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DISCOURSES

ON

*Theological & Literary Subjects.*

BY THE LATE

REV. ARCHIBALD ARTHUR, M.A.

PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF  
GLASGOW.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF SOME

PARTICULARS IN HIS LIFE AND CHARACTER,

BY

WILLIAM RICHARDSON, M. A.

PROFESSOR OF HUMANITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE following DISCOURSES were not intended by their Author to be published as they now appear. With the exception of three or four, none of them ever seem to have been written over by him twice. The liberty taken in offering them to the Public, was from the wish entertained by his near Relations, of preserving and doing honour to his memory; which they thought could be done, even though the works to be published were as imperfect as has now been mentioned. In prosecuting their design, they requested the Editor to make a selection of such Discourses, and present them to the Public in such a manner, as would best answer their intention. He undertook the office with much reluctance; and had he been aware of the great difficulty attending it, his reluctance would have been still greater. But his regard for the Deceased overcame his objections. Still, however, he would not have engaged in a business of so much difficulty of different kinds, but that Mr. ARTHUR's Rela-

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tions allowed him to have the assistance of the Rev. Dr. TAYLOR, now Principal of the University, and of the Rev. Dr. M'GILL, one of the Ministers in the City of Glasgow; each of whom had lived in habits of intimacy with the author.

IN making the selection, the Editor chose those performances which, from their importance, or the occasions of writing and delivering them, might, as he conceived, have been most carefully studied and composed. Any freedom, therefore, which he has used in correcting them, has been as seldom as possible. He has never ventured, in any one instance, to change the sentiment; or to make alterations on the general plan or structure of any Discourse; or even to alter the language in any particular, unless in removing those mistakes or imperfections, which must have proceeded solely from inattention.

ALL he has to say further is, that as these Discourses were calculated to impart useful instruction from a Professor's chair, it is hoped the same end may be attained by now offering them from the press.

TO THE HONOURABLE  
WILLIAM CRAIG,  
ONE OF THE SENATORS OF THE COLLEGE OF JUSTICE;  
ONE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF JUSTICIARY  
IN SCOTLAND;  
AND LORD RECTOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW;

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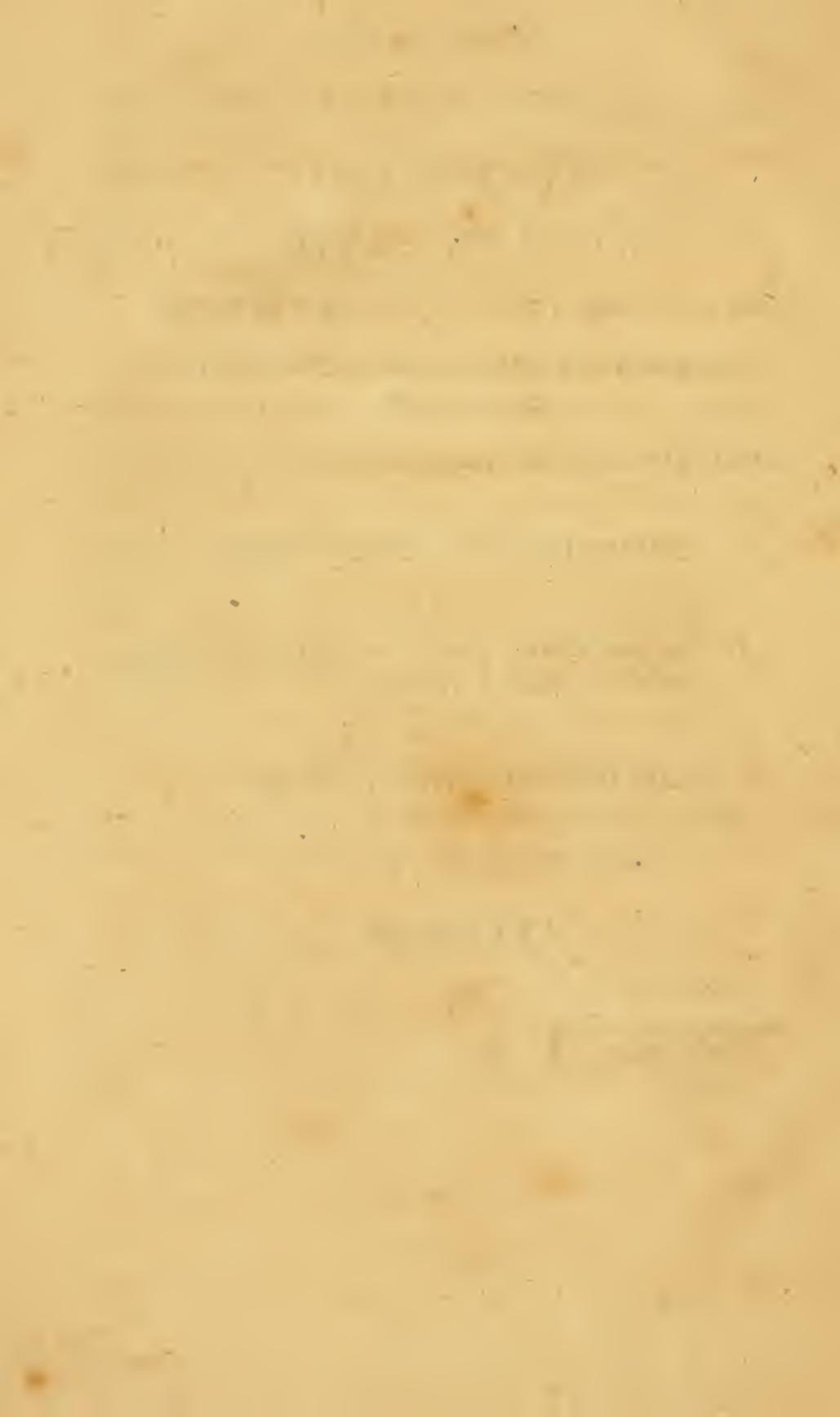
BY A PERSON WHOSE MERITS HIS LORDSHIP KNEW  
AND ESTEEMED,

ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE EDITOR.

GLASGOW COLLEGE,  
NOV. 2. 1803. }



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DISCOURSES  
ON  
*THEOLOGICAL AND LITERARY*  
SUBJECTS.

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PART I.

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*Consisting of THEOLOGICAL DISCOURSES.*

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## DISCOURSE I.

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*On the ARGUMENT for the EXISTENCE of  
GOD, from the Appearances of DESIGN  
in the Universe.*

AS every part of the Universe with which we are acquainted exhibits evident marks of *Design*, we must of necessity infer, that it sprung from a Wise and Intelligent Cause. The inference is obvious and undeniable. It is, indeed, principally upon this argument, that our belief in the existence of God is founded; and as it has been often placed in a false light by Atheists and Sceptics, I shall, in this discourse, endeavour to vindicate its justness from the objections of some able, and chiefly of some late, opponents.

### I.

In order to speak distinctly upon this subject, it is necessary to have a precise and accurate notion of what is meant by *Design*, because some persons

seem not to have given sufficient attention to this matter, and have involved themselves in perplexity.

In common life we understand distinctly what is meant by Design. We say that a man acts with design and foresight, when his actions tend to bring about some end, and were performed by him with this view. If a man propose to make a clock; and adjusts wheels and weights to one another, so that a motion is produced by means of which the hours are pointed out, we say that he acts with *design*, and we say that the piece of work which is produced manifests contrivance. Whenever any thing is properly adapted for producing an end, or answering a purpose, we say it is done with design. It is in this sense that the word design has been employed in stating this argument. It has been shewn, that important ends are served by means of the bodies of which the material world consists, and that their revolutions are directed to the accomplishment of certain valuable purposes. It has also been shewn, that the fabric and limbs of the human body, and the faculties of the human mind, are well fitted for those offices which they perform. In all these things there are undeniable marks of wisdom and intention.

When there appears design or contrivance in any thing, the question naturally occurs, from what did it proceed? and the obvious answer is, that it proceeded from a Designing Cause. In this

case there is no occasion for any chain of reasoning. The judgment is formed intuitively, and without any intermediate step. That *every effect must have a cause*, is an axiom manifest to every person; and it seems to be equally evident, that every effect that exhibits marks of design, must have proceeded from a designing cause. Whatever is well adapted for answering an end, must have been adapted by its author and contriver to answer that purpose. No judgments we can form appear to be more self evident than these; and accordingly they seem to have been formed by the whole of mankind, with respect to every subject to which they are applicable.

It may then be laid down as a first principle, founded on the constitution of our minds, and standing in need of no proof whatever, “that design, wherever it is observed, naturally, and therefore necessarily, suggests to us the notion of a cause.” The one conception is always connected with the other. We apply this principle in all the common affairs of life. If we behold a ship well built, completely rigged, and properly accommodated for containing a cargo of goods, or for lodging a number of passengers during a long voyage, we never hesitate in pronouncing, that it must have been the workmanship of a skilful carpenter. If we look at a palace adorned with all the elegant ornaments of architecture, and conveniently disposed for the accommodation

of its inhabitants, and for exhibiting to spectators their splendor and magnificence, we cannot entertain the slightest doubt of its having been contrived by an architect, and executed by the hands of artists adequate to such a noble piece of workmanship. If we were going through a desert, and saw a wretched hovel erected, though we observed no vestige of living creatures near it, we would immediately ascribe it to intelligent beings, and conclude, without further reflection, that men had once been there. Aristippus the philosopher was shipwrecked upon an island; and he, along with his fellow-sufferers, were walking on the shore, deploring their miserable fate, and not doubting but they would soon be attacked and destroyed by barbarians, or torn to pieces by wild beasts. While they were in this situation, the philosopher made a discovery which dispelled his own fears; and by means of which, he was enabled to rouse the drooping spirits of his companions. He perceived certain mathematical figures scratched upon the sand of the sea shore. The judgment which he formed was certain, and it was immediate. "Let us take courage, my friends," said he, "for I discern the vestiges of civilized men." He never imagined that regular figures, adapted to the demonstration of abstract truths, could have been accidentally formed by the foot of a sea-fowl; nor even that they could have been drawn by the hand of savages. In these suppositions there would have been no probability. He instantaneously judged

that they must have been constructed by men who had made progress in knowledge and mental improvement ; and who, of consequence, must have attained to gentle and polished manners. If we hear a tune well played, we never imagine that the sound is produced without the efforts of a musician ; and if we read an excellent poem, we are immediately convinced that it is the work of a good poet. We never imagine that letters accidentally thrown down, could form themselves into an Iliad or an Eneid. We do not even imagine that a person of small abilities could have arranged words, or contrived incidents, so as to have formed works of such distinguished merit. We are naturally led to assign a cause adequate to the effect, and to ascribe poems of such beauty and grandeur to minds of a superior order. In our connections with men, in the same manner, we observe their words and their actions. We consider these as effects proceeding from an internal cause. We judge of the cause from the effects which we observe ; and we conclude, that he who acts and speaks with prudence and discernment, must possess faculties corresponding to his behaviour.

All these judgments proceed from our Constitution. *We are so made*, that we naturally form them, just in the same manner as we pronounce snow to be white ; or as we infer, the existence of a substance from discerning its qualities. The whole of mankind form similar judgments, and

they do it intuitively. They use no argument on such subjects, and they can use none. They employ no intermediate steps, as in a chain of reasoning; and do not arrive at their conclusion, by adjusting premises to one another.

If we judge in this manner in the ordinary transactions of life, it is surely to be expected that we should judge in the same manner with respect to the design and contrivance discernible in the fabric of the universe. If a mathematical figure be scratched upon the sand, we instantaneously ascribe it to a designing cause, and acknowledge that he who formed it was a man acquainted with certain abstract truths. If we observe a building or an elegant contrivance, we ascribe them to an artist. If we see well directed conduct, we conclude that he who performed it is a prudent agent. Can we then behold the regularity and order of the universe, the subserviency of every part to the rest, the excellent adjustment of means to ends, and the invariable succession of revolutions, without pronouncing immediately that there must be an intelligent cause that produced them? It is impossible to behold the planetary system, to consider how nicely its parts are fitted to one another, how regularly its motions are directed, and how beneficial every part of it is to living creatures, without declaring that it is the workmanship of a wise Being. The bodies of animals are infinitely better constructed, and are also much more complex, than the best machine of human contrivance; and

if no person ever thought a watch was formed without intention, can any person imagine that animal bodies were produced without an artist?

If we take into consideration the provision that is made for the support of animal life, the instinct with which every creature is furnished, its appetites and its passions adapted to its manner of life, we observe still more and more reason for drawing the same conclusion. The faculties which man possesses, the powers of understanding and of action, and his capacity for discerning what is fair and beautiful, and of prosecuting what is honourable and proper, must obtain from every candid mind, an acknowledgment that this lord of the lower world must have been formed by the hand of wonderful Intelligence. “He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know?” The judgment in this case is as natural and necessary as in any other whatever. It flows from a principle in our constitution, and it has been formed in all ages.

These judgments which we form concerning Causes, from observing their Effects, must be founded upon an original principle in our constitution. They are universal, and yet nobody assigns a reason for them. They are evidently not conclusions from reasoning. It is impossible to

point out any intermediate steps by which they are proved, and nobody has attempted it. No man can give any argument by which it can be shewn, that a mathematical figure must be the work of an intelligent being, and could not be the work of a fowl or of a quadruped. We judge indeed in this manner, but we can assign no reason for our judgment, any more than we can assign any reason why we judge, that two and two make four. Neither did we learn to judge in this manner by experience. From experience we can acquire knowledge only concerning contingent truth or matters of fact, which may be, or may not be, without any absurdity. We can never learn from experience any knowledge concerning necessary truths which must be, and which it involves an absurdity to suppose not to be. We may learn from experience, that bodies gravitate. This is not a necessary truth; it is only contingent, and depends on the will of the Creator; and if he had pleased, body might have had opposite properties, or might not have existed. But we cannot learn from experience, that the whole is equal to all its parts. This is a necessary truth, and necessarily flows from the notions we have of a whole and of its parts. It must be true; and it is impossible, and involves absurdity, to think otherwise. Now, our judgments concerning the connection of effects and causes, are judgments concerning necessary truths. We do not judge that the connection *may* take place, but that it *must* take place. These

judgments, therefore, are of such a nature, as experience cannot suggest.

Some persons, unwilling to admit that the world sprung from a designing cause, have pretended that every thing sprung from *chance*, or from absolute *necessity*.—That the world arose from accident, was strongly urged by the ancient Epicureans; and that it sprung from necessity, or absolute and undirected fate, has been insisted upon by some speculative Atheists and Sceptics, both in ancient and modern times. It is, however, to be remarked, that these are only forms of expression, without any clear and distinct meaning. Chance and absolute necessity are words expressing certain abstract notions; and neither the notions, nor the terms that denote them, can possibly be the causes of any thing whatever. They are not active beings, capable of accomplishing any end.—In common language we attribute many things to chance. If a die be thrown, we say it depends upon chance what side may turn up; and, if we draw a prize in a lottery, we ascribe our success to chance. We do not, however, mean that these effects were produced by no cause, but only that we are ignorant of the cause that produced them. There are mechanical causes, which determine what side of a die will cast up, as certainly as any thing else; and, if we could adjust perfectly the degree of force with which it is thrown, and the particular direction, together with the nature of the surface on which

it passes, we could tell precisely what side would appear. This, however, we cannot do; and because the event depends on circumstances which we cannot foresee, we ascribe it to a cause of which we are ignorant; and to such uncertain and undetermined causes, we give the name of chance; not meaning that there is no cause, but that we cannot ascertain it.

Again, when all things are ascribed to necessity, if those who use the term have any meaning at all, they cannot mean that they sprung from no cause. They must only mean that the cause, whatever it was, acted necessarily, and not from choice. They must conceive the first cause, to have been actuated by some involuntary force, as a machine is moved by weights and springs, so that the effect must necessarily be produced; and cannot mean that there was no cause.—If we ascribe, then, every thing to chance, we do not exclude a cause; we only say we do not know what that cause is. If we ascribe every thing to necessity, we also admit a cause, though a different one from what is admitted by those who acknowledge design. The only question then is, whether the cause admitted be a designing cause or not.

That the universe must have proceeded from a *designing* cause; and could not possibly have proceeded from a cause without design and intelligence, by whatever name it may be deno-

minated, whether it be called chance, or necessity, or fate, is exceedingly obvious. Nothing beautiful, regular, and orderly, ever proceeded, or can proceed, from an undefining cause. Suppose matter to have existed originally of itself, and to have been endued with motion from eternity; and suppose that motion to have been continued without diminution; there is no doubt, but these materials, continually agitated, would, in the course of millions of ages, have assumed various forms: but there is no probability, that ever these forms would have been regular; and much less that there should be regularity in all their revolutions, mutual connections, and dependencies. Did ever chance form a machine so regular as a watch? Throw the different wheels, and springs, and pinions, of which a watch is composed, into one vessel, and keep the whole in motion for ages; and after all, neither the whole, nor any part of them, will ever be properly placed and adjusted.—Take a case that has often been put in handling this argument. Suppose a triangular prism, with three unequal sides, and a scabbard perfectly adapted to it, to be both set in motion through empty space; grant both of them the power of altering their motions, and of flying up and down in every possible direction, it is infinity to one that they will never meet. Supposing they did meet, it is still infinity to one, that they do not meet in that one particular direction in which the prism will enter its scabbard. If chance, then, cannot effectuate those simple ad-

justments, to which the design of a child is equal, how can it be imagined that it should adjust the innumerable parts and revolutions in the universe? There is not the slightest shadow of probability to justify such a supposition. Even though chance should sometimes have stumbled upon a regular form, after a variety of trials, in the way that Epicurus imagined men, and animals, and vegetables, to have been fashioned; these forms would again have been immediately destroyed, in the same manner that the monstrous appearances that had existed before them, in infinite multitudes, were destroyed, in consequence of the motion and changes of situation, which, upon that supposition, are always going on among the particles of matter. If chance never could arrange unorganized matter into those beautiful and regular forms with which we see it invested; could it, or necessity, or any blind cause, by whatever name it may be called, ever produce a being endued with life, sensation, intelligence, and the power of voluntary action? Can that which has itself no design or understanding, produce a wise and intelligent mind? The supposition is absurd. It is supposing an effect to be produced by an inadequate cause; which is precisely the same thing as to suppose it produced by no cause at all. It is strange that such an opinion should have ever been embraced by philosophers, the folly of which is manifest even to a child. An infant, if its bells on its rattle be taken away, never dreams that they were taken

away by nobody, but immediately judges that they were removed by some person or other. Even a dog, if a stone be thrown at him, never imagines that the pain he feels arose without a cause. He either flies from the place, that he may be exposed to no further sufferings, or he turns with resentment to defend himself. If an inhabitant of Terra del Fuego, or Lapland, who had never seen an army, nor knew the use of fire-arms, were brought to see a regiment reviewed, would he imagine that all their orderly motions and evolutions were the effects of blind chance? Would he not immediately perceive, that they arose from design and premeditation? The motions of a single human body are much more regular, and more various, than those of a large body of soldiers upon a field-day. Why then imagine that these motions are carried on without design? What then shall we say of the regularity observable in the whole human race, in inferior animals, in plants, in unorganized matter, and through the whole extent of the universe? Or, what shall we say of the intelligence of that man, who seriously believes that the whole is produced without a designing cause?

## II.

I shall now proceed to make a few remarks upon some of the principal objections that have been stated against the argument for the existence of

God, which we have been endeavouring to establish.

In the first place, it has been offered as an objection to this argument, that we see every thing going on regularly, in consequence of the laws of motion, which are established in the universe, without any marks of supernatural interposition. The presumption, therefore, is, that things have gone on in the same order, from all eternity; and consequently, that the universe never had a beginning. Some of the ancient philosophers believed that the world was eternal, without denying the existence of God; for they considered it as the eternal effect of an eternal cause. Their notions of the subject were often perplexed and dark, and they did not agree with one another. One class of them considered God as the soul of the universe; and supposed that he animated and moved it from all eternity, as the human mind actuates the human body. Others only supposed *matter* to be eternal; and imagined that it had originally subsisted in an unformed mass, which they called a chaos; and that at last the divine energy separated the parts of this mass, reduced them into form, and constructed the world as we at present behold it. The opinions of these philosophers were false, and supported by no evidence; but they were not atheists. It is most favourable for the atheist, if he adopt the supposition that the world is eternal, to maintain that its present form,

as well as its matter, are eternal: though the Epicureans did not avail themselves of this advantage; for they only contended for the eternity of atoms, or particles of matter, and of motion; and they supposed that the form was stamped upon them by chance. It would evidently have been more easy for them to have supposed form, as well as matter and motion, to be eternal, which some of their successors have accordingly done.

The belief that the world is eternal, however difficult to be supposed, is not inconsistent with the belief that it is governed by an eternal and intelligent being. But that the world should be eternal, and under no such direction, is inconceivable. It is supposing design to be without a designing cause, and the time at which it is supposed to have happened makes no difference. That there should be motion without a mover, is just as impossible as that motion should begin at any given time without a mover. Matter has no motion in itself. It is indifferent in its nature to motion or rest. All the motion that it has must spring from some cause. Its motions are regular; they must therefore spring from a designing cause. If there be regularity and design, it must be owing to intelligence; and the case is not materially altered, whether you suppose that intelligent cause to have operated from all eternity, or to have begun to form and arrange the world at a given time. Atheism, therefore, gains nothing by supposing the world in its pre-

sent form to have existed from eternity. The supposition may confound and embarrass our conceptions; but the same argument, from the design and regularity of the universe, is equally applicable on this hypothesis, as upon the belief that there was a time when every thing began to exist.

There are not proofs wanting to shew that the hypothesis of the world's eternity is utterly void of foundation.—The universe carries in it evidences of its late origin. I would not attempt to prove this fact, as some have done, from the nature of the great bodies in the universe. The sun, they say, is continually emitting light and heat, by throwing off particles of its substance, and consequently must be diminishing in size; and, therefore, if this luminary had existed from all eternity, it must long ago have been exhausted. The planets, they add, though they move in spaces where they can meet with very little resistance, yet do not perform their revolutions in places that are perfectly empty. They at least pass through light in their orbits; and though light be a body of the most subtile kind, yet it must occasion some resistance; and if this resistance, however small it may be, had continued from all eternity, it would gradually have impeded the motion of the heavenly bodies; so that, long before this time, they would have lost the impulse by which they move forward, and have been carried by gravity into the sun.

These observations may be just; but we know too little of the nature of these things, or of the means by which any waste in the system may be regularly supplied, to found any thing upon them with certainty. We must satisfy ourselves with evidence better suited to our own comprehension; and on the present subject we have enough of it. One instance in the structure of our own earth is sufficient to convince us. It is merely impossible that it could have subsisted from all eternity in its present form. Every shower that falls, and every breeze that blows, brings down portions of matter from the mountains to the valleys; and every stream that runs carries with it some part of the land into the sea. Consequently the tendency of all things on the surface of the earth is to produce equality. However insensible the effects of this constant change may be, yet, as it is continually going on, it would, in the course of many ages, have levelled every thing; and long before now, the waters would have uniformly covered the face of the earth. As this effect has not followed, of consequence the circumstances in which it would have happened have never existed; and therefore, the world has not been eternal.

If we consult the monuments of history, which have been transmitted to us, they will not only convince us, that this earth at least which we inhabit, is not eternal, but even that its

origin is not many thousand years removed from us. The history of no nation carries us very far back into antiquity. We know the origin of most of the ancient nations; and we know that they settled in countries which were thinly inhabited at that time, and contained no buildings, nor works of art, nor monuments, from which there was any reason to believe that ever they had been in a more improved state. Men appear to have sprung from one common stock, and to have spread gradually over the world, and not to have gathered into large societies before that period when our historical accounts of them begin. Most of the nations that afterwards rose to greatness, trace back their origin to some scattered bands of unpolished wanderers, who united and formed a small civil government. If men had subsisted much longer before that period, than the time that was necessary for their multiplication, so as to occupy the greater part of the earth; they would also, before that period, have formed kingdoms and empires; they would have established laws; they would have cultivated arts and sciences; and they would have built great cities. It is not to be supposed, that such empires, with their arts, could have entirely perished, and have been swept off, as it were, from the face of the earth, without leaving the slightest monument of their existence behind them. No monuments of that kind, however, remain. There is no reason to believe, that any great nations ever existed before those of

which history has preserved some account. We know at what time most of the useful arts were invented; and even the names of the inventors have come down to us. We cannot believe that these arts were formerly invented, and were afterwards lost; and we know that no great state could subsist without them. There is no reason to believe, that any useful art, which had been once invented, was ever lost, unless another that answered the same end better, were substituted in its room. As far as historical records go, we have reason to believe that man has always been improving in this respect, retaining the ingenuity of former ages, and adding to the stock by new inventions. We know also the origin of the sciences. We know the names and tenets of the first philosophers, and are able to trace knowledge from its first dawn to its present lustre. These particulars seem clearly to shew, that the world is of late origin. This opinion has accordingly been current among early nations. All of them had traditions among them concerning the creation of the world, and the origin of the human race, though some of these traditions were more distinct, and more probable, than others.

In this argument we have the assistance of the Epicureans, and it is dressed up, with great elegance, by their poet Lucretius: \*

Præterea si nulla fuit genitalis origo  
Terrarum et cœli, semperque æterna fuere;

B 2

\* Lib. V. 325. Ed. Wakef.

Quir supra bellum Thebanum, et funera Trojæ,  
 Non alias alieî res cecinere poetæ ?  
 Quo tot facta virum totiens cecidere ? neque usquam,  
 Æternis famæ monumentis insita, florent ?  
 Verum, ut opinor, habet novitatem summa recensque  
 Natura est mundi ; neque pridem exordia cepit.  
 Quæ re etiam quædam nunc artes expoliuntur ;  
 Nunc etiam augefcunt : nunc addita navigiis sunt  
 Multa ; modo organicei melicos peperere sonores.

A second objection has sometimes been urged against the evidence arising from the appearances of wisdom and design in the works of nature, and the proof of a first cause founded upon it, from some marks of irregularity, which, it is pretended, frequently occur in the world ; and from a variety of objects for which we do not discern any use. Why do comets appear to alarm mankind ? Why are the motions of the sun and moon so regulated, that their light is sometimes obstructed by eclipses ? Why is one district of the earth scorched with heat ; and why are two more pinched with perpetual cold ? Why is a great part of the earth covered with sea ; another part of it loaded with unfruitful mountains ; and another covered with morasses, or noxious weeds ? Why are there a multitude of productions, animal, vegetable, and fossil, which are useless to man ?—These irregularities, and others of a similar nature, are numerous, and resemble the works of chance. May we not therefore suppose, that those things which seem to be regular, assumed this appearance

in consequence of some lucky accident, some fortunate combination of parts ?

This objection was urged, with all the exaggeration of colouring which it is capable of receiving, by the Epicureans of old; and it was then urged with a better grace than it can be in modern times. The great improvements which our knowledge of nature has now received, render us capable of pointing out the wisdom of many particulars which seemed useless or irregular in ancient times. Comets do not now appear to be bodies accidentally formed, and appearing at uncertain times to terrify nations and kingdoms. We now know that they perform regular revolutions, and return at stated periods, as well as the planets. They are, therefore, instances of regularity and order, and not of accident. The eclipses of the sun and moon, also, happen according to regular laws; and the time when they are to happen, even a thousand years before it arrive, may be calculated to a minute. Their uses are not now unknown, though of old they were not discovered. One purpose of the sun and moon, is to measure the various seasons, and divide time into days and nights, and months and years. Their eclipses answer the same purpose; and the accounts of them, transmitted by historians, have been made use of, in after periods, for the important end of settling the chronology of ancient kingdoms. How useful they are in determining the longitude of places, and promoting the knowledge

of geography and navigation, is also acknowledged. The torrid zone is now known not to be uninhabitable on account of its heat; nor the two frigid zones on account of their cold, as the ancient Greeks and Latins supposed. They have all their inhabitants habituated to their temperature, and capable of subsisting in them with comfort. Some of those countries which they ignorantly thought to be only fit to be the abodes of savages, particularly our own, are now found not to be unfavourable to the growth of good government, of arts, and of science. Man can subsist and thrive on almost any part of the globe. The distribution of the earth into hotter and colder climates, is, in consequence of this contrivance, highly-beneficial. Each of the climates has its own peculiar productions, which cannot be obtained by culture in another. The produce of the earth, proper for man, is thus multiplied in prodigious variety. By means, also, of navigation, men have learned to exchange their own superfluities for those of other countries. Every climate of consequence enjoys the principal productions of all the rest; and human society, by means of the wise distribution of temperature, is much better supplied, both with necessaries and conveniences, than it could have otherwise been.

The vast ocean, whatever it might appear to the ancients, who durst not venture to sail upon it, is now found not to be unproductive. It is the

means of communication between immense continents, to the greater part of which they were strangers. The mountains are the sources of springs and rivers; and the most extensive forests with which they are covered have been found to be wisely contrived, since the demand for timber became universal, in consequence of the increase of commerce and ship-building. The wood in a British man-of-war would have constructed a whole fleet for the Romans or Carthaginians. Many of those productions, animal, vegetable, and fossil, which formerly were thought useless, are now found to be exceedingly valuable. The loadstone was anciently known by one of its properties, for it had been observed that it attracted iron; but it was not known that it would communicate its virtue to a needle, and that the needle, touched by it, would point towards the poles of the earth. Since this discovery was made, the loadstone is no longer considered as merely a curious fossil. It is considered as one of the most precious of mineral productions, as by means of it the mariner is supplied with his compass, which directs his course through the trackless ocean, and is enabled to transport the various articles of commerce. One of the finest colours is produced by the cochineal, an insect once thought insignificant; and many excellent dyes are now furnished by one of the meanest plants, which was formerly thought to be of no other use but to cover the rocks of the desert with a whiteness resembling that of hoar-frost. There

is an infinite number of other productions formerly regarded as uselefs, which future observations have shewn to be contrived for important ends. The purposes which they serve, are not indeed, evident at first sight. They are left to be traced out by the ingenuity and observation of mankind. But the mind of man is fitted for inquiry; and it is a part of his business in this world, to search into the works of God, and to accommodate the stores wisely provided for him to his own use and convenience. Houses were not built, nor clothes provided for him; but the materials are furnished, and it is left to him to frame them in the manner that suits him best. For a similar reason, the earth is not, without culture, fitted to yield him subsistence. It was not intended that he should be inactive. It is his duty to labour, to clear the field of noxious weeds, to drain the morasses, and to cultivate the ground. All the complaints that have been made against the wisdom of the creation, seem to be founded upon human ignorance. Later and more careful investigation has shewn, that many of them have not the slightest foundation. Those things which were complained of have, on many occasions, been found to be wise and useful contrivances; and future discoveries will, in all probability, remove every appearance of irregularity, and confute every objection from supposed uselessness. We are not able to comprehend the whole system of things, and to discern the subserviency of its several parts;

but if experiments and observations be continued, as they have been conducted for a hundred years, we will gradually be enabled to discern more and more evidences of design. Frequently men have only been blaming the inventions of human fancy, when they thought they were censuring the works of God. The ancient opinion, maintained by philosophers, concerning the planetary system, was very erroneous and imperfect. They considered the earth as the centre, and endeavoured to account for all the motions of the other bodies in the system, upon this supposition. Difficulties increased upon them without number, and every new observation added a new one to the former sum. The velocity with which the planets were supposed to move, in order to complete their circuit in twenty-four hours, was inconceivable; the manner of their procedure through the zodiac, and their appearances, sometimes farther south, and sometimes farther north, were unaccountable: the irregularity of their motions seemed astonishing; at one time they appeared to be going forward among the signs with great velocity; at another time some of them seemed to be stationary; and at another to be moving backwards. These appearances seemed irregularities; the minds of astronomers were distracted by them. They contrived one hypothesis after another to solve them. The motions of the universe were represented as so complex, that it was not possible to comprehend them. This system of astronomy was explained to

Alphonfus king of Castille, an encourager of learning. He was confounded with its perplexity; and at last exclaimed, not without seeming impiety, that if his advice had been taken, he could have pointed out a simpler method of constructing a world. This complaint was against the vain fictions of men, who thought they understood the manner in which the world is constructed, while they were ignorant of it; and not against the workmanship of God, when it is rightly understood. The world is really constructed in a simpler method than that in which it was explained to Alphonfus, and even in a simpler manner than he, with the light he then possessed, could have pointed out. After Copernicus had justly concluded that the sun, and not the earth, is the centre of the planetary system; and after future observations had fully verified his conclusions; all appearance of irregularity vanished. If the planets were viewed from the sun, which is the centre of the system, their motions would all appear to be regular; but as they are viewed by us from a situation in which we see some of them nearer the centre than ourselves, and others more remote, their motions must seem to us to be irregular; and the appearance which their motion must assume to our eye can now be demonstrated in every part of their orbit. We are now freed from the difficulty of supposing their velocities so great as to revolve in twenty-four hours; and by discovering in what position the planes of their orbits are, we can ac-

count for their appearances among the signs of the zodiac. Every thing now is so beautiful and regular, that Alphonfus himself, if he had enjoyed an opportunity of contemplating the whole, would have been forced to acknowledge, that it had proceeded from counsel greatly superior to his own. While men mistake their own fancies for realities, they may censure them with justice ; but it is presumption to impute any thing to the First Cause, which has not been discovered by experience to be a part of his works. We may then safely conclude, that any objections brought against the wisdom displayed in the structure of the universe, from appearances of irregularity, are ill founded, and only spring from human ignorance.

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## DISCOURSE II.

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*OBSERVATIONS by MR. HUME on the Existence  
of GOD, Considered.*

I PROPOSE to consider, in this discourse, those objections brought to invalidate our belief in the existence of a God, which have been advanced by the late celebrated Mr. Hume, in different parts of his philosophical essays, and in his posthumous dialogues concerning natural religion. This author, it is to be observed, has not given his arguments against the evidence of natural religion, in his own character, but in the character of fictitious speakers. At the same time, it must also be observed, that they are evident conclusions from certain principles, which he has been at great pains to establish; and he has drawn these conclusions himself, which follow from no principles but his own, though he has put them into the mouth of other speakers. In his dialogues particularly, where the argument is most copiously and openly

handled, he has introduced three persons as interlocutors : One of them is a man of piety, who disdains reasoning concerning the existence of the Deity altogether, and therefore what he advances upon the subject deserves little attention : One of the other two is a sceptic, who attacks the evidences of religion with much subtlety and eloquence, and who reasons upon the principles of Mr. Hume's philosophy, and draws from it conclusions that obviously follow from it : The other is supposed to be a rational and philosophical believer in the existence of the Divine nature, who maintains his own tenets by solid arguments, and with good temper. Unfortunately, however, this philosophical believer admits as truths the principles of Mr. Hume's philosophy, as well as his antagonist, and is often severely pushed in the course of the argument, when he endeavours to defend his belief upon these principles. The decision is given at last in favour of the believer, though an impression will be left on the mind of every reader in favour of the reasonings made use of by the sceptic, whatever aversion he may have to his conclusion.

In order to refute Mr. Hume's reasonings, it will be necessary to stand upon better ground than that which he has allotted to his philosophical believer. It will be necessary to inquire what foundation there is for those principles upon which the whole reasoning is founded.

The foundation of all the reasonings against the evidences of natural religion, which Mr. Hume has given us in fictitious characters, is the notion of cause and effect, which he has endeavoured to support in his essay intitled, “Of the idea of necessary connection.” In that essay, he positively denies that we have any notion of power, and that we have no notion of cause and effect, excepting that one object has often been perceived by our senses following another. We have seen flame usually joined with fire; hence we conclude that fire is the cause of flame. We have heard a sound often produced by the vibration of a string; hence we conclude that the vibration of the string is the cause of the sound. When the sun appears, we regularly see light; hence we conclude that the sun is the cause of light. In all this, there is no notion of power; we only perceive two things always conjoined, and we call the one the cause and the other the effect. If we see this conjunction only once, we cannot know that it is not merely accidental, and therefore we will not conclude that there is any such thing as cause and effect in the case; but if we see them often, we begin to suspect that they are always united, and the certainty increases upon us by degrees. Hence, all our notions concerning cause and effect depend upon experience. We are never able, he says, *in a single instance*, to discover any power or necessary connection, any quality that binds the effect to the cause, and renders the one an infallible conse-

quence of the other; we only find that the one does actually in fact follow the other. The impulse of one billiard-ball is attended with motion in the second. This is the whole that appears to the outward senses. The mind feels no sentiment or inward impression from this succession of objects; consequently, there is not in any single particular instance of cause and effect, any thing that can suggest the idea of power or necessary connection. He goes on with an attempt to shew, that neither the motions observable in external things, nor the actions of our own minds, furnish us with any notion of power; that in every thing we only perceive one event following another, without any connection between them; and that it is only experience which informs us of their union. He therefore concludes; Upon the whole, there appears not, throughout all nature, any one instance of connection, which is conceivable by us. All events seem entirely loose and separate; one event follows another, but we never can observe any tie between them; they seem conjoined, but never connected. And as we can have no idea of any thing which never appeared to our outward sense, or inward sentiment, the necessary conclusion seems to be, that we have no idea of connection or power at all, and that these words are absolutely without any meaning when employed either in philosophical reasonings, or in common life.

As this notion of cause and effect is the foundation of all the reasonings employed by this author against the evidences of religion, it will be proper to consider whether or not it be just; because with it the conclusions built upon it must stand or fall.

First of all, it is to be remarked, that this notion is built upon the supposition, that all our ideas arise either from sensation or reflection. But it is not true that our notions are all derived from sensation and reflection, or, as Mr. Hume expresses it, from outward sense, and inward sentiment. It might be easy to point out many of them that have not this origin. The conception we have of substance, for instance, is acquired by neither of them. We perceive substances by no sense internal or external. It is only the qualities of substances that are presented to our senses, and not the substances themselves. All men, however, have a notion of substance. They know that it is something in which the qualities are inherent; they know that the qualities cannot subsist of themselves, and that they must belong to something that does not strike the senses; to that thing they refer them, and they believe that substances do exist. The same may also be illustrated by our notion of identity.—Since then there are notions which are acquired neither by sensation nor reflection, the conclusion will not follow, that because a notion is reducible to neither, it therefore does not exist, and cannot possi-

bly be formed by the mind. It is better to reject altogether a system of arrangement, than to deny the existence of an object, because it will not correspond to it. We certainly have conceptions, which are reducible to neither of them; and our notion of the connection between cause and effect may be of that number. If we pay attention to this notion, we may easily be convinced that it is so, and yet it is very distinct and clear. When we see a cause produce an effect, (when we lift an arm, for instance, in consequence of volition) there is only the notion of succession suggested to us by our senses; we are sensible of our own volition, and we perceive that the effect follows it. There is nothing else presented to our minds by means of our senses either external or internal. But there is another notion presented to our minds, though not by means of the senses. We have a conception of power exerted, by means of which the action follows the volition, and consequently have a notion of causality or efficiency. From merely observing the constant conjunction of two things, we could have no conception of causality or power. The ebbing and flowing of the sea have followed one another in regular succession since the beginning of the world, yet no man ever suspected that the one was the cause of the other. The spring has always preceded the summer, and day and night have always succeeded each other; yet no person ever imagined that the one was the

cause of the other, any more than he believed that the departure of the swallow in autumn was the cause of winter, or the arrival of the cuckoo in spring was the cause of summer. A bell regularly rings when the clock strikes a certain hour, and upon the ringing of the bell, a number of people assemble for public worship; but no man in his senses ever imagined that the striking of the clock was the cause that rung the bell, or that the ringing of the bell was the cause that brought together a number of voluntary agents. The mere conjunction of events, then, will never lead us to conclude that the one is the cause of the other. In all cases where we speak of causality, we mean something more than mere conjunction or succession. If conjunction alone constituted our notion of cause and effect, we could not, in most cases, tell which was the cause, and which was the effect. In cases where the one succeeds the other, we might call that the cause which has the precedency in time; but where no succession is discernible, we might put the one in place of the other. We could not tell whether light is the cause of the sun, or the sun the cause of light; whether smoke is the cause of fire, or fire of smoke. But no man ever commits any such mistakes. The judgments of men upon this subject are uniform. They never differ in their notions of the cause and the effect when they understand what they are speaking about. They must

therefore have some method of distinguishing them; and if they have, they must have some other notion besides mere conjunction of two objects or events. Mr. Hume's notion, then, of cause and effect, is inadequate. It does not comprehend all that is commonly understood by causality; and it does not account for the judgments commonly formed concerning cause and effect.

Though we affirm, and can affirm with certainty, that Mr. Hume's notion of cause and effect is inadequate, yet we cannot pretend to define what causation is. The notion of power is altogether simple, and is obtained by attending to a particular course of operations in our own minds; and without attention to these, it is impossible ever to obtain it.—All our notions of active power are originally derived from our own minds. We know that we possess power; we are sensible that we have often exerted it; and we are convinced that we can exert it again, whenever we please. When we choose, we can raise our arm or let it fall. In all cases where we perform any action voluntarily, we are sensible of exerting ourselves; we consider the action as performed by ourselves; we look upon ourselves as the cause of it; and we praise or blame ourselves, according as we think we have acted well or ill. In every action we perform in consequence of our volition, we are convinced that we exerted power; we are convinced that we are causes; and we are satisfied that there

is a connection between our volition and the subsequent action. In consequence of our volition, indeed, there are certain acts performed, of which we are not the causes; there are certain motions of the nerves going on, there are certain contractions of the muscles in our limbs. These operations are performed by some means independent of us, and do not proceed immediately from our volition as their cause; accordingly, we do not consider ourselves as their cause, but resolve them into the original construction of our frame. But in whatever manner the intermediate steps are ordered, we consider the end, or the performance of the action intended, as having proceeded from ourselves; and we claim the merit of it, or think ourselves liable for its demerit.—All men whatever, have a conviction that they possess the power, and think themselves connected with the consequence, of their own actions. If a man thought he was not the cause of what actions proceeded from his volition, he would never blame himself when he did wrong, nor praise himself when he did right. If he saw nothing but a succession between two events, when he reflected upon his volition, and the consequences of them, and did not believe that there was an intimate connection between them, he would think himself no more concerned with them, than with the succession of any other two events whatever. But men do not think in this manner. They are all convinced that there is a connection between their own wills, and the

acts that flow from them. They do not consider these two things as loose and separate; they consider them as inseparably linked together. They not only consider their own actions, but those of their neighbours, as closely connected with their volition. They accordingly ascribe the praise and blame of what they perform, not to the external action itself, but to the mind that performed it.— If a judge saw nothing when a crime was performed, but a succession of two events, loose and separate from each other, he could never punish any person as the cause of the injury that had been sustained. If a tile fall from the roof of a house, and kill a man who stands below, or if the tile was dropt intentionally by another man, the succession of events is the same in both cases. But every spectator sees a wide difference between what happens in the one case, and in the other. In the one case, he sees nothing more than conjunction of events; but in the other, he discerns a real connection. In the one, there is no notion of power exerted; but in the other, there is manifest efficiency. In the one case, he may pity the sufferer; but in the other, he blames the murderer as the cause of the calamity.

So sensible are men that they possess such power, and that they are capable of being the causes of particular actions, that they affirm and deny many things concerning it. They say that certain things

are in their power, and that other things are not. When they speak in this manner, they surely believe that there are particular acts which they are able to perform ; and they firmly believe that there is a connection between their volitions and the acts that proceed from them. Though the acts should happen at the very time that they willed them, yet, if they were not sensible that they had exerted any active power in order to produce them, they would not ascribe them to themselves ; and the mere succession of events, in this case, would suggest to them no notion whatever of causality or efficiency.

None, however, except beings possessed of understanding and will, can properly be said to be endowed with active power ; or, to speak more accurately, none but beings possessed of will, are really endowed with it ; for understanding is implied in the very notion of will, as no person can will an action of which he has no conception. Hence there is no propriety in ascribing efficiency or power to inanimate objects. Matter is inert, and can have no active power whatever. When we say that the stroke of a club is the cause of the motion of a ball, we use language metaphorically ; and we do not really mean that the club is the cause of the motion, but that the intelligent and active being who holds it, and strikes with it, is the cause. The effect is the con-

sequence of volition ; and the mind of the agent is connected with it, notwithstanding the intermediate service of the club, no less than it is with those events where there is nothing intermediate, but the swelling of muscles, and the other involuntary motions of the human body. The club itself, we know, possesses no power ; and though it and the ball were to be in conjunction for a century, no motion would ensue from their position. —We are apt to speak of natural causes ; we see motion produced in one body by means of another : But the language here is metaphorical, and no man believes that the body, which is considered as the mover, has in itself any power to communicate motion ; but is, on the contrary, convinced that its motion is occasioned by something else. We say that a stone falls to the ground by gravitation ; but he must have attended very little to the subject, who considers gravitation as the efficient cause which produces the effect. Gravitation is not an active being at all, and cannot be a cause, for a cause always implies power : All we mean, when we say that the cause of a stone's falling is gravitation, amounts to no more, than that gravitation is one of the rules, or laws, established in nature, according to which, certain effects are produced, and of which the universality has been discovered by observation. But in what way these effects are produced, we do not point out when we use such language ; and in order to account for

their production, we must have recourse, at least, to the agency of an intelligent being. When Sir Isaac Newton discovered that the motions of the planets were produced by gravitation and impulse, he did not pretend that he had discovered the causes of their revolutions; he only said that he had pointed out the laws according to which these revolutions are performed. The question still remained, Who was the wise Being that established these laws; and who is the powerful Being that still puts them in execution?

The notion of power in ourselves differs from the notion of it suggested by the revolutions and changes of the material world. With regard to our own power, we feel an inward conviction, by means of which we naturally and involuntarily connect our volition with its consequence. In observing those laws of the material world, on the contrary, which we usually denominate causes, in conjunction with the events which happen agreeably to them, we perceive no such natural and intimate connection. With respect to natural effects, we must gather our knowledge from experience and observation; and after collecting a variety of instances, must determine the law to be universal or partial. In this case, we are not judging, in reality, concerning cause and effect; we are gathering general conclusions from inductions of particulars; we are not thinking of power at

all ; nor do we speak of cause and effect, unless in a metaphorical and analogical sense. Power and efficiency are the attributes of a voluntary and intelligent agent, and of him only. Mind is the only cause with which we are acquainted ; and in consequence of its exertions only, can effects be produced.

From the account that has been given of the notions we have of *power* and *efficiency*, and of the manner in which they are formed ; and likewise of the imperfection of that notion which is delivered and maintained by Mr. Hume ; the evident conclusion is, that all reasonings built upon the hypothesis, “ That there is nothing more in cause  
“ and effect than the mere conjunction of objects  
“ observed regularly to attend each other,” must be void of all foundation. The principle itself is false, and therefore every thing built upon it must be false also.

## II.

There is another observation, with respect to cause and effect, laid down by Mr. Hume, founded upon the same notions with those already mentioned, and more immediately applicable to the doctrines of natural religion. All our notions of cause and effect, he maintains, “ depend upon ex-  
“ perience. If we observe a conjunction between

“ two objects, or the succession of two events, on-  
 “ ly once, we cannot know that it is not merely  
 “ accidental, and will not of consequence suspect  
 “ that there is any connection, like that of cause  
 “ and effect, in the case. Whenever the effect is  
 “ single, we cannot discover any power or neces-  
 “ sary connection, any tie that binds the effect to  
 “ the cause, and renders the one the infallible con-  
 “ sequence of the other. Though the one fact fol-  
 “ lows the other, we have no notion of any thing  
 “ else but succession; and consequently there is not  
 “ in any single particular instance of cause and  
 “ effect, any thing that can suggest the notion of  
 “ power or necessary connection.”

This observation is an obvious conclusion from  
 this author's doctrine of cause and effect, formerly  
 explained. If it be true, that there is nothing  
 more in our notion of cause and effect, than the  
 regular succession of objects and events, no doubt,  
 our judgment, that the one event is the cause of  
 the other, must be the effect of experience; and  
 no single instance of conjunction or succession, can  
 be sufficient as a foundation for the conclusion,  
 that one of them is the cause of the other. But I  
 have endeavoured to shew that this notion of cau-  
 sation is inadequate and groundless. There is a  
 great deal more in our notion of causation than a  
 conception of conjunction or succession between  
 the two objects. We have a notion of power and

efficiency, which is natural to us, and is suggested by action, and which is entirely distinct from our notions of the objects and events themselves, or their succession. When we exert our own powers, and produce certain actions, we have a conviction that we possess those powers, and that the actions are necessarily connected with them. When we see the actions of other men, we also refer them to an active cause, the principle of volition in their minds. This reference we make by an immediate act of our judgment, without any reasoning or reflection, and without drawing any conclusion from repeated experience. Supposing the event that has happened to be single, and very unlike any thing we have formerly observed, we refer it to its cause, in the same manner as if it were an effect which we had observed a thousand times before. Let a person who had been brought up in a part of the country where nothing but natural simplicity is seen, have an opportunity of observing the tricks of a juggler: Let him see objects conveyed, as it would appear to him, from place to place, by an invisible hand; he would be astonished at what he beheld, or unable to account for any part of it. The effect would be altogether single to him, and unlike any thing he had seen before. Would he therefore have no notion of any thing but the succession of events presented to his mind by the motion of the juggler's pretended magic wand, and the strange transmutations

that followed? He would surely see something more. He would not indeed ascribe the unexpected event, which he saw, to the motion of the wand, nor to the words that might be uttered along with it; but he would immediately believe that there was a cause, though he did not understand the way in which it operated. He would immediately refer every thing to some skill and dexterity which the juggler possessed, though he did not comprehend it; and the novelty or singularity of the appearance would not prevent him from forming this judgment.—A watch having been presented to the Delai Lama at Thibet, neither he, nor any of his subjects, though it was entirely new to them, ever thought of it as the work of accident. They considered it as the effect of skill; and, in their metaphorical language, ascribed its motions to a living principle which the workman had infused into it. Accordingly, when it stopped, they expressed what happened by an analogy to the departure out of life; and told Mr. Bogle, when he was at Thibet, as ambassador from the East-India Company, that it had been dead for several years.—None of us, perhaps, ever saw a murder committed. If we saw one man stab another, it would be an event of which we had no experience; but though a single instance, we would have no more hesitation in referring it to its cause, and in saying that it proceeded from the anger or malice of the person

who perpetrated it, than we would have, though we had seen fifty instances of a like nature.—It is needless to multiply instances. Cases every day occur in common life, where effects are presented to us of a different nature from any that we have formerly met with. We are sensible of their novelty, yet we do not hesitate in referring them to their proper causes. We do not wait till a variety of similar cases happen, that we may form our judgment by experience; but without any experience, we consider the cause and the effect as connected with one another; and this we do in the generality of instances, with as much certainty as if we had been accustomed to them all our lives.

The observation then is not just, that we can form no judgment concerning cause and effect from a single instance. In a variety of cases, we do in fact form such judgment: and we do so involuntarily from the constitution of our nature. Our notions of cause and effect do not always proceed from experience; and in many cases there is need of experience, to correct the wrong judgments we have rashly formed concerning them.—If there were nothing more in causality but the regular succession of objects or of events; if we only discerned conjunction, without having any conception of connection; in this situation, it is true, that we would know nothing of the matter but by experience, and could form no judgment from a

single instance. Before we formed any judgments on the subject, we would be obliged to ascertain, by long observation, what objects and events were always connected, in order that we might be able to determine what were real causes and effects. Our judgments would be conclusions formed by inductions, or general maxims gathered from particular instances; and, after all, we would have no notion of power and efficiency, but only of conjunction. It has, however, been already shown, that this notion of cause and effect is inadequate. We have an original conviction of a connection between the cause and the effect: We have a conviction that power is exerted by the cause in the production of the effect; hence we must be sensible of the exertion of power, in a single instance, as much as we could be in any greater number.— These principles concerning cause and effect, are the foundation of the reasonings that occur in the writings of Mr. Hume, against the argument for the existence of a Supreme Mind, drawn from the evidences of design in the works of nature; and the foundation being removed, the superstructure must of itself fall to the ground.

The reasoning in Mr. Hume's writings, founded on these principles, is of the following kind:—  
 “ If experience and analogy be indeed the only  
 “ guides which we can reasonably choose in dedu-  
 “ cing inferences of this nature, both the effect and  
 “ the cause must bear similarity and resemblance

“ to other effects and causes which we know, and  
“ which we have found, in many instances, to be  
“ conjoined with each other.”—It is sufficient as  
an answer to this observation, that experience and  
analogy are not the only guides we reasonably fol-  
low in inferences of this nature. We have a no-  
tion of power or efficiency, with which we are not  
furnished by experience and analogy. From observ-  
ing any effect whatever, we infer a cause; and from  
observing an effect that manifests design, we infer a  
designing cause. This is the principle upon which  
men commonly act; and it is the principle that has  
been commonly made use of in proving the exist-  
ence of the Supreme Being. Yet no notice is  
taken of this common and obvious principle in the  
reasonings of Mr. Hume. The enlightened phi-  
losopher, whom he introduces to defend the evi-  
dences of religion, never appeals to this principle;  
and seems to be ignorant that ever such a principle  
was appealed to; though it occurs in every argu-  
ment for the divine existence made use of from the  
days of Socrates till the present, except that one of  
which we are now speaking.—An answer may al-  
so be given, even on Mr. Hume’s own principle,  
that similar causes produce similar effects. The  
universe, it is true, is an effect unparalelled; but it  
is by no means a singular effect. It has been al-  
ready observed, that we infer, from the works of  
human art, a designing mind; and surely it is not  
a case quite dissimilar, to infer a designing cause  
from the infinitely stronger marks of contrivance

and design that appear in the works of nature. The cases are like one another in every respect, except in magnitude and perfection : and this difference, instead of weakening the conclusion, renders it infinitely stronger in the one case than in the other. We infer design, from seeing a rude resemblance of a human face scratched by a child: Must we not much more, from the same principle, infer design from beholding a fine painting executed by a masterly artist? If, from a few marks of design, we infer wisdom; must we not, from an infinitely greater number, infer incomparably greater wisdom? Though the universe be an immensely greater and more noble effect than any we are acquainted with, yet it is not dissimilar to many other effects, in this respect, that it manifests design. It is its similarity in this respect, which is the only point connected with this argument; and if we infer similar causes from similar effects, we must of consequence, when effects are of the same nature, assign a cause to that which is the noblest, proportioned to its excellence.

These remarks will, I believe, suggest an answer to all the reasonings in Mr. Hume's writings upon this argument. Thus, when he says, " Our ideas reach no farther than our experience : we have no experience of divine attributes and operations : I need not conclude my syllogism ; you can draw the inference yourself \* ;" it may either be

\* Dial. p. 24.

answered, that our ideas reach farther than our experience; for example, we have knowledge of qualities belonging to the mind of Julius Cæsar, which we never learned by experience; we have knowledge of the qualities belonging to the minds of other persons, which we did not learn by experience; and, in like manner, we may have knowledge of the divine attributes, without experience of them, from observing their effects; for it is to be recollected, that by experience is meant by Mr. Hume the notions acquired by our senses external and internal: Or it may be answered, that, as from wisdom and goodness in the conduct of men, we ascribe to their minds these qualities; and since similar causes produce similar effects, we infer, from the incomparably greater instances of wisdom and goodness in the works of God, that he possesses these attributes in far greater perfection.

I shall quote a single passage more, in which the same reasoning is pursued.

“ If we see a house, Cleanthes, we conclude, with the greatest certainty, that it had an architect or builder, because this is precisely that species of effect which we have experienced to proceed from that species of cause. But surely you will not affirm, that the universe bears such a resemblance to a house, that we can, with the same certainty, infer a similar cause, or that the

“ analogy is here entire and perfect. The diffimilitude is so striking, that the utmost you can here pretend to, is a guess, a conjecture, a presumption, concerning a similar cause.” \*

The whole of this passage proceeds entirely upon the same principles with those that were formerly mentioned. It supposes that our notions of cause and effect are nothing more than the results of experience, and that we have no conception of active power and efficiency; and likewise, that, when experience fails, we have no other resource but analogy. If this principle be denied, the conclusion founded upon it is also denied. Though we had never seen a house before, we would have concluded that it had an architect; and from observing the world, we must, in the same way, assign to it an adequate cause. In the two effects there is also a similarity, however disproportioned they may be in magnitude. Both of them evidence contrivance; and therefore both have sprung from design; though in the one case, the intelligence must be supposed infinitely greater than in the other.

From the principles concerning cause and effect, which have been illustrated, and which are certainly founded in human nature, every part of

\* Dial. p. 26.

Mr. Hume's reasoning concerning the existence of the Deity, receives an easy answer; and his conclusions will never be adopted by any who understand properly what is meant by active power or efficiency.

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## DISCOURSE III.

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*The GOODNESS of GOD, Defended from the OBJEC-  
TIONS of MR. HUME.*

### I.

**G**LOOMY minds are disposed to exaggerate the miseries of human life; and to represent it, as if it were full of affliction. They pretend, and seem in fact to believe, that there is much more misery than happiness in the world. This, however, is by no means the case. The generality of mankind seem to testify satisfaction with their condition, and to enjoy much happiness.

That there are evils in the world, is not denied. There are undoubtedly many persons who are subject to great distress and affliction; and I shall afterwards endeavour to shew, that these evils are not inconsistent with the notions which we ought to form concerning the Divine Beneficence.

In this matter, perhaps we are not always impartial judges; and are very apt, upon many occasions,

to form estimates of human happiness exceedingly remote from truth. We, for instance, who have been brought up in civilized society, are inclined to think that the life of an Indian must be very miserable. We are apt to figure to our imagination the various hardships which he must undergo. He has no clothing to defend him from the inclemency of the sky, but the spoils which he has taken from a wild beast slain in the chase. He has no bed to sleep upon more comfortable than the green turf strewed with the leaves of trees. He depends for his food upon his bow and his arrow; and frequently travels for days without success, enduring the complicated hardships of hunger and fatigue. The hut to which he retires after the labour of hunting is over, is filled with smoke, and is in no degree fitted for convivial recreation. He is a stranger to the pleasures which arise from progress in knowledge, and from refinement in the arts. If he be sick, he has no skilful physician to attend him; and the remedy to which he submits, shocks our feelings; for he is first warmed in a stove, and then thrown into a river. We are apt to imagine that this man's life must be exceedingly miserable; and our judgment would no doubt be well founded, if a soul, trained up in our habits, and subject to our properties, were transfused into his body. But the Indian feels not the inconveniencies which make a great figure in our imagination. He has been accustomed to the inclemency of the weather, and is ready to answer with

the Scythian of old, when he was asked how he could support the cold when his body was exposed naked to it, "That he is all face." He has been inured to fatigue and fasting from his infancy, and his head never reposed upon a pillow of down. He has annexed notions of honour and fortitude to many exertions in the chace, and the success which attends them; and he looks with contempt upon those pursuits which require little bodily strength or activity. His diseases are few; and a day or two finishes his life, or restores him to health. To those things which we think he wants, in order to render his life comfortable, he is an utter stranger, and does not know that they are conveniencies. Though he be exposed to many dangers, he is conscious that he is brave; he has laid his account with attacks from his enemies, and if he should fall into their hands, he meets with nothing for which he is not prepared: He defies their insults; he even provokes their malice, and, with unruddled composure, sings the death-song which he prepared in his youth.—Persons in an early period of life have been brought from savage countries, and have been educated in the manners of polished nations; but they have always retained a predilection for the narrow enjoyments of their childhood; they have longed for an opportunity of returning to them; and whenever an occasion offered, they have again united themselves with their countrymen, and thought themselves happy when they exchanged the raiment of Europe for the skin of

an animal that clothed them in their early days. The same observations might be extended to the various stations of life. Wherever the people are not groaning under oppression, and are not sensible of bondage, they discover evident marks of happiness. They enjoy themselves in their sphere, and seem not to be sensible that they might be placed in a superior condition.—The manner in which man accommodates himself to his station is truly wonderful. They who bear the burden of civil society, who are exposed to daily labour and fatigue, are, in general, very well satisfied with their lot: and the man in a low situation, who considers himself as capable of living independently of the support of others, is as apt to despise the unknown pursuits and pleasures of his superior, as his superior is disposed to look with contempt upon his more humble enjoyments. The happiness of life depends not upon rank or station: It is well known that the highest situations among men, and the most envied possessions, bring along with them peculiar inconveniencies. The cares and sollicitudes of the man of business, the dangers attending the man of power, the lassitude and bodily infirmities incident to the man of pleasure, render their situation not more comfortable nor desirable than that of persons occupying the inferior ranks of society.

It is not, however, to be concluded from these observations, that all mankind are upon a level

with respect to felicity. This, no doubt, is very far from being the case. All the inference that can fairly be drawn from observations of this nature, is, that frequently those persons whom we are apt to think unhappy, labour under no positive uneasiness, but have, in reality, a great deal of enjoyment. It is, however, no doubt true, that human nature is susceptible of enjoyments to which many of them are in a great measure strangers. The slave of a despotic monarch may hug his chains, and not be sensible to the evils of his condition; but his happiness is not to be compared with that which is enjoyed by the member of a free state. They judge most unfairly, who think that the felicity of human nature is as great in the listless stillness of Turkey or of Spain, where the will of the prince is law, as it was in the states of ancient Greece, when Greece was free. It is true that the subject of the despot utters no complaint; he is satisfied with his condition, and does not even detest the tyrant who confines him to it. But his mind is debased; he knows not the dignity of his nature. If he regret not the enjoyments which he might possess, it is only because he knows not what they are. An ancient Athenian knew his own importance: He considered himself as a man, the member of a free state, and a person who had real consequence and value in the world. He gloried that he was not the tool of a despot; but that he was capable of acting and thinking for himself, and of shewing his independence. When Athens was

in its glory, when the valour of its citizens withstood the hosts of Persia, when every citizen connected his own renown with that of the state, and exerted himself to the utmost extent of his power, certainly more positive happiness was enjoyed than can ever fall to the share of men who are depressed, and subject to absolute rule. They who pretend the contrary speak without thought, if they mean not to encourage tyranny. The more sources of enjoyment any being possesses, if not prevented from drawing pleasure from them by external violence, the more delight must necessarily be received. The shell-fish, fixed to its rock, and endowed only with one sense, may feel no positive misery; but its enjoyments must be insignificant, when compared with those of animals who have five senses: and even those of the more perfect animals must appear small, when compared with those of an intelligent being endowed with reason, with taste, with kind affection, and with moral powers. This is the constitution of nature. It is, however, a wise and beneficent appointment, that inferior and less improved beings enjoy considerable measures of happiness in their own sphere, and are satisfied with the pleasures that fall to their share.—If we were to refer the matter to every man's determination, and if every man were to declare honestly what he had felt, the determination of the question, with respect to human happiness, might be reduced to a very narrow compass. There is no man who has not spent many more

days of happiness than of misery. Consider the situation of the generality of mankind, and think what can be added to their felicity. Almost the whole of them wish for something more than they have. This is a spur to their exertion. But what they have in view is generally a trifle, in comparison of what they already actually possess. If a man be provided with the necessaries of life, or be able to provide them by his labour; if he enjoy tolerable health, and be conscious of no crime, he can hardly feel much uneasiness, unless he be haunted by some of those phantoms of the imagination, which men sometimes raise to disturb their own repose. He has also many sources of enjoyment. The generality of men are really in this state; and many of them are in a state much more favourable. The necessaries of life are few, and in every country there are innumerable means of procuring them by honest industry. Health is the natural state of man, and it is greatly promoted by the exertions requisite for procuring those things on which the external comfort of life depends. The number of sick persons is very small, in proportion to those who are under no bodily uneasiness; and if we take away from the number, those who have brought disorders upon themselves by their own folly or vice; and those who are labouring under the infirmities of old age, the number will be greatly reduced. If we take a survey of human life, in this way, we may easily satisfy ourselves, that much more happiness might be taken

from it, than can be added to it consistently with the rank assigned to our species in this world. If the happiness compatible with our situation were represented as consisting of one hundred parts, it would perhaps be found, that what is actually enjoyed by the generality of men is very considerably above ninety of them. He is a very sickly man who labours under any disease for one month in twelve; and a very poor man who is at a loss to procure the necessaries of life for any one day in ten.

In making the estimate of human happiness, we ought in justice to throw out of consideration, all the evils which we have brought upon ourselves by our own negligence and bad conduct. These arise not from any thing that has been done by the Deity. We ought also to throw out of view all those which arise from the improper behaviour of others. None of these are justly chargeable upon the Creator and Governor of the World. If the evils that arise from these two sources be not brought into the account, the total will be much less than it would at first seem to be. Whatever appearance the universe may have to a gloomy mind, it will appear to a good man to be full of benignity.

It has already been remarked, with regard to individuals, that if any man make an inquiry among all those with whom he is acquainted, he

will find that the generality of them have much more happiness than misery. But the observation of particular persons reaches only to a small extent. The question still occurs, Is the remark to be received as generally applicable to all the inhabitants of this world?

I believe it will be found, that the application may be made very universally. What are those events which we hear of with wonder and astonishment, that rouse our curiosity and alarm our passions? Are they those things which are most common, and most correspondent to our own observation and experience? or are they those events which are strange and uncommon? The answer is evident. We pass by those things which are common without observing them; and we hear of ordinary events without emotion, and even without paying attention to them. Those events only, which are uncommon and unexpected, attract our notice and rouse our attention. What, then, are those things which we inquire after with eagerness, and are interested in when we become acquainted with them? Not, surely, with hearing that men in a certain country are living in peace, enjoying the comforts of domestic life, and regulated without disturbance by wholesome laws. If we heard such an account of any country, we would disregard it; and when we observe things going on in the same order among ourselves, we say we have no news. What, then, is it which we consider as

news? It is strange and unusual appearances which we listen to with attention, such as earthquakes, famine, pestilence, war, devastation, and the commission of enormous crimes. Since we consider such appearances as novelties, and wonder at them as things strange, it is evident that they are not the common accidents of human life. They are events that rarely happen, and therefore they strike us with astonishment and wonder when they do happen. In the same manner, it may be asked, what are the events which history records? Is it the peaceful transactions of civil life, the regular distribution of equity and justice, the progress and improvement of the arts of peace? No; such a history would never be read. The events which history records, are wars and bloodshed, the dissensions of princes, and the downfall of empires. The transactions that have happened during fifty years of profound peace, are passed over in a single sentence, which only forms a transition to a new scene of misery and carnage, which is described in all its particulars with whatever colouring the skill of the historian can bestow upon it. History, then, does not relate the ordinary transactions of human life. It relates only those events which are uncommon and striking. It is for the most part a register of evils. But this is a proof that misery is not the ordinary, but the uncommon state of mankind. If calamity were the common situation of the human race, and happiness were

accidental, it would only be the short intervals of happiness that would fill the chronicles of past ages; but since the contrary is the fact, the conclusion is, that the quantity of happiness in the world has always surpassed that of misery.

It may be added, that these arguments in favour of the divine goodness are in a progressive state. They are stronger at present than they were in former ages, and in all probability they will appear more powerful in future generations than they do at present. All the new discoveries that are made in the material world furnish us with new instances of good intention, and present to us no instances of bad intention. They shew us, that many objects in nature, which were formerly thought useless, have a most beneficial tendency; and they even shew us, that many of those things, which the ignorance of former times represented as noxious, tend to promote the benefit and welfare of sentient beings. The appearances of evil in the material world are gradually decreasing, while the appearances of kind and benevolent intention are every day multiplying. The complaints of men have been discovered, in many instances, to be founded in ignorance; and the proficiency of knowledge will probably more and more prove this to have been the case.

A similar observation, with respect to the com-

parative happiness and misery of the past and present times, obtrudes itself upon us. We may safely declare, that the outward state of human society, and the lot of mankind, is greatly preferable at present to what it has formerly been. We read of nothing, in ancient times, but devastation and calamity. The oldest annals of history carry us back to a most uncomfortable state of society. The world was divided into an immense number of small states, unconnected with one another, and each of them forming an independent government. All the states of antiquity, in their primitive condition, furnish us with this view. The citizens of small communities felt all the rivalry, and jealousy, and hatred, which are natural in such circumstances. Quarrels between private citizens of each society were unavoidable; and these usually brought on a war between the two states. Hence the several little territories of the ancient world were almost continually in open hostility; and their wars were carried on with a degree of personal animosity and fierceness, unknown in modern times. Consider only the misery of Italy, while Rome was struggling for superiority, amidst a multitude of other states as petty as itself; while they, so far from being united with one another against the little republic that was at last to subdue them, were all living in a state of reciprocal warfare. The people of Veij not only fought against the Romans, but they were also engaged in almost perpetual wars with the

neighbouring states of Etruria and Latium. Rome at last obtained the superiority, and the Italian states were united in one government; but still they had not peace. The several parts of the new empire were disjointed, and were instigated, sometimes by oppression, and sometimes by ambition, to engage in bloody civil wars. They also engaged in hostilities with foreign states. The rival power of Carthage carried on wars with them for a long time; then followed scenes of calamity through Greece and Asia. During hundreds of years, there was hardly a peaceful interval. The conquest of the world then known, was at last completed; but it was completed by means of much calamity. The number slain in battle is incredible. The number murdered in cold blood, from the rapacity and covetousness of the conquerors, was probably not less. The vanquished provinces were ruled with the rod of oppression, and their inhabitants often reduced to the deplorable lot of slavery. Even after the Roman empire was established, the government was never fixed on any firm basis. Intestine discord, civil war, murder, and oppression, were frequent. At last the barbarous nations, at the extremity of that great empire, burst in upon it, and in process of time subdued it. Unacquainted with the maxims of good government, they settled themselves in the countries of Europe as independent tribes; and the world returned nearly to the same situation in which it had been before the Roman greatness

began. The heads of clans, with their vassals and dependents, resembled the small independent states of remote antiquity, and they lived in continual warfare with each other. Hostilities were every where carried on with unabating fury, and prosecuted to the greatest excess. But the Roman arts and Roman agriculture, and even the Roman laws, were not entirely lost. Society, though rude, was more improved than it had originally been. While the several chieftains and feudal lords waged war upon each other, they were in some measure dependent upon a prince, whose power was gradually increasing. At last, though by slow degrees, the king obtained an ascendancy, and reduced the state to regularity and composure. The people still retained their ancient laws, and a variety of rights. The nobility established to themselves certain privileges which had been long in their possession. Government assumed a regular form in most countries of Europe. The private wars of private communities and associations, were at an end. The prince called the contending parties before the tribunal of his judges; and decided the contest by the authority of law, instead of leaving it to the fate of arms, and the dictates of private revenge. The people began to enjoy more repose than ever they had formerly done. Knowledge, and the arts of civilized life, grew up among them, in consequence of the public security. They were better clothed, fed, and lodged, than they had formerly been. Even

in those countries where the monarch remained independent; in consequence of regular government and the strict observance of civil justice, men attained to a degree of happiness, which, except in a few free states of antiquity, had been unknown in former ages. Wars were not carried on with unrelenting and indiscriminate cruelty. Captives were no longer put to the sword, nor reduced to the misery of bondage.—The public situation of the world has thus been gradually improving; and many sources of human misery are now dried up. There are still, however, some wounds of humanity left bleeding; but we have reason to believe, from the increase of civilization and knowledge, that they will at last be healed.

## II.

Another question may be asked, Whether the vices of men be decreasing, as well as their misery? It is to be remarked, that this question is not so easily answered as the former. The vices of men are often concealed in their own bosoms; but their outward situation is visible. The complaint in all ages has been common, that men are degenerating, and gradually becoming worse and worse. The complaint, however, is probably not well founded. One thing we certainly know, that vice has at least assumed a less boisterous form than it did in ancient times. We hear no more, at least in those countries in which we are chiefly interested, of

those assassinations and murders, those bloody acts of cruelty and revenge, that disregard to all covenants and promises, and that grossness in excess of sensual passions, which are every where to be remarked in the histories of ancient nations. Whether our vices be less heinous than theirs, I shall not pretend to determine; they are at least more concealed, and less adapted to disturb the general tranquillity. The persons with whom we converse, may not have more worth than those in former times; but they are at least more gentle in their manners, and we live among them with more security than could have been done some centuries ago.—These reflections seem to afford a decisive proof, that the sum of happiness in human life greatly exceeds the sum of misery, which is all that is at present contended for. If we attend to them, we will be at no loss to form a proper judgment of those exaggerated complaints which have often been repeated by the gloomy and the discontented, and must be satisfied that they are very ill founded. These complaints are often to be met with; and I shall read you the most eloquent and most exaggerated of any I know, which occurs, where it was not to have been expected, in the writings of Mr. Hume: \*

“ The whole earth, believe me, Philo, is cursed  
“ and polluted. A perpetual war is kindled a-

\* Dial. p. 99.

“ mongst all living creatures. Necessity, hunger,  
“ want, stimulate the strong and courageous: Fear  
“ anxiety, terror, agitate the weak and infirm.  
“ The first entrance into life gives anguish to the  
“ new-born infant and to its wretched parent :  
“ Weakness, impotence, distress, attend each stage  
“ of that life : and 'tis at last finished in agony and  
“ horror.

“ Observe too, says Philo, the curious artifices  
“ of Nature, in order to embitter the life of every  
“ living being. The stronger prey upon the weak-  
“ er, and keep them in perpetual terror and anxi-  
“ ety. The weaker too, in their turn, often prey  
“ upon the stronger, and vex and molest them  
“ without relaxation. Consider that innumerable  
“ race of insects, which either are bred on the  
“ body of each animal, or flying about, infix their  
“ stings in him. These insects have others still  
“ less than themselves, which torment them. And  
“ thus on each hand, before and behind, above  
“ and below, every animal is surrounded with  
“ enemies, which incessantly seek his misery and  
“ destruction.

“ Man alone, said Demea, seems to be, in  
“ part, an exception to this rule. For by combi-  
“ nation in society, he can easily master lions, ty-  
“ gers, and bears, whose greater strength and  
“ agility naturally enable them to prey upon him.

“ On the contrary, it is here chiefly, cried Phi-  
“ lo, that the uniform and equal maxims of  
“ Nature are most apparent. Man, it is true, can,  
“ by combination, surmount all his *real* enemies,  
“ and become master of the whole animal crea-  
“ tion : but does he not immediately raise up to  
“ himself *imaginary* enemies, the demons of his  
“ fancy, who haunt him with superstitious terrors,  
“ and blast every enjoyment of life ? His pleasure,  
“ as he imagines, becomes, in their eyes, a crime :  
“ his food and repose give them umbrage and  
“ offence : his very sleep and dreams furnish new  
“ materials to anxious fear : and even death, his  
“ refuge from every other ill, presents only the  
“ dread of endless and innumerable woes. Nor  
“ does the wolf molest more the timid flock,  
“ than superstition does the anxious breast of  
“ wretched mortals.

“ Besides, consider, Demea ; this very society,  
“ by which we surmount those wild beasts, our  
“ natural enemies ; what new enemies does it not  
“ raise to us ? What woe and misery does it not  
“ occasion ? Man is the greatest enemy of man.  
“ Oppression, injustice, contempt, contumely, vio-  
“ lence, sedition, war, calumny, treachery, fraud ;  
“ by these they mutually torment each other : and  
“ they would soon dissolve that society which they  
“ had formed, were it not for the dread of still  
“ greater ills, which must attend their separation.

“ But though these external insults, said Demea, from animals, from men, from all the elements, which assault us, form a frightful catalogue of woes, they are nothing in comparison of those which arise within ourselves, from the distempered condition of our mind and body. How many lie under the lingering torment of diseases? Hear the pathetic enumeration of the great poet :

“ Intestine stone and ulcer, colic-pangs,  
 “ Demoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,  
 “ And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,  
 “ Marasmus and wide-wasting pestilence.  
 “ Dire was the tossing, deep the groans : DESPAIR  
 “ Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch.  
 “ And over them triumphant DEATH his dart  
 “ Shook, but delay'd to strike, tho' oft invoc'd  
 “ With vows, as their chief good and final hope.

“ The disorders of the mind, continued Demea, though more secret, are not perhaps less dismal and vexatious. Remorse, shame, anguish, rage, disappointment, anxiety, fear, dejection, despair ; who has ever passed through life without cruel inroads from these tormentors? How many have scarcely ever felt any better sensations? Labour and poverty, so abhorred by every one, are the certain lot of the far greater number : and those few privileged persons, who enjoy ease and opulence, never reach contentment or true felicity.” &c.

This is indeed a most horrible view of human woes. It is eloquence, but it is not founded upon fact. It is not a just account of human life, to crowd all that is bad in it, as if it happened to every man, and at all times, into one assemblage. How few are they that are ever much infested with the stings of insects, or with the ferocity of lions, tigers, and bears! and how seldom is any man exposed to these inconveniencies! How few are there whose enjoyments of life are blasted by superstitious terrors, the demons of their own fancy! and are these always the most innocent of them? Gross crimes are committed, and severe diseases are endured, but the generality of men are not criminals, nor are the generality of them subject to the tortures of acute distempers. Those who are afflicted with remorse and despair, and the other dreadful passions, are surely very few, and they certainly are not the men who deserve to be happy.

And if some men have brought themselves to such a state of sensibility and unreasonable delicacy, as to complain when there is no reason for complaint, let them blame themselves, and let others blame *them*, and not their Creator. Nothing can be more unfair than to represent the most unusual situations in which men are found, as if they were the usual lot of humanity. There is surely more health than sickness, more delight than disquietude. Few labour under grievous afflictions, in comparison of the multitudes who are enjoying health and quiet, and the ordinary blessings of life.

The evils complained of sometimes happen. In some part or other they are always happening; but they are not the common state of mankind. Take every person as he is at present; deprive him of all reflection on the past and fear of the future; and then, even of those who are distressed, very few will think the present moment intolerable. All seem sensible of a real charm in their present state of existence, and they are generally unwilling to relinquish it, not so much from any dread of any thing beyond it, as from an attachment to its comforts and satisfactions, and to the various connections of human life. Even when labouring under distress, they find certain alleviations in the presence of their friends, and in the gratification of various powers. Any exceptions to the common rule are so rare, that they raise our astonishment, and lead us to inquire into the particular circumstances that have occasioned them. If calamity, pain, and misery, were the common lot of mankind, there would be solidity in those complaints which have been made. But this is evidently not the case. Every man's experience and observation convinces him that men are not in general unhappy. If any one, therefore, insists upon being so unreasonable as to maintain that man is always miserable, because he is sometimes so, we need not be surpris'd if we hear him, in the next place, affirm, that the British government is the worst in the world, because the people make more complaints than under any other; or that the sun is always obscure, be-

cause he is sometimes eclipsed, or because a spot sometimes appears on his surface. We admire the British government, notwithstanding the frequent murmurs of the people against administration. It is the superlative excellence of that government which makes its subjects know they are men, and feel they have a right to complain. It is only in despotical governments, where the subjects think they have no privileges, and that every thing granted them by their superiors proceeds from bounty, and not from right, that the people are never heard to murmur. We know also, that it is the brightness of the sun that makes its eclipses and its spots visible. If the sun were always eclipsed, nobody would take any notice of it, any more than they do of the spots of the moon, or the belts of Jupiter. Since then the good that appears in the world far surpasses the evil, the evident conclusion is, that the Author and Governor of the world must have intended to confer happiness. We cannot believe that a great scheme has been formed, in consequence of which, happiness is in general diffused through the universe, without also believing that this effect was intended. If this end were entirely out of view, and if every malevolent purpose were also out of view, the evident conclusion is, that in all probability, good and evil would have been equal, and, at any rate, the disproportion between them could not have been very great. But as the good in the universe far surpasses the evil, there must have been beneficent intention.

That God had no other end or view but to confer immediate happiness, cannot perhaps be positively said; at least it cannot fairly be said, agreeably to the sense in which benevolence is generally understood. By benevolence, in general, we mean the disposition to render others happy; and by perfect benevolence, some well disposed persons seem to have meant an inclination to render every person happy. They have accordingly ascribed this inclination, to render every being as happy as possible, to the Divine Nature. This opinion is ill founded. If God had so pleased, he could undoubtedly have rendered every being he has formed completely happy. He could have made them incapable even of rendering themselves miserable: He could have made them necessary instead of voluntary agents; and compelled them to act in the way that would infallibly have produced felicity; or he might have contrived things in such a manner, that they must have been happy in whatever way they acted. He has not ordered matters in any such way, and therefore we may be sure that he never intended to do so. Every thing is so conducted, that his creatures arise to greater and greater degrees of happiness, in consequence of their own exertion, and in consequence of the improvement which, by his appointment, follows from their exertions. The more wise and the more virtuous they become, the more happy they are of consequence. It is evident, therefore, though the Deity intended to communicate happiness, and has done so in the most liberal manner, yet this was not the only end

which he had in view. His beneficence must be considered as connected with the other active principles of his nature. He intended to make man happy, but it was in a particular manner, which he knew would at last contribute to the greatest general felicity of the species. If we suppose benevolence, or the disposition to confer immediate or unqualified happiness, to be the only principle of action in the Divine Mind, we can see no reason why there should be evil of any kind in the world at all, since undoubtedly his wisdom was sufficient to foresee it, and his power to prevent it. But since there is much more happiness than misery in the world, we have sufficient reason to conclude, that he acted from benevolence. The presumption arising from this consideration evidently is, that he must have also had other principles of action besides benevolence, but whether subservient to it, upon the whole, or not, is not the present question.

The opinion I have now expressed seems, in general, to have been embraced by those who have asserted the being and perfections of God; yet so unfair have their opponents been, that from a few unguarded expressions of some excellent men, they have insisted, that benevolence, or a desire to communicate the greatest possible happiness to his creatures, is the only principle of action in the Divine Nature; which opinion certainly ought not to be admitted. In particular, this view has been taken up by Mr. Hume, and has been urged

by him in his posthumous dialogues. His sceptic insists upon it; and his rational philosopher does not deny it. Indeed, upon this point, that perfect benevolence is the only principle of action in the Deity, they seem to be altogether agreed. It must, however, be observed, that the argument is of consequence treated unfairly. That benevolence is the only principle of action in God, has not generally been believed, and, excepting in an unguarded expression or two, in the works of the amiable and ever memorable Dr. Hutchison, I believe it never has been asserted by any writer of real eminence on the subject of natural religion. Yet Mr. Hume supposes all along, that universal benevolence is acknowledged, by all who believe in a God, to be the only principle upon which he can act. If this be allowed him, he concludes fairly enough, that we have no evidence of benevolence in the Deity, since, with infinite power and infinite wisdom, he might certainly have prevented evil. Hence he concludes, that the Deity must be indifferent to good and evil\*.

In answer to all this hypothesis, it may just be observed, that if neither good nor evil were intended, the probability is, that neither the one nor the other would preponderate. Both good and evil are distributed; and if the Being who distributed them be indifferent about them, and had it

\* Dial. p. 125. ad inum.

in his power to distribute the one as well as the other, the chance is demonstrably, that in a great many instances, the quantity in both sides will be equal. If two sorts of guineas, of different sizes, be issued from the Mint, the chance is, that an equal number of each will be returned into the Treasury: But, with respect to happiness and misery in the world, the case is very different; for happiness is much more universal than misery. They did not therefore proceed from a being indifferent about either. It was not his only intention to render his creatures happy; he intended to render them happy in a *particular manner*. He wanted that they should rise to eminence by diligence, labour, and exertion. He has other principles besides the pure desire of communicating happiness; he has acted according to them; and though it be allowed that he intended to make his creatures happy, it does not follow that he intended nothing else. Neither one nor other, then, of Mr. Hume's hypotheses has the least foundation in truth. It is not true that the Deity is endowed with perfect goodness, understanding goodness, in his sense, as excluding every other principle of action; nor is it true that he has perfect malice, or indeed any malice at all. Nor is it true that he has both goodness and malice, because, as Mr. Hume himself very well observes, the uniformity and steadiness of general laws, oppose this opinion. Nor is it true that he is indifferent to the welfare or misery of his creatures, since

it is evident that goodness prevails upon the whole, and is greatly superior to any appearances of evil which are discernible in the universe.

From all the observations that have been made upon this subject, the evident conclusion is, that God must be good, or that he must have an unalterable disposition to communicate happiness. As he is entirely happy in himself, he could not possibly have any motive in producing various orders of creatures, but to render them happy. He cannot, therefore, be actuated by envy or malice, or any of those propensities which incline men to injure one another. All these arise from human weakness and imperfection. He has no temptation, and can have none, to render his creatures miserable. If any of them suffer calamity, it must arise from some other source than malevolence in the mind that directs the universe. The manifold instances of goodness, which we have an opportunity both of beholding and enjoying, afford us most convincing proofs of the divine goodness. These displays of benignity could not proceed from the indiscriminating hand of chance; they could not proceed from a being that was indifferent to our happiness or misery. On either of these suppositions, the utmost that could have happened would have been, that the happiness and misery of the world would have been equal. The presumption is, that the balance would have turned very considerably to the side of misery. The

possible means by which sentient creatures may be made to suffer pain, are much more numerous than those by which they may be made to enjoy happiness; and if every thing was ordered without any intention to promote happiness, the probability is, that more of the circumstances by which we may be rendered unhappy would have occurred, than of those by which we may be rendered happy. If we suppose benevolent intention out of the question, the matter is reduced precisely to the same situation, with regard to this point, as if every thing had proceeded from chance. It is of no consequence what may be supposed to have been intended, if the purpose was not to communicate happiness; for felicity could not have been distributed in greater plenty than misery, unless this very mode of distribution had been intended. We see, in fact, that there is much more happiness than misery in the world; we must therefore believe that this distribution proceeded from benevolent intention, and must of consequence ascribe to the Deity a disposition to communicate happiness.

The only remaining question is, what degree of goodness are we to ascribe to God? Is there any consideration, that will lead us to consider it as of a limited and imperfect nature? I know of none from which we can be induced to form any such conclusion. Every thing seems to declare, that the Divine Benignity has no limits, but those which are presented by infinite wisdom, or, in other

words, that God always does those things which he sees to be best and most proper upon the whole, for the good of his creatures.

Mr. Hume, however, reasons in a different manner, and concludes, that we ought to ascribe to the Divine Nature a very limited degree, not only of goodness, but also of power and wisdom. His reasonings on this subject are to be found in his essay "Of a Providence and Future State," where they are put into the mouth of Epicurus; and in his "Dialogues on Natural Religion." "When we infer any particular cause from an effect, he says, we must proportion the one to the other, and can never be allowed to ascribe to the cause any qualities but what are exactly sufficient to produce the effect. A body of ten ounces raised in any scale, may serve as a proof that the counterbalancing weight exceeds ten ounces; but can never afford a reason that it exceeds a hundred. If the cause assigned for any effect, be not sufficient to produce it, we must either reject that cause, or add to it such qualities as will give it a just proportion to the effect. But if we ascribe to it further qualities, or affirm it capable of producing other effects; we can only indulge the licence of conjecture, and arbitrarily suppose the existence of qualities and energies, without reason or authority. If the cause be known only by the effect, we never ought to ascribe to it any qualities beyond what are precisely requisite to pro-

duce this effect. Allowing, therefore, the Gods to be the authors of the existence or order of the universe, it follows, that they possess the precise degree of power, intelligence, and benevolence, which appears in their workmanship; but nothing further can ever be proved. So far as the traces of any attributes at present appear, so far we conclude these attributes to exist: The supposition of further attributes is mere hypothesis."

This reasoning is carried on by Mr. Hume to a very considerable length, and is embellished with a great deal of eloquence. There is, however, an evident objection to it. We do in fact ascribe to the cause, qualities which we do not see in the effect; we must do so in common life, and we act every day upon such conclusion. If a man lift a certain weight with much ease, we conclude that he could lift a much greater weight if he were to exert himself. If a watchmaker forms one good watch, we conclude that he is able to make another equally good. This observation is obvious, and it occurred to Mr. Hume himself; and he states it accordingly, in answer to the supposed harangue of Epicurus. "If you saw," says he, "a half-finished building surrounded with heaps of brick and stone, and mortar, and all the instruments of masonry, could you not infer from the effect, that it was a work of designed contrivance? And could you not return again from this infer-

red cause, to infer new additions to the effect; and conclude that the building would soon be finished, and receive all the further improvements which art could bestow upon it? If you saw upon the sea-shore the print of one human foot, you would conclude that a man had passed that way, and that he had also left the traces of the other foot, though effaced by the rolling of the sands, or inundation of the waters. Why then do you refuse to admit the same method of reasoning, with regard to the order of nature? To this it is answered, that we reason in this way, with respect to men, because we know by experience what effects they can produce. We are acquainted by observation, with the nature of the agent, with his motives and his inclinations, and we expect to see again what we have seen a hundred times before; but the Deity is known to us only by his productions, and is a single being in the universe, not comprehended under any species or genius, from whose experienced attributes or qualities we can, by analogy, infer any attribute or quality in him. As the universe shews wisdom and goodness, we infer wisdom and goodness. As it shews a particular degree of these perfections, we infer a particular degree of them, precisely adapted to the effect which we examine. But further attributes, or further degrees of the same attributes, we can never be authorised to infer or suppose, by any rules of just reasoning."

I have given this reasoning pretty fully, because it is prosecuted at great length in the sceptical works of Mr. Hume; and the writings of that author, on account of his abilities and eloquence, are in every person's hands. The argument is specious, when dressed out by a fine writer; but at bottom is so insufficient, as hardly to need a serious confutation. I shewed formerly, that our notion of cause and effect, is not what Mr. Hume supposes it to be. He supposes that there is nothing more in the matter, than the bare conjunction of two objects or events; and that we call the one the cause and the other the effect, not from discerning any sort of connection between them, but merely from perceiving that the one is always joined with, or follows the other. I shewed that mere conjunction never gives us any notion of causation; and that two things may be united, or may follow one another to all eternity, without suggesting to us any notion of cause and effect whatever. We have a clear and distinct notion of power; and unless we had this notion, we could never have any conception of cause and effect. We have no need of experience and observation, to convince us that a cause operates and produces an effect. Whenever we see an effect produced, we necessarily infer, that the production of it was owing to the exertion of a cause; and this inference we make as strongly, the first time that we see an effect produced, as we can do after we have seen it a thousand times. We make this inference every

day, with respect to men. Though they perform actions totally unlike any thing we have formerly had experience of, we never hesitate to declare that they performed them; and accordingly ascribe to them all the praise or blame of them. Supposing the universe to be as singular an effect as you please, we must ascribe it to a cause able to produce it. It is only a small part of the universe with which we are acquainted, but we perceive in it wisdom and goodness; have we not then reason to conclude, that there is wisdom and goodness displayed also in those parts of it, which we never saw? If only part of a face in a fine picture were shewn us, and all the rest of it were covered with a veil, would we not infer, that the rest of the picture was similar to what we beheld, and that the painter had more merit than was exhibited to us? If we had an opportunity of seeing a few apartments in an elegant house, and had not time to visit the rest, would we conclude, that all, except what we had seen, was unfinished and void of elegance? Would it not be much more fair to conclude, that what we had not seen, was of a piece with what we had examined? If a statesman gives a piece of prudent advice in the privy council, which was adopted, and attended with great success to the nation; though he had never proposed any scheme, good or bad, before that time, would those that heard him ascribe to him precisely the degree of wisdom which he had then exhibited, and no more? Would they not rather be

inclined to think, that his judgment might be of great consequence in other business of national concern? and would they not, afterwards, be disposed to listen to him with attention, and consult him when difficulties occurred? If we read a short poem of remarkable beauty, we would not, surely, ascribe to the poet only the merit it discovered; but would conclude, that he had talents equal to the production of more poems, different in their structure, embellished with different imagery, and of different length.

We form judgments of a similar kind, with regard to moral conduct; and, upon many occasions, ascribe to a man a certain character, even from a single act. If a man has once been guilty of fraud, we consider him as capable of repeating the same fraudulent behaviour; and take care, ever after, not to trust him. On the other hand, if we see a man perform a remarkable act of generosity and kindness, we form a favourable judgment, and believe that he is disposed to perform many actions of the same nature. Similar inferences must necessarily be made, when we reflect upon the Divine Nature. The Deity has exhibited to us many instances of power, of wisdom, and of goodness. We must, therefore, suppose these to be attributes of his character. We know, that it is only a small part of his works with which we are intimately acquainted; but we must believe, that if we were acquainted with the rest, we would

discern through them all, vestiges of the same perfections; and as we know not of the boundaries of his operation, so we can fix no limits to these attributes. We have reason to believe, that they far exceed any thing of which we can form a conception.

The fallacy, then, of Mr. Hume's reasoning, concerning the Divine Attributes, as well as of his reasoning concerning the Divine Existence, lies in the imperfection of the notion of cause and effect, which he endeavours to establish. If we have a notion of power, natural to us and independent of experience, we can infer the existence of qualities and attributes in the cause, from the observation only of a single effect. From one act of beneficence, we infer goodness in the agent; and if that act be often repeated, or if a long series of good effects be performed, we must believe that there is more excellence in the mind from which they flow, than is exerted in all of these acts; or in other words, that it is disposed to perform more acts of the same nature.

Mr. Hume's objection, then, is not valid, even upon his own supposition, that the universe is a single effect, which has nothing similar to it with which it may be compared. But that hypothesis itself is false. We form our judgment concerning the Author and Governor of the World, in the same manner that we form our judgment con-

cerning one another. As we form our opinions of human characters, from observing particular actions; so we form our notions of the Divine Character, from observing the works of nature and of providence. We regard men as the causes of those actions which they perform; and, in like manner, we regard God as the author of every thing in the universe, and ascribe to him all the excellence which its structure manifests. So far are the two cases from being entirely dissimilar, that they perfectly resemble each other in every thing, excepting magnitude, dignity, and importance; and this circumstance in which they differ, in as far as it relates to the present question, is of no consequence whatever. If we ascribe goodness to a man from observing his actions; for the same reason, we must ascribe much more goodness to the Supreme Mind, when we behold the immense profusion of his bounty scattered through the universe. The cases are perfectly similar, and the inference in both of them is formed in the same manner.

If, from the effects which a man produces, we ascribe certain attributes to him as their cause, and then reason back again from the cause which we have assigned to other effects which we conclude it capable of producing, which Mr. Hume himself admits to be a fair way of reasoning; we are entitled to reason in the same manner concerning the Supreme Being. We observe much

goodness diffused through the world; hence we conclude that God is good, or that he intends to communicate happiness to his creatures. Having thus discovered a beneficent cause, we reason back to the effects, and conclude, that his goodness must be proportioned to his power and his wisdom, or that he will communicate happiness in every place of his dominions, where he perceives that it will be proper to communicate it. If this mode of drawing an inference be just in the one case, which it certainly is, it must also be just in the other; for the two cases are precisely parallel. That God is a single being in the universe, comprehended under no species nor genus, is true in one sense, but not in the sense in which Mr. Hume understands it. It is true, that God is infinitely superior to all other beings, that he is the independent and first cause of all, and that all other beings are limited and dependent; but it is not true, that there is nothing in which other beings resemble God. Excellence in man, though different in degree, is not different in its nature from excellence in God, for man is formed after the image of God. Since, then, intelligent and moral agents resemble God, the actions of men must be considered as in some respects similar to the Divine operations; and the same mode of reasoning is applicable in both cases. In this sense, the universe is not a singular effect, nor is its author a singular cause; for by singularity in this matter is not meant superiority, but

merely the want of all common qualities, and of every degree whatever of resemblance.

Thus have I endeavoured to show that God is good. Since his power is irresistible, he must of necessity be disposed to communicate happiness, as he can have no temptation to malice or envy, or the exercise of any other malevolent principle. His works clearly evidence that he is good, for the happiness that appears amongst his creatures is immensely greater than any evils they suffer; and we must ascribe all their felicity to him, as the beneficent cause of it.

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## DISCOURSE IV.

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*On the JUSTICE and MORAL GOVERNMENT  
of GOD.*

### I.

**T**HAT there is a moral government established in the world, and that Divine Justice is perpetually executed for the encouragement of virtue, and the discouragement of vice, is a truth confirmed by the experience of mankind. Through every part of the administration of God, that we have any opportunity of being acquainted with, we see evident marks of a love to virtue, and a hatred to vice, in him that rules and directs the universe. Virtue, in fact, always produces happiness to the man who possesses it; and vice is always productive of pain or uneasiness.

It is not, however, pretended that virtue and happiness are always inseparably connected, nor that misery is occasioned only by vice. There

are many sources of pleasure and pain, altogether unconnected with moral conduct. Every sort of exertion, the gratification of every passion, the acquisition of every advantage, is naturally attended with delight. Those pleasures arise from the action itself, or from its consequences, and not from moral qualities; they belong promiscuously to good and to bad men. We must believe that the worst of men feel pleasure from good fortune, as well as the best. Pleasures and pain of this nature, are plainly no evidence of a moral government, or of the contrary; and if all our enjoyments and uneasinesses arose from similar sources, we would have no reason to believe in the righteousness or justice of God, whatever reason we might have to believe in his goodness. That pleasure should arise to us from many sources, is a clear proof of kind and benevolent intention, but presents no evidence whatever of an upright administration. All the pleasures and pains, which we have in common with the inferior animals, and most of those which arise from the desire of wealth and of power, when they are pursued moderately, and without any violation of justice, seem to be of this kind. Of the same kind are many of the pleasures of taste, though not nearly the whole of them. All of these administer pleasure to us, when they are pursued within due bounds. They are evidences of our Maker's bounty and generosity, as they shew that he has been mindful of our happiness, and has

made liberal provision for it ; but they are unconnected with moral conduct, and therefore present us with no proof of a moral administration. Without attending to this distinction, we cannot clearly understand what a moral administration is. But there are certain pleasures, and these too of the most exquisite kind, which arise from the virtuous quality of the action, independently of the action itself. Virtue, considered merely as what is right, gives us pleasure independently of all consequences that arise from it ; and vice gives pain, merely from the consideration that it is wrong, even when we do not reflect upon any of its hurtful consequences. We feel that we are moral agents : there is a power implanted in our mind, by means of which, we not only discover what is right and wrong in our own conduct, and in the conduct of others ; but by means of which, we also approve of ourselves and others for good behaviour, and disapprove of bad behaviour. We not only perceive what is right and what is wrong, and form judgments concerning those qualities of actions ; but we also enjoy pleasure, or suffer pain, in consequence of our perceptions and judgments. Conscience not only dictates what we ought to perform ; it also affords us pleasure when we obey its commands, and fills us with painful sensations when we neglect them. It is a law within our breasts, and its precepts are enforced by the sanction of rewards annexed to obedience, and of punishments annexed to disobedience. It

is in consequence of our subjection to the law of conscience, that we are properly moral agents, and are to be considered as subjects of the moral administration of God. It is his law that prescribes to us our duty ; for it was he who implanted conscience within us, and it is he who dispenses rewards and punishments by means of it. It is by his appointment, that pleasure and pain follow the obedience or the transgression of the law he has given us.

That virtue is productive of great advantages in the world, is a truth which has been acknowledged by men in all ages. Some of old maintained, that it alone produces happiness ; and many others maintained, that the happiness arising from it is so valuable, that every other sort of pleasure is contemptible in comparison of it. The Epicurians were the sect in ancient times, that wanted to level the distinction between virtue and vice. They would not allow that virtue is eligible on its own account, or that it has any thing in its nature preferable to vice ; yet, from a regard to their own private interest, they professed to regulate their conduct by the same rules, as if they believed virtue to be valuable, and to avoid vice on account of the pains and inconveniences which follow it. While they maintained, that generosity, temperance, and justice, had no inherent value ; they also acknowledged, that any man who was inhuman, unjust, or debauched, acted

as a madman. It is astonishing, that when they saw virtue regularly productive of happiness, and vice of misery, they did not draw the obvious conclusion, that there must be an administration established, by means of which these consequences are uniformly produced. That virtue should receive a reward, in the regular course of things, and vice a punishment, seems clearly to prove, that there is a plan going forward, under the conduct of a just and impartial administrator; and it seems as impossible to refuse this conclusion, as to refuse that any other effect must have an adequate cause. That virtue is always rewarded in this world, and that vice is always punished, cannot be pretended; and there are good reasons which might be pointed out, why this distribution of things should not immediately take place\*. But that virtue is always productive of happiness, and vice of misery, may, I think, be safely affirmed. The same thing cannot be affirmed of any other course of action whatever. If this be the case, there must be a moral administration established in the world, and the Ruler of all things must be just and impartial; he must love virtue and hate vice. It would require a long induction of particulars, to point out the advantages of virtue, and the disadvantages of vice. The matter will, I hope, be sufficiently evident from a few instances, selected from an immense number that might be produced.

\* Butler.

Enjoyments have, properly enough, been arranged by ancient philosophers, under three classes; those which arise from our connection with body, those which arise from external things, and those which arise from mind. The two former of these classes do not always depend upon us. There are many enjoyments proceeding from the state of the body, and from external things, that must depend upon general laws of matter and motion. As a part of our frame is connected with the material fabric of the universe, it must be subject to its laws; and conveniences or inconveniences must, of necessity, arise from this connection. One man enjoys a good constitution, from causes that depend not on him; and another man, from causes equally independent upon him, is sprung from respectable ancestry, or is born to the possession of a large fortune. From these sources arise certain enjoyments, that are not of a moral nature, and are unconnected with the pleasures that result from virtue. It is, however, certain, that a number of enjoyments, both respecting our corporeal frame and our circumstances in the world, do arise from the practice of virtue; and those which arise from it, ought to be ascribed to it.

Health is the natural state of man, and sickness is only an accidental circumstance. Some have constitutions more firm than others, and enjoy a more uninterrupted state of health; but the worst

constitutions may be improved, and the best may be weakened. There is nothing that confirms the constitution, both of mind and of body, so much as industry and temperance. This is the lesson daily presented both by the physician and the parent, and both of them deliver the dictates of wisdom and experience. On the contrary, nothing has such a tendency to relax the whole human frame, both of body and mind, as indolence and debauchery. The young man who is addicted to either of them, wears grey hairs before his time, and brings upon himself diseases which resemble the decrepitude of old age, and hurry him to his grave; while the temperate and active play-fellows of his early years, are enjoying the blessings of life. Corporeal pain is the natural wages of intemperance; and there are few inveterate diseases that may not be traced to this source. The melancholy consideration is, that often they do not stop with the person who has brought them upon himself; but entail on posterity hereditary pain and weakness. It is hardly possible, in the way in which things are at present constituted, to persist in any excesses without suffering the penalties annexed to them. Lassitude, and at last the loss of health, and death itself, proceed from them. The vigour of youth may, for a time, prevent their ravages, but the arrow is shot, its poison is fatal; and its effects, though for a time latent, will at last appear, and dissolve the whole frame. The advantages of virtue, and the

disadvantages of vice, are clearly marked in the tendency of the one to produce health, strength, and agility; and in the tendency of the other to bring on diseases, weakness, and every inactive habit.

In the next place, though virtue has an evident tendency to furnish a man with a competent share of the good things of this life; the whole of them do not depend upon it. Many of the distinctions in civil society, arise from causes in which there is no personal merit. A man may be born to honours and fortune; this, undoubtedly, produces enjoyments, though they are not the enjoyments of virtue.

*Sed genus, et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,  
Vix ea nostra voco.—*

But though the enjoyments of fortune are not always the attendants of virtue, yet the man who acts according to the rules of conscience, and exerts himself as is dictated to him by the constitution of his nature, is in the fairest way of possessing them. The good will of mankind attends the man of a virtuous character; they wish to throw every advantage into his hands; they are grieved for every disappointment he meets with; and they endeavour to prevent the consequences of it, by every encouragement in their power.

The good things depending on external circumstances, are chiefly reducible to riches, fame, and power. These are not the necessary attendants of virtue, nor are they distributed according to any general rule, nor are they always connected with happiness: Yet, even with respect to them, it may safely be affirmed, that the good man has the best chance of possessing them, and that he is the only man who can derive much felicity from them. The man who has procured riches by avarice and oppression, or who has attained to power by corruption and venality, may enjoy some degree of pleasure; but it must be strongly intermixed with disagreeable sensations, from the consciousness of conduct that is wrong. A man will not necessarily become rich, in consequence of being virtuous; but he is in the most probable way of attaining a competent share of the goods of fortune. Neither is it probable, that a man's goodness will raise him to the highest summit of power; he will, however, gain influence from this consideration. There is nothing so powerful as virtue and good conduct, in procuring an ascendancy over the minds of others. It infallibly procures the love and esteem of all who have an opportunity of observing it.

It has sometimes been uttered, as a complaint against human-kind, that they are now degenerated, that merit is neglected, and suffered to sleep in obscurity; while insolence, ignorance, and folly, occupy offices of trust. There seems to be no foun-

dation for the complaint. Merit is esteemed and honoured wherever it appears. It must shew itself; it must send forth its leaves and its blossoms, before it can perfect its fruit. It is not to be rewarded as merit, till there be an opportunity of observing that it deserves the reward. A man has no right to become peevish for not meeting with encouragement, though he is conscious that he deserves it, while he has not given evidence that he is deserving of it. Whatever may be his own judgment, other persons can only judge from what they have an opportunity of observing.—Vice is, on the contrary, discountenanced. The resentment of mankind is excited against it; they hate the man of vicious character, and, by every method in their power, endeavour to deprive him of wealth and influence. His fame and good character are ruined: Men avoid his society, and endeavour to draw others from associating with him.

With respect, then, to our bodily constitutions, and with respect to the external good things of life, it is evident that the advantage is on the side of virtue. Intemperance produces dissipation of spirits, poverty, and bad health. Avarice and ambition are attended with envy, jealousy, resentment, care, solicitude, and many mental afflictions. Even the wicked acknowledge the worth of goodness; they despise the man whose character resembles their own, and extol the man who possesses genuine worth. The praises that Solomon bestows upon virtue, under the

character of wisdom, are just and well expressed, I quote him as an observer of mankind, not as a sacred writer. “She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared with her. Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life unto every one that layeth hold upon her ; and happy is every one that retaineth her.”

## II.

These advantages of virtue, respect us merely as we are men ; but there are many other agreeable consequences of it, which respect us as we are members of society. There are implanted in our minds, certain principles which connect us with one another. Man cannot live alone ; he must necessarily be connected with others, in the intercourse of social sentiments and duties. The necessities of man, as well as his inclinations, connect him with his brethren of mankind : He has frequent occasion for their assistance and advice, their countenance and protection, and even their company, in order to enable him to pass through this life with comfort. There are a variety of principles in our nature, by which we are connected with one another. A great number of these are altogether independent of us ; and, by the constitution of our nature, exert themselves involuntarily. Of this sort, are the parental and filial affections, and all the connections which result from blood and con-

fanguinity. But there are also some of them, and those too of the most endearing kind, which arise from voluntary choice. We form friendships and connections in life, which we are apt to regard as strongly as any other tie by which we are bound to our brethren of mankind. The advantages of friendship are known to all. The man who never had a friend, is in a deplorable situation. In distress, a friend partakes of our uneasiness; our thoughts, in consequence of his attention, are turned away from ourselves, and we feel for the uneasiness which our situation occasions to him; our sentiments, of consequence, become sympathetic, instead of being solitary; and whenever they become of that kind, they cease to be insupportable. Even joy cannot subsist, in any considerable degree, in solitude; for it is a social emotion, and in the very midst of society, must immediately vanish, unless it be supported by the mutual delight which it has occasioned.

On what is friendship founded? We have heard of villains, that have formed associations; we have heard of robbers, who have gathered in bands under a daring leader; we have heard of pirates, who have united under an able commander: But these associations were not founded upon the principle of friendship, but on that of interest. There never was any firm attachment, nor any secure reliance upon one another, among the persons

who were engaged in such combinations. They associated from motives of interest, and, from the same motives, they studied to act their part properly, while they were gathered together; but they never possessed any real esteem for the characters of one another. Every attachment that is sincere and lasting, must be founded upon a regard to merit. Without a persuasion of worth, we can have no trust and reliance upon one another. Virtue is the foundation of every useful and lasting attachment. All the connections which are founded in vice, must be unstable and short-lived.

If we consider our connection with society, in a more extensive light, than merely as we are associated with our friends; we shall find the advantages of virtue, and the disadvantages of vice, equally evident. I formerly mentioned, that the favour of men commonly attends the virtuous: It is men of this class whom they esteem, and whom they wish to be successful. It is equally remarkable, that their resentments are levelled against the vicious. Those who commit acts of violence and injustice, are universally detested and abhorred by mankind. Though a vicious person may avoid the penalties inflicted by law, he cannot avoid the hatred and contempt of mankind.

Even the laws of civil society may be considered, in one light, as the laws of God. They are

not, indeed, infallible. Frequently, they may not be so framed, as to include every transgressor, and at no time can they trace out every offender; but they are founded upon the distinction between virtue and vice; and as far as human prudence can direct, they are calculated to encourage virtue and discourage vice. These civil laws, though they are conducted by men, are to be considered as institutions of God. It is by his appointment, that civil society is established in the world. The laws by which it is governed, are, in general, the laws of conscience, which he has implanted in every heart; and the subordinations, by means of which it is administered, also arise from his distribution. The encouragement, therefore, given to virtue, and the discouragement thrown in the way of vice by the magistrate, may all justly be considered as ordinances of God.

But the principal enjoyments we possess, and those which more especially point out a moral administration, are those which arise from our own minds. We are so constituted by our Maker, that we receive a number of pleasures from the performance of our duty.

The Deity has implanted in our minds a variety of kind affections, by means of which we are interested in the welfare of one another. The exercise of all these benevolent affections, independently of any reflections upon the conse-

quences which they produce, is highly agreeable. The mind is warmed and captivated by means of them, and finds itself occupied by a most delightful train of sensations: But even these receive their principal charm, when they are considered as connected with the claims of duty; when they are followed by generous actions; and when they are ratified by approbation of conscience.

There is nothing so well fitted to delight the soul of man as virtue; it is even an agreeable object of contemplation. Agreeable sensations are excited whenever we behold it in the conduct of our neighbours; and the most transporting emotions are excited in our hearts, when we are conscious of it in ourselves. The man who possesses the amiable and gentle affections of the heart, and exercises them under the direction of rational and worthy principles; and who, by unwearied perseverance, has rendered the practice of his duty habitual to him, enjoys pleasures that cannot be conceived by those who have neglected to form their character in a similar manner. Good dispositions, directed by upright intentions and determinations, and confirmed by habit, being always attended with a consciousness of rectitude, bestow upon the mind an unshaken intrepidity, when it engages in an undertaking; an inexpressible joy, proceeding from the effusions of the heart, in the performance of the subsequent actions; and upon reflection, the most agreeable satisfaction and self-

approbation. The generous man, who has embraced an opportunity of relieving the miserable from his distresses, and of raising him again to the participation of the enjoyments of life; the grateful man, who has performed a kind office to his benefactor; the patriot, who has executed a scheme, that will be productive of great advantage to his countrymen; enjoy a satisfaction in their own minds, compared with which, any delight that arises from external circumstances is contemptible. The situations of the generality of men, do not furnish them with frequent opportunities of being very extensively useful; but every virtuous man will find abundance of occasions for performing actions, by which he will gain the applause of his own heart.

It is true, indeed, that the exercise of kind affections, even in the performance of the most worthy actions, may be accompanied with some degree of uneasiness. Sympathy and compassion, are, from the nature of them, connected with certain sensations, that are not agreeable; but the uneasy feeling, serves only to interest us more deeply in the welfare of those who need assistance, and is entirely disregarded when the opportunity of being serviceable presents itself. So great are the pleasures that arise from the exercise of the social virtues, that the opinion of those philosophers, who maintain, that we do good to others only with a view to encrease and multiply our

own enjoyments, is not without some degree of plausibility. From the performance of all such offices, there undoubtedly arises much pleasure and satisfaction; though, if we reflect upon the operations of our own minds when such actions are performed, we may easily be convinced that they were not, in reality, under the influence of any selfish motive.

Vice, on the other hand, is the most plentiful source of misery. The vicious man has nothing to support him against external calamities, if they should attack him. Even though he should avoid sickness, poverty, and reproach, he must be liable to many distresses. Malice, envy, jealousy, covetousness, and revenge, usually lead to a multitude of hazardous enterprises, and sometimes to fatal consequences; and besides, they harass the mind in which they reside, with such vexatious remembrances, such imaginary suspicions, and such shocking resolutions, as must necessarily render it a seat of misery. These ungenerous principles, wherever they appear, likewise excite the indignation of every indifferent spectator; and induce him, even previously to any inquiry into the occasion by which they were excited, to declare against them as unfavourable to humanity. The man whose actions are prompted by such depraved principles, whenever he reflects upon his conduct, which he cannot always avoid, must endure feelings similar to those of the indifferent spectator. He must not only disapprove of himself, but he must shud-

der at his own intentions; when, perhaps, the degenerate principle of action has gained such force, and urges so strongly to its gratification, that it spurns the dictates of reason, and, with irresistible impetuosity, impels to the criminal action. It is impossible to describe the misery of a mind that has lost the reins of its passions, now become uncontrolable from long indulgence, and disdain- ing every check from reason and conscience.

The vicious man cannot possibly avoid uneasy reflections. While memory lasts, his guilty actions must occur to his thoughts, and conscience must pronounce its decisions concerning them. The soul is the tribunal of this impartial judge, where it brings under review every action and intention, and either approves of them or condemns them. Its condemnatory sentences are not left unexecuted. It raises up a train of tormenting thoughts, which constitute a punishment of the severest kind. The criminal, who is brought before a human judgment-seat, may feel some sort of resentment, excited by the force and violence that have been employed against him, which may have some tendency to support his spirits, when the sentence is pronounced; but the vicious man, who is left to his own gloomy apprehensions, has not even this wretched resource. The voice of conscience cannot be suppressed. It cannot be rooted out, nor can its strength be much impaired. Its perceptions and judgments

depend not upon us, but are altogether involuntary. Dissipation of thought, in the hurry of business or of pleasure, may indeed, for a time, prevent its admonitions from being heard; but more serious hours will infallibly return. It never fails to fill the guilty soul with remorse, a disease which no remedy can cure. In a mind filled with remorse, there can be no repose. Imagination is immediately roused. Every criminal act that has been committed, with all its aggravating circumstances, is again brought into view. Even sympathy and compassion, principles intended to alleviate human misery, when excited in his mind by the sufferings of those whom he has injured and distressed, join, with a sense of guilt, to torment him. All the faculties of his soul, however discordant in other respects, conspire in upbraiding him with his guilt, and in augmenting his sufferings. As if all this were not enough, the images of his own fancy become his tormentors. He feels a secret dread and horror, occasioned, he knows not by what. His sleep is disturbed by terrifying dreams; and even when awake, he is alarmed with spectres. A more dreadful tormentor than an accusing conscience, joined by its usual attendant, a disturbed imagination, cannot be conceived.

From all these observations, and many of a similar nature that might easily be produced, it is evident, that it is the natural tendency of virtue to produce happiness, and of vice to render men miserable. It

is not pretended, that pleasure and pain do not arise from other sources besides these ; but virtue and vice are sources from which they uniformly spring. There are particular enjoyments which arise from the practice of every virtue ; and there are certain happy consequences, that originate from good and upright conduct, and appear at last, though they do not immediately flow from it. The happy effects of well-doing, are manifest in the ordinary course of human life. They are not unknown, even in the house of affliction ; in the midst of distress, they administer consolation. The practice of virtue procures the love and esteem, and trust of mankind ; while vice is the object of hatred and aversion. Even in the sunshine of prosperity, the delight that does not spring from goodness, is unsubstantial and transitory. A man who has been successful in promoting human happiness, has copious stores of delight laid up ; and even though his labours have not attained their end, he enjoys much satisfaction upon reflection, from the consciousness that he has performed his duty. The cruel and unjust are, on the contrary, tormented with fear and suspicion, while they are pursuing the dictates of resentment and avarice with success. They know that their actions are the objects of just detestation ; and knowing their consequences, they tremble lest they should be discovered. To forfeit the esteem of the world is a dreadful calamity ; but it is not the worst effect of vice, for vice also ruins all internal peace and

enjoyment. There can be no greater misery than the disapprobation of a man's own conscience. To this inward comforter, a man might fly for consolation from the injurious treatment of the world. But what refuge has that man who is not at peace with himself? Who can speak peace unto him, when a disturbed imagination, roused by a sense of guilt, continually presents dreadful forms to disturb his repose? The hurry of dissipation may, for a short time, prevent serious reflection; but anguish and dismay will soon return with redoubled force. He may rejoice for a while, in the sunshine of success; but a dark night of misery is fast approaching.

All these regular consequences, of virtuous and vicious conduct, did not spring from the hand of chance or necessity, or any other blind indiscriminating cause. They afford a clear and distinct evidence, that the Author of Nature is not indifferent to our conduct.

### III.

This distribution of rewards and punishments, as the natural consequence of virtue and vice, is a clear proof that there is a moral administration established in the world. There is evidently a regular connection kept up, which must proceed from intelligence and design. There is no necessary connection between virtue and happiness. The one might have existed without the other. Since, then, the one is adapted to

the other, and always produces it, the conjunction must be established by a free and voluntary Cause, who intended that it should regularly take place. Moreover, these pleasures and pains which are associated with virtue and vice, though they arise in the way of natural consequence, from particular courses of behaviour, are to be considered as sanctions of a law in the strictest sense.

The knowledge of right and wrong, which we possess, was certainly intended to be a law unto us. It was given us to afford us rules for the direction of our conduct. It is not of an arbitrary and uncertain nature; but it is the same in all ages and nations of the world. The approbation and disapprobation, united with our behaviour, is pronounced by means of our consciences. They act as judges in our hearts, and their determinations are also invariable. They were, therefore, certainly implanted within us, to execute that judicative office which they really perform. Every pleasure, then, that attends the practice of virtue, and every degree of uneasiness with which the practice of vice is attended, may be considered in the same light, as if it were an express declaration from the Author of our Nature, in favour of integrity, and a public avowal of his detestation at all manner of iniquity. The man of true worth, may justly regard all the agreeable consequences that have arisen from his upright life, as blessings immediately flowing from the

hand of God : And the man who has done what is wrong, may consider the misery which he has brought upon himself, as a punishment inflicted by the appointment of a judge. We are not to imagine that these distinctions have arisen from mere chance. The eye of wisdom will always consider them as springing from the intentions and providence of an over-ruling Governor. They are as much the effects of the Divine determination, as if they immediately followed a solemn sentence of approbation or disapprobation, audibly pronounced against every particular offence, before all mankind. Every thing in the history of providence, tends to exhibit, in a clear light, the love of God to the upright, and his abhorrence of every thing that is vicious.

These reflections seem clearly to ascertain the fact, that a moral government is established in the world ; and these same reflections seem to afford no inconsiderable proof, that the same government is much more extensive than any thing we have an opportunity of observing. I formerly considered the argument for a future state, upon the supposition that there is no governing providence ; and endeavoured to shew, from the analogy of nature, and from the constitution of the human mind, that even though the hypothesis of atheism were true, the probability is, that we would exist after our separation from the body.\*

\* This is the subject of a Discourse, not now offered to the public.

The soul is not made up of parts that can be separated, as those of the body may. It is not necessarily connected with our present bodies, for they are perpetually changing; nor have we reason to believe that it has any necessary connection with body at all. The change we are to undergo at death, does not seem more strange than the changes of many inferior animals, nor even more strange than the alteration of the mode of our own existence, when we come into the world. Still further, supposing we are to survive the dissolution of the body, the presumption is, that in our future state, virtue will produce happiness, and vice misery, even independently of moral government. The rule is established here, and therefore analogy leads us to believe, that it will also be established hereafter. These analogies, however, it must be admitted, only afford presumptions of what may be the case, and do not furnish us with any positive and direct proof of what will be the case.\*

But after we are convinced, that the world is under the moral administration of a wise and good Being, new light breaks in upon us. We see evident proofs, that we are here in a state of growth and improvement. Our minds, as well as our bodies, are at first much weaker and more imperfect than they afterwards become. We are trained up for discharging the offices of maturer life,

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\* Butler.

by the care of parents, guardians, and instructors. We undergo the labours of a state of discipline and probation, before we are admitted to perform the offices required of us as members of civil society; and without undergoing these, we could not be qualified for the offices which we are afterwards called upon to discharge. The whole of our lives in this world, seems to stand in the same relation to a higher state of existence, that our childhood does to manhood. We are put into a situation, where we are daily acquiring new habits, or strengthening old ones; and where we have many opportunities of making improvement. Every thing has an appearance as if we were intended for another state, in which we may have occasion for those attainments of knowledge and virtue which we have made; and which we find it incumbent upon us, as a matter of duty, to make, while we are here. If, then, we are placed under a wise and good moral government, we have surely reason to expect, that this plan which is begun, will be carried on; and that we will be placed in a situation, where we shall have opportunities to exert the powers which we have improved, and to enjoy the effects of those habits which we have formed. Accordingly, this expectation has been formed in all ages. Men have always discovered a longing after immortality, and have believed, that they would hereafter be put into a state, where they were to enjoy the fruits of their conduct. There is every reason to think, that this state is only the beginning of our exist-

ence; and that we were only placed here, in order to acquire those habits and principles which we shall have occasion to exert, and to carry forward to perfection, in another world.

From the nature of the moral government, which we evidently see established in the world at present, we have strong reasons to believe that our anticipations of futurity are well founded. Virtue certainly enjoys the favour of God at present, for it is rewarded by him in the ordinary course of his administration, while vice is in general punished. Now, it cannot easily be imagined, that the goodness of the Ruler of the World, will at once relinquish for ever, those righteous minds, which were of late the objects of his peculiar regard. It is surely much more probable, after he has trained them up, in the course of his providence, to degrees of excellence far superior to those which they once possessed, that he will not destroy them, but will preserve them in existence, and give them new opportunities of improving themselves more and more, in the habits of wisdom and of goodness.

It seems highly probable, that this would be the case, even upon the supposition, that virtue is fully and invariably rewarded in the present state, and that vice is unalterably and unexceptionably punished. But the moral administration of the

Supreme Being, though it is evidently established and is carrying on, is not yet brought to perfection. Our present is, evidently, not a state of final retribution, but of trial and discipline, subordinate to another state that is future. Though happiness be connected with virtue, and misery with vice; yet it does not appear, that enjoyments and sufferings, are so exactly, and so invariably, proportioned to merit and demerit, as might be expected from the distributive justice of an All-wise Administrator; upon the supposition that this were a state of full and equal retribution. There is reason to believe, that the goodness of some, from their situation among unworthy men, though it produced satisfaction to themselves, yet, indirectly, exposed them also to trouble and vexation; while, on the contrary, many vicious persons have passed their lives in the enjoyment of external tranquillity. Their pleasures and their sufferings may, indeed, have been more exactly proportioned to their merits and demerits, than could be known to us, who only perceive what passes outwardly. The happiness of the one, and the misery of the other, have not been evident to the world: Whereas, according to our apprehensions of equitable and wise administration, the good should be rewarded in the sight of all, and enormous vice should be openly and declaredly punished. Such considerations naturally lead us to conclude, that a time remains, in the schemes of Divine Wisdom, when indiscriminating justice will finally

and completely reward the upright, and punish the guilty. Irregularities, arising from the perversity of men, are at present, for wise reasons, permitted in the Divine Government. But from this circumstance, we have reason to expect, that a period is approaching, when these shall be fully removed, and every man shall receive a just and equitable recompense. The present plan of the Divine Government renders this expectation more strong and better founded, than it would have been upon any other supposition. If there had been no tendency in virtue to produce happiness, nor in vice to produce misery at present, we could not have had any certainty that there is a moral administration established; and from observing the present course of things, and seeing that virtue and happiness were perfectly disunited, we would have been apt, from analogy, to conclude, that they would always be disunited, and that there would be no state of retribution. Perceiving no reason to believe that God is just, we could not, on such a supposition, be led to conclude, that he would some time or other act as a just and impartial judge. If, on the contrary, virtue had been always fully and invariably rewarded in this state of things, and vice, in like manner, fully and invariably punished; if happiness and virtue, vice and misery, had been uniformly united, and never been separated; we might have been much more uncertain of a future state, than we are at present. Such a state would be a per-

fect state, and we could perceive no end that could be served by any alteration in it. If men, therefore, died under such a dispensation; or, in other words, went out of that state; we might be apt to think they had fully received their reward, and were never more to exist.

There is, however, another view of the matter, even upon this supposition, that would still leave the question in suspense; for if God be good and just, it cannot be believed, that he would exterminate from existence, those whom he had already countenanced and rewarded: And therefore, if he took them away from their present condition, it must be to answer some good ends to them; and since they were happy here, the only end he could have in view, would be to render them still happier in another state. The government, however, that is in fact established, in which we see clear and manifest marks of a moral administration of justice and equity, but intermixed with certain irregularities and exceptions, furnishes us with an argument in favour of a future state of existence, much more convincing than any that could be suggested by an administration apparently more perfect and impartial. It leads us to consider ourselves as only in the beginning of our existence, in a state of trial and of discipline; and it necessarily directs our views to another, connected with and founded upon it, which will be a state of final retribution.

In order to form any just notions concerning the moral administration of the Supreme Being, we must consider the present and future states in connection with each other. In the present, though the tendency of virtue be to produce happiness, and of vice to produce misery; yet the union does not always take place in effect. But if we consider this state as only one stage of our existence, any appearances of irregularity and disorder, which might otherwise alarm us, immediately vanish. The present short state of our existence becomes as nothing, when compared with an immortal life.

Since, then, the laws of distributive justice are established in the world; since a plan is carrying on, in consequence of which, virtue is rewarded and vice punished, even here; and since we have good reason to believe, that the same plan will hereafter be more perfectly executed than it is at present, and that the virtuous shall at last be rendered completely happy; we conclude, upon the best grounds, that God is just.

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## DISCOURSE V.

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*Of EVILS and their CAUSES, and of the SYSTEMS  
respecting them.*

### I.

**T**HERE is, undoubtedly, evil in the world, Some beings are very imperfect; they want power, and are deficient in their original construction. There are many misfortunes and accidents to which men are liable; a number of which, they are neither able to foresee nor prevent. There is much vice in the world, and it uniformly conducts misery in its train. If God be good, and just, and holy, why are these evils to be met with in his works? Did he want power to prevent, or wisdom to foresee them? None of these suppositions can be admitted. He who laid down the laws by which the universe is governed, undoubtedly knew what was to be the consequences of them; and he could have ordered

things in any other way that seemed good to him. Are we, then, to suppose, that God is not benevolent, or is not just? We have good reason to reject both these suppositions. There is more happiness than misery in the world. The quantity of the one is immensely superior to that of the other. God must therefore be good. There is a moral government established among mankind, for virtue is rewarded, and vice punished, though not completely, yet in a great measure. The Ruler of the Universe must therefore be just. Whence, then, does evil arise? By what means was it scattered through the works of God? The question is difficult. It has perplexed men, who believed in the unity of the Deity, through all ages; and has furnished those, who wished for a pretence to throw off the belief of a superintending providence, with plausible objections against it. Hence, men of speculation have been induced to form certain systems and theories, agreeably to which they imagined the world is governed, and according to which they fancied that evil might be accounted for.

Before we proceed to any consideration of this subject, there are two remarks which ought to be made, and carried along with us.

In the first place, the nature of the government exercised over the world, may naturally be expected to

be, in many respects, incomprehensible by us. It is but a small part of the universe, with which we have any opportunity of being acquainted. Even in that small part of it, with which we are best acquainted, there are few things which we know, in comparison of those which we do not know. We are not acquainted with the essence of any one thing upon the face of the earth. We do not know any thing of the substance of those bodies, which we have an opportunity of perceiving every day. We do not even know the substance of our own minds. We perceive certain qualities and relations, and from these we infer substances to which they belong. Even with respect to the relations that subsist among various substances, we are very much in the dark. We know, that there are connections which take place; we are able to point out a great number of them; and every day's experience discovers more of them, and enlarges the sphere of human knowledge. We see clearly, that certain connections, relations, and dependencies, take place, through a great part of the universe, because they have been traced out and explained. We know, that all the bodies of the solar system, respect and depend upon one another. We know, that the whole of the planets have a dependency upon the sun; that the moon has a similar relation to this earth. We know also, that relations and dependencies of the same sort extend to a much greater distance; for Saturn, which revolves round the sun, in a pe-

riod rather less than thirty years, does not perform his revolution always in equal times. When he happens, in his course, to approach the body of Jupiter, he is attracted towards, while near him; and, in consequence of his gravitation towards that planet, he is impeded in his course, and finishes it in one revolution, twelve days sooner than in another. Though we see a system of relations extending to such an immense distance, yet we find ourselves entirely at a loss to account for those, which we observe every day. We can assign no cause why the magnet attracts iron—why water freezes—why the vibration of a string produces sound—why the image upon the retina of the eye occasions vision—why the particles in a bar of steel adhere to one another—why fire burns, or why light moves in a straight line. There is not a single efficient cause that can be assigned in the whole system of nature. We can trace certain rules, by which things are connected; but as to causes, we are perfectly in the dark. There are relations which we observe every day; that, for instance, between soul and body, of which we know absolutely nothing. There are mechanical, hydraulical, pneumatical, and optical operations, going on in our bodies every moment, without our consciousness; and had it not been for philosophical inquiry, we should not have known that we performed them. New discoveries are continually making in the works of nature; and the whole of these, if we except a few descriptions of

unknown substances, are discoveries of relations, connections, and dependencies. The greater part of those discoveries that have been lately made, relate to objects with which we are every day conversant, and about which, it might be expected, we should have known most. Since, then, we see relations subsisting every where, and since every day's observation brings to view some that were not formerly discovered; surely we ought to believe, that the whole system of the Divine Government is not known to us; and that we have all the reason in the world to think, that it exceeds the comprehension of weak and imperfect creatures. Though, therefore, we be not able to explain every difficulty that may occur, we ought not to conclude that there is any imperfection in the workmanship. The microscopic eye of an insect, may discover many inequalities on the best polished wheel; yet that part of the machine answers very well the part of the machine to which it belongs, and any further polish would be superfluous. To an understanding able to comprehend the whole structure, these irregularities entirely disappear. Since, then, we know very little of the works of God, we ought to be very cautious in charging any thing as an imperfection, before we know all its relations and dependencies. It may serve useful purposes, though we cannot discern them. The general argument, from the superabundance of happiness in the universe, ought to be relied

upon; and if objections occur that cannot be answered, we ought not to be startled by them; as we know that the Divine plans are not comprehensible by us, and that there may be good reasons for a multitude of things which we do not know.

In the second place, it ought to be remarked, that though God is the Author and Governor of the world; yet there are in it many evils, which are evidently not to be ascribed to him. Though God created all the active beings in the universe, and conferred upon them those powers of action which they possess and exercise; yet the evil consequences, that may sometimes arise from the use of these powers, are not imputable to him who conferred them. We must, therefore, distinguish fairly between the actions of God and the actions of inferior creatures, that we may not blame the character of our Creator, for the blemishes of our own behaviour. Though God has given to man a certain extent of power, and has granted him liberty to make use of that power; yet the evil consequences that may sometimes arise, from the abuse of human power and liberty, are not chargeable on God. Those actions, which proceed from the exercise of our powers, must either be our own, or they must be the actions of the Author of our Nature. In the production of the same action, there cannot be two agents. There are, indeed, certain crimes, in which several persons

may be concerned, and all of them may be guilty; as there are many good performances, to which a number of persons may have contributed, and from which all of them may derive praise. But in all such cases, the action is of a complex kind, so as to admit of several agents, each of them performing his own part. Those actions, however, which proceed from our volitions, cannot be the actions of our Creator, if we be agents at all. If all our actions be performed by us, indeed, without any volition of ours, then these actions could, in no respect, be called ours. On such a supposition, we would be mere machines, without power; and would have no more merit or demerit, from the performance of those things to which we are instrumental, than a weapon, or any piece of matter has, that is moved by an active cause. But we are sensible that God has granted us powers, and that he permits us to make use of them. The actions, therefore, that proceed from the exercise of those powers, must be ascribed to us.—Human action may, indeed, be influenced by the Deity. As he bestowed upon us minds at first, so he may still, on many occasions, direct them in ways that are inexplicable by us. But when we perform actions that are contrary to his will, and are violations of the law which he has written on our hearts, we are certain that our minds are not guided by the influence of his power and authority; and these vicious actions must be charged to our account.—

The notions of the schoolmen, that God concurs with human actions, arise from speculations beyond our depth. Many of these subtle distinguishers, were inclined to represent God as the only agent in the universe, and to ascribe to his power, as the immediate cause, all the actions of men. As this opinion took away all merit from mankind, so it also took away all demerit; for if men were not agents, they were not chargeable with their guilt, any more than with their good actions. The conclusion naturally arising from this notion, to wit, that God is the author of sin, was justly looked upon as odious, and inadmissible. Hence, distinctions of the most subtle kind, were invented to save appearances; and one of these distinctions was, that God is the author of evil actions, as far as they depend on physical causes, or as far as body is concerned in them; but that man is author of them in a moral light, and therefore the guilt is imputable to him only. Such speculations as these are far above the reach of the human powers, and can answer no good purpose whatever. If they were intended, as it is to be believed they were; to promote the purposes of piety, and to encourage gratitude to the Maker of the world; that end is much more effectually answered without them, and with much less embarrassment. If we acknowledge, that all our powers, and all our opportunities, for the exercise of them, are derived from God, we certainly ascribe to him, as the original cause, all the

merit which we possess ; and we attribute to ourselves, and not to him, those actions which have proceeded from the abuse of our liberty, and the misimprovement of our faculties and opportunities.

## II.

What actions, then, ought we to ascribe to God ? It is evident, in the first place, that we must ascribe to him the formation of the material world, in all its parts. We must ascribe to him all its motions and revolutions, for it was he who established the laws by which they are performed ; and every change observable in the material system, either proceeds immediately from him, or arises from powers which he has delegated to inferior agents. Matter has no power, and consequently there is no physical cause properly so called. Those relations of bodies to one another, which are commonly called causes, are not really causes ; but are only general laws, according to which, the almighty living and moving Cause of all, regulates and governs his workmanship. Matter, therefore, its laws, its changes, and its productions, are all to be ascribed to the will and power of God.

In the second place, we must ascribe to God, our own constitution, both of mind and body, and the constitution of every other created active being. It is by the power of God, and not by ours, that our bodies are supported, and that the

involuntary motions, on which their welfare depends, are continued. The several principles of action in our frame, our instincts, our appetites, desires and aversions, affections and passions, were also implanted by him. All our capacities to do good, proceeded from him; and also, our frailties and imperfections, so far as they are natural to us, arise from his will; but we must not ascribe to him those imperfections, which have originated from our own negligence or misconduct.

In the third place, we must ascribe to him our situation in the world; the accommodation bountifully made for us in it; our opportunities of enjoying society, and our security from the enjoyment of law and government. We must also believe, that the inconveniencies attending our lot and condition in this world, in as far as they are natural, and inevitable by human prudence, arose from his will. But we must, by no means, attribute to him those inconveniencies which we have brought upon ourselves.

These observations being premised, I shall proceed to enumerate the several kinds of evil that have been remarked in the world; and endeavour to shew, that they are not inconsistent with the administration of a good and righteous God.

The evils in the world, that have been the subject of complaint, are of three kinds; and it is allowed, that all of them exist, though not in the degree that they are often represented.

In the first place, there are evils of imperfection, as they are called. Man, and all inferior animals, are of a limited nature. Their powers are weak, their knowledge is small; they are the natural heirs of manifold frailties and defects.

In the second place, we observe in the world many natural or physical evils. Every creature is not happy. We are exposed to bodily pain, from many causes; we are subject to diseases; we undergo many sufferings and disasters; we are all subject to death.

In the third place, we have many occasions to observe the prevalence of moral evil. Men are guilty of crimes, in their intercourse with one another. They frequently are guilty of fraud, injury, and oppression. They are led by violent passions, by resentment, avarice, and ambition. They often deluge the earth with blood and misery.

Is it consistent with our notions of a good administration, that these evils should be permitted to exist? Or are they of such a nature, as not to be inconsistent with the government of a good God?—The first class of evils mentioned, com-

prehends the evils of imperfection, as they are called. Why is not man made more perfect than he is? And why are there many orders of beings inferior to man? This objection, in reality, amounts to nothing at all. The question concerning the defects of inferior beings, is no more than a question concerning the propriety of creating any being at all; for every created being must, of necessity, be in some measure imperfect. Every being that is created, must be dependent; and however exalted its faculties, it must be inferior to its independent Creator. If the question, therefore, be proposed, in its utmost extent, it must mean, Why did not God create every intelligent being, equal to himself? But in this extent, it is altogether absurd, and contradictory to the nature of things; and if it be taken in a less extent, the intention of it is not very evident. If the question only be, Why are not human perfections greater than they are? and, why are not our frailties and defects fewer? It is to be remarked, that this question must, at last, run into the former; for still it might be asked with equal propriety, though we had been formed equal to the highest order of angels. On this last supposition, indeed, we would certainly have been free from many imperfections, to which we are at present subject; but yet we would not have been free from every imperfection. We would still have been dependent creatures, and limited both in power and knowledge. Still, therefore,

the complaint of our imperfection might have been made, with precisely the same degree of force with which it is made at present. If the objection, therefore, mean any thing at all, the question must be, Why were not all creatures endowed with powers and faculties, equal to the highest order of created spirits? or, which amounts to the same thing, Why were there different orders of beings originally formed? We can easily suppose the case, that no spirits should have been created, except those of the highest order, which at present subsists among dependent spirits. But surely, no man will pretend that he knows so much, as to pronounce, on such a supposition, that every thing would have been better constituted than it is at present; or that more happiness in the world would have been enjoyed, than at present subsists. We can form the supposition, that God should never have imparted existence to any being; and upon that supposition, there would have been no imperfection adhering to any being. But if that had been the case, Divine Benevolence would never have been exerted. If only the highest order of created spirits had been formed, there would, in all probability, have been much less bounty diffused through the world, than there is at present. There may have been many reasons manifest to Infinite Wisdom, for the creation of various orders of inferior beings, which we are not able to comprehend. The inferior orders may be necessary for the sub-

sistence or the improvement of the superior, and may be necessary to the welfare of the whole system. For ought we know to the contrary, subordination of ranks may serve equally good purposes in the government of the universe, as it does in civil government among men. We know its uses in human life; we see it established in the system of the universe; and we may safely conclude, that it is not without wise intention in the one, more than in the other. We see a beautiful gradation in the scale of beings, as it is constituted at present. It bears evident marks of wisdom and goodness; and it would ill become man, when complaining of his own imperfections, to pretend, that he could point out a method, in which more wisdom and goodness might be displayed. The gradation among the orders of being, appears to be every where regular. Some parts of inanimate matter are unorganized, and without any regular form or structure. Other parts of it are arranged in beautiful figures, some of which approach to the regularity of the inferior classes of plants. Among vegetables, there is none that has not an organized structure; but some of them rise not far above the regularity of chrysalization, and other forms assumed by organized matter. The several tribes rise above one another, by insensible degrees. Some of them appear in great elegance; and in many of their properties, so much resemble animals, that some naturalists have not hesitated, though not with perfect propriety, to ascribe to them life.

All these vegetable tribes depend upon inanimate matter for their support and sustenance. The vegetable and animal kingdoms are connected, by certain tribes of beings, that seem almost equally linked with both: They grow as plants; but are, in reality, the receptacles and dwellings of imperfect animals; and it is only of late, that their dependence or connection with the animal kingdom has been fully ascertained. The various orders of animals, rise in wonderful progression above one another. Many of the lower tribes seem hardly to be possessed of life and sensation; they have very little animal motion, and the structure of their bodies is exceedingly simple. They gradually rise to higher degrees of activity and sensibility, in the various tribes of insects. The tribes of fishes form the lowest class of larger and more perfect animals; and even among them there is a gradation. They are connected with the animals that live on air, by an amphibious race, having cold blood like them; but resembling the higher classes in other particulars of their structure, and in their general way of life. This division comprehends the serpent, the lizard, and the frog. To these succeed the various races of birds, whose organs of perception and of sensation, are more perfect than in the inferior tribes; and who discover instances of sagacity, which, though they really arise from instinct, bear a wonderful resemblance to reason and intelligence. Quadrupeds are still a more

perfect class than any of the former. They possess various measures of perfection; but some of them have no small degree of docility and dexterity; they are capable of acquiring habits, and of being trained up to various employments. At the head of the scale in this world, is Man, a species distinguished by reason, but enjoying this higher power in a wonderful diversity of degrees. The lower part of the species is not greatly superior in intelligence, to the most sagacious of the animal tribes; while the higher part of it possesses a most eminent and distinguished rank in the creation, when compared with the other inhabitants of this earth. In all this long series, there is no gap, nor large interval. Every part seems completely filled up. Reason does not conduct us any further in completing the scale; but analogy leads us to conclude, that there are created beings superior to man, rising above each other by insensible gradations, in the same manner with the tribes below him; and that the same law is continued to the highest created intelligence, without any interval.

As the vegetable kingdom is supported by the fossil, so animals are supported by both. Every leaf that grows has its insect appropriated to it, that feeds upon it; the whole air is peopled with insects; and every drop of water swarms with inhabitants, frequently too small to be seen with the naked eye.

Every part of the creation abounds with life and action. Among these animals, there are many which seem absolutely necessary for the support of others, and are, accordingly, their daily food. Reduce one class of them into non-existence, and some other classes will follow them of course; and the annihilation of the second will prove the destruction of a third species. Every tribe is connected with another, and depends upon it; and without the subordination which we behold, the world, at least in its present form, could not subsist.

If it be asked, whether all those orders of beings might not have been made more perfect than they are? We must answer, that we do not know if it was possible, without greatly diminishing the sum of happiness diffused through the world. There may already be as many of the more perfect creatures as there is room for; and yet there may be room for many classes of inferior orders, and even occasion for them, so as to promote the highest improvement and felicity of the higher orders. We see one tribe necessary for the sustenance of another, among inferior creatures; and we do not know how far the concatenation may take place, even among those of a superior rank. Though they do not furnish them with the necessaries of life, they may be of use to them in many other respects. We know too little of the

universe, to be able to form any tolerable judgment concerning the subserviency and connections that run through the whole of it. Granting the necessity for beings of an inferior order, it may be asked, if they could not be supported without preying upon one another? Might they not be fed by some kinds of organized matter, or by the production of a greater quantity of vegetables than there is at present? Perhaps this might be possible, though we know too little of animal life, to be able to pronounce that it is. But though it be possible, we cannot from this infer with certainty, that the happiness of the universe would be greater than it is at present. On the contrary, we know that it would be less. Those tribes of animals that were formed to be the prey of others, enjoy happiness, though of an imperfect nature, during the time they exist. Inanimate matter, or vegetables, if made to supply their place, would enjoy none. All the imperfect happiness they enjoy during their lives, is actually possessed in consequence of the constitution of things at present established, and would not be enjoyed upon the other supposition. They frequently become the prey of other animals; but they are distressed with no fears of futurity; they do not foresee their danger; they enjoy all the pleasure their natures are capable of, till the end of their existence. If they had human understanding, and human passions, they would be miserable, from reflecting on their situation; but they are

so formed, that they are not afflicted with any anticipation of misery.

### III.

The second class of evils, which have been represented as inconsistent with the administration of a good God, are *natural evils*; or pain and distress in their various forms. It has been maintained, that if the Governor of the world were benevolent, there would be no uneasiness to be observed in any part of his works. Every creature he formed, would enjoy uninterrupted felicity. If we allow, that he had power to render every being happy, why has he not done it? Must we conclude, that he wanted inclination to render them happy? Does he delight in their misery? And did he form them to load them with pain? These questions were asked in the days of Epicurus, and they are still repeated by those who are unwilling to acknowledge the existence of a Supreme Mind.

In answer to such questions, it may, first of all, be observed, that human abilities are too imperfect to investigate the sole end which the Deity had in view, when he created the world. It may have been nothing else but the desire of communicating happiness, for ought we know to the contrary; notwithstanding the instances of evil which occur. We are incompetent judges of the

manner in which the greatest possible happiness may be communicated ; and, perhaps, it may be impossible to communicate it, without an intermixture of evils affecting individuals. The sufferings of particular persons may be necessary, to produce the greatest sum of felicity upon the whole. There have been some, who have embraced this opinion, and maintained it ; though it is evidently beyond the sphere of our knowledge. If benevolence mean nothing more than a desire of rendering every person happy, it is a blind indiscriminating principle, and must not be ascribed to the Deity, as the sole end of his actions ; though the adversaries of religion choose to understand it in this light. If such indiscriminating benevolence, had been the sole principle of action in the Divine Mind, there could not have been any evils in the world. Accordingly, it is not in this sense that we understand goodness, when we say, that it was the principle from which God acted. Mere benevolence in the Deity, would make no distinction between good and bad men ; it would favour them equally, in order to make the sum of happiness the greatest possible upon the whole. But all who believe in the being of God, and seriously reflect upon his character, understand his goodness, as connected with justice, veracity, and fidelity. They consider God as exercising, not only a natural, but a moral government. In his natural government, he pays no attention to the characters of men. The light

and rain of heaven descend equally upon the just and the unjust. All the revolutions of nature affect men indiscriminately. The good are not secured from danger, nor from the inclemency of the skies, any more than the bad. It is not in this part of the Divine Government, that justice and truth appear, because they are not proper objects for them ; as inactive matter is incapable of being rewarded or punished, of receiving a promise, or acknowledging an obligation. Beings merely sentient, without the knowledge of right and wrong, and without any moral powers, are, in this respect, on the same footing with inanimate matter. They may enjoy pleasure, or suffer pain ; but they must, indiscriminately, be liable to these sensations, and cannot be subjected to them as rewards and punishments. It is in the moral administration of God, in that course of his dispensations in which he treats us as moral agents, deserving praise or blame for our conduct, that the justice and fidelity of God are manifest.

When we consider him as an upright Governor, we perceive that he does not bestow happiness indiscriminately ; but that he confers more ample shares of it, upon the righteous, than upon the wicked. We must necessarily consider him, when we view his character in this light, as not distributing happiness without distinction ; but as exerting his moral attributes jointly, in the most perfect manner. In this respect, when we consider

God as the moral Governor of the world, as rewarding and punishing men for their conduct ; it appears absolutely necessary, for the ends of his administration, that there should be some degree of pain and suffering in the world. If all enjoyed pleasure, and none were exposed to pain, there could be no evidences of a moral administration. Upon such a supposition, the consequences of virtue and vice would be precisely the same ; and we could not conclude, that the Ruler of All, had any particular regard for the one, more than for the other. The law of conscience, written in our hearts, might retain its power and obligation ; but it would be entirely deprived of its external functions of reward and punishment. A natural government over inanimate matter, and merely sensitive beings, might, for ought we see, be administered without any pain or suffering. Every creature, capable of feeling, might enjoy as much pleasure as its nature admits of. But if there be a moral government established, the case is altered. There must be a distinction made between the righteous and the wicked. Some peculiar advantages must attend the situation of the one, of which the other is deprived. There must not only be enjoyment, arising from common and natural causes, equally conferred on all ; but there must be enjoyments, that are solely appropriated to the virtuous, and that are conferred as rewards : And, on the other hand, there must be pain and suffering introduced, and some kinds

of them introduced in such a manner, that they may not pass into the lot of all men; but may be either wholly, or for the most part, inflicted upon the vicious. In this light, pain and misery, when they are the consequences of vice, are so far from being arguments against the moral perfections of the Divine Nature, that they appear indispensably necessary in a moral administration; and without them, we could not have any means by which we could know that God is just, and that he rewards and punishes men according to their conduct.

We perceive something analogous to this mode of procedure, even in human governments.—A parent finds it necessary to punish his child for a fault, and a magistrate punishes a worthless citizen for a crime; not from any malicious view, but from a regard to good order, and the welfare of the domestic or civil communities, over which they preside. The Deity, in like manner, may be perfectly good, and yet may have allowed pain to be introduced into his works, in order to promote the purposes of the moral government which he exercises over men. If once it be admitted, that we are under a course of moral discipline, it may be easily shewn, that hardships and inconveniencies are so far from producing misery upon the whole, that they are absolutely necessary to our happiness. A state of discipline and improvement requires, that individuals should suffer certain degrees of inconveni-

ence and suffering. It is by means of these trials; that their virtue is strengthened and improved. By means of these, they find occasion for the exercise of their fortitude, patience, and magnanimity; and acquire those habits which constitute an eminent character. If there were no distress in the world, there could be no charity; if there were no dangers, there could be no courage; if there were no temptations, there could be no self-denial; if there were no calamities, there could be no patience. Natural evils are essentially requisite to a subordinate state of discipline and improvement, such as that in which we are at present placed. They are necessary for producing the highest good of which our natures are susceptible, the steady and unwearied practice of virtue; and of consequence, for procuring the delight that proceeds from it.

If the end of placing us in the world, had been solely to render us happy, we might have had some ground to complain. But we were placed in this world to be good and virtuous; and, in consequence of acquiring an upright character, and confirmed habits of excellence, to become happy. Every thing, therefore, that tends to strengthen our virtue, and to confirm us in its habits, however unpleasing it may be in the meantime, tends ultimately to our felicity, and is to be reckoned good upon the whole. No parent, who values the happiness of his child, will inflict

pain upon him, merely with a view to render him miserable. He will, however, correct him for his good; he will force him to swallow a bitter draught, when he believes it will be conducive to his health; he will oblige him to undergo severe labour and painful exercise, when he believes they will tend to render him afterwards more respected, or more capable of supplying himself with the conveniencies of life. He will refuse him those agreeable things which he desires, when he perceives that they would tend to hurt his body, his mind, or his circumstances. Natural evil answers similar purposes; and therefore, ought not to be regarded as ultimately evil.

In the next place, it is to be remembered, that the imperfection of created beings, is not inconsistent with the highest degree of moral excellence, in the Divine Character. Since this is the case, it evidently follows, that pain, in so far as it is a consequence of imperfection in created beings, cannot be regarded as inconsistent with the Divine perfections. One consequence of our imperfection is, that we are intimately connected with matter. One part of our frame is material; and it must be subject to those laws by which matter is governed. The material world is governed by general laws. Gravitation and impulse, are produced by similar causes, and are directed according to the same principles, in every part of the universe. These general laws are productive

of manifold good consequences upon the whole, and are evidences of benevolent intention. If these laws were not uniform, we would not know how to direct our conduct. If a stone gravitated at one time, and did not gravitate at another, no man could act with any degree of certainty; and no person should venture to build a house of materials subject to such arbitrary changes, because the probability would be, that his building would not stand. If wood swam in water yesterday, but sunk to-day, no man would venture to sea in a ship. It is in consequence of their dependence upon the continuance of these general laws, that men are encouraged to act; and that they act in the persuasion that they will be successful. Without general laws, there would be no industry or skill, no arts or sciences. Men would never exert themselves, if the consequences of their actions were altogether uncertain, and if the effect might probably be something entirely different from what they intended. These general laws, therefore, are good upon the whole. But from the nature of general laws, they must be productive of inconvenience to individuals. It is good upon the whole, that matter should gravitate; but in consequence of this law, a man may be hurt or killed by the fall of a stone. From our connection with matter, this accident must sometimes happen, if the laws operate uniformly. The accident may happen to a good man, equally with a bad man. The only way in which we can con-

ceive that the accident should be prevented, is by an interposition of Divine power. But such interposition would be productive of worse consequences, than those which follow from the uniform adherence to the general law. Men would live in security, and lay aside prudence, if, without it, they thought they might be safe in perilous situations.

It is a general law of our nature, that we are sensible both to pleasure and to pain. The benevolence manifested in rendering us sensible to pleasure, will not be called in question. But it may be asked, whether might not we have been made sensible to pleasure, while we were so constituted, as not to feel pain? For ought we see to the contrary, the Author of our Nature might have constituted us in that way. But though he had done so, it is by no means evident, that our state would have been more comfortable upon that account. If we did not know what pain is, we would be much less sensible of pleasure, than we are at present. Besides, in many cases, pain seems absolutely necessary, for the preservation of our existence, in the present state of things. If we did not feel pain, when we approached too near the fire, we would not be apprehensive of the danger to which we exposed ourselves, by approaching still nearer. If we felt no pain when we needed a supply of food, we would have no monitor sufficiently eloquent, to make us take that sustenance which is requisite for our preservation. The bare cessation of pleasure would be insufficient; and

even the cravings of hunger often produce the effect with difficulty, upon those who are keenly engaged in any pursuit. The anxieties and solitudes that arise from the uncertainty of human events, and the possible miscarriages of the best concerted plans, though prosecuted with unremitting endeavours, keep the hopes and fears of men continually awake. They prevent us from being fatiated and disgusted with life: They excite fresh industry and application, and thus procure for us the happiness that results from action. Those evils, therefore, which arise from general laws, and from the nature of our constitution, are the necessary consequences of a plan evidently calculated for our benefit. They arise from the nature of our situation in the world, and from the rank which we hold in the scale of beings. Superior natures, we may believe, are free from them; but as they are the consequences of our situation, no objections arise from them against the goodness of God, which do not arise from the creation of imperfect creatures at first; which has been shewn to be no objection at all.

There are certain distresses and pains to which we are liable, and these too, not of the slightest kind, which are wonderfully alleviated by concomitant or subsequent pleasures. Of this kind are all those that spring from social affections. The pain we feel from sympathy with the distressed, the grief to which we are liable upon the loss of

a friend, are very painful sensations. But there is always some mixture of pleasure attending feelings of this nature. We think them proper and becoming in our situation. We are well pleased, because we possess them; we consider them as an ornament to our constitution; we reflect with pleasure upon the exercise of them; and we despise the man who would have been insensible to pain, upon a similar occasion. These are distresses under which we do not repine, and which are seldom mentioned in the complaints of the evils of life. The principles which they affect, are considered as parts of our social nature; they procure love to him in whom they are strong, and they appear in some way allied to goodness.

Lastly, on this head it deserves to be recollected, that many of the most intolerable natural evils to which we are exposed in this world, are the consequences of vice. There are few persons in great affliction who do not blame their own folly or bad conduct, for a considerable share of the sufferings which they endure. Many acute diseases, many of the disappointments that torment the ambitious, the covetous, and the aspiring; all the remorse and vexation that torture the vicious; are the offspring of imprudence or of guilt. Add to these, the calamities of oppression and violence, of fraud and extortion, of war and riot; all of which spring from inordinate desires. Remove from the world all the evils that spring from these

and fimilar caufes, and the remainder will not form the foundation of much complaint. Moft of the evils to which we are expofed, fpring either from our own bad conduct, or from the bad conduct of other perfons ; and, according to the obfervation formerly laid down, neither of them ought to be afcribed to God. Natural evil is no more a folid objection to the goodnefs of God, than the evils of defect or imperfection.

## IV.

In the third place, they who are unwilling to acknowledge the goodnefs of the Supreme Mind, have often dwelt upon the moral evils which are too prevalent in human life. They have exaggerated the corruptions of mankind, and have represented vice as the common courfe of behaviour among men. It is eafily fhewn, that their black representation of our prefent ftate is not true ; but they are ready to retrench when they are driven out of one fituation, and to fortify themfelves in another which feems to them more tenable. They boaft of it as the great and fuper-eminent advantage of fcepticifm, that they are confined by no doctrines, no fixed opinion, nor articles of belief ; but that when they are forced from one ground, they can always take refuge in another ; and it will be wonderful, if after many trials, they do not find a place where it will be impoffible to attack them. They enter flightly into the combat ; they never expofe themfelves to

a total rout; they always retire in good time, because they are not obstinate; they choose their ground anew, and their force is unimpaired, when it is necessary at a future time to begin the encounter. They maintain, that vice is the common state of man; that there are no good actions whatever.—They must soon yield up this field of contention. It can be shewn indisputably, that there are many good actions performed.—They maintain, in the next place, that vice is far more prevalent than virtue. Though it be shewn to their conviction, that this is not the case, still they are not without a subterfuge. They contend, that at least, there is vice and corruption in the world. What may be the precise quantity needs not be ascertained. All acknowledge, that there is much of it. If God be holy and just, why is any vice permitted? Might not man have been so constituted, that they would never have offended against the Divine Laws?

They who hold the opinion, that all our actions are necessary, without denying the existence of the Deity, find the ground they have taken up not easily maintained, when these objections are urged against them. According to their scheme, “the actions of men do not depend upon their powers. It is true, they proceed immediately from their wills; but their wills are acted upon necessarily by motives, and their determinations as equally necessary with the motions of a

piece of matter, when a sufficient degree of force is applied to it. These motives are necessary causes, and they are provided and appointed to act upon minds according to general laws, similar to those by which bodies gravitate, and motion changes its direction in consequence of impulse. Since, therefore, the will is not voluntary, but under necessity, the good or evil of human actions is chargeable to that being, by whose appointment the will was laid under necessary laws. It is maintained, that motives are presented to the mind, and operate upon it by general laws, similar to those by which the material fabric of the universe is governed. These general laws were appointed by God. In consequence of general laws, there must be particular exceptions; as pain arises, in consequence of them, in the natural world, so vice proceeds from them in the moral world. Both originally spring from causes of Divine appointment; but they are only consequences of that appointment, in as far as partial evil is inseparable from universal good. The laws themselves produce good upon the whole; and human vices, as well as human frailties, answer wise and benevolent purposes. All our actions, good and bad, contribute equally to carry on the great and good design of our maker; and therefore there is nothing, however vicious it may appear to us, that is ill in his sight, or, at least, nothing that is ill upon the whole."

This opinion sets out with hypotheses that can never be proved. We are not able to shew, that there are general laws in the moral world, any way similar to those by which the material world is governed. We are able to comprehend the laws of gravitation and impulse, and we have clear evidence of their universality. But we know nothing of the laws by which motives are regularly presented to the mind. We see how gravitation and impulse are carried on, and we can ascertain their effects. We can tell what force of gunpowder will throw a cannon-ball, of a given weight, to a particular distance. But we cannot ascertain the weight or force of motives, nor by any experiments determine their consequences. We have not, therefore, any evidence that the laws of the moral world are perfectly analogous to those of the material world. The supposition, that the mind of man can be acted upon as a piece of matter, by the force of motives, excludes all notions of human power, of self-determination, and self-motion; which seem to be the qualities essential to mind, and which distinguish it from matter. It must first be shewn that these qualities of mind do not exist, which will be no easy task, before it be proved that mind is subject to laws similar to those of matter. If the mind be passive, it may be governed by such laws; but if it be active, it is not easy to shew that such laws can be applicable to it.

The conclusions, that bad actions contribute equally with virtuous actions to carry on good ends, and that nothing can appear ill in the sight of the Deity, appear to be harsh. They may be true, but it would require knowledge of the general constitution of the universe, very far superior to that which we possess, to determine that they are founded in truth. Our notions of Divine justice lead us to conclude, that vice is hurtful in the government of God, that it is odious in his sight, and that he is prosecuting a plan, in consequence of which it will be finally exterminated from his works. It does not seem easy to account for moral evil in a good government, upon the same principles with natural evil. The difference between inactive passive matter, and an active self-determining mind, renders the two cases unlike to one another. With respect to matter, we perceive the influence of general laws; but, with respect to mind, if similar laws be established, we are incapable of discerning them; and in cases so widely different from each other, it is too great a step, to infer the existence of the one, merely from the existence of the other. The system of general laws may, no doubt, be established in the moral world, and may account for evils in a way that we cannot perceive; but in a matter of this sort, we ought not to reason upon hypothesis, but from facts.

If, on the other hand, we believe what our

perceptions and our observations convince us is true, and which it will never be possible to shew to be false, that man is a free agent, endowed with powers of choice, self-determination, and action; it follows, that those actions which he performs voluntarily, are chargeable to his own account, and are not imputable to God. If human liberty be supposed, the only objection that can be made to the Divine administration, on account of the vice that is in the world, must arise from this single view of the matter; that God has given man a power which he is capable of abusing, and which might have been withheld from him. If he had not been invested with moral faculties, he could have done no evil. Why, then, did not God render him incapable of committing guilty actions? This argument is, at bottom, the same with the objection drawn from evils of imperfection.

We cannot give any reason why the Deity at first created accountable creatures, any more than why he created beings that had not every perfection. We see, however, no inconsistency between the Divine perfections, and the creation of beings capable of choice and will. A being capable of self-determination, is surely of a class superior to those who are acted upon by necessity, like passive and inert matter; and if it was not inconsistent with Divine perfection to make necessary agents, it could not be inconsistent to make

voluntary agents. If a moral administration be worthy of God, if it be worthy of him to train up minds to excellence, in a state of discipline and trial; it surely was also worthy of him to confer upon them powers suited to that state, to render them capable of making improvement by virtuous exertions, and having it in their power likewise, to act in disobedience to his laws, that spirits of true worth and dignity might be distinguished from the unworthy and incurable; and that, of consequence, distributive justice might appear in rewarding the virtuous and punishing the vicious. If we believe God to be a righteous governor, we see evident reasons why vice should, for a time, be permitted in his works. He does not suffer it to remain, because it answers any good purpose; but he suffers it, because it is inseparable from a state of probation and discipline, where the worth of men's characters is to be tried. If we are in a state of trial, it results from the nature of such a state, that some will conduct themselves in it well, and others conduct themselves ill. There must be vice as well as virtue for a season. But God is a just governor and judge. He will separate the good from the bad; he will reward the one, and punish the other. Evil shall at last be exterminated from his works. He is not the cause, immediate or remote, of the evil that happens. He granted to man powers of acting virtuously. By means of these powers, a great part of men do accordingly act virtuously, and meet with his ap-

probation in consequence of their behaviour. There are others who act viciously, not surely from necessity, for they have the same powers originally with those who act virtuously, and they know that they could exert them in the same manner. Their want of improvement proceeds entirely from themselves.

In this light, it may be said, that vice is the consequence of a good general law in the Divine government, though this could not be said according to the preceding statement. It is a law in the Divine government, that minds should rise to eminence by means of passing through a state of discipline and probation. We have as clear evidence that this law is established, as that the laws of gravitation and impulse exist. This law is certainly calculated to promote valuable purposes in the universe. It is the means of forming at last, a great and immortal society of chosen minds, capable of rising to unlimited degrees of excellence. In consequence of this law, men must arise to dignity by means of their own actions. They must be left to act virtuously or viciously as they choose. Virtue must be rewarded, and vice punished. Room must be given for worth to display itself, and, of consequence, room must also be given for the indulgence of vicious inclinations and depraved habits.

This constitution of things is suitable to all the notions we can form of a perfect moral go-

vernment, and is worthy of the Sovereign of the universe. It is of no consequence to insist, that, as the Deity foreknew every thing that was to happen, he might have prevented vice. This supposition, if it means any thing, must mean, that God might have constituted things in a different way from what we observe them. Perhaps there might have been a thousand ways in which Infinite wisdom could have constituted the universe; but we cannot point out any that would have been better than that which he has chosen, nor any that would have been so good. The present distribution of things is worthy of him, and the events that happen, are such as he saw would happen, and would be productive of good consequences. But if it be only meant, that the same disposition of things being supposed to be established, the good might have been brought about and the evil prevented, because it was foreseen, the supposition is absurd. When we say that God could prevent future actions, we say what is contradictory. An action must be either future or not. If it be not future, it cannot be prevented. If it be future, and a Divine interposition renders it not future, then it has futurity, and wants it at the same time; but since it was prevented, it never was future, which is absurd. The objection, then, must only mean, that the Deity might have ordered matters in a different way from what they are at present, and in this sense it has been shewn, that the case is supposable; yet when

considered as an objection, it is certainly groundless, because we do not know how things could have been better constituted than they are; nor do we know how any particular part of the Divine government could have been altered, without producing worse consequences upon the whole, than those which we want to remedy. We may then conclude, that neither evils of imperfection, physical evils, nor moral evils, as they at present appear in the system of the universe, are any solid objections against the moral perfections of the Divine nature. All of them are reconcileable with perfect wisdom, goodness, and justice.

## V.

Having thus endeavoured, very briefly, to justify the ways of God to men, by shewing that the evils which occur in his works are no solid objection to the moral perfections of his nature, I shall now give a very short view of the principal hypotheses which have been invented to account for misery and vice.

It is needless to mention the method in which the heathen nations accounted for it. They believed in Gods of limited power and wisdom, not guided by the rules of righteousness, but under the influence of every disorderly passion. The appearance of evil was not inconsistent with the characters of their Deities, and they had no scruple in ascribing it directly to them. They considered their Gods as equally vicious with the

worst of men. Some of their philosophers, indeed, insisted that the Gods could do no evil; but then, they excluded them, in a great measure, from the government of the world, and attributed evil to fate or destiny.

Among christians there arose a sect, in ancient times, who maintained, that there are two first independent principles, the one of which is the Author of all good, and the other the Author of all evil. These were called Manichæans, from their founder Manes. The good principle they called the principle of light, and the bad one the principle of darkness; and between these two, they imagined that a continual warfare was carried on, the good principle always diffusing happiness, and the evil principle always scattering misery, and vice, and confusion through his works. Manes seems to have borrowed his notions from the theology of the ancient Persians, who, as we are told by some writers, also believed in two similar principles, Oromasdes and Arimanius; but he incorporated his absurd philosophy with the doctrines of christianity. There are no writings of Manes, nor of his followers the Manichæans, now remaining; and all that we know concerning them is gathered from some fathers of the church, who have laboured to confute them, and particularly from St. Augustine, who may be supposed to have been well acquainted with their doctrines, as he himself was brought up in the principles of that sect, and did not relin-

quish them till after he had come to the years of discretion and reason. Some have even imagined, that this learned and ingenious father never entirely surmounted the principles he imbibed in his youth; and that though he gave up the notion of two independent beings, and wrote against it, yet he was not able to reconcile the appearance of evil with the belief of a good Deity, and therefore, represented God as of a mixed character, so that he might be the author both of good and evil. The charge is not, however, I believe, well founded. We have not any full account of the reasonings made use of by the Manichæans; and if we may judge of them from what is said by their opponents, we must believe that they were not of much consequence. Mr Bayle, however, a most ingenious sceptic, has endeavoured, in several articles of his Philosophical and Biographical Dictionary, to supply the defect, and has produced several arguments which he thinks they might have used; and they are more ingenious, in all probability, than any they did use. It does not appear, however, that he has made many converts. Mr. Hume himself, notwithstanding his inclination to represent in the fairest light every system that is subversive of the Divine perfections, gives it up as not suiting the appearances in the universe; in which, as he justly observes, there is no such struggle between benevolence and malevolence, as it supposes. The hypothesis itself hardly needs a confutation, in the most specious form in

which it can be dressed. It is contrary to all our notions of independency. Allow that there are two first Principles: Either the one is more powerful than the other, or they are equal in power. If the one be more powerful than the other, he would entirely prevent the other from having any share in the production or government of the universe; and, therefore, every thing would be absolutely good, or absolutely evil. If they be equal in power, but have opposite wills, they would counterballance each other; the one would prevent the other from acting, and therefore would produce nothing. There cannot, therefore, be two independent first principles, the one good, and the other evil. The appearances of nature are also contradictory to this hypothesis. There is certainly more good than evil in the world; consequently, the world is not under the dominion of a good and an evil nature; for on that supposition, the one could not be more prevalent than the other.—Still further, there is no occasion to have recourse to two first principles; in order to solve appearances. Evil can be accounted for more simply, and therefore more philosophically, upon the belief of one Supreme Being, than of more. Evils of imperfection must necessarily fall to the share of created and limited beings. Natural evil is unavoidable, in consequence of the establishment of general laws. Since these laws are good upon the whole, they must have been established by a good Being. There are no

general laws that produce more evil than good, in the whole system of things. All, therefore, that remains to be ascribed to an evil being, is the suffering that arises from good general laws. But it would be absurd to ascribe the laws themselves to a good being, and the consequences of them to an evil principle. Moral evil is the work of men, and is to be ascribed to no external principle. But even granting that it were to be ascribed to a first and independent principle, what would be the consequence? Human vices, on that hypothesis, would be necessary. They would proceed from the exertion and activity of the evil principle. Men who committed them from involuntary impulse, could not be guilty. These actions, therefore, could not be morally evil; of consequence, there could be no moral evil in the world; and therefore, no reason for the supposition of an evil principle who is the author of it.

In modern times, there have also been hypotheses invented to account for evil; but they are not satisfactory. Whenever we endeavour to ascertain the motives and views, according to which the Divine Mind acted in the production of the universe, we are beyond our depth; and if we endeavour to speak of the subject, according to our conceptions, we shall soon find ourselves involved in intricacy and darkness, from which we will be unable to extricate ourselves.

Of all the hypotheses that have been invented to account for evil in modern times, the system of the best, or the *βελτιστον* system, as it is called, has procured the greatest number of adherents. The inventor and principal supporter of this system, was the celebrated Mr. Leibnitz, a German philosopher of great eminence, during the end of the last and beginning of the present century\*. According to this hypothesis, there were an infinite number of systems, that might, with equal ease, have been adopted by the Author of Nature, when he was creating the universe. Every thing might have been formed and arranged in innumerable ways, besides that in which they are formed and arranged at present. To the understanding of the Divine Mind, all possible systems appeared at once; and among them he chose that which he has established in the universe. This choice cannot be supposed to have been made without reason. What then was it that moved the Deity to make choice of the present constitution of things, in preference to all other possible systems? To this it is answered, "that God is infinitely good, and therefore gave the preference to the present constitution of things, because it is the best possible. It is true that there are many evils occurring, but they are not evils upon the whole; on the contrary, without them the greatest possible quantity of good would not be produced. Physical evil is frequently employed as the means of procuring

\* This was written several years ago.

greater good, or of hindering greater evil; and sometimes it is the punishment of faults, and tends to promote the good of the sufferer or of others. A mixture of it is even necessary to make us relish the goods of life. As to moral evil, it also often serves as the means of obtaining good, or of preventing greater evil; but vice is not produced by the Divine will, to attain these ends. It is only permitted as a necessary condition, a *sine qua non*, without admitting which, the greatest good cannot be produced; for both natural and moral evil are inseparably connected with the best possible system of things. Vice must often be permitted, otherwise greater evils would ensue. There are evils which a man might have it in his power to prevent, but which he must not prevent; otherwise he would relinquish his duty, and occasion greater evils, upon the whole, than those which he prevents. If an officer, in the time of danger, had an important post committed to his trust, which required all his attention; and while he was standing on duty, if he saw two soldiers of the garrison engaged in a quarrel, and ready to kill one another; he must permit them to commit the crime they intended, and must not leave his post to prevent the consequences of their violence. In like manner, God must permit vice; for he would be wanting in what he owes to himself, in what he owes to his wisdom, his goodness, and his perfection, if he followed not the bent of his inclinations to produce happiness, and if he did not

choose that which is absolutely the best, notwithstanding the evil of guilt which is involved in it, and interwoven with it, by the supreme necessity of eternal truths; for it is true, from all eternity, that in the best possible system, there must be an intermixture of evil. In such a system, evil is a necessary ingredient, and is inseparable from it."

This system is defended at great length, and with much metaphysical subtlety, by Leibnitz, in his *Theodocea*, or *Essays on the Goodness of God, and Liberty of Man*. When considered abstractly, it has an amiable appearance, and therefore, has been embraced by several writers since his time. It is, however, liable to many and powerful objections.

It is, in the first place, founded not upon fact; but upon conjecture. We cannot pretend that we have any knowledge of the views, from a regard to which God created the universe. We cannot, in the most part of cases, investigate the purposes and designs of one another, nor determine with certainty, from what the generality of actions proceed. Much less are we able to determine any thing accurately, with respect to the schemes of a nature so infinitely superior to us as the Divine. We have no principles laid down to us, from which we can conclude with certainty, that the present system is the best possible. We do not know, if the Deity intended to communi-

cate the highest degrees of happiness that could have been conferred upon the creatures he has formed, at least in the earlier period of their existence. If we were to reason from analogy, we would rather conclude, that the happiness of the human race at least, is improving; and we have reason to believe, that it will for ever improve. If the whole system be improving, it was not at first the best possible, nor is at present so; and we have no reason to say, that the Deity could not have made the whole at first, as perfect as it is to become. It cannot be proved, that the Deity had no other end in view but the communication of happiness. We have, on the contrary, reason to believe, that he could have rendered men much happier than they are, if he had not intended to promote more valuable purposes by their present subordinate state, than are already accomplished. It is presumption in us to pretend, that we are able to point out the ends which the Author of Nature must have had in his works, any farther than we are able clearly to ascertain, from the effects which he has produced, and subjected to our view and examination. Leibnitz does not pretend to prove the infinite goodness of the Divine Nature, from his works. He seems to lay it down as a postulate; for he declares, that though misery universally prevailed upon this earth, and vice as well as misery, yet we ought to conclude this world the best of possible systems; because our earth is only a satellite of the sun, and in the

immensity of nature, there is room for an infinite number of worlds, where uninterrupted happiness may be enjoyed. Now, if there were nothing but vice and misery in the world, or even if these were in general prevalent, I think it would be impossible for us to conclude that God is good; whatever he might appear to those who lived in more favoured parts of the world, or to beings that enjoyed a more extensive view of his works. In reasoning upon this subject, the goodness of God ought not to be assumed as a first principle, but ought to be proved; and surely the only proof of it which we can obtain, must arise from its effects.

In the next place, this hypothesis carries along with it certain views of things which are not easily reconcilable with Divine perfection. It supposes, that God chose the best possible system of things, and yet he chose a system in which much evil is blended with the good that appears in it. In the best possible state of things, therefore, evil is so intimately mixed with good, and is so necessary to its production, that the Deity himself cannot separate them. The best possible system that the Deity himself can form, it is supposed, must not only contain evil, but that evil is even necessary for the production of the greatest good. These suppositions are surely harsh. They rest upon this foundation, that good and evil are linked together by some fatal necessity, independent

altogether of the Divine will, and incapable of being dissolved by Divine wisdom and power. If good and evil be thus inseparably connected, the Deity must have taken them as he found them, and formed them into a system, in such a manner as to prevent the appearance of evil as much as possible. The best intentions could do no more. Upon this supposition, in the best possible system, the evil may be far superior to the good; since the quantity of it intermixed, independently of the Divine will, by the hand of irresistible fatality, may have been so great, that Divine power and wisdom could not adjust matters, so as to give the good an ascendancy. The best possible system may, of consequence, be a very bad one. Supply a good workman with bad materials, he will make the most of them that can be made; but still his productions may be exceedingly bad, and must be so almost inevitably. This system, if it be admitted, no doubt fully vindicates the Divine goodness. If he constituted all things in the best way that was possible, he acted from benevolence. But if such be the nature of things, independently of his will, that in the best arrangement in which even Divine wisdom and power can put them, much misery and vice must be introduced; it must be believed that the Deity is, in one respect, subject to absolute fate, and consequently, is not the independent Author of all things.

The whole system, indeed, leads directly to ne-

cessity. If every thing, even the calamities and the vices of human life, constitute a part of the best possible system of things, then nothing could be otherwise than it is, without rendering the system worse, and disappointing the views, according to which every thing was formed. No pain, nor vice, can be wanted, since they are necessary parts of the plan. Leibnitz does not hesitate to admit this conclusion in all its force; and he does not endeavour to obviate it, except by means of new hypotheses. Agreeably to his system of necessity, he maintains, that there is a sufficient reason for every thing, and therefore nothing can be changed; because, if there is a sufficient reason why it should be placed where it is, there can be none why it should be placed any where else. Hence, he maintains, that no particular matter can be disposed of otherwise than it is. Upon the same principle, he maintains, that the material world could not be situated in any other part of space except that which it occupies. When asked, why no particle of matter can change its place? He answers, because no particle of matter is precisely like another, and therefore, no one of them can be substituted for another. It is as if bodies of various figures and dimensions were adjusted to one another, so as to fill a vessel of a certain capacity, without leaving any interstices; in which case, the place of no one body could be altered, without making the whole aggregate take up more room than the capacity of the vessel.

When it is asked, why the material world could not be placed some where else, than where it is situated? He answers, that space is full, and there is no room for receiving it, except in the precise place in which it stands. In this manner, he builds one theory upon another, and endeavours to ward off the objections made to his hypotheses, by framing a new one.—Fond of his doctrine of necessity, he supposes that there is a correspondence eternally established among things; by means of which, certain effects are regularly produced, without any connection among the things themselves. This he calls a pre-established harmony. He supposes soul and body to have no connection nor influence upon each other. How then does the mind receive impressions by means of the body? And how do the actions of the body follow the volitions of the mind? All this is the consequence of the pre-established harmony. Body and mind are so constituted, that the actions of the one regularly correspond with those of the other; but the two have no more connection than two clocks, one in Britain and the other at the Cape of Good Hope, that always point to the same hour at the same time. There is no end of such theories that are totally unsupported by fact and experience; and the conclusions which depend upon them ought never to be received as truths.

There are some other writers who have ascrib-

ed the actions of the Deity to a single principle ; but have done it in such a way, that it is not easy to say if they had any peculiar notions, though they have used a particular form of expression. Thus, there are some who have ascribed the Divine conduct entirely to goodness ; but they have not explained goodness in such a manner as to exclude the other perfections of the Divine Nature. They have not represented it as a blind and indiscriminating desire to promote happiness ; of consequence, it may be consistent with justice, holiness, and truth.

Some others, particularly Mr. Grove, resolve all the Divine conduct into the effects of wisdom ; and, no doubt, wisdom may be considered as directing the purposes of goodness and of justice ; but it must not be understood as the only principle of the Divine Mind. Mr. Balguy, an eminent defender of Doctor Clarke's views of Moral Obligation, deduces all the actions of the Deity from rectitude ; which he explains as a regard to what is fit, to the nature of things, and to their relations, without making his meaning fully known. It appears, however, that he did not understand rectitude as expressive of any one perfection, exclusive of the rest.

All systems concerning the ends which the Deity had in view in forming the world, or which he

still prosecutes in governing it, relate to subjects far beyond our depth.

We ought to avoid the presumption of contriving them, and to satisfy ourselves with those measures of knowledge concerning our Creator and Governor, which are within our reach, and which he has enabled us, by attention and diligence, to acquire.

END OF PART I.

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DISCOURSES  
ON  
*THEOLOGICAL AND LITERARY*  
SUBJECTS.

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PART II.

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*Consisting chiefly of DISCOURSES which were read in  
the LITERARY SOCIETY, at their Weekly  
Meetings in GLASGOW COLLEGE.*

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1870  
The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been admitted to the membership of the Society since the last meeting of the Council.

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## DISCOURSE I.

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*On Qualities of INANIMATED OBJECTS, which excite  
Agreeable Sensations.*

**W**HEN external objects are presented to us, we not only perceive their figure, colour, size, and proportion, but we are also affected by them with pleasure or uneasiness. Yet though all men are endowed with powers, both of perception and of sensation, there are some men who seem only to perceive, and others who seem only to feel. One man attends so much to the figure of a romantic rock, that he is able to delineate its external appearance; while another is filled with sentiments of awe and veneration, but can give no distinct account of the object which excited them. A painter is obliged to acquire a habit of attending to things as they are in themselves: The man of sensibility, who is not an artist, generally attends only to the effect which they produce upon his mind. Accordingly, these persons, when giving

an account of what has appeared to them remarkable, choose very different methods of expressing themselves. He who is attentive to the visible appearance of objects, endeavours to represent them as they are in themselves, that he may exhibit to the imagination of others, the very form by which he himself was struck, and thus excite in their mind emotions similar to what he himself felt. The other expresses the feelings that were excited in his own mind, and endeavours to communicate them to other persons; but he leaves it, in a good measure, to their own fancies, to form an object correspondent to these emotions. This difference in the minds of men, produces the two forms of description which have been taken notice of by critics; the *direct*, which attempts to delineate the object; and the *indirect*, which is the expression of the emotions felt by the spectator.

Among the sentiments excited in the mind, by the perception of external objects, there are certain differences which are easily discerned. A gentle flowing rivulet, and an impetuous torrent, do not affect us in the same manner. The mind is disposed to tranquillity by the one, and roused and agitated by the other. The distinction between the sensations occasioned by sublime and by beautiful objects, is universally known. The characters of these sentiments are exceedingly different. The sensation of beauty is gay and enlivening. The sensation of sublimity is solemn

and elevating. We are attracted to a beautiful object by a kind of love; and accordingly, we sometimes bestow the appellations of amiable and lovely, even upon inanimate colours and figures. But a sublime object inspires us with a feeling of a very different kind, which removes us to a distance from it, and makes us look towards it with admiration.

The metaphorical language of every country, and the comparisons made use of in poetry, are founded upon a resemblance between the sensations excited by sublime and beautiful objects, and those that are excited by conduct. The tranquil joy which we feel when we behold kind and charitable behaviour, is not unlike the gay emotion which is inspired by beauty. The magnanimous character which exhibits uniform courage and self-denial, fills us with a kind of admiration similar to that which is excited by sublime objects. Hence, a generous man in unfavourable circumstances, is "a flower that blooms unseen, and wastes its fragrance on the air." A man of tried and steady virtue, is a rock that stands immovable amidst the fury of the waves. The sentiments, however, excited by conduct, are very dissimilar in one respect, from those excited by external objects. The actions of intelligent agents, are the proper subjects of approbation and disapprobation; which are moral judgments, entirely different from any feeling occasioned by inanimate objects.

The powers, by means of which the agreeable qualities of external objects are perceived and relished, are capable of culture and improvement; they are also liable to be vitiated. All men have those powers originally; but the variety of tastes which subsists among mankind clearly proves, that they have not been equally careful in bringing them to perfection. It is natural to expect, that some men should have more delicate feelings of beauty and sublimity than others. The circumstances in which they are placed, have an evident tendency to produce a difference in the degree of their sensibility. A mathematician who is solely intent upon the investigation of truth, is employed upon properties of his figure, which are totally unconnected with its beauty or deformity. It is his business to perceive, and not to feel. His faculties of sensation, therefore, may possibly remain in the situation in which nature left them. A man, in the same manner, whose thoughts are employed with views of profit, has frequent temptations to overlook agreeable appearances. One person may be capable of perceiving an object distinctly, and of forming judgments concerning its figure, size, colour, and proportions; and yet be, in a great measure, insensible to its beauty or deformity. Another may be deeply struck with beauty, who has nevertheless paid little attention to visible appearances. Thus, men, according to their circumstances, may improve their faculties both of perception and of sensation; or they may neglect ei-

ther of them, though endowed with them by nature.

Even among those who have improved their faculties of sensation, there does not appear the same degree of delicacy on every occasion. Prejudices have a powerful effect upon our judgments concerning the agreeable qualities of external objects. The associations to which the mind is accustomed, must necessarily influence its determinations with regard to its feelings, as well as its perceptions. Objects are frequently valued, not on their own account, but on account of something else. In cases of this nature, the mind imposes upon itself, and transfers to the object agreeable qualities which do not properly belong to it, and which it would not ascribe to it in different circumstances. One man may think an ancient Gothic pile elegant, from a principle analogous to that which makes transubstantiation appear true to another. Some antiquaries have discovered beauty, even in the rust of ancient medals: And a lover sees excellencies, which none but himself is capable of observing, in every trinket that belongs to his mistress.

The varieties, then, in the sentiments of men, concerning the agreeable qualities of external objects, do not prove, that there is not in reality beauty and sublimity in nature. There is no reason for asking with insult, as some have done, for a stan-

dard that is invariable, by which all objects of taste may be examined ; any more than there is occasion to ask for it in morals or in reasoning. There have been differences among men upon almost every subject, and there must be differences while their circumstances are not the same. The circumstances of men make a variety even in their perceptions. What appears to one to be a circular plate, another perceives to be a globe. The light in which an object is viewed, the distance at which it is placed, and the objects that surround it, have all an effect in altering its appearance to the eye. Yet in matters of this nature, we can speak with certainty, and we need no standard to regulate this diversity of perception. Our taste of beauty and sublimity may be more apt to be influenced by adventitious circumstances than our perceptions are. It is not, however, always arbitrary and capricious. Every body prefers a regular figure to one that is irregular ; a circle to a square ; and the glossy appearance of silk to a dull uniform colour. Men differ as little in their notions of beauty, when a violet, a winding stream, or a swelling green hill, are presented to them, as in their conceptions of the figure, size, or colour of those objects. Our knowledge of the agreeable qualities of external objects depends upon self-evident principles, which are as certain, and as universally known, as any truths that depend upon our senses. Men are, in reality, agreed with regard to them, and seldom

differ about the beauty or deformity of any object, when they are not under the influence of some passion. But external objects frequently possess other agreeable qualities besides beauty ; or though they possess beauty, it is sometimes united with disagreeable qualities : Of consequence, the effect produced upon the mind is of a complex nature. But in such cases, we seldom examine our sensations so accurately, as to be able to refer each of them to its origin. We carelessly look upon the external form as the sole cause of our pleasure, though probably it had very little effect in occasioning it ; or we ascribe the disgust and dissatisfaction which sprung from unseen sources, to an external appearance, which, had it not been for other circumstances, would probably not have displeas'd us. When men are placed in situations in which their passions are altogether uninterested, they discover little variety in their judgments concerning beauty and sublimity. The rainbow and the morning sky, have called forth the same sensations in all ages. The parterre of modern times, exhibits the same flowers that were cultivated by former generations : The forms of human beauty which charmed the remote ages of antiquity, transmitted to future times by the art of the statuary, are still looked upon as patterns of excellence.

Taste, then, is not so arbitrary a matter as some would pretend. It has principles which

are universally admitted, though, like the principles of morals themselves, they may be prevented by certain circumstances, from operating with such force as to determine the will.—Now, since there are certain external objects which universally appear agreeable, there must be certain qualities in these objects fitted for exciting agreeable sensations in the mind. The sensations of beauty and sublimity are exceedingly different in their nature. The one of them is gay, and the other solemn. The objects, therefore, which excite them, must necessarily possess very different qualities. But there must be one or more qualities that are common to all beautiful objects, and one or more qualities of a different nature, that are common to sublime objects. The objects belonging to each of these classes are infinitely diversified; and unless there were at least one property that runs universally through them, they could not produce the same effect upon the mind.

If we could discover the common qualities which belong to every thing that is beautiful, it might be easy, by analogical observations, to point out the common qualities belonging to every other class of agreeable external objects. With this view, I shall make a few remarks on beauty of colour and figure.

That some colours are more agreeable to the eye than others, is a fact too evident to be call-

ed in question. Every person is more pleased with the verdure which clothes the vegetable kingdom, than with the dusky or ferruginous hue of some impure fossils. It does not however appear, that any one shade of vegetable green is, in itself, either agreeable or disagreeable. No uniform colour seems to be in any degree beautiful. In all agreeable colouring, there are different shades united insensibly with one another. The different shades present to the mind a whole, in which every part is connected with the rest, and subservient to them. The verdure of nature seems to be the most gay and cheerful of all colours. It is equally removed from the fierceness of the red, and the languor of the violet. The surfaces on which it is usually seen, are smooth and glossy. Hence the different lights exhibit upon them, all the shades of this colour, from that which approaches the blue to that which joins the yellow, insensibly connected with one another. At the same time, no one shade occupies so large a space as to be contemplated by itself, separately from the shades connected with it. These two circumstances of insensible connection, and quick succession among the different shades, seem to be the cause that this colour upon vegetables is so highly agreeable, as all acknowledge it to be. By means of the insensible and uninterrupted connection which subsists among the different shades, it assumes the appearance of a regular whole, and enters the mind with the greatest facility. The

quickness of the succession occasions the gaiety of the sensation. When the mind broods over a single thought, it is in a solemn state; but when a variety of objects, so united as not to embarrass it, are presented before it, it is gay and cheerful. Similar observations may be made on all the other beautiful colours.

From these remarks, we are enabled to explain the reason why rough surfaces are not nearly so agreeable as those which are smooth. A rough surface has an appearance almost uniform, in respect of colour; but a glossy smoothness exhibits a great variety of shades; for the different parts of it do not reflect the same colours to the eye. There is, however, another circumstance to be taken into consideration. A smooth surface exhibits an unbroken connection of parts; but a rough surface has no unity: Its parts are disjointed and separated like a heap of sand, and there is no connection among them except contiguity. From the reasons which have been explained, the colours on silk are more beautiful than those upon cloth. The smooth glossy surface appearing in different positions with regard to the eye, and reflecting different lights, displays the colour immensely varied in the degrees of its strength. The great variety and infinite changes of colour upon the neck of a pigeon, produce their wonderful effect from the same causes. The vast arch of the rainbow strikes us principally with sentiments of sublimity; yet a small section of it is ex-

ceedingly beautiful. In it all the colours, in their different degrees of strength, are seen insensibly running into one another; while no one shade occupies so much space as to arrest the attention of the spectators. It is from the same causes, that the veins of marble, and the clouding of mahogany, excite the sensation of beauty. In all these cases, there is an easy and insensible connection of different shades. Their unity renders them easily comprehended by the imagination, and of consequence agreeable; while the rapidity with which they succeed one another, presents to the mind a variety of objects at once, and renders its emotions gay and lively.

There are certain objects similar to those which constitute beautiful colouring, that are common to all beautiful figures. One figure is undoubtedly preferable to another, independently of custom, education, or utility. Even children consider one shape as more agreeable than another, for they always prefer regular figures to those which are irregular; and among those which are regular, they choose a globular pebble rather than a cube. A straight line has no beauty. It is a tedious repetition of the same appearance without any variation, and consequently has nothing enlivening in it. Its parts have no connection, except contiguity among themselves. It does not make a whole, because there is no reason why it should be broken off at any one point rather than any other. But a waving serpentine

line is remarkably beautiful, and has been honoured by Mr. Hogarth with the appellation of the line of beauty. It does not appear, however, that this line can be traced in all beautiful forms. It is undoubtedly wanting, not only in many elegant mathematical figures, but even in many fine ornaments of architecture. It may further be observed, that this line retains its beauty, only when it has no more than two bendings in opposite directions. Add another inflection to it, and it loses its elegance. Extend it still further into a regular serpentine river, and it will appear nearly as formal as a straight line. When confined to two bendings, in opposite directions, it appears to be complete, all its parts are subservient to the whole; but when produced, it ceases to be a whole. It has no one determined length rather than another; its parts have no dependence upon one another; nor any connection, except from contiguity. In all curve lines, as well as this one, there is a great degree of beauty. The parts of which they are composed, are so intimately connected with one another, that if one of them be taken away the figure ceases to be a whole. There is a continual succession of changes among the parts. The whole is easily comprehended by the mind, and, in consequence of the quick succession of well connected parts, the emotion excited is gay and lively. A small circle, and an ellipse, are illustrations of these remarks. In a spiral line or volute, the succession of changes is still quicker than in either of

these, and on account of its gracefulnes, it has been chosen as a principal ornament in some of the capitals in architecture.

Though a straight line possesses no beauty, yet there is a considerable degree of beauty in some rectilinear figures. Mr. Burke says, he does not find a natural object that is angular, and at the same time beautiful. Indeed, few natural objects, he says, are entirely angular. He adds, "but I think those which approach the most nearly to it are the ugliest, p. iii. §. 15." This observation does not seem to have been made with sufficient attention. There is undoubtedly much beauty in the ramification of some vegetables, though the insertion of the branches is angular. Crystallization is a work of nature, whereby angular bodies are formed, which unquestionably possess much beauty. It is, however, undoubtedly true, that curvilinear figures are more agreeable than rectilinear ones. A square is less beautiful than a circle. The parts of which it is composed are connected, as belonging to a whole; but they are large and few, and do not follow one another in quick succession. The sensation, therefore, has little gaiety. Among triangles, the equilateral is more beautiful than any other; because angles of the same size make it appear a whole, from which nothing can be taken away, and to which nothing can be added, without destroying the connection and subordination of its parts. Hence, painters are fond of

this figure in forming their groups. A hexagon is still more beautiful than an equilateral triangle. Its parts are equally well connected, and equally subservient to the whole, so that it is easily comprehended; and there is a greater succession of parts to render the sensation gay. Variety, however, has its limits. The mind perceives no beauty in those figures that are not distinctly comprehended. A figure, with such a number of sides as to confound our senses, will appear beautiful if it be regular; but not so beautiful as another figure equally regular, and having only such a number of parts as can be easily comprehended by the mind.

Mr. Burke has observed, with great justice, that a beautiful object must be small in its kind. This he has illustrated from the fondling expressions of all languages, which are diminutives. It also appears from his instances of beautiful objects. A large figure is not fitted to excite a gay and lively sensation. Its parts do not succeed one another with rapidity. The mind has leisure to rest upon every one of them, and to contemplate it by itself. The character of the sensation is of consequence grave.

Besides the beauty of colour and figure, some writers have spoken of a kind of beauty which consists in motion. There is no doubt, but that small bodies, in a certain degree of motion, are more agreeable than the same bodies at rest. Every

person beholds with pleasure the flight of the swallow, a small boat under sail, or a purling stream. All the additional pleasure, however, arising from this source, may perhaps be accounted for from other causes. Not to mention that motion often produces agreeable sounds, and that it pleases us by regularly suggesting to us an active cause from which it proceeded, it may be observed, that motion exhibits an object in different lights, and displays variety of colouring. It also generally describes a figure which we are able to trace, when the motion is not very slow; and if the motion be very rapid, the figure is almost the only thing we observe, for we are hardly sensible of the motion. If we pay no attention to the human forms engaged in a dance, we have nothing to entertain us but the measured step and the mazy figure: These, however, are agreeable.

If we ascend from the simpler to the more compounded forms, we may still trace the same principles. We shall every where find easily connected and dependent parts, following one another in quick succession. The vegetable kingdom furnishes innumerable examples of them. Every shrub that blows, exhibits the bounty of heaven in diffusing beauty, to delight the eye and cheer the heart of man. The branches elegantly inserted in the trunk, are spread out in a globular or conical form, not regularly directed by the line and the plummet, and the compass, but bending with

easy inflexions. The foliage presents the various shades of vegetable verdure. The blossoms glow in the rich luxuriance of spring, or the fruit displays the mellow tints of autumn. Every part conspires to fill the mind with gay and lively sensations; while the connection of the parts, and their mutual subordination, render the form easily comprehended. Destroy the figure by lopping off a principal branch, and every eye will perceive the defect. Let the Gothic pruner stretch his line upon it, and mould it with his scissars into a rude image of some Egyptian pyramid, or of some living creature, and we lament that it is no more. Adam and Eve in yew, and the serpent in ground-ivy, will please no person who can relish the beauties of nature. Such fantastical representations were indeed once common, so that, as Mr. Pope proposes, any gentleman might have had his lady's effigies in myrtle, or his own in hornbeam. This was one of the caprices of fashion which lasted for a short time, but at last gave way to a juster and more natural taste.

The most noble illustration of the qualities which constitute beauty, is the human countenance. A considerable part of the excellence which distinguishes a fine face, consists in the form and complexion. The agreeable qualities which appear in inanimate nature, shine forth here in great effulgence. It must, however, be allowed, that the principal excellence of the human face

consists in the expression of heart and understanding. But this is a topic which does not belong to the subject of this discourse.

In forming our conceptions of beauty, it is proper to throw out of consideration every thing except colour and figure. It is by these alone that the sensation is excited. There are many other circumstances besides beauty, which produce agreeable sensations, and which are, therefore, apt to introduce confusion into our apprehensions. Some have spoken of a beauty of utility, a beauty of fitness, a beauty of proportion, and other beauties of a like nature. We must understand them as speaking figuratively, if we form distinct conceptions of beauty; or we must imagine that their notions were not accurate. An object that is useful, is often more agreeable than an object that is merely beautiful. But the useful object is only agreeable from its subserviency to something else, whereas the beautiful object is agreeable upon its own account. The qualities, then, which occasion the agreeable sensation in the one case, are entirely distinct from those which occasion it in the other. Beauty and utility may, however, often subsist in the same object; and in that case, without doubt, the emotion excited by both causes must be much stronger than that excited by either of them separately. A machine may be useful, its construction may be beautiful, and the two qualities, thus united, may produce a greater effect

than either of them by itself. But the qualities are entirely distinct, though they may be thus combined. On the other hand, as the pleasure arising from beauty is increased by utility, so it is diminished by what is hurtful. An object that possesses the most pleasing form and colours, may appear detestable, when we associate its appearance with pernicious effects. Notwithstanding the beautiful variegations, and elegant form by which some families of the serpentine kind are distinguished, many people are so much prepossessed against the whole race, on account of the venomous properties of a few species, that they look upon them as really deformed.

Our sense of beauty is influenced and perverted by many other considerations besides utility. To an antiquary, an ancient gem appears more beautiful than a modern one, which is much better cut ; but though the feeling in his mind be exceedingly agreeable, in consequence of the associations formed by means of his reverence for antiquity, yet, if he be able to distinguish fairly, he will not ascribe all his pleasure to the intrinsic beauty of the object. In the same manner, custom may render a deformed object agreeable, or a beautiful object less agreeable ; but still beauty and deformity are in themselves the same, though they may not be attended to, or may be obscured by other qualities. The same remarks may be applied to envy, resentment, and every other passion

that has a tendency to render an object more or less agreeable than it really is. The beautiful object is always more agreeable when some other agreeable quality is combined with beauty; and the deformed object becomes less disagreeable when its deformity is united with agreeable qualities. But beauty ought carefully to be distinguished from every thing else that excites agreeable sensations. It is a property of colour and figure alone, and belongs to nothing else in a proper sense.

The observations which have been made concerning beauty, will lead us to distinct conceptions concerning sublimity.

Among the objects that are commonly denominated sublime, there is evidently a great diversity. Largeness of dimension is, perhaps, the only property in which all of them agree. By this property, they are sufficiently distinguished from beautiful objects, none of which are large. Among the objects accounted sublime, the great, the solemn, and the terrible, are easily distinguished from one another. Of these only the first has obtained a name expressive of its object; the other two are denominated from the effects which they produce upon the mind. The sensations excited in the mind by these three classes of sublime objects are considerably different; but all of them are distinguished by their gravity, from the gay and lively

sensation of beauty. A gentle swelling hill is beautiful; a lofty towering rock is sublime. In the summer morning many beautiful appearances attend the rising sun. The colouring of nature then refreshed, the dew sparkling along the grass, and the innumerable variegations of the sky, are cheerful and beautiful objects. But the setting of the sun, when attended with dark shapeless clouds, is sublime. The succession of colours in spring, and the cheerfulness of the green, are beautiful; but the uniform dunness of the groves in autumn, is very sublime.

Of the three classes of sublime objects, that which excites the sensation by greatness alone, has most similarity to beauty. Grand objects differ from those which are beautiful, in magnitude more than in any other particular. There is an evident distinction among great objects, taken from that direction in which they are extended. In some of them, there is a great level expanse, as in the ocean. In others the object is elevated to a great height, as is the case in a lofty mountain. In both cases, the mind is filled with admiration; and the effects are so nearly similar, that though the two cases are manifestly different, it is hardly necessary to consider them, at least in a general view, as distinct. Both of them are most commonly comprehended under the term sublimity; though grandeur is more applicable to those objects which fill a wide expanse, and sublimity is more properly ap-

plied to those which produce their effect by elevation. It is not, however, size alone, in those cases, that produces the effect upon the mind. Figure is as necessary to grandeur and sublimity, as to beauty. A straight line produced to any length, does not excite any sensations of sublimity. An irregular pile of building is neither grand nor sublime. It does not affect the mind with agreeable sensations. To speak in the language of the schools, the form is necessary for the production of the effect, as well as the matter. All the figures which are beautiful, if increased in dimensions, become grand. A small circle or globe is beautiful; but the arch of the rainbow, and the expanse of the heavens, are sublime. The object possesses unity, as well as in the case of beauty. The parts of which it is composed succeed one another in the same regular and orderly manner. The connection which subsists among them, and their subserviency to the whole, are of the same intimate nature. The difference between them consists in this circumstance, that in the small object the variations are much quicker than in the large one. The emotion excited in the one case is gay, and that excited by the other is grave. In the one case it is a modification of love, in the other it is admiration. Greatness and littleness are, indeed, only relative terms; and both of them may be applicable to the same object, according as it is compared with an object greater or less than itself. It would be a very small mountain

which we could equal only in dimensions to the greatest house. It is impossible to distinguish with accuracy, the objects of beauty and grandeur. The sensations of men may differ, according to the notions they have formed of magnitude. Every man, however, has a pretty accurate knowledge of the general size of objects that belong to a class with which he is acquainted; and he can easily tell what falls short of it, or exceeds it in any remarkable degree. He compares classes with which he is acquainted with one another. He forms analogical judgments, even concerning those classes with which he is not acquainted. There may be a variety, but there must be a correspondence in the sentiments of men, when they are excited by the same objects.

Variety of colouring is in no degree necessary to the sublime, and with some kinds of it, is entirely inconsistent. It may, however, be admitted in grand objects; for, though it excite the sensation of beauty, and not that of grandeur, love is not inconsistent with a certain degree of admiration. The effects, however, of grand objects, are never felt by themselves; unless when the colour is uniform, and consequently produces no emotion. For the same reason, grandeur is not inconsistent with ornament. But the ornaments ought to be of such a nature as to produce a joint effect with the object. Chinese ornaments are ridiculous upon a massy structure, because they produce an

effect inconsistent with that which is occasioned by the building. The size of the edifice determines the size of the column. The same reason justifies the rule in painting, that the folds of the drapery ought to be large, and the colouring not glaring, when the picture is intended to express dignity.

The Solemn is considerably different from the grand. It is produced by such an uniformity, in a succession of grand objects, as expels all vivacity from the mind, and confines its attention to one thought, or at most one class of thoughts. A certain degree of darkness is exceedingly favourable to this sort of sublimity. By throwing obscurity upon objects, it not only prevents the view of any thing that is enlivening, but it makes every object appear to the imagination greater than it really is. An avenue of old trees produces an effect of this nature. Every part of it presents to the mind an object similar to what has gone before; and from the exclusion of the rays of light, the whole is overcast with a dark gloom: From both which causes, the mind is disposed to that musing frame which makes it continually to brood over the same thought. Hence the propriety of avenues around an old Gothic building, the antique form and darkness of which produce a similar solemn effect. Hence, also, appears the impropriety of planting such avenues near a cheerful edifice of the modern taste.

The last species of the sublime is the Terrible, and it is the only species which produces a violent effect upon the mind. Some have confined sublimity altogether to those objects which occasion terror, and have even considered the power of exciting terror, as the property that constitutes sublimity. This, however, is very far from being the case. There are many objects which excite sensations in us, from their grandeur or solemnity, which are not in the smallest degree terrible. Terror, indeed, is not properly excited by the object at all; but by an apprehension of some power which it possesses, by means of which it can produce hurtful effects. In order to render inanimate objects terrible, the poet finds it necessary to personify them, and people them with active beings, whom he represents as capable of influencing human happiness.—Neither are we to look on every object that is terrible as sublime. When we consider the terrible as an object of taste, we must always consider it as furnishing us with sensations which administer more pleasure than pain. A man who is under terror from real danger, has no sensations that are not painful. He has no sentiments of sublimity from the object that terrifies him. Even when we ourselves are in no personal danger, we feel no pleasure from looking upon a mean object which is capable of producing hurtful effects. On the contrary, we look upon it with detestation and aversion. But when we ourselves are in security, and when no other person is in actual danger, we take pleasure in contemplating

a great object which seems to threaten fatal consequences. We look with great satisfaction upon the flash of the lightening, upon an immense cataract, or upon a precipice with steep hanging rocks. These objects produce an emotion of terror, from an apprehension of the effects they are fitted to produce. The activity of the human fancy forms situations which interest the passions, and give exercise to the mind.

I shall only add to these remarks, that beauty and sublimity, though originally expressive of qualities in external objects, are, in a figurative sense, ascribed to many things of a very different nature. Both of them are attributed to sounds, from the similarity of certain effects produced by them, to the effects produced by external objects. By a similar analogy, we speak of beauty in the arrangement of a sentence, or in the disposition of an oration; and of sublimity in the imagery of a poem. A treatise is beautiful which is well expressed, and which possesses unity of design; having all its thoughts well connected, and all subservient to some purpose intended by the author. It affects us with a sensation analogous to the sensation excited by beauty in external figure and colour. A poem is sublime when the images are great, and succeed one another in such a manner, as to excite sensations similar to those occasioned by sublimity in the inanimate productions of nature.

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## DISCOURSE II.

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*Concerning MR. BURKE'S THEORY of BEAUTY.*

VARIOUS opinions have been entertained concerning *Beauty*, which represent it as having no actual existence; but as being merely a sensation or a judgment in us, occasioned by prepossession, custom, or certain notions of subserviency and utility. Other opinions have also been delivered on this subject, established perhaps on a better foundation, which consider beauty as the result of certain properties or qualities inherent in the object itself, and which render it beautiful, independently of any judgments with respect to it, which custom or prepossession may have introduced; and likewise independently of any end to which it may be adapted; or of any fitness, or any other relation it may have to other things. According to these, beauty would exist though there were no spectator; and would be lovely though there were no sentient being to feel and acknowledge its loveliness.

Among the ancient philosophers, we meet with nothing upon this subject that is very explicit. However strongly they felt the sensation occasioned by beauty, they appear not to have inquired much after it as a quality in external things. Plato has written two dialogues on this subject; but in neither of them has he endeavoured to explain in what it consists, unless by mentioning in a general form of expression, measure and symmetry as belonging to it. Cicero, in the same general manner, speaks of order and correspondence of parts as qualities of beautiful objects; but he gives no illustration of them, nor does he represent them as constituting a complete enumeration. He indeed only mentions them occasionally, as an illustration of another subject.

As far as I have been able to learn, St. Augustine was the first who ever prosecuted an inquiry concerning the qualities in the object which render it beautiful, in a regular and philosophical manner; and if we make proper allowances for the rudeness of the age in which he lived, the success of his researches appears to have been wonderful. In the fourth book of his confessions\*, he speaks of two or three books which he had written in his younger years upon this subject; but some way or other he had lost them, and he seems not to have wished that ever they should be recovered.

\* Chap. 13.

Some of the general views, however, in which the matter had presented itself to him, may be traced in those parts of his writings that remain, in which beauty happens to be mentioned. In that passage of his confessions, where he takes notice of his treatise concerning beauty, he informs us distinctly, that he looked upon all beautiful objects as possessing certain common qualities. "What is it," says he, "that is beautiful, and what is beauty? What is it that allures us, and attaches us to those things which we love? Unless there were comeliness and elegance in them, we would not be attracted by them. One is, as it were, a whole; and is therefore beautiful: Another is becoming, because it is adapted with fitness to something else, as a part of a body to the whole of it, as a shoe to the foot, and the like." Here is manifestly a distinction marked out between those things which are beautiful in themselves; and those which are agreeable from their fitness, or from the relation in which they stand to other things. In other passages, he observes, that "there is nothing arranged in order that is not beautiful\*." "That all corporeal beauty consists in congruity of parts, with a certain agreeableness of colour; but wherever there is not congruity of parts, we are hurt, because something is wrong, or because it is too little, or because it is too large †." He also represents beauty as consisting "in unity;" by

\* De ver. relig. c. 77.

† De civ. Dei, xxii. 19.

which he means connection among the several parts of the object, especially with relation to the whole which they constitute. That this was the sense in which unity was understood by him, appears from his illustration of it; for he ascribes it to the correspondence and symmetry which take place among the several members of a building \*. The same views appear in the following passage † : “ In a human face, if one of the eye-brows be shaven, how very little is taken away from the body? But how much is taken away from its beauty, which does not consist in bulk, but in symmetry and measure.” In these passages, colour, order, proportion, symmetry, uniformity, and the relation of parts to a whole, are expressly mentioned as constituents of beauty. Among these are the principal properties, which many writers in modern times have regarded as essential to beauty. We have, therefore, reason to regret the loss of a treatise which contained illustrations of these topics, written by a man of such eminent abilities as St. Augustine.

The principal opinions supported by *modern writers* on this subject, are that of Dr. Hutcheson, which places it in *uniformity* and *variety*; and that of Mr. Burke, which I now propose to consider.

“ Beauty,” according to Mr. Burke, “ is a thing

\* De. ver. relig. c. 59, 60.

† De. civ. Dei, xxii. 19.

much too affecting not to depend upon some positive qualities. And since it is no creature of our reason ; since it strikes us without any reference to use, and even when no use at all can be discerned ; since the order and method of nature is generally very different from our measures and proportions ; we must conclude that beauty is, for the greater part, some quality in bodies, acting mechanically upon the human mind, by the intervention of the senses. We ought, therefore, to consider attentively, in what manner these sensible qualities are disposed in such things as by experience we find beautiful, or which excite in us the passion of love, or some correspondent affection.”

The common qualities which may be remarked in all beautiful objects, Mr. Burke thinks may be reduced to five. Such objects, in the first place, are *small* ; secondly, they are *smooth* ; thirdly, there is *gradual variation* in the parts of them ; fourthly, they are *delicate* ; and fifthly, they are of an *agreeable colour*.

I shall consider these particulars in the order in which they are treated of by the author, and offer some remarks upon the doctrine he holds with regard to each of them.

“ In the first place, if we attend to their quantity, beautiful objects are comparatively *small*. In most languages, the objects of love are spoken of under diminutive epithets ; and

diminutive terms are almost always the terms of affection and tenderness. In ordinary conversation, it is usual to add the endearing name of little to every thing we love. In the animal creation, out of our own species, it is the small we are inclined to be fond of; little birds, and some of the smaller kinds of beasts. A great beautiful thing, is a manner of expression scarcely ever used; but that of a great ugly thing, is very common."

This observation, with regard to the magnitude of beautiful objects, is evidently well founded, in the way in which it is understood by the author; but it is difficult to render it sufficiently precise. Great and small are only relative terms; and when used by themselves, without any comparison being expressed, convey no determinate notion, and therefore furnish us with no distinct conception of any quality in the object to which they are applied. It is a very small horse that is not double the size of the largest dog.

The notion of smallness may be rendered more precise, by supposing it always to involve comparison, and by applying it only to those objects that are small in their kind. But still, even with this limitation, it does not furnish a measure sufficiently accurate to regulate our determinations with respect to beauty. The swan and the peacock, though among the largest of the feathered class, are universally acknowledged to be beauti-

ful birds; as well as the crested wren and the humming bird, which are among the smallest.

The true answer to the question, why beauty is inconsistent with largeness of dimension? appears to me to be the following.—In large figures there is a degree of uniformity, which produces an effect upon the mind, very different from that which is produced by beauty. The outline is carried on through a considerable length of space without any sensible inflexions. There is not that marked variation, that quick succession of parts, which is necessary for exciting a gay and lively emotion. In objects that are of smaller dimension, the changes in the outline are more rapid and sensible. Hence the emotion to which they give occasion is more lively and cheerful. A beautiful object, of consequence, must not exceed that size which admits of such quick and sensible variations of surface. But in a great variety of objects, where the structure and form of the several parts which constitute the object is diversified, bodies, of magnitudes considerably different from one another, may all of them be possessed of beauty, in perfect consistency with this principle. The long neck of the swan is no deformity, but on the contrary is an ornament; because in the natural posture of that bird, it is moulded into an elegant curve, in which all the parts insensibly run into one another. The magnitude, then, of beautiful objects, must be limited in such a manner as to be

consistent with this general property which all of them appear to possess, and may therefore be ascertained with a sufficient degree of accuracy.

The second property, according to Mr. Burke, that is observable in all beautiful objects, is *smoothness*. "In trees and flowers, smooth leaves are beautiful; smooth slopes of earth in gardens; smooth streams in the landscape; smooth coats of birds and beasts in animal beauties; in fine women, smooth skins; and in several sorts of ornamental furniture, smooth and polished surfaces." He ascribes the most considerable part of the effect of beauty to this quality. "Take any beautiful object," says he, "and give it a broken and rugged surface, and however well formed it may be in other respects, it pleases no longer; whereas, let it want ever so many of the other constituents, if it want not this, it becomes more pleasing than almost all the others without it. Any ruggedness, any sudden projection, any sharp angle, is in the highest degree contrary to beauty."

This observation, as well as the former, is certainly well founded; and it is not without reason that the author testifies his surprise, that none of those who had handled the subject before him have made any mention of the quality of smoothness, in the enumeration of those which go to the formation of beauty.

I am inclined, however, to believe, that objects which are smooth do not afford pleasure merely from possessing this property. The surface of a stagnant ditch is as smooth as that of a limpid stream; the feathers of an owl are as smooth as those of a pigeon; and a piece of bottle glass admits of as fine a polish as an agate; but the sensations excited from these objects, are far from being equally agreeable. I apprehend that the pleasant effect produced by smooth objects, is principally owing to that glossiness which they commonly possess; in consequence of which, they reflect the rays of light that fall upon them, on the eye of the spectator. If a surface appear to be perfectly uniform throughout, notwithstanding the highest degree of smoothness, it will excite no sensation of beauty. In order to render it agreeable, it is requisite that there should appear upon it diversity of colour, or at least, different shades of the same colour connected with one another. This effect is more completely produced, when there is some degree of curvature in the polished substance, than when it is perfectly level. Whenever this is the case, it occasions a much greater variety in the colours of the rays of light that are reflected. The leaves of trees, the petals of flowers, and the feathers of birds, are all constructed so as to be convex on the one side and concave on the other; and accordingly, they produce the effect of their glossy smoothness in the most perfect manner. Jewellers, and other artists, avail themselves of this

circumstance, and generally bestow their highest polish upon surfaces formed into one of those shapes, from which the greatest variety of colour is reflected. When a lapidary cuts a precious stone, he makes it either concave or convex; and he grinds upon a diamond a considerable number of different surfaces, that its lustre may appear with as much splendor as possible.

When there is a sufficient degree of gloss upon the surface of the object, the highest degree of polish is not necessary to render it beautiful. The furs of many animals, as well as the plumage of many birds, are not exceedingly smooth; and yet, on account of the varied light which they reflect, are very beautiful. The same observation is applicable to the leaves, the petals, and the fruit of many plants, which are not entirely smooth; but are clothed with a downy substance, which, however, reflects the light in such a manner as is very agreeable.

In some particular cases, where the colour resides in the substance itself, and is not merely reflected from its surface, and where the figure of the object upon which it is spread is in itself remarkably beautiful, the highest degree of polish would produce a bad effect. By introducing a superficial lustre, it would prevent the various colours and shades from being observed in that situation in which they are really distributed upon

the object: And in a strong light, they would even prevent the figure of the object from being distinctly perceived. If a peach were not covered with a downy surface, but were polished so as to have the gloss and lustre of a grape, it would be rendered a much less beautiful object than it is. The reflection of light from it would hinder the gradations of native colours upon its surface, from being clearly perceived; and would even throw some degree of obscurity upon its general form. The smoothness of beautiful objects may, therefore, be considered as nothing more than an adjunct or concomitant of beautiful colour, and as deriving its importance, principally, if not solely, from this circumstance.

The third property which Mr. Burke ascribes to perfectly beautiful objects, is *gradual variation*. Their parts never continue long in the same right line. They vary their direction every moment, and they change under the eye by a deviation continually carrying on; but for whole beginning or end you will find it difficult to ascertain a point. This observation he illustrates by the figure of a dove. Here we see the head increasing insensibly to the middle, from whence it lessens gradually till it mixes with the neck. The neck loses itself in a large swell, which continues to the middle of the body, when the whole decreases again to the tail. The tail takes a new direction, but it soon varies its new course. It blends again with the

other parts, and the line is perpetually changing above, below, upon every side. The bird is smooth and downy; the parts are, to use that expression, melted into one another; you are presented with no sudden protuberance through the whole, and yet the whole is continually changing. He further illustrates the same observation, from the most striking instance of it that occurs in nature, an elegant human figure.

This is an opinion concerning beauty of figure, which was understood, at least in part, by Mr. Hogarth, and which he has endeavoured to illustrate in his analysis of beauty. Mr. Hogarth explains the gradual variation of outline, by supposing it, in all cases, reducible either to a curve bending in two directions, described upon a plain surface, in which the degree of curvature lies in the middle between excess and defect; or to another curve, described by a line twisted in a spiral direction round a cone, and having the degree of its curvature in the same happy state of mediocrity. The degree of curvature that is most beautiful is here left exceedingly indefinite; but, perhaps, much precision is not to be attained in matters of this sort. The principal defect of this theory is, that it is not applicable to all forms that are beautiful. Though in all of them there be insensible variation of surface, the outline is not always reducible to curves of either of these kinds. As Mr. Burke has justly observed, there is no particular line

that is always found in the most completely beautiful objects. Mr. Burke has, undoubtedly, improved this opinion very much, by not considering beauty as limited to any particular curve, but as consisting in gradual variation in general. The most beautiful productions of nature owe the greater share of their beauty in fact, to the gradual and insensible change that takes place in the position of their parts: And those who have been most successful in bestowing the embellishments of art, have been those who, in this respect, followed closely after nature. The best designers in gardening, for instance, have imitated the swells and bendings which they observed in the works of nature; and have taught even their artificial streams and walks, to wander in gentle curvatures, so as to conceal from view the hand of art, from which they derived their origin.

Though variation in the constituent parts of an object be necessary to constitute beauty, and though that variation in the most beautiful figures be conducted by means of curve lines; yet Mr. Burke seems to have pushed the observation further than was necessary, when he excludes altogether from the rank of beautiful objects, all those which have angular connections of parts. "I do not find any natural object," says he, "which is angular, and at the same time beautiful. Indeed, few natural objects are entirely angular. But I think those which approach the most nearly to it are

the ugliest."—The ramification of vegetables are in general angular, and are in general beautiful; and in some of them the insertion of the branches is more beautiful than in others. The leaves of many plants are angular, yet they are beautiful. Crystallization is a work of nature; all the crystals are angular; and that they are productions of considerable beauty, seems to be universally acknowledged. An irregular object which is angular, unquestionably is not beautiful; but a figure that is regular, that has its sides and angles all equal to one another, possesses a certain degree of beauty. A hexagon is a more beautiful figure than a trapezium. A solid figure contained by twelve regular pentagons, and having twelve equal angles, will, in the same manner, be preferred by any spectator to a cube. The cube, however, has some beauty, though in the degree of this quality which it possesses, it may be inferior to a globe. The degree of beauty which it possesses, cannot be supposed to be derived from any similitude it may be thought to have to a globe; for in all resemblances that are manifestly not perfect, the nearer they approach that with which they are to be compared, if they be still considerably removed from it, the more ugly do they seem upon comparison. The face and form in no species of animals, so much resemble those of man, as in the monkey tribe; but from this circumstance, they are generally reckoned among the most disagreeable.

These observations do not, in any degree, invalidate the general doctrine of Mr. Burke upon this subject. On the contrary, all appearances of this nature receive an easy solution upon his principles; and he had no occasion to exclude them on account of any inconsistency they would have introduced. We must therefore suppose, that they had not occurred to him. Gradual variation is necessary in beautiful objects, to produce a lively sensation; and this variation is certainly most perfect, when it is continued every moment without interruption. Irregular breaks are inconsistent with it, and every angular transition that has not a relation to something, and for which no manifest reason appears. But if the figure be a whole, with correspondent parts, the sides and angles are similar to one another; and the transitions from one straight line to another, though not so insensible as in the sweep of an uniform curve, succeed each other according to a distinct and evident rule, and are easily comprehended by the mind. We can follow such variations in consequence of the connection established among all the several parts of the whole, without any conception of interruption; and nearly with as little exertion, and with as much rapidity, as even the variations of a curve line. The agreeable quality, therefore, in the one class of these objects, is of the same nature with that which recommends the other.

The fourth property which Mr. Burke finds in beautiful objects, is *delicacy*; by which he understands that quality which is opposed to robustness and strength. "An appearance of delicacy," he says, "and even of fragility, is almost essential to beauty." He accordingly produces various instances of delicate objects, which, without controversy, are agreeable.—I apprehend, however, that the beauty which is really in all of them, does not arise from their delicacy, but from other qualities connected with delicacy: And that some of them are, besides, recommended to us by other considerations, which frequently produce upon us a much more powerful effect than even beauty itself. "It is not the oak," he observes, "the ash, or the elm, or any of the robust trees of the forest, which we consider as beautiful; they are awful and majestic; they inspire a sort of reverence. It is the delicate myrtle, it is the orange, it is the jessamine, it is the vine, which we look on as vegetable beauties." The effect in these cases, is certainly just what it is represented to be. But the oak, the ash, and the elm, are not considered by us as grand objects, merely because they have strength to support themselves, and even to withstand the tempest: Nor are the myrtle, the jessamine, and the vine, considered as beautiful, merely because they would fall to the ground unless they were born up by something which is stronger than themselves. In matters of this nature, there are many other circumstances which ought to be taken

into consideration. "Beauty," it is observed by the author himself, "is inconsistent with great magnitude; and it cannot, in fact, subsist in any object of such a size as prevents the quick variation of the parts of which they are composed. It cannot, therefore, belong to the lofty trees of the forest; all of which, if they be well formed, continue in the same direction for a long space, without any deviation. On the other hand, it is a quality that perfectly corresponds with the small dimensions, the tapering form, and the elegantly twisted direction of creeping and climbing shrubs." Delicacy, however, does not, in these cases, constitute beauty; but is requisite for producing that form in those plants that have been mentioned, in which beauty resides: For if they had been robust, their figure would have been different from what it is. Besides, there are other particulars in the shrubs above mentioned, which contribute remarkably to render them beautiful; such as the ever-green leaves of the myrtle; the trumpet-shaped flowers of the jessamine, with its elegant foliage; and the whole array of the vine.

The next instance of delicacy, is in flowers. "It is the flowery species," says this eminent author, "so remarkable for its weakness and momentary duration, that gives us the liveliest idea of beauty and elegance." It is, however, in this illustration alone, that he lays aside the accurate notion of beauty, which he had formed as

applicable only to figure and colour. In this instance, he takes into consideration things of a very different nature. He represents the pleasure we receive from observing beautiful flowers, as depending upon the reflections we form concerning their weakness, and short duration.—The short existence and transient beauty of flowers, have struck men in all ages. The life of man, and the vanity of his pursuits, have been fitly compared to a blossom which blows to-day, and to-morrow decays and withers. But is this the reflection by which the beauty of flowers is recommended to us? Does any one think a rose or a carnation beautiful, because it is of short duration? This may be a circumstance which he regrets: But he regards something in the flower itself which he thinks valuable; and it is upon the persuasion that this quality which he regards is soon to be no more, that his regret is founded. Flowers distinguished for beauty, though they were to be as lasting as the stars in the firmament, would preserve, like them, their claim to distinction.—“Among animals,” continues this agreeable theorist, “the grey-hound is more beautiful than the mastiff; and the delicacy of a gennet, a barb, or an Arabian horse, is much more amiable than the strength or stability of some horses of war or carriage.” In this instance, the signification of the term delicacy seems to be altered. It was formerly opposed to strength. But what is the best indication of strength in proportion to

size, or quantity of matter? It is undoubtedly exertion. Now the grey-hound or race-horse are certainly capable of more exertion than the mastiff or beast of burden. They have, therefore, more strength in proportion to their magnitude. But, independent of this consideration, we may remark still further, that it is the figure solely or chiefly, which in these instances, constitutes the difference. The gradual variation, formerly mentioned, is more observable in the shape of the one class of objects, than in the other. Nor, in general, is ever the conception of strength taken into the consideration of an ordinary observer.

The last instance produced by Mr. Burke, in order to confirm his opinion, that delicacy is one of the constituents of beauty, is derived from the human species. "The beauty of women," he says, "is considerably owing to their weakness and delicacy; and is even enhanced by their timidity, a quality of mind analogous to it." In this case too, certain circumstances are mentioned, which are, in their own nature, unconnected with beauty. Weakness and timidity, are qualities by which another person may be recommended to our protection. One in a defenceless state, even though exposed to no actual danger, is in some measure an object of compassion, and consequently of attachment. Weakness and timidity are not in themselves agreeable qualities. In a soldier we would consider them with contempt, if not

with indignation. But we expect no active courage, and masculine enterprise, in a woman. Feebleness and timidity are not inconsistent with those qualifications which we expect in her: Of consequence, they are so far from exciting aversion, that they call forth those sentiments by which we are attached to the defenceless. Besides all this, they are to be considered as qualities of mind; and are, in strict propriety of language, altogether unconnected with beauty. If mental qualifications were to be brought into view upon this subject, it would be an easy matter to produce several that would entirely eclipse any excellence which depends upon colour and figure. Delicacy of form seems connected with human beauty, no farther than as it is the shape that is most beautiful, from other considerations. The broad square shoulders, the large bones, the well-defined muscles, and athletic structure, of a very strong man, are not beautiful. The several parts are not melted down, and blended insensibly with one another, but are joined by abrupt connections. There is not that *gradual variation* which beauty requires. Mr. Burke himself seems to be sensible, that delicacy alone will not render an object beautiful: For in the following passage, he expressly excludes the case in which it must operate with greatest force. "I would not be understood to say, that weakness betraying bad health, has any share in beauty; but the ill effect of this is not because it is weakness, but because the ill state

of health which produces such weakness, alters the other conditions of beauty; the parts, in such a case, collapse; the bright colour, the *lumen purpureum juventæ* is gone; and the fine variation is lost in wrinkles, sudden breaks, and right-lines."—Here the matter is put upon the proper footing: Delicacy is of no consequence in beauty, unless it be united with the other conditions; and independently of any regard to it, the other conditions constitute beauty.

The last circumstance which Mr. Burke mentions as an ingredient in beauty, is *colour*. With respect to the beauty of colour, he makes three observations.—First, "the colours of beautiful bodies must be clear, and fair, and bright."—Secondly, "they must not be of the strongest kind. Those," he observes, "which seem most appropriated to beauty, are the milder of every sort; light greens, soft blues, weak whites, pink reds, and violets."—Thirdly, "if the colours be strong and vivid, they are always diversified, and the object is never of one strong colour. There are almost always such a number of them, as in variegated flowers, that the strength and glare of each is considerably abated." He adds an observation of more consequence than any of the three, which he has expressly enumerated; and which, indeed, seems to render them almost necessary. "The colours of a beautiful object," he says, "are mixed in such a manner, and in such gra-

dations, that it is impossible to fix the bounds. Hence the dubious colour in the necks and tails of peacocks, and about the head of drakes, is agreeable."—It is, in fact, the gradual variation, the imperceptible shading of colours into one another, as I formerly observed, that constitutes their beauty. No uniform colour whatever, is really beautiful. If a body, uniformly coloured, appear beautiful, it is in consequence of the manner in which the surface of it is placed, with respect to the eye; so that the rays reflected from it are differently coloured; and hence the colour, whatever it may be in itself, is varied to the sight of the beholder. The instances of beautiful colours, enumerated by Mr. Burke, seem to have been taken from silks, on which the glossy surface reflects the rays in the greatest diversity; but his observations are not equally applicable to surfaces that are not so glossy.

Among the particulars enumerated by this elegant and philosophical critic, as constituting beauty, *gradual variation* and *colour* seem to be all that are essential: And as beauty of shape and colour may be accounted for upon the same principles, gradual variation alone seems sufficient, if it be supposed that there is a connection among the several parts that undergo the variation. But unless this connection be pre-supposed, gradual variation alone does not constitute beauty. A number of objects may be disposed at equal distances,

increasing in size gradually; but having no connection, they have no beauty. The qualities of smallness, smoothness, and delicacy, are not essential to beauty, or are only subservient to the essential qualities.

It must, however, be acknowledged, if we except Dr. Hutcheson, that Mr. Burke has done more to explain the nature of beauty distinctly, than any of his predecessors who have pursued such investigations.

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## DISCOURSE III.

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*Concerning DR. HUTCHESON'S THEORY of BEAUTY.*

**I** Observed in a preceding discourse, that various opinions have been entertained concerning the nature of beauty, according to which, it has no actual external existence; but is merely a sensation or judgment in us, occasioned by opinion, prejudice, custom, or certain notions of subserviency and utility. There have also been various opinions concerning beauty, according to which, it is the result of certain properties or qualities inherent in the object itself, and which render it beautiful, independently of any judgment concerning it, which custom may have introduced; and also independently of any end to which it may be adapted, or of any fitness, or any other relation that may subsist between it and other things.

I also suggested some observations on one of the most celebrated, and most rational of these opinions; namely, that of Mr. Burke, who regards beauty, “as a thing much too affecting not to depend upon some positive quality;” and who concludes, “that it is some quality in bodies, acting mechanically upon the human mind, by the intervention of the senses.” He accordingly proposes to consider attentively, in what manner sensible qualities are disposed in such things, as by experience, we find beautiful, or which create in us the passion of love, or some correspondent affection.

The common qualities which may be remarked in all beautiful objects, Mr. Burke thinks, may be reduced to five. Such objects, in the first place, are small; secondly, they are smooth; thirdly, there is gradual variation in the parts of them; fourthly, they are delicate; fifthly, they are of an agreeable colour.

Without recapitulating the observations which were made upon each of these particulars; I shall make some remarks upon another of the most celebrated opinions, according to which, beauty consists in certain qualities inherent in the object itself, independently of any sensation or judgment in the mind of the spectator; namely, that of Dr. Hutcheson. This eminent philosopher had formed much juster and more accurate conceptions

concerning the nature of beauty, than any that had gone before him. These he has fully explained in the first part of his "Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue."

I am aware, at the same time, that Dr. Hutcheson has expressed himself in such a way, that one might be led to suspect that he did not consider beauty as belonging to the object itself; but as being merely a sensation in the mind. "Beauty, in corporeal forms," he says, "is either original or comparative; or, if any like the terms better, absolute or relative. By comparative or relative beauty, he means only that which we perceive in objects commonly considered as imitations or resemblances of something else." Of this comparative or relative beauty, as it is called, there is no occasion to take any further notice; because, though imitation and resemblance are occasions of agreeable sensations in us, they are so exceedingly different from beauty, that they hardly seem to have any connection with it; and it is only concerning original or absolute beauty, that the author entertained peculiar notions. Concerning this latter kind of beauty, Dr. Hutcheson requires it to be observed, "that by absolute or original beauty, is not understood any quality supposed to be in the object, which should of itself be beautiful, without relation to any mind which perceives it; for beauty, like other names of sensible ideas, properly denotes the perception

of some mind ; so cold, hot, sweet, bitter, denote the sensations in our minds, to which, perhaps, there is no resemblance in the objects which excite these ideas in us, however we generally imagine otherwise. The ideas of beauty and harmony being excited upon our perception of some primary quality, and having relation to figure and time, may indeed have a nearer resemblance to objects, than those sensations which seem not so much any pictures of objects, as modifications of the perceiving mind ; and yet were there no mind with a sense of beauty to contemplate objects, I see not how they could be called beautiful.”

I consider this passage in no other light, than as the author's protestation of his general belief in Mr. Locke's doctrine concerning secondary qualities, that they do not exist in objects, and are merely sensations in our minds. If he had really believed that there is no beauty in the object itself, independently of the spectator, his account of it ought to have consisted in an analysis, or illustration of the sensation excited in the mind ; and not in a search after the qualities in external things, by means of which it is regularly excited. Upon these principles, he might as reasonably have inquired into the qualities of heat and cold, sweetness and bitterness in the object, which he believed did not exist in it, as into the qualities which excite the sensation of beauty. But he certainly did not consider the two cases as parallel ;

for he immediately proceeds to ascertain the qualities in objects which constitute their beauty, and recommend them to the spectator; and those qualities which he has actually fixed upon are of such a nature, that they must belong to the object equally, whether it be perceived or not; and would have belonged to it inherently, though it had never been perceived. On this account, I look upon Dr. Hutcheson's opinion upon this subject as one of those, according to which beauty belongs to the object, and does not depend upon any sensation or judgment in us; notwithstanding his declaration of his adherence to the philosophical doctrines which were at that period universally embraced.

According to Dr. Hutcheson, "the figures which excite in us the ideas of beauty, seem to be those in which there is uniformity amidst variety. What we call beautiful in objects, to speak in the mathematical stile, seems to be in a compound ratio of uniformity and variety: So that where the uniformity of bodies is equal, the beauty is as the variety; and where the variety is equal, the beauty is as the uniformity. This," he adds, with his usual modesty, "may seem probable, and hold pretty generally."

In illustration of this doctrine, he makes the following observations.—"First, the variety increases the beauty in equal uniformity. The beauty of an equilateral triangle is less than that

of the square ; which is less than that of a pentagon ; and this again is surpassed by the hexagon. When, indeed, the number of sides is much increased, the proportion of them to the radius, or diameter of the figure, or of the circle, to which regular polygons have an obvious relation, is so much lost to our observation, that the beauty does not always increase with the number of sides ; and the want of parallelism in the sides of heptagons, and other figures of odd numbers, may also diminish their beauty. So in solids, the icosahedron surpasses the dodecahedron, which is still more beautiful than the cube ; and this again surpasses the regular pyramid. The obvious ground of this is, greater variety with equal uniformity."

" The greater uniformity increases the beauty, amidst equal variety, in these instances : An equilateral triangle, or an even isosceles, surpasses the scalenum. A square surpasses the rhombus or lozenge ; and this again, the rhomboides, which is still more beautiful than the trapezium, or any figure with irregular curve sides. So the regular solids surpass all other solids of equal number of plain surfaces : And the same is observable, not only in the five perfectly regular solids, but in all those which have any considerable uniformity, as cylinders, prisms, pyramids, obelisks ; which please every eye more than any rude figures, where there is no unity or resemblance among the parts."

“Instances of compound ratio we have in comparing circles or spheres, with ellipses or spheroids, not very eccentric; and in comparing the compound solids, the exoctahedron, and eicosidodecahedron, with the perfectly regular ones of which they are compounded: And we shall find, that the want of the most perfect uniformity observable in the latter, is compensated by the greater variety in the former,” (he should have said, by its greater variety,) “so that the beauty is nearly equal.”

“The same foundation,” he observes, “we have for our sense of beauty in the works of nature. In every part of the world which we call beautiful, there is a surprising uniformity amidst an almost infinite variety.” He proceeds to illustrate this doctrine, from the position of the heavenly bodies in the circumference of a great sphere; from their globular figure; from their revolutions in elliptical orbits; from the regularity of their motions, and the returns of their seasons. He also illustrates it from the alternations of light and shade, mountains and valleys upon the surface of this earth; and also from the uniformity in the structure of all plants and animals, and from the diversity of their different species.

This account of beauty is not very clear or precise. The exact meaning in which the term uniformity is to be understood, is not distinctly

ascertained. It is, indeed, observed by the ingenious author, that rude figures do not please, because there is no unity or resemblance among the parts. If by unity and resemblance among the parts, were to be understood a close connection among them, this property, united with variety, would, I think, amount nearly to the same thing, with a quick succession of the parts well connected; which, upon a former occasion, I endeavoured to illustrate as the common property of all beautiful objects. But neither Dr. Hutcheson himself, nor any of his followers, so far as I know, have expressed themselves in such a manner, as to give any ground for believing that this was his meaning.

Dr. Hutcheson, from his applications of the term uniformity, appears to have considered those objects as uniform, the parts of which resemble one another. Hence, he ascribes uniformity to the tribes of animals and of vegetables, from their agreement in certain common qualities; in consequence of which, they are arranged in the same general class. And he ascribes variety to the species comprehended under the class, from the diversities by which they are distinguished. In this application, uniformity signifies resemblance, or sameness of properties.

But in many cases where there are strong resemblances, and also considerable diversities, there is

None of that quality which Dr. Hutcheson denominates absolute or original beauty. Lizards, and frogs, and toads, resemble each other in many particulars, and also differ in several. But many of them are void of absolute beauty. Their resemblances and diversities may give pleasure to a contemplative natural historian; but it is a pleasure connected with investigation, and not with the imagination. It is only comparative beauty that is observed in such cases, which is not, in reality, beauty at all.

In the manner, therefore, in which the subject should be limited, I would consider uniformity only in that light in which it can be applied, to what Dr. Hutcheson calls absolute or original beauty. Here it is manifest, that in every case where all the parts have a perfect resemblance to each other, no sensation of beauty is excited. A straight line continued for any length, has no beauty. It exhibits nothing that can call forth in the mind, any sensation which is gay and lively. Uniformity, therefore, if it mean resemblance, cannot by itself constitute beauty. This appeared very evident to Dr. Hutcheson; and on this account, he associated uniformity with variety. When the two properties are thus combined, the meaning of the proposition, that beauty consists in uniformity amidst variety, must either be; that in beautiful objects there must be a resemblance among the parts, but this resemblance must not be perfect: Or it must be, that some of the parts must resemble each other, but

not the whole of them. Dr. Hutcheson and his followers seem sometimes to understand the proposition in the one of these senses, and sometimes in the other. When they say that a circle is a beautiful figure, they mean that all its parts resemble one another, because every point in the circumference is equally distant from the centre; but as it is a visible figure, all the parts of it do not seem to the eye which perceives them, perfectly to resemble one another. If the eye were in the centre of the circle, the circumference would appear to be a straight line, and all its parts would exactly resemble each other; and therefore, it would have no beauty. But it is seen from a point without it, from which all its parts appear in positions different from one another. Though they resemble each other in their position with relation to the centre, they vary in their position with regard to the eye. The resemblance, therefore, is not perfect, but admits of variety, and hence is beautiful.

It is in this sense that the definition must be understood, when applied to regular mathematical figures, and also when applied to beautiful colours. But in the same sense, it cannot be applied to certain other figures which have a considerable degree of beauty; to those, for instance, which please on account of their symmetry. By symmetry is understood that resemblance which takes place among the correspondent parts of regular bodies. If one eye-brow be not perfectly

like the other, there is a want of symmetry. But in all cases in which beauty depends upon symmetry, it is requisite that the whole of the parts should not resemble one another. Only those which correspond to each other must resemble each other; but there must be other parts which differ from them. If there be symmetry in the arches of the eye-brows, something must intervene that is different from these arches. If there be symmetry in the front of a house, broken into three divisions, it is to be understood that the middle part is different from the other two, and that only those parts which are to the right and the left of the middle part resemble each other; but the resemblance between the corresponding parts must here be perfect. In this case, therefore, if we say that beauty consists in uniformity amidst variety, we do not mean that there is a resemblance which is not perfect among all the parts; but we take the words in their other signification, and mean that there is a perfect resemblance among some of the parts, but not among the whole of them.

According to this explanation of Dr. Hutcheson's system then, beauty consists either in a resemblance that is not perfect, among the several parts of an object; or in a perfect resemblance among some of the parts, while there are other parts of the same object that are different from these. Whenever, then, the parts of an object are arranged in either of these ways, a sensation of

beauty should be excited.—Suppose chips of stone broken from a rock to be thrown together in a heap; or pieces of coarse gravel to be united, as they often are, by a cement of clay or calcareous matter; all the various parts of the heap, or of the rude mass, resemble each other in con- texture, colour, and the greater number of their properties: But there is abundance of variety in their figure and size. They have, therefore, the constituent qualities of beauty. The heap, or the mass, however, that is made up of these ingredients, has no beauty at all. The reason is obvious. None of the figures are beautiful in themselves. If, therefore, there were any beauty in the aggregate, it must arise from the connection which subsists among the several parts. In the cases supposed, there is no bond of connection but contiguity, which is not close enough to constitute beauty. Even though there were a close connection, and though a sensation of beauty were occasioned by it, still it could not be accounted for on the principles of this system, which requires only uniformity and variety in the objects themselves, without requiring connection of any sort among them.

Suppose again, a variety of irregular bodies, some of them having a perfect resemblance to one another, and some of them having no such resemblance, to be presented to the eye, they would not necessarily excite a sensation of beauty. A

particular disposition and arrangement of them would be further requisite ; and after all, the effect would not in every case be produced.

These properties alone then, do not constitute the whole of beauty, since they may exist without rendering the object to which they belong beautiful. No aggregate whatever of objects that are ugly, whatever uniformity and variety may be introduced among them, will ever appear beautiful. In order to account for beauty upon this system, it is necessary to suppose, that the objects among which uniformity and variety occur, be not in themselves ugly ; which is a condition not assumed, and which could not well be assumed, because it would be accounting for the beauty of an object, by pre-supposing that it had nothing in its construction inconsistent with beauty.— It must be acknowledged, that there is uniformity united with variety in many of those forms that are denominated beautiful ; but every object does not appear to be beautiful, in which there is uniformity mixed with variety.

It may be further observed, that this theory seems to be defective in another respect. It introduces two principles of a very different nature, to account for beauty. As it is not pretended that either of them, by itself, will render an object beautiful, the result must depend upon the union or combination of them. It cannot be imagined,

that every combination of them should be equally well fitted for producing the effect. It ought therefore to be determined, whether an object is most beautiful when uniformity prevails in the combination, or when variety has the ascendant; and what measure of each may, with propriety, be introduced. Unless something of this sort be done, the whole matter is left in a very vague and unsettled state. There is no object in nature, whose parts do not bear some resemblance to each other, and in which, therefore, some uniformity may not be observed; and there are few in which there may not be pointed out some degree of variety. It is not, therefore, any degree whatever of these qualities that constitutes beauty; but some particular combinations. These combinations ought, therefore, to be marked out; not, indeed, with mathematical accuracy, which in matters of this sort cannot be attained, and ought not to be demanded; but as comprehended between certain limits that can be tolerably ascertained. This does not seem to be done in a satisfactory manner, by saying that beauty consists in a compound ratio of the two qualities, and the perfection of the one compensates for the deficiency of the other.

Some of these objections to Dr. Hutcheson's doctrine had occurred to Lord Kaims; and he has stated them with his usual acuteness, in the chapter of the Elements of Criticism, concerning uniformity

and variety. This definition, to wit, "beauty consists in uniformity amidst variety," he observes, however applicable to one or other species, is far from being just, with respect to beauty in general.—Numberless are the beautiful objects of sight, which have little or no variety in them. A globe, the most uniform of all figures, is also the most beautiful; and a square, though more beautiful than a trapezium, hath less variety in its constituent parts. The foregoing definition, which at best is but obscurely expressed, is only applicable to a number of objects in a group, or in succession; among which, indeed, a due mixture of uniformity and variety is always agreeable, provided the particular objects, separately considered, be in any degree beautiful; for uniformity amid variety, among ugly objects, affords no pleasure. This circumstance is totally omitted in the definition; and, indeed, to have mentioned it, would at the very first glance, have shewn the definition to be imperfect; for, to define beauty as arising from beautiful objects, blended together in a due proportion of uniformity and variety, would be too gross to pass current, as nothing can be more inaccurate than to employ in a definition, the very term which is to be explained. At the same time, Lord Kaims does not hesitate to adopt this doctrine in part, especially in illustrating the beauty of nature.

Dr. Hutcheson himself seems to have been

aware of some difficulties attending the opinion which he had embraced; and accordingly mentions it with diffidence, as extending to a great part of beautiful objects; though he does not positively hold it out as including the whole of them. "This" he says, "may seem probable, and hold pretty generally." He appears in fact, to have formed his notions at first from the beauty of some mathematical figures; and he afterwards found it no easy matter to accommodate them to the beauty which appears in the structure of vegetables and animals. He observes with great truth, that there is much uniformity among plants, in the manner of their growth and propagation; that there is a near resemblance among vegetables of the same species, though their numbers surpass imagination. In the infinite number of leaves, fruit, seeds, and flowers, of any one species, there is a great uniformity in the structure and situation of the smallest fibres. All this is true; and it shews undeniably, that there is uniformity as well as variety, in the several species of vegetables. There is observable among them much regularity and order, and other indications of design and wise intention. But this is foreign to the subject; for it is in individuals, and not in whole classes of objects, that beauty is perceived. How does it follow that an individual is a beautiful object, from the similarity which takes place among the various individual objects that constitute the species? It is not the order and the regularity ob-

servable in the whole species, but the beauty perceived in the individual, which is to be accounted for. The uniformity and variety should be found in the parts of the individual, and not among the innumerable individuals contained under the species; for beauty is not properly a quality of abstract conceptions, but of visible things. Though there is as much similarity and diversity among amphibious animals, as among birds; it does not follow that a toad is as beautiful a creature as a pigeon. Some theory like that of father Buffier, which founds our notions of beauty in what is most common, and at the same time most rare in the species, would seem here to be necessary, in order to supply the deficiency. That might be accounted most beautiful to which we are most accustomed in any particular species. But Dr. Hutcheson was too good a philosopher to patch up a system with any such hypotheses.

With regard to animals, Dr. Hutcheson makes observations similar to those he had made respecting plants, from the unity of mechanism that appears in their several classes, and the great diversities which are at the same time to be found among them. His observations upon this subject, are liable to the same objections that have been made to those concerning plants, from the difficulty of accounting for the beauty of individuals. In animals, however, it must be acknowledged, that the doctrine which accounts for beau-

ty, from uniformity joined to variety, has fewer difficulties to encounter than in plants; because in the same animal there are parts perfectly resembling each other, and corresponding to each other, with a degree of regularity not to be met with in vegetables. There is symmetry in the structure of the whole form. "In each individual," says he "how universal is that beauty which arises from the exact resemblance of all the external double members to each other; which seems the universal intention of nature, when no accident prevents it." We see that the want of this resemblance never fails to pass for an imperfection and want of beauty, though no other inconvenience ensues, as when the eyes are not exactly alike, or one leg or arm is a little shorter or smaller than its fellow. Symmetry, in cases of this nature, falls in exactly with the general notion which the author of the *Inquiry* endeavours to support; but the other circumstance of general resemblance in the whole species, and of particular diversity in the several beings which constitute the whole, is of no value in explaining the beauty which we meet with in individuals.

Dr. Hutcheson, sensible that some other quality besides uniformity and variety, is necessary to account for beauty, has introduced proportion, by way of supplement to his observations upon the beauty of animals; without having formerly announced it as one of the constituents of beauty,

and without representing it, after it is introduced as an universal ingredient. "There is a beauty in animals," he says, "arising from the proportion of the various parts to each other, which still pleases the sense of spectators, though they cannot calculate it with the accuracy of a statuary." I mention this addition to the system, merely as marking the author's own conviction that his system was incomplete. The manner in which proportion pleases, cannot be accounted for from uniformity and variety. Proportion is discerned by the understanding, and not by the imagination. Beautiful objects exist in all proportions, and there are many objects proportioned to one another that have no beauty. It has been clearly shewn by Mr. Burke, that proportion is not at all an object of taste; and I have nothing to add to his masterly remarks upon this subject.

Dr. Hutcheson, with great judgment, distinguishes from beauty certain agreeable appearances which are frequently confounded with it. "The most powerful beauty," he observes, "in airs, gestures, motions, arises from some imagined indication of morally good dispositions of mind." "There is also a beauty in figure," he observes, "as it is a natural indication of strength." These he very properly passes over, as something distinct from beauty in its strict signification. There is nothing properly beautiful in external things that has not intrinsic value in itself, independently of

all relation to other things. Those things that please because they are the indications or expressions of other things that are good, but different from themselves, produce the delight they occasion in a way that is not so immediate as that which is produced by beauty.

The very ingenious author of this system might have saved himself some trouble, as well as secured himself from a number of objections that have been started against his doctrine, if he had carried his distinctions a little farther than he has done; if he had observed that it is only to visible figure and to colour that beauty is properly ascribed; and that when we apply it to general theorems and to virtue, it is only in a figurative sense. He has not, however, carried his distinctions so far; for he endeavours to account for beauty, in general theorems and in virtue, upon the same principles with external beauty. But it is needless to follow him into those cases, in which the application of his principles, from the nature of the thing, can only be analogical, and where the analogy itself is very remote.

It ought to be remembered, to the honour of Dr. Hutcheson, that he has treated of this subject in a much more philosophical manner than any that had gone before him; and many who have succeeded him, have done little more than copy him. He had no model but Mr. Addison's

papers on the Pleasures of Imagination, which are beautiful and elegant essays, and contain many excellent reflections, and direct the attention to many instances of agreeable objects; and which, when considered as a first effort to arrange the objects of taste, are truly wonderful; but which aim at no metaphysical research. Dr. Hutcheson was the first who explained, with any degree of distinctness, those faculties of the human mind that are connected with accurate discernment and judgment in the fine arts.

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## DISCOURSE IV.

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*Remarks upon the SENSATIONS occasioned by GRAND  
and by TERRIBLE OBJECTS.*

THE character of the sensations which are excited by objects that are grand, is essentially different from the character of the sensations which are excited by objects that are beautiful. The sensation which is occasioned by beauty is gay and cheerful; that which is occasioned by grand objects, is solemn and elevating. A beautiful object attracts us towards it, and inspires us with love: A grand object likewise attracts us; but we are involuntarily restrained from approaching very near it, and are filled with admiration. Largeness of dimension, though essential to grandeur, does not constitute it, nor does it excite by itself any emotion of sublimity. A straight line produced to any given length, will never occasion in the mind of the spectator any agreeable sensa-

tion. An irregular mass of building may have great dimensions without any grandeur. An ill-built village may occupy the surface of the terraqueous globe, with its straggling houses, for the extent of a mile; and yet from no point of view be fitted to excite any sentiment of grandeur. A tree, with few branches and thin foliage, may spring up to the height of a ship's mast; or a white cloud may pass over our head, at a great distance from the surface of the earth; and yet the mind of the spectator may be altogether unaffected by them. In such cases there are large dimensions; but it cannot be said with any propriety, that there is any thing grand or sublime. In order to excite agreeable sensations, it is not enough that great extent be exhibited to the eye. It is further requisite, that there should be certain qualities which are proper objects of internal perception.

The sentiments of Mr. Addison upon this subject are well founded. "By greatness," says he, "I do not only mean the bulk of any single object, but the largeness of a whole view, considered as one entire piece. Such are the prospects of an open champaign country, a vast uncultivated desert; of huge heaps of mountains, high rocks and precipices; of a wide expanse of water, where we are not struck with the novelty or beauty of the sight, but with that rude kind of magnificence which appears in many of the stupendous works of nature. Our imagination loves to be filled with an

object, or to grasp at any thing that is too big for its capacity. We are flung into a pleasing astonishment at such unbounded views, and feel a delightful stillness and amazement in the soul at the apprehension of them. The mind of man naturally hates every thing that looks like a restraint upon it ; and is apt to fancy itself under a sort of confinement, when the sight is pent up in a narrow compass, and shortened on every side by the neighbourhood of walls or mountains. On the contrary, a spacious horizon is an image of liberty, where the eye has room to range abroad, to expatiate at large on the immensity of its views, and to lose itself amidst the variety of objects that offer themselves to its observation. Such wide and undetermined prospects are as pleasing to the fancy, as the speculations of eternity or infinitude are to the understanding. But if there be a beauty or uncommonness joined with this grandeur, as in a troubled ocean, a heaven adorned with stars and meteors ; or a spacious landscape, cut out into rivers, woods, rocks, and meadows ; the pleasure still grows upon us, as it arises from more than a single principle.”

There have been periods, however, during which men have acted as if they had believed that magnitude alone constitutes grandeur. Several of the immense structures that were erected in early ages by the nations of the east, appear to have exhibited very little in reality, that could im-

fills the mind with sentiments of sublimity. The pyramids of Egypt were buildings of prodigious size; and probably the tower of Babel was a work of dimensions, even superior to them. But the pyramids, according to the accounts that are given of them, have no grandeur that is proportionable to the labour they have cost. They seem to be imitations of mountains, and we are astonished when we reflect that they were erected by human power; but whenever we compare them to mountains, their grandeur is lost, and they become merely diminutive objects. The temple of Jupiter Belus at Babylon, rose, it is said, a mile in perpendicular height; but we have no reason to believe that its grandeur was at all proportioned to its size. The wall of China forms the barrier of a very extensive empire, and is itself a stupendous piece of workmanship; yet we never heard that it excited any sensations of sublimity in the minds of travellers. It is a mound of vast extent; but every man has seen much greater mounds raised by the hand of nature, than the portion of this huge mass that can at any time fall under his eye. The expectation of producing grandeur by bulk alone, is now known to be idle, and accordingly no artist entertains it. It is justly ridiculed in the well known epitaph upon a celebrated architect, though perhaps with more severity in the application of it than there was reason for:

Lie heavy on him, earth ; for he  
Laid many a heavy load on thee.

Though magnitude alone, however, does not constitute grandeur, it is essential to it. A small object never excites the elevating and solemn sentiments of sublimity ; nor does it ever occasion any grave sensation, unless when the imagination is impressed by something concomitant, but altogether different from the object itself.

An object, in order to excite sublime sentiments, must not only have large dimensions, but its parts must be disposed of with some degree of order. Whenever there is confusion and intricacy, the effect produced upon the mind is not agreeable. The regularity, however, which is requisite, is not that which is measured by the level, the plummet, the line, and the compass ; it is only that which arises from the mutual relations and subserviency of the several parts. A grand object, as well as a beautiful object, must be considered as a whole, consisting of various parts connected with one another, and all of them capable of being readily viewed in the relation in which they stand to the whole. These parts must be disposed in order, so that their mutual dependencies may be perceived. In all cases where such connection and subserviency cannot be discerned, the several parts can only be regarded separately, as if they were distinct and detached objects ; and the aggregate or

asssemblage that is made up of the disjointed materials, is not fitted to occasion any agreeable sensation.

As the relation of the parts to the whole and to one another, must be perceived before any agreeable effect can be produced, it is necessary that the connection which subsists among them should be obvious; and as the emotion to be excited is of a grave character, it is necessary that they should not be numerous, and should succeed each other slowly. A great number of parts, well connected with one another, in a manner that admits of quick, though easy and gradual changes, would excite the gay and cheerful sensation occasioned by beauty: And if these were not intimately connected with one another, the variety of parts could not be easily comprehended; the attention would be distracted; and in whatever manner the understanding might be occupied, the imagination could be supplied with no agreeable employment.

Upon this last observation is founded, what has been denominated greatness of manner in the fine arts. A piece of architecture which is not small, where there is this greatness of manner, fills the mind with nobler and more elevated sensations, than a building of much larger dimensions, in which it is wanting. The whole fabric, and all its parts, bear a suitable proportion to each other; and the mind that contemplates it is struck with

an air of simplicity and majesty. When a painter wants to represent in his picture a dignified personage, he makes the folds of the drapery large, that the objects which strike the eye may be as few as possible; and of consequence, that the mind may feel no embarrassment in conceiving the whole figure at the first glance. For the same reason, it is a rule adhered to by the best painters, that the lights and shades must not be dispersed in small and detached portions through the picture, but that they should fall in large masses. Without paying regard to this rule, it would be impossible to introduce grandeur into the imitative arts. The several parts of the picture, if this rule were not observed, could not produce a simultaneous impression; and the detached fragments, being viewed in succession, would have no force nor effect. It is a just observation of Mr. Addison's, "that perhaps a man would have been more astonished with the majestic air that appeared in one of Lyfippus's statues of Alexander, though no bigger than the life, than he might have been with Mount Athos, had it been cut into the figure of the hero, according to the proposal of Phidias, with a river in one hand, and a city in the other." — "Great objects," as it is observed by President Montesquieu, "are made up of parts that are large. Big men have big arms, large trees have large branches, and great mountains are made up of mountains piled upon one another. This is the manner of nature. The Grecian architecture,

which admits of few divisions, but makes each of them large, imitates great natural objects. The mind is sensible of a certain majesty that reigns through the whole of it. The Gothic architecture appears to be much varied; but the profusion of ornaments fatigues us, in consequence of their smallness, by which we are prevented from distinguishing one of them from another; and in consequence of their number, there is none upon which the eye can rest. It therefore displeases, even by those means which have been chosen to render it agreeable. A building of the Gothic order is a kind of riddle to the eye which perceives it, and the mind is embarrassed by it. In the Grecian architecture, on the contrary, as it has the divisions that are proper, and as many as it is proper it should have, that the mind may perceive as much of it as it can see without fatigue, and at the same time enough to occupy it; there is that degree of variety which makes it to be looked upon with pleasure. Painters divide the figures, which they represent in a picture, into groups of three or four each. In this, as well as in throwing their lights and shades into masses, they imitate nature." These observations are well founded. The Grecian architect, and the skilful painter, follow rules, by attention to which, objects are presented in such a way as to constitute a whole, consisting of parts which the mind easily comprehends. All the several parts conspire with each other in producing a joint and simultaneous

effect. The mind of the spectator is employed ; but is not fatigued, distracted, nor confounded. It is from a similar reason, that a detached hill, which rises up to a great height, is a more sublime object than a long chain of irregular mountains. Its parts bear a more intimate relation to the whole, are better connected with one another, and are all of them distinctly comprehended. The space to be taken in by the eye is precisely marked out. The figure upon which the attention ought to be employed, is not blended with neighbouring objects, in such a manner as to render it difficult to say where the one ends and the other begins.

At the same time, however, it is to be remarked, that though a connection among the parts of great objects is necessary, in order to produce an agreeable impression upon the mind, it is not requisite that there should be all the smoothness and insensible gradation that is requisite in objects which are beautiful. Wherever the objects beheld are great and extensive, the mind is employed in contemplating the large portions of which they are constituted, and has no leisure for observing the more minute parts. The wide prospect from the top of a mountain, though diversified with swelling hills, appears to the eye as an immense plain. The conical mountain, though the outline be interrupted and broken by many crags and precipices, appears to be a regu-

lar figure, with a surface nearly smooth. The mind is occupied with the result of the whole, and not with the smaller and more detached pieces of which it may consist.

The ingenious and philosophical Mr. Burke has advanced some opinions with regard to the origin of our sensations of sublimity, which are peculiar to himself. According to him, they depend upon that connection between mind and body, in consequence of which they mutually influence each other.

“Whatever,” he observes, “is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling.”—“When danger or pain,” however, he acknowledges, “press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful, as we every day experience.” He afterwards adds, that “not only whatever is qualified to cause terror is a foundation capable of the sublime; but that many things from which we cannot probably apprehend any danger, have a similar effect, because they operate in a similar manner.” From certain ef-

fects of pain and fear, he concludes, that they “act upon the same parts of the body, and in the same manner, though somewhat differing in degree.” And that they “consist in an unnatural tension of the nerves.”—“The only difference between pain and terror,” he says, “is, that things which cause pain operate upon the mind, by the intervention of the body; whereas, things that cause terror generally affect the bodily organs, by the operation of the mind suggesting the danger; but both agreeing either primarily or secondarily, in producing a tension, contraction, or violent emotion of the nerves, they agree likewise in every thing else.”—“Whatever is fitted to produce such a tension, must be productive of a passion similar to terror; and consequently, must be a source of the sublime, though it should have no idea of danger connected with it.”—“A mode of terror or pain, is always the cause of the sublime;” and this is the case whether there be actual danger, or whether the notion of it be only suggested by association. Visual objects of great dimensions must, he thinks, occasion pain by the vibration of the retina, from the rays from every point of the object striking repeatedly upon it, if vision be performed by a complete picture of the object formed at once upon that membrane; but if only one point of the object be distinguishable at once, the eye must move along it with great celerity; and of consequence, its nerves and muscles must be much strained and highly affected.

Unity is necessary to the sublime, because a variety of objects allow intervals of rest, prevent full tension, and do not all of them engage the mind at once. Succession of great objects, as in a colonnade, is sublime, because each of them produces an impulse and vibration similar to that which was produced by the one which went before, and increases the effect. Darkness and blackness contract the radial fibres of the iris, and may strain the nerves that compose it beyond their natural tone ; and by this means produce a painful sensation. In this manner, he endeavours to shew that all the examples he had collected of the sublime, are capable of producing a mode of pain, and of being thus allied to terror, and are to be accounted for on the same principles.

This theory is, no doubt, very ingenious ; but is at the same time liable to strong and obvious objections.—In the first place, the nature of the connection between body and mind is unknown to us. Though it were proved, that in every case in which sensations of sublimity are excited in us, there is such a tension of nerves as occasions some measure of pain, the origin of these sensations is not explained. There is only a concomitant circumstance pointed out. We can see no connection between the tension of a nerve, and delightful admiration. Though we knew them always to be concomitant, we could have no reason to account the former the cause of the latter, any

more than we have reason to account a quick and hard pulse the cause of a fever.

In the second place, the opinion that the sensation of pain is occasioned by the tension or contraction of the nerves, is a mere hypothesis, not yet established by observation of facts and experiment, the only guides in matters of this sort. Mr. Burke himself admits, that physiologists are not agreed whether pain be the effect of a contraction or a tension of the nerves. "Either," says he, "will serve my purpose; for by tension I mean no more than a violent pulling of the fibres which compose any muscle or membrane, in whatever way this is done." That a violent pulling of the fibres which compose a muscle will occasion pain, can hardly be doubted; but it will not be easy to shew that this is the only means by which pain may be occasioned. If it be said, therefore, that sensations of sublimity are occasioned by a tension of fibres similar to that which occasions pain, it is only an attempt to explain a thing that is obscure, by an analogy to something equally obscure with itself.

In the third place, it is not certain that any tension or contraction of the nerves, such as is supposed, takes place when we contemplate grand objects. Regular pulsations of rays upon the retina may occasion continued vibrations of nerves; or the muscles, by long and rapid motion, may be

strained; and in either case pain may be occasioned. But these vibrations and strainings, if they really exist, do not always produce pain; for pain cannot exist without being felt, and in the contemplation of a grand object we are conscious of no pain. A man may certainly admire the rainbow or the aurora borealis, without any uneasy bodily sensation.

In the fourth place, there seems to be an obvious distinction between those objects that are grand, and those that are terrible. An emotion of terror may, indeed, be excited at the time when something great is contemplated, not by the object itself, but by some concomitant circumstances. When this is the case, the mind may be more deeply affected, and its enjoyments may even be more sensible, than when the grandeur of the object is contemplated by itself without any such union. But whenever this happens, the sensation excited is not purely of the sublime; it is of a complicated nature; and the circumstances which occasioned it, ought to be distinguished from one another. In many noble descriptions, terrible images are introduced along with those which are lofty, and the effect is certainly increased by them; but these descriptions may as properly be denominated pathetic as sublime; for the pathetic is not confined to the means of exciting pity, but may also be employed in exciting terror, indignation, or any violent passion. If the sublime were the effect of

terror and pain, all terrible objects that did not overpower the mind by the apprehension of danger, would excite this sensation. But there are many things that inspire us with much terror and horror, while we are convinced that we ourselves are safe, without producing any such effect. A massacre might fill us with many dreadful sensations; but it could never excite one that is agreeable. A delicate lady, who shudders at the sight of a spider, conceives it, at the same time, to be a mean and loathsome insect. As there are terrible objects that excite in us no sublime sentiments, so there are also many grand objects that affect us with no terror. The superstitious notions of the vulgar may fill them with dread when they behold the aurora borealis; but are the sentiments excited in them more sublime and elevating? is their admiration better founded or more genuine, than those of the philosopher, who looks upon the glorious appearance, in the firm persuasion that it threatens harm to no living being? There are many sublime passages to be met with in the poets, that present no image whatever which can occasion terror. Thus, in the seventh book of *Paradise Lost* :

First in his east, the glorious lamp was seen,  
 Regent of day, and all th' horizon round  
 Invested with bright rays, jocund to run  
 His longitude through heav'n's high road : the gray  
 Dawn, and the Pleiades before him danc'd,  
 Shedding sweet influence.

Again :

————Up he rode,  
Follow'd with acclamation, and the sound  
Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tun'd  
Angelic harmonies : the earth, the air  
Refounded, (thou remember'ft, for thou heardft)  
The heav'ns and all the constellations rung,  
The planets in their stations lift'ning stood,  
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.  
Open, ye everlasting gates, they sung,  
Open, ye heav'ns, your living doors ; let in  
The great Creator, from his work return'd,  
Magnificent, his six days work, a world. L. 557.

It appears then, that great and terrible objects, though they may frequently be united, are in reality distinct ; and that the sensations occasioned by them are not the same. If Mr. Addison's enumeration of the sources from which the pleasures of the imagination are derived, to wit, greatness, beauty, and novelty, be regarded as complete, both of them must, indeed, be placed under the same general head of arrangement. But the pathetic and the sublime are commonly distinguished by critics, and there seems to be good reason for the distinction. If the common acceptation of terms be adhered to, there are several objects of taste that produce agreeable sensations, but cannot easily be referred to any of Mr. Addison's classes.

If we pay attention to those objects that are terrible, and compare them with those which oc-

caſion ſublimity of ſentiment, we may eaſily be convinced that their nature is not the ſame, and that the effects which they produce upon the mind are very different. A grand object is diſtinct in all its parts; it can be clearly comprehended by the mind, and the relation of its portions to the whole can be readily diſcerned. It rouses and elevates the mind, without producing in it any violent agitation, and without embarrassing or confounding it. It places us in a frame, which, though it be of a grave and ſerious nature, is in every reſpect agreeable. Thoſe objects, on the contrary, that inſpire us with terror, are in general ſo far from being diſtinct, that they are often involved in much darkneſs and obſcurity, and even owe ſome of their principal effects to this circumſtance. They frequently throw the mind into violent agitation, and even diſtreſs and confound it. Inſtead of elevating the ſoul, they generally depreſs it.

Notwithſtanding theſe unfavourable appearances, however, it cannot be denied, that objects which occaſion terror, produce in us, upon many occaſions, agreeable effects. Every perſon muſt have felt a charm thrown, by means of them, upon many excellent deſcriptions. They have very often much more influence over our minds, than even grand objects themſelves.

To aſſign any good reaſon why the mind ſhould

be pleased in such circumstances, seems to be difficult. Fear and terror are certainly in themselves disagreeable emotions. The objects that give occasion to them can never, upon their own account, be rendered agreeable to us. Whenever we are afraid, we are apprehensive of danger; we are desirous to employ any proper means in our power to deliver ourselves from the distressful circumstances in which we are placed; and are solicitous to regain tranquillity and security.

It cannot, therefore, be in the actual perception of terrible objects, when we consider ourselves as in immediate danger from them, that we feel agreeable sensations. But after the object that excited our fear is removed, or after the danger that threatened us is past, we may sometimes have pleasure in recalling to remembrance the circumstances in which we were placed; or we may reflect upon similar situations with satisfaction, when they are presented to our imaginations in a fine picture, or in an elegant description.

Objects of dread and terror, even when we ourselves are in the most perfect security, if they threaten other persons with danger, and still more, if they actually distress them with calamity, can never produce the smallest mixture of pleasure in any mind that retains a spark of humanity. Though every man of taste reads with much delight, Virgil's description of the burning of Troy;

yet no man who had not inured himself to fights of woe, could receive any pleasure from beholding a great and populous city in a conflagration. The object in itself might please on account of its grandeur, if we were convinced that the welfare of no person was at stake; but every agreeable sensation which might otherwise arise from this source, is excluded by an inevitable reflection upon the horror, misery, and calamity, that are spreading every where. Lucretius's account of the pleasure we receive from beholding the dangers and distresses of others, while we ourselves are at ease and in security, has often been quoted and admired; but I hope, for the honour of human nature, it has been more on account of the beauty of the poetry, than on account of any truth there is in the philosophical observation;

Suave mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis,  
 E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem:  
 Non quia vexari quemquam est jucunda voluptas,  
 Sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave est.  
 Suave etiam belli certamina magna tueri  
 Per campos instructa, tua sine parte pericli.

In such situations, I believe, any man of ordinary humanity will find himself too much interested in the circumstances of the sufferers, to have any leisure for comparing his own case with theirs, and for reflecting with complacency and delight upon his own personal security. A man sitting at his fire-side, may possibly be reminded

of the comfortableness of his own lot, if he observe from his window another person drenched by the rain; but he would be a monster that could reflect upon this circumstance, if he saw his neighbour struck down by a thunderbolt, or drowned in a torrent.

The principal things that strike the imagination with terror are the following:—Great power actually exerted, or at least supposed to be capable of being exerted with much violence: An obscure light, sufficient to shew the presence of objects, but not sufficient to enable us to distinguish them from each other, or to discern their real figures and dimensions: And dead silence, especially if it be unexpectedly interrupted by a noise of very short continuance. We all consider ourselves as exposed to danger from violence, if we perceive a power which we believe ready to commit it: We are apt to suppose a disposition to such violent acts in beings that are obscurely seen, and with respect to whom, the defects of perception are supplied by the suggestions of an alarmed imagination: And in a period of solitary silence, while we have no person at hand to give us his assistance if we should be attacked, we are most at leisure to reflect upon the helplessness of our own situation; and the least noise strikes us as the prelude to awful acts.—The principal circumstances that occasion terror, are finely thrown together by

the taste and philosophy of Milton, in the beginning of his *L'Allegro* :

Hence loathed Melancholy,  
 Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,  
 In Stygian cave forlorn,  
 'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy,  
 Find out some uncouth cell,  
 Where brooding darkness spreads his jealous wings,  
 And the night raven sings ;  
 There under ebon shades, and low-brow'd rocks,  
 As ragged as thy locks,  
 In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.

The authors of the most striking descriptions have availed themselves of these circumstances. "Now," says Eliphaz\* "a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear perceived a little thereof. In thoughts, from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face, the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof. An image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying, Shall mortal man be more just than God?" Milton has frequently employed the same dark and indiscriminating colours, when delineating objects of terror. In his description of hell, he informs us, that

\* Job IV.

A dungeon horrible, on all sides round  
As one great furnace flam'd; yet from those flames  
No light, but rather darkness visible  
Serv'd only to discover fights of woe. *B. 1.*

The whole of his description of death is thrown into a deep and impenetrable shade :

The other shape,  
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none  
Distinguishable, in member, joint, or limb,  
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,  
For each seem'd either.—Black he stood as night,  
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,  
And shook a dreadful dart. What seem'd his head,  
The likeness of a kingly crown had on. *B. 2.*

In this description, except the dart, there is not a distinct image presented to the mind; for though a crown is spoken of, it is only the likeness of one; yet the fancy forms images much more dreadful than if a picture had been fully drawn. In the following picture, every thing is great, but every outline and figure is indeterminate, and left to be moulded or completed by the fancy :

On t'other side, Satan, alarm'd,  
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,  
Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd :  
His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest  
Sat Horror plum'd; nor wanted in his grasp  
What seem'd both spear and shield.

I cannot believe, that in these and similar in-

stances, where we certainly receive pleasure from descriptions of terrible objects, there is, in reality, any agreeable sensation directly excited by the object itself, or even by the representation of it held out to the fancy. We naturally turn away with aversion from objects that excite horror and terror. In many cases, even the description of them is too dreadful to be heard without real pain and distress, and can be rendered agreeable by no art. The figure must be withdrawn from view, and the fancy left to supply it according to its own discretion. There are, however, many cases in which we would behold with uneasiness, those scenes which gave us pleasure in a representation or description. There must be some charm that attaches us in such cases, which does not depend upon the thing itself that is represented or described. If the following observations do not fully illustrate the nature of this charm, they may, at least in some measure, tend to explain the effect which the description of objects of terror has upon us, when it is agreeable.

It may, in the first place, be observed, that such objects, when presented to our imaginations, are well fitted to awaken our attention. They rouse and agitate our minds, and engage them in the exercise of various emotions. Whenever the attention is seriously engaged, the mind is employed, its thoughts are collected, it is entirely occupied with a single train of reflections. It is, of

consequence, delivered from all that languor which usually arises from want of occupation; it has not even leisure to throw a transient glance upon those objects, which, in different circumstances, might distract it, by exciting transient desires and emotions. Whatever object is capable of engrossing our thoughts, and occupying the whole of our attention, if it be not sickness, grief, or severe pain, or the dread of great and impending evils, is always productive of some enjoyment, by the exercise which it occasions.

In the next place, we are naturally led by our curiosity to the contemplation of those objects which occasion terror. If we be thoroughly acquainted with an object from which there is reason to believe we may receive hurt, we feel no agreeable sensation excited by attending to it. We naturally endeavour to avoid it, and hasten to a place where we may be in security. But if it be an object with which we have only an imperfect acquaintance, we are desirous of investigating every property of any consequence that belongs to it. Merely from the principle of curiosity, called into exertion by the emotions excited in us, every thing that relates to it becomes interesting. If a volcano were to break out in our neighbourhood, throwing out immense quantities of ashes, smoke, and flame, every man would look upon it with wonder, and would wish to obtain a fuller acquaintance with the nature of that dread-

ful appearance. The curiosity of some, would probably lead them farther in their researches than might be consistent with a reasonable regard for personal safety; and we would hardly be surpris'd, though in some, the same avidity for knowledge that actuated the elder Pliny, should involve them in the same fatal consequences. Our wonder, when once it is excited, naturally prompts us to further inquiry and investigation; our imaginations are busied with conjectures, and our minds are never perfectly at ease, till we learn many particulars with regard to the new appearance. If a shriek be heard at the dead of night, not only is our attention awakened, and our imagination busily employed in conjectures, but our curiosity is strongly excited; and we cannot be at rest till we discover whence the unusual sound has proceeded, or till time has erased the impression. It is this curiosity by which children are induced to listen with avidity to stories which frighten them; and which seem, in fact, to make disagreeable impressions upon them, even during the time they are listening to them. They are willing to bear all the uneasiness which the narration really costs them, from their eager desire to learn how every thing ended.

The objects which inspire terror, are not only new, and excite wonder; but they are also commonly unexpected, and produce surpris'e or astonishment. As they attack us suddenly, not only

our imaginations are engaged, but our passions are also excited. The utmost activity of our minds is called forth at once. We are led by our fancies into a scene of wonders, every part of which we are eager to explore.

In the last place, it is to be observed, that in order to render terrible objects agreeable, even in description, they must be accompanied by something that is naturally agreeable. They are rather fitted to heighten the effect of other things, than to produce any agreeable effect by themselves. A mixture of terror may, for instance, heighten the effect produced by an object that is grand, by affording more ample scope for the exercises of the imagination. A man who is under the influence of terror, usually conceives his danger to be of ten times the magnitude that it really is. If an object be in itself truly grand, you need only involve it in a certain degree of darkness, so as to render the outline less distinct; or cover part of it with a cloud, in order to make it appear much grander than it would otherwise do. The imagination, when left to itself without controul, is disposed not only to supply every defect with great liberality; but even to complete the prospect that is only imperfectly seen, by making large additions. If a being be introduced, who is supposed to possess great power, and at the same time to be actuated by the blackest malice, the strongest effect will not be produced upon the mind by

exhibiting a full-drawn picture of him. Only suggest materials for the imagination to work upon, and it will form an image much more adapted to its own taste and relish, than any that the pencil could delineate.

It may be added, that there are various embellishments of eloquence and poetry, by which a good writer insinuates himself, and by means of which, he is capable of making even those things please which are naturally disagreeable. Except the flowing versification, the following lines, put into the mouth of the apparition in Dryden's *Theodore and Honoria*, present nothing that is agreeable :

As often as my dogs with bitter speed  
 Arrest her flight, is she to death decreed.  
 Then with this fatal sword on which I died,  
 I pierce her open back or tender side,  
 And tear that harden'd heart from out her breast,  
 Which with her entrails makes my hungry hounds  
                   a feast.

Nor lies she long ; but as her fates ordain,  
 Springs up to life, and fresh to second pain,  
 Is sav'd to day, to-morrow to be slain. }  
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After all, I doubt not but the observation of Mr. Addison is just : “ If the description of what is little, common, or deformed, be acceptable to the imagination ; the description of what is great, surprising, or beautiful, is much more so ; because here we are not only delighted with comparing

the representation with the original, but are highly pleased with the original itself. Most readers, I believe, are more charmed with Milton's description of paradise, than of hell: They are both, perhaps, equally perfect in their kind; but in the one, the brimstone and sulphur are not so refreshing to the imagination, as the beds of flowers, and the wilderness of sweets, in the other." So far is Mr. Addison's judgment in this matter acknowledged to be well founded, that in the judgment of the best critics, there are scenes of horror not to be represented, and that cannot be described so as to communicate pleasure. Even Milton's descriptions of his devils would be shocking, if he had not invested them with certain qualifications which are excellent in themselves, though liable to be abused; such as superior wisdom and power, determined and invincible fortitude, and even some degree of friendship and mutual confidence.

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## DISCOURSE V.

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*Concerning NOVELTY, considered as an OBJECT  
of TASTE.*

**M**R. ADDISON has represented all the pleasures of imagination as occasioned by grandeur, by beauty, or by novelty. It is obvious that all the pleasures of taste are not derived from these sources. The gratification, for instance, which we receive from melody and harmony, or from wit and humour, or from rhythm and cadence, or from unity in composition, cannot be ascribed to any of these agreeable qualities, unless in a figurative sense. Several subsequent writers have accordingly represented Mr. Addison's enumeration as incomplete, and have endeavoured to supply the defect.

As that elegant author was the first who treated of this curious branch of human nature in a phi-

lofophical manner, it could not be a matter of wonder, that some of those sources from which the pleasures of the imagination are derived should have escaped him. At the same time, if his intention be rightly understood, as he has explained it himself, I know of nothing material he has omitted. It was not his aim to give any account of those mental pleasures which arise from the exercise or culture of the understanding; and therefore, he had no occasion to consider the beauty of problems, nor the beauty of fitness or intention, which have entered into the plan of some philosophers who have followed him. Neither did he mean to account for those pleasures that are of a moral nature, and, therefore, he did not comprehend those delights which arise from good dispositions, or from virtuous conduct. These are classes of enjoyments which, however valuable, are essentially different from those that were the object of his inquiries.

Under the pleasures of imagination, he did not even mean to comprehend all the pleasures of taste. Many pleasures of taste arise from objects that are heard, as well as from objects that are seen; but Mr. Addison expressly desires his reader to remember, that by **the pleasures** of the imagination, he means only such pleasures as arise originally from sight; and accordingly, he divides these pleasures into two kinds, primary and secondary; the former comprehending those which are

entirely produced by such objects as are before our eyes ; and the other comprehending those which flow from the ideas of visible objects, when the objects are not actually before the eye, but are called up into our memories, or formed into agreeable visions of things that are either absent or fictitious.

The term novelty, as applied by Mr. Addison to one class of the objects of taste, is used in a signification more extensive than that in which it commonly occurs. In ordinary conversation, we are accustomed to speak of some things as new, and of other things as not new, merely with relation to our own knowledge, or the knowledge of other persons. We call those things new which we were not formerly acquainted with, and those things not new of which we have formerly obtained sufficient knowledge. This kind of novelty is not in the object itself, but in the relation which it has to the mind ; and it ceases to exist whenever that particular relation is removed by familiarity or custom. An object, in this sense, may be new to one man, which is not new to another ; and children or persons who have had little information, meet with the greatest quantity and variety of things that are new to them. Every discovery in the sciences, every improvement in the arts, every revolution in government, or in the manners of mankind, possess this kind of novelty at first, but cease to have it after they be-

come generally known. In these last instances, however, the novelty does not lie in the relation of the objects to the knowledge of a particular person, but to the knowledge of all mankind. All writers upon the subject, have agreed in calling such things as those that have been mentioned, new. With regard to such objects, it has been observed, that as the novelty subsists for a very short time, the direct pleasure which the mind receives from it is transitory, though sometimes it may be renewed upon reflection, and may also give occasion to subsequent enjoyments.

Under that class of objects which are to be denominated new, Mr. Addison includes not only those that have never formerly occurred to the person who perceives them, or have never occurred in the same manner; but also those that are in themselves uncommon, strange, extraordinary, rare, or singular. Objects of this sort, frequently make deeper impressions upon us than those which we were not acquainted with before, but which have nothing in them that is very peculiar. When an unknown object has a resemblance to those things with which we were formerly acquainted, we become immediately familiar with it, and its novelty ceases; but when an object is extraordinary or singular, its novelty, if we may so express ourselves, is permanent. It does not associate with those things with which we are familiar; it remains distinct and separate, and preserves its ex-

traordinary appearance, or uncommon properties, perhaps for ever. The novelty of such an object does not wear out by use, acquaintance, and familiarity, as in the former case. It may continue to the last what it was at first. It is a quality inherent in the thing itself, and does not depend upon the relation which it bears to the state or degree of our knowledge. As the quality itself is permanent, the direct pleasure occasioned by it is not transitory, as in the former case, but continues for a long time, and may be repeatedly renewed. It is not children, or persons who are ignorant, that have the best opportunity for enjoying this sort of novelty; it is those who are most enlightened, who are best acquainted with the common qualities and the general arrangements of objects. Without much previous knowledge of those things which are ordinary, those things that are singular or extraordinary, cannot be distinguished so as to be relished and admired. It is the virtuoso, the connoisseur, the natural historian, who alone can perceive novelty of this nature in some classes of things, and persons distinguished by improvement, whose particular employments may not have obtained names, that perceive it in others.

As Mr. Addison, in his Essay on the Pleasures of Imagination, has treated of novelty very briefly, he has not formally pointed out this distinction among those objects which he calls new. He speaks of novelty as fitted to gratify curiosity,

and as a motive to put us upon fresh discoveries. In this view of it, he must mean that kind of novelty, an acquaintance with which dispels ignorance, or increases knowledge, and which is relative to the state of our understandings. In another place, when celebrating the merit of Milton, he asks, "What more strange than the creation of the world, the several metamorphoses of the fallen angels, and the surprising adventures their leader meets with in his search after paradise?" Now these are fine instances of that kind of novelty which is uncommon, extraordinary, and even singular, which we never can become familiar with, the impression of which is permanent, and the pleasure arising from the contemplation of which, can be repeatedly renewed. These two kinds of novelty, when thus distinguished from each other, may, with enough of propriety, be denominated by the terms made use of by Mr. Addison himself; the former of them may be called the new, and the latter the uncommon.

The generality of writers upon the subject of taste, since the days of Mr. Addison, have paid little or no attention to this distinction, and have usually overlooked the uncommon altogether. Confining their attention entirely to the new, they have represented the charms of novelty as felt only by the ignorant. They acknowledge that we derive pleasure from observing things that are unknown; but they are a proof of our imperfec-

tion; for if we were acquainted with every thing around us, we could never feel them. The best evidence of consummate wisdom is *nil mirari*.

Lord Kaims, indeed, had perceived that these two things are not the same, and observes, "That a thing must be singular as well as new, to excite our wonder." He seems, however, to have looked upon the distinction as of little moment, for he immediately subjoins, "To save multiplying words, I would be understood to comprehend both circumstances, when I hereafter talk of novelty \*.

It is unquestionably true, that nothing can be better accommodated to the weak but progressive state of man, than the desire of knowing what he has hitherto been unacquainted with. This principle is one of the chief incitements to that industry which produces eminence. Great and beneficial effects flow from it. In the gratification of it consist some of our most rational and dignified enjoyments. The relish which we have for what is singular or extraordinary, may be of much less consequence either to the individual or to society; still, however, it is a principle in human nature, to which there are objects adapted; and it furnishes enjoyments that are permanent, and some

\* *Elem. of Crit.* chap. vi.

of which cannot be considered as beneath the dignity of the highest created being.

Mr. Addison has endeavoured to explain the manner in which novelty affects the mind, and I think little has been added, or perhaps need be added, to his observations upon this subject.

“Every thing,” says he, “that is new or uncommon, raises a pleasure in the imagination; because it fills the soul with an agreeable surprize, gratifies its curiosity, and gives it an idea of which it was not before possessed. We are, indeed, so often conversant with one set of objects, and tired out with so many repeated shows of the same things, that whatever is new or uncommon, contributes a little to vary human life, and to divert our minds a while with the strangeness of its appearance: It serves us for a kind of refreshment, and takes off from that satiety we are apt to complain of in our usual and ordinary entertainments. It is this that bestows charms on a monster, and makes even the imperfections of nature please us. It is this that recommends variety, where the mind is every instant called off to something new, and the attention is not suffered to dwell too long, and waste itself on any particular object. It is also this that improves what is great and beautiful, and makes it afford the mind a double entertainment. Groves, fields, and meadows, are at any season of the year pleasant to look upon;

but never so much as in the opening of the spring, when they are all new and fresh, with their first gloss upon them, and not yet too much accustomed and familiar to the eye. For this reason, there is nothing that more enlivens a prospect than rivers, jetteaus, or falls of water, where the scene is perpetually shifting, and entertaining the sight every moment with something that is new. We are quickly tired with looking upon hills and valleys, where every thing continues fixed and settled in the same place and posture; but find our thoughts a little agitated and relieved at the sight of such objects as are ever in motion, and sliding away from beneath the eye of the beholder."

In this explanation of the manner in which novelty pleases, there are two circumstances clearly pointed out. In the first place, it gratifies the principle of curiosity, by furnishing the mind with the knowledge of something with which it was formerly unacquainted. In the second place, it interests the mind by exciting in it certain agreeable emotions, and giving employment to its thoughts. The emotion excited in the mind, is denominated by Mr. Addison, surprize. He uses this term in a general and loose signification. We are properly surprized at those things which are unexpected, and wonder at those things which are extraordinary. But Mr. Addison comprehends wonder under sur-

prise; for in most of the instances which he produces of things that occasion this emotion, there is no occurrence marked as being unexpected. Lord Kaims has taken notice of this distinction, and given a very full illustration of it in his chapter concerning novelty. Though he acknowledges, however, with Mr. Addison, the interest which the mind takes in uncommon objects, and the exercise which it receives from them, he is inclined to ascribe the whole of it to the operation of curiosity; and accordingly endeavours to account for all the charms of novelty, from the gratification of this principle. The most part of other writers upon the subject that I have met with, think all the pleasure we receive from novelty so easily accounted for, from the gratification of curiosity, that they have hardly mentioned any thing else. This, I apprehend, has arisen from not attending sufficiently to the distinction between those things that are new, and those that are uncommon.

That those objects with which we have formerly been unacquainted, whenever they are presented to us, give us an opportunity of gratifying the principle of curiosity, cannot be doubted. We are originally formed with a strong desire of knowledge, which, unless checked by an unnatural ascendancy, given by indulgence to some other principles in the constitution, must operate strong-

ly as long as we live. To make progress in the acquisition of knowledge, is certainly one of the valuable ends for which man was formed; and the gratification of the principle which prompts him to the pursuit, is wisely rendered highly agreeable. On ordinary occasions, however, the satisfaction which accompanies the consciousness of improvement, is of a very tranquil nature. In the acquisition of the most valuable knowledge, we usually proceed in a regular and orderly manner. Our thoughts are connected together according to the usual laws of association, and each of them succeeds that which went before it, in such a manner, that the mind preserves the same tone, without elevation or depression. We are gradually carried on in our progress; we are introduced, almost without attending to it, to the knowledge of those things that are new, by means of their associates, with which we have already become acquainted, and acquire the knowledge which we wish for by imperceptible degrees. The state of the mind is, in the mean time, quiet and tranquil. It is happy in the exertion of its powers, and in the employment which it finds in comprehending those objects which are presented to it. It also receives pleasure and satisfaction from its consciousness of making attainments in valuable intellectual accomplishments.

If all the pleasures that arise from the perception of things that are new or uncommon, consisted

in this sort of gratification furnished to the principle of curiosity, I think it might reasonably be doubted whether novelty could, with any propriety, be styled an object of taste. The enjoyment that is felt in cases of this nature, arises directly from the exercise of the mental faculties, and in this respect, is essentially different from those agreeable sensations which accompany the reflex or secondary perceptions of beauty, harmony, and the like; which are commonly considered as constituting the pleasures of taste. A man pursues knowledge as he pursues power, or fame, or any other object that is agreeable. In his pursuit he meets with that delight which is continually the attendant of activity, in those exertions which are made for the sake of acquiring what is desirable; and in consequence of attaining the end which he had in view, he procures gratification to the active principle which is predominant in his mind. It is not, therefore, in exertions of this sort that we are to look for those pleasures of the imagination which are occasioned by novelty. The mere gratification of the desire of knowledge, seems to me as much unconnected with taste, as the gratification of ambition or avarice, or as the agreeable sensation arising from moderate exercise of body.

But new objects are often presented to us in such a manner as to rouse us from a state of tranquillity; and uncommon objects, if they excite

our attention at all, have continually this effect. They excite in us certain emotions, by means of which we become interested; and we feel an agreeable sensation, not from the direct perception of the object, but from a reflex or secondary perception and judgment that it is new or uncommon.

There are two classes of objects which affect us in this manner. Sometimes the object that is presented to us is singular, or extraordinary, or at least different in certain important respects from any we have formerly been acquainted with; and at other times, an object which we have formerly known makes its appearance unexpectedly. In both these cases, the sensation excited in us is of a lively nature, and, unless when overbalanced by sensations of an opposite character, occasioned by other circumstances, is agreeable.

Objects that are singular or extraordinary, excite in the spectator the emotion of wonder. The uncommon appearance of them may either be relative to the imperfect state of his knowledge, or it may depend on the nature of the things themselves. The emotion is occasioned in neither of these cases, by curiosity, or the love of knowledge; it follows instantaneously the perception of the objects; and so far is it from being introduced by the desire of information, that in the highest degree of it, which is denominated asto-

nishment, it utterly suspends, for a time, the exercise of every intellectual faculty. After the violence of the emotion has subsided, curiosity begins to operate. We endeavour to find out certain particulars in which the uncommon object agrees with other things that are more familiar to us. Our wonder, however, does not entirely cease, till we become acquainted with the most striking and remarkable qualities of the extraordinary object, and be able to refer it to some known class of things. During the course of all this investigation, the mind is interested, and derives pleasure from the exercise and employment with which it is furnished. It is in this manner that we are affected by the uncommon productions both of nature and of art; and it is more for the sake of the pleasure that arises from the emotion of wonder, than from any desire to increase the stock of their knowledge, that men universally discover so prevalent an inclination to see those things that are strange.

If, upon the other hand, it should evidently appear, that the object is extraordinary in itself, and unlike any thing else, we scarce indulge the hope of learning any thing further with regard to it. Our curiosity necessarily comes soon to an end, but our wonder continues almost unabated.

Although it is an object entirely singular that excites wonder in the highest degree, yet the emo-

tion may also be called forth by things that differ in any remarkable respect from those of the same class to which we have been accustomed. A man may have an opportunity, almost every starry night, of seeing meteors dart across the heavens, and may look upon that appearance in its ordinary form with perfect indifference; but if a fiery ball of immense size and splendour burst forth, he will look upon it with wonder, and even with astonishment. If a plant send forth its blossoms in autumn, or its leaves in December, it deviates so much from the ordinary growth of the vegetable tribes, that it occasions some degree of wonder.

We feel the emotion of wonder in a similar manner, when we discover resemblances among those things which we formerly thought were entirely different in their nature. Thus men were struck with amazement, when it was discovered that the lightning of heaven is the same kind of matter with electric fluid. The same is the case, when we discover that events exceedingly unlike each other, have sprung from the same or similar causes; and that various changes are brought about agreeably to the same general laws; that the tides, for instance, flow, and that a comet is retained in its orbit by the same force that brings a stone to the ground. In such cases, curiosity is fully satisfied by the discovery, because the knowledge that was wished for is already

gained ; but the wonder occasioned by the extraordinary or singular combination continues, and always recurs anew whenever these great discoveries in the material world are thought of.

It is not merely uncommon objects themselves that produce wonder. The emotion is perhaps occasioned in a higher degree by extraordinary combinations of things formerly known, and by the discovery of singular relations subsisting among them, than by any single objects whatever. The effect of this emotion is in a particular manner felt, when conceptions that were not formerly thought to possess any thing in common, are brought together as agreeing in some respect, whether important or insignificant, agreeably to the ordinary laws of association, by an elegant writer, or a facetious speaker. It is from such uncommon combinations that figurative language borrows its enchantment, and genuine wit its sprightliness. Such uncommon but natural combinations, delight the mind, by giving exercise and play to the imagination.

Not only may objects themselves, with their qualities and relations, strike us by means of their rarity or singularity, and thus excite our wonder ; but there may also be something strange, of a similar nature, in the manner in which even a common object is presented to our notice. When every thing goes forward in a regular train, when

every event is progressively brought under our observation by that which immediately preceded it, our minds remain in a quiet and tranquil condition; we see without emotion every thing going on in that steady course to which we have long been familiarized. But cases often occur when the ordinary train of things, at least as it was settled in our conceptions, is not adhered to; and events accordingly happen which we did not expect, and for the occurrence of which we were not gradually prepared by those events which preceded them. In such a case, the mind is suddenly roused, and thrown into a state of lively agitation. The emotion excited upon such occasions, is denominated surprize. We are surprized to meet with a person who we thought was residing in a distant country; to find abilities where we expected none; and to discover slight resemblances, contrasts, analogies, and relations, among those objects that seemed to be altogether unconnected.

It is justly observed by Lord Kaimes, that surprize, considered as an emotion, has no invariable character. In the occurrences of life, it must sometimes be an agreeable, and sometimes a disagreeable emotion, according as the event that has happened is looked upon as fortunate or unfortunate. As it is occasioned by nothing that is absolutely in the object itself, but is wholly relative to our knowledge or conceptions at the

time, it cannot continue, as wonder sometimes does, for any considerable period. It is, indeed, an emotion that is merely momentary; and after it is gone, it cannot be renewed by recollection. Its effects may be powerful and violent; they may long be felt in a weakly constitution; but the emotion that gave occasion to them is, in an instant, gone for ever.

In the pursuit of knowledge, surprise is generally attended with agreeable consequences. An unexpected occurrence rouses the mind, and gives it employment. We endeavour to discover the means or the train of connection by which it was brought about. If we unexpectedly meet with a friend, we naturally inquire to what it is owing that he happens to be here. A natural historian may be surprised to find a piece of quartz, or other heterogeneous matter, in the midst of the most solid crystal; or a spider in the most transparent amber. His surprise rouses his attention, and incites him to make suitable inquiries. A variety of hints and conjectures are naturally suggested to him by such circumstances, with regard to the origin and formation of such bodies. He is inevitably led to believe that they have once existed in a state different from that in which they at present appear; and he is strongly induced to trace out other circumstances, by means of which he may be enabled to ascertain the changes they have undergone.

As surprize produces a strong, though not a lasting, effect upon the mind, those who wanted to affect the mind by productions in the fine arts, have very naturally been led, upon some occasions, to introduce objects fitted to excite it. Whether the success, in the generality of these attempts, has been sufficient to requite the labour which it cost, may, I think, be doubted. In public spectacles where it has been tried, as long as the show was new to the spectator, it has seldom failed to please. A stranger is agreeably surprized when he meets with a great fall of water at the end of a walk, while he knows that there is no river near the place; but his pleasure never again returns, after he discovers that the whole is a deception that has been practised upon him, and learns that the appearance is produced by the reflection of candle-light from a large bent sheet of tin. Objects so situated as to produce surprize, have often been introduced into gardens, and have frequently produced a striking effect upon a stranger, the first time he heedlessly and unexpectedly stumbled upon them; but the pleasure he felt vanished in an instant, never more to return. Of this pleasure arising from surprize, whatever may be its value, the proprietor himself never partakes. His only enjoyment upon the occasion must be drawn from the astonished countenance of his guest; and it may be doubted whether this be not too dearly purchased, at the expence of losing other objects that might

administer delight to him, even when he was alone. One of the best imagined contrivances of this sort, perhaps in the world, occurs in Hagley Park, when after ascending a sloping walk, rendered almost dark by the deep shade of old trees, you issue forth unexpectedly into the open light and air; and a most extensive prospect, nobly diversified, is at once presented to the eye, from a seat placed on the verge of the wood, and most appositely inscribed, "These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good, Almighty." It is this magnificent prospect which Thomson celebrates in his *Spring*, l. 946.

Meantime you gain the height, from whose fair brow  
The bursting prospect spreads immense around :  
And snatch'd o'er hill and dale, and wood and lawn,  
And verdant hills and dark'ning heath between,  
And villages embosom'd soft in trees,  
And spiry towns, by surging columns mark'd  
Of household smoke, your eye excursive roams :  
Wide stretching from the hall, in whose kind haunt  
The hospitable genius lingers still,  
To where the broken landscape, by degrees  
Ascending, roughens into rigid hills,  
O'er which the Cambrian mountains, like far clouds  
That skirt the blue horizon, dusky rise.

The whole, however, of the effect which is produced by this magnificent scene, is not to be ascribed to surprise, nor indeed even the principal part of it. The prospect that opens to the

eye is vast; the objects that are exhibited in it are grand in themselves; and the whole must appear magnificent, whenever the eye is directed to them. To be brought unexpectedly into the view of such a scene, may strengthen the impression upon the mind of a stranger; but though it be contemplated a thousand times, familiarity will not deprive it of its charms.

In literary compositions, occasions very seldom occur, upon which surprize can be excited with success. Whenever the subject treated of is grave, it is requisite that the mind of the reader or hearer should be gradually carried forward by a regular train of thoughts, depending upon one another, and connected according to the common laws of association. It must be prepared by what has gone before, for that which is to follow. This method is necessary, whenever the intention of the speaker or writer is to communicate information, to convince the understanding, or to move the affections or passions. If any thing be introduced abruptly, and without proper connection, it appears strange indeed; but it is disjointed and out of place, and therefore, does not contribute to the general effect. If the mind is to be elevated to any particular tone, it should be done by degrees; and it ought afterwards to be brought down, with a sense of the impressions that have been made upon it, and with the resolutions that have been formed, to a state of

tranquillity and composure. The surprize occasioned by the introduction of what is unexpected, is inconsistent with the ends which the writer upon any serious subject has in view. In ludicrous composition, however, surprize may often be excited with good effects; and it in reality occasions a considerable proportion of the pleasure which arises from wit and humour, especially the lower kinds of them.

With regard to the effects of wonder in heightening the merit of some kinds of literary composition, the case is very different. To some kinds of writing, it seems essential that a variety of things that are strange and uncommon should be introduced. This, however, is not universally the case. If it be the sole aim of an author to convey instruction, he may effectuate his purpose, by leading the mind of his reader gradually into his own views, without exciting any wonder. Every writer, indeed, that expects reputation, must produce something that has the merit of being new, at least when considered in relation to the understanding of his readers. He must either treat of something that is not generally known, or he must bring to view something with regard to a known subject that has not been attended to; or he must place the matter in a new light, or represent it in colours different from those in which it has commonly appeared; or he must do something or other that is peculiar to

himself. If he does nothing that has not been done equally well before, he has not the smallest pretensions to excellence. This is, in fact, one of the principal charms in every work of genuine merit, that is addressed to the understanding. Something is presented to the mind with which it was not formerly acquainted, or at least, is set before it in a shape or dress in which it has not usually been viewed. It is not necessary to excite any emotion, but a degree of novelty must be introduced, sufficient to awaken curiosity, to procure attention, and to give employment to the intellectual faculties.

If a writer aim at any thing farther than merely to communicate information, it will not be sufficient solely to gratify curiosity. If he means to interest the mind of the reader, to please his imagination, or to move his affections and passions, he must excite wonder in one degree or other, by presenting things that are uncommon and extraordinary. Though the incidents be probable, they must, in some measure, be marvellous, or different in some material respects from those that ordinarily occur, in order to captivate the imagination. The metaphors, the comparisons, the allusions, must be taken from objects or actions that are not vulgar nor familiar. The language itself, however natural it may seem, must be considerably raised above the level of common conversation. Even the writer of a son-

net or an epigram, if he be successful, must bring together thoughts that have not commonly been associated in the minds of his readers, or he must adorn a thought that is common with some uncommon illustration. If the subject itself should not be extraordinary, there must be the *callide junctura*, or the *curiosa felicitas*, the artful association, or the studied elegance, in the thoughts, the figures, or the expression, in order to render it agreeable.

In all the productions of the fine arts, it is absolutely necessary to keep curiosity awake, by presenting things that are in some respect or another new. It gives an agreeable employment to the mind to trace resemblances, contrasts, and relations, to which it has not been accustomed. We are led into fresh prospects, where every object claims our attention. Though we may have seen many of the same things before, it has been a different side of them that was turned towards us. When they are presented to us in a different situation, or when the light falls upon them in a different direction, they become in a good measure new again.

A work may, however, possess all this merit, and yet not obtain lasting fame. The novelty which it presents may be merely relative; and if such be the case, it will cease to please, in consequence of familiarity, after it becomes well known.

Time, therefore, always depreciates such a production.

Writers of genius, accordingly, have not satisfied themselves with what is new; they have diligently sought after that which is rare. Whatever is scarce, if it have either beauty or utility, must be valued; and whatever changes may take place, it will always bear a price. The best poets have not been satisfied with gratifying curiosity, unless they also excited wonder. The fairies in Shakspeare's *Tempest*, and the sylphs and gnomes in Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, are extraordinary beings, whose appearance and actions call forth our wonder. Our curiosity, with regard to them, is soon satisfied, because we know that any inquiry concerning them would render us little wiser. We do not become familiar with them; they always continue equally strange, and therefore will always excite the same emotions that they occasioned at first. The celebrated simile in Addison's *Campaign*, presents an image that is grand; but its effect is principally owing to the circumstance, that it is extraordinary or singular:

So when an angel, by divine command,  
 With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,  
 Such as of late o'er pale Britannia past,  
 Calm and serene he drives the furious blast;  
 And pleas'd th' Almighty's orders to perform,  
 Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.

In the works of nature, novelty is nothing but endless variety. The same objects can be viewed and traced in an infinite number of directions and combinations; hence they can be examined with pleasure a number of times. A man hardly ever wearies in going over the same ground, when it is finely diversified with woods and streams, and banks and rocks; he finds something that calls up his wonder anew every time he visits it.

In the works of art, it is exceedingly difficult to introduce the variety of nature. The same, or similar objects, are in general too apt to recur; the mind becomes languid, from want of employment. We are soon tired of the smooth level walk, the vista always presenting the same object as its termination, the uniform parterre, and the regular row of trees. We wish for that wildness and diversity which nature gives to her works, where every step brings to view some object or some arrangement that has not struck the attention before. We demand something analogous to this variety in the productions of art; and we reckon those works most perfect, which attain the nearest resemblance to it.

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## DISCOURSE VI.

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*Remarks on some OBJECTS of TASTE, that seem not reducible to BEAUTY, GRANDEUR, or NOVELTY.*

**T**HERE are many qualities, such as utility, fitness, proportion, uniformity, and variety, that are very frequently connected with beauty; and there have been several philosophers who have thought that beauty consists in some one of these qualities, or in some combination of more than one of them. I think it requires little illustration to shew that none of these qualities constitute beauty, though some of them are generally found united with it. These qualities, and several more of a similar nature, are to be met with in a vast variety of objects, which no sentient being ever accounted beautiful; and even where the object is really beautiful, no person estimates its beauty from the degree in which it possesses these qualities.

At the same time, it is readily admitted, that all these qualities are productive of agreeable sensations in our minds; though the qualities themselves, and the sensations occasioned by them, are very distinguishable from beauty, and the agreeable feelings occasioned by beautiful objects.

It must be acknowledged, that in all cases in which utility is discernible, there is something fitted to please some minds, and perhaps the generality of minds. There may be nothing that is naturally agreeable in the object itself; but there are certain purposes to which it may be applied, which are productive of agreeable consequences. We contemplate the thing itself, and its consequences in connection, and by well-known laws of association, attribute the sensation excited in us to the object itself, as much as to its uses.

Every sort of fitness or correspondence between two objects, affects us in a similar manner. In cases of this sort, there are evidences of design and contrivance, which have been employed with a view to bring about an end. The purpose that is served may, upon many occasions, appear to be of no great importance; and when this is the case, our pleasure may not be so great as when it is of much importance. Still, however, we are convinced that it seemed of some importance to the person who bestowed his labour and contrivance upon it. It, besides, discovers a cer-

tain degree of ingenuity in the contriver. He has attained the end which he had in view, either by his mental or manual operations. We enter, in some degree, into his sensations; and his skill or dexterity, even when we think it misapplied, produces an agreeable effect upon us.

Proportion, both in visible objects, and in abstract conceptions, is an agreeable quality. Regular figures are those which are formed according to a certain rule; so that, according to the same rule, figures similar to them may be formed. A square, for instance, is a regular figure, having all its sides equal, and all its angles right angles; and any person who describes figures having these two properties, describes squares. We are pleased when we look upon those things which are regular, because they are easily comprehended by the mind. Wherever we observe proportion, we are sensible of a certain degree of regularity. A series of objects, for instance, increasing or decreasing in magnitude, according to a given quantity, possesses regularity. A figure, in the same manner, that is just the half, or just the double of another, bears a regular relation to it, that is easily and perfectly ascertained. In observing relations of this nature, the mind is affected in an agreeable manner.

Uniformity and variety also produce agreeable sensations. In all regular objects there are cor-

respondent parts; and these correspondent parts must be uniform, or must have a perfect resemblance to one another. In a parallelogram, the opposite sides and opposite angles must be precisely equal; if they differ from one another in any respect, the figure is not quite regular. Wherever objects, contiguous to one another, are intended for the same use, we are pleased when we find uniformity among them. We expect to see the windows in the front of a house all of the same dimensions, and the chairs in a room like one another. We carry this principle farther, and are pleased with seeing the walls and the furniture of the same colour in the same apartment. It is the same sort of uniformity which we desire to meet with in objects that have symmetry of parts. We are pleased with a perfect resemblance, both of figure and colour, in those parts which are correspondent. Whenever a resemblance among a variety of objects is useful, in assisting the mind to comprehend and remember them, it is agreeable. If there should happen to be variety introduced among those things which were intended for the same use, we are incapable of discovering any reason for it; it breaks that connection which we are desirous of finding among the several objects, and, of consequence, perplexes and embarrasses us. At the same time, an uniformity that is very long continued, is insupportable; it keeps our attention fixed upon the same thought, and renders our minds languid and inactive. If

the series be very long, it is absolutely necessary that variety should be introduced, in order to give exercise and vivacity to the mind. A long avenue, with parallel rows of trees, is always exceedingly tiresome; and a colonnade fatigues us, if it extends farther than that space which we can take in at a single view.

Order and arrangement are intimately connected with those particulars which have been last mentioned. They also are fitted for exciting in us agreeable sensations, even where they are not connected with beauty. If a great number of objects be presented to us in confusion, we are not able to survey them with any sort of satisfaction. We cannot perceive any relation by which they are connected with one another, nor can we even form any distinct conception of them. But if they be arranged in order, and divided into their tribes, and classes, and families, we can, with great ease and satisfaction, go progressively over the whole of them. During the survey, our minds are employed without being fatigued. In a museum, where a great number of natural productions and curiosities are preserved, we would receive little or no pleasure, if the various articles were not placed in order; but, as every thing is properly classed, we proceed with satisfaction from one order, and from one object to another; we can fix our attention where we please; and we

can have recourse, whenever we choose, to those particulars which we wish to examine with care.

Many of those pleasures, however, which arise from the sources that have been enumerated, are principally, or altogether, of an intellectual kind, and are to be regarded as of a different kind from the pleasures of taste. We cannot, in the generality of cases, feel much pleasure when the understanding is dissatisfied; but in many cases the understanding may be gratified, as it frequently is in the investigation of abstract truths, when the powers of taste have no employment.

Congruity and propriety are objects of taste, and are fitted to give us pleasure. They are, however, very different from beauty; they belong to the relations that take place among different objects, and not to the objects themselves. An object may in itself be beautiful, and yet it may be placed in such a situation, or connected with things so unsuitable to it, that it will not produce its proper effect. In the conduct of life, we consider one sort of behaviour as proper, and another as improper. There are some actions which we consider as altogether improper in man; there is an incongruity between them and his nature. There are others which would be improper in certain men; they would be incongruous with the general tenor of their conduct. There are other actions that have no impropriety in

their own nature, which become improper in particular places and times, and which would denote something very wrong in the man who performed them unseasonably. There is a similar congruity and propriety among the objects of taste. Every thing should be introduced in such a manner as to be of a piece with the rest. One part of the furniture of a house must not be gorgeously rich, while the rest is mean or plain; otherwise gross incongruity will appear. The ornaments of a building must have a relation to the whole, and to one another; and that which is suitable to an opera-house, may be of such a kind, that it would be intolerable in a church. The levity which pleases us in a comedy, could not be endured in a sermon. The ornamental language which is suitable in a popular harangue, addressed to the imagination or passions, would be highly improper in a didactic discourse, intended merely to communicate information to the understanding. The bold figures of epic or lyric poetry would appear ludicrous, if introduced into a pastoral or an elegiac composition. The reason why congruity and propriety are pleasing, is manifestly, that all the particulars and circumstances exhibited to view, produce a similar effect, and consequently concur in making a joint impression upon the mind. On the contrary, when the several particulars and circumstances have a tendency to produce effects dissimilar to one another, the emotions excited are frequently inconsistent; and

the mind, sensible of an absurdity in the junction of them, feels no serious emotion.

Contrasts, also, are means by which pleasure is excited, or at least heightened. A large man appears to be taller than he really is, when placed beside a very little man; and a bright colour is seen to much advantage, when we have an opportunity of comparing it with a dark one. In painting, the effects of light and shade are heightened by the artful contrasts of them; in statuary, also, the attitudes of the figures are contrasted with each other, in order to exhibit each of them to the best advantage. After passing through a dark wood, the eye is relieved when it comes again to the open day, and sees an extensive prospect before it. In an epic poem, the mind is transported when it passes from contemplating the awful lake of hell, and the conflicts of superior beings, to visit the delights of paradise. Contrasts, then, appear to please, not from any thing in the objects themselves, but because they place the objects contrasted in a more conspicuous situation than that in which they would otherwise have appeared, and thus hold them out to the attention of the mind. In order to produce an agreeable effect, they must be made use of with judgment, so as to present only those things which deserve to be attended to; and though they be introduced with art, the art ought not to appear.

Intricacy has been mentioned by some writers as one of the constituents of beauty, though for what reason I know not. That intricacy gives pleasure upon some occasions, is unquestionably true. When we have nothing else to do, we are fond of tracing out all the windings of a perplexed path, and of gaining a distinct conception of the whole plan. The labyrinth of Crete did not obtain its celebrity for nothing. After the clue had been discovered, there was, no doubt, something amusing in its inextricable error; but the pleasure lay in the investigation of it, and no stranger returned from it satisfied, till Theseus had been taught to conduct himself through its mazes by the use of Ariadne's thread. A person who is employed in unravelling intricacies, and in solving puzzling difficulties, is engaged in a most laborious operation of the understanding; and whatever pleasure he receives from his labours, or from the result of them, is of an intellectual nature.

Among the objects of taste, the expression of the human countenance deservedly holds a very high rank. In what manner the connection between mind and body is established and carried on, we cannot explain; but that there is such a connection, is known to all. All the passions, desires, and emotions of the heart, express themselves by certain modifications of the eye, or of the features of the face. There is one disposition

of features that indicates good nature, and another that indicates fretfulness and peevishness. Anger, madness, grief, joy, have all particular configurations of countenance by which they are denoted. The eye, especially, is susceptible of an expression of vigour, of penetration, and understanding. Physiognomists have studied to reduce to general maxims, the observations they have collected on this subject; but hitherto, I believe, without much success. In particular instances, however, the fact is abundantly manifest. In every fine countenance, the charm usually consists much more in the expression of good dispositions, than in beauty itself.

Grace is also an object of taste, though it is very difficult to point out in what it consists. According to Montesquieu, its effect is wholly owing to surprise. "We are struck with a sort of astonishment, when a person pleases us more than we had expected. We are agreeably surprised, when we find pleasing qualities, where external appearances did not promise them. Women that are not beautiful, often have graces which beautiful women have not. A beautiful woman strikes at her first appearance; but it frequently happens that we afterwards find our prejudice in her favour has been too high, and we have the mortification of being obliged to moderate the opinion which we had originally formed. Hence our favourable impressions are gradually effaced.

Where, on the contrary, the charm is not in the countenance, we are agreeably surpris'd to find it in the manners. Grace depends more upon the mind than upon the features. A fine countenance makes an impression at once, which gradually wears out; but an amiable mind shews itself by little and little, and always strikes us with new wonder. The graces depend more upon the air and manner, which are continually changing and producing new surpris'e, than upon the face. Beauty depends on the features alone; but grace displays itself in a thousand other circumstances."—There is in these remarks much acute observation on human life. At the same time, the opinion will hardly be received by the generality of those who reflect, that the lasting pleasure infused by the graces, depends upon an emotion so sudden and momentary as surpris'e. Probably it may be found that grace is nothing else but the natural expression of dignified sentiments, united with amiable dispositions, and a frame of mind that is tranquil and unruffled. In all graceful manners, at least, there must be the expression of this state of soul. I would not, however, be understood as if I thought, that wherever there is grace in the manner, there are always to be found the correspondent dignity of soul, and loveliness of disposition, and serenity of temper. We know that whatever is external in behaviour may be acquired by the power of habit, without the cor-

respondent internal frame. Still, however, even the external expression is agreeable.

Imitation is another object of taste, and Dr. Hutcheson has denominated it relative or secondary; to distinguish it from beauty, grandeur, novelty, and others which have been mentioned, that are absolute or primary. There are many cases in which imitations are agreeable; the effects which they produce are known to all who are acquainted with the imitative arts of painting and sculpture. The productions of these arts are viewed with rapture, and spoken of with enthusiasm, by those who are competent judges of their merit; and there is no man, however little conversant in such matters, who does not receive pleasure when he looks upon a fine picture or statue. A considerable part of the pleasure occasioned by these arts, is to be attributed to the objects which they represent. A fine landscape presents to our minds a great number of agreeable rural objects, similar to those we have often visited and contemplated with delight. We receive sensations of the same kind with those which would be excited by the objects themselves, if they were actually present. The imitation of whatever is beautiful or grand, excites in us emotions similar to those which would be excited by the natural objects that are represented. This is, undoubtedly, one great source of the pleasure which is derived from the imitative arts; hence it has

become a rule in these arts, that in order to produce the most powerful effects upon the mind of the spectator, the most pleasant natural objects ought to be selected for the purpose of imitation. A painter ought not only to copy nature, but if he want to inspire into others the highest degree of pleasure, he ought to copy the most delightful and striking, the grandest and most beautiful objects and scenes which nature presents.

There is, however, another kind of pleasure arising from the imitative arts, which does not depend upon the objects imitated, but upon the artist's execution. It is, evidently, a difficult matter to represent a beautiful human figure, for instance, in stone, without deriving any advantage from colour; or to represent solid objects with their various dimensions, and placed at different distances, by colour alone, upon a level plain of board or canvas. It requires great skill and dexterity, joined with much practice, completely to accomplish these ends. We receive a high degree of pleasure, accordingly, from the exertion, when it is happily employed, from reflecting on the skill and abilities of the artist; hence, even objects that are not naturally agreeable, sometimes appear agreeable in the representation. The exactness of imitation, however, never produces so much pleasure as an agreeable object itself; and those artists who employ their abilities on mean objects, are never so successful in producing plea-

sure in the spectator, as those that imitate objects which naturally please. At the same time, the dexterity and skill of the imitator must not be kept out of view, otherwise our pleasure must be considerably diminished. We are often much more pleased with the imitation, from our knowledge of the powers exerted in the production of it, than we would be with the original. Hence, if an artist endeavour to impose upon us by concealing himself, by making us believe that he presents the real object itself, as by painting a statue in the natural colours of the person represented, our pleasure is not so great as it would have been, had we seen the statue undisguised; the imitation becomes, in such a case, too complete.

Painting and sculpture are evidently imitative arts. Music and poetry have also been considered in the same light, though, I think, with less propriety. Music consists of modulated sounds. If it imitate any thing, it must be similar natural sounds; but those sounds which are fitted for such imitation are few; some of them are not agreeable, and few of them have sufficient variety. The murmuring of rivers, and the noise of cascades, will form no music. The shrieks of animals are equally unmusical; and even the singing of birds cannot be imitated in a piece of music, with any advantage. Music must derive its principal merit from expression, and not from imitation. It must be correspondent to the state of mind in

which a person is, when he is calm and tranquil, or when he is under the impression of joy or of grief; and cannot properly be said to imitate or resemble any thing, nor can it properly be said to describe any thing.

Poetry has frequently been called an imitative art. Aristotle, in his *Poetics*, has given it this appellation. He had principally in his view dramatic compositions, intended for the use of the Grecian theatre. A play, when it is performed, may very properly be called an imitation of a real transaction; because the exhibition pretends to resemble something which has actually happened. The same language may be applied to a play, independently of any regard to the performance of it; as the whole of it is conducted in dialogues resembling, in some measure, the conversations of men in common life. The *Iliad* is also denominated an imitative poem by Aristotle, because the heroes are not only described, but are, as it were, brought upon the stage,—introduced as if really present and conversing with one another while carrying on their actions. In these respects, it may be admitted that poetry is imitative.

The same reason does not seem to be equally applicable to some other kinds of poetry. Of what is a description an imitation? It is a number of sentences or verses, intended to communicate to the mind certain conceptions of external things,

with their relations, changes, and mutual influences; but this is no imitation. Words, sentences, or verses, bear no resemblance to the thing described; they are only arbitrary signs, affixed to certain thoughts, and fitted by custom to suggest these thoughts. Poetry, therefore, when it describes, is not imitative. The same thing may be said of it when it illustrates any subject, or when it presents to us various images, with a view to amuse the fancy, or to excite our passions; still it imitates nothing. Words, indeed, are only the representatives of thoughts in our minds, and to these thoughts they have not, and cannot have, the least resemblance. They are not even the representatives of things, and cannot resemble them. Nothing that consists of words can properly be called imitative of any thing, unless it be of something which also consists of words.

Verse, indeed, it is said, may be imitative; it may be slow or quick, smooth or rough, and in consequence of these qualities, may imitate the motion or object described. In this sense, it may be admitted that poetry is imitative, but it is within very narrow limits; and so imperfect is this sort of imitation, that if the words be not also understood, no part of their meaning will ever be communicated to the mind by the sound of the verse alone.

*Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum,*  
is often quoted as a fine instance, and it seems,

in fact, a very expressive line, after we know the meaning of it ; but a person who only heard the sound of it, without knowing the subject, would never guess that it was meant to imitate the galloping of a horse. Mr. Pope, after many other critics, has not only laid down the rule, but has also exemplified it :

'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,  
 The sound must seem an echo to the sense.  
 Soft is the strain when zephyr gently blows,  
 And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows :  
 But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,  
 The hoarse rough verse should, like the torrent, roar.  
 When Ajax strives some stone's vast weight to throw,  
 The line too labours, and the words move slow.  
 Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,  
 Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the  
 main.

In these verses, the sound is adapted, with admirable taste, to the thought which is contained in them ; but they do not appear to be imitations of the whispering of the wind, the running of water, the dashing of waves, the throwing of stones, or swift running. Mr. Pope had too accurate discernment in matters of this sort, to attempt the poor and whimsical conceit of such imitation, in a case where it is impracticable. Such imitations have, however, been attempted ; but hardly ever, I believe, without producing a ludicrous effect. Thus Dryden has endeavour-

ed, in his song for St. Cecilia's Day, to imitate, by means of words, the founding of a trumpet, and the beating of a drum; but even that great master of harmony failed of success, when he undertook to execute what cannot be done:

The trumpet's loud clangor  
Excites us to arms,  
With shrill notes of anger,  
And mortal alarms.  
The double, double, double beat  
Of the thund'ring drum,  
Cries, hark, the foes come,  
Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat.

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## DISCOURSE VII.

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*Concerning the influence of CUSTOM upon our JUDGMENTS, in matters of TASTE.*

SOME have considered beauty and virtue, as qualities of objects and of actions, and as capable of being discerned by certain perceptive powers in our minds, in the same manner that the external qualities of objects are perceived by the external senses. To these perceptive powers, as they do not discover external qualities, they have given the name of internal senses; and as they presuppose that certain qualities have been previously discerned by the external or other direct senses, they have also denominated them reflex senses.

Others have thought that beauty and virtue have no intrinsic qualities by which they can be

distinguished ; and that all the excellence which we ascribe to them, arises from something extrinsic to the object or action itself, to some association in our own minds.

Among the various lights in which we are able to view an object or an action, that of its utility is one of the chief ; but independently of its utility, it would seem that we see in it something intrinsically good or bad, something which attracts our love, or excites our aversion, which gains our approbation, or calls forth our disapprobation.

Though we have internal sensations, and judgments accompanying them, which enable us, without any dependence upon the authority of other persons, to pronounce one object beautiful and another deformed, one action laudable and another blameable ; yet, in a variety of instances, men are certainly ruled by prejudices, and adopt, without examination, the judgments concerning beauty and deformity, right and wrong, which are held by those whom they esteem, or by the generality of those with whom they have occasion to converse. Their minds are under the guidance of influence ; they submit to the authority of custom, either of a more limited or of a more extensive nature.

This influence of custom or prejudice, is observable in the whole conduct of life. It has even

been maintained, that some of our more important judgments and conclusions depend upon it. Our determinations, both in matters of taste and morals, have been represented as founded upon it.

The doctrine, that our judgments in morals depends upon custom, seems to involve in it important consequences; and as it has of late been maintained by a writer of great abilities, and of deservedly popular estimation, I propose afterwards to consider it particularly; at present, I shall only make some observations upon the opinion, that in matters of taste, our judgments are ultimately resolvable into the influence of custom.

The principal, and by far the most ingenious, supporter of this doctrine with whom I have any acquaintance, is Father Buffier, of the order of the Jesuits; an author of great merit in many departments of literature, and whose valuable treatise, *Of First Truths*, has lately been brought into public notice in England, by the assiduity of Dr. Priestly, with a view to detract from the originality of Dr. Reid.

Father Buffier has laid down his opinion with regard to our original judgments in matters of taste, and especially with respect to beauty, in a very paradoxical form of expression. Beauty, under which, as it appears from his illustrations, he comprehends the greater part of the objects of

taste, seems to him to consist in that which is, at the same time, most common and most rare in things of the same species; or, as he also expresses his meaning in different words, it is that particular disposition of parts, which is the most common of all the particular dispositions which occur in the same sort of things. By the term disposition, he understands figure, situation, colour, proportion, arrangement, order, and similar qualities. This doctrine he illustrates in the following manner:—"In human countenances, there is an infinite number of particular dispositions or conformations, one of which is beautiful, and the rest are not. But among the other particular configurations, which we do not denominate beautiful, there are more that resemble that one which is beautiful, than that resemble any of the rest. In fifty countenances, there may be twelve or fifteen configurations, only one of which can be called beautiful. Hence beauty consists in that which is most rare. But among the other countenances there may be eight or ten that much resemble the beautiful one; but among the remaining dispositions or conformations of countenances, there will not be found above one or two, which bear such a resemblance to each other, that they seem to have been made after the same model. Hence it appears that the beautiful is the most common configuration or disposition of parts. Among fifty foreheads, there may be only one that is beautiful; but the generality of the rest have more resem-

blance to that one than they have to one another. Of beautiful countenances, the superiority lies sometimes in one feature, and sometimes in another. If they were all perfect in every part, they would be precisely like one another. In fact, the countenances that are usually mistaken for each other, have always in them more beauty than deformity; and there is no instance of two ugly persons being mistaken for each other. Every ordinary painter can take a striking likeness of an ugly countenance; but it is very difficult to take a just likeness of a fine face, because it has very few, and very delicate distinguishing marks. Beautiful persons resemble one another more than they resemble any person who is not beautiful; and if any beautiful figure be preferred to another, it is on account of some feature more rare, and at the same time more common, than the corresponding feature in the other. If it be said, that beauty consists in proportion, it may be asked, What are the rules of that proportion? for we cannot tell if parts be proportional, until we know what proportion they ought to have. If it be said, that the proportion is ascertained by the uses to which the part is to be applied, still no rule is laid down that is sufficiently accurate. A remarkably large mouth is reckoned a deformity; but it serves the purposes of eating and speaking, and every other use of a mouth, as well as one that is of a middling size. We must, therefore, still have recourse to that which is most seldom and most

frequently met with, to fix our standard of proportion in judging of beauty; and whatever departs far from this standard, we must account deformity. A monster is ugly, because he has scarce any thing in common with the usual form and figure of man. Besides, if beauty consists in the relative proportion of parts to each other, whence would this proportion be learned, except from experience? The most ordinary stature of man, is that which is accounted most beautiful; and it deviates from beauty, if it greatly exceeds it, or falls much below it. The several parts of the body must each of them bear a proportion in length to the height of the whole. That conformation of parts, then, which is accounted beautiful, is precisely that to which we are most accustomed, and with which we are best acquainted. If one class of men accounts that beautiful, which another accounts ugly, it must be admitted, that with relation to them it is beautiful, though not with relation to the rest of mankind. If the inhabitants of the tropical regions think their own black colour, woolly hair, thick lips, and flat features, more beautiful than the European complexion and form of countenance, they have as good a right to laugh at the taste of the European, as he has to laugh at them. The appeal must be made to the whole human race, and be determined by the majority of voices; and the decision will ultimately be founded upon that which is most common upon the whole."

This system is ingenious and plausible. The principles upon which it is founded seem to have been gathered from observation and experience. It will not be easy to produce an instance of any form that is beautiful, which differs in any material respect from what we have been accustomed to see among individuals belonging to the same class of things; nor would it be easy to produce one that is ugly, which resembles the generality of its own species; if we except the particular case, in which, from some associations we have formed, and some prejudices we have adopted, we may account a whole species ugly.

But though that which is most common in each species, be admitted to be also the most beautiful, it may still be doubted, whether it appears most beautiful because it is most common, or whether the generality of objects in reality possess some degree of intrinsic beauty. The bulk of mankind are agreed in their judgments concerning beautiful objects; but whether is it this agreement that renders the objects beautiful? or is there intrinsic beauty in the objects themselves? and are the judgments of men accordingly formed, agreeably to the truth of things? It seems more natural, as well as more correspondent to the common sense of mankind, to suppose, that there is an original distinction between beauty and deformity in the nature of things, and that some objects were invested with beauty by their author, and

others not; than to suppose, that the uniform judgment of men is capricious, and founded upon nothing but the relish formed by habit for those things to which they have been long accustomed. There are, in fact, certain colours and forms, which produce agreeable sentiments whenever they are perceived, which have universally given pleasure in all ages, and which appear beautiful the first time they are seen. Shall we say that the vegetable verdure, with which the surface of the earth is covered, is the most common, or has it most frequently come under our observation?

In the first place, the fact that men in general are more accustomed to this colour than to any other, is not so certain, as that much can be safely built upon it as a foundation. Our eyes are, perhaps, as frequently turned to the hills that skirt the horizon, upon which, on account of their distance, no verdure can be seen, or to the vault of the sky, as to the green carpet that is under our feet. They who live in northern regions, like our own, see the fields and the woods, for the greater part of the year, of a colour very different from green; and they who inhabit large cities, seldom have an opportunity of beholding the verdure of nature at all. To many persons, accordingly, this colour is far from being the most common; but the want of custom does not prevent them from relishing it, whenever they enjoy an opportunity of seeing it. It will hardly be

pretended, that it is the most common colour, because other colours have a greater resemblance to it than they have to one another. Such a supposition, whatever probability it may have when applied to human countenances, would in this case be altogether inapplicable. It is true, that green is one of those colours which are commonly accounted compound, as it may be produced by an intermixture of blue and yellow rays. Still, however, its appearance is simple; its component parts are seldom thought of, and to many are unknown. It has no resemblance to the component colours; and no notion of it could be communicated to a man who had never seen it, by pointing out the ingredients of which it consists. Besides, it is not the only colour that is reckoned compound; for orange may be produced by mixing the rays of yellow and red; and purple, by uniting those of red and blue.

But though it were granted that green is the most common of colours, how can it be made appear that it is also the most rare, which is the other quality requisite to constitute beauty? Here, so far as I can see, the theory of Father Buffier can give us no assistance.

Suppose a man to have spent the whole of his life in a village, in which there is only one elegant house, and all the rest are mean cottages; will not this person pronounce that house the

most beautiful in the village? On what does he found his judgment? It is, no doubt, the most rare form of a house he has ever seen; but surely it is not also the most common, for all the other houses in the village resemble one another more than they resemble it. Let a man who has visited all the cathedrals in the kingdom, be brought to St. Paul's, it will appear to him unlike any of those which he had formerly visited. All those great buildings which he had been examining, were built in the form of a cross, and in the Gothic style of architecture: All of them had a considerable resemblance to one another. He now beholds a building of a very different kind; but it will not, on that account, appear to him deformed or monstrous. He will certainly admire it as a noble piece of architecture.—Is there a child who does not prefer a smooth surface to a rough one; and a regular figure, in which all the parts are connected with one another, to an unformed and unconnected mass? The long arched neck of the swan is singular among birds, and the branching antlers of the stag among beasts; but they are not upon this account reckoned ugly or monstrous: On the contrary, all acknowledge that they are beautiful.

The truth seems to be, that the ingenious author had in his eye nothing but human beauty. It has, accordingly, been only to it, that he has endeavoured to accommodate his theory. It does

not, however, account in a satisfactory manner for the beauty of the human countenance. There are innumerable faces, all of which are, in many respects, different from one another; and yet all of them have an agreeable appearance. Of fine countenances there are numerous varieties, modifications, and classes. There is no occasion that all beautiful figures should be cast in the same mould. There are various species of them; and though a particular person be most struck and pleased with one of them, yet his taste is not so limited, that he may not receive pleasure from beholding many others, whose features and complexion have little resemblance to that one which has principally engaged his attention and his affections. He has no occasion to wait till he has compared what he has now seen, with what he has seen before, in order to form a proper judgment on the case.

If this ingenious and laborious writer had applied his theory to some other subjects, to which it seems to be as applicable as to beauty; or to any object of taste, he would have been led to suspect its truth. In morals, for instance, he might have said, upon the same hypothesis, that virtue is that course of conduct which is at once most common and most rare among men; most common, because the conduct of most men has more resemblance to it than its contrary; and most rare, because all men deviate in some re-

spects, though not equally, from the perfect rule. Hence virtue is approved of, agreeably to the general custom and observation of men. But if in any nation, a particular vice, persecution, for instance, or the offering of human sacrifices, be accounted virtuous; vice, among the members of such a nation, changes its nature in these respects, and becomes virtuous. We do not, therefore, judge of virtue from the dictates of any natural faculty, but from observing the general usage and behaviour of men. If he had applied his theory in this manner, he would soon have been led to doubt of its truth, even with regard to matters of taste.—This author, it is true, reduces the whole of theology to two propositions; first, that the testimony of the church is incontrovertible; and secondly, that the church actually teaches, and has always taught, as appointed by God, all the articles of faith and worship. But, though a Jesuit, he seems to have been more liberal with regard to those matters that are of moral obligation, than those which are connected with religious belief.

There is, perhaps, no system that ever was formed upon any subject, however whimsical and imaginary it may be in various respects, which is not upon one side or another supported by truth, or something that resembles truth. An hypothesis may be built upon a very narrow foundation, and be exceedingly different from a conclusion found-

ed upon all the facts and observations that should be taken into the account ; but it is usually proped up by some facts, which give it a specious appearance of solidity. Though custom be not in reality the rule of our judgments concerning beauty and deformity, or any other objects of taste, any more than it is the rule of our judgments concerning truth and falsehood ; yet a great number of judgments, concerning those things which are agreeable or disagreeable to us, certainly depend upon it. Whatever things we have been accustomed to see united, we expect to see united again ; and if the accustomed union does not take place, we feel some sort of disappointment. We have been accustomed to see a steeple have a weather-cock, though it has certainly no natural connection with a steeple ; yet such is the force of custom, that if we see a steeple without one, we think immediately that we perceive a defect. A ship has no occasion for a carved image in its prow ; yet a sailor would notice the want of it, almost as soon as the want of a rudder. In such cases we are led by natural principles of association. Several things are linked together in our minds, in consequence of their having been usually seen together ; and when one of them occurs, we look for that object which we have usually observed to be its concomitant. The influence of custom upon our judgments, in a great variety of respects, is most elegantly illus-

trated by Dr. Smith, in his theory of moral sentiments.

Fashion is a particular modification of custom. We call those things fashionable, which are not common among the great body of the people; but are made use of as ornamental, showy, and splendid, by those who are distinguished by rank or station. The dress, the furniture, the equipage, and even the language of the opulent and magnificent, acquire a charm from the dignity ascribed to their possessors, and from the respect and veneration with which they are viewed. In all circumstances of this sort, the great and the gay are imitated by those who are in lower stations. From an evident association, every thing which those of higher rank make use of, appears genteel and graceful. Dress and furniture are, in a great measure, under the influence of fashion. Some forms of them may be, in themselves, more graceful and elegant than others; but it is seldom from such considerations, that the choice in articles of these sorts is regulated. Every person, in such matters, yields up his own judgment to the whim and caprice of those who are in the rank of life above his own. However ridiculous the fashion may be in the eyes of a foreigner, it appears graceful to those who follow it.

The influence of fashion is not confined to dress and furniture. It appears in every thing else that

is accounted ornamental. The gardens, parks, and pleasure grounds, which surround great houses, have undergone many revolutions in their form and ornaments, from this cause. If a man of magnificence forms an artificial lake, because he has not the command of one that is natural; his neighbour, from the power of example, will perhaps scoop out a pond near the brink of a navigable river. Whatever may be the natural situation of his grounds, his groves and his walks must be copies in miniature of those which surround the dwelling of the great man whom he admires :

Thro' his young woods how pleas'd Sabinus stray'd,  
 Or sat delighted in the thick'ning shade!  
 With annual joy the reddening shoots to greet,  
 Or see the stretching branches long to meet!  
 His son's fine taste an op'ner vista loves,  
 Foe to the Dryads of his father's groves;  
 One boundless green, or flourish'd carpet views,  
 With all the mournful family of yews.

Even music, versification, and style in composition, are liable to the same sort of influence. A man of superior genius frequently guides the taste of his cotemporaries in some one or other of these respects. It has been said, not without probability, that the lively, pointed, short, and asthmatical period, at present so universally made use of in France, owes its prevalence to the commanding example of Voltaire.

It is readily acknowledged, that agreeable sensations are derived from an attention to the laws of custom and fashion. These, however, ought to be distinguished from those pleasures of taste which are derived from what is really beautiful or grand in the works of nature or of art. In all probability, it has principally been owing to a neglect of this important distinction, that the principles of taste have sometimes been represented as arbitrary and capricious. Every thing which entirely depends upon custom, is certainly capricious. But there are many agreeable objects that have continued throughout all ages to be agreeable. Fashion may sometimes oppose the natural principles of beauty and elegance; but whenever it does so, it cannot be very lasting. The love of grace and elegance must at last prevail, though it should be after a tedious struggle. The fashion in gardening, and in building, is now more suitable to nature than it formerly was; and in all probability, it will last much longer than those fashions which immediately preceded it. It is not to be suspected that the opulent will soon return to the Gothic arch, the narrow-grated window, the long avenue, the formal terrace walk, the *jet-d'eau* from the mouth of a triton, and the cascade supplied from the temple of a water-nymph.

We sometimes speak of a man who has good taste in dress and furniture. It is evident, that when we express ourselves in this manner, we do

not mean to ascribe to that person any superior discernment, with respect to those things which have real beauty and elegance. We do not ascribe to him any taste that is founded upon real principles. We do not believe, whatever he may pretend, that he in reality perceives any superior beauty in any one colour or figure, than in another. We know, on the contrary, that his notions of grace and elegance change as frequently as the moon; and that in a few weeks, he will declare those things to be odious and intolerable, which he now commends. It is with no propriety that we attribute taste to such a person. He does not reflect upon what is truly beautiful, but only observes with attention whatever is particular in the dress and furniture of those who shine in the highest circle. The most accomplished in this species of taste, if taste it must be called, are milliners, ladies' waiting-maids, taylor's, hair-dressers, upholsterers, and coach-makers.

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## DISCOURSE VIII.

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*On the Arrangement of ANCIENT and MODERN  
LANGUAGES. \**

**A** MODERN European, who pays attention to the languages of antiquity, is naturally struck with those peculiarities by which they are remarkably distinguished from the language which he himself acquired in his childhood. The most striking mark by which ancient languages are distinguished from modern, is the great variety of flexions which they employ to express the several relations of objects, and the time and modifications of action. The manner in which this difference between ancient and modern languages arose from the circumstances of mankind, has been excellently pointed out and illustrated by Dr. Smith.

\* This, and the following Discourse, were formerly printed in a Collection of Essays, published at Edinburgh by the late Rev. Mr. Chapman, minister of Kinfauns.

Besides the variety of flexion, there is another peculiarity in the un-compounded languages of antiquity, that appears remarkable to a modern European, to wit, the inverted order in which words were placed, both in speaking and writing. The arrangement of his own language is familiar to him; and in consequence of the ease with which he makes use of it, and the difficulty which he finds in comprehending what is arranged upon different principles, he is apt to think that it alone can be natural. The other form of arrangement appears to him to be arbitrary, and merely the work of art.

This conclusion, which a modern European is apt to form, is not void of some plausible reasons to support it. The general principles of grammar and syntax have a foundation in nature, and are accordingly the same in all languages. In the order of nature, the agent or cause exists before the action, and the action is performed before the effect be produced. When a person, therefore, has occasion to mention the agent, the action, and the effect, it seems natural to follow the order in which they appear; and to place, first, the word expressing the agent; in the next place, the word expressing the action; and, last of all, the word expressing the effect, or the thing acted upon. Accordingly, the rules of construction observed in all languages follow this order, and place the subjective member of the sentence first, the attributive

next, and the objective last. The construction of ancient, as well as modern languages, supposes this rule, and is founded upon it. It appears, therefore, unnatural, at first sight, that the arrangement of words should not be directed by the same principle. The order, indeed, which this rule points out, is very often followed in ancient languages; but this circumstance does not seem to arise from any regard to the rule, for it is also frequently deviated from. The transpositions which every where occur, appear evidently to be reducible to no grammatical principles. If no other account of the appearance can be given, we may be led by these considerations, to look upon the arrangement of ancient languages as altogether arbitrary, the work of study and contrivance; and to call it artificial, as distinguished from the arrangement of our own, which we know to be natural.

It is evident that the one of these peculiarities in ancient languages necessarily supposes the other. There can be little inverted arrangement without variety of flexion. Words, which express things inseparably connected with one another, must always be understood as if they were joined; and their relation could not be perceived, unless it were denoted by some common mark. In modern languages, the connection of such words is generally pointed out by juxta-position; because there is nothing in the words themselves that can answer

the purpose. On the other hand, the variety of termination in the ancient languages, made it generally an easy matter to discover what words were closely connected, though they were not placed near one another; and thus rendered a great variety of arrangement practicable, without much danger of ambiguity.

But, though the variety of flexion in the ancient languages enabled those who spoke them, to make a choice among several arrangements of the same words, each of which they could adopt without becoming unintelligible; it may justly be called in question, whether this was the only circumstance that introduced inverted arrangement. That it is a circumstance, without which the varieties of arrangement which they made use of would have been impracticable, cannot be doubted; but it would appear, that there must have been something farther that induced them to forsake the grammatical order. The order of construction would lead people to place words, expressing things intimately connected, close by one another, unless some consideration of importance directed them to a different arrangement. That they had it in their power to deviate, does not seem to be a sufficient reason for their deviating in fact.

There seems to be only one consideration, arising from the nature of language itself, that could lead to such an arrangement in any case; and,

though it undoubtedly had some influence, it is not of sufficient importance to have established an universal custom. The consideration I mean, is the preference in found that one form of arrangement possesses over another. Men have unquestionably an attachment to harmonious arrangement in language; and every nation has shewn this attachment in its early poetry. But this attachment will go no great length. It is relinquished, on all occasions, for the sake of expression; and hence the sounds, in almost all languages, that signify any sort of exertion, are harsh. Besides, inversions are common in the rude jargon of barbarous nations, that cannot be supposed to have paid attention to melody, or any other object of taste, and that have scarce words, or rude sounds enough, to express their meaning with regard to the common necessaries of life.

If men had been led to a transposed arrangement, by a regard to the harmony of their language, this form of arrangement might have been properly called artificial. On this supposition, they would have considered carefully, in what order words might be placed to be most agreeable to the ear; and the order which nature points out would have been changed by design. But it will hardly be imagined, that almost any particular, with regard to the common language of any country, proceeded from design. Necessity forced men to invent words, for the purposes of

social intercourse ; the sounds fixed upon were, in general, accidental ; flexion was fallen upon as the easiest expedient for expressing relation, time, and modification, and became universal from analogy. Pronunciation is the effect of custom. In these matters, there is no law-giver who has formed a code of regulations, or has studied what is best, and commanded men to adhere to it. Grammarians are philosophers, not law-givers. They have no existence till language is formed, and has become analogous from causes independent of design. They collect facts, and arrange them, and draw conclusions from them ; but they are allowed to make no innovations. In matters of language, the people claim, and exercise a right of making laws for themselves.

If these remarks be well founded, with regard to language in other particulars, it is reasonable to suppose, that the case is similar with respect to arrangement. It had, in all probability, an origin, independent of art. It is true, indeed, that after a language has become regular and polished, and after the people who make use of it have become attentive to elegance and beauty of expression, they will pay attention to the arrangement of words. They will readily observe, that, when placed in one order, they have more perspicuity, strength, or beauty, than when placed in another. They will make a choice among the various arrangements which the genius of the language, or

the authority of custom, permits them to employ ; and will convert this, as well as other particulars, into an object of taste. But this was not the situation of those who first spoke in transposed language.

Transposition, such as we meet with in the ancient languages, appears to rise from natural principles ; and may, therefore, be expected in every language that will admit of it, consistently with perspicuity. The reason of it is not to be sought in the ingenuity and contrivance of those who invented the language, or made use of it, but in the common succession of thoughts in the human mind.

A man naturally utters his thoughts in the order in which they occur to him. This order varies according to the circumstances in which he is placed. A man who is keenly engaged in the performance of any action, does not see what he is doing, nor the effects that arise from it, in the same light in which they appear to the indifferent spectator. His thoughts, with regard to it, succeed in a different order from those of the man who is not interested in it. The mind of him who is agitated by any passion, is filled with reflections concerning what he has done or suffered, or intends to do. On the contrary, nothing enters into the mind of the cool spectator, but the actions which he has seen. Bring these persons to

relate the transaction that has passed, and they will give their accounts of it in very different forms. He who was no way concerned in it, will endeavour to communicate to others, a view of the facts, in the same light in which they occurred to himself. He will inform you how the action began, how it was carried on, and how it was finished. The person who was engaged in it, will, on the contrary, represent, in strong colours, those circumstances which operated most powerfully upon his own feelings. He will speak, as if he endeavoured to gain your sympathy, or to rouse your indignation. The facts which he produces will not be arranged in the order in which they happened, but in the order in which his passion has thrown them, to answer its own purposes. His narration will, of consequence, convey no clear view of the transaction. A child, who is much offended, commonly dwells upon such circumstances as convey a very imperfect notion of what has happened; and, frequently, you must employ a great number of interrogatories before you understand the cause of his complaint. Upon this fact is founded the distinction of direct and indirect description, taken notice of by critics. The former of these describes objects and events, as they are in themselves, or as they appear to the dispassionate spectator: The latter expresses the feelings of a person who has beheld them with emotion, and who only selects such circumstances as have made an impression upon his own mind.

Since, then, our thoughts, upon many occasions, do not follow the order in which things really are, or in which events have happened, it is evident, that neither will the expressions of them follow that order. Speech will naturally follow the order in which the things which it expresses are suggested to the mind. A man, in all cases, when he is under no restraint, naturally utters first what is uppermost in his thoughts. He who is zealous about any thing that fully occupies his mind, does not begin to explain his conceptions with a formal preface, and then proceed to open up matters gradually to the understandings of his hearers; but he enters at once into the middle of his subject, and, following the dictates of his own heart, addresses the passions of his hearers without intending it; not recollecting, that they have not yet received proper information. Lyric poetry, which usually represents the passions and feelings of an agitated mind, borrows this abrupt manner; and a great part of the poet's art lies in conveying proper information concerning the subject which has given occasion for so much warmth, without appearing to intend it.

It may naturally be expected, that what takes place in a speech expressive of the speaker's passions, will also take place in every part of it; and that the arrangement of words in sentences, especially if the force of habit be not powerful, must frequently deviate from the order of construction.

A man will naturally name first that object which makes the greatest impression upon him, and afterwards the objects or actions connected with it. A man, who is speaking under the influence of admiration, anger, desire, or any other passion, mentions first the cause of his present emotions, and then the objects or circumstances united with it. It is obvious, that any one of those things which are expressed by the different constituent parts of a sentence, may be the immediate occasion of the emotion which is felt. The agent, the action, or the effect, may each of them produce the affection of love, admiration, fear, desire, or anger. On some occasions, even a quality, a circumstance, or a contingency, may be the immediate cause of the sensation. It is evident, then, that, if the nature of the language be such as will admit of it, any one of the constituent parts of a sentence may be placed first or last, according to the importance which it appears to possess in the imagination of the speaker. Still, however, the grammatical principles, which mark out the relations in which the different parts of the sentence stand to one another, remain unaltered, though the order which they point out be not followed.

If men were pure intelligences, without affections and passions, it is probable that there would be no inversions in language. If this were the case, the sole purpose of speaking would be to communicate information; and in doing this,

every man would follow the order of things, because it would be the same with the order of his own thoughts. He would first express the cause, then the action, next the effect, and last of all the circumstances or other peculiarities connected with them. He would follow, in every respect, the grammatical order, and it alone would be natural. But men are frequently under the influence of strong passions and affections. Hence it becomes one of the uses of language to express the emotions and feelings of the heart, as well as the perceptions and judgments of the understanding. Perhaps this use of speech, at all times, and especially among the first inventors of language, is more frequent than the other. Men express their admiration, their desires, and their resentment, more frequently than they relate or describe, with a view of communicating information. Hence they are naturally inclined to make frequent use of transpositions. If the language be uncompound- ed, and have great variety of terminations, by means of which the grammatical order can be discerned, though the order of the words be altered, as was the case in the ancient languages, these transpositions will be frequently used. They will become equally familiar to those who are habituated to them with the grammatical order, and will naturally take place of it, when any circumstance of strength or beauty seems to give them a preference. We are as often affected by the objects acted upon, or the effect, as by the agent or

cause. Of consequence, the oblique cases may be expressed first, as frequently as the nominative. When this order has obtained the authority of custom, men will make use of it when they are calm and deliberate, as well as when they are agitated. Accordingly, we find, that this is the case in ancient languages. The verb or word which expresses action or passion may also sometimes stand first; because the action itself, independently of the agent or effect, may sometimes strike the imagination. This order, however, must be much less frequent than either of the former. It is generally the objects, and not the operation, with which we are affected. Though we know that the action is necessary to produce the change by which our emotions are excited, yet it does not make the principal figure among our conceptions. We are apt, indeed, when we study a language, to look upon the verb as the principal word in a sentence; and it is natural that we should do so, when we consider it in a grammatical light. It is the key of the sentence; and, till it be found, the other parts are inaccessible, and without meaning. But the action expressed by it does not commonly make so distinguished an appearance in the eye of a person who speaks a language, as it does in the eye of a grammarian. In the generality of cases, he considers the verb as nothing more than the word that connects together the subjective and objective expressions, and points out their connection, relation, or influence upon

one another. It is essential to the sentence; for without it no meaning can be expressed; but it makes not a principal figure in the speaker's imagination. He will, therefore, in the generality of cases, be inclined to assign it the last place, and to mention first the two objects which more immediately interest him. This, accordingly, was the order established by habit in the Latin language; and Quintilian tells us, that every transgression of this rule was a transposition. When speaking concerning the propriety of ending sentences with verbs, he observes, "*Sine dubio omne quod non cludet hyperbaton est.*" This established custom was of great consequence to the writers and orators of Rome. It enabled them always to keep a word in reserve, without which the sentence was not complete, till they had expressed the less essential circumstances, and thus rendered it impossible for them, without gross negligence, to make use of a sentence, which, as we express it, dragged a tail.

Sometimes, it may neither be the things which act, or are acted upon, nor the action itself, that chiefly interests the mind; but some modification, quality, or circumstance; and, in those cases, what are called the terminative or circumstantial members of the sentence, may be those which will be first expressed by an agitated mind. This form of arrangement is not peculiar to the ancient languages, but is common to all languages whatever.

“ Now,” says Hamlet, when meditating whether or not he should kill his uncle, whom he found praying,

“ Now might I do it pat ; now he is praying ;  
 “ And now I’ll do’t.”

It was the conveniency of the time that made the principal figure in his imagination.

It is to be observed, with respect to the transpositions of ancient languages, that the order of words was so far ascertained by custom, that it cannot be looked upon as arbitrary. The modern critics are in a gross mistake, who ring the changes upon the capital words of a sentence, and affirm, that the Roman manner of speaking admitted of arrangements equal to them in number ; and the moderns, who write in Latin, are in the same mistake, when they think they are writing the Roman language, while they are transposing words in whatever manner seems agreeable to their fancy or ear. The Roman arrangement was far from being in such an uncertain situation. Quintilian produces some instances of inversions, which he thinks blameable, that would scarce appear to us to be inversions at all. He thinks the following sentence in Cic. pro Cluentio, needs an apology, though we would scarce consider it as uncommon. “ *Animadverti, judices, omnem accusatoris orationem in duas divisam esse partes : In duas*

*partes divisam esse,*" says he, "*rectum est, sed durum et incomptum.*" He censures the following expression of Domitius Afer as affected, which we have often seen imitated, "*Gratias agam continuo.*" Some inversions, he says, are entirely peculiar to poetry, and are inadmissible in prose, as in Virgil, "*Hyperboreo septem subjecta trioni;*" "*Quod oratio nequaquam recipiet,*" observes Quintilian. And the following arrangements in the poems of Mæcenas, he thinks unallowable, even in verse :

Sole et aurora rubent plurima.  
Inter sacra movit aqua fraxinos.  
Ne exequias quidem unus inter miserrimos viderem  
Meas.

It appears, then, that the arrangement of ancient languages was not artificial nor arbitrary; but arose from nature, and was limited by determinate boundaries. The ancients were as sensible as we are, when violent transpositions were made use of. They collected uncommon inversions from their poets and orators; and these collections have a place in their books of rhetoric.

After the German and Tartar nations took possession of the Roman empire, compounded languages were formed out of the different simple languages that had been spoken by the conquerors and the conquered. Variety of flexion, which is one principal characteristic of the ancient lan-

guages, was in a good measure lost, in consequence of the circumstances of the united people. The effect of this change was, that the other peculiarity of un-compounded languages was also in a considerable degree taken away. When variety of termination was no longer in use, the nominative and oblique cases of nouns, in the greater number of instances, could only be distinguished by their position. The place of the attributive member of the sentence was, for the most part, fixed after the subjective, and before the objective. The grammatical order took place of the order which the operation of passion and affection had introduced, and custom had established, in the primitive languages of both people.

It is not to be supposed, that the authors of the new compounded languages were more employed in the exercises of the understanding, or were less subject to the influence of violent passions, than their forefathers, the inventors of the primitive languages, had been. The operation of their affections and feelings should naturally have led them to retain the ancient arrangement. But the operation of the causes which took away their declensions and conjugations was irresistible. Unacquainted with the principles of grammar, they could not learn the complex flexions of a foreign language. They were forced to make up a language of a simple form, which, from the nature of it, could admit of few inversions. They had

no choice left, but to adopt the order of construction, or to become unintelligible.

The people, however, who had made use of this compounded language, had passions and affections equally strong with those of their forefathers. It is not to be imagined, therefore, that they would form a language that had no provision made for the expression of their feelings and emotions. Though the terminations of their language afforded no proper means for laying open their sensations, it may easily be believed that they were not destitute of expedients sufficient for the purpose. Even without the use of cases, and with very little flexion, the modern languages of Europe admit of variety in arrangement. They have active and passive voices, much more determinate than those of the Romans. By substituting the one of these, instead of the other, it is easy for the speaker to place the subjective or objective first, according to his pleasure. By means of prepositions, and auxiliary verbs, a considerable variety of arrangement can be introduced, without producing ambiguity, though not so much as could be done by the terminations of antiquity. In the disposal of circumstances, all the variety of the uncompounded languages is admissible. Translators of ancient authors seem frequently not to have been aware of the powers which the language in which they wrote possessed. They have generally formed their translations upon the grammatical order

of the original. The consequence is, that the conceptions of the author are entirely disarranged in the translation, and the object which he placed first is thrown to the end of the sentence. This appears to be one of the principal reasons that the generality of translations want vigour and spirit. The inconvenience might generally be avoided, and the conceptions of the author preserved in the order in which he put them, by the expedients which have been mentioned.

The capital circumstance in which modern languages differ from the ancient, is, that in the former, the place of the verb is almost invariably fixed to a situation where it does not produce the best effect. Active verbs can seldom be reserved for the close of a sentence, without transpositions, which the analogy of modern languages will scarce permit. The place of the verb, as was formerly observed, is of little consequence to the expression of passion, because it is not the action that generally makes the principal figure in the imagination; and where it does, the verb can be put in the principal place, by an allowable inversion in the most compounded European language. The determinate situation of the verb is indeed a disadvantage in modern languages, in another respect. As it cannot be generally thrown to the close of the sentence, so as to preserve the suspense of the hearer, it requires art in the speaker to dispose of the circumstantial and terminative ex-

pressions among the principal members, in such a manner as to prevent a languid addition, after the sense is complete. We know, however, from the practice of the best writers, that this inconvenience is by no means insuperable.

The ease with which they who made use of the ancient languages could keep up the attention, by the position of the verb, is the chief circumstance in favour of the ancient arrangement. It is not, however, the only one. The varieties that could be introduced, without violating the laws of custom, contributed much to the harmony of speech, under the direction of a person who could make proper use of them. The variety that was admissible, appears to have been considerable, though it has been shewn that it was not so great as has been often imagined.

With respect to strength and energy, so far as such properties depend on arrangement, ancient and modern languages seem to be nearly on a level. In either of them, the object that principally affects the imagination may, by a proper management, be made to hold the principal place. In both, the order which custom has rendered the most general, expresses nothing either passionate or affecting. The inverted order, anciently made use of in common conversation, presented no object to the mind in a striking point of view, any more than the order of construction

does to us. In both of them, the deviations alone can be felt.

With regard to perspicuity, there appear to be some advantages on the side of modern languages. When a language is transpositive, it is not easy to tell what number of different terminations might be necessary, to prevent all ambiguity, and to make the hearer necessarily perceive the relation that subsists among the words which are intimately connected. There can be no doubt, however, but such a number might be fallen upon. But the number made use of by the ancients was not sufficient for the purpose. The writer or speaker was obliged to be upon his guard, even when expressing himself in the common form, lest his words should be susceptible of two meanings; and the best writers, after all their care, have not always been successful. Often the meaning to be chosen must be determined from the connection, and not from the words. The want of articles, and the omission of the personal pronouns, were great causes of this ambiguity; but it also arose, in a considerable degree, from the variations admissible in the common arrangement, and from want of determinate precision in the flexions. “*Chremetem audivi percussisse Demeam.*” It is impossible, from this sentence, to say who was the sufferer. In the following, the meaning cannot be mistaken; but the reference of the words is not determined by the grammatical rules of the

language. “*Visum esse à se hominem librum scribentem.*” If we were not prevented by the sense, we would take the book to be the writer, as soon as the man. This is often the case among prose writers; but ambiguity is much more frequent among poets, who allow themselves greater liberty in transposition. It is not easy to tell how many senses the following line in Virgil might admit of, if we were to overlook its connection :

“*Saxa vocant Itali mediis quæ in fluctibus aras.*”

It may be what Virgil meant, “The Italians call those particular rocks in the midst of the billows, altars; or, they call rocks in the sea, in general, altars;” or, which seems, at first sight, the most obvious meaning, it may be, “The Italians call altars, which are in the midst of the billows, rocks;” or, “They call those particular altars, rocks;” or it may be, “Men call all the rocks, or these particular rocks, in the midst of the Italian sea, altars;” or, “They call all the altars, or these particular altars, in the midst of the Italian sea, rocks.” There are more meanings of which it is susceptible. Some part of this ambiguity arises from the want of articles; but a good part of it is owing to arrangement. A man could scarce find eight words in a modern language, that could be disposed so as to admit of so many meanings. In all languages, indeed, there will frequently occur ambiguous expressions; and

it might be easy to produce numbers of them from modern poets, who make use of transpositions; but they are not nearly so frequent as in the ancient poets. In prose, the construction is usually determined precisely by the words, without any regard to the sense. The principal parts of a sentence are almost regularly known by their position; and all relations and modifications are much more distinctly marked, by prepositions and auxiliary verbs, than they were anciently by cases, and moods, and tenses. As terminations are not regarded, we are free from all the confusion that arises from their ambiguity. For the purpose, therefore, of conveying information with precision, the arrangement of modern languages appears to possess some advantages over the arrangement of ancient languages. It is sometimes defective in point of beauty and harmony; but it possesses excellence of a much superior nature.

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## DISCOURSE IX.

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*On the CAUSES that have promoted or retarded the  
GROWTH of the FINE ARTS.*

**H**ISTORIANS have remarked, that the eminent poets, sculptors, painters, orators, and elegant writers, both of ancient and modern times, if we admit a very few exceptions, all flourished within the limits of four short periods. The ancient Greeks were the first who distinguished themselves by a relish for elegant performances; and, among them, many strove for the palm of excellence, and obtained it. Their eminent orators, writers, and artists, were, for the most part, cotemporaries; and lived during the period that intervened between the Peloponnesian war and the death of Alexander the Great. Polite literature, and the fine arts, made their second appearance in ancient Rome during the age of Augustus. The

third period comprehends the latter part of the sixteenth century, during which the arts were encouraged in modern Italy by the family of Medici. The last period began in the reign of Louis XIV. The spirit which made its first exertions in France, soon extended some measure of its influence over other nations ; and notwithstanding the presages of its approaching departure, which have often been remarked by those who were disposed to prefer the age of their fathers to their own, there is reason to believe that its energy is still felt, and that the limits of its empire are gradually extending to countries formerly rude and unpolished.

“ No person of reflection and taste,” says Voltaire \*, “ reckons more than these four ages in the history of the world. These four happy ages brought the arts to perfection ; they stand for æras in the history of the human understanding, and they are patterns for posterity to imitate.”

It is not to be wondered at, if philosophers have inquired, with uncommon curiosity, into the causes which promoted the fine arts during these periods. In those ages, human nature seemed to have assumed an appearance very different from that in which it had been seen at other times. The Athenians, in the days of Pericles and of Demosthe-

\* *Siecle de Louis XIV. Introd.*

nes, bore little resemblance to those savages who needed the bloody laws of Draco. The Romans, in the reign of Augustus, could not have been discerned by their taste and manners, to be descendants of the barbarous people that had formerly fought with the Samnites and the Veientes. The tempers, inclinations, and pursuits of men, seemed to have undergone an entire revolution. Posterity felt powers, of which their forefathers had never been conscious, and derived their principal enjoyments from sources that had formerly been unknown. In the mean time, those nations of the world which were unconnected with Greece and Rome, remained in ignorance and barbarity. There was scarce any thing, except external figure, that could entitle a wild Scythian to be arranged in the same order of beings with a polished Athenian. The mind of the one seemed to differ in every respect from that of the other. The Scythian had no more comprehension of those subjects which employed almost entirely the thoughts of the Athenian, than a man born deaf has of musical sounds. In one country, man was a creature that seemed to be formed for excellence, and that possessed an eminent rank in the scale of beings; in another, he seemed to surpass his kindred beast of prey in nothing but superior cunning and dexterity, and in his capacity of acting in concert with other animals of his own species.

Both in ancient and in modern times, men of

speculation have endeavoured to discover the causes which have produced such a remarkable diversity in the powers and the tastes of nations. The accounts of this appearance that have been delivered, are very different. Some have ascribed it to the efficiency of natural causes, and others have sought for it in the political circumstances of particular countries. The theory embraced in one age, usually solved all the difficulties which had occurred with respect to the matter in preceding times; but the next revolution in favour of the arts, discovered that it was not built upon a solid foundation. Circumstances were omitted in the account, without paying a proper regard to which, no just conclusion could be formed.

The ancient Greeks, with Aristotle at their head, forgetting the rudeness of their ancestors, transmitted to them in the most indisputable records, and every day recalled to their memories by many of their ancient laws and customs, imagined that nature had been more liberal of her gifts to themselves than to any other people. They thought that they were born with those superior qualifications which they certainly possessed. They accordingly looked on themselves as of a different order from those nations whom they styled barbarians; and, with an insolence, inspired by this persuasion of natural superiority, believed themselves formed to be masters, and the rest of mankind to be marked out by the Author of Nature

to be their slaves. The posterity of these Greeks beheld a melancholy reverse. The fathers had left behind them models of excellence; but the sons were incapable of imitating them. Rome, formerly considered by them as the seat of barbarians, conquered their country, and outshone them in the arts. They were not able to account for this change, consistently with their ancient claim to natural superiority. To solve the difficulty that now occurred, they had recourse to moral causes. "Liberty," said they, "is the only nurse of the fine arts. When Athens ceased to be free, the powers of genius departed from her. Restore her democracy, and the arts will again return to her; but they can never attain their full growth, and exert themselves with vigour, unless where the government is democratical." This manner of accounting for the appearance is plausible; but the experience of modern times has shown that it is not strictly just. Free government is undoubtedly favourable to every great and manly exertion; but other causes may sometimes operate, so as to supply the want of it. After the days of Greek and Roman liberty, the fine arts again rose to eminence; but not in democratical governments, like that of Athens. They have flourished in aristocratical states, and in an absolute monarchy.

After the revival of learning, princes and chieftains, who were themselves void of literature, fre-

quently paid respect to the genius and taste of those who were distinguished by their literary talents. They retained them in their castles and palaces, or gained their friendship by acts of liberality. In the sixteenth century, there was no poet nor grammarian who had not his patron; and whenever he lost the favour of one, he endeavoured to procure the protection and support of another. There are many instances in the annals of literature, before the influence of Gothic manners had expired, of poets who wandered about from court to court, seeking encouragement and patronage. In those times, there was no person that was independent, except great barons, and the members of free corporations. Among the latter of these, a man of literary merit might obtain protection; but his profession could not procure him the means of subsistence; for wealth had not yet diffused itself among the people. His resource, therefore, was to gain admission into the retinue of a powerful lord, whose vanity he might flatter, or whose exploits he might extol to the skies. To be dependent upon a powerful baron, in those ages, was not accounted dishonourable. Even the brothers and kindred of the chieftain aspired to no superior situation. In process of time, poets, musicians, and painters, such as poets, musicians, and painters, then were, became almost necessary appendages of a court; and the prince or baron valued himself upon the reputation acquired by the artists whom he patronised. During the pontifi-

cate of Julius II. and of Leo X. this sort of literary patronage had become highly in vogue. Princes vied with each other to obtain possession of an eminent artist, and endeavoured to allure men of distinguished fame, by high encouragements, to take up their residence at their courts. The labours of the artist, who was thus courted and patronised, attracted more and more attention, and were spoken of with applause in foreign states. While men of taste and genius were thus in a dependent situation, during a period when the blessings of independence were neither envied nor known, Italy produced several poets of eminence, and the best painters the world is yet acquainted with.

About the middle of the last century, taste had made considerable progress in France. The great men who had surrounded Louis XIV. wanted to render his court as brilliant as possible; and that monarch himself, from the day on which he took into his own hands the reins of government, discovered a strong attachment to every thing that was splendid and magnificent. An ornament to his reign, of such distinguished lustre as eminence in the fine arts, could not be neglected. A project was formed, and the execution of it was entered into with vigour, to make the age of Louis as remarkable in France for poetry and painting, as the pontificate of Leo X. had been in Italy. The means employed for the purpose, were founded upon the views which were at that time entertained

concerning the causes from which excellence in the fine arts proceeds, and which had been naturally enough suggested by recent facts. Those persons who had been accounted the ornament of Italy in the preceding century, had been patronised and pensioned by princes; and their emulation had, at the same time, been incited by the prospect of universal applause. The political reasoners in France, having this instance immediately before their eyes, imagined, that if distinguished artists were again patronised and pensioned, and if a taste for excellence and design were so universally promoted; public fame might always attend royal munificence; new Tassos and new Raphaels would be produced in abundance. With this expectation, the principal poets and painters, who were already in France, were publicly encouraged; academies were erected, both in Paris and in Rome, for training up young Frenchmen in the imitative arts; and the minds of the people were formed to a relish of elegance and magnificence, by numerous displays of excellent productions, collected at an immense expence. Nobody doubted of the great effects which all these encouragements were to bring about. The monarch was complimented upon his attention to the fine arts, and upon the honours which his country was to receive, in consequence of his munificence; as if every thing had already happened, agreeable to the most sanguine expectations. Time at last undeceived the political philosophers. No rivals arose to dispute the

palm with those painters and poets who had at first been encouraged to excite the emulation of others. All the patronage of the nobleſſe, the penſions and academies of Louis the Great, and the hopes of applauſe from an enlightened people, could raiſe up no more Corneilles, Racines, and Molières, no more Pouſſins, Le Sueurs, and Le Bruns.

Philoſophers were now convinced, that the moral cauſes which they had aſſigned, the favour of princes, and the deſire of applauſe, were inſufficient to produce excellence in the fine arts. No other method of accounting for the appearance upon ſimilar principles occurred to them; and hence they concluded, that in matters of this nature, moral cauſes have very little influence. They began to imagine, that it was the difference of climate, air, and diet, which occaſioned, for the moſt part, the diverſity of minds, and which ſtamp the characters of particular ages and nations. This opinion has long been prevalent among the French philoſophers. It is agreeable to the principles of materialiſm, which have long been eſtabliſhed among them. It is alſo convenient in their abſolute monarchy, where it is neceſſary to ſpeak with great reſerve upon thoſe moral cauſes, which have any reference to the principles or adminiſtration of government. It is, perhaps, likewise flattering to the characteriſtical vanity of their nation. They are deſirous of convincing foreigners, that they poſ-

self the finest climate in the world. They boast of this advantage as peculiar to themselves; and they wish to have it believed, that their minds are framed to nicer perceptions than those of any other people, in consequence of the favourable circumstances in which they have been placed. They proceed upon a prejudice that is very universal; for men in general are more elated on account of the advantages which they have derived from nature, than on account of those acquisitions which are the fruit of their own industry.—Montesquieu himself has endeavoured to account for many political appearances, from the diversity of climate; and other philosophers, of respectable merit, have applied the same theory to the progress of the fine arts.—“The different classes of conceptions,” says Fontenelle, “are like plants and flowers, which do not grow equally well in every climate. Perhaps the soil of France is as unfavourable to the reasonings of the Egyptians, as to their palm-trees: And, without going to so great a distance, perhaps the orange-trees, which do not grow here so easily as in Italy, indicate, that there is a turn of mind in Italy, to which we have nothing exactly similar in France. It is at least certain, that, in consequence of the connection and reciprocal dependence which subsists among all the parts of the material world, the difference of climate, which discovers itself upon plants, must extend to the brain, and produce upon it certain effects.”—The Abbe du Bos has carried this view even beyond

Fontenelle. "May we not maintain," says he, "that there are countries where men are not born with the faculties necessary for excelling in certain professions, as there are countries where certain plants cannot grow? May we not also maintain, that, as the grain which is sown, and the trees which are in vigour, do not bring their fruits every year to equal perfection, even in the countries that are most adapted to them; in the same manner, the children brought up under the most happy climates do not become, at all periods, equally perfect men? May not one year be more favourable than another to the physical education of children, as some years are more favourable than others to the vegetation of plants? Two seeds produced by the same plant, bring forth fruits of different qualities, when sown in different soils, or even in the same soil in different years. In the same way, two children, born with brains constructed exactly in the same manner, will become men of very different understandings and dispositions, if the one be brought up in Sweden, and the other in Andalusia. They will become different, though brought up in the same country, if it be in years, in both of which the temperature of the air is not the same."—To establish this favourite opinion, the elegant writer produces a great number of analogical reasonings, and a variety of facts, which, though they are by no means sufficient to prove the truth of his conclusion, abundantly shew,

that there is an intimate connection between the body and the mind.

It is evident, upon a very slight reflection, that the theory of physical causes, applied to moral and political appearances, is mere hypothesis, incapable either of proof or of refutation. In order fully to confirm it, there would be occasion to ascertain the state of the air, and the nature of the diet, which are requisite in producing a genius for the fine arts; and to shew, that those who have arisen to eminence have enjoyed these external advantages. Such a proof ought to consist of numerous observations and experiments, conducted with unquestionable accuracy, in order to carry complete conviction. It is hardly to be believed, that such a degree of evidence ever will be brought. The investigation would be too tedious, and would depend upon too many minute circumstances, to be accomplished by human accuracy and abilities. Till a clear proof from facts and experiments, however, be brought, the opinion should be regarded merely as a conjecture, and ought not to be admitted as a fair conclusion. At the same time, this theory does not seem capable of a direct refutation. It does not seem possible to shew all the effects of external circumstances upon the body, nor all the influences of the body upon the mind. They may be greater or less than we are disposed to imagine them, for the subject is clearly beyond the reach of our investigation. The Abbe du

Bos may be right in his conjecture, that genius has sometimes appeared beyond the degree of latitude that should naturally have limited it; because the active spirit of southern climates is transported with their productions, and is transfused into the frozen sons of the north, with the wines, the spices, the coffee, the tea, and the tobacco, which are brought from happier regions; but it is to be feared, that it will be long before physical knowledge be so far improved as to verify this conjecture. If we would rest our conclusions upon facts, we must look out for very different causes, or acknowledge that we are entirely ignorant of the matter.

When we consider the several causes which have been assigned, and the various suppositions which have been contrived, to account for the progress of the fine arts, we might be apt to imagine, that there must be something remarkably difficult in the inquiry. But philosophers have often sought for strange and uncommon causes to account for the most simple events, and have perplexed themselves with matters that were manifest to the vulgar. They have sometimes had recourse to the stars, to explain the ordinary occurrences of human life, which plainly proceeded from the exertions of human power. The growth and progress of the fine arts, seem to have been occasioned by causes exactly similar to those which have promoted the mechanical arts. Provide a good market,

and you will find little difficulty in obtaining manufacturers who will furnish it with commodities. If there are not already in the neighbourhood a sufficient number of labourers and tradesmen to supply the demand, the deficiency will soon be supplied without any trouble to the community. This principle in police has been known, and depended upon at all times, with respect to the necessaries and ordinary conveniences of life ; but men who had formed high conceptions of poetry, painting, and eloquence, and who had themselves made progress in some one or other of these professions, were unwilling to believe that it was applicable to the fine arts. They persuaded themselves, that those elegant accomplishments which embellished human life, and afforded a most refined pleasure to delicate and cultivated minds, must have sprung from some more noble origin, than the mean occupation which furnished food to a mechanic. They were desirous of discovering a cause, in some measure proportioned to the dignity of the effect which they beheld. They thought it derogatory to those productions which fill the soul of man with enthusiasm, to imagine it possible that Demosthenes pleaded, and Raphael painted, and Corneille composed tragedies, from the vulgar motive which renders the meanest artisan industrious. They were disposed to believe, that those great accomplishments from which they derived the most lasting and rational pleasures, must have proceeded immediately from a heavenly origin. Great artists,

and men of superior genius, deserve every sort of recompense, and ought to be amply provided with the means of subsistence; but who can believe that they exert themselves from views of interest? Can any thing noble flow from such a polluted source?

The reflection may be mortifying to human vanity; but it will be found at last, that the noblest and the meanest arts have been prosecuted, and have arisen to their highest perfection, from the same causes. The productions of both, not only in their quantity, but also in their excellence, have borne a proportion to the demand there was for them in the market in which they were to be disposed of. A regard to interest has always been found to be the strongest incentive to vigorous exertions among all ranks of men. Every man is not fit to become an orator, a painter, or a poet; but neither is every man fit to become a watch-maker, a black-smith, or a porter. In every age and country, however, there are men lying in obscurity; whom encouragement might have called forth, and raised to eminence in the fine arts. Men, it is to be presumed, are originally upon a level every where, whatever different appearances the nature of their circumstances may afterwards force them to assume. If we attend to the progress of the fine arts, in the several ages during which they have been cultivated with remarkable

success, we may easily be satisfied that these remarks are well founded.

The period of the fine arts in Greece began immediately after the conclusion of the Persian war. The Athenians were a commercial people, and, at times, employed a great number of ships, which traded to the coast of Asia, and the islands of the Egean sea. Manufactures were carried on at home to a considerable extent, with a view to supply the demands of foreign commerce. The consequence was, that in process of time, the citizens of Athens became rich and luxurious. Besides, after the kings of Persia had given up their expectations of conquering Greece, they kept up a correspondence with the leading men in its principal states. Themistocles, after conquering the Persian monarch, was pensioned by his son Artaxerxes. The states in Lesser Asia which belonged to the great king, lying far from Babylon, the seat of government, were always struggling to throw off the yoke; and were also subject to revolutions, from the jealousy of viceroys and tributary princes. The Persian sovereigns often found it necessary to overawe them with an army of disciplined Greeks. When the governors of provinces made war upon one another, they likewise found it necessary to hire Athenian and Lacedemonian soldiers. After the contest was over, peace could seldom be established, till all matters had been settled to the satisfaction of the Greek armies that had been employ-

ed, and of the states to which they belonged. It appears that great sums of Persian gold were distributed among the leading men of Athens, to procure their interest among the people, in favour of the measures that were serviceable to Asia. Greece, and especially Athens, having become rich by commerce, and by political negotiation, the arts of luxury were introduced, to satiate the artificial wants that were created among the opulent. The people vied with one another, in splendour and magnificence. Pictures and statues became necessary articles in the furniture of their apartments. Their houses were embellished with beautiful columns, and the other ornaments of architecture. A great number of artists became necessary to supply the increasing demands of luxury. The painters and statuaries raised their prices, in proportion to the value that was set upon their works. Views of interest produced emulation among them; and every artist made vigorous exertions, from the expectation of excelling his competitors. Every subject in ancient mythology was cut in marble, or expressed in colours; and so great was the demand for such performances, that we are told it was more easy to find a god than a man at Athens. How many artists must have been employed to furnish such immense numbers of pictures and statues, during the short period of Athenian greatness? The temples of their Gods, which were numerous, and which were built and adorned in the most sumptuous manner, must of themselves

have employed many principal architects and statuary. The public games of Greece likewise produced a market for works of taste, that ought not to be overlooked. The victors were generally men of great opulence ; and their vanity led them to disregard expence, in order to have their exploits properly recorded. They employed, for the purpose of perpetuating the memory of their victories, the principal statuary, painters, and poets of their age. It is well known, that Pindar, in his time, had the highest character for panegyric, and that he sold his songs of praise at a most exorbitant rate. At these games, as well as at other times, the theatre was frequented by the Greeks. The tragic and comic poets, who furnished new dramatical entertainments, were honoured and rewarded. Encouragement excited emulation, and produced the celebrated dramatic performances of that period. It was during the same age that the Grecian eloquence attained the highest degree of perfection. The prize which an Athenian orator had before his eyes, was the most honourable to which ambition could aspire. Eloquence was the direct road to power and influence. The administration of that popular government was in the hands of him who could turn the minds of the people, and bend them to his own purposes. In this manner did all the fine arts spring up in proportion to the demand there was for them. The encouragement was great : Artists arose in numbers, and, from views of interest, endeavoured

to excel ; and among a multitude of competitors, several arrived at great eminence.

This period of the fine arts lasted as long as the causes which had given occasion to it continued to operate. But, after Greece had been subdued by the arms of Rome, it was plundered by the conquerors, and governed as a vanquished province by rapacious pro-consuls and prætors. The riches and luxury of its inhabitants were at an end. Their eloquence declined, when it ceased to be the means of procuring influence. There arose no more eminent artists, after there was no longer a market for works of taste. The Romans, however, only completed what the ambition of the Macedonian princes had begun.

The fine arts made little progress in Rome, till the time of their civil wars. It was not till after they had conquered Greece and Asia, that they had sufficient wealth to render them a luxurious people, or even to give them a taste for elegance. The nations whom they had formerly conquered were all poor, except the Carthaginians ; and even the victories which they obtained over that rising people, could hardly indemnify them for the severe losses which they had sustained during their tedious struggle for superiority. But, when the opulent countries of Greece and Asia were subdued and plundered, wealth flowed upon Rome in the most copious streams. Those men who had been

active in the field, and were enriched with the spoils, rivalled one another in splendour at home. Wealth was soon diffused among many members of the republic. Every one endeavoured to acquire a large quantity of those things which were most valued in the polished countries that had been conquered. The statues, pictures, and carved vessels of Greece and Sicily, were sold at Rome; and their price increased in proportion to the demand which was occasioned by an additional influx of wealth from other pillaged provinces. All was insufficient to answer the growing demand for works of this nature. New artists arose, in consequence of the encouragement by which they were invited. The eminent Romans employed them in copying Greek models, as well as in painting and carving new designs, and in adorning houses and villas, in which they could display their magnificence. Poetry easily found encouragement among nobles greedy of praise, and among a luxurious people fond of theatrical spectacles. Eloquence flourished, while it conducted to greatness, by enabling the orator to direct the public deliberations of his countrymen.

But this reign of the fine arts, as well as the former, was short. Good poetry continued while there were men of taste who were capable of relishing delicate praise, which was for no long period. But eloquence declined when it could be of no important service to him who possessed it,

and when it could not be exerted upon any great occasion; which became the case when the empire began to be governed by the absolute power of a single man. Other causes brought about the downfall of painting and statuary. During the time of the emperors, there were no new conquests like those of Greece and Asia. The right of citizenship belonged equally to every province. There were no means left, by which great wealth could be acquired, as the Romans were unacquainted with commerce. Even the wealth that was among them was rendered insecure, by the violent nature of the government. Rapine and assassination were frequently the lot of the opulent. Listless and despondent, the wealthy addicted themselves to sensual gratifications, which they were capable of enjoying without acquiring any popularity, or creating any suspicion in the emperor. While such was the state of affairs, little encouragement could be given to artists. There was another cause that operated along with this one. A prodigious quantity of Greek statues and pictures had already been brought into Italy. These, in consequence of evident associations, were more valued than Roman performances of equal merit. Nero, instead of employing Roman artists to make statues for his new buildings, plundered Greece and Asia anew, and took away even household-gods. The demand in Rome for works of taste, was much less than it had been in the days of liberty; and the productions already in the mar-

ket were nearly sufficient to answer it. Scarce any thing was wanted but copies of the works that had most reputation ; and these were made by slaves, who never can have the same inducements to great exertions with freemen. Architecture survived, for a long time, the downfall of the other arts. The emperors, and their favourites, took much pleasure in building magnificent edifices. The palaces and baths of Dioclesian appear, from their ruins, to have been noble structures.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the states of Italy had emerged from the barbarity in which, like the rest of Europe, they had long been sunk. The Gothic tyranny, which had long depressed mankind, had in some measure lost its force. Good police was established over the country, and a free communication was opened among the several territories. At that time, all the most valuable branches of commerce in Europe were carried on by Italians. They trafficked with the kingdoms of Asia, and brought over the productions of India, before its coasts had been explored. Wealth, of consequence, was amassed by many individuals in Italy. The vast sums brought into that country by ecclesiastics, from every corner of Christendom, united with commerce to diffuse opulence every where. Luxury was the natural consequence of plenty ; and an example of it was set by two succeeding pontiffs. A demand arose as formerly, in ancient Greece, for the productions

of the ornamental arts. Ancient statues began to be dug up ; but the quantity of them that was discovered, served only to inflame the desires of the opulent, without satisfying them. Those that were found served, however, an important purpose ; they became models of excellence for the new artists, whom public encouragement called forth to imitate. The fine arts were not patronised by individuals alone. The principal ecclesiastics had imbibed the taste of their countrymen, and had resolved to procure the richest ornaments for places of worship. They refitted old churches, or built new ones, at great expence ; and employed the ablest sculptors and painters, to adorn them with all that their arts could furnish. This period produced the most eminent artists ; but the demand was only temporary. The commerce of Italy sunk, in consequence of the improvements in navigation made by other nations. The ecclesiastical revenue was diminished by the reformation in religion, and part of it was necessarily consumed in political negotiations. The churches were soon stocked with pictures, which were to remain, with little augmentation, for ages. If pictures were still wanted, the demand was more frequently for copies than for originals. When the market was shut, the artists disappeared. Academies were erected, to preserve alive the spirit of the arts ; but they produced little effect. The pupils copied coldly after the best models ; and having no suffi-

cient motive to make them exert themselves with vigour, executed no originals of eminent merit.

It was about this period too, that music began to be cultivated in the low countries, and in Italy. The same love of pomp and magnificence that induced the dignified ecclesiastics to decorate their churches, made them also pay attention to the music performed during the service. They gave great encouragement to performers; and the lasting nature of the office in which they employed them, afforded them security that the same encouragement would continue. Different churches rivalled one another in the excellence of their music, and the people acquired a taste for it. Hence, to this day, the catholic countries have, in general, carried this art to greater perfection than the protestant.

In the subsequent century, the nobility of France were brought from their ancient castles, and were accustomed to a free communication with one another. They resorted to court, and acquired a taste for show and splendour. They spent their revenues, not as they had formerly done, upon a numerous train of retainers; but upon those things which afforded amusement, or served for ornament. The coat of mail was taken down from their halls, and a picture supplied its room. Instead of tilts and tournaments, they sought after the entertainments of the theatre. A market was

opened, where many were disposed to purchase; but the commodities exposed to sale were of small value. Eminent painters, and dramatic writers, immediately arose, and supplied the demand with productions far superior to any that had formerly appeared, which were bought from them at a correspondent price. The young monarch encouraged the prevailing taste. He and his ministers countenanced every man who had any pretensions to the fine arts. But the countenance of the sovereign could not preserve painting in its glory, after the demand for its most finished labours was over. Poetry, on the contrary, found encouragements different from the temporary favour of the great. It came to a more crowded market than its sister art, and therefore continued in splendour.

Britain cannot much boast of its artists. It was struggling for liberty, at the period when its neighbouring nation was amusing itself with elegance and magnificence. It has been inhabited by an active and industrious, rather than a luxurious people. To this day, the opulent, who are fond of show, spend their fortunes upon political schemes, and have little reserved to bestow upon the productions of the fine arts. There never has been such a demand among them for good statues and pictures, as to be a sufficient encouragement to eminence. Few good artists have been induced to settle among them. They have, however, brought over to this country, many capital perfor-

mances of foreign masters. They have formed a judgment of excellence in design and composition, by means of the best prints. Though they have had few original painters, they have had many who copied well, and they have encouraged many distinguished engravers.

Perhaps it may not be possible, for a long time, to raise a school of eminent painters in Britain; for it does not seem probable that there will soon be a sufficient demand for their productions. Pictures, considered in the light of ornament, are hardly consistent with the glaring degree of light, which custom requires in elegant apartments, and which greatly contributes to cheerfulness in our northern region. Not only the forms of our religion, but the state of church-patrimony, prevent pictures from ornamenting our places of worship in the same manner as they do in Italy. The few who choose to have galleries of pictures, wish to be possessed of performances which have already acquired reputation, and they purchase them at immense prices. Pictures and statues are not commodities of which the fashion soon alters. The stock of them which have been provided still remains; and till it wear out, the demand can hardly be so great as to encourage vigorous exertions. Besides, a painter at present, who could paint as well as Raphael, would not, for a long time, obtain the reputation of Raphael. There is a reverence that naturally impresses us, when we reflect

upon men of established reputation, and makes us heighten in our imagination the merit of their works.—Besides, the first performance of any kind is always preferred to any future one, unless its inferiority be very remarkable. A painter who follows the style and manner of an eminent artist, is considered in no higher light than an imitator, though he produce better performances than he whose style he follows. We do not allow him the merit of invention. The man that would obtain high reputation, must move in a path that has not been trodden before. The academy of arts is a noble seminary, worthy of the royal munificence by which it was founded; but if we may judge of it by other institutions of the same nature, we may foretel, that it will be long before it produce any thing far above mediocrity in painting; though it must, without doubt, educate excellent engravers, and train up designers that will be exceedingly beneficial to manufactures and the mechanic arts.

Though Britain has produced few artists of note, it has given birth to many excellent poets. Poetry has been the growth of every time and country. Its excellence is estimated comparatively. Sternhold was deemed a rare poet by his generation, as well as Dryden in his age. In every country, poetry adapts itself to the taste of the people. In Britain, it has risen to high perfection; even though we estimate its merit among us, by a com-

parison with the best productions of the same sort among the most polished nations. It has not attained its excellence in consequence of royal patronage and munificence; it has been addressed to the public, and from the public it has received its reward. They who have excelled in the elegant arts among us, have not been the humble retainers of a court. They have lived in a state of independence, requited for their labours, like the merchant or the artizan, by those who set a real value upon their works. Abilities and taste never stood upon so honourable a footing; and thus supported, it is to be hoped, that without any other encouragement, they may long

“ live and thrive, —

“ Indebted to no prince nor peer alive.”

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## DISCOURSE X.

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*Concerning the STUDY of the ANCIENT LANGUAGES,  
as a necessary Branch of a LIBERAL EDUCATION.*

ONE of the most important trusts committed to the members of civil society, is to train up successors to themselves, who may be qualified to discharge, in a becoming manner, those offices of life which may fall to their share. Men in the vigour of their age, act agreeably to the habits which they acquired when young; and these habits have usually been formed under the influence of authority and example. The companion of a hero becomes himself a hero; and the friend of slaves for ever retains the soul of a slave, or, which is the same thing, of a tyrant. The original differences among the various tribes of men are inconsiderable. The character is produced by the habits which the circumstances of the individuals have led them to form. The pre-

sent age is, therefore, in some measure, accountable for the conduct of the succeeding generation. The young will, in all probability, retain through life the bias which they have already acquired, and some portion of it will influence even their posterity.

Civilized nations have always been sensible, that it is a matter of great moment to the state, that the youth should be properly trained up; and have accordingly paid some degree of attention to the means of their education. They have regarded them as the buds, in which are contained the future ornament and wealth of a succeeding period; and have encouraged the culture which they thought necessary to render the blossom beautiful, and the fruit mature.

No plan of education can be laid down, which can be adopted universally. The various ranks, situations, and circumstances of men, render it necessary to confine the attention of many to particular classes of objects, and to the attainment of certain habits which are requisite in that employment in which they have engaged.

Man is composed of body and mind; there are a variety of habits which may be learned, connected with both these parts of his constitution. Some of these habits are acquired by all who have not some defect in their organization, as those of

walking and speaking. Others are acquired only by particular classes of men, whose mode of life renders them of consequence.

A variety of corporeal habits must be learned by those who are in the lowest ranks of life, and who perform the drudgery of society, before they can act in their own simple employments, either with ease or advantage. The man whose bodily labours are of a different kind, must acquire different habits. But in every society, there are many persons born to affluence, who have no occasion to learn any of those peculiar habits that are connected with, or that are necessary to, the mechanic body. They are to associate themselves with those who occupy the highest stations; to frequent courts, and other places to which the splendid and the polite resort. They have, however, bodily habits to acquire, much more difficult to be attained than those of the labourer or the mechanic, of which, their long education in dancing, riding, and fencing, scarcely furnishes them with the first elements, before they reach that gracefulness of deportment of which they wish to be possessed.

The mental habits must be of much greater consequence, in constituting the highest excellence of the human character, than those of the body; and they are acquired with more difficulty. They are either intellectual or moral. To the formation of the moral habits among all ranks, it will

be readily acknowledged, that too much attention cannot be paid ; on the prevalence of these, principally depend the happiness, the peace, and security of human society. It would be better for a community, that it should receive no increase of its numbers whatever, than that those should be introduced into it who have not been trained up to be good men and good citizens. The order and regularity of mankind, proceed much more from the care of the parent and guardian, than from the superiority of the magistrate.

How far the culture of intellectual habits, to any considerable degree, is universally necessary, may not perhaps be equally evident. If we consider the accomplishments requisite in the lower orders of society, as subservient to nothing higher than the production of those commodities on which their manual labour is commonly employed, a very small degree of understanding is, without doubt, necessary. A man who is employed from morning to night in turning a wheel, or moving a cord over a pulley, needs little more knowledge to qualify him for performing these operations, than a dog or a machine possesses. But we rate men too low, when we think that any of them were formed merely for such mean offices. They were born for social intercourse, and, whatever be their rank, they have duties to perform. They stand in the relations of members of families, of friends, of citizens. The better they understand the na-

ture of these relations, the better will they be qualified for discharging those offices that are incumbent upon them. Unless they possess some moral and religious knowledge, they will be dangerous, rather than useful members of society. It would be better that their work should be performed by horses, than by them. The advantages which their station can allow them to make in acquiring knowledge, must be very inconsiderable ; but little as it must be, it will tend to make them at peace with themselves, and consequently, less disposed to injure others ; it will improve their moral habits ; it will enable them to bring up their children better than they could otherwise have done. It is also more for the honour of a country, to produce men endowed with some portion of rational powers, than to produce mere beasts of burthen. Provision for the proper instruction of the lower orders of the state, is more beneficial at least, than houses of correction.

It is, however, principally from those orders of men, who are not obliged to gain their subsistence by manual labour, that the mental improvements of a society are to be estimated. Among them may be expected those habits, both intellectual and moral, in which human excellence principally consists. That there are many stations of life in which improved abilities are necessary, and more in which they are ornamental, and confer dignity on the possessor, cannot be denied. An enlighten-

ed understanding, and a cultivated taste, are of consequence, both to him who enjoys them, and to others. In matters of this sort, however, there is a dignity independent of utility; and the man who judges fairly concerning them, will not value them merely from views of profit. If gracefulness be desirable in external accomplishments, and if study is made use of to attain it, surely improvement in the habits of the understanding is much more deserving of human pursuit. If certain forms of education be adopted, as subservient to the perfection of bodily motions and attitude, it is reasonable that there should also be modes of education for training up the understanding.

In the modern nations of Europe, an early acquaintance with the languages of Rome and Greece, has been generally thought a proper foundation for future proficiency in the attainment of knowledge. This is an accomplishment, not to be acquired without much study; and its uses are not obvious on a cursory view of the matter. It has been doubted by some, whether it be a proper method of education.——Knowledge consists in an acquaintance with things, and not in an acquaintance with the meaning of words. Ancient books contain no information, comparable to what is to be met with in modern authors. Is it not better, consider-

ing the shortness of life, to search for knowledge in the most compendious way, than to travel in the round-about tract of the commonly received plan of education? Are not those arts which are immediately conducive to profit, enough to be learned?

These objections are specious; and they must have weight with all who are either unwilling that their children should submit to any drudgery, or who have had no competent education themselves, or who have not attended to the gradual steps by which the human mind must ascend to knowledge, if ever it is to be reached. I believe, however, they are all fallacious; at least, whether they be or not, a plan that has in general met with the approbation of those who were best able to judge, and has been attended with success, ought not to be rashly relinquished, till fair trial and experiment have shewn that there are others superior to it.

I have no occasion in the present case, to maintain the superlative excellence of the ancient authors. That many of them are elegant, and contain important truths and facts, will be allowed on all hands. I further believe, that though they contain much more philosophical knowledge, than those who are superficially acquainted with them generally admit; yet every thing material in philosophy may be met with in

modern books. They contain, no doubt, many important historical facts; but the most part of these too, may be met with in the volumes of Rollin or Grevier, translated into English by several eminent hands. Their poetry and their eloquence were eminent; but who will be at the trouble of acquiring a language to read books of amusement, especially in this age, when enough of them are to be met with every where? It is also true, that we have little occasion to speak Greek or Latin. Men of some professions may, however, find it convenient to be able to read them. The divine will hardly pretend that they are useless to him, if he reckon the learning of his profession of any value. The practising attorney will make a poor sheriff, if he cannot read a Latin paper; and the apothecary has occasion to make up prescriptions, a great part of which is Greek. Latin sentences impertinently occur even in English books, and sometimes find their way into the House of Commons, which a man of figure would surely blush to say he does not understand.

I would not, however, insist upon any of these topics. I think there are others less controvertible, upon which the decision of the question may safely rest.

The attainment of knowledge, united with moral accomplishments, is the avowed object of a liberal education. The nearest road to the at-

tainment of useful knowledge ought to be preferred. If knowledge could be instantaneously communicated from one mind to another, the labour would be soon finished in the whole circle of sciences, and the whole stock of human knowledge might be amassed in a single mind, during the space of a few years; but knowledge can be conveyed to a mind, no faster than it can be received. The mind is not in a passive state when it receives information; it must exert its own power before the knowledge become its own. A parrot may remember sounds, and utter them; but without exertion of intellectual faculties, no knowledge can be acquired. These faculties must be improved by exercise, and confirmed by habit, before they become capable of comprehending distinctly any abstract or general views. Children are undoubtedly able to learn something, but they are totally incapable to acquire any science. Four or five years of their life must elapse before they be able to count their fingers; and at twelve years of age, it is but in some instances that they discern the force of moral obligation. It is long before they are able to follow any deduction in reasoning. I know of no science which they are capable of learning. They have, indeed, memories; they might store up a multitude of historical facts; but they must remain with them merely as stories, with regard to which, they can make no observation of any consequence. They are incapable of generalizing such materials.

During this period, when their faculties have not attained sufficient vigour for the acquisition of science, it is unreasonable that they should be unemployed; or which is worse, that they should be employed on what they cannot comprehend. You may teach them some mechanical art; you may instruct them in the art of making Dutch toys, or that of hand-writing. The first of these will enable them to use their hands with readiness, and the other will qualify them for the office of an engrosser. Neither of them are despicable accomplishments; but surely neither of them will contribute much to improve the mind. Both of them will give employment, and will prevent habits of idleness; but they will give no room for those exertions, by which alone mental superiority is attainable. The study of the ancient languages, in the early period of life, seems admirably fitted to answer all the purposes which we wish to be attained. They require no powers which the young do not possess, and they call forth into vigorous exertion those of which they are possessed; they give abundant scope for the exercise of memory, and tend greatly to improve it; they gradually accustom the mind to habits of attention; they habituate it to inquiry; they render it capable of submitting to labour with patience; they are excellently adapted to subdue the giddiness and inconstancy of an unregulated mind, that has never been accustomed to pursue any end with steadiness. In the study

of a language, more than in any thing else, we are sensible of the proficiency we make. The young mind is pleased with a consciousness that it is increasing in strength, and advancing in improvement. Hence arises a new incitement to more vigorous exertion. It has been asked, is the mind learning any thing during this progress, but the knowledge of the words of a dead language? I answer it is learning much more. It is learning valuable habits; it is learning to exercise its powers; it is fitting itself for bestowing similar attention, vigour, and patience, upon any thing which may afterwards become the subject of its thoughts. Though it were granted, that the language in itself is of no use, the argument would not be invalidated. Does a man learn to dance, that he may be able to execute the steps of a horn-pipe?

There is one habit of mind, which the study of the ancient languages is peculiarly fitted to form. They give it a faculty in forming judgments and conclusions from analogy. Every thing that occurs is like something else. A solution of the new case that occurs, is to be looked for in something that was formerly known. A quickness and readiness in searching for resemblances is acquired, much more perfectly than it could be acquired by any other means. There is, perhaps, no one circumstance, in which mental superiority more evidently appears, than in the facility with which the agreements and disagree-

ments, the resemblances and differences, of objects, are discerned. Upon this depend the important operations of classing, combining, and arranging, of dividing and separating, and others of a similar nature, which are of the highest value to an improved mind; and by which, such a mind is principally distinguished from that which is uncultivated. The habits of classing and arranging, of discovering analogies and resemblances, with quickness and ease, must be of great use in life; and I know of no means by which they can be got with so little trouble, or in so great perfection, as by studying the ancient languages. The knowledge of the language itself may, or may not, afterwards be of consequence to the person who learns. Whether it be or not, is not a matter connected with the present view of the subject. The mind must be taught to exert itself in the most useful manner. The attainment of this habit is the principal object in view; and the means best adapted to it ought to be embraced, though nothing else of any value arise from them. Supposing no valuable knowledge to be acquired, the mind is at least improved, and is prepared for acquiring knowledge when its powers attain vigour. If a man were brought up in the principles of the Cartesian philosophy, he would be accustomed to reasonings built upon false and whimsical hypotheses, and to arrangements formed upon wrong principles. Such a man could not properly be said to have acquired any valuable philosophi-

real knowledge; but no man will pretend to say, that his mind has received no improvement from his studies. He has acquired habits of reasoning and arrangement, which will never forsake him. These he is capable of employing in a proper manner. They will assist him in gaining an acquaintance with a philosophy better founded; and by means of them, he is at least qualified for gaining useful knowledge. This important end is obtained by regular education, even when it is wrong conducted, and directed to insignificant objects. If it does not impart much knowledge, it furnishes the mind with habits, by means of which it is prepared for attaining knowledge. If an acquaintance with the ancient languages be in itself valuable, as I sincerely believe it is, the advantages gained from the study of them is still greater than that which has been stated.

There is another advantage to be gained from the study of the ancient languages, independent of what intrinsic merit they may have in themselves. It seems to be the most effectual way of gaining a thorough acquaintance with the principles of grammar and rhetoric, and consequently of fine-writing. However simple an art grammar may seem to be, it is not to be acquired without much attention and practice. In learning one of the ancient languages, a person must necessarily become acquainted with rules, which, with very few deviations, are applicable to all languages.

He becomes acquainted with those principles which are absolutely necessary to fine writing. It is true that the principles of grammar may be communicated by other means, but by none that I know of so completely.—The first principles of rhetoric must also be acquired during that study. No person can learn those languages, without observing the various forms of expression; the various senses, original and figurative, in which words are taken; the ornament and grace that are added by such means. Whether he be made acquainted with the rhetorical terms, or not, he must become acquainted with the things themselves. These principles, like those of grammar, are in general common to all languages. The person who is learning an ancient language, is accustomed to habits of accuracy. He must pay attention to the order and structure of every sentence, and to the propriety of every expression; otherwise he cannot ascertain with certainty the meaning of his author. He cannot easily gain this habit in reading, without carrying it along with him in composition. It does not follow, that in consequence of his attainments, he will become himself an elegant writer. Fine-writing presupposes many other qualifications, besides an acquaintance with grammar and rhetoric. But he possesses some of the subsidiary and indispensable requisites; and where is the fine writer who has not enjoyed this advantage? If a young man has acquired the first principles of grammar and rhetoric, before he be thir-

teen or fourteen years of age, his time has not been much mispent, though the language which he has acquired be thrown out of the question. The Grecian youth had no means of learning those arts in so complete a manner. They did not begin to learn them till they had arrived at the age of manhood. They attended grammarians and rhetoricians, who read to their scholars the works of the poets and orators of their own country. From the books which those teachers have left, it appears that their principal observations were such as a school-boy among us would be ashamed not to be acquainted with. In the modern nations of Europe, grammarians and rhetoricians, such as those of the Greeks were, would meet with no encouragement, because there is no occasion for them. A method has generally prevailed, which is found to be attended with better consequences; and on account of this circumstance, the former method is relinquished.

Supposing the study of the ancient languages to be generally given up, what could be substituted in their room that would answer the same purposes? It could be no science—for boys are incapable of reasoning or comprehending general principles. A mechanical art might keep them from learning habits of idleness, but it would be no foundation for mental improvement. It might be unconnected geographical or historical facts; but these would only exercise the memory,

and would not improve the other powers of the understanding. Scarce any thing else seems to remain but modern languages. These are, at least, as useless to the generality of people, as the ancient languages. The most part of a nation remain at home, and have no intercourse with strangers. The books written in French and Italian, will not be supposed to be greatly superior to those which are written in Greek or Latin. In the other views that have been mentioned, the study of a modern language will not answer the same purposes with the study of the ancient languages. It does not exhibit such a diversity of analogies; it does not require such a number of general rules, as to present an extensive plan of classification; its arrangement is less complicate, and does not require such habits of attention, accuracy, and exertion. It would be better than no substitute at all; but as we are already possessed of a better method, the wisest course certainly is to retain it. A modern language, at least as far as it is to be attained in a foreign country, is very easily learned by those who are already instructed in the principles of grammar, and are well acquainted with the ancient language from which it is principally derived.

I hold the study of the ancient languages to be necessary in a liberal education, till something else be found by experience, to be productive of greater, or at least, equal advantages.

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## DISCOURSE XI.

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*On the Importance of NATURAL PHILOSOPHY\*.*

**M**EN prosecute philosophical inquiries as they do other ends, either from a desire of gratification, or from some views of utility. The mental gratification which they expect, partly consists in a deliverance from certain uneasy feelings, which, in an ingenuous mind, accompany a consciousness of ignorance; and partly from an entertainment afforded to the principles of taste. The beneficial advantages which they have in view, depend upon the lucrative or elegant purposes to which the proper direction of intellectual attainments are subservient.

Natural philosophy, considered in either of these lights, is a most inviting department of knowledge.

\* This Essay gained the prize given by the Society of Masters of Arts in Glasgow College, at an early period of the Author's life.

It gratifies the intellectual faculties, by bringing the objects and events of the material world under the view of the human understanding, and familiarizing them to the imagination. It affords entertainment to the principles of taste, by exhibiting new, beautiful, and grand appearances. It unfolds the mysteries of those arts which render human life comfortable; and it lays a foundation for interesting researches in other branches of science.

I shall endeavour briefly to represent the importance of natural philosophy in these several lights.

In the first place, the importance of natural philosophy appears from the information it presents to the human understanding, with regard to the connections that subsist among the objects of which the material world consists, and the laws by which their changes and revolutions are regulated; the gratification which their regularities afford to the imagination, and the pleasure derived from their order and beauty to the principles of taste.

We are filled with wonder, when we contemplate objects, qualities, or actions, unlike any thing with which we have formerly been acquainted; and we are surprised when we meet even with those things which we know, where we do not expect them. These situations of mind are ge-

nerally accompanied with uneasiness, whenever the emotions are either very strong or lasting. We are naturally led to inquire what the unknown object is, and by what the unexpected event was occasioned. Whatever is disagreeable in these situations of mind, arises from our ignorance, and is removed by proper and distinct information. If we were acquainted with all the objects in nature, and if we knew their effects and influence upon one another, we could never feel wonder nor surprise at all, unless from the unexpected conduct of voluntary agents. Every object would be viewed without emotion, and every natural event would be foreseen. The vain and extravagant assertion of antiquity, that "it is unworthy of a philosopher to wonder at any thing," if philosophical knowledge were in no respect deficient, would not want a foundation in truth. Philosophy, by conducting us to the knowledge of Being, and of its actions and changes, has a tendency to remove whatever is disagreeable in wonder and surprise; and a man possessed of all the information which it aims to attain, would never feel these emotions.

The study of natural philosophy may, in one light, be considered as the means of removing the astonishment occasioned by uncommon external objects, and their unexpected changes; and one of the principal inducements to rational in-

quiry, is the removal of that unsatisfied state of mind.

The manner in which the instruction presented by natural philosophy, contributes to remove the restless feelings of uninformed wonder and surprize, will evidently appear, after we have examined the nature of that knowledge, with which the mind in such cases rests satisfied. In this view, it will be requisite to consider objects and actions separately.

First, we shall consider natural objects.—No part of the uneasiness arising from want of knowledge, with regard to these, proceeds from the judgment; for the inquiry is not concerning truth and falsehood. The object lies before us, and we have it in our power, as far as our senses enable us, to discover with certainty every one of its qualities. Though some property may escape our search, we have no doubt concerning the reality of those which we observe. It is the imagination that is unsatisfied with respect to a new object. This faculty delights in beholding at once a great and uninterrupted prospect, to the several parts of which it can turn its attention, without feeling any difficulty in passing from one of them to another. It is disturbed and confused by a multitude of unconnected objects. That it may bring the infinite variety of bodies to a comprehensible view, it is obliged to have recourse to the expe-

dient of reducing them into classes. This operation of classing is elegant and ingenious. All objects that possess some common distinguishing property, are brought together under one view, and denominated by the same name. A few of these general classes extend to the whole infinitude of being. By means of qualities that are less general, these great classes are divided into smaller; and these again are subdivided, upon the same principle, till, in the remote classes, these objects only are placed in the same assortment which bear a close resemblance to one another. In this manner, the imagination fits the objects in the universe to the extent of its own powers.

The ancient Peripatetics denominated the quality that is common to the whole class or genus, the *unum*, or the uniting quality, and called it the material part of the essence in each of the species. The quality that distinguishes a species, they called the formal part of its essence, or that which makes it what it is, and renders it different from the other species of the same genus.

There is no less art discovered in the means which the mind employs, for having recourse at pleasure to that conception for which it has immediate occasion. It separates the species of the object from the class with which it is associated, by fixing its attention upon some quality in which it differs from the rest. Thus, though the objects

of nature be reduced, in appearance, to a small number, and constitute a beautiful whole; yet the notions of several divisions, and of each individual member, remain distinct.

In the generality of cases, means are wisely provided for the exercise of both these operations of mind, in the system of nature. Every object in the visible creation, agrees, in so many respects, with a variety of other objects, that means of arrangement are never wanting. The only difficulty lies in selecting these common qualities which are most striking, which are altogether peculiar to the class, and therefore not subject to ambiguity. It may, indeed, be impossible ever to form a system upon principles of arrangement that are perfectly unexceptionable. Cases sometimes occur, that perplex the philosopher. A species may sometimes appear, almost equally connected with two genera, as it may possess, in an imperfect degree, the qualities by which each of them is distinguished; or a singular kind of object may occur, that is not easily associated with any particular class; but, in general, the great classes may be united, and their component assortments distinguished by indisputable marks. After the generality of objects are properly arranged, a few irregularities, where all the properties are understood, and easily remembered, give little uneasiness to the imagination. Properties may afterwards be observed, that either reduce them to their own

kinds, or constitute them new and distinct genera.

The knowledge of material objects and their arrangement, is the province of natural history. It becomes interesting to us, from our fondness for generalization, or our desire to assort objects, in such a manner, that they may be easily comprehended by the imagination. This branch of knowledge serves admirably the purpose of removing the wonder which arises from the perception of any objects that are entirely new to us. After examining the qualities of an individual, we connect it with that class whose distinguishing properties it possesses. If it cannot be brought under any known division, still, while the exceptions are few, it occasions little trouble to the mind that has a comprehensive view of the several classes of substances, to which it is in some degree related. It is disposed of by the imagination in a general class, and connected as a singular object with its inferior assortments. A place can thus be allotted to it, where it can occasion little embarrassment. It forms, as it were, a small appendix to an extensive methodical enumeration. As the ease and satisfaction of the imagination are the principal things consulted in this study, that system is the most perfect, which, while it adheres closely to the divisions that are evidently marked out by nature, adopts the fewest and simplest principles of arrangement, and, at the same time, distinguishes

substances from one another, by characters that are peculiar, and that leave no ambiguity nor confusion. Such a system pleases the imagination, for the same reasons that recommend an elegant oration, where the succession of parts is easy and natural, and where the observations that are more immediately connected with one another are arranged together. Where all advantages, however, cannot be obtained, ornament and elegance must be sacrificed to utility. The ancient botanists, who took their characters from all the parts of the plant indiscriminately, were sufficiently attached to nature; but their principles of arrangement were too numerous, and what is worse, they were inaccurate; and now, after new kinds have been discovered, possessing qualities which they thought peculiar to some of those which they knew, many of their descriptions are unintelligible.—Tournefort arranged his general classes from the figure of the corolla, and distinguished his genera from the properties of that part, and of the fruit. His principles were abundantly simple; but after thousands of Asiatic, African, and American species, had been introduced, they were not sufficient to render his descriptions always characteristic, so that the kind could be certainly distinguished and ascertained.—Linnæus adopted the whole fructification. He forms both his classes and his orders from the number, proportion, and situation of the stamina and pistilla. The figure, number, proportion, and situation, of the

other parts of the fructification, sufficiently distinguish his genera; and, with a few other obvious marks, taken partly from these, and partly from the leaves and other parts of the plant, characterise his species and varieties. His principles are still sufficiently simple; his arrangement is elegant in the highest degree; his descriptions are determinate and precise. Though he has not, on every occasion, been able to connect these plants, which, from their external habit, seem to be naturally related; yet, on account of its other uncommon advantages, it does not seem probable that the Linnæan system will soon yield to another. It has received several alterations from Thunberg, his eminent scholar and successor in his chair, and some of his other disciples, which seem to me to be improvements, as they tend to render it more simple; but all of them rigidly adhere to his principles of deriving all from number, figure, proportion, and situation of parts. It is a singular testimony to the merit of this great man, that the violent opposition he met with from ingenious and eloquent philosophers, proved altogether unsuccessful; and he died, loaded with fame and honours, after having lived to see his principles embraced by the learned of every nation in Europe. The systems of animals, though perhaps not yet brought to such perfection as this one, are founded upon such natural and easy principles of arrangement, that they give great satisfaction to the imagination. With regard to these two, the world

confesses the obligations it is under to the penetration and indefatigable industry of Linnæus. The rapid improvements in chemistry will, undoubtedly, lead to a system of fossils, more accurate than can be formed from external characters, which, in this branch of natural history, have been found to be insufficient; and much has already been done to accomplish this valuable end.

The wonder occasioned by new objects is removed, whenever they are properly afforded, and thus brought under the comprehension of the imagination; but external objects themselves do not occasion so much wonder and surprize as their motions and changes. With respect to these, the mind follows a different mode of generalization, from that which it employs with respect to the substances themselves. It has a natural propensity to refer actions to their causes; and it arranges them from the nature of the agency which produced them, or the nature of the laws, according to which they are brought about. The perception of an effect not related to any thing else, is never satisfactory to the mind, because it is only the consequence of action, and therefore supposes the exertion of an active power. Hence arises the inquiry into causes and effects, or into the general laws, according to which, motions and changes are produced, to which the researches into affortments and arrangement are only subservient. Experience sufficiently proves, that one object is

acted upon by another, and has certain motions and changes produced in it; however difficult it may be to explain the nature of these operations, or to investigate the general law by which they are regulated. Sensible of this, the mind is never satisfied after perceiving an action, if it be uncertain of the agent; but after we become acquainted with the efficient cause, or the general law, according to which the effect is produced, we observe the effect, with emotions very different from those which we formerly felt. A man who, for the first time, saw the ebbing and flowing of the sea, and who had never heard any reason assigned for these changes, would observe them with astonishment. This emotion, however, would only last, till he knew that it happened in consequence of the general law of gravitation, with which he is perfectly acquainted. Notwithstanding the multiplicity of effects, the laws, agreeably to which they happen, are few, and easily comprehended by the imagination; and the manner of their efficiency is familiar to the mind.

It is to be observed, that our inquiries into the causes of things are not entirely intended to please the imagination. Regard is also paid to truth. If a cause be assigned, though it be evidently sufficient for producing the effect; yet, if we perceive that it is really not the cause, the mind is not in the least degree satisfied. The understanding claims a right to judge; and if it discover any thing wrong,

the account that is given, however beautiful and plausible it may be in other respects, must be relinquished as a groundless hypothesis. Evidence for the truth of a cause is not, however, absolutely necessary to render a theory amusing and agreeable. If no improbability be discerned, and no better account of the matter occur, the cause assigned is often acquiesced in without any proof. The Cartesian school, which accounts for the polar direction of the magnet, by supposing that a subtile matter revolves through its poles, though no proof can be brought of the existence of such a fluid, will find multitudes disposed to adopt that hypothesis, till another be formed that can be better supported; for it is more satisfactory to imagine such a fluid producing the effect, than no cause at all. If the cause assigned be so familiar to the imagination, as to be easily comprehended; if it account sufficiently for the appearances ascribed to its operation; if no evidence lie against it; though there should be only a presumption in its favour, it will give some relief to the mind, and will accordingly be assented to by many, till another theory, more elegant, or better supported, be produced. On the other hand, a system or theory becomes contemptible and unsatisfactory, when it is so complex as to be burthensome to the imagination; or when its principles are of a kind with which we are not acquainted; or when it is evidently whimsical and inconsistent with fact and observation; and in such cases must be relinquish-

ed. Who would receive a system of occult causes, which, from the multiplicity, as well as incomprehensibility of its principles, accounted for nothing? Who will believe that the pulsations, digestions, and secretions, in the human body, are occasioned by a plastic power, of which neither he nor any other person was conscious? Who does not despise the theory that accounts for the deluge, by supposing the earth involved in the watery tail of a comet, when it was melted by the sun upon its return from the remote regions of cold and darkness?

Having thus considered the nature of the information which the mind requires, with regard to the changes of matter, it may be proper to illustrate the manner in which natural philosophy affords this satisfaction. A few remarks on the history of physics will be sufficient for this purpose.

Before the introduction of arts, men were very little accustomed to speculation; and their philosophy, of consequence, was rude and imperfect. The only inquiries among them regarded things that were extraordinary, astonishing, and terrible. Common effects scarce excite any curiosity. Their causes are sometimes very evident; and, at any rate, the thing itself is so familiar to the imagination, that it gives it no trouble, and is overlooked. A rude people would never inquire why

vapour ascends, and rain falls. Daily accustomed to observe these effects, they would consider them as primary operations of nature, which did not need to be traced back to any principle of a more general kind. But thunder, earthquakes, hurricanes, and other terrible appearances, must immediately claim attention. Every effect, or chain of causes and effects, upon the principles of all philosophy, rude or improved, must proceed from an active being. The agent, however, may be conceived as producing the effect, either immediately, or by certain means fitted for bringing about the end. The former of these methods is the more simple, and, accordingly, appeared as the only method of philosophizing to the untaught generations of early times. Every striking event was ascribed to the agency of some invisible power, that was capable of counteracting the common and established course of things. Jupiter darted the lightning, Neptune shook the earth, Æolus directed the tempest. As for matter, with its usual changes, they were supposed to be eternal and uncaused. Plato is said to have been the first of the Greeks, who ventured to maintain that matter was created.

Mythology may, in this light, be considered as the first attempt to philosophical inquiry. Effects were attributed by it to certain causes, which were supposed to be capable of producing them. Imperfect as this philosophy was, it presented some-

thing on which the human imagination could rest. Every divinity had his own province; certain effects were regularly ascribed to him; and these, it was supposed, he was capable of performing, with the same ease that men perform those actions to which they are every day accustomed. So invariably did they ascribe similar effects to the same persons, that the commentators of Homer have found little difficulty in turning his poems into tolerable allegories, by translating the names of his gods into the names of the provinces over which they presided, and by supposing their actions to signify motion and change, expressed in the manner of poetical personification.

This kind of philosophy, though well enough adapted to the capacity of the vulgar, and the taste of the superstitious, could not long satisfy the minds of those who inquired rationally. The imagination was confounded by the multiplicity of those invisible beings which were necessarily introduced to account for appearances. The divinities of celestial dignity, not to mention those of the seas, rivers, and mountains, were innumerable. Another inconvenience attending this system, considered as a philosophical hypothesis, was, that the manner these beings acted was unknown, and their operations resembled those of an occult cause; but its principal defect was, that it furnished nothing on which the understanding could rely. The evidence for the existence of these di-

vinities, was no better at first than mere supposition and conjecture; and in process of time, the whole hypothesis was overturned by observation and experience. Men saw, at last, that many of the events formerly ascribed to personal agency, proceeded from natural causes. They discovered, by attending to facts, that a flood was not occasioned by a river-god pouring forth water from an urn; but by the melting of snow, or the falling of rain: And that an echo was not the voice of a sportive nymph, but the reverberation of the air from a smooth surface.

After men were persuaded that motion and change are frequently not effectuated by immediate personal agency, their views of natural causes became gradually enlarged. In a great number of cases, it was easily perceived from what exertion a particular change immediately proceeded; but this was not sufficient information to a philosopher. That the imagination might be satisfied, it was necessary that a great number of events should be accounted for from one common cause, and reduced in this manner to a general class. Theories were inserted, with a view to satisfy the mind, by connecting a variety of events, as having proceeded from the same source. But as experience had not yet laid up a sufficient provision of facts for the purpose, the fancy was employed to supply the want of observation. The supposition was frequently imaginary; and as it wanted a foun-

dation in truth, it could not suit the appearances of nature. Cases were often occurring, for which it did not tolerably account. In order to satisfy the understanding when it became more enlightened, it was necessary to load the theory with a variety of exceptions and deviations, or to add new principles to those formerly thought sufficient. By such management, it was possible to account for many appearances; but the system gradually became burthenfome to the mind; because simplicity, without which the imagination cannot be pleased, was entirely lost. Philosophy was deprived of elegance, and assumed a clumsy form. It became necessary to overthrow the ancient edifice, and erect a new fabric upon a simpler plan.

The history of astronomy, as we have heard it elegantly delivered by Dr. Smith,\* furnishes us with a good illustration of this progress. The earth was believed, of old, to contain a centre, round which the heavenly bodies revolve every day in circular orbits. This supposition was at first abundantly simple, and it accounted very well for all that was then known of the planetary system; but observation afterwards demonstrated the imperfection of the theory. Many appearances of the planets which were not at first attended to, particularly the retrograde and stationary situations of some of them, were left unexplained by this theory. To supply its defects, cycles, epicycles, and eccentric-

\* See Dr. Smith's *Posthumous Essays*.

cities without number, were introduced, till it became so complex, that it distracted the imagination. A new system, more simple and less burthenfome to the mind, became necessary. An ingenious supposition, of which an account is transmitted to us by Cicero in Scipio's dream, was adopted by some ancient philosophers, though it was not generally received. The two inferior planets, whose motions occasioned most perplexity, were supposed to move periodically round the sun; and the sun, with these two attendants, was imagined to revolve every day round the earth, above the orbit of the moon, and below that of Mars. The situation of the three superior planets was the same as in the old system. This hypothesis, greatly improved by the supposition that the three superior planets also move round the sun, while the sun, attended by the whole, revolves round the earth, was afterwards illustrated and maintained by the celebrated Tycho Brahe, but with the same want of success. Though these suppositions may account for facts better than the old system, yet they are surrounded with many difficulties, and are deficient in simplicity. It was particularly unfortunate for the hypothesis of Tycho, that it was not thought of till a better one was known. No effort of human genius could amend the old hypothesis, so as to make it account for appearances, and at the same time please the imagination. It was absolutely necessary to overturn the whole. When things were in this situation,

the Emancipated Spirit arose, who, either of himself, or assisted by some hints derived from antiquity, discovered that the great source of light and heat is the centre to which the opaque bodies tend, and round which they revolve. By this hypothesis, he accounted in the easiest manner for these appearances, which had involved the Ptolemaic system in inextricable intricacy and endless confusion. The simplicity of the supposition recommended it to the imagination; future observation established its truth.

Notwithstanding the agreeableness of simplicity to the imagination, it must be sacrificed to truth whenever they interfere. The inquiry into the means by which the heavenly bodies are kept in motion, exhibits an instance of this sacrifice. Men had long imagined that the planets were fixed in crystalline orbs, which revolved like chariot wheels, in consequence of a *vis motrix* impressed upon them by a *primum mobile*, and other such causes, when Descartes attempted a more simple hypothesis. He supposed that the universe is filled with a fluid, continually moving in a circular direction, in which the heavenly bodies revolve, from the same principle that carries a vessel down a stream. The theory had great simplicity to recommend it; it accounted for every thing by impulse, the law of nature with which we are best acquainted. It is not then to be wondered at, that they who adopted it pertinaciously adhered

to it. But the foundation of the whole was merely imaginary. Whenever it was proved that there are parts of space not occupied by matter, the theory could not stand. Sir Isaac Newton, guided by experiment, and the principles of sound philosophy, at last discovered the connection by which the whole system is bound together, and the causes by which its revolutions are effectuated. Instead of supposing the world to be filled with matter, he concluded, from good reasons, that in the greater part of it, there is scarce any matter at all; so that there is nothing to interrupt the motion of a planetary body, when once begun by means of impulse. He found from analogy, supported by computation, that the planets are attracted by the sun, as a stone is attracted by the earth; and by means of the principle of gravitation, added to impulse, which had been supposed by Descartes, he found himself capable of accounting for every motion of the planetary system. His principles were few and familiar; and as he had no occasion for whirling pools, his theory was more simple than that of Descartes. Facts corresponded to it; and every philosopher who loved truth, finding it confirmed by experience and analogy, founded on laws that universally prevail, and accounting for all appearances, willingly embraced it.

It might easily be shewn, that the revolutions of theories, in every branch of physics, as well

as in astronomy, proceeded from the same circumstances. Men of inquiry, observing that events were complicated and astonishing, though their causes were few and familiar, were naturally led to seek relief to their imaginations, in reducing events to general classes by means of their causes. When this method of generalization appears to be impracticable, another method, similar to that employed in classing external objects, though far less satisfactory to the mind, is adopted. We are less struck with a dreadful event, when we are informed of similar calamities that have happened elsewhere. Men in distress feel a consolation from reflecting that they are not singular. Events, however important, that are familiar to the imagination, pass unobserved, even by those who are ignorant of their causes. From this view, a system of generalization, with regard to events, similar to that which gives relief to the mind, with regard to external objects, appears to be very natural. Accordingly, a talkative man, who does not trouble himself with the causes of actions, thinks he has sufficiently accounted for an extraordinary fact which you have mentioned to him, when he tells you another equally wonderful. Few events have fallen under his observation, because he viewed them without examining or distinguishing them. A few classes, formed from similarity of circumstances, include all the stories that burden his memory and imagination. He is at ease, whenever he gets a singular event afforded, by bun-

delling it up with parallel occurrences. Even the philosopher is sometimes obliged to satisfy himself with a similar method of generalization, and to adopt a sort of analogical theory, though he be sensible of its imperfections, from want of better principles of arrangement. If this inelegant method of removing the surprize of novelty give relief to the imagination, how much more satisfactory must that system of generalization be, which arranges effects from the agency of those natural causes that are familiar to our minds, and which attempts to explain every thing as the consequence of a few general laws that are well known? Knowledge of this nature is the sublimest that the human soul can possess; it bears a resemblance to the discernment of the Supreme Intelligence, which beholds the first spring and the long concatenation of efficiency, by which the determinations of the divine will are brought about. So vain are men of such knowledge, that they unwillingly renounce even the appearance of it. A hypothesis never was relinquished, till it had become too complex by repeated amendments, or till it was found insufficient to account for appearances, or till it was proved to be false; and scarce even in these cases, unless a more perfect one was substituted in its room.

Knowledge of this nature, as it is the result of much labour and genius, is treasured up and transmitted from generation to generation. Few have

it in their power to make any additions to it ; but he who makes himself acquainted with it, enjoys from it all the satisfaction which the first inventor felt, except the consciousness of having made a valuable discovery. It is an intimate acquaintance with these primary laws and principles, and a knowledge of their effects, that constitute a philosopher. Every uncommon appearance strikes a child, as it strikes a savage, with amazement and astonishment. These sensations are less frequently felt by the man who has familiarized to himself the generalizing principles which have been adopted by philosophers. The effect appears to be what might have been expected from the cause which produced it ; the connection is clearly discerned, and therefore the imagination is undisturbed. Though the causes of many things yet lie hid, the plan of investigation is still going on, and after the labour of ages, will be brought to perfection. Then will be discovered the simple principles which move the great machine of nature ; and the long series of connections and dependencies, by which its parts are linked together, will be unfolded. All who think themselves born for better purposes, than to travel through the world with no other view than to gratify craving desires, or to pursue whatever is conducive to profit or pleasure, have the strongest encouragement not to remain in a state where they must gaze and wonder at every thing ; but to purchase from philosophy, at the expence of labour

and diligence, those principles of generalization, both from resemblance and efficiency, which afford relief to the imagination, and satisfy the love of truth, and exalt the inquiring mind far above the deplorable state of barbarity. It is this love of knowledge that ought to warm the bosom of a philosopher. It is this which has led numbers of inquiring minds through labour and danger, to inhospitable regions, that they might examine those productions and appearances of nature, which they had not an opportunity of observing at home. Such laborious perigrinations, in search of knowledge, were not peculiar to the ancients, as Pythagoras, Democritus, and Plato. These great men have been rivalled by Hæffelquist, Forskal, Thunberg, Sparman, Forster, Banks, and Solander, and many more in our own times. Animated by this thirst after information, every ingenious mind will endeavour assiduously to store itself with the treasures of wisdom which have been laid up by experience, though it can make no addition to them.

Philosophy, by means of the plans of generalization which it follows, and by the agreeable appearances which it exhibits, affords a most refined entertainment to the principles of taste. The mind that is capable of being affected with grandeur or beauty, must frequently be captivated during an inquiry into the system of nature. The uniform tendency of her various operations is not discernible to the

inattentive eye. That which the vulgar behold as a detached production, or an accidental event, is regarded by the philosopher as necessarily connected with a great scheme. There are, indeed, many agreeable appearances which are obvious to every eye. The rainbow, the aurora borealis, and the lightning, affect the mind of the unlearned, as well as of the philosopher; but the sentiments of the one are very different from those of the other. The one considers them as great and beautiful, because he can examine them with attention. The other beholds them with notions of danger, while his thoughts are confused by his ignorance of their nature, causes, or effects. He who has attended to the mutual influences and operations of things, perceives without terror the beautiful order of the universe, and rejoices in contemplating those events which contribute to promote the harmony of the well-adjusted plan. How different are the conceptions of the philosopher, when he considers the sun as an immense body, giving stability, light, and motion, to the whole planetary system, from those of the unreflecting part of mankind, who think it no larger than a brazen shield, and who confine its effects to the small spot of earth with which they are acquainted? The late discoveries in optics have pointed out beauties in the rainbow, which the ancients, who knew not distinctly even of what colours it is composed, could not discern. Horace exposed to ridicule the poets who attempted to describe it; but

minute descriptions of it have been given by the poets of this age, which Horace himself would have admired. Formerly, the thunder was heard with terror and amazement; but electrical knowledge has emboldened the modern philosopher to penetrate even into the thunder-cloud, and taught him to direct the course of the lightning. In ancient times, the appearance of a comet filled kingdoms with consternation, and made the heart of the bravest soldier to faint. A philosopher, at present, dreads none of its effects, but receives it with joy, as a messenger from the remote parts of the universe, from whom he can obtain information concerning the extent and revolutions of the world. Every part of the material system presents a variety of great or beautiful objects to the philosophical eye.

Though the labours of the natural philosopher be primarily directed to the gratification of his own mind, yet they uniformly tend to the benefit of mankind. From every branch of physics, there arise practical arts of importance to the comfort of human life. The probability of success in the medical art, depends, in a great measure, upon the knowledge of natural history. When the limits between the various appearances of matter are not distinctly ascertained, so that one object may on all occasions be distinguished with certainty from every other—when the properties of vegetable and mineral substances are not in-

vestigated and understood, and their mutual attractions and relative affinities examined—it is idle to prescribe and dispense. The perfection of the colours in painting, staining, enamelling, and dyeing, as well as many particulars regarding farming, bleaching, refining of metals, and a variety of other arts, depend upon the same kind of knowledge. The advantages in particular arising from the art of separating metals from grosser materials, and fashioning them into instruments for the conveniency of life, are numerous and striking. How low the state of those societies where iron is unknown! They want the ornamental works of art; and even those which necessity has produced, after infinite labour, bear only a coarse appearance. They have no method of turning even wood into the most useful forms.—Clay itself, by the assistance of metals, assumes a polished surface, and can be applied to purposes both useful and ornamental. Without the discoveries of the astronomer, geography and chronology would for ever have been in their infancy: Without astronomy, men could seldom have gone beyond the limits of their native country, to exchange their superfluities for those of other nations. The vast ocean would have been poured out upon the earth in vain. No mariner could have steered his course through it to foreign regions. The wealth of fertile climates would have rotted under the feet of their indolent inhabitants, and could not have become the reward of industry to the adventurous

sons of less favoured countries. Astronomy, of itself, would not have been sufficient to have guided the mariner through extensive seas, though it ascertained to him the place of the globe at which he had arrived. Without the magnetic needle, to point out his course when he could not observe the stars, and without the knowledge of its variations, he durst hardly have quitted the sight of land, to free himself from the danger of rocks and shelves, or to shorten his course to distant shores—lest he should have lost his way amidst clouds and tempests.

The great advantages derived to life from the study of mechanics, are too manifold to be enumerated. By means of machinery, the work of multitudes, who are unassisted with the improvements of philosophy, is performed by a few; the productions of nature are formed, at a small expence, into the necessaries and elegancies of life; and the labours, as well as natural produce, of a populous and improved country, are exchanged for the wealth of foreign regions. Several useful arts have received considerable improvements from those instruments that measure the weight and temperature of the air. Regularity, punctuality, and dispatch, are greatly indebted to the machines which measure time. The improvement which the internal navigation of countries has received by means of canals, demonstrates the benefit of hydrostatical knowledge.

The invention of conveying water by subterraneous tubes, so as to answer all the useful purposes of the most expensive aqueduct of antiquity, is sufficient to shew the utility of modern discoveries. The late excellent contrivance of the pneumatical engine for extinguishing accidental fire, affords a proof that no hint, however unpromising, ought to be rejected as useless. No man could have guessed, without experiment, that the condensing air-pump could have been applied to so beneficial a purpose. But it is needless to dwell upon these useful and ingenious contrivances, with whose advantages every one is acquainted, and whose number renders a proper selection almost impossible.

In the last place, natural philosophy is recommended to the attention of mankind, by the light which it throws upon other studies, and the foundation it lays for important inquiries.—The subjects treated of in this branch of philosophy, are of that kind which is best fitted to strike the fancy. They are perceived by the external senses, and their qualities and operations are discovered by experiment; hence they easily become familiar to the mind. Of consequence, they are admirably adapted to the purposes of embellishment and illustration in the fine arts. From them, the poet and orator frequently borrow their comparisons, allegories, and metaphors. They communicate to us conceptions of the unseen operations of mind, and the workings of human pas-

sions and affections, under figures and allusions, brought from the more familiar and perceptible operations of matter. Without an acquaintance with the works of nature and art, it is impossible to enter into their views, so as to obtain that information which they want to communicate, or to enjoy these pleasures of taste which they want to inspire.

From this source too, the moral philosopher derives much benefit. From the analogy of the laws by which the natural and moral systems are governed—though he can form no conclusion in his own science—he is enabled to repel many ill-grounded objections made to those conclusions which have been drawn from just premises. These points which appear doubtful to him who is unacquainted with the subject, acquire the appearance of probability, when a resemblance is discovered between them and those doctrines which are indisputable. A moral truth, which at first sight seemed questionable, is no longer astonishing, after it appears to follow from a rule in the government of moral things, analogous to the laws by which natural events are directed. It is associated in the imagination, and a probability in its favour is laid before the understanding.

But nothing in this view is so recommendatory of natural philosophy, as that it is the foundation of religion. It is from observing the events of

nature, and referring them to the agency of some intelligent cause, that men acquire their first notions of Deity. According as the knowledge of the works of nature is more or less perfect, the prevalent ideas of the divine nature must be more or less distinct. In our present situation we can know nothing of God, but from the discoveries which he has made of himself. Far removed from our senses, he could never have become an object of contemplation to our minds, unless he had made manifestations of his being and perfections. We have no faculties for perceiving him in any other way. Though he had expressly revealed himself to the human race, and had left the knowledge of himself to be handed down from father to son, the information received concerning him would probably soon have dropt from their remembrance. The memory of a remarkable transaction is lost, among the greater part of mankind, in a few years. They who remember it, only recollect it after long intervals; and they who had not their feelings excited by it when it happened, hear it afterwards with the listless attention usually paid to an uninteresting tale. To produce in the world an habitual sense of Deity, it is requisite that the monuments of his being and attributes, should be publicly exhibited to the eyes of all mankind. Conquerors and patriots have found, that victories and deliverances from slavery were very soon forgotten. Hence, they and their admirers have thought it requisite to employ certain means for rescuing

their names from oblivion, and transmitting to posterity the fame of their merit. Trophies have been hung up, arches and pillars erected, and statues publicly exhibited, to strike the eyes of the spectator; that when fathers were asked by their children, What mean these remarkable objects? they might recollect the courage of the brave, and the conduct of the wise, and might relate the memorable actions which they had performed. God has made use of similar means to communicate the knowledge of himself to the human race. The analogy of all his works demonstrates the existence of a wise Being.—Could nature, or chance, or fate, or any other undefining cause, by whatever unintelligible name it may be denominated, arrange the vast variety of beings, in their kingdoms, tribes, classes, orders, kinds, and species; and impress upon every division the marks by which it might regularly be distinguished from all the rest, as well as the common properties by which it could be joined with larger assortments? Is it without design that the seed of a vegetable produces a plant, with every property of the one on which it grew; or that the young animal, carried to a foreign land, acquires, without instruction, the manners of its parent? As well might it be said, that the machinery employed in a commercial nation was all made by chance, whether chance mean a being without design, or no being at all. From what proceeded the ordinary concatenation of causes and effects in the universe? Why do the general laws by which

the world is regulated continue unchangeably the same? Would the same agency always produce the same effects upon matter? Would gravitation and impulse uniformly operate, as they have always done, if they had not been intended to bring about certain ends that were foreseen, and if they were not directed to these ends by an omnipotent hand? No materialist will assert that an orrery was formed without contrivance. How absurd then, is it to maintain, that the motions of the heavenly bodies which it represents, do not proceed from intelligence? The uniform agency of the causes by which the operations of the universe are effectuated, demonstrate satisfactorily the wisdom of their Author. The greatness of the events which are brought about, affords irresistible evidence of supreme power. The Almighty Sovereign who governs all things, is independent of every other being. None can oppose the execution of his purposes. He can have no envy, hatred, nor any other malicious passion that arises from fear or interference of interests. In consequence of his unalterable happiness, he must be perfectly good. That he possesses this glorious attribute, he has given abundant evidence. The revolutions of day and night, and of the various seasons; the liberal provision he has made for the necessities of his creatures; the proportion established between the quantity of the productions in the world, and their utility; the capacity he has given to fossil and vegetable substances, of being

improved by labour and culture, and of being turned by art into valuable forms—are all testimonies of his benignity and kindness. He who cannot perceive the order and harmony of the works of God, cannot form a proper conception of the universal Parent. He who is best acquainted with the works of creation, has the best opportunities for becoming acquainted with God. He beholds every where, power prompted by goodness and directed by wisdom. The universe appears to him a great system, with God at its head, effectuating all its motions by the simplest means, and promoting by them the most beneficial ends. With joy he offers up his gratitude to the Author of every good gift, and reposes with confidence upon the wisdom and stability of his Administration.

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## DISCOURSE XII.

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### *On SENSIBILITY.*

**T**HE ancients very properly observed, that the mind of man consists of an intelligent, a sentient, and an active part. All of these are subservient, in some measure or other, to the attainment of the supreme happiness that can fall to his lot, and to the right discharge of those duties which it is incumbent upon him to perform. That man is distinguished by his capacity for intelligence and action, is acknowledged by all who have reflected upon his nature. “As the ox is formed for the draught,” said Aristotle, “the horse for the course, and the hound for the chase; so man, like a mortal divinity, is formed for two things, understanding and action.” But it was not intended by the Author of our nature, that these excellent faculties should be employed, without yielding any emolument. It was intended, that certain ad-

vantage and profit should arise from the proper improvement of our intellectual powers, and from the right exertion of the active principles in our minds. It was reciprocally intended, that certain losses and inconveniences should proceed from the neglect or perversion of our intellectual powers; and from the wrong direction, misapplication, or neglect, of our active abilities. These advantages and disadvantages appear in the consequences of right and wrong conduct, as they procure to us the conveniences of life, the confidence and love of mankind, and the approbation of our own hearts; or as they prevent or deprive us of these enjoyments.

As there are certain fruits which spring from the right exercise and improvement of the intellectual and active powers of man, and certain fruits of a different kind that are produced, if they be neglected and misapplied; it is not to be expected that these fruits, when gathered, will be equally agreeable, or equally nutritive. Their effects may be expected to be as opposite to each other as their natures. The one must be attended with advantage, and the other with disadvantage. But the powers of intelligence and action alone, cannot communicate to the intelligent agent, any information with regard to his gain or his loss. Right and wrong, riches and poverty, honour and contempt, may be discerned, distinguished, and judged of by intellectual powers; but the con-

sequences of them upon the agent cannot be known to himself, by any powers of human reason : They are contentment or discontent, pleasure or pain, happiness or misery. These are not objects external to the mind, which may be discerned or perceived ; they have no existence but in the mind itself, and do not exist unless when it is sensible of their presence.

Philosophers have differed widely, with regard to the rank that should be assigned to this class of feelings in the human constitution. The ancient Stoics insisted, that they were unnecessary parts of the human frame, and led always into error and evil ; and ought, therefore, along with the passions connected with them, to be entirely extirpated. As the wise man is free from desire and aversion, so they required that he should also be free from joy and grief, hope and fear. With regard to the external circumstances of life, even those that regard our most intimate friends, we ought to maintain the most perfect apathy. Right conduct, according to them, depends on acting agreeably to nature. This sort of conduct they explained, as depending upon right and perfect judgments, concerning the value of those objects that are pursued. The ultimate end to be pursued, is the attainment of happiness. This end is in the agent himself, independently of all external circumstances. The first object of pursuit, therefore, is to have a mind well regulated, preferring the enjoy-

ments of mind to every thing else. Though they maintained, that the happiness or misery of man does not depend upon external things, and that these are in their nature indifferent; yet they denied that the use of them is indifferent. They have a certain estimation and value, from a regard to which, right or wrong conduct is to be judged of; and from which, the offices, duties, and business of life, are to be denominated right or wrong. He who estimates every thing according to its just and natural value, and conducts himself in his pursuits agreeably to this precise and accurate judgment, is the perfectly wise man. He acts agreeably to nature, because he conducts himself according to the true nature and real value of things. He pursues only those things which are honourable, because those only have intrinsic value, and because in those alone does the supreme happiness of man consist. Hence they easily formed the distinction between their perfect man, who acted with integrity from the most perfect intelligence; and their ordinary man, who, with good intentions, according to the best information which his abilities could collect, performed the common and usual offices of human life. According to the principles of this philosophy, the ordinary feelings of compassion, sympathy, and humanity, are not to be encouraged, but suppressed; because, they may pervert the mind, and prevent the most enlightened judgments,

which ought to direct the conduct, from being formed.

The Peripatetics also placed virtue in living conformably to nature ; but they usually explained the expression in a different way. By nature, they understood human nature. According to them, a man acts agreeably to nature, when he acts according to the principles of his own nature ; when he properly estimates the value and dignity of these principles, gives the ascendancy to those which have a natural right to supremacy, and keeps the rest in subordination to them. It is the province of reason, comprehending under it conscience, as the regulating part of our frame, to command ; and of our desires, affections, passions, and the feelings connected with them, to be subservient, and to obey.

According to both these systems of philosophy, the supreme exaltation and felicity of man, consists in the perfection of his nature, in the exercise of the highest intellectual and active powers with which he is endowed ; and in no respects upon any thing in which he is merely passive.

The Epicureans, indeed, among the ancient sects, placed the happiness of man in the enjoyment of bodily pleasure, and in freedom from bodily pain, which they represented as being the same thing ; but they did not consider happiness

as lying in passive indulgence. In order to be happy, a man must be active. He must encounter labour and danger, when it is necessary to acquire future pleasure, or to avoid future pain. He must forego present gratifications, for the sake of greater ones in expectation; or submit to severe personal hardships, to obtain future gratification, or to avoid evils that threaten him. Even upon this system, the life of a prudent man must be a life of mortification and self-denial.

The principal sects of the ancient philosophers, then, placed the whole of human merit, and of human happiness, in the improvement of the intellectual faculties of which man is possessed; in the exertion of his active powers in performing the several duties of life; and in keeping the subordinate principles of his nature in an habitual and constant subserviency to those which were intended to govern and conduct him.

It remained, I believe, for the present age, to place any considerable part of human merit in the sensitive part of our constitution. We are, indeed, formed in such a manner, as to feel both delight and uneasiness, from those things which affect either ourselves or other persons. Upon this part of our frame, our happiness or misery in a great measure depends. We enter into the joys and sufferings of others; we commiserate with the afflicted, and are disposed to drop the involuntary tear

in cases where we can afford no relief. This is a wise and beneficent contrivance in our constitution. It is a means of linking us together in social union, and of disposing us to be serviceable to one another. These sympathetic principles are distinctive of man, for they appear in no other animal. The care which inferior creatures bestow upon their young when in distress, seems to depend entirely upon the parental affection, for it extends not to the other distressed individuals of their species.— This sympathetic part of our constitution is of great and manifest importance to us. In some, the sensations appear to be originally stronger, and in others weaker. But they are the work of him who is the Author of our frame; and whether it be better for us to have them strong or weak, we derive no merit from the degree in which we have them. Nothing here depends upon us. One man may be made superior to another in a physical light, as he may be a superior animal; but every thing that has merit or demerit, every thing that is of a moral nature, must depend upon us, and proceed from us. Our worth, in as far as the sensitive part of our nature is concerned, must lie, not in its possession, but in its management, application, and employment.

Some of the ancient sects carried their views, with regard to the sensitive part of our nature, so far, that they considered the entire conquest and subjection of it as a principal part of human duty.

A wise man, according to the Stoics, in order to act his part well, must be entirely free from the impressions of hope and fear, joy and grief, pity and compassion. These are indications of weakness, and all of them have a tendency to mislead the mind from a steady and uniform adherence to the rules of right.

In modern times, some philosophers of great eminence, have ascribed much more of human merit to the sensitive part of our constitution, than the ancients have done. Some of them have placed moral worth in the possession of kind and benevolent affections towards the human race, in conjugal love, parental and filial attachment, esteem and veneration, friendship and patriotism. The mind that is always sensible to the connections upon which these affections depend, is, of all others, the best constituted, and has the greatest value and excellence. These, however, are only physical qualities; and though, like beauty and gracefulness, they may render one being a superior animal to another, they cannot render him more deserving of praise or of blame. In as far as they were originally formed in us, they are not ours, but his who made us. The most eminent of those who have placed virtue in the affections, though they have attributed the whole merit to the affections themselves, even when there is no opportunity for the exertion of them, have, notwithstanding, always represented them as connected with

subsequent exertions. They have considered them, as not merely sensations excited by the condition of those around us; but also as active principles, continually prompting us to exert ourselves in doing good. Hence they judge of the merit and value of the affections themselves, by the beneficial consequences which they tend to produce. Those which are most extensively useful, are more valuable than those which affect a smaller number of men; they stand, therefore, in need of direction, prudence, and self-command, with a view to suppress those that are less extensively beneficial, and to encourage those which tend to diffuse happiness through a larger circle. The merit of the affections, then, is not to be judged of by the passive effects produced upon our minds, but by the consequences that may arise from their active exertions.

This doctrine, when thus explained and modified, is not irreconcilable with the ancient views of morality. It still exhibits virtue as consisting in acting according to nature—whether we explain this expression, as meaning conduct directed by a regard to the true value and importance of things, or conduct directed according to the impulse of the superior and more noble principles, in opposition to the instigation of the inferior ones. In another respect, several modern philosophers have ascribed more to the sensitive part of our nature, than was done by their forefathers of antiquity.

According to the unanimous opinion entertained by the ancients, we form our judgments concerning right and wrong, virtue and vice, by means of reason, or the intellectual part of our constitution. This is the supreme and governing principle in man; it alone has light and discernment. The rest may prompt us to activity, but they are blind, and can perform nothing properly without its guidance and direction. Appetite rushes forward with indiscriminating fury to the attainment of its object, and ought to be kept under controul. Sensation affects us with pleasure or pain, but cannot distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong. Some eminent modern philosophers have assigned a much more exalted rank to the sensitive part of our frame. They have maintained, that it is by means of a sense, analogous to the external senses, that we discriminate between virtue and vice. Agreeable sensations are excited in us by whatever is fair and honourable in behaviour; and disagreeable sensations are occasioned by every thing that is base and unworthy. The one course of life is amiable and attractive—the other is odious and repulsive. We are, therefore, naturally led to estimate the value and merit of conduct, from the impression which it makes upon us. If it excite in us agreeable sensations, we approve of it, and think it deserving of reward: If, on the contrary, it shock and disgust our feelings, we disapprove of it, and think that it deserves punishment. If this be the case, there is no occasion to have re-

course to reason, or to apply to any of our intellectual powers, in our determinations concerning conduct; sensation alone is sufficient for the business. It ought, at the same time, to be observed, that some of the most distinguished of those who have ascribed moral approbation and disapprobation to a moral sense, however they may sometimes have expressed themselves, do not seem to have attributed them entirely to the sensitive part of our nature. All must agree with them, that right and wrong conduct excite agreeable and disagreeable sensations, both in the agent and the spectator; though they think that there is also a judgment formed by some discerning, and consequently, intellectual power. Some of those, on the other hand, who refer all moral determinations to sense, sometimes express themselves as if they did not exclude understanding. Dr. Hutcheson, in particular, represents the moral sense as the regulating and governing power of our nature, as having rightful dominion over the whole man, and as that which ought to moderate and direct all our appetites and passions. These are provinces to which a sense, in the common acceptance of the term, is altogether inadequate, and which cannot be managed without prudence, foresight, and understanding.

But there have been many, in late times, especially since the writings of Sterne made their appearance, who seem to have attributed the prin-

incipal share of human merit to the sensitive part of our nature. They have extolled the softer affections, love, pity, and compassion, as constituting the supreme excellence of a character; and have thought that nothing could so much recommend any person, as a great proneness to receive and indulge them. Hence they speak of him who is most susceptible of such impressions, whose heart is most easily captivated by beauty and gracefulness, and whose tears most readily flow upon the recital of the tale of distress, as the worthiest of men. The possession of tender and delicate feelings implies all that is excellent. The man of sensibility, who is awake to every impression made upon him, and whose nerves vibrate with vivacity, is he that claims our utmost regard.

This doctrine seems to constitute the chief part of the morality of late novellists, and of that tribe of writers, in general, who have denominated themselves sentimental; and who endeavour to excite compassionate feelings, without attempting either to inform the understanding, or direct the the conduct of life; and whose aim, accordingly, is merely to please. The word sentiment, indeed, in propriety of language, signifies not only a sensation of pleasure or pain, but also implies an opinion or judgment of the understanding. When we speak of moral sentiments, for instance, we not only mean to express the agreeable or disagreeable sensations in our minds, but also the judg-

ment of approbation or disapprobation which we pass upon actions. But they who of late have most frequently employed the term sentiment, seem to have understood nothing by it but feeling; though they have indeed confined it to the feelings of the mind, and have not extended it to those of the body.

If merit consisted merely in a nice and delicate feeling of the impressions made upon us, there would seem to be no reason why as much of it should not be ascribed to irritability, as to tender sensibility. There seems to be as much worth in being grievously offended with slight wrongs, as in being deeply affected with slight distresses. In a court of honour, perhaps, there would appear more. But here again, we must have recourse to our feelings. A man who is irritated, is boisterous and noisy: He breathes revenge, and thirsts for blood: His conduct, and the principles which dictate it, shock and disgust our feelings. We dislike them, and therefore condemn them. But the heart that is wrung with the distress of pity and compassion, shews nothing that is repulsive. We are attracted by its tenderness; it gains our love and our praise.

If liking or disliking, attraction or repulsion, be the only grounds of approbation or disapprobation, it would seem that we ought not only to approve of tender affections and of delicate feel-

ings, but also of all qualities that are agreeable. This doctrine, therefore, in order to be consistent, ought to admit intellectual talents, lively imagination, improved abilities, and even beauty, strength, and other bodily accomplishments, into the same high rank with compassionate affections. But this would not have answered the ends which these writers had in view. They meant to exalt the sensitive part of our nature; they have paid but little regard to the intellectual, and scarcely any at all to the active.

In favour of those who lay so much stress upon generous affections, and the interesting feelings connected with them, it must be observed, that they have laid hold of a most amiable and valuable part of our frame. By these principles, we are linked in close union with our brethren of mankind. On them depend all the endearments of domestic and social life. Without them, life would be gloomy, melancholy, and insupportable. It is our wisdom and our duty to indulge them, and to improve them; because they are the principles in our frame that chiefly create love and attachment, and which are productive of some of the most genuine and exalted enjoyments that can fall to our lot.

But it is further to be observed, that we are not to consider warmth of affection, or sensibility of heart, as constituting real virtue. They are, in

themselves, merely passive impressions made upon our minds, agreeably to the laws, according to which external things operate upon us. If only these impressions be made upon us, without producing any further effect, however strong our sensations may be, we derive no merit from them. There is no moral worth in shedding tears for distress, or in being shocked with misery. These are sensations altogether involuntary; and that which is involuntary cannot constitute virtue.

Though sensibility and affection, however, do not of themselves constitute worth, they are fitted to prompt and dispose us to meritorious conduct. They induce us to perform kind offices to those who are connected with us, and to those who stand in need of our assistance. It is in the benevolent and charitable exertion, and not in the passive sensation, that merit consists. There is too much reason to believe, that there are many who frequently weep over the recital of human calamities, and yet seldom or never stretch forth an active hand, with a view to lessen or remove them. There is also reason to believe, that exquisite sensibility often arises from a relaxed constitution, and a debilitated state of the nervous system, which dispose to indolence, and prevent any vigorous exertion. From whatever cause such delicate sensibility may arise, after the habit has been formed, it inclines the person who has formed it, instead of finding out and relieving the miserable, to turn

away his eyes and thoughts from them, as objects of averfion and difguft. It is ideal, and not real fcenes of diftreffs, in which fuch a mind delights.

Thus, the indulgence of fuch paffive impreffions, without calling them frequently into active exercife, feems to have a tendency to weaken and debilitate the mind, and difqualify it for performing beneficent acts. In order to do good, it is frequently neceffary to check and counteract our feelings. When a perfon is in diftreff or danger, we may feel, in the moft lively manner, for his fituation ; but if this be all, we do him no fervice. We ought to repress fuch emotions as may prevent us from difcerning thofe meafures which the exigency requires, or that vigour which is requifite to put them into execution. The life of our friend is in danger, and cannot be faved without cutting off a limb. It is diftreffing to fubject him to pain ; but it is abfolutely neceffary for his fafety, and our fenfibility ought to yield. Our affections plead ftrongly againft the chaftifement of a darling child ; but it is neceffary to fecure his future good conduct, and therefore our feelings muft be difregarded.

In other cafes, as well as this, when the paffive impreffions are much indulged, the mind becomes too much enfeebled to form the active habit. A man who has habituated himfelf to read elegant writers, and is fenfible of their beauties, without

exerting his own talents in composition, may acquire a nice and fastidious taste in judging of the works of others, and yet have no vigour to execute any thing himself.

Passive impressions and affections, in the natural state of man, prompt him to action. Compassion prompts him to acts of charity. By a repetition of such acts, he forms himself to habits of charity. These active habits gradually are strengthened: But in proportion as they grow stronger, the effect of the passive impressions, as Dr. Butler has well shewn, is diminished, and the man acts from a sense of duty, and not from blind impulse.

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## DISCOURSE XIII.

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*Concerning the Effects of CRITICAL KNOWLEDGE ON  
the Advancement of the FINE ARTS.*

“THE modern French wits,” says Sir William Temple, “have been very severe in their censures, and exact in their rules, I think to very little purpose; for I know not why they might not have contented themselves with those given by Aristotle and Horace, and have translated them rather than commented upon them; for all they have done has been no more; so as they seem by their writings of this kind, rather to have valued themselves, than improved any body else. The truth is, there is something in the genius of poetry, too libertine to be confined to so many rules; and whoever goes about to subject it to such constraints, loses both its spirit and grace, which are ever native, and never learnt even of the best masters. ’Tis as if to make excellent

honey, you should cut off the wings of your bees, confine them to their hive or their stands, and lay flowers before them, such as you think the sweetest and like to yield the finest extraction; you had as good pull out their stings and make arrant drones of them. They must range through fields as well as gardens, choose such flowers as they please, and by properties and scents they alone know and distinguish: They must work up their cells with admirable art, extract their honey with infinite labour, and sever it from the wax, with such distinction and choice, as belongs to none but themselves to perform and to judge.

“It would be too much mortification to these great arbitrary rulers among the French writers, or our own, to observe the worthy productions that have been formed by their rules, the honour they have received in the world, or the pleasure they have given mankind; but to comfort them, I do not know there was any great poet in Greece, after the rules of that art laid down by Aristotle, nor in Rome after those by Horace, which yet none of our moderns pretend to have out-done.”

These remarks of Sir William Temple have been frequently repeated since his time, sometimes with greater, sometimes with less warmth, but generally in a declamatory manner, and positive tone.—The matter deserves a fair hearing. If

criticism be really chargeable with the hurtful consequences ascribed to it, it deserves to be discouraged: If you ruin the spirit and grace of poetry, by subjecting its genius to the constraint of rules; and if Aristotle and Horace banished poetry from Greece and Rome by their writings upon that art, let criticism be for ever abandoned. It is better to leave poetry and its sister arts, in their libertine state, free of controul, and allow them to range the fields at random, though their flights should sometimes be extravagant, than lose them altogether, by confining them within certain limits, and attempting to polish their manners.

But the truth seems to be, that criticism is not chargeable with the bad consequences attributed to it, and that all the invectives that have been uttered against it, as far as private grudge and resentment were out of the question, have been founded on a few mistakes which may be easily rectified.

The accusations against criticism have usually proceeded upon the supposition that it is entirely arbitrary, or at least that it is not built upon any principles that have a foundation in nature. This supposition, in either of the views, appears to be unjust.

The powers of taste furnish us with original

perceptions and sensations, as well as the external senses. We perceive beauty and deformity with the same distinctness as figure or colour, and are affected, in consequence of the perception, with pleasure or pain. We conceive the objects of taste as qualities really subsisting in the object, and not attributed to it by our imaginations, and form our judgments concerning it accordingly. Without the powers of taste, we could form no conception of beauty and deformity, any more than we could form a conception of blue or yellow, without the power of seeing; and without the persuasion that the qualities really existed in the objects perceived, as their properties, we would set no more value upon a diamond than a rough pebble. Men form their judgments agreeably to these original perceptions and feelings; and in these matters, their judgments are as uniform as with regard to the objects of the external senses. When an object is not much compounded, the judgments of men concerning its beauty, its fitness, or its structure, appear to be invariably the same. There is no dispute about the beauty of colour in a pigeon's neck, or of a violet, nor about fitness in the figure of a door, or the structure of a honey-comb. It is only when an object is too complex to be easily comprehended, that differences arise. But in similar cases, there is the same variety with respect to the objects of the external senses; and according to circumstances, men form different judgments concerning distance, size,

figure, and situation. In neither case, however, is the judgment arbitrary, but is formed agreeably to the appointment of nature, and is uniform in all men who are in the same circumstances. The cause of variety in taste, is not that there is any variety in the perceptions or sensations of men in these matters, but that there are several lights in which the same object may be viewed, in each of which it assumes a different appearance; and that there are other qualities, besides those which are properly the objects of taste, belonging to many objects, that occasion pleasure and pain. These latter sensations, as they arise from a different source, ought to be separated from the feelings of taste; but they are usually confounded with them; and an object that is useful or fashionable, is commonly looked on as beautiful; yet utility and fashion, though they be things that are agreeable, are of a very different nature from beauty.

Since, then, we have original perceptions and judgments concerning beauty and deformity, criticism, which is the knowledge founded upon the observation of them, is not arbitrary and capricious, but has a solid foundation in nature. We can draw conclusions by induction, concerning the objects of taste, as well as concerning the objects of the external senses; we can reason concerning them, and our reasoning may be founded

upon self-evident and undeniable truths. The objects of art possess beauty or deformity, as well as those of nature, and are judged of in the same manner, and are to be reasoned upon on similar principles. By observation and induction, we may form rules for judging concerning them as well as concerning other things. The knowledge and application of these rules is criticism: It is an art founded upon nature, and however difficult it may be to bring it to perfection, it is evidently capable of the same certainty with similar branches of knowledge.

Though this be the only foundation of solid criticism, they who professed the art have often built upon different principles, and by doing so, have exposed the art itself to censure. Aristotle did not appeal to nature, but to Homer and Sophocles; and Bossu delivered a system of rules founded upon the example of Homer and Virgil. They felt pleasure in reading certain poems; they considered them as perfect, and concluded that every thing excellent must be like them: They did not inquire what it was that rendered these poems agreeable, but pointed out their striking parts, and recommended them as models. Their conduct seems to land in the supposition, that there is no excellence in these kinds of writing, except what they have derived from the authority of those who have obtained reputation. Notwithstanding this grievous mistake in setting out, the

poets they chose to recommend, had so many perfections, and had formed themselves upon such excellent principles, the grounds of which their critics could not point out, that many of the rules founded on their example are agreeable to nature, and must always be observed. As these critics, however, gave no better reason for their rules than the authority of eminent writers, it was suspected that their art was not founded upon natural principles. To say that a rule must be right, because Homer observed it, is like saying that a proposition must be true, because Aristotle maintained it. Every man who has enough of invention, has as good a right to make a model for himself as Homer had.

Since, then, criticism is an art not arbitrary and capricious, but is founded upon first principles, and since its rules are not derived from example and supported by authority, but are formed by induction and analogy, the importance of its objects entitles it to a rank considerably high among the branches of knowledge. It is of consequence to class those objects and qualities which are agreeable, and to discover, if possible, the circumstances which recommend them. To learn to give a reason for our approbation and disapprobation in the fine arts, is as exalted an employment as to learn to assign the rules by which natural events are produced. It tends to make us

more and more acquainted with the powers of our own minds.

Here it is asked, What worthy productions have been formed by the critic's rules? The answer is obvious. It is not the intention of criticism to make an artist: It cannot bestow upon a man the powers of invention and imagination, and exquisite delicacy of feeling: These must proceed from the hand of nature. But it can direct him to the proper use of them. The officer did not bestow on his soldiers the power of walking; but he taught them to walk regularly. The musician did not give his scholar the power of moving his fingers; but he trained him up to a proper use of them. Every man who excels in the fine arts must observe certain rules, in whatever way he obtain them, and the production would be monstrous in which no rules were observed. In statuary, architecture, painting, and music, this is obvious to all. In eloquence and poetry, the rules are not so easily applied, but the matter is equally certain: Transgressions are more easily overlooked, but there must always be regularity. The knowledge of rules will not confer powers, but it will direct these powers; and it will prevent gross deviations from propriety. The knowledge of grammar will never enable a man to write either perspicuously or elegantly; but it will enable him to avoid mistakes that are inconsistent with perspicuity and elegance.

It is further asked, If there are not poets who have obtained great reputation, though they have transgressed the rules of criticism? It is admitted that there are; and it may further be admitted, that no poet has obtained reputation who has not transgressed some one rule or other. But they have not obtained fame on account of their deviations, but in spite of them. A man may have great excellencies, and yet be chargeable with some foibles, and will be esteemed notwithstanding his defects. Superior abilities will give pleasure, though not recommended by every grace. A piece of agreeable news will be well received, though communicated in an unengaging manner. Besides, there are some of the critic's rules of more value than others, and there is no eminent poet that has not pretty uniformly adhered to those which are of most importance.

On the other hand, a poet may rigidly adhere to the rules of criticism, and yet not obtain high renown. We want entertainment to our understandings, our fancies, and our hearts, as well as to our taste, and a writer who is recommended by nothing but his elegance, cannot expect to stand in competition with those who possess superior qualifications. He has the external figure, but he wants the living soul.

After these observations, it will hardly appear that poetry is too libertine to be confined by rules,

and that by these restraints it loses its spirit and grace. It is to be judged of by principles founded in nature, and arising from the exercise of the powers by which we distinguish those things which give pleasure from those that do not. It is only required that it should possess the properties which are adapted to these powers, and which occasion agreeable sensations: It is required that it should be beautiful, or sublime, or interesting. This is no unreasonable demand, for unless it possess these qualities, it will not please even those who know not the rules of criticism. It asks nothing but what must be performed, whether there be rules reduced to writing or not. So far it imposes no restraint. It further points out classes of objects that are beautiful and sublime, and directs the poet's attention to them, and it separates from them other classes of objects that might be mistaken for them. It prescribes rules, according to which the objects are to be combined; but these rules are not arbitrary. It is by observing them, that the objects combined can be made to produce the best effect. They resemble the rules that direct the jeweller in the arrangement of his precious stones: They do not constrain, but assist him. The orator does not find his eloquence hurt, because he is obliged to observe the rules of grammar: On the contrary, he finds it of advantage to him in the communication of his thoughts, that his audience understands grammar as well as he; and without this knowledge in

them, he would be apt not only to make a weak impression, but even to be misunderstood. The painter does not complain that he is bound to observe the rules of perspective: He knows that it is by observing these rules that his landscape will be fitted for producing the proper effect. He wishes that the spectator should be acquainted with the rules according to which he wrought, because this knowledge will enable him to form a more favourable judgment concerning his picture. The same must be the case with respect to poetry: They who judge without rule, must often be in the wrong: They may be moved and affected by what is striking and pathetic, but they may also be influenced by false colouring: They may perceive the brilliancy of a simile, but be incapable of discerning what he values much more, the conduct of the whole performance.

But how is the remaining objection, which appeals to facts, to be solved? After Aristotle wrote his treatise on poetry, there were no more poets in Greece; and after Horace published his epistle to the Pisos, the muses forsook Italy. If the knowledge of the rules of criticism was the cause of this event, poetry would never have revived; for all these rules were known at the revival of letters. But, probably, there might be some other reason for the fact. We are told the same thing concerning oratory and fine writing: They also declined at the same periods, and some have

thought it was owing to the critical rules laid down by the rhetoricians. Architecture, by the same reasoning, should have sunk in Rome along with poetry, because Vitruvius had disclosed its mysteries, as Horace had done those of poetry. But this graceful art was not so peevish as her sisters: She only began at that time to fix her residence in the Roman territories. Perhaps a better reason for the decline of poetry and eloquence may be found in the change the Greek and Roman states underwent in the days of Aristotle and Horace: It was then that they ceased to be free, and became unfit for any such exertion.

I would conclude, then, that the arts are in no danger from criticism: I mean true and rational criticism; for there is an illiberal kind of censure that is sometimes dignified with the name of criticism. This illiberal criticism may have bad effects, though they cannot be very formidable. It resembles detraction with regard to the moral character: It proceeds from malice or spleen, and is not founded on just principles: Its decisions cannot long produce any considerable effect. If a man of abilities runs a risk of being ill treated on account of his performances, no doubt he may be averse to throw himself in the way of danger, and he may want the incitement to industry that arises from the prospect of success.

This, however, is only an accidental inconvenience, though it may sometimes happen, and is no more an objection to criticism, than casual oppression is to regular government.

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## DISCOURSE XIV.

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*Observations on the PUNISHMENT of CRIMES.* \*

A LETTER.

THERE are several circumstances in your situation which must afford you a great deal of pleasure, especially the opportunity which you enjoy, and which I see you do not neglect, of comparing the condition of mankind in foreign countries with what you were acquainted with at home, and of observing the varieties which the difference

\* This Essay was formerly published in "*Anecdotes of the Russian Empire*," by the Editor of this volume, along with the following Note :

"The Author of this volume had no notion, when he wrote the Thirty-second Letter, of the merit it was about to have with his readers. It produced this answer, which the ingenious writer has most obligingly allowed him to publish. If the Editor could have presented every other letter in the collection so well supported as that which has occasioned this return, the solicitude he now feels on coming before the public might perhaps have been lessened." ed."

between them produces upon manners and character. It is flattering to our national pride, that you have hitherto met with nothing that tends to weaken your attachment to the liberty and the customs of your countrymen.

In your inquiries, the various regulations of police deservedly occupy a part of your attention; and among these, the laws relating to the prevention or punishment of crimes certainly occupy a very distinguished place. Every good citizen ought earnestly to wish, that the magistrate should be enabled to watch over the interest of all the individuals belonging to the community, and to restrain any person whatever from violating their rights. For the sake of absolute security from all injuries to his person or property, he might perhaps be disposed to sacrifice several other valuable privileges.

There are regulations and establishments of police in other countries, which tend more effectually to protect the inhabitants from the fraud and violence of their fellow-citizens, than any provisions that have been made by our laws. I entirely acquiesce, however, in your judgment, that similar plans, for prevention of crimes, would be attended with great and imminent danger, if they were adopted in Britain. It is not to be denied, that in this island daring attacks have often been made by desperate individuals upon the persons and properties of men; and, on account of these,

our unequalled form of government has frequently suffered reproach among the advocates for arbitrary power in foreign states. The representations of this evil which have been given, are not entirely groundless, though they are sometimes grossly and industriously exaggerated. But even granting that that they are strictly true, it will not be found easy to devise a remedy that will not occasion more fatal consequences than the disease. It is better to remain as we are, though sometimes exposed to danger from the feeble attack of a timid and skulking plunderer, than to arm a protector with irresistible powers, that may afterwards be openly employed to rob us of our most valuable rights.

I have heard of two schemes that have been seriously proposed, with a view to prevent the frequency of crimes, especially of robberies, in this country.—The one of these is, to erect a Board of Police in the capital, resembling that which is established in France, under the inspection of a fit person, corresponding to the Lieutenant of Police in Paris, who, by means of spies and emissaries, and by means of information regularly transmitted to him from proper officers stationed in the country, may have a perfect acquaintance with the residence and transactions of all persons whose characters are suspicious. The other scheme is, to condemn all persons, guilty of robbery, or of other gross crimes, to bondage and hard labour.—I am not satisfied that either of these proposals, if car-

ried into execution, would answer the end intended by them; and I am thoroughly convinced, that neither of them is adapted to the constitution of Britain, and the temper of its inhabitants.

The first of these schemes, by which it is proposed to form a great establishment of police, comprehending many inferior departments, with their proper officers, is recommended by the success in preventing or speedily detecting crimes, with which similar plans have been attended on the Continent, especially in France. We must not, however, allow this consideration alone to determine our judgment; for there may be regulations well adapted to the manners and government of other nations, that are inconsistent with our sentiments, and with the spirit of our constitution.

An obvious objection to this plan arises from the great expence with which the execution of it must necessarily be attended. It would require a vast number of spies of different ranks, connected with one another by their subordination to common superiors. We can hardly suppose that these spies could at all times possess a sufficient degree of intelligence for the purposes of the establishment, if they were less numerous than the officers of excise. As it might be necessary, however, that, in appearance at least, they should carry on some ordinary business, with a view to conceal their real employment, they might not entire-

ly depend upon the public treasury for subsistence, and might therefore be supported for a smaller sum than the same number of excise officers. At the same time, when we reflect that secret services must be liberally paid for, and that it might be requisite to have spies who could easily obtain admission into fashionable circles, there is reason to believe, that the difference of expence upon the whole might not be very considerable. Though the excise be a very productive tax, the nation has always complained of the heavy charges paid for collecting it. If a burden, equally grievous, were laid upon a free people, without any pretence of defending their country, or of annoying their enemies, it would be altogether insupportable. The French, indeed, do not murmur; but the French do not tax themselves, and they claim no right to inquire into the expenditure of public money.

There is another objection to this proposal, of much more weight than that which I have already mentioned, arising from the nature of our civil constitution. A free people will never submit, for the sake of the most perfect security from the injurious attacks of individuals, to the restraint of acting always under the inspection of spies. They will not allow their houses to be examined by officers of police, without legal warrants from the magistrate; nor will they bear with patience to see their fellow-subjects carried away to prison,

unless they know the grounds upon which they are suspected, and are also assured that they shall soon be brought to a fair and open trial. Men who love civil liberty, would rather choose that their goods and persons should be exposed to some small degree of danger, than purchase a complete security from such injuries, by suffering those who are in power to inspect every man's business and conversation. An establishment of police, perfectly adapted to answer its end, requires that cognizance should be taken of the suspicious as well as of the guilty, and is therefore inconsistent with liberty.

It is only in arbitrary governments, that such great and regular systems of police have been carried into execution ; and there is reason to believe, that they are supported at great expence, and with unremitting attention—much more from reasons of state, than from any regard to the security of the subject, or the good order of the community. The end which they have in view, does not appear to be so much the punishment or the prevention of crimes, as the safety of the prince's person, and the maintenance of his authority. A despot is at all times jealous and suspicious : He dreads every whisper, as if it were the voice of a conspirator ; and his throne shakes below him, whenever there is the smallest commotion among his subjects. Spies are necessary to bring him information of every thing that has the appearance of design or

of exertion, that he may be enabled to preserve, through all his dominions, the stillness of night : But he endeavours to conceal his own fears, under the plausible pretence, that all his anxieties are produced by his unceasing attention to the safety and security of his subjects. The sovereign of a free state is agitated by no similar fears ; for he reigns agreeably to the declared inclinations of his people ; he possesses their confidence, and can depend upon their affections. As long as the sovereign of a free country is disposed to rule agreeably to the principles of the constitution, he will endeavour to be directed by the general wishes of his people ; and whenever he begins to suppress the open declarations of their fears and disgusts, and to obtain secret and indirect information concerning their sentiments, he certainly means to increase his own power, and to lessen their influence : He distrusts them, because he knows that he himself deserves not to be trusted.

A system of police, for the purpose of detecting crimes by means of spies, has, for a considerable time, been carried on in London, under the inspection of Sir John Fielding ; but it is not extensive, nor is it subservient to any thing but the administration of justice. It must be conducted in some way that is very different from its present form, before any suspicion can reasonably arise, that it may, at last, be made use of to serve purposes of state. The best of rulers, however, are naturally desirous of increasing

their power ; and men who have privileges to lose, ought for ever to be on their guard. The conduct of the suspicious must sometimes be inquired into ; but let the nature and grounds of the suspicion under which they lie, always be made publicly known ; and let the inquiry be open, impartial, and not unnecessarily delayed. Notwithstanding every precaution that can be taken, the innocent may sometimes be unjustly suspected, and may become sufferers by confinement before the truth can be investigated ; but let them never suffer, unless strong presumptions lie against them ; and let it be understood, that suffering is very different in its nature from punishment, for though it may be severe, it is not ignominious.

The other scheme, by which it is proposed to condemn certain classes of criminals to hard labour, as well as the former, seems liable to strong objections. Punishments of various kinds may be devised ; and many kinds of them have been inflicted in different countries, some of them with better, and some with worse effects. All those which are accompanied with torture, are happily laid aside in our own island ; and, in the opinion of the wisest men, should be abolished every where. Why should the delicate, the sensible, and the compassionate, be wantonly subjected to that anguish which they must necessarily feel, when they are forced to see, or to hear of sufferings, that are shocking to humanity ? Is it even prudent to ex-

pose atrocious guilt in those particular circumstances, in which its baseness is concealed or palliated, by emotions of pity excited in favour of the criminal? Such punishments are inconsistent with the natural principles of man, and with the ends of penal functions.

The punishments that are shocking to humanity ought never to be inflicted; yet there are crimes which justify great severity. Justice may reasonably demand, that a man who has been guilty should suffer in his fortune; though, at the same time, rigour, in this respect, should always be avoided, when the future welfare of his family is connected with the forfeiture. A man may also deserve to be banished from his country, and to be legally divested of all those privileges which he formerly enjoyed as a citizen: He may even be guilty of such atrocious acts, that the indignation of mankind cannot be satisfied, if his life be spared. Banishment and death are punishments, by which future danger from the attempts of a person, who, by the perpetration of gross crimes, has discovered an inclination and capacity to injure society in its most essential interests, may be effectually prevented; and they do not seem improper under any form of government.

Deprivation of liberty is a kind of punishment that may also, in some forms of it, be adopted in any civil community. Imprisonment for a limited

time, if it be regarded as a severe, and not as a shameful punishment, may often be very reasonable and proper. Even perpetual imprisonment is a sort of punishment that is not inconsistent with the principles of free government; but in any state, whether free or despotical, to retain a person who is never to be of any service to the community, and who might perhaps be useful elsewhere, seems to be a measure unnecessary and inexpedient. If there be a man, whom it is dangerous to preserve in the community, the obvious dictate of common sense seems to be, that he ought to be thrown out of it.

Instead of preserving an useless life in a state of long imprisonment, it has been thought a wise expedient in some nations, to condemn to slavery those criminals, whose guilt is not considered as heinous enough to deserve death, though their vicious inclinations are so well known, that it would be dangerous to intrust them with liberty. It has been imagined, that while their labour was a punishment to themselves, it might be productive of some benefit to the state. This is the mode of treating certain classes of felons; which some are desirous of seeing established in Britain.

There are several lights in which the tendency of this sort of punishment may be examined.—If we look upon it as an engine of police, merely intended to prevent men who are ill-disposed from

the commission of crimes, it appears to be very well contrived. While persons, from whom danger might be apprehended, are kept under the immediate inspection of proper officers; while their tasks are regularly demanded from them, and the rod of correction is continually suspended over their heads; they can hardly find any opportunity to injure the properties of others.—It cannot, however, be reasonably expected, that this mode of punishment will produce any such good effect, unless the criminal be condemned to slavery for life. There are some, indeed, who are inclined to believe, that hard labour, continued for a limited course of years, may be sufficient to answer the purpose. They found their belief upon the persuasion, that a happy alteration in the manners and characters of the sufferers may gradually be produced. I am rather of opinion, that every successive year, the morals of persons in such circumstances will become more and more corrupt. Slavery must be followed with consequences entirely similar to those which attend other punishments of an ignominious nature; all of which seem very ill adapted to make any desirable alteration in the offender. A man who is subjected to public infamy, immediately loses all sense of shame, and becomes from that time bolder in guilt than ever he was before. This evil is common to all ignominious punishments, when the criminal is permitted to survive them, and to continue in th

same society to which he formerly belonged.—But there are also other evils which are peculiar to that mode of infamous punishment which we are considering. If it should become common to condemn felons to hard labour, it will be impossible to keep them under proper discipline, unless a number of them be collected together; and if they be permitted to live in society with one another, each of them will become more corrupted than he was before: And persons thus trained up in the school of vice, whenever their period of servitude expires, will become the most daring of villains. The contagion of bad principles, which infects every manufactory where labourers are collected together, cannot fail of spreading with great rapidity among men who are stigmatized for their villany, and legally deprived of reputation. The lot of slavery alone is sufficient to debase the minds even of the ingenuous, and must render those who are already corrupted totally abandoned. If, therefore, it be at all proper to make slavery the punishment of crimes, it ought to be perpetual; for in no other way can it effectually prevent the disturbance to which society might afterwards be exposed, from the same persons who had formerly violated its laws.

The matter may be examined in another view. One important end of punishment is, to prevent the future commission of crimes similar to that for which the penalty is inflicted. Condemnation to

hard labour does not seem to be an expedient well adapted for answering this valuable purpose. Its effects, indeed, extend to the guilty persons who suffer ; it restrains from injurious acts, some of the worst members of society ; but it does not sufficiently deter other persons of abandoned principles from committing the same crimes for which they are suffering. No punishment can be very effectual, unless it strike the imagination of the spectator ; and for this purpose, it is not enough that it be severe—it is further requisite that it should rarely occur. Slavery in itself is undoubtedly very severe, even more severe than death ; but it seldom appears to an indifferent spectator in this light. The generality of men thoughtlessly estimate the lot of a slave, as not much harder than that of the labouring poor. They look only to his external appearance, without entering into the distressful thoughts that are inseparable from his wretched station. Where slavery is established, the evils attending it are frequently exposed to view ; and the impressions which they make upon the mind, even of the compassionate, is scarcely felt. A punishment that is continually exhibited cannot be very striking. We cease to be moved with the most shocking spectacles, when we are accustomed to see them every day ; and a villain will not feel much uneasiness from the dread of those sufferings, which long observation has rendered familiar to him,

It may be added, that condemnation to hard labour is the most unequal of all punishments that can be inflicted. Death and exile are equally severe upon the generality of men ; but the evils of slavery fill men with different degrees of distress, according to the diversity of their circumstances. A man who, during the greater part of his life, has been accustomed to work with his hands, and whose expectations scarce ever rose beyond provision for a scanty maintenance, could not suffer nearly so much, from being obliged to labour in a way similar to his ordinary employment, as the man who has been brought up in luxury and refinement. The spend-thrift clerk of a grocer may be guilty of the same crime with a coal-heaver ; but it would be most unmerciful to condemn the former to undergo the same bodily labour with the latter. One of them wants entirely those habits, which the other has spent his days in acquiring. Cases might easily be supposed, in which punishments of this sort would be more severe than any thing which the ingenuity and cruelty of men have been able to devise. A judge might indeed be allowed to discriminate among a number of criminals, and allot to each of them the degree of punishment which he thought proper and adequate to his offence, his constitution, and his habits ; but in a free state, every discrimination of such a nature is looked upon as grossly iniquitous.

A law, then, condemning criminals of a certain

description to hard labour, though it might be attended with several advantages as a regulation of police, appears, at the same time, to be inseparable from various disadvantages that are more than sufficient to counterbalance all its salutary effects. The inconveniences, however, that have been mentioned, are not the whole, nor are they the most alarming of those which might be mentioned. It is to be apprehended, that such a law, if it were executed with rigour, might indirectly produce consequences of a public and most important kind. I am fully satisfied that slavery, limited to a certain term of years, will not answer the intention of preventing crimes. In order, therefore, to render a law, by which felons are condemned to hard labour, effectual in bringing about its end, it will be necessary to make the penalty perpetual. If the condemnation of felons to a state of bondage, which is to terminate only with their lives, were established by statute, and if the law were rigorously executed through every part of the kingdom, it is manifest that the number of bondmen would soon become very great. The expence necessary for supporting the institution would, in a short time, become enormous and intolerable to the nation; for the labour of slaves, employed in public works, and placed under the direction of an overseer who has no interest in them, will produce nothing by which the charge of maintaining them may be defrayed. The expences might indeed be lessened, by employing

them in the ordinary occupations of civil life ; but if this were the case, the distinction between them and other classes of citizens, would be too slightly marked to render their punishment exemplary ; while, at the same time, the honest labourer would suffer degradation in his own fancy and that of others, from the reflection, that he earned his bread by manual acts so mean and so severe, that condemnation to the performance of them was thought a proper punishment for those who are the disgrace of our species.—The following seems to be the only remaining expedient for preventing these evils, if this sort of penalty be insisted upon, to wit, That those who may be condemned to hard labour shall be made the private property of individuals, who, being bound to maintain them, will have an interest in obliging them to perform the tasks assigned them. But still this expedient would bring along with it new inconveniences. It is greatly for the interest of the community, that persons of notoriously abandoned characters should be kept by themselves ; but, according to this scheme, they would again be dispersed and mingled with the great body of the people, whom they would have an opportunity to corrupt. Their punishment might be abundantly, and even excessively severe ; but being endured in private, it could not be exemplary ; and there is reason to fear, that it would very frequently be capriciously and iniquitously inflicted. It must be added, that, from the instant when such a regulation took effect,

domestic slavery would be introduced, and supported by the authority of law.

If domestic slavery, in any considerable extent, were tolerated, and a legal method of acquiring slaves instituted, the horrors of that deplorable state would appear to the imagination in colours much less lively than they do at present, and would soon cease to be shocking. Custom and familiarity would reconcile the minds of men to the view of misery; and in process of time, it would probably not be thought cruel to deprive men of their liberty for very small offences. The consequences might at last become worse than at first might be suspected, or indeed can be easily conceived. In such circumstances, would an ambitious statesman hesitate to court the favour of the rich, by freeing them from the burden of poor's-rates, which might easily be done, if the minds of men were reconciled to domestic slavery, by adopting the plan for maintaining the poor, which was proposed and recommended, about the beginning of this century, by Mr. Fletcher of Saltoun? Would he think it hard, to make those who could not support themselves and their families, together with their wives and children, the legal property of their rich and powerful neighbour, who might be willing to supply with food the feeble and the infant, from the prospect of acquiring a sufficient recompense by their future labour? As one step naturally and insensibly leads to another, we might

reasonably expect that a scheme of this nature would be embraced, as soon as the minds of men could be brought to bear it. The ancient Romans allowed the person of a man, who could not pay his debts, to be sold. If we were accustomed, as they were, to the deprivation of liberty, domestic slavery would soon become universal.

A state, in which domestic slavery prevails, may be great and vigorous, and may enjoy very extensive political liberty ; but its freedom must be the freedom of an aristocracy, under which inauspicious form of government, whatever blessings may be enjoyed by a few, the great body of the people must be in a condition of bondage and ignorance, very little superior to the condition of beasts of burden.

I have given you my sentiments with respect to these two expedients for preventing and punishing crimes. Both of them must, in my opinion, be inadequate, as long as they are managed consistently with the principles of free government. I think it would be highly dangerous to this country, to carry them into execution in any degree whatever ; because it is not improbable, that, at some future period, a minister inclined, as ministers often are, to increase the power of the crown, might avail himself of them, to promote purposes that were not intended by those who at first proposed them. A free country can never be enslaved, till the customs and the feelings of men be altered ; but this

is a sort of change that may, by slow and insensible degrees, be at last effected. In a state where the conduct of none of the citizens has ever been watched over by spies, the minister who employs such emissaries, for his own ends, will be universally detested. But if an establishment of this jealous nature be already founded in one department, and the minds of men reconciled to it, something of the same kind may, with less difficulty, be introduced into another. Free men abhor slavery; but if they can be induced by motives of convenience to tolerate it in one instance, they may gradually be brought to bear it with patience in more. If they can behold a felon reduced to slavery, without any emotions of indignation, they may be brought, by degrees, to behold those whom they despise, or in whose welfare they have no interest, reduced to the same condition, without feeling much for their misery. It is the duty of a free people to watch over their liberties with a jealous eye, and to look even upon small circumstances, by which they are infringed or endangered, as matters of great importance.



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A P P E N D I X.

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No. I.

*An Account of some Particulars in the Life and Character of the Rev. Mr. ARCHIBALD ARTHUR, late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow.*

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AS those to whom the preceding DISCOURSES have afforded satisfaction, may be desirous of having more information concerning their respectable author, than is announced in the title-page; I shall endeavour, but without attempting the arduous task of circumstantial biography, to give a faithful account of such particulars in his life and character, as may gratify fit curiosity, and coincide, in some measure, with reasonable prepossession.

The Reverend MR. ARCHIBALD ARTHUR, late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, was the eldest son of Andrew Arthur and of Jean Snodgrafs. His father was a considerable farmer on the estate of Lord Douglas, in the shire and parish of Renfrew. He was born at Abbots-Inch, the farm possessed by his father, on the sixth day of September 1744. He received his earliest education from his parents; who, being persons of great worth, and having such a considerable degree of knowledge as is not unusual among respectable farmers in Scotland, were capable, while teaching their son to read English, of imparting to him other useful information; and of awakening in the tender mind of the child, those affections, and that sense of duty, which

might afterwards be required of him in discharging the important functions of manhood. Those who have been so fortunate as, like him, to have received their earliest instruction, immediately or directly from attentive and worthy parents, or, as much as possible, under their inspection, will recollect, with sentiments of grateful tenderness, how, even in the very dawn of life, good dispositions, or excellent principles, may not only have been improved, but almost implanted.

After completing, or during the eighth year of his age, he was placed under the care of Mr. William Ballingal, rector of the grammar-school in the neighbouring town; or, to speak more agreeably to its population, the neighbouring city of Paisley. In his thirteenth or fourteenth year, he was removed to the university of Glasgow; where he received still farther improvement in his knowledge of the Latin language, in the classes of Mr. Moorhead; and began and continued his study of the Greek language, in the classes of Dr. Moor. These eminently-learned professors, not more eminent for their taste and erudition, than for their goodness of heart, and attachment to early merit, soon discovered in their pupil, a brilliancy of genius, and strength of understanding, which, in their opinion, not only deserved, but required encouragement. This discernment, on their part, was so much the more remarkable and meritorious, that his external appearance, either in form or features, was neither animated nor prepossessing; that it was rendered still less so, by an invincible bashfulness, of which the habit continued to clog his manner, or impede his exertions, during the whole course of his life; and which contributed, perhaps, to promote, or to confirm a slight but ungainly hesitation in his speech; from which he was never, but very seldom, or occasionally released. On some occasions, however, when he arrived at manhood, and in the after

course of his life, he experienced such release. There were luminous moments, which his friends can never forget, when the ease of intimacy, and the hilarity of social enjoyment, unbarred his utterance, and gave vent to a torrent of most impressive elocution, rich in science, abounding with information, and flowing in a stream of correct, yet spirited diction; of which the effect seemed to be so much the more powerful, that its commencements were so reluctant. These, and some other particulars of the same kind, are admirably, and justly expressed, in the following passage in a letter concerning him from a learned and ingenious friend:—"He delighted chiefly to associate with his friends in the University, or with a few clergymen of the city, or of the country, who knew his merit, and who required not the probation of long intercourse, or the laborious display of his talents, to enable them to estimate him justly. In the society of those friends, his unprepossessing exterior was either never thought of, or it was instantly forgotten in the full exuberance of science and literature with which his conversation flowed. Yet even with these friends, the first moments were generally passed in silence, or lost in abortive efforts to excite discourse. In a short time, however, his powers were rallied; and he became, as it were, a new character. His embarrassments wore off; and the most brilliant thoughts, clothed spontaneously in the most elegant language, gave life and interest to his conversation. Wit and humour, literature and science, rendered it highly amusing and instructive. He seemed himself to have the most exquisite enjoyment in this new state of mind, and in getting rid of those embarrassments of speech and look, under which he had a few minutes before been labouring."—In addition to this just description, I cannot help asking, is it surprising that such enjoyment should

have been solicited by his friends? Solicited, and indulged by himself?

The attention paid to him in his early years, by Professor Moorhead, agreeably to the grave and sedate habit of that excellent and diligent teacher, were uniform and steady. The friendship of Dr. Moor, who possessed much vivacity of disposition, and even sprightliness of humour, with great quickness of sensibility, was animated and active: and as these qualities were connected in his character with much kindness of temper, and courtesy of manner, the abilities of the bashful boy were occasionally unshackled from the restraints of oppressive diffidence; so that the fervency of his genius broke out in the style and measures even of poetical writing. Dr. Moor, no less than his fellow-students, were not a little surprised at the spirit and fluency of his performances: and the author himself seemed not a little surprised, or even disconcerted, with unexpected applause. Yet neither did these early intimations of ability, consisting chiefly of translations from ancient authors; nor did even his early efforts in original poetry, exhibit so much ardour of fancy, as facility of expression, and accuracy of classical knowledge. Hence we are led to remark the cool Deliberation in choice, and steady Determination of purpose, equally distant from rash presumption or stubborn obstinacy, which formed a characteristic lineament in the mind of ARTHUR. Of a thoughtful and silent habit, he appears to have reflected much, not only on external things, but on his own internal constitution: and to have thus become distinctly acquainted with his own inherent inclinations, the extent and peculiar capacity of his own intellectual endowments. He appears, therefore, to have duly appreciated his powers; and to have discerned in what departments he was best qualified to succeed, or excel. He, in general, never wasted his time, or threw away his exertions on any un-

attainable object. Though endowed with all the fancy and sensibility which may be necessary in consummate taste, yet not possessing, as he himself conceived, so much as might be necessary for the energies of poetic inventions, he quitted the paths of imagination, notwithstanding the applauses bestowed on his early effusions, and directed the application of his vigorous and steady mind to the acquisition of valuable knowledge. In like manner, without aiming at the high colouring, or animated vehemence of a figurative diction, he studied, and was able to write with perspicuity, with readiness, with all that elegance which depends on correctness in the choice of words, and all that melody which arises from their proper arrangement.

As no person, without being improperly careless or indifferent, was less anxious about himself, or thought less about his own particular interests; and as no principle of action appears to have predominated more generally in his whole conduct, than a calm and uniform, not an impetuous or desultory desire of doing good; we may reasonably suppose, that his own inclination, in the choice he made of the clerical profession, concurred with that of his parents. He applied, therefore, with great diligence, to that course of philosophical study which is held necessary to the knowledge of theology, and the duties of a clergyman. But as, with great simplicity of heart, as well as of manners, his chief or sole object, in literary pursuits, was to acquire necessary, or fit improvement, his application was more assiduous than ostentatious, and his proficiency more real than apparent. Meantime, the capacity of his mind enlarging itself in the course of intellectual exertion, became so great, that in his riper years, no discovery in science was too extensive, or too vast for his comprehension. Along with this, his habits of profound and accurate thinking, discovered

themselves by the surprizing facility with which he was able to apprehend the most abstruse and difficult subjects of philosophical and abstract inquiry. Nor was there any disquisition so intricate, as that his acuteness and perspicuity could not unravel and unfold its perplexities. Nor were his talents for extensive comprehension, and the ready conception of scientific knowledge, confined to any one department. Deeply skilled in the philosophy of the human mind, he was equally familiar with that of external nature. He seemed, in truth, to be more decidedly attached to physical than to metaphysical or moral science; so that as he advanced in life, natural history and botany were his amusement. Long, indeed, before his nomination to an academical chair, there were few or no departments, whether literary, philosophical, or theological, with the exception of the medical school alone, in which he could not have been an eminent teacher. In fact, both before and after his appointment to a Professorship, he lectured, when occasion required, in Logic, Botany, and Humanity. During the necessary absence of the Professor of Church-history, he lectured for a whole session of college in that department; and his lectures were held in such high esteem, that a very enlightened clergyman, writing to a friend concerning him, expresses himself in the following very striking and impressive terms:—"These lectures were attended  
" by a select circle of students in theology, now almost  
" all of them respectable members of the Church of Scot-  
" land, with an enthusiasm of admiration, which was,  
" at the same time, an honourable proof of their own  
" taste and discernment, and of the superior abilities of  
" their respected teacher. Lecturing on Tuesdays and  
" Thursdays, at the same time that he discharged his  
" own particular duties, he brought the History of the  
" Church down from the creation of the world to the

“ birth of our Saviour. The course was chiefly distinguished for the rational and consistent account which was given of the Mosaical institutions ; of the civil and religious history of the period, and the canon of the Old Testament. I was so fortunate as to have taken down a tolerably accurate abridgement of these lectures, which has been transcribed during these twenty years, by at least as many ministers of the Church of Scotland, who have all of them expressed their entire satisfaction with the knowledge it afforded them.”

In judging concerning, or in adopting philosophical opinions, the same steady reflection, the same resolute and unbiassed strength of mind, which may have been already remarked, continued to characterise him. He seems, of consequence, to have formed a just estimate of reputation ; and never to have sacrificed an action of his life, or a thought in his mind, to that vanity, or desire of transient consideration, which is sometimes discovered in the affectation, or ostentatious display of popular erudition, or that sort of learning which may, for the time, be in vogue. Totally free from bigotry, either in philosophy or in religion, and with a spirit guided on all occasions by a candour as liberal as it was tolerant, he studied for the sole purpose of obtaining, and, as his duty might require, of imparting, what he accounted the most interesting or important knowledge. He was so much the better qualified to form steady and decisive judgments, that his clearness of apprehension, and accuracy of discernment, enabled him to detect, with peculiar readiness, the fallacies of ingenious, but erroneous speculation. With this independence of spirit, and vigour of intellect, he was not, for the sake of a temporary reputation with fashionable writers and their followers, to embrace, or seem to embrace, the opinions of those dis-

tinguished persons, whether in France or in Britain, who have, through the whole of Europe, and for more than half a century, swayed and prepossessed the judgement of at least the young and the inconsiderate. Some of the authors, no doubt, or recent retailers of what has been reckoned irreligious or licentious doctrine, have been accounted men of worth and of good intention. But whatsoever may have been their motives, for all of them have not been celebrated as men of worth, the literary historian of the last fifty or sixty years, must observe, and combining literary with political history, must necessarily state, as a characteristic feature of the times, the prevalence of such systems, their consequent influence, and extraordinary effects.—An improved state of civilization occasioned luxury: luxury, by obvious consequence, produced inconsideration: and inconsideration was ready to admit such erroneous opinions, supported by the authority of ingenious men, as might justify folly. Eloquent and ingenious writers, whether prompted by conviction, or devoted to the love of present fame, or of present emolument, or from principles even worse than these, invented, or gave a modern dress, to those arguments that seemed to invest error with the garb of truth, and absolve the gay from the restraints of rigour. By their ability they attracted notice; by their apparent liberality they conciliated favour; and by the indulgences, which were the necessary result of their doctrine, they gained popularity. Thus the number of their disciples, in all nations and languages, became a multitude. Is it wonderful, therefore, or must it not have necessarily happened, that youthful candidates for literary honour, should have seemed to espouse, or, becoming the dupes of their own ingenuity and aversion to antiquated maxims, should have actually espoused their opinions; and connected themselves in a covenant of implicit alliance with leaders who had

won the suffrages of all the intelligent, as they deemed, of the human race, and had arisen to a station of such acknowledged authority?—But ARTHUR was not one of these. While engaged in the study of theology, he was employed as private tutor in the family of Claud Alexander, Esq. of Newton, in the neighbourhood of Paisley: and in October 1767, having undergone the trials, as they are termed, or examinations, which are previously necessary, he received from the Presbytery of that place, his licence to be a preacher of the Gospel. This licence, however, was not obtained without considerable opposition. Judging for himself in theology, as in philosophy, he was not supposed, by some of the members of that Presbytery, to have assented, with implicit trust, to all the tenets, which, since the days of St. Augustine, have been ascribed to the Christian religion; and which, by a great number of persons, have been attributed in particular to the Church of Scotland. Though, for example, there might be opinions, or particular views of Christianity, which represented that religion as requiring less actual exertion, and a less scrupulous attention to our own thoughts and our own conduct, than a strong profession of profound belief in some speculative and mysterious doctrines; it was not consistent, as he apprehended, with the real improvement, and consequent welfare of mankind, to adopt or recommend those opinions. How much soever his own success or preferment might depend on the esteem of a popular audience, to whom such views might be acceptable, he was not, for any consideration, to trespass against the independence, or to forfeit the conscientiousness of an upright mind. On subjects, therefore, where different shades of thinking may be imperceptibly blended, and where the lines of distinction are not strictly defined, he might, without any actual departure, have seemed to depart from the tract of establish-

ed doctrine. He was also supposed, and perhaps with good reason, to have favoured, in occasional conversation, and to have supported with all the energy which he sometimes exerted, the opinions of the Rev. Mr. Ferguson of Kilwinning, and other eminent members in the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, who endeavoured, at this time, though unsuccessfully, to prevail with the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to allow some relaxation in the tests usually required from Clergymen of the Presbyterian establishment. Those discourses, therefore, which were delivered by him as specimens of his knowledge, ability, and opinions, underwent a very strict and minute discussion: nor, among other opponents, did he encounter an opposition less formidable, than that which was understood to be directed, if not openly conducted, by Dr. Wotherspoon, then a minister in Paisley, and afterwards, when he was appointed President in the College of New-Jersey, one of the American legislators. His defence on this occasion was conducted with complete success, and his discourses vindicated from the charges brought against them, by the eloquence of the Rev. Messrs. Fleming and Warner, who will long be remembered as enlightened philosophers and theologians; and by the good sense and knowledge of Christianity possessed by the Rev. Mr. Davidson at Inchinnan, who afterwards, as Principal of Glasgow College, became his friend and colleague.

Soon after obtaining his licence, he was appointed Chaplain to the University of Glasgow: and on this occasion, in a letter written to the author of this memoir, who was then at St. Petersburg, by Mr. Foulis, the celebrated University printer, is the following passage:—"ARTHUR  
 " is one of the College chaplains; and by the good sense,  
 " ingenuity, and style of his sermons, gives reason to an-  
 " ticipate his future eminence." His sermons, indeed, though altogether unindebted to any advantages of delivery

(for he always read them, as well as his professorial lectures), were very generally esteemed by his hearers: and were distinguished, not only for good composition, ingenuity of thought, and liberality of sentiment, but for the successful illustration of several passages in the sacred writings, and the happy elucidation of important doctrine. I select, as a specimen, the following observations concerning the proof of our Saviour's resurrection, because it has a more detached appearance than any other that occurred to me, depending less on any previous or succeeding remarks; and also, that, within a short compass, it contains a very striking view of the end, which, in the author's opinion, was aimed at by the Christian dispensation.—“ The resurrection of our Saviour is one of  
“ the most important facts related in the gospel. Unless  
“ it were firmly established, all the rest would be of little  
“ value. It ought, therefore, to be confirmed by sufficient testimony. God has accordingly, in his boundless  
“ wisdom, provided for it a degree of evidence, which  
“ has, through all ages of the Christian church, appeared  
“ so convincing to the candid part of mankind, that the  
“ adversaries of our religion have been peculiarly unsuccessful in their objections against its certainty. At the  
“ same time, it will readily be allowed by the sincerest  
“ friends of the Christian revelation, that the truth of  
“ our Lord's resurrection might have been supported by  
“ evidence still stronger than that upon which it has appeared proper to Divine Wisdom that it should be  
“ founded. If it had pleased God, he might have raised  
“ Jesus from the dead in presence of the Scribes and  
“ Pharisees themselves, so as to render it impossible for  
“ them to deny the fact of which they were eye-witnesses. Or, our Lord, after he arose, instead of going  
“ into Galilee to meet his disciples, might have made  
“ a public appearance in Jerusalem, and might, in per-

“son, have shut up the mouths of the most perverse and  
 “obstinate of that stubborn generation. It may not be  
 “in our power to perceive all the reasons why God was  
 “not pleased to afford us the highest degree of evidence  
 “which it was possible for him to have given in a matter  
 “of such importance. We see, however, some wise  
 “ends answered by the evidence he has afforded, which  
 “could not have been answered by any proof that is quite  
 “irrefragable. If our Saviour had appeared after his re-  
 “surrection in such a manner as to convince even his  
 “enemies that he had overcome the power of death, all  
 “men would have equally believed on him. The faith  
 “of his gospel, of consequence, could not have made  
 “any distinction between the fair and candid, and the  
 “perverse and prejudiced. But we find matters were  
 “ordered with infinitely greater wisdom, and more con-  
 “sistently with a state of discipline and trial. The evi-  
 “dence was made abundantly strong, to be perceived by  
 “those who ‘had eyes to see, or ears to hear;’ though  
 “still there was room for those who ‘stiffened the neck,  
 “and drew away the shoulder,’ to refuse their assent. The  
 “good were selected from the bad, the facts of the gospel  
 “serving as a touch-stone to try the value of mens minds.  
 “This was a constitution of things perfectly adapted to  
 “that dispensation, of which the great tendency was to  
 “gather together ‘the children of God who are scat-  
 “tered abroad.’ It was upon this view of his gospel  
 “that our Lord offered salvation to those who believed,  
 “and represented those who believed not as condemned  
 “already. Faith was the mark of a candid and teach-  
 “able mind, capable of being guided by the light of truth.  
 “Disbelief, on the contrary, was the evidence of an un-  
 “fair and prejudiced heart drawn away by its own un-  
 “governable desires and passions.

Mr. ARTHUR now resided in Glasgow in the family of

Mrs. Blackburn, as tutor to her son Robert Brown, Esq. of Newhall; and of Mr. Blackburn, her son by a second marriage. He had previously, and for a short time, been employed in a similar situation in the family of a gentleman in Kintire. Soon after his appointment to the College Chaplainship, the declining health of Dr. Craig \*, one of the ministers in the city of Glasgow, well known as the author of elegant sermons, and a "Life of Jesus Christ," made it necessary for him to have an assistant: nor could his own congenial mind, or the wishes of an intelligent audience, suggest any other than ARTHUR. Now also, he was appointed Librarian to the University; an office in which he continued till near the end of his life: and in consequence of this appointment, he some years afterwards complied with the desire of the University, in making a catalogue of the books, amounting to about twenty thousand volumes, contained in the College Library. This work, in two folio volumes, and executed after the model of the catalogue of the Advocates Library in Edinburgh, consists of two parts; the one containing an alphabetical list; and the other a list of the same books as they are arranged in presses. Those who know the difficulty that frequently occurs in ascertaining the different performances of the same author; and sometimes also, of selecting from a verbose title-page, the words most suitable for the subject of the book to be inrolled, are alone qualified to appreciate the labour and the knowledge requisite for such a work; which was executed, on this occasion, in the most distinct and satisfactory manner.

While he was thus employed as assistant to Dr. Craig, and librarian to the University, and having been some time a member of the Literary Society in the College,

\* See his Life in the Biographia Britannica, written for that work by the editor of this volume, at the desire of the late Rev. Dr. Kippis.

Dr. Reid, the late illustrious Professor of Moral Philosophy, was approaching to the seventieth year of his life; a period when that venerable philosopher had determined, though his constitution was hitherto but slightly impaired by the infirmities of old age, to resign the labour of teaching. His fortune, and the necessary demands of a family, in a large city, of increasing expence and population, not permitting him to give up all the emoluments of his situation, he thought of resigning in favour of some proper person, who might be appointed his assistant, to give lectures and teach for him, during his life; and to succeed, after his death, to all the rights and duties of the professorial office. Proceeding with that sedate reflection, that sincere regard for the interests of true learning, and that deep concern for the fit instruction of youth, which were ever eminent in his character and conduct, he considered maturely whom, among many candidates for literary preferment, he could conscientiously recommend to the College, as qualified to fill that chair which had been formerly occupied by Smith and Hutcheson. Ever punctual in his attendance on public worship, he had heard the discourses delivered by ARTHUR, while he was employed as College Chaplain; he had also heard him occasionally after he had become assistant to Dr. Craig; and had also many opportunities of knowing the extent of his abilities, not only in the intercourse of conversation, but by the discourses which he read, and the discussions in which he bore a part, in the Literary Society. To him, therefore, after sufficient deliberation, his choice was directed. Nor was he influenced in this proceeding by any solicitation, or any recommendation, or otherwise than by the conviction of his own enlightened discernment, and the sincere desire of doing good to the public. The person whom he thus distinguished was not himself aware of his intention, and had never made any advances towards the attainment of a situation so very honourable. The busi-

ness was first suggested to him on the part of his worthy patron, who recommended him to the Faculty of Glasgow College on the sixth day of May 1780, and had the satisfaction, twelve days afterwards, of seeing him unanimously elected.—Young men commencing the career of life, with few or no advantages of birth or fortune, may derive encouragement from this circumstance in our narrative: for here they may remark, that persons of diffident or bashful merit, unassisted by those pretensions that conciliate favour, and, unconscious of the impression they may have made, may nevertheless have been fast advancing in the esteem of the candid and the discerning. ARTHUR, for example, did not know, till some time afterwards, that at the conclusion of one of his sermons in the College Chapel, Dr. Reid should have said aside to one of his colleagues, whose seat on the professorial bench was next to him, “ This is a very sensible fellow, and, in my opinion, would make a good Professor of Morals.”

The professors of Ethics, or Moral Philosophy, in the University of Glasgow, employ two hours every day in instructing their pupils \*. In the first of these, they deliver lectures; and devote the second, after a proper interval, to regular and stated examinations. Such examinations are reckoned of great utility to those who study, as tending to insure their attention, to ascertain their proficiency, and give the teacher an opportunity of explaining more clearly any part of the lecture which may not have been fully understood. Those who received instruction from Dr. Smith, will recollect, with much fa-

\* In the Statistical Account of the University of Glasgow, published by Sir J. Sinclair, which was all written by Dr. Reid, excepting the statements respecting the business of particular classes, and which was much shortened in the printed copy; the whole time employed in teaching in the philosophical classes, owing, perhaps, to this abbreviation, is not mentioned at sufficient length.

tisfaction, many of those incidental and digressive illustrations, and even discussions, not only in morality, but in criticism, which were delivered by him with animated and extemporaneous eloquence, as they were suggested in the course of question and answer. They occurred likewise, with much display of learning and knowledge, in his occasional explanations of those philosophical works of Cicero, which are also a very useful and important subject of examination in the class of Moral Philosophy.

The lectures delivered by Professor ARTHUR consisted, agreeably to preceding practice, of three principal parts. In the first, along with other important topics in natural theology, he considered the arguments for the existence and attributes of the Deity. Here he expatiated at considerable length, and with much interesting, as well as copious illustration, on those appearances in the structure and extent of the universe that intimate design and wisdom. Nor did he think it improper to indulge his own predilection for the study of external nature, by giving a detailed and animated statement of the opinions entertained by the most distinguished philosophers, concerning the nature and arrangements both of terrestrial and celestial bodies. These discourses were peculiarly calculated to enlarge the conceptions of those who were devoted to the study of theology; and to fill their minds with awful and exalted views of the Supreme and Omniscient Being\*.

The second part of his lectures was more strictly ethical. In the first, he considered the duties of man towards his Creator: in the second, he considered the duties of man to his neighbour and to himself. The virtues, according to their different kinds and complexion, were ranked and delineated. The nature of the virtuous quality, as it pervades, modifies, and characterises every

\* Some of these are printed in the preceding pages.

action which is the object of approbation, was defined and unfolded. The principle of moral approbation was ascertained: and the theories of eminent moralists, both respecting the virtuous quality, and the mental operation or faculty by which it is perceived, were illustrated. He did not represent virtue as consisting merely in natural dispositions, or a sensibility which shewed itself by feeling, or immediate impulse; but in certain fixed and determined purposes of the will, and having their origin in previous reflection and deliberation. It was thus alone, according to his apprehension, that man, as a free agent, and as such he always considered him \*, following the unequivocal intimation of consciousness, could be accountable for his conduct. His opinions on these subjects, as well as concerning the nature of the human mind, and the process of the understanding in the acquisition of knowledge, coincided, in general, with those of Dr. Reid; and in addressing his students in his first introductory discourse, he employed the following terms in announcing this similarity:—"In many parts of the course, you will observe a great coincidence between the method which I propose to follow, and the views which I am to deliver, with the method and views which many of you may have heard from Dr. Reid. I have had opportunities of becoming acquainted with his principles: I adopted them because I was convinced of their truth; and when I deliver them, it shall be because I believe them."

In treating of Jurisprudence and Politics, which formed the third part of his lectures, and in which he considered man as a member of civil society, and subject to civil government; he followed the division of rights, and description of different relations adopted by his predecess-

\* "If a man," says he, in one of his sermons, "*feel* himself a free agent, let no metaphysical argument convince him, that his actions are all necessary."

fors. From none of these, in the detail of jurisprudential or political statement, could he have received greater assistance, than from the disquisitions, both published and not published, but which he had heard delivered by Dr. Smith. Few, indeed, of the lectures composed by that justly celebrated Professor, were more interesting than those in which he traced the origin, or stated the nature, of those political institutions that succeeded the downfall of the Roman empire; and which included an historical account of the rise and progress of the most conspicuous among the modern European governments. The period, however, during which Professor ARTHUR was an inmate of Glasgow College, more perhaps than any of equal length, abounded in important events; important perhaps to all mankind, but especially so to Britain. Most of the great contests which had taken place among nations, in the times immediately preceding, had been chiefly for the enlargement of power, or the extent of territory. But those that followed were not so much to gratify the ambition of states, or of princes, as to define and ascertain the most essential political rights. It seemed as if they were to determine, with complete accuracy of distinction, and by a new set of experiments, the true nature of civil liberty, and in the possession of what privileges the freedom of political communities was really to consist. The opinions, therefore, to be entertained by a public teacher, or to be delivered from a chair of Moral Philosophy belonging to a University of no inconsiderable name, in a nation distinguished above all those that ever existed, for the enjoyment of genuine liberty, though not with nominal reference to passing events, but by obvious inference, and a development of general principles, were to be considered as of peculiar importance. ARTHUR was well aware of the situation. To say that his zeal for true liberty was sincere and ardent, is unnecessary; for with his enlargement of mind, and extensive, but suitable

concern for the welfare of all mankind, it could not be otherwise. To say that levity of thought was no part of his character, would be injurious almost to the candour of disposition, and vigour of mind, which we have already ascribed to him. "Let nothing," says he in one of his Sermons, "be admitted as true, merely because it has long been believed. Strip every opinion of the venerable garb which even antiquity has thrown upon it, and strictly examine it by the light of truth."—To the rule which he thus recommends, he himself most invariably adhered; and was not to be swayed in his political, any more than in his philosophical or religious creed, by the opinions of great names, or of the multitude. He had withheld his approbation, but with that temperance of expression which was due to the prevailing voice of the nation, and of its rulers, from those measures that excited and continued the contest of Great Britain with America. His acquaintance with the British constitution led him, according as he apprehended, to perceive, and his candour to acknowledge, that the claims of our kindred on the other side of the Atlantic had their foundation in justice. The sagacity also of his discernment prevented him from apprehending any necessary calamity to the British kingdoms, in their separation from their American colonies. "It must be remarked," says he in one of his Fast-day Sermons during the American war, and with a spirit almost prophetic, "it must be remarked, that the future situation of a continent larger than Europe, is now in dependence. The time may be remote, but will come, when the American world will rise to liberty, to arts, and to eminence. Our happiness and importance are combined with their's; and if we are not still connected with them, notwithstanding all that has yet happened, it must be owing to egregious vice and folly either in them or in us. If connection

“ does not take place, our glory may suffer, and their fe-  
“ licity will be greatly retarded. The mighty events  
“ now depending will be loaded with the most important  
“ consequences. The plans of Providence undoubtedly  
“ are to promote the good of mankind. Our business is  
“ to acquiesce in the divine disposal, that we may be  
“ sharers in the benefits that will arise out of the midst  
“ of grievous troubles. Whether we be worthy to par-  
“ take of them or not, the designs of Providence will not  
“ be frustrated. The great scheme is going on, and will  
“ at last be accomplished.”—At a more recent period,  
when the revolution which has agitated, and still agitates  
the world, took place in France, his sentiment was the  
same with what reigned in every upright and virtuous  
bosom. He rejoiced in the emancipation of a nation so  
vast and powerful. But his rejoicing was not of long  
continuance. So early as the demolition of the Bastile,  
his penetrating discernment detected the features of rap-  
acious selfishness, beneath the disguise of a liberal in-  
dignation; and the livid hues of malignity, amid the  
glow of affected enthusiasm. He saw, as he conceived,  
in the character and conduct of the most noted leaders  
in the first national convention, those alarming taints,  
which afterwards became a noisome pestilence, to infect  
the atmosphere of other nations. He heard, gaining up-  
on the shouts of freedom, the outcry of licentiousness,  
and the screams of anarchy; to be succeeded, as he ap-  
prehended, by the dead and stupifying calm of a porten-  
tous despotism. He strove, therefore, as far as his in-  
fluence could properly extend, to resist and oppose the  
progress of those principles that governed France. But  
here, as on some former occasions, his voice was not, for  
some time, the voice of the public. Many persons of  
real candour, and of unquestioned good sense, transport-  
ed by their attachment to a cause so good as the deliver-

ance of a numerous and mighty people from the chains of an unrighteous, and often an oppressive government, cherished the pleasing expectation, that out of the chaos of tumult and disorder would arise a regular and fair creation. Combined with these in the general tendency of their hopes, though opposed to them in the usual strain of their sentiments, were such persons, whether numerous or not numerous, and on whose views and characters it is unpleasant to expatiate ; who, in the ruins of every religious and political establishment among their neighbours, anticipated, or devoutly wished for a similar consummation among themselves. To these may be added many sectaries, otherwise men of eminent worth and distinguished ability, who, having separated themselves, or having been born in a state of separation, from the religious establishments of their country, conceived themselves much aggrieved ; and encouraged the persuasion in their own minds, and those of others, that the agitations on the Continent, or even the interposition of continental powers, might produce, in their behalf, some desirable reform in the government of Britain. But highly as Mr. ARTHUR might have respected many persons belonging to some of these descriptions, he preserved his own mind from the influence or the contagion of their opinions. He belonged to that class, now perhaps the most numerous, who did not augur a great deal of immediate good from the French revolution ; and who believed, that whatsoever improvement or reparation might be needful in the government of Britain (and in a government of such long duration, both may no doubt be occasionally needful), the relief, remedy, or addition, was not to be applied by violent or external agency, but by bringing into proper action the inherent and rectifying principles of our original constitution. Thus viewing the affairs on the Continent in their true light, and not having their appearance misre-

presented by the intervention of any national prejudice or private passion, he considered them as they really existed, and anticipated some of those effects which have actually ensued. That an event so extraordinary, and so interesting, as an entire change in the government of France, should affect and agitate the minds of men, and occasion much diversity of opinion in Britain; and that, by the tendency of various opinions, our peace and happiness as a nation might be impaired or promoted, were circumstances very naturally to be expected. It seemed, therefore, not improper to mention the chief diversities in opinion which actually took place, so as to ascertain those particular views which a person of such eminent talents, and in a situation so highly important to the instruction of youth, as the subject of this memoir, was inclined to adopt\*.

Besides the time already mentioned, as being regularly allotted by the Professors of Philosophy in the university of Glasgow, for the purposes of public instruction, Mr. ARTHUR and his predecessors gave every week, on different, but stated days, two additional hours; at which time they prelected, or delivered discourses on subjects not necessarily connected, yet so much connected with the immediate duty of their profession, as to be very useful to those who attended them. Hutcheson employed these hours in explaining and illustrating the works of Arrian, Antoninus, and other Greek philosophers.—

\* The sentiments entertained by Mr. ARTHUR, concerning the British constitution, coincided also with those of Dr. Reid, who thought it proper, soon after the commencement of the French Revolution, and in the situation in which he was placed, to declare, and allow his opinion on this important subject to be published. His thoughts, on this occasion, were given in the form of an introduction to a discourse delivered by him in the Literary Society, on the Utopian system, and were published with his consent in the Glasgow Courier of December 18. 1794. It is republished in Appendix No. II. to this Volume.

Smith occupied them in delivering those lectures on taste, composition, and the history of philosophy, which, before his nomination to a professorship at Glasgow, he had delivered as a lecturer on rhetoric in Edinburgh.—They were appropriated by Reid to a further illustration of those doctrines which he afterwards published in his philosophical essays.—ARTHUR's supplementary lectures, in consequence of his own particular relish for elegant composition, were more agreeable to the method followed by Dr. Smith; and treated of fine-writing, the principles of criticism, and the “pleasures of imagination.” They did not contain the analysis, or particular examination of individual performances, but were intended by him to unfold and elucidate those processes of invention, that structure of language, and system of arrangement, which are the objects of genuine taste\*.

Professor ARTHUR taught the class of Moral Philosophy fifteen years, as assistant to Dr. Reid, and only one session of College after the demise of his predecessor. His health, for several months before his death, seemed declining; but neither he, nor his friends, entertained or expressed any apprehension of his speedy dissolution. In the month of May, however, which preceded that event, he became dropical; and the symptoms, by the 10th of June, were so alarming, that Dr. Jeffray conceived him to be in imminent danger. His disease, indeed, proceeded with such rapid and irresistible violence, as to baffle the skill of medicine, and the assiduities of attentive friendship; so that on the morning of the 14th of June 1797, this amiable and enlightened spirit was delivered from human suffering, and disengaged from an earthly frame. May we venture to lift the veil? May we look into the region beyond the grave, or penetrate the clouds which divide the present from the world about to come? If a human being, possessed of as much integrity as is consistent

\* Some of those are printed in the preceding pages.

with the frailty of human nature, and devoted, as much as human weakness can allow, to the discharge of important duties, may confide in the goodness, and in the mercy of that Almighty Parent, at whose dispensations he never repined, and in whose providence he ever trusted; our lamented friend, though removed from our sight and society, is still alive. Agreeably to those hopes and wishes of the best and wisest among mankind, and which, being founded on rational principles, are established by Christianity; he is now exalted to a higher fellowship, and engaged in corresponding employment. Or, in the language of a great poet, whose understanding was as intelligent as his imagination was powerful, and who was as sincere in his religious poetry as he was zealous in political disquisition,

- “ Sunk though he be———  
 “ So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,  
 “ And yet anon repairs his drooping head,  
 “ And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore  
 “ Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.”

After Mr. ARTHUR's death, his brothers and sisters, for he was never married, found he had been possessed of more property than they supposed. Having never, excepting for a short time after Lord Porchester became his domestic pupil, been engaged in the expences of a family establishment, and being of a disposition altogether independent, he lived uniformly within his income. He was thus enabled not only to extend his beneficence, which he did most readily, in all kind and charitable offices, to proper objects within his reach; but to leave such a sum of money to his relations, as seemed, to persons in their situation, not at all inconsiderable. Part of this they have employed in printing and publishing the posthumous volume, which has given occasion to this memoir; not much concerned, so far as regards their pe-

cuniary interest, whether the return may indemnify them or not. Their chief design was, in the most effectual manner, to express their respect and affection for their much honoured and departed brother. Accordingly, they have thus erected a monument to his memory, more permanent, and more satisfactory, than any that could have been executed by the chissel or by the pencil. These must perish: but this will endure; and, if their partiality does not deceive them, will transmit to posterity the portraiture and likeness, not of a frail and perishing body, but of a mind actuated by the best principles, and endowed with superior powers.

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No. II.

*Observations on the Danger of Political Innovation, from a Discourse delivered on the 28th November 1794, before the Literary Society in Glasgow College, by DR. REID, and published by his consent.*

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THERE are two questions in politics, which are perfectly distinct, and which ought never to be confounded. The first is, What is that form, or order, of political society, which, abstractly considered, tends most to the improvement and happiness of man?—The second is, How a form of government which actually exists, and has been long established, may be changed, and reduced to a form which we think more eligible?

The second question is difficult in speculation, and very dangerous in practice: dangerous, not only to those who attempt it, but to the society in general.

Every change of government is either sudden and violent, or it is gradual, peaceable, and legal.

A violent change of government, considering the means that must be used to effect it, and the uncertainty of the issue, must be an object of dread to every wise and every humane man. It is to wrest power from the hands of those who are possessed of it, in the uncertain hope of our being able, and the more uncertain hope, that, after

a violent convulsion, it shall fall into hands more to our mind. The means of effecting such a change, are plots, conspiracies, sedition, rebellion, civil war, bloodshed, and massacre, in which the innocent and the guilty promiscuously suffer.

If we should even suppose that a total and sudden change of government could be produced without those violent means; that, by a miracle, those in power and office should voluntarily lay down their authority, and leave a nation to choose a new form of government: suppose also, that, by another miracle, foreign enemies should not take the advantage of this state of anarchy: What would be the consequence? A very small state, like an ancient Greek city, when they banished their tyrant, might meet and consult for the common good. The issue of this consultation commonly was, to choose a wise and disinterested man, who was superior to themselves in political knowledge, and to give him power to model a government for them. And this was perhaps the wisest method they could take: for a good model of government can never, all at once, be invented by a multitude, of which the greater part is ignorant; and of the knowing, the greater part is led by interest or by ambition.

A great nation, however, cannot meet together to consult. They must therefore have deputies chosen by different districts. But previous to this, the number and limits of the districts, the qualifications of the electors and candidates, and the form and method of election, must be ascertained. How these preliminaries are to be fixed when all authority is dissolved, and the nation in a state of anarchy, is a question I am not able to resolve.

Supposing, however, this difficult point to be happily settled, and the electors of a district met to choose a deputy; is it to be supposed that all, or the greater part, of the electors, are to be determined by a pure and disinter-

ested regard to the good of the nation? He surely knows little of human nature, who would admit such a supposition. We know, from long experience, how such elections proceed. The poor electors must have their bellies or their purses filled, their burdens lessened, or their superiors mollified. The rich must have their private attachments and friendships gratified, or good deeds done, or promised, or expected. There may, no doubt, be electors, both knowing and perfectly disinterested; but the proportion they bear to the whole, I am afraid, is too small to be brought into estimation.

Such being the electors, who are to be candidates?—It were to be wished that they should be the wisest and best men of the district; but this is rather to be wished than expected. It is evident they must be men, who have it in their power and in their inclination to offer the inducements by which a majority may be gained. Without this, their pretensions would be laughed at.

To pass over these things; suppose an assembly of deputies met, and a constitution of government determined, unanimously, or by a majority; whether this constitution is to be imposed upon the nation by a despotic authority of the deputies, or to be again submitted to the choice of the people, I cannot pretend to determine, nor shall I enumerate the dangers that may arise from one of these ways or the other. After all the favourable suppositions I have made, it seems to me, that to bring such a government to a firm and settled condition, must be the work of a century. For, we may observe, that the stability of a government, if it be at all tolerable, depends greatly on its antiquity. Customs and manners, by which we and our forefathers, for many generations, have been governed, acquire an authority and a sanctity, independent upon their reasonableness and utility. To this disposition of human nature, I think, it is owing, rather than to cli-

mate, or to any peculiarity in the genius of the people, that very imperfect forms of government, when, by a mild administration, they have continued for many generations, and acquired the authority of antiquity, continue to subsist after they become very tyrannical. When intolerable grievances are felt, that produce sedition, they are imputed, not to the form of government, but to the fault of those who administer it. Thus, in Turkey, a sedition is quelled by the sacrifice of a Vizier, a Mufti, or sometimes of a Sultan, without any attempt to alter the form of government. Into this reverence for the ancient form of government, I think, we must likewise resolve that maxim, admitted by all political writers, that when an ancient government is overturned, either by conquest or by internal disorder, the safest way to establish a new one, is to keep, as much as possible, to the old forms of procedure, and the old names of officers.

What I have said hitherto relates to violent and sudden changes of the form of government; and the conclusion from the whole is, that such changes are so dangerous in the attempt, so uncertain in the issue, and so dismal and destructive in the means by which they are brought about, that it must be a very bad form of government indeed, with circumstances very favourable to a change concurring, that will justify a wise and good man in putting a hand to them. It is not with an old government as with an old house, from which the inhabitant who desires a new one, may remove with his family and goods, till it be pulled down and rebuilt; if we pull down the old government, it must be pulled down about our ears, and we must submit to the danger of having the new built over our heads.

But there may be changes that are not sudden and violent, but gradual, peaceable, and legal. New laws and ordinances, wisely contrived, may remedy the defects of

a constitution, remove grievances, and promote general happiness. This must be granted: yet so limited is the wisdom of man, so short his foresight, that new laws, even when made with the best intention, do not always produce the effect expected from them; or they bring unforeseen inconveniences, that do more than counterbalance their good effects. For this reason, even such changes ought not to be rashly made; but with good advice, and for weighty causes. Surely every man who has the skill and ability to mend the constitution, by such peaceable means, merits the blessings of a nation. And every constitution, in proportion as it gives scope for such amendments, by allowing due liberty of printing and petitioning, and by giving the people a share in the legislature, is in the way of having its defects supplied, and its errors corrected.

We have the comfort to think, that, in this respect, as in many others, the *British Constitution* excels all others we know. The change made at the Revolution in 1688 was violent indeed, but necessary. It affected only one branch of the legislature, and, by the good providence of God, was brought about, with fewer of the evils that commonly attend such revolutions, than could have reasonably been expected. Since that time, we have had no revolution, but such gradual and peaceable changes, by new laws, as have improved the constitution, and greatly promoted the prosperity of the nation——

——The relation between a government and its subjects, like that of marriage, or of parent and child, is strong and important. It is a relation instituted by the Author of nature, as, without government, men must be savages. To preserve and strengthen this sacred tie, concerns the honour and the interest of both parties. The duties are reciprocal: protection and the benefit of laws on one hand; respect, submission, and defence in time of

danger, on the other. Whatever is excellent in the constitution, ought to be the boast and the glory of the subject; as we glory in the virtues of our near relations. If we see, or think we see, imperfections in the constitution or in the government, we ought to consider that there never was a perfect human government on earth; we ought to view such defects, not with a censorious and malignant eye, but with that candour and indulgence with which we perceive the defects of our dearest friends. It is only atrocious conduct that can dissolve the sacred tie. While that is not the case, every prudent and gentle mean should be used to strengthen and confirm it. As he is a good friend or neighbour with whom we can live in peace, amity, and the exchange of good offices; so is it a good government under which we can "lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty."

*Glasgow Courier, Dec. 18. 1794.*





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