* Sir Roger's game-keeper.

tainting a character with professional habits, that the butcher is prohibited from serving on a jury.

For myself, Sir, I replied, I am only ashamed, that from the dictates of my own reason I have not sooner acknowledged the truths you set before me. I always had my doubts; but not supposing amusements of this kind to be *sinful*, and not conceiving them to be *improper*, from the eagerness, with which numbers of my elder brethren pursue them, I stifled my own suggestions. But in my present sentiments I believe I shall never fire a gun again for my diversion, at any kind of game.

To

To assist your good resolutions, said the Dean, I can suggest two, or three other considerations, which are worth the attention of a clergyman. He can scarce be settled in any place, in which he will not find the squire of his parish attached violently to his game, and jealous of every man, who interferes with him in this great point. He is especially jealous of the clergyman, whom he considers as an interloper. I have known many clergymen get into silly squabbles on this score, and by making themselves obnoxious to the squire, render themselves much less able to be of service in  
 their

their parishes. On many occasions the squire's countenance may be of great use to the clergyman in managing his parochial affairs: and it is highly imprudent to lose his assistance for a trifle.

I once, said I, experienced this inconvenience myself. But I had the discretion, when I found I had raised a jealousy, immediately to desist. At present, I have free permission from Sir Roger, and two or three other gentlemen of the country, to range their domains, when I please: So that I lay down my arms in the plenitude of my power.

I should

I should wish still farther to suggest to you, continued the Dean, that if any mischance, in these violent exercises, should happen to a clergyman, it tells much worse, than when it happens to another person. How oddly would it sound, if the parish were told, on a Sunday, there could be no service, because the parson had put out his shoulder, the day before, at a fox-chase? If a clergyman lose a hand, or an eye in shooting, as is sometimes the case, I have generally found the commiseration of people, mixed with a certain degree of contempt. If he had been about his business, they would say, it would not have happened.—The commif-



tion also of an accidental mischief, in these unclerical amusements, will always be more distressing, at least it ought, to a clergyman, than to a layman.—Poor Archbishop Abbot was a melancholy instance. He was exemplary in many points, but unhappily indulged himself in the amusement of shooting; and as he was taking this exercise in a park belonging to Lord Zouch in Hampshire, he had the misfortune to shoot one of the keepers. After this event, he never recovered his cheerfulness; and party running high, it gave his enemies a great handle against him. It was brought as a question, whether he could ever again officiate as an arch-

archbishop. After a long inquiry, it was determined, that he must be degraded, but that the king might again restore him; which was accordingly done.—I could point out a prelate of these days \*, who, though otherwise a very respectable man, does his character no service by being a sportsman. Formerly he kept a pack of hounds; but has had the decency, since he obtained a mitre, to dismiss them. He is still however his own game-keeper; and is so expert, that he wants no assistance in furnishing his table with every article of game. Archbishop Abbot's misfortune reminds

---

\* About the beginning of James II.

minds me of a similar accident, of which this prelate had nearly been the occasion. A young lady, who lived near him, was riding quietly along a close lane, when a gun went off, on the other side of the hedge, close to her horse's ear. The beast took fright—started violently aside—and threw her; though providentially she was not hurt. While her servant was following her horse, she walked gently up the lane; and coming to an opening in the hedge, the bishop, in all his shooting accoutrements, presented himself. He made his apology, and hoped she was not hurt. She thanked him for his kind enquiry: but said, she should  
have

have been better pleased, if it had been needless.

I told the Dean, I remembered something of the story, about two years ago, in the public prints.

Yes, said the Dean, she was an arch girl, and inserted it in a very ludicrous manner; making a laughable contrast between the bishop's sporting attire, and his lawn sleeves, and other episcopal habiliments\*.

Well,

---

\* Dr. Johnson's profound reverence for the hierarchy made him expect from bishops the highest degree of decorum. There are gradations, he said, in conduct: there is morality—decency—propriety. None of these should

Well, Sir, said I, I hope these examples will prove sufficient cautions.

to

---

should be violated by a bishop. When a bishop places himself in a situation, where he has no distinct character, and is of no consequence, he degrades the dignity of his order. Nor was it only in the dignitaries of the church that Dr. Johnson required a particular decorum, and delicacy of behaviour; he justly considered, that the clergy, as persons set apart for the sacred office of serving at the altar, and impressing the minds of men with the awful concerns of a future state, should be somewhat more serious than the generality of mankind; and have a suitable composure of manners. A due sense of the dignity of their profession, independent of higher motives, will ever prevent them from losing their distinction in an indiscriminate sociality: and did such as affect this, know how much it lessens them in the eyes of those, who they think to please by it, they would feel themselves much mortified.

*Boswell's Life of Johnson*, vol. iii. p. 32.

to me, though I am sorry to receive them from such exalted characters.— I should wish you however to believe, that I am an enemy to cruelty in all shapes; and do not remember, that I ever wantonly took the life of the meanest reptile.

We certainly, said the Dean, have no right. When a spider takes possession of my house, or a snail of my garden, I make no scruple to destroy them. They are invaders. But if I meet with either of them in the fields, I should think myself the invader, if I disturbed them. If a wolf attempt to seize a lamb, which is my property, and under my protection,

tection, I think his life should pay the forfeit. But if he can seize an antelope, or any other wild animal, with which I have no concern, I have no authority to interfere. He has the same deed of gift to alledge for seizing the antelope, which I have for the beef or mutton I buy in the market. And yet I know not, whether I should not put him to death, wherever I found him, as a proscribed villain; as always acting under at least a tacit declaration of war against me. If I were not well assured, he would attack me, or mine, whenever he could, I am persuaded, I should never molest him.—Man regulates his actions towards his *fel-*  
*low-*

*low-men, by laws and customs.* But certainly there are laws also to be observed between man and beast, which are equally coercive, though the injured party has no power of appeal.

I fully accede, said I, Sir, to your code of criminal law between man, and beast. It is certainly power, not right, that we appeal to, in wantonly disposing of the lives of animals. And what surprises me the more, is, we often see this wanton breach of natural law in men of humanity. An acquaintance of mine, who is as ready as any man to do a good-natured action, will stand whole mornings by  
the



the side of a bridge, shooting swallows, as they thread the arch, and flit past him. He is however no clergyman.

Let him be what he will, said the Dean, his profession has been mistaken, and he ought to have been bred a butcher. I can have no conception of the humanity of a man, who can find his amusement in destroying the happiness of a number of little innocent creatures, sporting themselves, during their short summer, in skimming about the air; and without doing injury of any kind, pursuing only their own little happy excursions, and catching the food,

I

which

which Providence has allotted them. But I have seen instances enough of this kind of cruelty to remove all surprisè. More offence from facts despotism I never remember to have taken, than, about five or six years ago, in a little voyage I made into the Irish sea. A nephew of mine, the captain of a cruizer, whom you may remember to have seen here last summer, was then lying at Milford-haven; and, being about to take the voyage I have mentioned, was desirous to carry me with him, as I had expressed an inclination to see the wonderful rocky barrier, which nature had formed against the ocean, along many of the coasts of Wales.

As

As we drew near a promontory, where the rocks were lofty, we found them inhabited by thousands of sea-fowl of different kinds, which at that season frequent them. I was greatly amused with seeing the variety of their busy actions, and different modes of flight; and with hearing the harsh notes of each, when single; and their varied tones, changed into a sort of wild harmony, by the clangor of all together. One should have thought a colony, like this, might have been safe from all annoy. They are useless when dead—and harmless when alive—We saw however, as we proceeded, two or three boats anchoring  
at

at different distances, in which were certain *savages*—I can call them by no other name—diverting themselves with shooting at these poor birds, as they flew from their nests, or returned to them with food from the sea; destroying not only the parent-birds, but leaving the helpless progeny to clamour in vain for food, and die of hunger. This mode of taking life for no end, is a species of cruelty, which I should wish to brand with the severest name; and should almost detest a clergyman, who should find his *amusement* in it.

I must allow, said I, Sir, that what you have said against hunting, and  
 F shooting,

shooting, hath entirely convinced me of the impropriety of both, as clerical amusements.—You have said nothing however against fishing. Do you allow me to suppose, this amusement to be a clerical one? It is silent, quiet, and may be contemplative.

I am afraid, replied the Dean, I shall be thought too rigid if I abridge a clergyman of this amusement: and yet I cannot bring myself to allow him any *amusement*, which arises from *destroying life*. To fishing is annexed a peculiar cruelty. An impaled worm writhing upon a hook; or the convulsions of a fish under the operation of having a  
✻  
barbed

barbed hook extracted from its bowels; are ideas which greatly hurt my feelings. Catch your fish with a net, and you have my free leave.

But, said I, Sir, the trout, and I believe other fish, inhabit such little rapid rivulets, as are accessible only to a fly. Nets are accommodated chiefly to large rivers; and they require a boat, and other apparatus, which a clergyman cannot always command. Besides, the use of nets is commonly forbidden as too destructive. But the angling rod is generally allowed, and easily procured: and many a clergyman, who lives near a trout-stream, may find it convenient

venient to bring a dish of fish, which costs him nothing, now and then, to his family.

There is some force, no doubt, answered the Dean, in what you say: and if the fish can be caught in no other manner, I know not how to object. Only still, if I were the clergyman, I should leave other people to catch them.

But, said I, Sir, many of our great churchmen have indulged themselves in this amusement. That skilful ca- suist, and able divine, Dr. Donne, I have heard, was once an able an- gler; your worthy predecessor, Dr.

§

Nowel,

Nowel, was likewise a great proficient in angling. Our present worthy primate \* also I have been told, was inferior to neither of them in his love for angling. And good Mr. Walton †, whose lives I have heard you speak of as models of easy writing and good sense, wrote a book (though it never perhaps caught your attention) intitled, *The Compleat Angler; or, The Contemplative Man's Recreation.*

Indeed,

---

\* Archbishop Sheldon.

† Isaac Walton, a Hamburgh-merchant, who retired from business in the latter part of his life; and was much esteemed by all the scholars of his time. At this period, he had written several lives; to which he afterwards added the life of Bishop Sanderson.



Indeed, said the Dean; you have drawn up against me a very formidable body of evidence: but will you give me leave to challenge them? Donne, you know, was esteemed in the early part of his life, an *incorrect man*: and I suppose you are not much acquainted with his opinion on this subject, after he became a *pious divine*. For my predecessor, Dean Nowel, I have a high reverence; and I have heard, as you have, that he was an able angler. But I have heard also, that he made it a rule to give all his fish to the poor; which looks as if the good man was not quite easy in his business; but thought some kind of expiation

piation necessary. As to our worthy primate, I have eaten fish with him many times at his own table, and the tables of our common friends; and I never heard a syllable said, either by himself, or others, alluding to his skill in angling; so that I suppose that skill, whatever it was, has been long ago forgotten among the inaccuracies of his youth. After all, however, I cannot allow the example of any man living to be a test of right and wrong. It is not the example which makes the action good; but the goodness of the action which gives force to the example. If you could assure me, that Dean Nowel, or Dr. Donne (who was still

an acuter man) had ever considered: the art of angling with any attention; in a moral light, their *opinions* at least might have had some weight; but when we consider them as addicted only to a favourite amusement (and we all know the force of prejudice in such cases) their *example* appears to me of little value.—As to my friend Walton (whom I much esteem) though I allow him to be a pleasing writer, I doubt whether he is a deep reasoner. How angling can be called the *'contemplative Man's Recreation,* I cannot see. That the contemplative man may lay his angling rod on the bank, and take out his book, or meditate on a subject, I can

can easily conceive. But what has that to do with angling? While he is following his profession, and attending to the frisking of his fly, I should not give much for the produce of his contemplation.

Well, Sir, said I, if human examples have no weight with you, let me urge you with scriptural authority. Many of the apostles were fishermen; and our Saviour himself bids Peter *cast his book into the sea.*

Why yes, answered the Dean; but I doubt whether you will get more from these authorities, than from the

the

the other. Fishing, you know, was the occupation of several of the apostles: they fished with nets for a livelihood: and St. Peter, you will remember, did not *cast his hook into the sea* for his *amusement*. However, you find I am not very rigid on this head.—To be ingenuous with you, I am withheld from saying all I could wish to say on this subject, by a sort of pious prejudice. My father was one of the most benevolent of men; and one of the most skilful of anglers. Nobody dressed a fly more naturally. Many a time, when I was a boy, have I been delighted with looking into his fishing apparatus; and seeing his different flies—some plain, and  
grey-

grey-coated — some shining with glossy green—and others brilliant with spots of burnished gold—yet all so natural, that I think they might have imposed on the most experienced fish. Each of these he used in its proper season; and could make it frisk on the surface of the water, with the very action of life. All the rivers of the country, and their characters, he well knew; and would sometimes ride a dozen miles for a good day's fishing.—In respect to the memory of this excellent person (who was as good a man as any you have mentioned, and felt for every creature alive except a fish) I would not be too harsh in my censure of  
 this

this amusement. I cannot however, all prejudice apart, forbear saying, that, in general, we have no right to take the lives of animals except for food, or to get rid of a nuisance—and that when we are obliged to take life, we should always take it in the easiest manner, and never as an *amusement*. All this appears to me so much the dictate of nature, and truth, that no man can controvert it *in reason*, whatever he may do *in practice*. But the clergyman is under the still stricter ties of decency, and respect to his character.

But have not you, said I, Sir, confined within too strict a limit the  
power

power of man over the lives of animals? Are there not other reasons, besides obtaining food, and the removal of a nuisance, which may make the exercise of that power lawful? May we not take the whale for his oil, and the beaver for his fur?

I allow it; said the Dean. Where the uses of man preponderate, his right over the animal seems just. But perhaps greater liberty may be commonly taken in this matter, than my code will allow. If the use be trivial, the claim is imperfect. Though I should permit you to take the whale for his oil; I should not readily grant  
you



you leave to destroy the elephant for his tooth.

I told the Dean, I saw the difference very plainly. But, said I, Sir, do you allow the philosopher to take life in making his researches into nature? In examining the wonders of the microscope; in tracing the circulation of the blood; in discovering the properties of air; and in other things, which tend to advance human knowledge, and often serve some great end of utility?

"This question, said the Dean, is rather more difficult. What promotes human knowledge, or serves  
any

any essential purpose of utility, is certainly of more consequence, than the life of an animal: and I give you liberty to take it, when you are sure you are on good ground. But I should interdict this privilege to mere *curiosity*. We may believe, on the credit of others, that the blood circulates; or that an animal will die in an exhausted receiver.

I then asked the Dean, if he did not think, on the other hand, that we might carry our tenderness in taking life too far? I have frequently, said I, deserted a path I wished to walk in, because I have found it pre-occupied by a train of ants, which it hurt

hurt me to crush. And yet I have sometimes thought my caution unnecessary.

No doubt, replied the Dean, every virtue has its extremes—its *ultra* (as we just observed) as well as its *citra*. I have often seen this tenderness in taking life carried to a ridiculous length, if we can call any thing ridiculous, that is founded on an amiable principle. I knew a humane man, who would not suffer a mouse to be taken in a snap-trap. He allowed it to be taken alive; but he took care to have it carried to a distance into the fields, and there set at liberty. He would not destroy a spider, though  
he

---

he made no scruple to sweep away its web. My dear Sir, I once said to him, *your tender mercies are cruel*. It would certainly be more merciful to dispatch these poor animals at once, than to make them miserable by turning them adrift, or leaving them to a languishing death, by taking from them their means of subsistence. All this therefore seems to me absurd. It is making the lives of animals of more consequence than they should be. It is making a man miserable for the sake of a mite. For if we carry this tenderness as far as it will fairly go, we ought neither to eat a plum, nor taste a drop of vinegar. It is not size,

G

which

which gives value to life. The insect, that forms the blue of a plum, or that frisks in a drop of vinegar, has certainly the same claim to exist, as a spider, or a mouse. And how far life extends, we know not; so that our tenderness in this respect, if indulged to excess, might be endless. Like Indian Bramins, we should not dare to lie down, or set a foot to the ground, without examining every footstep with microscopical exactness. But as these little swarms of nature interfere thus with all the concerns of men, it is plain that Providence does not lay much stress on their lives. All therefore that seems required, in these cases, is to abstain  
from

from *wanton injury*.—I would not however have you always take the measure of a man's virtue by the extraordinary tenderness of his feelings. I knew a gentleman, so extremely tender towards the lives of animals, that when an earwig crept out of a log of wood, which had been laid on his fire, he forbade any more logs to be taken from that pile, and left it to rot. Yet this very man, with all these nice feelings about him, lived avowedly in a state of adultery. Such tenderness therefore may, or may not, be allied to virtue—certainly not necessarily so allied. It is founded merely in nature. But when *any one* affection of the mind is re-

gulated by a *religious principle*, there is in that mind a *controlling power*, which regulates *other* affections. Thus if we abstain from cruelty on a *religious principle*, we may depend on that *principle* on other occasions. As to these *delicate feelings*, they seldom reach beyond their *immediate object*.—Here the Dean made a pause, and after a little recollection, said, he thought they had now run over all the *riotous*, and *cruel* amusements, which he could recollect. As for *cock-fighting*, and *horse-racing*, he said, they are such gambling diversions, that I conceive no clergyman would even be present at the former; or enter into the spirit of  
the

the latter. The race-ground is a wide field, and if he ever enter it for curiosity, he will not only avoid the deep concerns, and commerce of the place, if I may so phrase it; but will also keep entirely aloof from the noise, and bustle, and clamour of the scene. A friend of mine lived on the confines of a celebrated race-ground. He was fond of horses, merely as beautiful objects; and liked to see their various motions. And as people are generally well mounted at a race, and much agitated, he used to gratify his curiosity by walking out in an evening, about the time the race was over; and would get behind some hedge, where unseen



he had a good view of the company returning from their sport over a fair plain. This was to him the only amusement of a race; and he would say, he believed he had more pleasure from the sober enjoyment of this moving picture, than any one could feel, who entered into the wild joy, and jollity of the scene.

This put me in mind of a story, which I could not help telling the Dean, of a clergyman in a neighbourhood where I once lived. He had prayers in his church every Wednesday and Friday. But one Sunday, as he was putting on his surplice in the vestry, Matthew, said he to his clerk, I shall be at the races on Wednesday, so you must give notice,

tice, there will be no prayers. Poor Matthew, who had not been fully instructed, and did not himself enter into the decorum of things, made all the congregation stare, by giving notice in a very audible voice, *that there would be no prayers on Wednesday, because the parson was going to the races.*

The good Dean received my story with a forced laugh ; for I perceived his feet grew rather painful to him. He rang soon after for his servant to change his posture ; and I thinking myself in the way, wished him a good night.

END OF THE FIRST DIALOGUE.

SECOND DIALOGUE..

---

IT was two days before I had an opportunity of renewing my conversation with the good Dean; which I was not sorry for, as it gave me time to put on paper what had already passed. He had divided amusements into three kinds, and we had yet considered only such as were *noisy* and *cruel*. I took the first opportunity to remind him, that he had left me still in possession of such amusements,

amusements, as he called *trifling* and *seducing*.

I mean not however, said he, to be more complaisant to you on this head, than I have already been. I am afraid too many of our fashionable amusements will fall under my censure. What do you think, for instance, of *cards*?

I answered, I did indeed suppose he would point one of his first batteries against them.

It was plain then, he told me, that I thought they deserved to be assaulted.

I know

I know not, said I, Sir, whether I thought quite so ill of them. I have always been accustomed to think, that moderately used, they were an innocent amusement even for a clergyman.

But pray, said the Dean, in examining the propriety or impropriety, the innocence or guilt, of an action, are you to consider how it affects yourself alone; or how it affects the public in general?

No doubt, I replied, a public-spirited man will consider his actions in reference to the public.

He

He certainly ought, said the Dean; and this being allowed, do you not consider the present rage for card-playing, through all ranks of people, as a public evil?

I replied, it was, no doubt, an amusement much abused: but the abuse, I thought, lay only at the door of the abuser. Meat and drink were abused—dress was abused—the Bible itself was abused: but we must have these things notwithstanding.

Aye, there, returned the Dean, you point out the true distinction. You answer yourself. *We must* have the one; but *need not* have the other.

Does

Does it follow, because we *must* have meat and drink, though they are abused, that we must necessarily have cards also?—If then cards be allowed to be a public evil; and we are, at the same time, under *no necessity* to have them, every conscientious man would give up a thing so trifling (as an amusement is at best,) to avert that evil: and by refraining, he certainly does avert it, as far as his own influence and example reach.

You do not mean, said I, Sir, that cards are in themselves essentially bad?

Why,

Why, no, said he. Cards *in themselves* may afford as innocent amusement as any thing else. And yet I know not whether this concession is not too much. I have been used myself to consider amusements under the head of such as are strictly social; and of such as contain in them a principle adverse to society: Many amusements are of the former kind; but cards, and some other games, in which one party must be victorious, and the other subdued, encourage a kind of principle somewhat opposite to the social temper: and the many little squabbles, even among friends, at such games, prove the truth of my remark. However, if we could  
play



play with such moderation, as occasioned no heart-burning, I should be inclined to wave *this objection*; and consider chiefly the *excess*. It is this indeed which creates the great mischief; and the *example* spreads it. If cards are played at in the parlour, they descend to the kitchen: and from your parlour and kitchen, to those of your neighbour, and so on. The lust of card-playing is now become so flagitious, that every serious man, I affirm, ought to withdraw his own example from so general, and pernicious a practice. The clergyman, in particular, should dread to sanction, what has certainly  
so

so bad an effect on the manners of the people.

But, said I, Sir, my example is of so little weight, that it cannot make things either better or worse.

There is not, replied the Dean, with some warmth, in the whole magazine of false reasoning, a more destructive mode of it, than this. I will not set a good example, because I know another will not follow it. So nobody will set a good example. We have better rules surely, to direct us, than the practice of other people. When a man thus puts his own practice and example into the hands of others,

others, and depends upon his neighbour's conduct to regulate his own, what reformation can we expect? If we are right, under such circumstances, it is by chance. Every man's example has its influence, more or less, which he should endeavour, for the sake of good order, to make as instructive as he can, without troubling himself with the example of others. In families, where cards are never introduced in the parlour, I dare take upon me to say they are rarely seen in the kitchen; except perhaps where servants have already learned their lesson in card-playing families. And if the obligation to avoid setting a bad example, in this instance, be

be *general*, it binds the *ecclesiastic* with double force. He should certainly be the *salt of the earth*; and endeavour to keep every thing, as far as he can, from corruption. Consider what a change even that might effect. There are perhaps twenty or thirty thousand ecclesiastics of different denominations, scattered about the various parts of England. If each of these influence a dozen, which (including their own families) is no extraordinary calculation, consider what a party would be gained over. Each of these again, we may suppose, might have some influence; and if we may adopt our Saviour's allusion, we might hope to see it work

like leaven, through the whole mass. At least, we might hope to see cards confined within the gloomy walls of gaming-houses, and night-cellars.

But should we not, said I, Sir, *begin* our reformation at these places? If we could get rid of gaming-houses, and night-cellars, which the high, and low vulgar frequent, cards might perhaps be left to us sober people as an innocent amusement.

Not so entirely, my good friend, answered the Dean. It is not only when cards are carried to this pernicious height, that I except against them. Indeed, when a man has taken  
his

his degrees at a gaming-table, I have done with him. He is beyond receiving instruction from me. I must therefore inform you, that I do not confine the gaming-table to what is called so (as they say) κατ' ἐξοχην. I rank under that head all those scenes of profligacy, scattered, not only through the metropolis, but through every part of the country, where high stakes are pledged, and well-dressed people meet, not so much with a view of amusement, as with a purpose to pillage one another.—These however are only the *excesses* of card-playing; but for various other reasons the very practice itself should be discouraged.—In the best light, I

think, cards afford only a frivolous, and seducing amusement; especially to a clergyman.—They often lead him into more expence, still short of what may be called *gaming*, than may be prudent for him to incur. Once engaged in the habit of playing, or listed, if I may so phrase it, into the corps of card-players, he cannot sometimes avoid venturing higher stakes than he could wish.—But suppose he keep the scales of loss and gain pretty even, (as I have sometimes heard the moderate card-player boast) what shall we say for the expence of time? Here comes in a very seducing part. Evening after evening is lost. The afternoon  
is

is often added. Habits are formed. Play and comfort are connected; and the day ends in joyless vacancy, that does not conclude with cards.—Besides, you give yourself into the hands of others. It is unsocial to break up a party. You are not therefore master of yourself.—Then again, consider, you cannot choose your company. You are a known card-player; you cannot stand out, when a hand is wanted, and must often consort with those you disesteem.—Perhaps you yourself become a corrupter. The card-player must have company. He cannot follow his occupation alone: and when he gets old in his habits, he



seduces, where seduction is necessary, every one, over whom he has influence, to join him in his idle employment.—Above all, young people should consider, how easily, where amusements are concerned, the mind glides into habits of indulgence. In these journies of pleasure, step follows step mechanically. I knew a young lady thus debauched into a card-player, though she was once among the most amiable of her sex—domestic—ingenious—fond of books—full of resources, and never at a loss for the employment of her time. Family amusements were all the pleasures she sought. Her father and mother were excellent people; and brought her  
up,

up, an only daughter, in, what I may justly call, the cheerful restraints of religion. But during a short visit at a relation's, to which her father reluctantly consented, she unhappily got a taste for card-playing; and, when she returned home, did not much enjoy those innocent domestic circles, in which, before, she had given, and received, so much pleasure. In short, she had lost her heart to this vile amusement. Soon afterwards she married a young gentleman of fortune—sober, virtuous, and modest; but of talents very inferior to those of his wife. With discretion she might have modelled her family, as she had pleased; and had an excel-

lent example before her, in her father's: but she chose rather to corrupt her husband, and turn his mansion into a gaming-house.—I mention this instance as one among a hundred I have seen in my life, to shew the rapid progress of pleasurable habits, and those of cards beyond all others; to which I think particularly belongs that excellent adage, *Principiis obsta.*

But since, said I, Sir, we are often obliged to consort with those, whom we disesteem, or with those, whose minds are too unfurnished to bear a part in conversation, is it not useful, and often necessary, to introduce something,

something, that removes, for the time at least, all disgust—something that may level those, who have not sense, with those who have; and enable them to pass their time together in mutual civility, without labouring to support a conversation, which most probably more than half of them are utterly unable to support?

This is the first time, said the Dean smiling, I ever heard cards mentioned as a bond of benevolence. As the cause of ill-humour, and dissension, I have often heard them taxed. But I suppose you do not hold the argument seriously. You cannot imagine cards to be more effectual to this end,

end, than even those modes of general civility, which commonly reign among polite people; and check, during the intercourse, all appearance of such little hostilities, as may rankle within. At least you must allow, that card-playing is not quite a clerical mode of inculcating benevolence.—And as to your solicitude to lower the man of wit and sense to a level with his neighbours, and bring conversation to an equilibrium, I think it ill-judged. If the man of sense have any good-nature in his composition, he will not be much hurt at bestowing on his weaker neighbour a pittance of his own information, and wisdom. At least,

least, it is not well done in you to furnish him with an apology to withhold it. How is the poor man to improve, if on his coming into company, an immediate stop is put to all conversation by calling for cards?—However, I consider this argument only as a shuffle. Any conversation is surely better, than the dull monotony of a card-table. He who can bear the conversation of a card player, should not affect being out of humour with any other conversation. For myself, I protest I should make better company of a parrot.

I cannot, said I, truly say much for  
the

the conversation of a card-table, except that it is innocent, and may keep conversation from taking a worse turn.

Why, yes, said the Dean, and so it would, if you should clap a gag into every body's mouth, when he went into company. At the same time I should lay but little stress either on one expedient, or the other. A short *restraint* affords no *amendment*. Bring the axe to the root of the tree—correct the heart—and you do something. But till that be done, the propensity to scandal may be *checked*, but will find its opportunity to *break out*, whether you are a card player,

or

or not. Perhaps, like fermenting liquor, it may burst out with more violence from having been confined.

But, said I, Sir, is it not worth consideration, whether people may not employ their vacant time worse, if they do not employ it on cards?

I know not how they can employ it worse, answered the Dean, if you respect their amusements only. And if you think cards will keep a young fellow from the stews or a debauch, when he is inclined to either, I fear you attribute much more to them, than they deserve. If a man be fond



HO    DIALOGUES ON THE

fond of two games, both are amusements; and so far as there is a similitude between them, the love of one may perhaps overpower an attachment to the other. But when a man is fond of a *game*, and addicted to a *vice*, as there is no similitude between the objects, you have no more ground for expecting the former will drive out the latter, than for supposing a man's dancing a minuet should prevent his admiring a picture.

You force me, said I, Sir, out of all my strong holds: but you must give me leave to make one observation more. I have heard sickly people  
speak

speak of cards as a great relief in pain; when the mind is incapable of any other attention. And if exciting this frivolous attention will draw it from attending to its malady, cards, I think, are an opium, and may often be called a blessing.

Aye, aye, replied the Dean; I have certainly no objection to their being used medicinally. But then I should wish to have them sold only at the apothecary's shop, and the doctor to prescribe the use of them. I should fear, if the patient prescribe for himself, he may be apt to take too large a dose, as he often does of laudanum, and other anodyne drugs. I once  
 knew

knew an old lady, who had lost the use of her speech, and of both her hands, by two or three paralytic strokes; and every evening took the remedy you have been prescribing. She was a lady of large fortune—gave good suppers—and had generally a number of humble friends about her, one of whom always, after supper, dealt, sorted, and held her cards, and pointing to this, or that, the old lady nodded at the card she wished to have her friend play. But it sometimes happened, that the paralytic shake of the head was mistaken for the nod of approbation, and unfortunately a wrong card was played; which threw the old lady (whose whole heart was  
in

in the remedy she was taking) into such violent fits of passion, that people thought she received more injury from these irritations, than benefit from the prescription.

I fear, said I, Sir, from all this ridicule, you thought what I advanced, rather impertinent.

My ridicule, replied the Dean, was not surely directed at you; but at those poor melancholy objects, who cannot, even at the close of life, be happy without their cards. I have heard of many such;—and have known some.—I once called on a neighbouring clergyman (it is now  
 I many

many years ago) whom I found, not indeed absolutely dying; but so ill, that it was thought he never could recover. I was then in haste; but finding him desirous of my company, I promised to drink tea with him in the afternoon. When I came, I found he had invited two other clergymen to meet us. As I knew them both to be men of sense and learning, I expected to spend a very pleasant evening. But how great was my surprize, when the tea-table being removed, the card-table was introduced; to which they sat down as to a thing of course. I was the only young man among them, having only just taken orders: but I

was

was so struck with this mode of administering consolation to a dying man, and with the strange indecorum of drawing a young clergyman into such improprieties, that I knew not what to do. I hesitated: but the text came into my head, *rebuke not an elder*; and not having time, in the moment, to consider circumstances, I sat down. But the thing made such an impression on me, that from that day to this, I have obstinately persisted in never touching a card. At a time, when serious thought and meditation are the most becoming, it is pitiable, in the last degree, to see the dregs of life running off in so wretched a man-



clergymen have a difficult part to act. The prevalence of custom is a vehement tide, which we find it very hard to stem.

I should therefore, said the Dean, wish you to keep out of it; which every man may, if he please. Be resolute at first in resisting importunity, and importunity will presently cease. You will soon be considered as one who has a will of his own.— The clergy, I think, may be divided into two great bodies. One class are such as enter into the ministry only to make their fortunes. These are a kind of amphibious animals. I cannot call them clergymen.



They are traders in ecclesiastical goods. With them my arguments have nothing to do. They have no scruples; and will comply of course with every thing that will recommend them to the world.—In the other class are many, no doubt, who have the end and honour of their profession at heart: and wish only to be convinced of the propriety or impropriety of a thing, to do it, or leave it undone. But there are numbers, I fear, in this class, well-meaning, on the whole, and serious men, who are yet ready to make the customs of the world an apology for a variety of improper practices; and slide into a number of corrupt habits, without considering

considering that to oppose the seducing customs of the world is the very essence of a state of trial; and that it is the very business of a good pastor to set up his own example as a way-mark against them.

To all this I fully assented.

Aye, Mr. Frampton, continued the Dean, with much earnestness in his manner, these are serious truths. The customs of the world put a gloss upon many improper things—among which I consider cards—and mislead numbers, who are glad perhaps to misinterpret the apostle, and tell you, that if they

do them not, *they must altogether go out of the world.* But whatever liberties the layman takes (and yet I know not what gives him any exclusive liberty) the clergyman ought to be particularly guarded against the indulgence of any amusement, which is fraught with so much mischief, both public and private; which so easily gains ground by the force of habit; and in the defence of which, you see, so little can be said. Many bad habits subside in age. Nature cannot hold out. But here is a mischievous propensity, which cleaves often to our very last sand. It is possible, I may yet live to see people so barefaced, as to make no distinction of days, and  
play

play at cards on Sundays. It is practised, I am informed, in France, from which we derive too many of our fashions.

I told the Dean, that, as I believed I was better acquainted with the history of card playing, than he was, I was afraid that vile practice, though not frequent, had gotten at least some footing among us. One instance I knew. I had, not long ago, the honour to be admitted, in a dearth of better company, to the card-table of a lady of fashion. Soon after I found she played on Sundays; when, fearing lest I should be involved in the imputation of that practice, I ne-

ver would touch another card at her house. On her calling me to account for deserting my post, I plainly told her the reason. This led to a short debate. She said, after the duties of the day were over (for she was a constant church-woman) she thought a little recreation in the evening was very allowable. I talked of the great *impropriety* at least of *breaking down fences*, and laying the practice open to the common people, even though she would not allow any profanation of the day. She thought the fault lay in the cattle, that *went through the broken fence*. At length however she allowed that *cards on a Sunday* were very improper among the lower people

*ple*—and farther, that, when *carried to the height of gaming*, they were a very improper Sunday-amusement to *any one*. I begged she would suffer me to shew her, merely on *these two concessions of her own*, the mischief of introducing cards *at all* on a Sunday. And, that she might see it in the stronger light, I offered to put my arguments on paper. But I could never obtain leave. She always stopped my mouth with saying, she had made up her mind, and wished to hear no more on the subject.

I honour you, said the Dean, as I should every young clergyman, who  
could

could make so proper a stand against a vicious fashion. I did not indeed know, and am much hurt to hear, that this vile practice has at all gotten footing amongst us. I thought the Sabbath, though not observed as it ought to be, had never been prostituted in this shameless manner. The Sabbath is certainly the great mean of keeping alive the little religion we have; and much have they to answer for, who contribute at all, but especially in this flagrant manner, to destroy its reverence among the people.

I think so truly, said I, Sir; and the rather as I believe the common  
people

people yet hold such profligacy in detestation. A genteel family took a summer-lodging, not long ago, in a country-town, where I happened then to reside : and I remember one Sunday (the day being hot) the windows were thrown open, and exhibited them sitting round a card-table. But the mob, provoked at such impudence, gathered about the house, and in very intelligible language, gave them to understand, that if the card-table was not immediately removed, they would take their own method to remove it.

I am no friend, said the Dean, to  
the



the jurisdiction of a mob; but in this case, I could say with the poet,

*Interdum vulgus rectum videt*—

In return for your account of this very impudent piece of effrontery, I will tell you a story of genuine simplicity. A friend of mine had a curate, recommended from Cambridge, an excellent young man, who had never been in a scrape during the whole time he had been at the university. He was addicted to no improper amusement; and cards in particular he disliked. It happened, however, on some singular occasion (I believe on that of a young lady's coming of age) he was invited among several other young  
folks

folks to spend an evening, where cards made a part of the entertainment. He stood out strenuously, as wholly ignorant of every game. At last some *general game* \* (I know not what they call it) being proposed, and some of the company (as corrupters are always at hand) instructing him in what he could not but feel he had powers of mind to comprehend, he was drawn in, and sat down, though little attentive to the business in which he was engaged.

---

\* We have among us at present a kind of game, which is called a *round game*, from the company's sitting *round* a table. The Dean probably alludes to some such game as this, which might be in use in his time.

At the end of the game, when the accounts of profit and loss were settled, his companions gave him four shillings, to his great surprise, for certain little ivory fish, which he had received in the course of the game. The next morning, when he told the story, he said, it was fortunate he had been successful; for if he had lost four shillings, instead of winning them, he should certainly have gone off without paying his debt; as he had not the least conception, that the ivory fish he had received, represented any thing but themselves.

I am convinced, said I, Sir, there  
is

is great force in every thing you have said; and I shall always consider cards as a very dangerous, and ensnaring amusement.—But still, I think, your arguments regard chiefly *the excess*. Many occasions may occur, on which a man would wish to break through a general rule. There are few rules, however right on the whole, which do not admit exceptions. An *habitual card-player* deserves every rebuke you can give him. But perhaps you will not be so severe with a prudent *occasional* one, though he should even be a clergyman.

I am sorry, my young friend, re-

K

plied

plied the Dean with a serious air, you have so soon forgotten the grand argument I used against a clergyman's having any concern at all with cards as an amusement. I endeavoured to shew you, that, as cards were become so *general an evil*, the clergy, who should consider themselves as *the salt of the earth*, should endeavour to purify this mass, instead of mixing with it. If they encourage the practice of card-playing by their own example, they certainly hold the public good very cheap, when they cannot give up so trifling a thing as an amusement, to promote it. They certainly ought, were it merely for the *chance* of promoting it.—

it.—As for your being an advocate, added the Dean, for *occasional playing*, though every thing I have said should go for nothing, I think such *qualifying* is of little use. You cannot well play *occasionally*. You must either resolve never to play, or be at every body's beck. If you are known *occasionally* to play, you will be thought a *surly fellow*, if you ever refuse, because it depends entirely on your own inclination; and a good-natured man will always be ready to give up his own inclination to please others.—But if you are known *never to play*, nobody can take offence. So that, in fact, there seems to be no medium between playing, *whenever*

*you are asked, and never playing at all.*

I felt so much ashamed at having so soon forgotten the good Dean's grand argument, with regard *to the public*, that I was too much abashed to make any immediate reply.

He observed my confusion: but without taking notice of it, after a little pause, he obligingly continued his discourse.—Well, said he, Mr. Frampton, having thus dispatched the card-table, let us go next to the *play-house*. What a noble institution have we here, if it were properly regulated! I know of no-  
thing

thing that is better calculated for moral instruction — nothing that holds the glafs more forcibly to the follies and vices of mankind. I would have it go, hand in hand, with the pulpit. It has nothing indeed to do with Christian doctrines. The *pageants*, as, I think, they were called, of the last century, used to represent scripture-stories, which were very improperly introduced, and much better handled in the pulpit. But it is impossible for the pulpit to represent vice and folly in so strong a light as the stage. One addresses our reason, the other our imagination; and we know which receives commonly the more forcible impression. There



should always however be a little dash of the *caricature* to give a zest to *character*. But nature and probability should be strictly observed. I remember—it is now, I believe, thirty years ago—seeing a play acted, in which an old fellow is represented dallying with a coquettish girl. It was an admirable picture from nature. The sprightly actions of youth imitated by the ridiculous gesticulations of age, struck my fancy so forcibly, that the picture is yet as fresh, as if it had been painted yesterday.—As *moral representations*, I cannot say, I think Shakespear's plays are models. There is a fund of nature in them—vast invention  
—and

—and a variety of passions admirably coloured. I wish I could forget the loose fancy, which wantons through most of them, and is extremely disagreeable to a chaste ear. But what I chiefly remark, is, that I do not *commonly* find in them (what I should wish to find in *every* play) some virtue, or good quality, set in an amiable light; or some vice, or folly, set in a detestable one; and made, as it were, the burden of the whole. I call the scenes of Falstaff admirable copies from nature; but I know not what instruction they give. Now I should wish to turn the play-house into a mode of amusing instruction; and to suffer no theatrical perform-

ance, which did not eminently conduce to this end. Young men, for instance, are apt to be led away by vicious pleasures; and to supply their profligacy, are often carried from one degree of wickedness to another. A play on such a subject \* might perhaps deter many a young man in the beginning of his career. Or a good effect might be produced by placing some virtue in opposition to its contrary vice; as *contrasts* generally have more force, than *simple exhibitions*.

---

\* There was afterwards a play formed on this very plan, intitled, George Barnwell; the moral of which is good, though the execution is far from being faultless.

I asked

I asked the Dean, if he meant to exclude comedy from his theatre?

By no means, said he: I should rather encourage it more than tragedy; inasmuch as I should have more hope of curing such vices, and follies, as require the lash, than such as require the gibbet. My stage-authors should deal much in ridicule, which, well conducted, not thrown on individuals, but cast broadly on vice, and folly, I conceive to be an admirable engine. But I should not ridicule a squinting eye—a stammering voice—a provincial dialect—the peculiarities of a profession—  
indeed

indeed any oddity, or deformity, that was not strictly immoral.

I am afraid, said I, Sir, you will cut off much of our modern wit by this severity: for these oddities are, in general, a great source of it. The broken English of a Frenchman—the blunders of an Irishman—or the broad dialect of a Scotsman, are what our modern theatres are taught to believe very witty. I shall however (to speak for one) think myself much obliged to you for ridding the stage of all this trumpery of false wit and humour; and bringing only such ridiculous characters forward, as can *support themselves*, if I may so speak,

by their follies.—But there is one thing, which, I fear, will incapacitate the stage from being of much use in the reformation of manners. The scenery, the dresses, the musick, and other appendages of the theatre, make the expence so great, that it can never be brought to a level with the pockets of the multitude.

That is well urged, said the Dean. I thank you for the hint, and will immediately model my dramatic representations in conformity to it.— We have one church for rich, and poor. All pay equal homage to one God— all are equally his creatures—and it is fit we should all worship him in  
one

one place.— But though we have only one church, there is no necessity to have only one theatre. In my Utopia, therefore, I mean to establish two—one for the higher—the other for the lower orders of the community. In the first, of course, there will be more elegance, and more expence; and the drama must be suited to the audience by the representation of such vices, and follies, as are found chiefly among the great. The other theatre shall be equally suited to the lower orders. And to enable them the better to partake of the moral amusement provided for them, I mean to abolish all tumbling—dancing—bear-baiting, and every thing else,  
that

that tends only to encourage *merriment* without *instruction*.

You have now, said I, Sir, perfectly satisfied me. I shall heartily rejoice in the erection of your two theatres. And it gives me great delight to hear you speak so favourably of the drama. I own, if there is any one amusement, which appears to me superior to all others, it is to see a good play, well acted.

But hold, said the Dean: you understand, I hope, that I give this commendation only to theatres of my own regulating; not to such as at present



positions should be somewhat in this way. But they should all certainly have a moral tendency. The farce, as at present used, is a most absurd excrescence; and I suppose intended merely to please the vulgar. As there is an upper gallery, the people there must be pleased, as well as those in the boxes. But my two theatres will render this double mode of representation unnecessary.—In short, if the stage were regulated as I could wish it, even clergymen almost might be actors upon it. As it is now managed, they cannot well, I think, be innocent spectators. Tacitus, I remember, somewhere speaking of the modesty of the German ladies, attributes

butes it in a great measure to their not being suffered to attend public diversions\*. I should wish only to make one improvement on this German fashion, which is, neither to permit gentlemen nor ladies to attend them, till they are better regulated. The historian might have reference to the publick amusements of *his own* country; with which he thought it happy, the German ladies had no opportunities of being corrupted.

Whatever

---

\* The words of the original to which the Dean alludes, are, *Septa pudicitia agunt, nullis spectaculorum illecebris, nullis conviviorum irritationibus corruptæ.*

De Mor. German.

Edit. Gronov. p 401.

Whatever his precise meaning was, it shews his general opinion of such amusements: and, I suppose, you will allow Tacitus, though not an apostle, to be a very good judge of men, and manners.—Besides, added the Dean, the very profession of a player is rendered so disreputable, that nobody ought to encourage it. Take the matter home with you. Would you wish either your son or daughter to seek a livelihood on the stage? If not, do you think it shews much moral rectitude to encourage in other people's children, what, on virtuous principles, you would shudder at in your own?

I told

I told the Dean, I durst not take upon me to answer his invective either against the stage, or its professors. I feared there was more truth in what he had said, than I wished to find. A clergyman, I observed, must often be in the way of hearing, and seeing improprieties; which he cannot avoid. But I allowed it certainly to be a different case, when he went *voluntarily* into the way of these things.—I then asked the Dean, what he thought of *dancing-assemblies*, and cheerful meetings of other kinds?

As they are at present managed, said the Dean, so far as I am acquainted

quainted with them, I should hardly allow a clergyman to attend any of them. Put them under my regulation, and he may attend them all.

For the sake of truth, I replied, I must say, that I have attended the assemblies at our county-town, not constantly, indeed, but very frequently, and I do not remember ever seeing (except perhaps once, or twice) what the most exact person would call the least breach of decorum, or good manners.

I know not, said the Dean, what you precisely mean by the least breach of decorum: but before I should give  
my

my sanction to the assemblies at your county-town, I should wish to ask a few questions. Is all company, that are well dressed, promiscuously admitted?—or admitted on the introduction of nobody can tell who?—Is there no vying in dress, and ornament, and fashion?—Are no card-tables introduced?—Are suppers, and drinking, and late hours excluded?—While you are dancing, or carding, or drinking above stairs, is any care taken of your poor servants below?—Are they left to saunter about inn-yards and tap-houses, to get into bad company— or, not knowing what to do with themselves, to debauch one another? Unless you

can answer me rationally on all these heads, I shall never suffer any clergyman, over whom I have influence, to attend any of these meetings. It may be difficult perhaps to prevent the layman from filling the heads of his sons and daughters with dress, and vanity, and folly, and intrigue, and all the impertinence that attends such promiscuous, ill-regulated assemblies — we must leave him, if he please, to set them an example himself, and go before them in all these scenes of dissipation—we must leave him also to take no more care of the morals of his servants, than if they were his cattle; and to pay

no





their daughters are seen to most advantage.

Aye, replied the Dean, I have lately heard that argument maintained, in a'l the plenitude of its folly, by one of those prudent mothers; to whom I was weak enough to give my advice on this head, for the sake of an amiable god-daughter of mine. I hate the idea of carrying young women, like colts, to a fair. It is indelicate: it is below their dignity. They should not seek; but be sought after. Few happy marriages, I believe, are founded on these hasty impressions.—I shall not, however, say more on this point, as I am not  
instructing.

instructing the world at large; but only giving advice to my brethren of the clergy. Let the beau suit himself with a belle, and choose a wife from the made-up young ladies, who are taught to say smart things, and shine at assemblies; and whose heads are fuller of fashions, than of such knowledge as most becomes them. But when the clergyman thinks it prudent to change his condition, let him look for a wife in some domestic family; and endeavour to choose one, whom he hears sober people commend for her private virtues. And if she happen to be known in any polite circle, and dignified by the name of a *lifeless, inanimate thing*,

he

he has still the better chance for happiness.

As I was always fond of dancing, I did not care to let the argument wholly drop; and told the Dean, I hoped he had no dislike to dancing in *itself*; but only when it was improperly circumstanced. It appeared to me a very innocent winter-evening amusement.

It appears so to me, said the Dean. I have already told you, that if you will suffer me to regulate your dances, and other evening-meetings, I will freely indulge you in them.— Summon an assembly, when you please,

please, at some *private* house. *Public* houses always lead to promiscuous company, and intemperance. Let the meeting consist of well-educated, and well-disposed young people of both sexes; and when the music strikes up, and the dance begins, send for me; and I will hobble away, as fast as my gouty feet will allow; and if I may be permitted quietly to occupy a corner of the room in an elbow-chair, I shall enjoy the scene as much as any of you. To see youth and innocence made happy amidst such amusements, as are suitable to them, always gives a new joy to my philanthropy; which is as suddenly damped, when I see them

§ entangled

entangled in pleasures, which I cannot but look on, as secret snares for their innocence.—And yet I cannot say I should wish to see a clergyman, except perhaps a very young one, more than a spectator of these amusements. To see him to-day sailing about in a minuet step, and to-morrow preaching in a pulpit, might make a contrast perhaps too strong for some of his hearers. I do not, however, wish to determine precisely. The amusement is certainly innocent.—With regard to the other meetings you mention, if you put them under the same rational restraint, I have no objection to any of them. I should be pleased to meet  
a set

a set of virtuous, well-bred young men, or a mixed company, at dinner, or supper; and if their chief end were either conversation, or innocent amusement, I should do the best in my power to amuse, and enliven them. Nor should I expect them all to be men of agreeable manners, ingenuity, and information. I should only indulge the hope of their having the same dislike, that I had, to transgress the rules of decency and propriety.--But as for clubs met together on set purpose to be joyous—to drink, and to rattle—to sing songs, and catches—to roar, and stagger, as the evening gets late, I hold them

in

in abhorrence. No clergyman \* should ever join in such orgies; and I should think very meanly of him, if he should frequent a company, that had the least tendency to that riotous mirth, which produces these improprieties of behaviour.

You seemed to mention, said I,  
 Sir, with a mark of disapprobation;  
 songs,

---

\* Johnson and his friend Beauclerk were in company with several clergymen, who thought they should appear to advantage by assuming the lax jollity of men of the world. Johnson, who, they expected, would be entertained, sat grave, and silent for some time. At last, turning to Beauclerk, he said, by no means in a whisper, "The merriment of these parsons is mighty offensive."

*Bof. Life*, vol. iii. p. 328.

songs, and catches. Do you see any thing particularly mischievous in them?

By no means, replied the Dean, when they are not found in bad company; and when the words are such as neither countenance vice, nor violate decorum. If the select assembly we just left dancing, choose to amuse themselves after their dance, or after supper, with singing, I should not only approve it, but beg leave to listen to them. Even the clergyman I will allow to sing in such an assembly; though I should warmly reprove him, if he should sing for the entertainment of a mixed company,

or



or at a public meeting.—If I should not be thought precise, or puritanical, I should, now and then, recommend a psalm-tune, especially on a Sunday evening. We have several psalm-tunes, which are very fine; and when sung in parts by sweet female voices, are, in my ear, more harmonious, than any other species of music; and in the language of our great, but unfashionable poet \*,

Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to  
heaven.

—At the same time, I cannot say, I am a friend to instrumental music on

---

\* At that day Milton, on the account of his political principles, was not in general esteem.

on Sunday-evening; from no objection to the thing itself, (though, indeed, I think harmonious voices sweeter, when unaccompanied) but I should fear its being misconstrued by undistinguishing people, to whom we should always be careful not to give offence. Psalms are sung in churches, and can lead into no mistake: but fiddles, and flutes, and harpsichords are merry instruments, and, in some people's opinion, can never be accommodated to purposes of devotion\*.—As to *catches*, I know little

of

---

Occidus is a pastor of renown.  
When he has prayed, and preached the Sabbath down,

M

With

of them: but from what I do know,  
they make no attempt either at sense,  
or sentiment. The harmony may  
be good; and if the words, though  
senseless, have no ill-meaning, I shall  
not reprobate, though I cannot com-  
mend them.

Having

---

With wire, and catgut he concludes the day,  
Quav'ring and semiquav'ring thought away.  
The full concerto swells upon your ear;  
All elbows shake.—

Will not the sickliest sheep of every flock  
Resort to this example?—

If apostolic gravity be free  
To play the fool on Sundays, why not we?  
If he the tinkling harpsichord regards  
As inoffensive, what offence in cards?  
Strike up the fiddles, let us all be gay:  
Laymen have leave to dance, if parsons play.

C. W. P. E. R.

Having dispatched, said the Dean, all our *riotous*, and *cruel* amusements, and likewise such as are *trifling*, and *seducing*, (though they often, as in some instances just observed, intermingle with each other) I should now introduce you to such amusements, as I think proper for a clergyman: but as the evening grows late, we will take an earlier hour, if you please, to-morrow, to discuss them.

END OF THE SECOND DIALOGUE.

THIRD DIALOGUE.

---

THE next day was Sunday, when I happened to be wholly engaged. But on Monday I waited on the good Dean soon after dinner.

I am impatient, said I, Sir, to have another conversation with you. You have taken away my gun, and dog. You have prohibited my playing at cards, and have refused me leave to go to an assembly, or to meet my friend

friend at a tavern; and I cannot but be solicitous to know, what amusement you will at length allow me.

But are not you, replied the Dean, rather unreasonable? I have indeed taken your gun. But as to your dog, you may keep him, if you please, for a companion. I have no objection. Have I not at least *connived* also at your fishing, though I cannot recommend it? Have I not introduced you to many agreeable societies? Have I not given you leave to sing and to dance? And does not all this satisfy you? However, I mean still to do more. I

with only to make your amusements:— your habits— your company— your dress— and your profession, all agree.— By the way, I am not a little solicitous about the dress of a clergyman; which I think a matter of more consequence, than the generality of people will perhaps allow. I think it an argument of great lightness in a clergyman to endeavour, as far as he can, to adopt the lay-habit. He shews he has embraced his own profession only for reasons of convenience; and in his heart dislikes its restraints. I should wish to have every clergyman, especially when in full orders, obliged.

obliged to appear always in a short cassock, under his coat. He could not then so easily adopt improprieties in his dress; and might be more upon his guard also against improprieties in his behaviour. His clerical habit would be a continual call upon him for decorum at least, as he durst not, in that garb, do many things, which, dressed like a layman, he might be tempted to do. Besides, it might tend to keep such young men out of the church, as, when in it, are a disgrace both to it, and to themselves. Cloathing was originally intended for the sake of decency, and warmth. In civilized societies, it became afterwards of use to



distinguish ranks: and if in this instance the distinction were a little more enforced, it would, I am persuaded, have a good effect.

I hope, Sir, said I, that my wardrobe, if it were all produced before you, would give you no offence. Nothing would be found there, but what is strictly clerical. Indeed I myself have been often highly offended at the improper dress of many of my younger brethren. I wonder not, therefore, at *your* being offended.

So far then, answered the Dean, I may presume upon you, as a hopeful disciple; and that, as you are clerical

AMUSEMENTS OF CLERGYMEN. 169

cal in your dress, you will be clerical: also in your amusements.—Now as *exercise*, on which health so much depends, is one great end of amusement, and as the clerical life may in general be called a sedentary one, he who provides amusements for a clergyman, should have an especial view to exercise. But though I forbade the clergyman to gallop after hounds, I have no objection to his mounting his horse, and riding a dozen miles, in a morning, for exercise.

But without some end in view, I observed, few people were fond of a solitary ride.

Solitary

Solitary ride! exclaimed the Dean: Have you forgotten the philosopher's noble adage, *Nunquam minus solus; quam cum solus?* I should allow a man brought up in business to urge such a pretence: but in a scholar I cannot admit it. The very trot of a horse is friendly to thought. It beats time, as it were, to a mind engaged in deep speculation. An old acquaintance of mine used to find its effect so strong, that he valued his horse for being a little given to stumbling. I know not how far, he would say, I might carry my contemplation, and totally forget myself, if my honest beast did not, now and then, by a false step, jog me out  
of.

of my reverie; and let me know, that I had not yet gotten above a mile or two out of my road\*.

But every scholar, said I, Sir, has not the art of keeping his thoughts so collected. The trotting of a horse, even without stumbling, may be enough to dissipate his best meditations.

If he cannot think in one way, answered the Dean, let him think in another. If he cannot lay premises  
and

---

\* This story was afterwards told of Dr. Young—not the author of the Night-thoughts; but another clergyman of that name, remarkable for simplicity of character, and absence of mind.

and conclusions together, and make a sermon; let him consider some letter he has to write—or some conference with a neighbour to manage. He must be a very thoughtless fellow, if he have not some useful topic to engage his thoughts. Or perhaps he may have some friend to call upon. At worst, he may amuse himself with looking at the country around him. It is a pleasure to see how differently the corn, or the grass grows in different parishes; and to mark its progress in different soils, and different exposures. Every season furnishes some new, and agreeable scene. He sees the woods assume one appearance in the spring—  
another

another in summer—a third in autumn—and a fourth in winter. And as nature is never at a stand, he sees a continual variation in her scenes. So that, if he have no resources in himself, he may still find them in the beauties of nature.

But perhaps, I objected, he is not fond of riding; or he may not be able to keep a horse.

Let him walk then, said the Dean. I should recommend walking to him, as every way a preferable exercise. Over the horseman he will enjoy many advantages. He is instantly equipped. He has only to take his hat,

of my life. When I was a young man, and could go among my poor neighbours, I had three employments at the same time: visiting my parish—studying—and using exercise. I have made in these excursions many a sermon. The greatest part of this book \* was first rudely composed in the fields, and when I came home, I always digested what had occurred in my walk—consulted my authorities, and wrote all fair over. And even since I grew old, when it pleases God to allow me the use of my feet, I still continue the same exercise: only instead of being able, as I was then,

to

---

\* The *Origines Sacrae*; which the Dean had just been correcting.

to take a fatiguing excursion, without paying much attention to roads or weather, I am obliged now to shorten my walk—to rest a little, and divide it into portions—to creep along easy paths—in garden-walks, or under sheltering hedges.

Much do I wish, said I, Sir, that you could continue with more ease your useful walks, in which the world hath so much partaken, and will long partake.—For myself, I shall certainly endeavour to imitate an example, which I am convinced is so profitable. I will immediately get a memorandum-book; and hope in time to find more pleasure in bringing

N home



home the head of a sermon, than I have often done in bringing home a pheasant, or a partridge.—But still, Sir, there are many pious, and good clergymen, who may be great blessings to their parishes, and yet were never able to compose a sermon themselves; and cannot perhaps, by any means, induce a habit of thinking methodically—What are they to do?

Why they must endeavour, said the Dean, as I advised the horseman in the same circumstances, to find employment for their thoughts, as they are able. If they are visiting a poor neighbour in sickness, or distress,

they

they may think what to say on the occasion. The duties of his parish will always be a call to exercise, and engage a worthy clergyman to be frequently abroad, especially if his parish be extensive.—He may also take a book, and read at intervals, which will always furnish employment for his thoughts.—I have heard Sir Roger speak of the mode of exercise used by his late friend Dr. Bret. He would generally, during two hours every day, fall out into the fields, with his spud in his hand; and cut up all the weeds he could meet with. A field of thistles was to him a sporting country: and he used to say, good man! when he

was inclined to boast a little of his benevolent exercise, that he believed, he did not save his parishioners less than a dozen pounds every year in weeding.—But if walking, after all, except when some end, or parish-duty is in view, cannot be made pleasant to a clergyman, let him seek other exercise. Does he love a garden? There cannot be a more clerical amusement, than the cultivation of it. The flower-garden—the fruit-garden—or the kitchen-garden may all afford him great amusement, and are perfectly consistent with his character. I should think it no discredit to a clergyman to have his vines, and his fruit-trees

trees better trained by his own hands, than those of any professed gardener in the country: and even his pease, and beans, and cabbages, to be in a more flourishing condition — the great philosopher Descartes, I have heard, was one of the greatest florists of his time. He sowed the stars in the morning, and his flowers in the afternoon.——But if the clergyman wish for still stronger exercise, than the nicer parts of gardening afford, let him roll his walks, or dig his ground *usque ad sudorem*. This will be of great use to him; for besides the advantage of it, it will enable him to take as much exercise in a couple of hours, as will serve him for the

N 3

day.

day.—It is a wise provision in the statutes of some monastic houses, to oblige their members to employ themselves in manual labour during so many hours in the four-and-twenty. Nothing can contribute more to give them spirits, and rid them of the spleen. I have heard, that the founder of the famous convent of La Trappe, in prescribing this kind of discipline, used to say, that as labour was originally laid on man, as a punishment for sin, we may be assured, it is one of the best means of keeping him out of it.

I admire his wisdom, said I, in making the rules of his convent an  
antidote

antidote to the natural indolence of a cloister. And I think our church, in giving the clergyman a glebe, hath had something of this kind in its eye. I suppose you have no objection to his making the culture of it his amusement?

None, replied the Dean, if the selling of his corn, and hay, do not lead him to bargain among low people at markets. I have no objection to *any* innocent rural employment. For myself, when I lived in the country, I had great pleasure in all these things. I used often to see my horses, and cows foddered; would visit them in their pastures, and fed my poultry  
N 4 myself.

myself. But there are few circumstances, in which I should advise a clergyman to gather his own tithes. It is an odious business.

I asked the Dean, if he had any objection to *botany*, as an inducement to draw us abroad?

Not the least, said he, if it *be* an inducement—to me it would be none: though it is certainly very innocent; and, if I should judge from the numbers who study it, very interesting also. To examine the beauty and construction of plants—their infinite variety—and their several uses, I can easily conceive, might furnish

furnish much rational amusement. But merely to give them hard names, when they already have easy ones; and to *class them botanically*, which is in fact to class them so, that nobody, but a botanist can find them out, appears to me something like writing an English grammar in Hebrew. You explain a thing by making it unintelligible.—I must speak however with caution on a subject, of which I know so little\*.

I then asked the Dean, what he  
 thought

---

\* This censure of botany seems to respect Mr. Ray, who was contemporary with Dr. Stillingfleet, and the only botanist of note, I believe, at that time.



thought of bowls, tennis, and cricket, as clerical amusements?

With regard to bowls, said he, I am a party concerned, and therefore improperly called upon either as an advocate, or an evidence. I always liked a game at bowls, and thought it good exercise in a summer-evening. It is just exercise enough to give the body a gentle breathing, without being too violent. With regard to tennis, and cricket, I must be silent for another reason. I know nothing of either of them. To none of these exercises however I have any objection, if the party, which joins you  
in

in them, be well chosen. It is this, which makes them innocent, or seducing\*.

I think, said I, Sir, we have now exhausted all such amusements, as go under the name of *exercise*; and I cannot but acknowledge, you have been more liberal on this subject, than I expected. If you will be as indulgent to us in our *domestic amusements*, we shall have no reason to complain. What gratification, Sir, on  
 this

---

\* The Dean did not perhaps know, that there are few tennis-courts, which are not places of public resort. Every amusement, so circumstanced, he would certainly have interdicted.

this head, are you disposed to allow us?

All that is necessary, replied the Dean. For my own part, I know not what mental amusement men of science and information want, after a studious day, except that of conversing with each other. Nothing gives the mind a more pleasing relaxation. You need not talk much yourself, if you are indisposed; and listening to good sense, is no fatigue.—Nor does any thing excite genius so much, as this collision among learned men. We are equally pleased with feeling our own sentiments corrected, (as it is done in a manner by ourselves) and  
with

with correcting the sentiments of others. These meetings among learned men, may be called the *Fair of learning*. They purchase commodities of each other. One man exchanges his wit for another's knowledge ; and each probably gains what he wants, at the expence of something in which he abounds. — From this kind of communication too we get a variety of hints, which we may afterwards turn to use ; and that without the fatigue of thinking ; as other people think for us. I knew an ingenious man, who read little himself, but kept much good company ; and had the art of picking up, and turning to account, every thing he heard.

By

By expanding these hints, and throwing beautiful lights, and images upon them, with the help of a good imagination, he would write a sermon, or an essay, which might be called entirely his own; though his friends, who lived much in the same company with him, could now and then discover the clue of his leading ideas.—I should not however advise any young man to seek his knowledge in this vague way. It is a hundred to one, he is not qualified for it. Besides, it is an indolent way, when you rest solely upon it. In your books you will always meet with instruction.

If

If the pleasure, said I, Sir, arising from the company of learned men could be enjoyed in its full purity, it would indeed be a relaxation beyond all others. Where tempers are well harmonized, I can conceive nothing more delightful. But as in chemical mixtures one single heterogeneous ingredient often puts the whole mass into a ferment; so in these learned societies, one man, who talks incessantly, or disputes eagerly, destroys all the pleasure of the meeting; and makes us think our time might have been employed more happily on our own solitary meditations. For myself, indeed I have seldom mixed freely with any one set of people, among whom

whom some or other has not been of this troublesome description. At college I remember several such intruders on the social pleasures of an evening.

It is very true, answered the Dean, noisy talking, and eager disputing, are two great evils in conversation ; and are often found, more or less, in the meetings even of learned and ingenious men. And it is a miserable thing, when a man's self is the only person pleased with hearing his own conversation. Nay, I will go farther, and allow that this is not the only evil which infests these societies. There are other things which  
often

often render them disagreeable. A friend of mine told me lately, that in a capital town in England he was a member of a very reputable society, consisting of several men of taste and science. He was delighted with their conversation, and thought his time very profitably spent. He soon, however, found, that one or two of the members of this society had a deistical turn. This might have been endured, if they would have kept their sentiments to themselves, and discussed only points of literature. But they were forward, on all occasions, to move questions on religious subjects; and would discuss them with very offensive licence. My friend  
o therefore



therefore seeing no remedy, left his company, and comforted no more with a society, where he could not receive pleasure without a great mixture of pain. And indeed I must allow with you, there are so many things, which make these general meetings of literati disagreeable, that I know not whether, as far as mere relaxation is concerned, one has not a better chance for it in the mixed company of well-bred people of both sexes. I should at least wish for no more than three or four, in a society of select friends, to make it agreeable.

But, said I, Sir, there are many of

us

us poor curates, who have few opportunities of getting into company of any kind; who live in lonely places; and see few, besides the peasants of our own parishes: What resources have you for us?

Why, in the first place, answered the Dean, the peasants of your parish are, in many respects, the properest company you can keep. You will not mingle with their pleasures and diversions. But the good pastor will often find leisure to enter their houses and cottages, and see and hear what they are about: and in this duty he will find his amusement. On this head, however, I need not

instruct *you*.—Besides, added he, we are rather going from the question. We are not considering amusement as united *with* duty; but as a relaxation *from* it.—Are you musical? I know no amusement so adapted to the clerical life as music. And indeed not only as an amusement; but as a mean often, as Saul used it, to drive away the evil spirit. Sedentary men are subject to nervous complaints; and I have known many a man, who could, at any time, fiddle away a fit of the spleen.

I am myself, said I, musical enough, to have sometimes felt the  
relief

relief you mention, though I can, on no instrument, charm any ears but my own.

And what other ears, replied the Dean, do you wish to charm? To tell you the truth, I should think excellence rather a disadvantage. I have known several clergymen, who were masters of musick, get into disagreeable connections by being called on frequently to assist in concerts with people, whom it would have been more prudent to avoid.—We are willing indeed to suppose, that musick makes a part of our heavenly enjoyments: but on earth, I am persuaded, it is sometimes found among

very unharmonized souls. It may drive away a fit of the spleen, or moderate some momentary passion; but I fear it has not often much effect in meliorating the heart by subduing inordinate affections.—If, therefore, continued the Dean, you can fiddle so as to amuse yourself, I should desire no more.

I hope then, said I, Sir, my acquirements in this art will not displease you; for they are very far from the point of excellence.—But I am chiefly solicitous to have your opinion on a still more favourite amusement, which is *drawing*. It  
has

has given agreeable employment to many a solitary hour in my life, and I should be sorry to be debarred the exercise of it.

I have no intention, said the Dean, to debar you from it. But I must give you one piece of advice. As you are fond both of musick and drawing, I should not wish you to practise both. One of these *domestic amusements*, I should think, might find sufficient employment for your leisure.— This piece of advice is from myself. But I am not unqualified to give you other instruction. I have no knowledge of the art myself, but I remember hearing an excellent

o 4

cellent judge give instruction to a young man, who had a profession, as you have, and wished to follow drawing only as an amusement. In the first place, I remember, he advised his young friend against colouring, which all dabblers are fond of. To understand the harmony of colours, he said, required great experience; and without it, colouring was daubing. He advised him also, I recollect, against attempting history, or portrait, or animal life, or any other branch, in which *accurate delineation* was required. Landscape he recommended as the easiest, and most pleasing branch, which might have the farther advantage of decoying him into the forest,

forest, or the field, to examine, or copy nature.

I gave the Dean my best thanks for his advice. Of the utility of that part, which came from himself, I was already convinced by experience: and had determined to drop one of my amusements, as I found I could not, without too great an expence of time, follow both. With regard to the other part of his advice, I lamented, that it had never been given me before. I owned I was a dabbler, and had daubed over many a sheet of paper. But if I continue, said I, to practise drawing, I shall entirely lay aside my colours; and practise





though you should not be able to please yourself with your own proficiency in drawing; yet, if you have a taste for the art, you may be greatly amused with the works of others. A clergyman near me, who is now dead, had a small collection of prints and drawings; and when he was fatigued with study (as he was a very studious man) could, at any time, amuse himself with a few of his prints.

But all this, said I, Sir, requires taste; and if a clergyman have no taste for these amusements, I hope you have no objection to indulge him in some amusement, which does not require it—in a game at chess, for  
2 instance,

instance, with a neighbouring vicar; or at back-gammon with the squire?

In my opinion, said the Dean, chess is so far from being a relaxation, as all amusements should be, that if you are fairly matched, it is a severe study. It is a game, in which a great variety of different movements create double the variety of different circumstances; on each of which circumstances, so numerous a train of consequences again depend, that to provide for all the contingences that arise from your own moves, and may arise from the probable moves of your antagonist, requires a mind intensely occupied in  
the

the pursuit before it, and vacant from every other. In short, a skill in this game, like mathematical knowledge, may be continually advancing to perfection. When I was Fellow of St. John's, I played much at chess; and being fond of it, I attained, as I thought, some degree of excellence; till at length, from beating all the young men at Cambridge who played with me, I began to think myself the best chess-player in England. It happened, on a visit to a friend in London, that an old German officer made one of the party. After dinner we went to different amusements, and it was proposed, that he and I should play a game at chess, as we were

were both known to be chess-players. I modestly threw my glove; but my heart beat with a full assurance of triumph. I soon, however, perceived, that my antagonist opened his game in a manner, to which I had not been accustomed. This roused all my attention. But while I was defending myself in one quarter (for I quickly found I had to act only on the defensive) I received a severe blow on another. And while I was endeavouring to recover my disordered affairs, the enemy broke in upon me, and shamefully defeated me, without giving me an opportunity of displaying one instance of my prowess. I was convinced, however, that all this mischief

chief

chief had befallen me from too great confidence, and an incautious manner of opening my game. I begged another trial: but it ended in the same disgrace. My antagonist, by this time, was fully apprized what a hero he had to deal with; and exulting in his success, desired me to fix upon any chamber on the board I pleased, and use all my strength merely to defend that single post: he engaged to attack no other. But in spite of all my endeavours, he gave me check-mate upon that very spot. Nay, he did it repeatedly; for my shame was now turned into admiration. I sat down therefore contented; and endeavoured to console myself

self by forming the disgrace I had suffered into a lesson against presumption.

I cannot, in return, said I, Sir, tell you a story of my prowess at chess; but, if you will give me leave, I will tell you one of my perseverance. I played a game with a gentleman at my own lodgings, and was victorious. You have taken me, said he, rather inopportunately to-day; but if you will be vacant on Thursday, I shall be this way, and will demand satisfaction. Accordingly on Thursday he came about eleven o'clock; and by the time we had played three games, two of which I had won, his  
horses

horses came to the door. I cannot leave the matter thus, said he; if you can set any little matter before me, we will go on. Two games more were played, when in the midst of the third, a bit of roasted mutton appeared; and by the time it was cold, I had defeated him again. I was now four or five games before him. Our intercourse therefore with the mutton was short; and we went to work again. I was still victorious, when the horses returned at six. This is provoking, said he, I cannot leave the matter thus. Can I have a bed at the inn? His orders to his servant now were, not to bring the horses till they were sent for.



This was a melancholy note to me, fatigued, as I was already, beyond measure. However, as I was under some obligations to the gentleman, and in my own lodgings, I had no choice. The night ended late, and the morning began early. Breakfast came—the barber came—dinner came—all was negligently treated, except the main point. I sighed inwardly, and hoped this visitation would now soon have an end. It lasted, however, all that day; and I was still two games before my antagonist; though I had played as carelessly as I could, without discovering my indifference. As the evening drew on, and I expected every moment

ment to hear a message sent for the horses, I was shocked with his telling me we could not part on these unequal terms. As the next day was Saturday, and he must of necessity, he said, then finish, he would try his fortune once more. So we continued nailed to our board, till a late hour on Friday night; and began again before breakfast, on Saturday morning. Towards the close of the day, our accounts differed in one game. But I was too complaisant to dispute the matter; so the horses were sent for, and I was delivered from such a trial of my patience, as I never before experienced.

Scarce any mischief happens to us, said the Dean, but we have the comfort of thinking it might have been worse: and you were happy that your friend did not come to you on Monday, instead of Thursday.—As it appears, however, from *my* story, how much time and pains are necessary to obtain excellence in this game, and from *your* story, how fascinating a game it is—it is worth while to consider how far it may be a proper amusement for a clergyman—and whether it really answers the end of an amusement by unbending the mind. If it only substitute one severe study for another, it cannot certainly take the name of an amusement.

ment \*. Let every one however judge for himself. I found it too interesting to be amusing to me, and therefore in early life I left it off.— It is certainly, however, a noble game. It gives us an idea of war without its guilt. It gives us a just idea too of common life—of the happy effects of prudent, and cautious  
 steps

---

\* Cowper, with his usual descriptive talents, admirably portrays the ardour of a chess-player.

—————Who then  
 Would waste attention at the chequer'd board,  
 His host of wooden warriors to and fro  
 Marching, and counter-marching, with an eye  
 As fixed as marble, with a forehead ridg'd  
 And furrowed into storms, and with a hand  
 Trembling, as if eternity were hung  
 In balance on his conduct of a pin?



Certainly, replied the Dean, such games afford a juster picture of the *circumstances* of life: but I am speaking of the *conduct* of it. Sometimes, it is true, we are ruined by unavoidable calamity; but more often by our own misconduct: and it is this latter view of life, which chesses so justly resembles.

Well, said I, Sir, as you repudiate chesses from the list of your clerical amusements, because of its *intricacy*, I hope, you will take back-gammon into favour, because of its *simplicity*.

Not into my favour truly, answered the Dean. I know too little

of it to make it a favourite. I have no objection, however, to it, but its stupidity. Let those play at it, who like it. It seems to me a noisy, rattling game, fit rather to conclude an evening after a fox-chase, than suited to the taste of men of letters, and refinement.—But indeed I have a sort of prejudice against back-gammon, as it contributed to ruin the fortunes of an excellent young man, with whom, in early life, I was intimate at college. He was related to a rich, old admiral; and was supposed to be his intended heir; which he probably might have been, had not this stupid game intervened. Back-gammon was the admiral's delight.

delight. He had no resources in himself. As to books, he hardly knew the top of a page from the bottom. Back-gammon was level to his genius. All his powers were centered in this game. Three, or four hours after dinner; and half that time after supper, he never failed to play, and all day long, if the weather did not permit him to go abroad. As the admiral was not a very pleasing man, and besides rather penurious in his house-keeping, his company was little sought after; and it fell to the unhappy lot of my friend to be his almost constant antagonist. Day after day—it was weary work. I remember well his coming to me, one evening,



evening, much out of humour: "I have been playing with him, said he, at this stupid game, from four this afternoon, till eight; and he had the conscience, towards the close of this heavy business, to look me full in the face, and cry, Cousin, you play as if you were tired."—In short, my friend could not bear this miserable trespass upon his time, and began to make conditions. The admiral was not used to controul, took the huff, blotted him out of his will, and chose a puppy for his heir, who was fit for nothing but to play at back-gammon.

A liberal minded man, said I, Sir,

is much to be pitied, when his interest, and his sentiments are thus at variance. Young as I am in life, I have seen several instances of it; but I have seldom known, as on this occasion, sentiment prevail.—Upon the whole however, Sir, I think you are too harsh in your censure of back-gammon. It is not surely a game of deep contrivance; yet I think it possesses variety enough to be amusing even to an enlightened mind, which wishes, during a short interval, to suspend its faculties, and enjoy the refreshment of a little privation of sentiment. What has hurt this poor, harmless game, I believe, more than any thing else,  
is,

is, its connection with those wicked little cubes, called *dice*, which are employed in so many villainous purposes, that every communication with them is suspected. One of our good bishops, I have heard, is fond of a game at back-gammon, when he can get snug to it with his chaplain. But he stands much in awe of his own servants, lest in passing to and fro they should hear their master rattling *dice*. So he plays always on a table, lined with green baize, and throws his dice from lined boxes\*.

If

---

\* This story is told of Bishop Gibson of London; but as he lived after Dr. Stillingfleet's time, I suppose the same device has been practised by other bishops.

If it had been my case, said the Dean, I should have played openly — These concealments never are concealed. They only shew, that we have not resolution to forbear doing, what, on some account, we do not think perfectly right. For myself, I see no reason why the bishop may not indulge himself in a game at back-gammon, without scruple, if he like it. As for the ill-repute it lies under, on the account of its connection with *dice*, I see no more reason for it, than that knives and forks should be objected to, because they may become the instruments of gluttony. It is another connection, which occasions the mischief.

chief. If these *little wicked cubes*, as you call them, were not connected with certain little *wicked circles* called *money*, they would be perfectly harmless. These little *circles* are, in fact, the wicked companions which debauch the *cubes*; and are indeed such mischievous companions as seldom fail to turn all amusements into vice. In my Utopia therefore money shall in no degree be connected with amusement. Its proper place is the market, and there only it has concern.

Gaming, said I, Sir, no doubt, is a very strange perversion of amusement: but is there any objection to  
a trifling

a trifling stake, which is never felt, whether we win or lose, and is in fact no *object*?

What end then, said the Dean, does it answer?

Merely, I replied, to keep the attention a little awake.

You must allow then, answered the Dean, that as far as it does keep the *attention awake*, so far it is an *object*. The amusement itself, it seems, cannot keep the *attention awake*; but wants a stimulative, the love of money, which makes you play with that care and caution, which the amusement

amusement itself could not do. And is this any thing else, my good friend (twist and analyse it as you please) but the spirit of avarice? One man's *attention* cannot be *kept awake*, as you phrase it, without playing for a shilling. Another man must keep his *attention awake* with a pound. A third must be enlivened by a stake of ten times as much; and so on, till the attention of some people must be *kept awake* by staking a patrimony. You see then plainly, that if the stake be so trifling, as to be no *object*, it can be no *incentive*; and if it be an object, it can only be so, by your attachment to a sum of money; and what will you call that attachment.

attachment, unless you resolve it, with me, into the spirit of avarice?

But though in theory, said I, Sir, you may be able to lead it up to this source, it seems, in fact, to be so trifling, as not to come within any moral calculation.

I know the mathematician, replied the Dean, divides matter with such nicety, as to bring it to an invisible point. But I do not like to see morals so treated. Is the *excess* wrong? If it be, the *approach* cannot be right. If your mind be *at all* infected with the spirit of *avarice*,

Q

and

r. a  
nd  
(e)  
an's  
you  
hil-  
> his  
A  
ke of  
, till  
must  
rimo-  
hat if  
be no  
and if  
so, by  
f mo-  
ll that  
hment



and the desire of profiting by your neighbour's loss, it is so far an *approach*. There are different degrees of vice, no doubt; but we are cautioned against breaking one of the *least commandments*, as well as the greatest. The good Christian endeavours to preserve his mind from the smallest taint; and the Christian minister thinks himself particularly bound to abstain from every *appearance of evil*.—In fine, I will not cavil with you, whether playing for money arises from avarice; but certainly the *amusement* ceases, when it cannot itself produce its end; and *what does produce the end*, becomes the leading principle. So that the point issues here:

here: if you choose such feeble amusements, as are really no amusements, without the aid of vicious stimulatives—it becomes you to lay them aside; and seek for such amusements, as are simply such.

To be candid, I replied, I have nothing farther, Sir, to oppose. Vicious custom, I fear, hath modified all our amusements, as well as every thing else; and hath driven them from their natural simplicity; connecting things with them, that have no relation to them. I cannot but allow with you, that amusements should be simply such; and that if they connect themselves with money,

they should assume another name,—  
I then put the Dean in mind, that he had yet furnished us with no *domestic amusement*, that came under the name of *exercise*. Rainy weather, I observed, might continue so long, as to make a little motion necessary to a sedentary man. Do you object to billiards?

Why no, said the Dean, not much. My own method, when I could not take exercise abroad, was to throw two or three doors open, and walk from one chamber to another, with a book, or scrap of paper in my hand, as I used to do in the fields. But I do not prescribe my own example to others.

others. As to billiards, they are so unhappily connected with gaming, and bad company, that I have no great respect for the amusement—at least as a clerical one. However, as the influence of this game, from its expensive apparatus, cannot be so extended as cards, I should not object to a clergyman's playing at it in a private family, and under the usual restriction of playing only with good company, and for no stake.

I am obliged to you, said I, Sir, for the liberty you have given me of indulging an amusement, which is a favourite one with me; and in



time.—I then asked the Dean, if he had ever heard of the game of shuttlecock? or if he would laugh at me for mentioning it to him as good *domestic exercise*?

Laugh at you! said the Dean; I know no game, that I value more. It has all the characters of the amusement, we want. It gives us good exercise—it makes us cheerful—and has no connection with our pockets: and if I may whisper another truth in your ear, it does not require *much skill* to learn. When my legs were in better order, I have spent many a rainy half-hour with Sir Roger, at shuttlecock in his hall. The worst

of it is, few parsonage houses have a room large enough for it; though perhaps the tithe-barn, if it be not better employed, may furnish one.— I could say more in favour of shuttlecock. You may play at it alone. It is also an exercise too violent to last long. We need not fear, as at billiards, to mispend a morning at it.— Laugh at you! so far from it, that I respect the man, who invented shuttlecock.

I asked the Dean next, if he had any objection to some little handicraft business, as *domestic exercise* for a clergyman? And I particularised that of a carpenter, or a turner; both  
 which,

which, I said, were very well fitted to put the blood in motion.

Aye, aye, replied the Dean, I like them both. I have known very worthy clergymen good carpenters, and turners. I knew one, who had a shop in his house, and made his own tables and chairs. They were substantial, and not ill-made; and though he did not think them neat enough for his parlour, they did very well for his chambers, and study. I knew another clergyman, added the Dean, and an exemplary man he was, who was an excellent turner. He used to work in box, ebony, and ivory; and made a number of little, pretty conveniences



niences both for himself, and his friends. In the coldest weather, I have heard him say, he could put his whole frame in a glow by working his lathe.—Did not you see in the prints, that *Mons. Pascal*, who died the other day, had retired, a few years ago, to the learned seminary of *Port-Royal*, where he, and other eminent men made it a rule to intermix their studies with manual labour\*?

I told

---

\* The Society of *Port-Royal* (so called from a place near Paris, where they associated) consisted of some of the most religious men, the greatest wits, and best scholars, that France ever produced; they lived together in a happy intercourse, without any monastic rule; and under no restraint, but  
what

I told the Dean I had seen it; and that I rather wondered at the choice, which Pascal had made of his own employment, which was that of making wooden shoes.

Aye, good man, said the Dean, he made them for the poor peasants in his neighbourhood; and I should be glad to give more than double their value for a pair of them to keep for his sake.

I then

---

what religion, and good sense prescribed. Their chief employment was to form the minds, and studies of ingenious young men; and by their works to improve their country, both in religion, and science. In short, they were a set of philosophers directly opposite to those, from whom the French nation hath lately taken instruction.

I then mentioned book-binding to the Dean, as a clerical art.

Why, yes, said he, I think it is: but we should have introduced it earlier in our conversation, under the head of *domestic amusement*; it will hardly come under that of *domestic exercise*.—Well, have you any thing more to offer? You see, I am disposed to allow my brethren every mode of amusement, and exercise, that is consistent with innocence, and propriety of manners; and I hope the range which may be taken within these bounds, will be thought fully sufficient. If I have omitted any thing;

thing; or if you have any thing farther to propose, let me know.

I recollect nothing, said I, Sir, at present; and have only left to express my grateful obligations to you for what is past. If any thing farther should occur, I shall take the liberty, on some future occasion, to propose it. In the mean time, I am perfectly satisfied myself with the indulgence you have given me; and should think any of my brethren unreasonable, who should desire more.

---

*THIS is the substance of what passed between the Dean of Paul's, and me, on the subject of clerical amusements. As our conversation lasted three evenings, I had the more leisure to commit it to writing. The force of many of the Dean's expressions, I fear, is injured in an account, which depended so much on memory: but I dare take upon me to say, the sentiments are invariably his.*

*As this conversation gave a new turn to all my own amusements, it enabled me also to be of some service in giving occasional advice to several of my younger brethren: and if my executors should find these papers, and think them worth communicating to the public, I should*  
hope

*hope they might be of use also to others. Such clergymen, indeed, as have formed settled habits, especially of card playing, will not easily, I fear, give them up; but will probably defend them against the good Dean's arguments, as they are able. But among the young conscientious clergy, I hope, there may be many, who may find something in what hath been said that deserves their attention. To them particularly I recommend the good Dean's advice.*

JOS. FRAMPTON.

THE END.











