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*The Mythological Picture
of Cebes the Theban*

THE
EMPEROR
Marcus Antoninus
HIS
CONVERSATION
With Himself.

TOGETHER
With the Preliminary DISCOURSE of the
Learned G A T A K E R.

As also,

The Emperor's LIFE, Written by Monsieur D'acier,
and Supported by the Authorities Collected by
Dr. STANHOPE.

To which is added the Mythological Picture of
CEBES the Theban, &c.

Translated into *English* from the Respective Originals.

By J E R E M Y C O L L I E R, M. A.

The Second Edition Corrected.

L O N D O N :

Printed for R I C H A R D S A R E, at *Grays-Inn Gate* in
Holborn, MDCCVIII.

THE
 Mythological Picture
 OF
C E B E S
 THE
T H E B A N.

Being a serviceable Emblem for the
 acquiring of Prudence, and the
 Direction of Human Life.

AS we were taking a Turn in *Saturn's*
 Temple, we saw a great many con-
 secrated *Presents*, remarkable enough for
 their Curiosity; amongst the rest we took
 particular Notice of a Picture hung over
 the Door; the Piece we perceiv'd was all
 Emblem, and Mythology; But then the
 Representation was so singular and out of
 Custom, that we were perfectly at a Loss
 whence it should come, and what was the
 meaning on't. Upon a strict View, we
 found 'twas neither a City, nor a Camp,
 but a sort of Court, with two Partitions
 of the same Figure within it, tho' one of

C c 2 them

them was larger than the other. The first Court had a crowd of People at the Gate, and within we saw a great Company of Women. Just at the entrance of the first Gate, there stood an Old Man, who by his Gesture and Countenance seem'd to be busy in giving Advice to the Crowd as they came in.

And being a long time at a stand about the Design of the *Fable*, a grave Man somewhat in Years, making up, begins to discourse us in this Manner. Gentlemen, *says he*, I understand you are Strangers, and therefore 'tis no wonder the History of this picture should puzzle you : For there are not many of our own Countrymen that can explain it. For you are to observe, this is none of our Town Manufacture. But a long while ago, a certain out-landish Man of great Sense and Learning, and who by his Discourse and Behaviour seem'd to be a Disciple of *Pythagoras*, and *Parmenides* ; This Gentleman, *I say*, happening to Travel hither, built this Structure, and Dedicated both the Temple and this piece of Painting to *Saturn*. Sir, *said I*, had you any Acquaintance with this Gentleman ? Yes, *says he*, I had the Benefit of his Conversation ; and was one of his Admirers a long time. For, to my thinking, tho' he was but young, he talk'd

talk'd at a strange significant rate ; And as for this *Picture*, I have heard him expound the *Emblem*, and read upon the Argument very frequently. Sir, *said I*, unless you are very busy, I beg of you to instruct us a little in this Matter, for we are strangely desirous to know the meaning of this Fable in *Colours*. Gentlemen, *says he*, I'm very ready to serve you, but then I must tell you there is some Danger in hearing the Story. Danger ! As how ? Why, *says he*, if you mind what you are about, and understand what's deliver'd, you'll grow unexpectedly Wife and Happy upon the Discourse ; but otherwise to be free with you, you'll turn Ignorant, and Ill-natur'd, and be the most unfortunate Blockheads imaginable. For the Explaining this *Mythology* is as touchy a Business to the Audience, as the *Sphinx's* Riddle was formerly : If a Man was an *Oedipus* at it, he found his Account in the Undertaking, but if the Mystery prov'd too hard for him, he was lost, and murder'd by the Monster upon the spot. The Consequence of the present Case is much the same : For Folly is a sort of *Sphinx* to Mankind in general ; and gives an obscure Intimation of what's good and bad, or indifferent for us : If a Man can't look through her, and untie her Riddle, tho' the

she does not chop him up at a Mouthful like the *Sphinx*; yet she will be sure to dispatch him by Degrees, sit as close to him as a Consumption, and ride him as the Spleen does a Malefactor under Sentence. But on the other hand, when *Folly* is understood, then she goes to pot herself; and the Man is made safe, and happy for his Life-time. Therefore pray take care, and be attentive, and let nothing slip your Observation. In earnest if the Matter stands thus, you make us almost Wild to hear you upon this extraordinary Subject. 'Tis just as I tell you. Well, *said I*, if we are likely to smart at this rate for being careless, you'll be sure to find us upon our Guard, and therefore begin as soon as you please.

Upon this, pointing to the Picture with his Cane, do you see this Inclosure, or Court, *says he*? Yes. This then you are to understand is Life, and the Place for Mortals to range in. The Crowd at the Gate, are the People that are just coming into the World: And the Old Man that stands by on rais'd Ground, with a *Paper* in one Hand, and the other in a Posture of Direction, is the common *Genius*. This superintending Spirit instructs those that enter, how they are to manage themselves in *Life*, and which Road they are

are to take, if they expect to come safe to the end of their Journey. And pray, *said I*, which way does he direct them, and how are they to govern themselves? Don't you see, *says he*, there by the Gate where the Crowd goes in, a woman sitting in an Arm'd-chair handsomly dress'd, and with a Mien of Quality? I see her with a Glass in her Hand; pray who is she? That's *Imposture*, *says he*, that bubbles the whole World in some measure out of their understandings. Say you so? Which way does she go to Work? She opens a Vein, and gives them a Glass of her Constitution. What sort of Drink is that? 'Tis Ignorance and Mistake. What is to be done then? Why, when they have taken this Stirrup Cup, they Travel into *Life*. What? Does every body take their Mornings Draught of this Liquor? Every body, but not all Brimmers; some drink more, and some less. To inform you farther, don't you see, a parcel of *Wenches* within the Gate, different enough in their Persons, but all of them with the bold Air of their Profession? I see them. Very well: If you would know their Names then, they are *Opinion*, *Passion*, and *Pleasure*. As the Crowd enters, these Lasses frisk about them, and salute them with a great deal of welcome, and then lug them

off. And whither do they carry them ? Carry them ! Some to good Fortune, and some, by mistaking their way, to Ruin, and the Gallows. In earnest, Sir, *said I*, if the Case stands thus, 'tis dangerous Drinking ! You say well : And yet all these Women promise to direct them right, and to make them as Considerable and Happy as they would wish. But the poor Wretches having taken a Glass too much with *Impudence*, are so muddy-headed, that they over-look their Advantage, and mistake their Ground, and ramble about at that senseless giddy rate as you see. And look you, continues he, how those Gypsies manage the People that came in first, and lead them whither they have a mind to. I perceive it, *said I*, but pray what blind distracted Woman is that which stands there upon a round Stone like a Globe ? That's *Fortune*, replies my Instructor, who is not only Blind, but Mad, and Deaf into the bargain. And what may her Business be I beseech you ? She ranges every where, *says he*, snatches away this Man's Circumstances, and gives them to another ; and in a little while recalling her Liberalities, bestows them upon new Favourites, and all with great Arbitrariness, and Inconstancy. And therefore her Pedestal, and her Posture, is a good Emblem

blem of her Nature. How so ? Because *says he*, her standing upon a Globe shews her Feet not well fix'd, and that there's no depending upon her Bounty. Indeed those that reckon upon her are generally ruffled with Disappointment, and mightily shock'd in their Expectation. Here I desir'd to know, what was the Business of all that Crowd about her, and who they were ? I was answer'd, they were a Clan of unthinking People ; and all of them making their Application to Fortune for those things she threw away. Very well : But how comes it to pass that they appear so differently Affected in their Countenances, that some of them are all in an Extasy, and others as much out of sorts, and wringing their Hands in Despair ? Those, *says he*, who seem so merry and well pleas'd, have receiv'd a Spoil, and sped in their Addresses to this Lady ; and therefore they call her *Good Fortune* : But the others who weep and wring their Hands are Displeas'd by her of what she had granted them before, and here her Title is *Bad-fortune*. What sort of Favour does she bestow then, that makes her command the Temper, and dispose of the Passions of her Admirers, in so Sovereign a manner ? To answer you, *says he*, her Bounty consists of such Things as are

are generally esteem'd great Advantages What are those? They are Wealth, Fame, Birth, Children, Posts of Command, Crowns, &c. 'Tis very well! And are not all these good Things with a Witness? As to that, *says he*, we'll debate it afterwards, but at present let's go on with our *Story*. With all my heart. Do you see then, continues the Gentleman, how the Passage through this Gate, leads you into another Court upon an Ascent, and that there are several Women dress'd like Wenches, standing at the Portal? I see them. I must tell you then, their Quality is very Coarse, two of them are *Lewdness* and *Luxury*, and the other *Flattery*, and *Covetousness*. And what do they stand staring here for? To Spy out those to whom *Fortune* has been any thing kind. And what then? Then they appear mightily transported, make up to them with great Endearingness, and ply them strongly with Compliment and Flattery: They invite them to their Apartments, promise to settle them in Satisfaction, and that without the least Intermision, or Incumbrance whatsoever. Now those who are gain'd to Libertinism with this Courtship, think themselves in a delicate way, and are Strangely pleased with their Choice at first. But after some time
when

when they begin to recollect, they perceive the Entertainment was nothing but a Visionary Cheat; and instead of a Regale, they have been prey'd upon, and ill used. Now when Men come to this pass, and have spent all that *Fortune* had furnish'd them with, they are forced to go to Service to these *Women*; and here all manner of Affronts, and scandalous Practices must be digested: They must bear with every thing, and boggle at nothing: They must Cheat, or betray their Trust, pick a Pocket, or rob a Church, as occasion serves. And when all these Tricks fail them, they are sent to the House of Correction. And how are they handled? Don't you see, *says he*, a little Door opening into a narrow, dark place? I do; and several ugly, slut-tish Women in Rags, are the Inhabitants. You are right. And to describe them to you; she with the Whip in her Hand, is call'd *Discipline*, she with her Head bending down to her Knees is *Grief*, she that tears her Hair is *Pain*: But pray, *said I*, what ill-look'd Skeleton of a Fellow is that, with ne'er a Tatter to his Limbs, and that Woman too by him, that's Beauty enough to be his Sister? You have guess'd the Relation exactly, and to satisfy your Question, the Man
is

is *complaining Sorrow*, and that Sister of his is *Despair*. To this Company the *Rakes* above-mention'd are sent, where they are maul'd and mortified sufficiently, and after they have gone through their Exercise in this *Bridewell*, they are committed to Goal, where *Unhappiness* is their *Keeper*: And here they are fast for their Lifetime, unless they happen to light upon *Repentance*: If *Fortune* sends this Lady to any one of them, she disengages him from his Confinement, and gives him a new set of *Notions*, and *Desires*, which puts him in the Road to *True Knowledge*; However, the Direction is not so Infallible, but that 'tis possible for him to miss the way, and make a Visit to *pretended Learning*. And what follows? Why, *says he*, if he Travels right, and comes to the Seat of *True Knowledge*, she does his Business effectually: she purges his Head, and cures his Spleen, and makes him Easy, and Prosperous as long as he lives: But if he mistakes the Road, *pretended Learning* picks him up, and leads him a new Dance. O strange! *said I*, here's another great Risk to be run: But I beg of you what sort of Mortal is this *pretended Learning*? Don't you see, replies my Instructor, that farther Court? Yes very plainly. And don't you perceive a Woman

man in the Porch genteelly dress'd, and with an Air of Sobriety? That I do: To inform you then, the Generality are so ignorant as to mistake this Gentlewoman for *Learning*; whereas she is really but a Counterfeit of that Quality. Now those who are upon the Road to Recovery and *True Knowledge*, commonly bait with her first. And is there no other way to *True Knowledge* but this? Yes, there is. Here I put in again, and ask'd him, who are those Men that walk within the Court there? These, *says he*, are the Admirers of *pretended Learning*, only they mistake the Person of their Mistress, and fancy themselves in the Conversation of *True Knowledge*. Pray who are they? Here's a great many sorts of them, *says he*, here are Poets, Orators, and Logicians; Musick Masters, Accomptants, Mathematicians, and Astrologers; Epicureans, Peripateticks, Philologers, &c. But under favour, methinks I see some Women like *Debauchery*, and the rest of her Companions which you shew'd me before, pray who are they? The very same. What? Do they walk in this Inner Court? As sure as you live, sometimes, tho' not so often as in the first. And does Fancy, and uncertain Opinion take a Turn here too? Most undoubtedly, *says he*: And which is more, these

these Sparks being not recover'd of the Dose, which *Imposture* gave them, they are troubled with the Company of *Ignorance*, and *Folly*. Neither will they ever be rid of *Opinion* and the rest of the Gang, till they part with *pretended Learning*, enter into a Course of Physick, and Purge off all their Conceit, Ignorance, and Ill-Humours. Then their Condition will be secure. But as long as *pretended Learning* has the Ascendant over them, they'll ne'er be disentangled; neither will all their Notions, and Proficiency, ever cure them of any of the Distempers above-mention'd. Say you so; Which is the way then, that leads to the seat of *True Knowledge*? If you mind, *says he*, you'll perceive an Eminence at a distance, which looks as if 'twas perfectly uninhabited. I have it. And don't you see a little Gate, and the Avenues to it very much unfrequented; for indeed the Ascent to it is troublesome, and the way rough, and rocky? I perceive it, *said I*. Does it not then appear a lofty Hill, with a very narrow way to't, and Precipices on each side? Yes, the Prospect is just as you say. This is the Road to *True Knowledge*, *says he*, and on my Word, a very rugged one to look on. But let's proceed. Don't you observe two hail lusty Women stand on the Top of the Ascent,

cent, and stretching out their Hands with a great deal of Inclination? I see them, who are they? they are Sisters, *says he*, one of them is *Temperance*, and t'other *Patience*. Good Women both, but what makes them sprawl their Hands out with so much Fancy? 'Tis to encourage Travellers, *says he*, and keep them from Cowardize and Despair: Letting them know at the same time, that if they will but hold out, and strive a little, they'll quickly be easy, and come into a good Road. Well! But when they come to the steep Ascent, how do they get up, for I can't perceive any way made for them? These Women, *says he*, step down a little, stoop for them, and so hale them up. Then their Guides order them to rest a little, and soon after furnish them with Strength, and Spirits, promise to convey them to *True Knowledge*, give them a Prospect of their Journey, and shew them how smooth, and pleasant, and free from all manner of Inconvenience, the Road is. Really, *said I*, it appears so to me. Don't you see, continues my Instructor, on this side that Grove there, a lovely Meadow, which looks so surprizingly bright, as if it had a whole Sun of its own to make it Beautiful. You need not question my Eye-sight, *said I*, where such an Object as that is,
lies

lies before it. And don't you see another Pile of Building in the middle of this Field? I do, what do you call it, and who does it belong to? This is the Seat of the Fortunate, *said he*, here all the Moral Virtues keep their Court, and Happiness, is always in their Train. Say you so? This must needs be a delicate Place then. Right. But to carry you farther: Don't you perceive a handsome, middle aged, Matronly Woman by the Gate in a plain Dress? And if you observe her, she stands upon a square Stone, and not tottering upon a Globe; there are likewise two young Women on each side of her, which look as if they were her Daughters. Yes, *said I*, by their Features and Complexion, one would think so. To expound them to you then, the Matron in the middle, is *Knowledge*, or *Learning*, the two others are one of them *Truth*, and the other *Persuasion*? But what makes the Elder Lady stand upon a Stone like a Die? To shew the steadiness of her Posture, that People may know where to have her, and that her Favours are safe and significant. Well explain'd, but pray what does she present People with? Why, *says he*, she gives them Assurance, and the faculty of fearing nothing. And how do these Qualities operate? They give

give the owners the Satisfaction to know they are out of Danger as long as they live. In earnest, *said I*, this Lady has an excellent Hand at making Presents! But what makes her stand without the Gate? To cure those that come hither, and give them her Cephalick Prescription; and when the Potion has cleans'd their Constitution, she brings them in, and presents them to the Virtues. How is this? I don't rightly understand you. I'll clear it to you, *says he*, 'tis just as when a Patient dangerously ill, is undertaken by a Physician: In the first place the Doctor endeavours to remove the Cause and discharge the Morbifick Matter; and when this is done, strength returns of Course, and the Man is set up. But if he won't take his Physick, and be govern'd, 'tis no wonder if he dies of the Distemper. I apprehend you, Sir, *said I*. Thus, *says he*, when any one is brought to Learning and Philosophy, she falls to Doctring of him presently, gives him a purging Dose out of her own *Dispensatory*, that all the ill Humours may be carry'd off in the first place. And what are those? They are Ignorance and Error, which *Imposiure* drench'd him with; they are Pride, Appetite, and Intemperance, Anger, and Avarice; and the rest of that

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Unfortunate Entertainment which he swallow'd in the first Court. And when he's well wash'd *within*, whither does she send him? Then he is permitted to enter this last Court, and introduced to *Science*, and the other Virtues. And what may they be? Don't you see within the Gate, *says he*, a Company of handsome, modest Women, without any thing of Dressing, *Washes*, or Expence about them? I see them, *said I*, who are they? The first, *says he*, is Knowledge, the other, who are her Sisters, are Fortitude, and Justice, and Probity, Sobriety, Modesty, Liberality, and Good-Nature. In earnest, *said I*, fine Ladies all! Now methinks, my Expectations begin to rise considerably. If you mind what you hear, *says he*, and digest it into Practice, your hopes are not ill founded. I'll do my best, take my Word for't. Do so, and then you'll succeed, and be safe. But pray, *said I*, whither do these Ladies lead the Man? To their Mother, *says he*; And, who is she? They call her Felicity. Felicity! And what is her Business and Quality? Do you see, *says he*, the Path that leads us to the Mount there, where the Structure looks like a Fort for the Security of all the Courts? Yes. And is there not in the Porch a handsome young Lady sitting

sitting in a Chair of State, dress'd like Quality, but not to any degree of Magot, or Curiosity. But, if you mind her, the Crown upon her head, is particularly fine, both in the Matter, and the Making. Truly, it seems to be just as you say. This Lady, *says he*, is Felicity. And when any body comes hither, what's her Business? She Crowns him, *says he*, from her own Cabinet, and so do all the *Virtues* too, insomuch that by his Reception, you would take him for some great Conquerour; and that he had gone through *Hercules's twelve Labours* at least. And has he done any thing like it? Yes indeed, he has got the better of several Wild Beasts of an extraordinary Bulk; These were formerly his Masters, made him their Drudge, snap'd a Collop sometimes out of his Carcass, and used him at a miserable rate. But now he has fought himself into Liberty, and Conquest, has them all at Command, and chains them up for Sight and Service. You awaken my Curiosity extremely, pray what sort of Wild Beasts are they? In the first place, *says he*, Ignorance and Mistake; now whether you know it or not, these are great Beasts, and dangerous ones too, tho' they don't go it may be upon all four. Truly, *said I*, I think they are. The o-
D d 2 ther

ther parts of his Conquest, *continues he*, are Grief and Pain; Covetousness, and Intemperance, and all the whole Force of Vice besides. These are noble Exploits, *said I*, the *Olympick Games* can show nothing like it; But I suppose this Champion's Crown is not altogether for Ornament, therefore pray tell me the Advantage in wearing it. You are to know then, young Gentlemen, *says he*, that it has a mighty satisfying Quality: He that has this Crown upon his Head, is possessor of Happiness; And which is more, 'tis of his own Growth too, without any Dependence upon his Neighbours. In earnest, 'tis glorious conquering at this rate. But how does the Man spend his time, and whither does he go, after he is thus Crown'd? The *Virtues*, *says he*, receive him, and conduct him back to the Place where he was before, and here they shew him at what a rate of Scandal and Misery People live. How often they run their Heads against a Post, ramble from their Interest, and are led as it were in Triumph by their Enemies. Some are made Prize of by Debauchery, some by Arrogance and Ambition, and some by Covetousness, &c. Neither is it in their power, to disengage themselves and make their Escape hither. But they continue
Rol-

Rolling and Restless till they tumble into their Graves; And all this happens because they can't pick out the right way, for alas! They have forgotten the Advice the *Genius* gave them. What you say is not unlikely; But still I'm at a loss why the *Virtues* should lead this happy Man to the Place from whence he came? 'Tis to inform his Judgment, *says he*, and make him understand the World better. For to deal clearly, *Error* and *Ignorance* had abused him before. And thus his Understanding, being misty and misled, he was wildred in the Qualities of Things, and mistook the Nature of Good and Evil. So that, in short, he was in a great measure, as irregular, and unhappy as the rest. But now having gain'd a right Notion of Interest and Advantage, he sees farther into the Follies and Misery of other Men. Right, and when he has seen all this, how does he dispose of himself? Just as he pleases. For let him go where he will, he is as safe as a Ship in a Harbour: and all People will be as glad of his Company as a *Patient* is of the Visit of an able Doctor. What, won't he be afraid of those scurvy Women any more, which you said were like Bears in a Bear-garden? Not at all. He'll never be disturb'd with *Pain* nor *Poverty*, with In-
D d 3 tem-

temperance, or Avarice, nor any of that hostile Clan which made him uneasy before. For he'll be perfectly Impregnable against all manner of Attacks. And as no other Serpent dares venture upon those who are bitten by a Viper, because they are fortified by a superiour Poyson which is now turn'd to an Antidote: So this Man has always his Preservative about him. What you say, seems very reasonable. But pray tell me who those are that come down the Hill; some of them with Crowns on their Heads, and Satisfaction in their Face: Others are the Picture of Despair, look somewhat maim'd and batter'd, and seem under the Guard of a parcel of Women? Those crown'd, *says he*, are safe arrived at the seat of *Philosophy*, and appear pleas'd with the Conversation of that Lady. But those who have no sign of Success upon their Heads, are some of them turn'd back by *Philosophy* for being unqualified: Others miscarry for want of Industry and Spirit. And when they have strain'd up to *Pasience* quit the Advantage of the Progress, and Ramble without Path, or Direction. I understand you. But, what Women are those at the Heels of them? They represent, *says he*, Grief and Pain, Despair, Ignominy, and Ignorance. Say you so.

Then

Then the Men are in very bad Company. You're right. Now when these People come back to the first Court and return to *Luxury* and *Lewdness*, they make an odd Report of the Adventure, and blame *Philosophy*, and not themselves for their Mis-carriage; They tell you that all who went upon these Discoveries, are wretchedly harra's'd, and disappointed. And never enjoy any of the Satisfaction which are to be met with at home. What Advantages are these? Why, in a Word, debauching and regaling their Palates: For Gourmandizing, and the Liberties of a Brute are in their Esteem the Supreme Satisfaction. They must take their Fancy, but under favour, who are those pleasant smiling Women that come from yonder place? They call them *Opinions*, *says he*, their Business is to introduce those to *Instruction*, who are upon the Road to the *Virtues*, and when they have convey'd them hither, they return to fetch more: And to encourage new Comers, they let them understand how happy those People are that took the Journey before them. Have these Women admittance to the *Virtues*? By no means; *Opinion* is never allow'd to appear in the Presence of *Science*; However, they deliver up their Charge to *Learning* or *Instruction*. And

D d 4 when

when they have done, go back for fresh Company: Just like your Merchant Men, which when they are unladen, set sail again, and are freighted with another Cargo. Without Flattery, *said I*, you seem to explain these Matters very well: But you have not told me what Directions the *Genius*, or superintending Spirit, gives those who are just marching into Life. He bids them be bold, *says he*, and keep up their Spirits; and pray do you so, for I shall let you into the whole Business, and make no Omissions in the Relation. And here holding out his Cane again, do you see that blind Woman, *says he*, standing upon a Globe, who I told you was *Fortune*? Yes, we see her. The *Genius*, *continues he*, warns every body never to trust this Woman, nor to reckon any thing their own, or of any long continuance, that comes from her. For the Grants of *Fortune* are always made with a Power of Revocation; And a Man that holds of her is a meer Tenant at Will, and may be turn'd out the next Day for ought he knows to the contrary. *Resumptions* are very common with this Lady, and there's no depending upon her Favour; And therefore the *Genius* advises People to be loose and indifferent with her, and neither be transported when she

she gives, nor dejected when she takes away. For she never acts upon Reason, but throws out every thing at Peradventure. Therefore the Rule is never to be surpriz'd at any of her Proceedings; Nor behave our selves like some unreasonable Bankers, who when there's Money lodg'd in their Hands, are pleas'd with receiving it, and look upon it as their own: But when 'tis drawn out again, they are as much out of humour, as if they had some real injury done them: Never remembering they are but Cashiers; and that they were trusted with the Sum, upon condition of repaying it upon demand. These things the Directing Spirit orders People to observe, with reference to *Fortune*, whose Custom it is to take away what she has bestow'd, and soon after, to restore thrice as much; And it may be in a little time she will turn short again, carry off her last Bounty, and a great deal more into the bargain. Upon these Considerations, the *Genius* enjoins them to receive what they can of her, and make off with it forthwith in quest of a more lasting Liberality: And where is this to be had? *Learning*, replies the Gentleman, will present them, provided they can get safe to her. Present them with what? With the Knowledge of what is

is really useful, and significant ; now this is a Favour that will stick by them, and there's no fear of its being recall'd ; And therefore the *Genius* bids them press forward for this Advantage as fast as they can : And when they come up to those Women, which I told you were call'd *Pleasure* and *Intemperance*, they are order'd to pass on, without making the least stop, or acquaintance, till they reach *Pretended-Learning* ; and here they are to stay sometime till she has furnish'd them with Conveniencies for their Journey ; and then to set forward to *true Learning* or *Philosophy*, with all Expedition. These are the Directions of the *Genius*, which whosoever either neglects, or mistakes, is lost and undone to all intents and purposes. Thus, Gentlemen, the Mythology of the *Picture* is explain'd to you. And if you have any thing to ask farther about the Argument. you are heartily welcome. Sir, *said I*, since you give us this freedom, pray what is it the *Genius* orders People to receive of *Pretended Learning* ? Some things that may be of Service to them if they please. What are those ? *Letters*, *says he*, and Scholarship, which being a handsome Amusement, are as *Plato* observes, a sort of Restraint upon young People, and keep them sometimes

times from flying out into Extravagance. Is there then a Necessity of touching upon this Coast in order to the arriving at *true Learning* ? Not at all : They are useful indeed in some Respects, but as to the Point of Probity, they signify little. Do you say then they signify nothing towards Virtue, and moral Improvement ? I say a Man may be good without them, and yet they are not altogether Useless. To illustrate the Matter. Tho' we may understand a Foreigner well enough by an *Interpreter*, yet it may not be amiss to learn the Language our selves. Thus you see we may go on without the Advantages of Education. What then don't Mathematicians and other Scholars, stand fairer for degrees in Honesty, than other People ? I can't see which way, *says he*, since they mistake the Nature of Good and Evil, and are as much govern'd by their Vices as the rest of the World. For, to speak freely, a Man may have abundance of fine Notions in his Head, and run through all the *Sciences* as they call them, and yet love Wine and Women, and Money, a great deal too much. In short, he may be admirably furnish'd this way, and yet be a Fop, a Knave, or a Traitor, if he has not a care : I'm sorry to say there are not a few Men of *Letters*
ly-

lyable to this Imputation. And since the Case stands thus, what Advantage have they in reference to *Virtue* above others? Truly not much, as you have represented the Matter. But under favour what's the Reason then these Gentlemen are lodg'd in the *Second Court*, for by their Apartments they seem to be next Neighbours to *true Knowledge*? And what of all that, *says he*? Don't you see several pass immediately from *Debauchery* to *true Knowledge*, from the first Court, to the third, without making a Visit to these Gentlemen of Education? And in what, then, does their Privilege consist? In earnest, I think they are either more lazy or more untoward than the rest, in Learning the Lesson they should do. How so, *said I*? Because, *says he*, those in the *Second Court* pretend to know more than they really do: Now their being thus conceited in their Ignorance, makes them more sluggish in their Advances to *true Knowledge* than otherwise they would be. Besides, don't you observe that *Opinion*, and *Uncertainty* are perpetually trudging to them out of the *First Court*? So that in fine they are not a jot better than other Mortals, unless *Repentance* calls in at their Lodgings and they grow fully convinc'd that 'tis only *Sham-Learning* which they have

have been all this while amus'd with; And that unless they mend their Manners, and their Company, 'tis impossible for them not to Miscarry. And therefore Gentlemen, *says he*, I hope you'll remember this Discourse, comply with the Directions, and Practise them up to a Habit; Indeed all other Business is but trifling to this; But you must frequently recollect your Memory, and take Pains with your selves, otherwise what you have heard will do you no Service. We shall endeavour to take your Advice. But I desire you would explain your self a little upon the Notion of *Advantage*, and how the Common Liberalities of *Fortune* can be said not to be *Good*; such as Life, Health, Riches, Fame, Posterity, Victory, &c. And how the contrary to these can be maintain'd not to be *Evil*? To assert this I must needs say, is all Riddle and Paradox to me. To satisfy you, *says he*, I shall ask you a few Questions, and pray speak your Mind freely in your Answer. I shall do it. What do you think then in case a Man lives ill, is Life any Advantage to him? No truly, *said I*, 'tis rather a Disadvantage. Very Well, *says he*, then bare living, without other Considerations, is no Privilege: 'tis a Good Thing to those that live well, but

a Misfortune to others. Under favour do you affirm that Life is Advantage, and Disadvantage too? I do. Pray, *said I*, have a care of an Absurdity; For 'tis impossible the same Thing should be both Good and Bad; At this rate it would be Profitable, and Prejudicial, and the Object of Choice and Aversion, at the same time. That is Absurdity enough, *says he*, in all Conscience: But pray, if living Ill is a mischief to him that's guilty on't does it follow from hence, that Life precisely taken has any harm in't? Indeed, I can't say both these Cases are the same. Why then Life is no bad Business, if it were, those who live well, would lie under the Misfortune, for they live no less than other People. Truly, you seem to argue reasonably enough. Therefore, *says he*, since Life is common both to Good and Bad People, it must be Indifferent of it self, and the Use must determine the Quality. 'Tis much like Lancing and Burning, the Season and the Application; makes the Distinction; If a Man be well, it does him a Mischief, but an Ulcer, or an Imposthume, is much the better for a skilful Hand. To put an other Question to you, had you rather live scandalously, or Die bravely? I had rather Die upon those terms. You answer

swer like a Man; From hence it follows that Death is no Evil, because 'tis sometimes more Eligible than Living. You are right. The same Reasoning, *continues my Instructor*, will hold with reference to Health and Diseases; For the former is sometimes a Misfortune to a Man, and as Circumstances may happen, he had much better have been sick in his Bed. I can't deny what you say. Let us go on then, *says he*, and examine the Case of *Riches*; And here a very little Reasoning will serve the Turn: For Matter of Fact when 'tis frequent and visible, needs no Proof: Now, nothing is more common than to see Wealthy People live Scandalously and Miserably. Ay, that's but too true. Then Riches does them no service in order to Virtue, and Happiness. It seems so, otherwise they would manage better. Well then, 'tis Precept, and Principles, not an Estate, which makes Men good for something. Indeed I think so. Which way then, *says he*, can *Wealth* be a real Advantage, if it can't improve the Owners, nor contribute to the making them better Men? I can't tell. By your Concession, an Estate must be a Disadvantage to those who know not how to use it. Yes, without all doubt. How then can that be absolutely a good Thing, when a Man is sometimes the

the better for being without it. From hence it follows that a Person that has Honesty and Discretion to his Fortune, may make something on't ; But unless he is thus qualified, he is only furnish'd with Edge-Tools to cut his Fingers. To conclude, the overrating these Things is that which disorders Humane Life, and ruins the World ; For when People fancy they can't be happy without such Circumstances, they'll boggle at no Wickedness to come at them ; And all this Mischievous occasion'd, for want of a right Notion of what is *really Good*.

The Picture of Cebes

F I N I S.