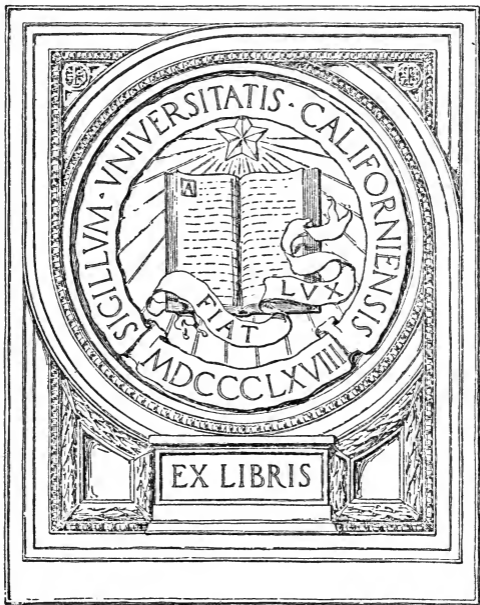


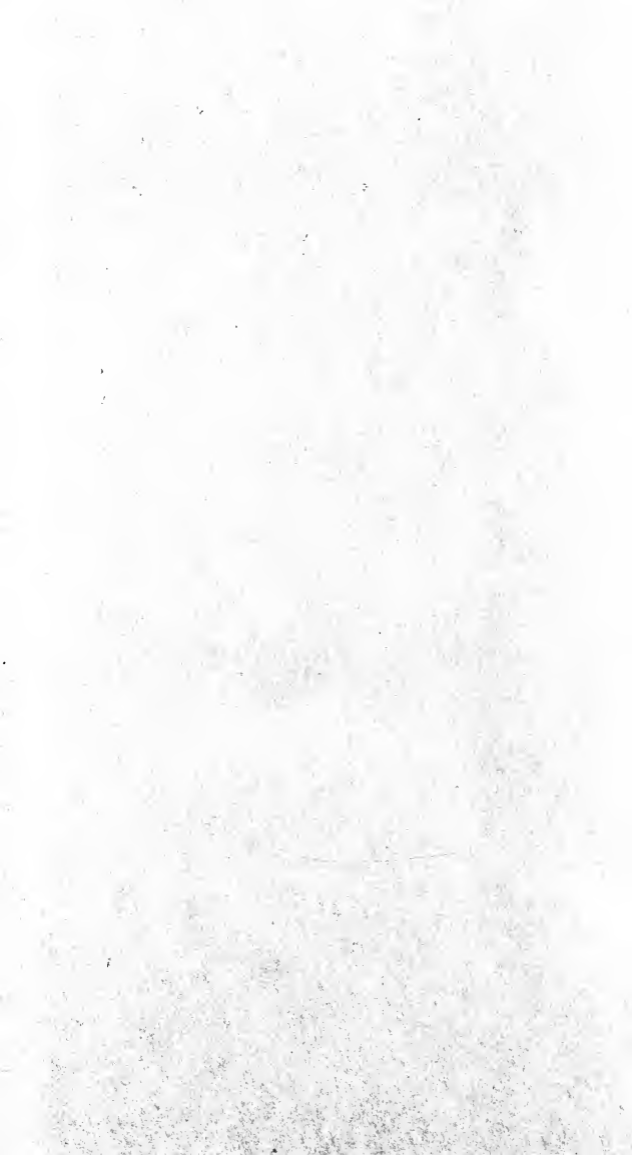
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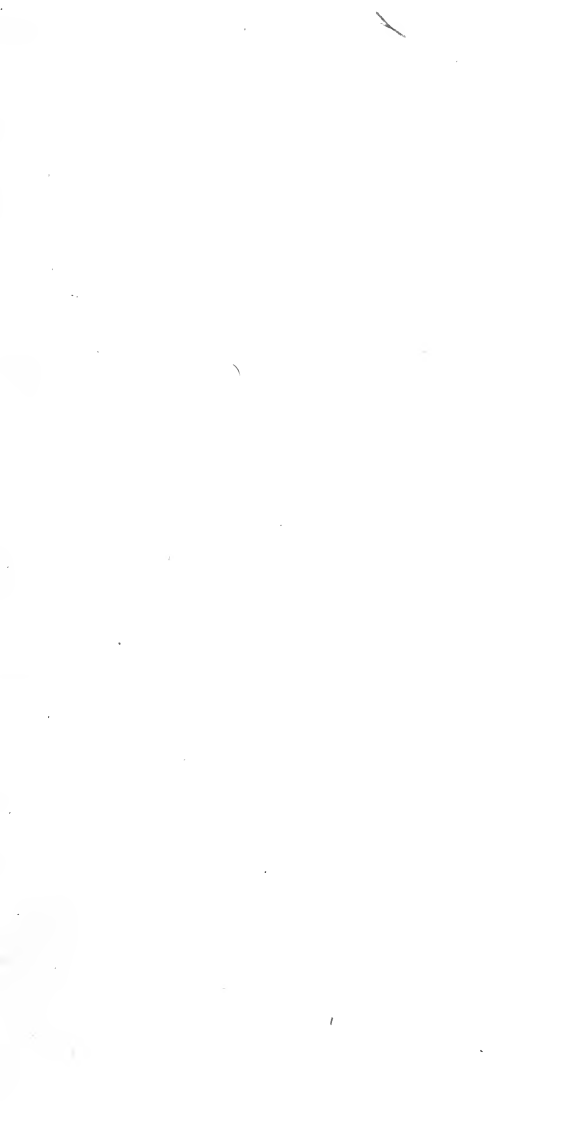
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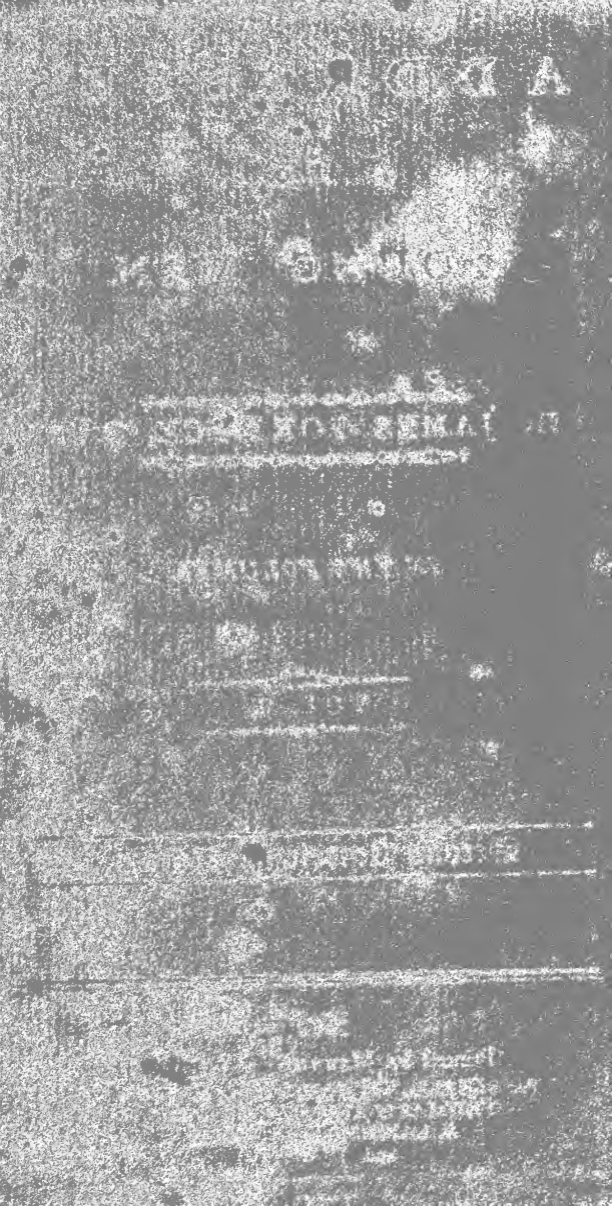
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Book

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Fordyce, James

Addresses to you
men



A D D R E S S E S

T O

Y O U N G M E N .


By JAMES FORDYCE, D. D.


IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L . I .

Second American Edition.

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Sydney J. W. Perkins

C O N T E N T S.

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P R E F A C E.

NEXT to the dispositions and manners of Young Women, those of Young Men may be regarded as of the greatest consequence, both to the present and future generations. It is certain they will be attended with the most powerful influence on that sex, whose empire is universal. Their mutual intercourse indeed is evidently much more efficacious in moulding the minds, and directing the actions of others, than the highest authority, or the wisest example of age. How deeply society will be affected by the connexions which Young Men shall form, and by the conduct which they shall hold, as they advance, it is not difficult to imagine; nor can it be necessary to prove, that, as the behaviour of individuals in their early days gives for the most part a turn to the rest, so from the character of our Youth in general, we may prognosticate favourably, or otherwise, concerning our own times, and those that shall more immediately succeed them. For these reasons, and others that need not now be stated, the improvement of the rising age in the best things, has always appeared to me an object of the first magnitude. On this principle Sermons to Young Women were attempted. From the generous reception with which they were honoured by the public, many persons, whose judgment I must ever respect, were induced to intimate the most obliging wishes that I might proceed to address the Youth of my own sex. But such an undertaking was at first rendered impossible by ill health; and afterwards, when I thought of engaging in it, I hesitated long from real diffidence.

I readily reflected, that I could add but little to the large stores of moral and religious instruction, with which Young Men disposed to use them were already furnished from a variety of quarters: and when I contemplated those giddy youth who wanted admonition most, I easily discovered that they were least inclined to receive it.

From the impetuosity of their passions, and the force of their prejudices, together with the thousand artifices that were constantly employed to inflame the former and strengthen the latter, while the voice of virtuous friendship, and of domestic wisdom, was either not exerted, or not heard in the din and tumult of the world, nothing seemed so difficult, as obtaining the attention of such minds to counsel in the shape of sermons. I well knew with what contempt and disgust they were taught to look on every thing that bears the name of preaching: nor was I conscious of possessing skill sufficient to surmount effectually so powerful an obstacle.

The regard to decorum, which the generality of Young Women deem it necessary to preserve; the happy restraint from many evils, and subjection to useful rules, which that lays them under; their quick feeling of reputation, and ardent desire to please by a demeanour at once attractive and unblemished; the diffusive influence of these qualities on their whole characters; the peculiar warmth and softness of their affections; their superior aptitude for devotion; their prevailing sensibility to whatever can entertain the imagination, or impress the heart; and perhaps may be added, the lively interest they take in those that are avowedly attached to them, as they might perceive I was;—all these things concurred to supply me with such handles in addressing that sex, as I could not hope to find in the other case. If in consequence of so many advantages, my endeavours met with approbation, it was natural for me to entertain doubts of success, where those advantages did not take place; where, on the contrary, the disadvantages were great; and where this conviction would be frequently returning to depress my ideas, and to damp my efforts.

It was also obvious to consider, that the attraction of novelty was gone; that the public is apt to rise in its demands in proportion to its past indulgence; that many would expect something better than what preceded, without allowing for the greater difficulty of the task; and that readers of more candour might be disappointed, without any blameable defect on the part of the writer. He
might

might use his utmost diligence in a work, which he undertook for reasons apparently good, but which from its nature was unavoidably less interesting : or he might make the attempt at a period of life, when assiduity was relaxed, and ardour abated.

By reflections of this sort I was restrained for a course of years. At length, however, I assumed resolution from the repeated and animating calls of kindness ; and to those Young Men, who had virtue or decency enough to give me an attentive hearing, I applied myself from the pulpit in a series of discourses, which I meant afterwards to publish. Nor did I meet with any thing inauspicious on the occasion ; the usual audience being from that time increased by a number of such, whose approbation was not more encouraging, than their attendance was regular and serious. But on weighing yet further the circumstances before mentioned, I fixed at last on the plan now executed, in which I have studied to accommodate myself also to the gayer part of my youthful friends, for whose happiness, as well as for that of the graver, I shall always be solicitous, without giving up a single point of true religion, or sound morality.

It has been my aim to engage the hearts, no less than the understandings of my hearers, in favour of truth and goodness. Curious speculations, learned inquiries, philosophical disquisitions, or the distinctions of a metaphysical divinity, did not enter into my design. If they had, they might have been easily extracted from a moderate library. But, partly to impress upon the youthful mind, sentiments of piety and worth, partly to warn it against the mischiefs to which it is most exposed in a state of public manners highly corrupt and seducing, was my chief endeavour.

I am under little apprehension that those who join liberality of sentiment to seriousness of principle, will reject the friendly counsels here presented, because they are not introduced with texts of scripture, because they are not fettered by the formalities of method, or yet because they are accompanied with illustrations, remarks, and modes of compilation, more familiar, less solemn, and nearer the level of common life, than have been often adopted in grave discourses.

It will be understood, that I speak to Young Men at large, as forming one numerous assembly, which I suppose to be present, and whose presence I feel to be an object of importance and animation. I only except the hypocritical bigot, the profligate infidel, and the malevolent detractor. For them I profess no zeal; on them I can stamp no impression; and from them I expect no quarter, if they should chance to mix with my hearers.

It will likewise be perceived, that these Two Volumes comprise but a portion of my subject, which appears on the slightest survey both comprehensive and various. To do it but tolerable justice, many topics of much moment will afterwards require our consideration, if it shall please Heaven to afford leisure and ability.



Address I.

ON THE RESPECT DUE TO YOUNG MEN.

WHETHER I consider you, whom I have now the pleasure of addressing, as individuals, or a part of society; as entering on the theatre of life, or designed for a higher existence when you leave it; as possessed of great advantages, subject to many difficulties, or exposed to peculiar temptations; I am deeply impressed with your importance, and tenderly anxious for your welfare. Thus, indeed, I have long felt with regard to you; and to merit your esteem by promoting your improvement, your reputation, and your happiness, has long been an object of my ambition.

Will you hearken to me, then, as to a brother and a friend, whilst I endeavour with freedom and affection, with familiarity and respect at the same time, to engage your thoughts on a variety of topics closely connected with your particular circumstances, and your best interests? I pretend to no influence but that of persuasion, and to no authority but that of truth. It is not my intention to indulge indiscriminate satire, or general declamation against vice and folly, without any distinction of characters, or any view to the principles and manners of the age. I mean not to burden your memories with the minute sub-divisions of scholastic method, or to perplex your understandings with the unsatisfactory subtleties of theological debate. Yet less would I seek to mislead your imaginations by the phantoms of a wild enthusiasm, or chill your hearts by the gloomy spectres of superstition. Far from wishing to debar
you

you from any innocent delight, I propose to show by what means you may actually multiply your pleasures, and enjoy with the highest relish, to the largest extent, and for the longest term, every gratification becoming your nature, and suited to your state.

Our system, nevertheless, may appear to be somewhat unfashionable. But if you will honour us with your attention, we doubt not of being able to convince you, that in reality it implies nothing vulgar or illiberal; that it requires not a single action, word, look, or thought, of which you can have reason, in any company, or on any occasion, to be ashamed. Neither, as I hope, will you find us, in the prosecution of our plan, strict without necessity, or severe without cause. We are willing, gentlemen, to make every candid allowance for the imbecility of human nature, like those who feel themselves men; and for the gaiety of juvenile minds, like those who remember that they also were once young. When the clearest rules of duty oblige us to remonstrate, and our warnings are seconded by the most awful sanctions of religion, even then we would temper admonition with tenderness, and engage you to embrace instruction chiefly from ingenuous motives; always regretting when we are compelled to enforce it by considerations less attractive, but never assuming the air of a tutor, or adopting the style of those that affect "to have dominion over your faith, instead of being helpers of your joy."

"Young men exhort to be sober-minded—Entreat the younger men as brethren"—were the directions given by an apostle to two evangelists, who were both his pupils and his friends, respecting the manner in which they should treat the youth of their days. You will not say, that this was the language of a bigot. A bigot, you are sensible, is the avowed enemy of all moderate counsels. A condescending disposition, an obliging demeanour, he neither practises nor commends. His fancy is too much heated to regard the measures of common sense, or the laws of social life, in matters of spiritual concern; and his judgment is too narrow to comprehend the extensive objects of religion and humanity. Such a man does not exhort, but dictate, does not entreat, but command; and as for the plain unpretending virtues of prudence and sobriety, a temperate
mind

mind and a discreet behaviour, what are they to him who is intoxicated with a conceit of his superior sanctity and wisdom? How different was the character of St. Paul!

Formerly, indeed, he too had been a blind and furious zealot: but, from the time that he imbibed the meek and lowly spirit, with the enlarged and generous principles of his new Master, no one could be more mild or unassuming, more strictly attentive to the rights of mankind, or more sweetly solicitous for their salvation. "Young men exhort"—to what? To display their courage, or their zeal, by persecuting those who differ from them, by destroying God's creatures in God's name, as he had done when himself a young man; or yet to evidence their virtue and their piety by renouncing all terrestrial enjoyments, relinquishing all secular connexions, and being unprofitable to others under the pretence of saving themselves? No; but "to be sober-minded," that is to say, regular and moderate, careful to govern their passions, improve their faculties, and prepare for performing with diligence and discretion their duty to society. But however important or necessary such advice may appear, it must never be obtruded with officiousness, or pressed with asperity; it must still be prompted by a benevolent disposition, and still accompanied with an amiable address. This enlightened man well knew that the human mind revolts against all violent attempts to control her; that she requires to have her reason convinced by argument, and her affection engaged by kindness; that her innate pride is shocked at those who would presume to tutor her with rigour; that both the spirit and the impatience of youth in particular are apt to rebel, where authority, however founded, is not softened by gentleness, or rather where the master is not happily concealed in the friend; but that much may be done by him who has the skill to graft instruction upon ingenuity, and to gain the confidence of his disciples by using them well. "Entreat the young men as brethren." Regarding them as the rational offspring of your common Parent, as members of the same great family with you, initiated in the same divine faith, and destined to the same immortal fellowship, avoid in your reproofs, admonitions and counsels, whatever might tend to disgust or discourage them;

Let candour and benignity reign in all : beseech, obtest, conjure them to be wise, to be good, to be happy : let your arguments breathe, throughout, the heart-felt earnestness, the whole beautiful flame of fraternal and Christian friendship. In short, St. Paul was thoroughly acquainted with human nature and human life. In this instance he discovers not more concern for the edification and felicity of young men, than knowledge of their consequence, character, and situation. I said, their consequence, character, and situation. What these are, let us now briefly recollect. We just hinted at them in the beginning. A slight illustration of each, will furnish sufficient motives for the warmest exertions of zeal on our part, and for an affectionate concurrence with those exertions on yours.

Could we suppose to exist upon earth a reasonable being, who was doomed after a few years to drop into nothing ! still you will allow, that to render him, even for so short a space, happier in any respect, would be no contemptible exercise of kindness. Minds endowed with the least humanity, cannot but derive satisfaction from imparting it, in whatever degree. But how are the obligations to benevolence extended and strengthened, when it is considered that every individual of the human race was made for immortality, and contains in his frame capacities of growing delight through every stage of his existence ! On this comprehensive and elevating system, it may be affirmed, that to awaken the love of virtue and knowledge in any single breast, is, beside conferring a present benefit of the most valuable sort, to serve a future interest, as much superior to the temporary salvation of a State, or the mere external welfare of all mankind, as the felicity possessed by one soul through an endless duration, must amount to a sum greater than any possible accumulation of good, that can be enjoyed by any imaginable number of men through periods bounded by time. But of securing this object, it is acknowledged on all hands, there are many more probabilities in the days of youth than in later years. Of what immense moment then must it appear, to advance the happiness, by advancing the improvement of a numerous race, sustaining, as young men do or will sustain, a great diversity of relations, and formed, as they are in common with others, to exist forever !

You,

You, my honoured hearers, constitute a large, an essential, and a capital branch of the human species. You are, or you expect to be, united with society by a thousand strong, and a thousand tender ties. The bosoms of your parents, kindred, and friends, are at this moment throbbing with anxiety on your account. In your lot is involved the lot of multitudes. You have the power of communicating blessings or woes innumerable, inexpressible, inconceivable. The effects, which your behaviour in particular will produce on the conduct, dispositions, reputation, and peace or wretchedness of the other sex, are not to be told. To you, your country turns her impatient eye, eager to find in your persons her hope, her protection, and her boast; well knowing that she must rise or sink as you shall support and adorn or disgrace and betray her. While I thus speak, I fancy that I see you shooting up into fathers, masters, men of business, teachers, tutors, guardians of youth, physicians, lawyers, divines, magistrates, judges, legislators, or, to say the whole at once, into useful members of a mighty State, through all its variety of departments, which you may in the progress of life be called to fill. When your predecessors retire from the scene, are unfitted for action, or numbered with the dead, it is you who must supply their places, and carry on the system of human affairs. With respect to many, there is reason to suppose, that the greater part of your days is yet before you. But who can say how much its pleasures, or its pains, may be increased or diminished by your present deportment? When the eventful story is ended with your lives, it will be resumed in your posterity. Your influence, my friends, will reach to succeeding ages. Nameless generations will, in no small degree, receive their turn and character, consequently their happiness or misery, from the conduct which you shall pursue, and from the principles which you shall propagate. If your memories should be handed down to future times, you will be blessed as the benefactors, or execrated as the pests of humanity: and, to finish the account, when the world shall hear of your conduct and principles no longer, when the world itself shall be no more, their final result in relation to yourselves, and millions of your fellow creatures, will be nothing less than everlasting destruction, or life eternal.

Has

Has the Almighty bestowed upon you such marks of importance, and is it possible for us not to be struck with them? Whilst earth and heaven, whilst mortal and immortal powers, are beholding you with earnest expectation, and awful suspense, can we remain unconcerned spectators? Sensibility, benevolence, religion, forbid!

Have not all the best minds, and most virtuous nations, ever taken a deep interest in the sentiments, tempers, and manners of young men? Have not the judgment and learning, the experience and policy of ages united in training them to knowledge, virtue, and glory? Where is the subject, that has employed more able or more eloquent pens, than their education? And, if we speak of scripture, what shall we say of the attention paid them by many of the inspired writers, particularly by the man renowned above all others for his wisdom, of which he has in a manner exhausted the treasures, that young men might share them? He, indeed, appears to have been peculiarly affected with a sense of their consequence, and also to have possessed a profound insight into their characters, the leading lines of which his instructions, warnings, and encouragements, have almost constantly in view.

It has been long observed, that beside the difference of form and appearance sufficiently visible for the most part, the several periods of life, from the commencement of reason, may commonly be discriminated from one another by a certain cast of thought and disposition proper to each. Among the rest, we naturally expect to find in young men, a lively fancy, a ready understanding, a retentive memory, a resolute spirit, a warm temper and tender affections, a quick sense of honour and disgrace, an irresistible love of action and enterprise, an ambition to be admired and praised, especially for their probity, their manhood, their generosity, their friendship, their good-nature, and other virtues of that order, with a detestation and disdain of the opposite vices. In them too we naturally expect to discover a strong propensity to amusement, company, and imitation; a high relish of existence, sanguine hopes of happiness, exalted ideas of the world; candour and truth, extending even to an honest bluntness and an easy credulity; a keen appetite for pleasure; a restless attachment

ment to the other sex, with an ardent desire of their approbation; an impatience of control, a thirst for liberty, an eagerness of information; a passion for what is wonderful, curious, or new.

But human nature is infinitely varied. In numbers of youth many of these qualities are either not found at all, or in a very feeble degree; and in none are they universally found alike strong. Even where they do exist with considerable force, it is divided amongst them in very different proportions; and the character of mind and heart, discoverable in different young men, as such, appears under a great diversity of shapes and combinations, producing a correspondent diversity in their tendencies and manners, and requiring nearly an equal distinction in the particular modes of treating them.

Meanwhile it is pleasing to observe in general, that many of the qualities just named, furnish very valuable seeds of intellectual, moral, and religious improvement; as, on the other hand, the friends of society cannot but be alarmed at the danger arising to its highest concerns from the rest: a danger infinitely increased by the endless and formidable snares that beset you on every side, from bad companions, bad books, bad fashions, false ridicule, or continual flattery; often from the blandishments of worthless, but artful women; often from the worst examples in the nearest relations; often from rank and affluence; and alas! how often from an education deplorably neglected, or grossly mistaken! Where indeed is the wonder, if all these, meeting with the warmth and vivacity, the confidence and inexperience, the want of suspicion and therefore the want of guard—shall I add, the unthinking rashness and the ungrounded conceit too common to youth, should render your situation exceedingly critical and hazardous?

Your situation will recur to our remembrance so frequently, that I shall only touch upon it now, as it is affected by the character and circumstances of the times. From the snares just specified, we must not flatter ourselves, that youth could be wholly secure in any period consistent with an advanced state of society. But who does not see, that, in an age so deeply and so widely corrupted as
the

the present, those temptations are strengthened and multiplied to an extraordinary pitch? Who does not see, that they operate every where, at this day, with a power more and more alarming, but chiefly in rich and populous cities, and most of all in the metropolis, which, like other capitals of great nations, when arrived at a certain point of refinement, loses in principles and morals, as it gains in extent and splendor, and is becoming every day a wider theatre of luxury, profaneness and profligacy?

Contemplate for a moment the enormous growth of public diversions, the peculiarly dangerous tendency of some of them, the prodigious influx of wealth which not long since took place for a course of years; the spirit of dissipation, idleness, debauchery, extravagance, which these have engendered and propagated; with their inseparable attendants, a disregard for the ordinances and principles of religion, for the authority of laws, and even for the restraints of decorum; a quick decay of patriot zeal, a rapid progress of venal dependence, and a want of vigour and diligence, or of capacity and skill, in applying the means of reformation, amongst our magistrates, our clergy, and our teachers in different ways; or, to sum up the account at large, a general and hitherto unexampled relaxation of maxims and manners amongst all conditions of men. Such is the state of things in which you, my young friends, are destined to live. Who, that has the smallest degree of feeling or reflection, can behold you placed on so dreadful a precipice, and not tremble for your safety?

In this situation, what is to be done? Indolence would answer—Nothing at all, or nothing effectual. Spleen would suggest, that the world is not worth the mending. Superstition would, with doleful accent, doom all but a handful to inevitable destruction: and bigotry would assert, with a fierce air and peremptory tone, that it is impossible for any to be saved without an implicit faith in one favourite system, to the utter exclusion of all others. But your good qualities, my respected auditors, and a joyful assiance in the Almighty Former of the human heart, encourage us to hold a different language, and to hope, that notwithstanding whatever diversity of opinions in points of inferior moment, notwithstanding a thousand
powerful

powerful temptations which you are under of “following a multitude to do evil,” notwithstanding innumerable specious but wrong elections which you daily witness, you may yet be induced to “choose the good part,” and to pursue without delay the only path of security and glory.

Thus then we would exhort and entreat you. If the sentiments of probity and excellence, which Heaven has impressed on the tender mind, deserve to be respected; if it becomes you to cherish your worthiest and finest feelings; if the palm of honour, fairly won, can please the youthful breast; if the praise of virtue can awaken your ambition; if honest love can gratify your wishes, or your bosoms can glow with the fervour of friendship; if the manly and magnanimous part should still be preferred to the mean and the effeminate; if humility be both decent and wise; if piety be the highest obligation of man, his greatest improvement, and his strongest security; if there be any beauty in sensibility, any sweetness in candour, any nobleness in liberality, any genuine attraction in unrepined delight, or any hollowness and deformity in criminal indulgence; if there be aught engaging in amiable conversation, in a courteous behaviour, in the spirit and accomplishments of a gentleman; if knowledge be pleasant to the soul, and the love of liberty be more than a name; to these considerations, and whatever is most inspiring in the faith of religion, or glorious in the hope of immortality, I would bespeak your candid attention. Upon such subjects, and others connected with them, I mean to address you in the best manner I am able, and from the best motives: May the Supreme of beings bless the attempt, and grant me the felicity of contributing to yours!

Address II.

ON THE REVERENCE WHICH YOUNG MEN OWE TO THEMSELVES.

MY HONOURED FRIENDS,

TO set forth your importance in life, in society, in the general system, to point out the good qualities which you have received from the Fountain of goodness, and to demonstrate the respect with which you ought, on both accounts, to be treated, was the chief object of the preceding address. To explain and enforce the reverence which, on many accounts, you owe to yourselves, is the purpose of the present. At the tribunal in your own breasts, I am to plead your cause. It is the cause of humanity, and of Heaven. After asserting the regard due to you from others, and conscious as I am of paying it among the rest, I should be sorry to see you forget your just consequence, or act as if you did.

Is there danger then, that youth should treat themselves with disrespect? Have they not often been accused of magnifying their dignity in their own opinion, as well as claiming from others a degree of esteem to which their right was not very clear? Let us distinguish.

That young man who pretends to more merit than he possesses, or who values himself on trifles which imply none, will, from the discerning, draw contempt instead of honour. In the eagerness of his pursuit after praises which he does not deserve, he will be apt to overlook the advantages which he really has, and to neglect the cultivation of those virtues with which he was endowed by the Author of his frame. On the other hand, he who pays himself just respect, will generally bid fairest to meet it from others. It is impossible seriously to despise a dignified

sied behaviour ; and the very wretch, who affects to laugh at a character truly honourable, cannot help at the same moment feeling within himself inferiority and awe.

Among the profoundest and the noblest maxims of ancient philosophy, we may fairly reckon that which inculcated self-reverence. Perhaps, gentlemen, it is one of the first and most comprehensive rules of right practice. Those that are habitually afraid of offending against the best convictions of their own hearts, will not often go far wrong, at whatever period of life : but those that follow this direction early, before their sentiments have had time to be perverted by their passions, or warped by the world, are surely least exposed to deviation.

In truth, I conceive that your conduct, my young auditors, will, through the whole of your future progress, be very much regulated by the light in which you view yourselves at setting out. If you establish it now, for a sacred and invariable principle, to follow, as nearly as your nature and situation will permit, that elevated standard of rectitude which your Creator has raised within you, and never to sink greatly beneath your original rank, and glorious destination, as intelligent, social, and immortal beings ; is there not reason to hope you will in that case perform your parts worthily ? If, on the contrary, forgetting what you are, and for what end so distinguished, you fail to cherish or regard your innate perceptions of probity and greatness ; if even striving to suppress them, when repugnant to the lower propensities of your make, you labour to persuade yourselves, that you were formed chiefly for the gratification of these last, and choose accordingly the path to which they point ; what is then to be expected ? I would rather you should answer the question than myself. That about which I am most solicitous on this occasion, is to trace the foundation and show the necessity of that reverence with which you ought habitually to observe and obey the highest dictates and the purest feelings of your own minds.

There is not perhaps any term more familiar in the mouths of youth, especially amongst those of better condition, than *honour*. But have they well considered its meaning ? Do they carefully discriminate between that
honour

honour which refers to public opinion, and that which results from self-esteem? Say, my brothers, do you never forget, that the first is suspended on prepossessions and fancies more variable than the winds, more restless than the waves; and that the last, when rightly understood, is built on truths and conclusions immutable as God himself, and unshaken as his throne? In the latter, which is the proper signification of the word, honour includes virtue, and bestows its sanction upon that only. In the former, which is the common acceptance of this term, it does not necessarily include virtue, and its suffrage is frequently given to vice. But can you be at any loss, which to prefer? Can you doubt for an instant, whether you shall depend on your own approbation, or the applause of others; whether you shall be enslaved to the prejudices and caprices of the multitude, often changing and ever uncertain, or appear respectable to yourselves by a behaviour which something within you will always pronounce worthy, excellent, noble?

I said, Something within you. For, pray observe, we would not now send you back to academies and colleges, for a system of morality, founded on deep speculation, wrought out by slow deduction, or supported by laborious argument. A system more obvious and simple, perhaps too not less satisfactory and persuasive, you will find nearer home. God has established in your breast, Sir, a school of far superior authority to any merely human; committing you to the care of conscience, his awful representative. If you will listen with docility to this divine teacher, you shall seldom err in any fundamental point of virtuous practice.

I speak not now of religious obligations strictly so called, which must be the subject of future consideration, and which the school of Christ alone can teach in perfection. I would only remark in the mean time, that as this latter school corroborates and enforces the lessons taught in the former, so no sooner is unbiassed reason made acquainted with the new relations, and mighty objects, discovered in the other, than conscience perceives and acknowledges the duties thence arising: his sphere of action is only enlarged; his power and importance are increased; he discerns with
more

more quickness, feels with greater purity, and dictates in a tone of majesty unknown before : in short, this home tutor becomes much more enlightened, and venerable, in the exercise of an authority originally derived from the Parent of all.

To vary the allusion, the sovereign Ruler has erected in every mind a tribunal, where the same delegated power presides in his name, judging and determining on the great questions of right and wrong, honourable and base, with a precision that cannot easily be mistaken, an expedition that admits of no delay, and a solemnity that none can slight but at their peril.

To this high court we appeal from the decisions of vice and folly. We will abide by the sentence, which conscience shall pass, in every momentous case where moral obligation is concerned ; which he shall pass, not in consequence of a minute examination or long trial, but on the least attentive recollection, at the very first moment of coolness.

Now, for example, that you are not disturbed by the tumult of the world, or deluded by the sophistry of the passions, tell me at once, in what light justice, generosity, friendship, fidelity, fortitude, modesty, self-command, virtuous love, public spirit, universal kindness—in what light these qualities appear to you, as soon as they are named, and without regard to particular situations, or remote effects ? Which of you will stand forth, and say, in the face of this assembly, in the face of the internal judge, in the face of all-inspecting Heaven, that these qualities imply any thing reproachful or mean, any thing of which a man of sentiment and honour should ever be ashamed ; or that their contraries can ever deserve esteem.

I have already hinted, that, to decide fairly on this subject, there is no need of nice distinctions, subtle disquisitions, or metaphysical refinements. Were these indeed wanted, what would become of human beings engaged in action, involved in uncertainty, and environed with snares ? But as they are not wanted, so men never fly to them in the practice of life, when they wish to follow, with honesty and simplicity, the spontaneous uncorrupted dictates of the heart.

The law which God has written there, appears in characters so legible and so large, that, to use the language of a prophet, "he who runs may read." He who does not, has most probably turned away his eye on purpose, lest he should see something that might check him in his career; and he who does, but endeavours to wrest the sense, or render the intention dubious, has reason to look upon himself as no better than a hireling counsellor, or hackneyed pleader, who speaks not the language of truth and justice, but studies to serve his client at the expense of both. The client in this case, is appetite or interest. If either of these should retain you, Sir, to puzzle so plain a cause, I will refer it to the first boy we meet.

I will draw, in his hearing, an upright and honourable character, contrast it with its opposite, make use of no art or colouring in either, and, without delivering any judgment of my own to bias him, I will ask his opinion of both, and rest the whole on that issue. He will not fail to declare instantaneously for the former; and, if possessed of a soul more than commonly well-born, he will declare with a noble warmth, from the generous unstudied impulse of his own affections. Even while I am drawing the two characters, you shall perceive his eyes sparkling with delight, and glowing with indignation, by turns. But who can describe the raptures and emotions that successively swell and fire the breast of such a youth, at representations of this kind; thus pursued and diversified, through a series of interesting events, whether real or imaginary?

To mention but one example of each sort, amongst innumerable that might be produced; what think you of the history of Joseph? What have you not felt in following that extraordinary young man through all the wonderful windings of his lot, and contemplating the gentle and heroic virtues which he alternately displayed, in the depth of persecution, and the height of advancement? Witness, again, what some of you have doubtless experienced in perusing that well known, but never sufficiently celebrated work of the incomparable Fenelon, *The Adventures of Telemachus*, in which is combined every thing that can captivate the fancy, or ravish the heart with the love of goodness.

But

But the truth is, that neither the graces of a sublime imagination, nor any singular excellence of temper, are necessary to discover the beauty of this illustrious form. Say in so many words, that a man is sincere and compassionate, generous and brave, disinterested and magnanimous; where is the wretch so hardened in vice, that his conscience shall not, in spite of himself, revere the exalted image? What numbers, alas! pine and languish inwardly for that worth which they have not the resolution to court, sighing, if we may so speak, in the bosom of infamy, for those attractions of excellence and honour, which they are conscious they shall never possess!

Such are always their own accusers. They live at variance with themselves; unhappy in not being able to quell the bosom-tyrants to which habit has enthralled them; more unhappy in finding it impossible to escape the bitter upbraidings with which nature pursues them for the injuries done to her. Divided, distracted, torn in pieces, between their passions and their sentiments, they dispute the vices which they indulge, they love and hate the same thing, they condemn their criminal pleasures the instant after they have tasted of them. No, my hearers, there is not amongst you all a single individual, who, living in disorder, can secretly justify it to himself, whatever he may pretend to others. Such pretence is mere talk, "great swelling words of vanity," to every one of which his heart gives the lie. The internal witness can never be corrupted: the voice within will plead for virtue, however forsaken or oppressed: the heaven-taught advocate may be overborne by noise and violence, may be discouraged and silenced for a time, but will sooner or later find opportunities of speaking up, and in a manner more terrible than thunder bursting unexpected in the midst of a calm.

Above twenty years after Joseph's unnatural brethren had treated him with such complicated barbarity, affliction awakened in them the pang of remorse; and at the very conjuncture when they wanted comfort most, conscience arose, and turned upon them with tenfold fury. "They said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought

befought us, and we would not hear : therefore is this distress come upon us."

Think not, infatuated youth, who in the greatness of your strength, and the gaiety of your spirits, are going astray, who yesterday perhaps rioted in the haunts of intemperance, and purpose this night to repeat the ignominious scene, think not that you shall always elude the reproaches of your own breast. "Your sins will find you out;" and the invisible reprovcr that saw them, will reckon with you in a style which you may affect to despise, but which will pierce your heart to its inmost convictions.

I know it has been said, that all this is the effect of laws and institutions, of authority or education. But surely they who say so do not believe themselves : surely they feel the cause to lie much deeper ; and must be conscious, that no external influence could ever bring them in good earnest, and on calm reflection, to approve of vice, or repent of virtue. I will readily allow, that such things have a considerable efficacy in forming the opinions and moulding the manners of men ; in either improving or invigorating the native sense of right and wrong, or weakening and overlaying it, according as they are wise and salutary, or the reverse. Neither do I deny, that the situation and customs, the religion and laws of different countries, may produce different ideas of duty in many particular cases ; or that, where reason is misled, or conscience ill-informed from the beginning, deplorable errors may be embraced for truths, and horrible crimes committed under the name of virtues. But to adopt the words of a forcible writer : "Cast your eye over all nations, and run through all histories. Amidst the many absurd, and the many inhuman modes of worship, amidst all that prodigious diversity of characters and manners ; tell me, if there be upon earth any country in which it is deemed a crime to be compassionate, sincere, beneficent, and generous ; in which an honest man is despicable, and knavery held in esteem."

The complication of circumstances, the grossness of ignorance, the blindness of prejudice, the violence of passion, the power of persuasion, the example of multitudes, co-operating with a wrong cast of political or religious institutions,

stitutions, may no doubt occasion numberless undesigned, and unconscious deviations from the rule of right: yet the rule remains, and, when not concealed, obscured or overlooked from such causes, will in matters of importance be recognized by most, however it may be transgressed by many.

The advantages sometimes obtained by villany, the boldness with which it is sometimes acted, and the capacity which it sometimes displays, may for awhile turn off the unwary eye from its natural turpitude; but at last, when viewed in itself as divested of that false lustre, it will generally, in a greater or less degree, disgust every mind that is not deeply depraved.

There is, there is in the centre of the soul, a sacred instinct, a celestial impulse, ordained to be the guide of men under Him who made them; by which "they are a law to themselves;" by which they are prompted, without the instructions of art, and abstract from the motives of interest, to approve and respect "whatsoever things are venerable," even when they do not practise them: and wherever the heart is most tender, there will these things, in consequence of this beautiful and sublime sensation, command the highest regard, and secure the happiest empire.

Thus, gentlemen, I am led on to show you the particular necessity of cultivating, in the days of youth, so important and so honourable a principle in your nature. For when, I beseech you, is the heart most likely to be tender, if not in those blessed days?

It is often pleasant to mark the first appearances of moral sentiment in the minds of boys. Some of them, it must be owned, betray very early a crookedness of disposition that seems to be interwoven with their frame, and that is seldom afterwards set right by whatever skill or care. It affords, indeed, but little if any handle for the instruments of culture. Such unhappy creatures are the worse for praise when they chance to merit it, and not the better for reproof, however severe, or however tender. They feel perhaps, now and then, some touches of shame; but these are embittered by vexation, instead of being tempered with ingenuity. Their blushes are the reddenings partly

of consciouſneſs, and partly of reſentment: their original obliquity remains. We heartily ſympathize with their parents and friends: but we, I fear, can do nothing for their reformation. We muſt leave them to the rough diſcipline of adverſity, and to the myſterious operation of that Omnipotent Hand which can “create them anew in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works;” of that hand which, in the emphatical language of our Saviour, “can out of the very ſtones raiſe up children unto Abraham.”—Let us turn to more hopeful characters.

Let us ſuppoſe an ingenuous youth, like many whom we have ſeen, endowed with a lively ſenſe of commendation and blame, with a ſtrong abhorrence of cruelty and injuſtice, with a contempt of every thing baſe and mean, with a promptneſs to protect the weak, to patronize the injured, to pity diſtreſs, to fly to its relief, to melt at a tale of generoſity, to impart to aſſociates, to raiſe up a fallen antagoniſt, to be reconciled to a yielding adverſary, to behave after victory with mildneſs and modeſty. When we obſerve ſuch diſpoſitions in a boy, our hearts burn within us, our thoughts dart forward into future years, and we are ready to cry out with a kind of prophetic rapture, “He will one day make a brave man!” Ah, that the prophecy were always fulfilled! Shall I ſay, how often it fails? Let us conſider in what manner the fatal reverse moſt uſually happens.

Figure to yourſelves a very common caſe, that of ſuch a youth, as we have now deſcribed, falling from ſchool into life, without a watchful father to guard or a wiſe friend to admoniſh him, or yet any fixed principle in relation to the duty and the glory of preſerving his innocence. He falls into looſe company. Where do they not abound? Intending no evil, he ſuſpects none. Amuſement is his object: but that is generally dreſſed out with ſo many alluring circumſtances, that his paſſions now ardent are inſtantly on fire. Appetite, vivacity, ſolicitation, example, hurry him into ſcenes of diſorder. He ventures forward with trembling ſteps. He yet reveres the vicegerent of God within him: he yet ſtands in awe of his own heart. His mind, hitherto undebauched, ſtartles at the ſight of vice: his feelings of honour ſhrink back from her approach,

proach, like the sensitive plant from the hand that touches it. He blushes at the thought of deviating from virtue : he still loves that heavenly form ; but then he hears her worthless rival preferred and extolled. The hollow enchantress smiles, and courts, and addresses him with apparent fondness. "Beguiled by her much fair speech," he is tempted to yield : yet reflection interposes. The principles of his creation are not easily subdued. He resolves to be wise ; but his companions rally his simplicity, call him a coward, and laugh him from his purpose. He plays the fool. He quickly returns to his senses, repents, is abashed. Conscience stares him in the face, and thunders in his ear, "You have lost your innocence. O amiable innocence ! that wast went to exhilarate this now unhappy boy, thou art fled forever, to cheer and delight him no more."

Yet he forms a thousand purposes to be sober : he maintains them for a time. He takes comfort from this seeming amendment : he begins to be reconciled to himself. He endeavours to forget the past : the future is to be regulated by prudence and propriety. He rises in his own esteem. "Whatsoever things are pure, and venerable, and of good report, he thinks on these things." In short, he is resolved, when he shall next meet the persons who led him astray, by no means to comply with them, that is, not beyond the bounds of temperance and wisdom. He meets them : the social spirit kindles ; conversation takes its former turn, a turn most dangerously contaminating ; youthful imagination glows ; jollity and wine add fuel ; his passions are again on fire ; his resolutions melt away : how rapid and irresistible the transition from thence to new folly !

The modesty of nature thus overleaped, and her reluctance baffled, what is there now left to check our young adventurer ? His desires, inflamed by indulgence, refuse the rein, and rush on, "as the horse rusheth into the battle." Even when satiety, and weariness, would join with reason, and conviction, to obstruct their progress ; fancy and fashion, luxury and dissipation, spur them along. The misgivings of guilt grow weaker ; the remonstrances of conscience are little heard, and less regarded ; or if at
a graver

a graver hour, in some situations unavoidable, these should prove more importunate and pungent than ordinary, the wretched youth takes refuge in louder folly and deeper riot.

But remark, I beseech you, what happens in the meanwhile. He is shocked at finding such disappointments in his pleasures, and such disgusts from his associates, as he never apprehended. The first very seldom answer his expectations; and of the last some deceive, and some devour him: he discovers ingratitude in many, insincerity in more, and selfishness in most: he is confounded with the treachery of one, and provoked by the impudence of another. What is the consequence of all? His spirits are depressed, his mind is chagrined, and his temper unhinged. The natural sweetness of his better days is dried up. Displeased with others, displeased with himself, he becomes peevish and splenetic. The benignity of virtue, and with it the charm of life, are vanished. The conscious dignity, the delicious sentiments, which formerly transported him, being now by the force of ignoble passions extinguished, he sinks into real littleness, his soul shrivels into narrow affections and illiberal views: he loves no one's interest thoroughly but his own, and is therefore transported no longer: "his frozen heart," as one has expressed it, "palpitates with tenderness no more." He is alive only to the feeling of his meanness and misery, mingled with starts of transient gratification, with gleams of social gladness, and now and then a few flights of airy exultation. I said—Of airy exultation, and will endeavour to explain myself.

Having forfeited the nobility of his nature, and yet retaining a remembrance of it, his debasement appears to him, as often as the reflection recurs, so deeply humiliating, that he is compelled to look round for some method of self-support, some kind of compensation to his pride for a loss which he can never cease to regret. Fain, indeed, would he believe that virtue is little more than a name; that his former ideas of her were chiefly, if not altogether, the dictates of education, or the illusions of ignorance. He is often told so by his vicious companions, by those particularly whose hearts are more callous than his own.

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Still however suspicions will arise; a degradation, and a discontent, will be felt. A frown from the divinity in his breast, a single look of disapprobation from that dreaded power, will get the better of all those unnatural efforts, and cover him with confusion, in his calmer moments. What shall he then do? whither shall he fly then, for shelter from retrospect, from reason, from himself?

The system of modern honour is at hand, to receive, to re-assure, and soothe him; that boasted contrivance of desperate libertines, that notable system, which by boldly assuming the title of virtue, frequently wearing her semblance, and freely passing for her amongst the generality of the fashionable, the great, and the gay, will enable him, in some measure, to elude the terrors of the inward judge; whilst it gives him a pretended license to commit almost every crime, and yet to plume himself on the reputation of a gentleman! Let him only abstain from theft, pay his debts at the gaming-table, fulfil such contracts as the law would enforce should he attempt to break them, and send a challenge to any man who happens, however undesignedly, to affront him; he may then talk as usual of sentiment and integrity, of spirit and principle; he may swear upon his conscience, he may swear upon his honour, and be all the while a dissembler, a cheat, an adulterer, a villain; yes, a villain, if coolly to violate the dearest and most sacred rights of society can deserve the name. Honour, conscience, principle, spirit, integrity, sentiment! How dare you, Sir, take words like these in your polluted lips? Shameful abuse of language! Abominable imposition upon the human mind! Intolerable insult to every sincere lover of goodness, to every person of true sensibility!

Shall we contrast with the picture now drawn, that of a young man entering the world, not only with a well-turned mind, but with resolutions alike earnest and deliberate, alike rational and devout, never to profane the sanctity of virtue, never to sacrifice to low passions the awful honours of humanity, stedfastly to reverence and faithfully to obey that first law, the law of conscience, to maintain inviolate the unaffected delicacies of native probity, or in other words, the heart-taught and heart-felt convictions of truth

and rectitude? Or shall we proceed to prove, that such resolutions seriously revolved, frequently renewed, and firmly adhered to, through the rest of life, will, with the grace of Heaven, be a powerful preservative of innocence, and that he who acts accordingly will find the practice delightful, beyond all that is commonly esteemed most delightful amongst men? These pleasing considerations must be postponed to a future opportunity, till when, I commit you to the divine influence and your own reflections.

Address III.

ON HONOUR AS A PRINCIPLE.

I CONCEIVE, gentlemen, that to preserve and cherish the sense of truth, integrity and glory, which we have found interwoven with the human mind, is the main design of moral culture; and that he will be the most estimable person in manhood who is the least perverted from the ingenuity of youth; who is constantly recurring to his earliest and tenderest perceptions of virtue; who, whilst “a man in understanding, is in malice a child;” who, with the improvements of reflection, and the acquisitions of experience, retains, as much as possible, that simplicity of soul, and that generosity of affection, which give such grace and sweetness to the bloom of life.

Is it possible to think of those lovely qualities, and not sigh to see them so often defaced in the succeeding scenes? Is it possible to contemplate the ruins of youthful excellence, and forbear to weep over them? But whence, my brothers, this deplorable change? From neglecting early to fix, and firmly to keep, that best and bravest of all resolutions, which was formed by one of the most celebrated persons of whom we have any record, “My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.” I will at no time, and in no situation, allow myself in that which I suspect to be wrong. In all seasons, and under all circumstances, I will endeavour to practise what I feel to be right.

Many of you, I doubt not, will recollect those memorable words of the Man of Uz, of that man whose unblemished and unalterable worth stands attested in a manner altogether extraordinary. The Almighty himself we find speaking of it in a style of exultation, if the phrase may be allowed; for thus he is introduced addressing the enemy
of

of all goodness: "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man?—and still he holds fast his integrity, although thou movest me against him to destroy him without cause." The heaviest storm of affliction, that ever put human virtue to the proof, had not power to overthrow his. He might complain: it is permitted to nature. He could not plead an entire exemption from the frailties that will in some degree cleave to all her sons. However the benignity of his Maker might pronounce him perfect compared with other men, he was yet far enough from justifying himself in the sight of supreme rectitude. Those brighter discoveries which he had obtained of the all-perfect Being, threw him into the lowest prostrations of humility and penitence: but nevertheless they hindered him not from consoling himself under the weight of sorrow, and the severity of censure, by the conscientiousness of a behaviour which had been upon the whole singularly excellent and praise-worthy. It had been such, indeed, with an uniformity which stood the test of the most opposite conditions, and both in the extreme.

Now what was it, think ye, that could, next to the influence of God, produce a conduct so superior, and so even, though thus tried? What other, than the purest and the noblest purpose deliberately weighed, and affectionately embraced from the beginning? At least you will acknowledge, that characters of transcendent and persevering value are not very often formed in the advance of life, if the first part of it was passed without principle, or any vigorous sentiments of probity and honour. Is it not then most likely, that this glorious man had taken up early the magnanimous resolve before mentioned? "My heart shall not reproach me," that is, for any allowed transgression or wilful neglect of its sacred dictates, "so long as I live."

This, my friends, and this alone, we call the principle of honour in the truly estimable, comprehensive and elevated sense of the expression; and we say that the young man who sincerely adopts and steadily adheres to it, in a humble but joyful reliance on Heaven, will seldom be at a loss about the path he is to pursue, will always have at hand an answer to temptation, and will be generally fortified against

against those discouragements which might otherwise overwhelm him.

A youth, entering the world, may be compared to an unpractised traveller, passing through a country where he meets with a number of cross-roads not properly marked, which of course leave him uncertain about the right one, and, if he is not much on his guard, lead him away from it. Alas, Sirs, in how many different directions may the young, the unexperienced, and the heedless, be trained on to destruction! In just as many as there are irregular inclinations to prompt, worthless companions to entice, and dangerous follies to ensnare them. To these we may add the strange diversities of system "and oppositions of science, falsely so called," that divide and perplex mankind, in relation to the conduct which they should pursue. Let me explain myself on this last point.

The opinions of the greater part, respecting the track they are to follow, may be chiefly ranked in two classes. On the one hand you find little else but ceremony without substance, speculation without practice, faith without works; a high-flown orthodoxy, which, if it does not avowedly supersede the necessity of sound morals, takes however all occasions to undervalue them; and, in fine, a fiery zeal; which burns up every sentiment of moderation and charity. On the other hand you hear of honesty without piety, good nature without real principle, modern honour in place of ancient virtue, or at most, certain decencies of demeanor, that leave men at liberty to indulge the most criminal dispositions, provided only that appearances are preserved.

If you listen to the advocates for these several schemes, they would every one persuade you that they and they only are in the right; that such as differ from them are equally mistaken and miserable; in a word, that, by espousing their party in preference to all the rest, you can alone ensure felicity. This they maintain with as much positiveness and vehemence, as if truth and they were born and had grown up together. From the narrowness and partiality which they all betray, it appears, indeed, that they are all erroneous: yet none of them are without a multitude of followers, each system being not
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only propagated with a confidence that imposes, but also adapted to soothe and screen the sinful propensities of men, while each seems to provide some kind of compensation; a circumstance which ought of itself singly to render both suspected; for this obvious reason, that the complying with one obligation can never be a just excuse for not complying with another. But what shall we say? Youth is a stranger to suspicion. "Pausing, pale distrust," as the poet has beautifully described it, "the assistant of that slow mistress, experience," is only to be found in the school of the world. Fond, confiding youth, yet unacquainted with the perfidy and futility daily practised there, is forward to believe whatever is boldly asserted, especially if it leave a latitude, much more if it give encouragement, to the favourite desires of nature.

But now suppose a young person hitherto uncorrupted, modest, simple, possessed of the amiable dispositions which our divine Master so much admired and applauded in children; imagine him to hear those opposite schemes proposed and pressed with the usual eagerness: how shall he proceed? what course shall he steer in this wide uncertain ocean of contending opinions?

There is but one safe course; it is pointed out by the Hand that made him, and that sent him forth on the voyage of life: he finds it traced upon his heart; his reason recognizes and recommends it as the work of the Creator. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord thy God requireth of thee; to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Our ingenuous inquirer listens to the voice of the Most High within him, as thus addressing his conscience: "Behold, I have placed thee in the mind of that youth, as my representative. Fail not to exert thy power, in blessing him with tranquillity and joy while he continues his allegiance; but, should he rebel, give him to know that it is an evil and a bitter thing, by punishing him with dejection and inquietude. Follow him every where, and make him always sensible that his peace and welfare depend on the veneration he entertains for God's vicegerent."

What think ye, Sirs? Will the youth we have supposed, with those awful words resounding in his intellectual ear,
hesitate

hesitate in his choice, or be disposed to doubt, whether he shall obey the heaven-commissioned judge, or give himself up to the giddy, noisy, and arrogant rout on either hand, which we mentioned before? Will he not rather rejoice in so significant a declaration of the unerring order, esteem himself happy in conforming to it, and be apt to cry out, with a mixture of serious contempt and holy zeal—Stand off! ye flatterers of youthful folly, ye smiling abettors of vice; and you, ye formal, proud, hypocritical pretenders: Stand off together, ye triflers, and “disputers of this world!” I will not be governed by any of you: I will “hearken to the voice of the Lord God, and him only will I obey: I will call no man master upon earth:” the image of my Maker’s authority in this breast I will ever revere: “My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.”

Be not deceived, my young friends: he who ultimately dreads any other censure than that of his own mind, or surrenders himself to any other power than that of the Being who made him, may be pronounced a slave, let him pretend to what freedom or dignity he will. He is driven on by pride, or vanity, or interest, or inclination, by the fear of man, or the fashion of the day, or the caprice of the moment, or the opinion of his company, or the tone of the crowd which he is taught to regard as consonant to the rules of honour, if not actually prescribing them. But, consider, I beseech you, how poor and precarious a conduct, to say no worse, that must be which is actuated by principles so fantastic, because so variable in different men, in different nations, in different ages; so blind in their origin, as proceeding from passion instead of reason; and so uncertain in their effects, as depending solely on the casual influence of education, complexion, or situation of governments, courts or climates, or whatever other circumstance, alike accidental. Is it possible that virtue can derive solidity or steadiness from such motives, or that any thinking man can feel security or satisfaction within, who, instead of faithfully observing the great unerring lines of duty marked out by an undepraved conscience, commits himself to the inextricable maze of human folly? No, gentlemen, there is but one comprehensive, one obvious, one
 immutable

immutable rule of honour, which you can follow with safety, amidst the perilous, the changeable, the dubious, and the partial maxims on either side, that have been devised by self-love, worldly policy, or false refinement. You have heard it already; but you cannot hear it too often: it is the whole art of acting worthily, of acting nobly, comprised in a single short sentence: Never, while you breathe, to offend deliberately the inward monitor—"My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live."

The same manner of thinking will furnish with an answer to every temptation. Young men are encompassed with snares: all is enchantment around them. Their fancies, like florid painters, give too much colouring to every object: their passions, like mettlesome horses not yet broke, disdain the curb. Pleasure invites and appetite impels them. Opportunity presents itself in endless shapes; and ignorance of the world promises concealment, where concealment is wished: where it is not, the notion of liberty is infinitely grateful to the pride of juvenile spirits. The ardour of enterprise blends with the flame of desire: both are fanned by adulation and caresses. In the hurry of impatience, and the heat of pursuit, future consequences are neglected; and if a few friendly advisers should step in, and offer to remonstrate, however discreetly, fashion, that petulant and over-bearing power, stands forward, urges the authority of rank, with the weight of numbers, and laughs to scorn the singularity, unmodish air, and supposed awkwardness of virtue. A melancholy account of your situation; such, indeed, as would represent it hopeless, were there nothing to counterbalance all this; but, God praised, there is much to counterbalance it, as you may afterwards hear. I shall at this time only take notice of the resistance which "an honest and good heart," with the aid of a little reflection, naturally makes to those dangerous assaults.

Is it all enchantment around me? will our well-resolved youth reply? I care not; it is but the magic of the blood: I will not trust it: the least sobriety of thought, or seriousness of occupation, is sufficient to break the spell: something whispers me at this moment, that there is nothing so beautiful, so sweet as innocence. Would the glare of imagination impose on my understanding? I will guard
against

against it, as an illusion like the former, and produced by nearly the same cause. The senses have lent their too ready assistance; but God has given me a judgment to correct both. As for those passions which were formed to submit and serve; shall they usurp the command, and precipitate me whithersoever they will, in spite of reason, in spite of conscience? Dignity and independence disdain the thought. As to appetite; were I to follow blindly its headlong impulse, in what should I excel the beasts that perish? It is easy to talk and vaunt of pleasure; but in the opinion of a reasonable being, no gratification that is inconsistent with peace, or purity, can deserve so agreeable a name. Does opportunity allure? Opportunity, when it would seduce me into disorder, and expose me to infamy, is a betrayer under the mask of friendship. But grant I could be concealed from the eye of men; what would it avail me, since I cannot be concealed from my own? And why should I be tempted to dream of liberty, in violating the laws of virtue? Do I not perceive, that I am then only free and self-possessed, when I follow cheerfully the dictates of the soul? When I act otherwise, do I not feel myself enslaved and wretched? If I am to attempt something great indeed, and worthy of ambition, let it be to rise above the vulgar herd, by the power of superior worth. With regard to adulation; how empty a thing, when the heart speaks a different language! What were the caresses of thousands, if conscience should chastise or reason condemn? The effects of guilt are only divided from it by a moment, and the more dreadful often for that short interval. Then as to fashion, with her whole gaudy and fantastic train; how frivolous, impotent, and contemptible, when opposed to the single dominion of truth, rising in her native unadorned majesty! What sorry support could the applause of the former yield me, were I unhappy enough to incur the rebuke of the last? Be gone! ye gay, glittering, but inconstant and deceitful phantoms of criminal and of vain delight. By whatever specious names you may be called, whatever plausible appearances you may assume; be gone! and give place to the sublime and invariable honours of wisdom, to the solid and unprecious joys of goodness. Come, and possess this breast,

ye fairest offspring of heaven ! To you I devote myself with eternal attachment. Of you I can never be ashamed or weary. " My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live."

Let us now see in what manner this heroic resolution will help to fortify young men against many of those discouragements which might otherwise overwhelm them. The hopes of youth, even when under the strictest discipline, are sanguine. They are not perhaps the least so, when that discipline degenerates into severity ; an error into which well-meaning, but ill-judging parents may sometimes fall. In this case, expectation, like an untamed bird, only pants the more impatiently to get loose from the hand that confines it. And when the restraint is at last removed, with what transport does it soar away into the world ! At any rate, but particularly when more sprightly than common, the youthful imagination figures to itself, in friendship, in reputation, in success, scenes of happiness which do not often take place, and which when they do, very seldom fulfil the promise they gave.

Suppose then a young man to meet with treachery where he reckoned on sincere attachment, with contempt where he looked for generous esteem, with calumny instead of merited approbation, with painful reverses of fortune where all things seemed to smile ; in short, that the visionary paradise, which bloomed for years in his raptured fancy, fades at once into a desert ; and that he seems there, like a solitary wanderer, forsaken and forlorn. What shall support him in this situation, especially if he should have much sensibility of temper ? I know nothing that can support him to purpose, but a consciousness of integrity. If his heart do not reproach him, he may take comfort ; he has within him, he has before him, resources that are independent of chance and change. Though not without a feeling of distress from disappointed views, he may console himself with those surer and nobler prospects which open in the regions of an upright mind. There a real paradise may be said to bloom, and one that withers not in the winter of affliction. To speak without a metaphor, " he is satisfied from himself ; and this home satisfaction serves to exalt

exalt the blessings still left him, to convert the simplest gratifications into a continual feast, and to crown the whole with the anticipation of immortal joys.

I say not, that such elevation will be always equally experienced by a virtuous youth, in the midst of discouragement. No one is always alike strong; nor are the sources of consolation, which flow from inward rectitude, always equally improved. Neither do I deny, that amongst young men of bad character, firm nerves or natural sturdiness, a phlegmatic disposition or a thoughtless gaiety, pride of soul or stoical indifference, the flutter of company or the flush of wine, may contribute sometimes to buoy them up in the rougher seasons of life. But then I affirm, that when the weather grows uncommonly tempestuous they will find these but feeble aids.

When the worthless and the debauched are by the force of calamity driven back upon themselves, and instead of a conscience calm and approving, feel nothing but perturbation, and hear nothing but reproach; when they perceive that they are not only despised but despicable, not only unfortunate but unhappy, not only deserted by others but untrue to themselves, unfaithful to the better sentiments and wiser purposes they have at times entertained; I desire they would tell us, what shall comfort them in this desolation of mind, as well as of condition? I repeat the question, what shall comfort you then? You will perhaps answer, the expectation of better days. And is that all? Have you no other refuge than what has already failed you, and may fail you again? May, said I? Alas! there will come a time, nor can that be very distant, when it must fail. Beyond that, Sir, you dare not look; you know you dare not. All beyond that is, to your guilty imagination, horror inconceivable, the blackness of darkness, and the depth of despair.

For the truth of these remarks I appeal not to scripture only, but to observation, to history, to poetry, to philosophy, to the united intelligence and accumulated wisdom of ages; all filled with the victories gained by the good over the sharpest sufferings, over sickness and poverty, censure and obloquy, the insults and persecutions of enemies, the ingratitude and infidelity of friends; delighting to recount

how the virtuous have in such conjunctures stood their ground, preserved their cheerfulness, asserted their integrity, proclaimed their trust in Providence, appeared to those about them great, superior, illustrious—From what cause? From the magnanimity and triumph of conscious worth. Whilst, on the other hand, we behold exposed to view the dejection, the despondence, the tremblings, the terrors, the unutterable and inevitable misery of the wicked, very often in prosperity itself, but in adversity almost always; arising from whence? From the dark abyss, from the dreadful chaos of a self-condemning mind. So true is that declaration of Solomon; “The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?” When all is sound and vigorous within, trials from without may be well borne: but when that which should support them is broken, how shall it be supported? I cannot conclude this argument better than in those words of Milton, so much to the purpose, and so wonderfully striking:

He that hath light within his own clear breast,
May sit i' th' centre, and enjoy bright day;
But he that hides a dark soul, and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun:
Himself is his own dungeon.

Address IV.

ON HONOUR AS A REWARD.

THE love of fame has been styled the universal passion. It is certain, that even the meanest of mankind, and the most obscure, are ambitious of having their admirers; as the greatest characters, and the most illustrious, have been supposed to derive much of their lustre and greatness from the same source. It appears that the very philosophers, who have written against it, hoped to be admired for writing well: else why did they prefix their names to their works? And as there is no rank of men, so there is no time of life, in which this passion is not observed to operate. In which of the sexes it is most predominant, I pretend not to say; an eminent author places its favourite seat of empire in the female breast. Be that as it may, it were vain to deny that its dominion is often felt very sensibly by men, and especially by young men.

Amongst the many pleasures which you, my friends, promise yourselves in the journey of life, are you not delighted with the idea of being esteemed, honoured, applauded by your fellow travellers? Would not the thought of incurring their contempt or reproach be sufficient to damp your spirits, high as they now are; to chill your ardent imaginations, to blast the whole transporting landscape before you?

God forbid that I should attempt to extinguish your sensibility, on this subject! It were unwise, unnatural, impracticable. But give me leave to say, that, like all other passions, the love of fame may want to be moderated, and will want to be directed: nor can I doubt of being favoured with your attention and friendly regard, if I show you by what means you may, consistently with the purest intentions,

tentions, ensure, under Providence, a valuable and permanent reputation.

You have heard in what sense honour may be said to act as a principle; and you have seen some of the good effects produced by it in that view. To them let us now add the estimation and praise which naturally accompany its persevering influence. In other words, let us inquire on what grounds honour may be expected and enjoyed as a reward.

“Happy is the man that findeth Wisdom. Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour.” It was the observation of Solomon, who possessed such insight into the hearts of men, as to know, that however august a personage Wisdom might be herself, or of however beautiful a form in the eye of a few select spirits, distinguished by the elevation of their sentiments and the sanctity of their manners, she would yet not be very often courted for her own sake, without regard to her dowry; and therefore was careful to represent her as nobly portioned.

Though, of the advantages she brings, *honour* is mentioned last, it was not least in the opinion of that great man. Accordingly to the strictest rules of just writing, it ought, upon the supposition of its being highest in value, to hold that place in the sentence, which would make the ideas rise to the end. And we are certain that he gave it the preference to wealth: “A good name,” he says elsewhere, “is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favours than silver and gold.” And again, “A good name is better than precious ointment;” one of the articles which are purchased by affluence. A character well tried and well approved, a reputation extracted, if we may use the term, from the fairest conduct, and the most agreeable qualities, carries with it a fragrance at once regaling, permanent, and widely diffused, beyond all that is most sweetly odoriferous in the productions of nature, or the preparations of art.

The sagacity of Solomon indeed was not necessary to discover, that, as honour is frequently enjoyed without riches, so it has always greater splendor in the view of discerning spectators; and that, when it is the result of virtues,

virtues, or of talents, transcendently brilliant, or extensively useful, it fails not to strike all mankind. I confess, that in a state of society deeply corrupted by the luxury which opulence supplies, this last often attracts the gaze of admiration, and raises the sigh of envy: but even in such a state it is not seldom an object of contempt, when compared with the intrinsic dignity of an exalted fame.

That the best and greatest men have in all ages been subject to obloquy, cannot be dissembled. That you may suffer the same treatment for the very conduct we recommend, is far from impossible. The unprincipled, and the uncharitable, always were, and always will be, disaffected to that worth in others, which powerfully though silently shames their own want of it. The ignorant also, and the ill-informed, may by the contagion, or the instigation of malignity, be often incited to think and speak of you very unkindly: yet we maintain, that notwithstanding the worst misrepresentations of the wicked, and the grossest mistakes of the weak, a degree of reputation sufficiently valuable may be secured.

For in the first place, gentlemen, if you behave well, the worthy and intelligent who know you, will approve; and their approbation is genuine praise. If those who do not know you, chance at any time to adopt a different opinion, can you be surpris'd, or should you be mortified? Is it wonderful that men are frequently mistaken concerning persons, as well as things? Or, whilst your own hearts do not condemn you, and such as are acquainted with your real characters add their suffrage, ought you to be unhappy at its being denied by those who withhold it, only because they are not equally informed?

A good name is then possessed indeed, and will then be relished to purpose, when from the evidence of a right deportment, not merely in particular instances, or on extraordinary occasions, but in the general tenor of life, the joint voice of worth and judgment bestows an honourable attestation: for then it is echoed by conscience; or if you like the expression better, the soul becomes responsive to that external testimony, and lifting herself towards heaven, whispers, in a rapture of humble gratitude, "Blessed be the Power that taught me to deserve it!" Let the severest

est casuists say, what there is in such praise which the truest modesty may not be permitted freely to enjoy.

The conceited and foolish are ravished with flattery of all kinds, and from all quarters: their object is mean, and their pursuit of it restless; they are extolled only or chiefly, by the worst and the lowest, by sycophants and dependants; nor does their thirst of adulation ever say, "It is enough." Persons of genuine merit can be thoroughly pleased with no commendation but that which they feel to be just, and which is insinuated with delicacy, conveyed with ardour, or expressed with simplicity.

He that makes no distinction in the characters of those whom he wishes to approve him, is a stranger to the superiority of virtue, and unconscious of intellectual eminence. The best men and the finest spirits cannot be much gratified, but by the approbation of congenial souls. Trust me, Sirs, the more correct your taste, and the truer your perceptions in what relates to conduct and capacity, the more difficult you will find it to be pleased with yourselves; and the less, of course, you will be captivated with indiscriminate favour, or promiscuous fame. There is but one case, in which you ought at all to regard the opinion of fools, whether for or against you, where reputation alone is concerned; I mean, when it happens, as sometimes it may happen, to be seconded by the opinion of the wise.

In perusing the letters of a late nobleman to his son, whose character and success in the world appear to have been his supreme concern, I was surprised to find his notions on that subject so little delicate. An universal popularity, obtained by whatever superficial accomplishments, or trivial recommendations, purchased at whatever expense of truth or virtue, the celebrated and the elegant Chesterfield is perpetually inculcating, as the grand object of study, labour, ambition, to a young man whom he loved above all others. I say not merely, how depraved or vicious, but how vulgar and despicable a system, especially for one who seems to have piqued himself so much on his knowledge of the world, and the refinement of his manners?

I cannot for my part help believing, that the better any person is acquainted with mankind, the less value he will be

be disposed to set upon the regards of the multitude; such is their incapacity, their caprice their mutability. Nor can I comprehend, how a dignified demeanor is compatible with incessant endeavours to soothe, and dazzle, and deceive all alike, by an artificial application to their fancies, or their passions. Such a behaviour may be thought by many wonderfully polite, and is always thought, by those who practise it, mighty cunning: but I will venture to affirm, that it is neither manly breeding, nor true ability; it is often found among the lowest and the weakest of the people.

The philosopher, I think, spoke very unphilosophically, who said, that great men prefer general esteem, though less, to that which, though more considerable, is confined within a smaller circle of enlightened judges. Those men at least, who discover such a preference, cannot be *great* in the best acceptation of the term.

But perhaps you will ask, are enlightened judges then always inclined to confer applause where it is really deserved? Are they never, by false reports or unjust suspicions, by unlucky rivalships or malevolent propensities, prevented from "giving honour to whom honour is due," and especially where the title to it is founded on eminent merit? Suppose, for example, a young man to possess uncommon purity of sentiment, correctness of morals, and nobleness of temper, with talents far above the ordinary rate? Is there no danger that numbers, from whom we might expect more candour, shall be induced to join with men of less discernment than themselves, in depreciating a reputation which may gain too fast on the public, and distance those who started at the same time, or perhaps much earlier, in the race of fame? I wish, for the credit of human nature, that we could answer in the negative: but who does not know, that undergoing calumny from the invidious is a tax which distinguished attainments have in all ages been destined to pay?

On this account, indeed, it will generally be considered by the charitable and the impartial, as giving an additional stamp to a praise-worthy character: and perhaps we may be warranted in saying, that the merit which has not been thus tried in the furnace of slander, is more doubtful, or
more

more obscure. A decided and splendid reputation will naturally excite the greatest jealousy in those whom it eclipses, when names of inferior lustre, or ambiguous desert, will often be suffered to remain undisturbed.

But suppose, Sir, that your integrity, however real or uncommon, should be so artfully clouded by the shades of detraction, as not to be seen, for a long time, even by the most candid as well as perspicacious; you may depend on this, that unwearied constancy, unabated fortitude, and humble trust in God, will surmount all such obstructions in due season, when "he will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your judgment as the noon day." Superior excellence will at last be observed, acknowledged, honoured by all, or almost all, situated near it, whom good sense would desire to please.

I said—By all, or almost all, situated near it. From indolence, from inattention, from a continual succession of new objects, but chiefly perhaps from the endless practices of craft and malignity on their unsuspecting minds, some very benevolent and sensible by-standers may be forever hindered from recognizing it: a circumstance, no doubt, to be regretted; but yet unavoidable in a world so mixed, and so imperfect.

As to those whose situation permits them to contemplate a shining reputation only at a distance, you will easily imagine how much they may mistake it, notwithstanding the kindest dispositions and the clearest eyes, if they look through a medium discoloured by the falsehoods of malice, or the deceptions of art: an inconvenience which can often not be eluded by any circumspection or prudence on the part of him who is thus viewed, and which falls out the more frequently, as few, alas how few! have learned one great and generous maxim, namely, that of nobly disregarding representations, rumours, and surmises, to the disadvantage of characters known by themselves, or asserted by others who know them, to be just, and true, and pure, and honourable. This rule, gentlemen, I would wish ever to follow myself; and I would fain persuade you all to follow it: but indeed the advantages that would ensue to yourselves, to your friends, and

to the interests of virtue, society, religion, are not to be told.

When I mentioned superior excellence, I meant that which neither shrinks from the beholders with too much bashfulness on one side, nor presses on them with too much boldness on the other. It is very certain that great virtues, and great powers, have been often obscured by timidity in the possessors; and that, though a spirited but unpretending discovery of both, when particularly called for, would have procured them general notice and renown, they have remained, by an unhappy self-desertion, unapplauded and unknown by all, except a few who had opportunities of seeing them in private without a veil: nor has it been seldom observed, that an open display of brilliant accomplishments, and a high strain of virtuous action, would have probably attracted more numerous and more affectionate admirers, had they not been accompanied with airs of self-sufficiency, which will ever prove a real, a visible, and a heart-felt abatement.

It appears, indeed, to be agreed on all hands, that modest confidence, especially in youth, is the most successful usher of distinguished merit to the temple of honour. A daring vindication of conscious dignity may on some necessary occasions impress peculiar respect: but such instances, I believe, do not frequently occur; and that man's reputation had need to be of no common magnitude in the public eye, who presumes very often to turn its attention personally upon himself; as he, on the contrary, will be little regarded by numbers, however considerable his pretensions, who timorously conceals, or feebly enforces them.

It should be likewise remembered, that many persons of singular worth and capacity, suffer those who have neither to bear away, unenvied, the palm of popularity, by an incessant labour to gain it in nameless artful ways, which impose upon incompetent and inattentive judges. As the others abhor every sort of fallacy, so they despise a name among the superficial and unthinking. But they rest not here: from a consciousness of right intentions, from the honest ardour of their natures, from the unapprehensive simplicity so incident to generous minds, they are too apt

to forget certain forms, ceremonies and precautions, which, however small in themselves, have often a mighty stroke in the affairs of life, and especially go farther, as they are observed or neglected, to escape or incur censure, to obtain or forfeit praise, than the unexperienced and the incautious will easily conceive. It is indeed to be regretted, that excellent spirits not a few, forget to do themselves justice and fail of appearing excellent in a number of cases, for want of those inferior attentions, which ought by no means to be omitted, though they are by no means worthy of all the painful and servile sollicitude with which they are studied by the hypocrites of this world.

But not to insist longer on characters qualified to shine with extraordinary radiance; there is, my friends, a charm in youth, which, added to the beauty of virtue, will seldom fail to render you particularly engaging in every sensible eye. An elevated reputation can only belong to elevated endowments, displayed before many spectators: but the most obscure young man in this assembly may enjoy what he ought to account sweeter, what is certainly much safer and much quieter, the felicity of being esteemed and loved by the best people about him. Their number, it is true, may be inconsiderable; but, if the vainest minds can be often delighted, for a whole life, with the capricious regards of a few individuals like themselves, whom the slightest circumstances and most fantastic ties have connected, what should hinder a well-disposed youth from being happy in a high degree, to find himself approved and cherished by a little circle of friends, whose attachment is founded in goodness, and whose union is cemented by principle?

I presume, however, that many of you may, in due time, have opportunities of extending your good names through a wider sphere, by performing the several parts allotted you on a larger theatre. And for your farther encouragement to perform them well, I go on to remark, that, corrupt as are the majority of mankind, the public voice is still in favour of virtue. He who should dare to write, to speak, or act, avowedly against her sovereignty, would be generally condemned; and therefore, if you except a handful of reprobates, desperate wretches that are
lost

lost alike to honour and shame, her enemies are seldom disposed to declare their hostility openly, but often willing to assume the appearance of respect, and even to wear her livery whilst they are actually serving her ignoble antagonist.

Add to this, that whatever pains they may take in private to support themselves and one another in so base a slavery, made yet more base by so mean a disguise, they cannot forbear in secret to blame a conduct with which the convictions of the heart can never be reconciled, or to approve the contrary, which those convictions must always justify.

Let it be considered too, that such men shall often censure severely, for their ill-behaviour, the very persons whom they have contributed to mislead, whilst they cannot withhold their admiration from those who have steadily resisted their snares; this inward tribute being extorted by the force of that worth which they wanted to destroy; and virtue asserting her supremacy, even there where her laws are most heinously transgressed.

“But were every bad man,” says a late very respectable writer, “true to his own bad cause, yet both their weight, and even their number, is less considerable than they would have it thought. The gay and the loud, the bold and the forward, nay, the great and the noble, however they fill the eye, are by no means the whole world; and there is reason upon many accounts to look beyond these, and inquire what the serious and considerate, what the generality and bulk of mankind, whom it is neither modest nor prudent to despise, what they think of our conduct, what has been the judgment of time past on the like behaviour, and what will probably be the judgment of time to come, when we shall be spoken of without ceremony, and have the characters that we appear to deserve indelibly fixed upon us.”

Let me subjoin, that in this view we shall find honour to be the ordinary attendant of wisdom, and the pursuit of virtue entitled by the common suffrage to the reward of praise. If you, my beloved hearers, will but hold fast your integrity, will but persist, without petulance or affectation, in the glorious resolve which it was the endeavour

of the last address to recommend; you may solace yourselves with the assurance, that "more and greater are they who are with you, than they who are against you."

Many observe you with cordial affection for your characters, and fervent vows for your success; and many look on with sentiments of involuntary approbation, which, though they will not own it, they must yet feel. The opinion of these last, indeed, will never, I hope, affect you much, will never affect you at all, any farther than as an additional evidence for that righteousness which you are determined not to let go, a silent testimony in its behalf from its very foes. But what do I behold? A bright and beautiful "cloud of witnesses," the wise, the pious, and the good, compassing you about with eager attention to see you excel, with ready zeal to applaud your efforts, with kind impatience to congratulate your triumphs, and announce you to the delighted universe as conquerors worthy of never-fading laurels!

Many things which have been now suggested would merit a more ample discussion: but we conclude for the present with saying, that whilst you show yourselves undaunted by the insolence of vice, and undisturbed by the impertinence of folly, both of which you must often expect to encounter, the sober and discerning part of the bystanders will regard you with a warmth of attachment increased by this opposition. All the better sensibilities of men are awakened at the sight of virtue contending bravely with distress. Persecution, in particular, is that dark ground which makes the lustre of worth, and especially of early worth, appear more conspicuous: nor are there perhaps upon earth many spectacles of greater dignity, or which excite a stronger interest in every feeling heart, than that of a lovely and honourable youth pursuing the path of true glory, in spite of reproach and ridicule; rising with a noble superiority above the sneers, and cavils, and aspersions of witlings, of infidels, of libertines: preserving unimpaired the sweetness of his temper, amidst the overflowings of their gall; and as he passes on, with modest greatness, through whole ranks of those unhappy men, eyeing them by turns with generous compassion and just disdain;

disdain; not unlike that fearless and flaming spirit of heaven, represented in *Paradise Lost*, where, after having remonstrated in vain against the apostacy of the rebel-angels, he is thus described by the poet :

So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found :
Among the faithless, faithful only he ;
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, unseduced, untterrify'd,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal ;
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single. From amidst them, forth he pass'd,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
Superior, nor of violence fear'd aught ;
And with retored scorn his back he turn'd
●n those proud tow'rs to swift destruction doom'd.

Address V.

ON THE DESIRE OF PRAISE.

IT is well known, that the better sort of heathens would have chosen to suffer the most formidable death, rather than to live in disgrace : and I could tell you, gentlemen, of a Christian hero, who expressed nearly the same sentiment, when he said, “ It were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.” In prosecuting his plan of pious zeal, and disinterested benevolence, he found such a charm, that nothing in this world could induce him to renounce it. The very idea filled him with disdain. Observe by the way, that St. Paul scrupled not to assert himself in the firmest manner, and the strongest language, whenever the honour of his profession, as connected with his person, seemed to demand it. Nor are we in the least offended at this kind of glorying : on the contrary, we are delighted with it in persons of approved worth, when they are roused, and as it were challenged, by the importance of the occasion.

The truth is, that, as in every respectable station men are permitted to pique themselves on maintaining its dignity, so every honest man may frankly and boldly claim the reputation of honesty, without being deemed on that account vain ; probably, because the obligations to integrity are so clear, indispensable and sacred, that the practice of it cannot, strictly speaking, be supposed to deserve any particular applause, or to imply any uncommon excellence.

But the conduct of the apostle was in a much nobler style : it was a continued sacrifice of all mercenary views, to the glory of doing his duty from the sublimest motives ; in which number are apparently included, a regard for the grandeur of his office, and a feeling of the magnanimity

that

that became it : so that you have here one of the highest patterns, which can be desired, of a virtuous and religious sensibility to merited honour.

But is it to be imagined, that he who manifested so just a sense of reputation himself, would attempt to discourage it in others ? So far the reverse, that he urges, in one of his epistles, an assiduous attention to “ whatsoever things were of good report ;” and, as if this precept, which may be thought tolerably comprehensive, were not sufficient, he adds, “ if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” It is probable, on the principle of legitimate composition, which in this place evidently requires the conceptions of the writer to ascend, that he means to say, not merely, if there be any thing deserving the name of virtue, or the recompense of praise, but, if there be any situation in which you can manifest more enlarged affections, or more eminent attainments, without confining yourselves to the common measures of duty, “ think on these things.” For, though you are never knowingly to aim at what is beyond your strength, and it should be always your first care to be thoroughly masters of the most necessary qualifications, that should not hinder your embracing and improving any singular opportunity which may present itself, to display an elevation of worth, or of wisdom, above the ordinary standard.

Whatever those who are disaffected to religion may affirm, or those who are ignorant of her may apprehend, to the contrary, nothing can be more certain, than that, though pointed in the first instance to another world, she is by no means unfriendly to the interests of this : and as, for the greater efficacy, she applies to all the original sentiments of our nature, so among the rest, instead of endeavouring to eradicate the love of fame, she seeks only to train it, to prune its luxuriance, to correct its irregularities, and to lead it upwards, that it might yield the fairest fruit, and climb by just degrees to immortality. It seems indeed, with a few exceptions, so deeply rooted in the minds of men, it shoots so strong in the worthiest and noblest, and has produced such heroic achievements, such honourable services, such useful inventions of all kinds, in a word, such mighty improvements in sciences, in arts, in what-

ever contributes to embellish and exalt humanity, as leave not the smallest room to doubt of its proceeding from the hand of the Creator.

Among savage and unlettered nations, skill in hunting, valour in war, wisdom in council, patient endurance of pain, arduous acts of self-denial, faithful attachment to a tribe, generous displays of private friendship, all these, it is well known, have ever been held in high estimation. Among civilized and enlightened people, the passion for glory has operated in a more extensive sphere, and given birth to yet more beneficial effects. That it has often been the occasion of much mischief, we pretend not to deny: but can you name any passion, or any principle, which, however good, or however dignified in itself, is not, when perverted, liable to the same objection?

It will not, I think, be disputed, that we naturally wish for approbation, and shrink from contempt; that no man is sufficient for his own happiness; that we are all, in some degree, dependent on each other; that to live without esteem is to live without utility and without comfort; that he is an imprudent, I might have said, a desperate man, who bids defiance to the public; that he who has no regard to reputation is a profligate, or will soon become one; and particularly that, where it is thrown off by a young man, he of all creatures must be the most depraved and infamous. He must, for this reason; because he has conquered so early that sense of honour and shame, which seems, by the appointment of Heaven, to be the most powerful, vivid, and beautiful principle of the yet uncorrupted mind. When this barrier is broken down, what shall restrain the violence of appetite, or regulate the wildness of fancy; in him whom experience has not yet taught the inconvenience of yielding himself up to either, and reason is not yet strong enough to act on higher considerations?

That the principle I speak of should frequently be weakened in the progress of life, or that men should sometimes be hackneyed into insensibility on this point, as on others, by travelling the beaten road of the world, cannot appear very strange: but a young man divested of his ingenuity,
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and lost to the feelings of praise and blame, is surely a sort of monster in the creation.

Of such unnatural perversion, of such internal deformity, it is to be hoped the examples are not many. Let me warn you, however, against their influence: it may be more dangerous than you apprehend. Perhaps there was a time, when those very youths could blush at the thought of vice, and glow with the love of virtue: but familiarity with evil debauched their nature, and sunk them into the wretches they now are. Fly! my friends, fly their approach! fly the most distant infection of that young libertine, of that young knave, of that rebellious son, of that early scoffer at laws divine and human! Their touch is defilement, their company is disgrace, the very imputation of their acquaintance is infamy.

Such total indifference to honest fame you abhor; you justly consider it as the last stage of depravity, and the sure effect either of an abandoned life, or of a secret consciousness that a man has no claim to the good opinion of his fellow-creatures. But are there none of you, gentlemen, whose ambition respecting this object is too languid; who are apt to halt in the career of glory; whose sentiments of honour are not sufficiently alive for the purpose of quickening you to industry, to study, to worthy deeds, and magnanimous exertions; or in whom the perceptions of shame are too feeble to be a preservative from vice, or a guard to wisdom?

If any such now hear me, I can only urge them to contemplate whatever is most animating and glorious in the precepts, the promises, and the examples of scripture; in the highest characters recorded by history, and the fairest models exhibited by philosophy, eloquence, and poetry; to associate with young men of true spirit, and distinguished reputation; to cultivate the esteem of the worthiest persons of either sex; and to pray that the Being "from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift," would inspire them with a lively sense of the best and greatest things.

At the same time that you pursue this course, I would warn you carefully against the prevailing passion of the present age, to seek importance and character from any thing,
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or every thing, but capacity and virtue. It is indeed affecting to observe, on what frivolous qualities, and poor pretensions, youth are now taught, not only by the tone of the fashionable and gay, but by those who should instruct them better, to found their hopes of fame and distinction. So long as young men are encouraged to expect sufficient consequence and admiration, amongst the croud, from superficial accomplishments, and external advantages, what reason is there to imagine they will generally take much pains to procure, amongst the few, that superior significance and applause which are given only to real, shining, and well-acquired merit?

But is it not possible that the love of praise, abstractly and absolutely considered, may be too vehement? It is not only possible, but very common; and we proceed to admonish our more sanguine friends against this extreme.

First then we say, that he is eminently guilty of such folly, who is more solicitous about the approbation of frail and fallible mortals, than of the unerring and eternal Judge, who alone can estimate his conduct with certainty, or recompense it with efficacy, in the different periods of his existence.

Picture to yourselves a pious and virtuous youth. His attention will turn chiefly on his principles, his temper, his passions, his motives of action. Upright designs, good affections, a devout spirit, and useful life, the testimony of his own mind, and the friendship of a few people like himself—these, I conceive, will be the leading objects of his wishes and cares: but these make no noise or show; they are most of them internal, and all connected with ideas and sensations, exercises and habits, hopes and joys, that often soar above the ken of the world, and always point beyond its jurisdiction.

In his outward deportment will be found a sobriety and a regularity, which, though accompanied with cheerfulness, will by the disorderly and the sensual be frequently mistaken for rigour. When the honour of religion requires an open discovery of the hidden virtues which she has taught him, he will not refuse to “let his light shine before men.” But it is his ambition to be yet better than he seems, to practise much whilst he professes little: he would not wil-
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lingly omit any exterior observance, which either duty or decency demands; but the Omniscient only is witness to the hidden graces of his heart, to the complacency he takes in contemplating and diffusing happiness, to the comfort he derives from relieving or mitigating distress, to that self-inspection and self-control, to those conflicts of temperance and triumphs of faith, to those effusions of devotion, intercessions for men, and aspirations after immortality, which pass in the silence of solitude, and the secrecy of the soul.

Let it be added, that the greatest worth may be so situated as not to have room for actual or for visible exertion. The bosom may swell with generosity, or melt with compassion, while the hand is denied the power of manifesting either. Patience can only appear remarkable in affliction, as moderation can seldom be displayed but in prosperity. Different stations call for the exercise of different qualities. "But," says a fine writer, "the Sovereign of the world beholds every perfection in its obscurity, and not only sees what we do, but what we would do: He views our behaviour in every concurrence of affairs, and sees us engaged in all the possibilities of action: He discovers the martyr and confessor without the trial of flames, and will hereafter entitle many to the reward of actions which they never had the opportunity of performing."

Let me subjoin, that, as He alone is fully acquainted with your characters, so he only can ensure your felicity by speaking peace to your minds through all the vicissitudes of this life, and in the next proclaiming and crowning your endeavours before the assembled creation, whose united applauses, were it possible to attain them without his, would be empty as the flattery of fools, and impotent as the acclamation of children.

But now suppose a young man so engrossed by the desire of human approbation, as to regard but little that which is divine, what will be the consequence? Those concealed attainments and virtues before described will seldom or never engage his pursuit. To strut and shine on this terrestrial theatre, will be his highest aim; and if the spectators, who with himself are soon to leave it, will but give their ineffectual plaudit—to obtain, by "truth in the in-ward

ward part," the favourable sentence of the Judge of all worlds, will be made a matter of slight consideration. Such a youth will be merely a player at large: earth is his stage; he lives on applause; and when he dies—where is he, and what will be his doom?

Permit me, gentlemen, to remind you farther, that the passion we are surveying is excessive in those who live to the opinions of others, rather than to the feelings of their own hearts; who are more studious of *honour as a reward*, than of *honour as a principle*; who have more anxiety about what the world may say of them, than what they must think of themselves; in short, whose predominant ambition is—to appear.

But who can paint the meanness or the misery of such a character? Who can enumerate the sacrifices of sincerity, conscience, spirit, independence, real dignity and solid fame, that are daily offered to the idol of vulgar popularity? I mean the caprices, and humours, and modes, and vices of the very persons whose understanding is perhaps at bottom despised.

Those who are immoderately fond of admiration, will not for the sake of securing it, scruple much to imitate fashionable follies, or to practise reigning sins. The fear of ridicule will often deter them from virtue, as the hope of praise will often incite them to evil, in those companies where praise and ridicule are distributed according to the laws of the mode. You will, I believe, never find an inflexible integrity united with a passionate love of applause. Adherence to the cause of truth and goodness, where that is in credit, argues but little fortitude. Men of feeble principles would willingly act right, if they knew how to face men of none. If you, my hearers, would follow invariably the dictates of your own minds, that is, if you would be truly happy and honourable, you must never suspend your satisfaction upon the opinions of others.

Would it be going too far to suppose, that there never was, from the beginning of the world to this day, a bigotted votary to fame, whom it did not render a hypocrite in religion, or a dissembler in life; whom it did not warp from rectitude, and sink into servility?

And how is such a person repaid for all this debasement, on the supposition that he obtains the object of his wishes? Why, his fancy is inflamed, his thoughts are agitated, his head turns giddy, his heart restless, his thirst of praise is only augmented by its gratification. He is pushed on to new enterprizes, full of trouble, uncertainty, danger; and to new compliances, of which many are painful, many expensive, many abject, and not a few, as it often happens, shameful and ruinous alike. How often too is he mortified by the very incense he receives, because not equal to the expectations of vanity, or the demands of pride; it being seldom found that others think so highly of him, as he thinks of himself! The joint adulation of a whole multitude, however numerous or splendid, shall frequently give him no pleasure, if but a single individual of little note refuses to pay him homage. Many of you will remember the history of Haman and Mordecai.

How small is the proportion of ambitious men, who can adopt the celebrated saying of Cæsar, that he was satisfied with his share of life, and of fame! Whether indeed Cæsar could hold this language with sincerity may be a little questioned. His unceasing and unhappy pursuit of empire was certainly no very convincing proof of it.

But, were the praises of others to rise never so high, do you think, Sir, they could compensate the reproaches of your own mind, if for gaining the former you should incur the latter? Surely not. How often have bad men felt themselves contemptible and wretched, at the very instant that parasites have loaded them with compliments on their importance and success! Flattery, like all other applications to a mind wounded with guilt, is at best but a palliative. It appears from all history, that tyrants who have generally been the worst characters have generally been the unhappiest, though, I think, they have always received most adulation.

But can a young man be too eager in seeking honest fame? Yes, he may; and especially, if he aim at great and extensive celebrity: for, in the first place, how few are there whose abilities, natural or acquired, are sufficiently marked to distinguish them from the common mass of mankind! Providence seems to raise up but here and there
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a spirit of much eminence ; meaning probably, on one hand, to show what it is possible for humanity, exalted by an emanation from heaven, to attain, and, on the other, to keep the bulk of men so nearly on a level, that they shall have little cause to look down on one another.

Nor indeed are the few, whose endowments have placed them on higher ground, exempt from imperfections that might teach them humility : but, suppose their virtues equal to their talents, and their opportunities equal to both, (combinations which seldom happen) what obstacles must they expect from the ignorance of some, from the prejudices of others, from the envy of numbers !

The judges of merit are not many ; and they too will often overlook it without ill intention. But there is not, I fear, any quality so rare as candour in estimating the characters of others, or a disposition to see and to set them in the most favourable light they will bear ; nor shall we find amongst all the vices that adhere to men, any one more prevalent than a jealousy of those that outshine them.

But those who appear to thirst after praise, are, it must be owned, justly disappointed. People naturally oppose any violent propensity in others, however they may use the freedom to indulge it in themselves ; and no sooner do they discover in any a passionate longing after fame, as there is no inclination more ready to betray itself, than they are upon their guard, and take pleasure in withholding that applause, which, however they might be willing to bestow it as a gift, they cannot endure to have exacted as a tribute. Even the most generous minds will be careful how they deal out commendation to such as it might render yet more conceited.

Besides, I doubt not but you have often observed, that this weakness is constantly leading men into indecencies, which offend the by-standers, from that sense of decorum which polished society cultivates in the human breast. All the world is hurt by the boastfulness and ostentation of him who is forever exhibiting. In his impatience to put himself forward ; to talk of his own performances, and of his own concerns ; to be still the hero of his little tale ; to turn the conversation still his own way, if indeed he
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does not engross the whole ; and either openly or obliquely to detract from others, while with more or less management, or it may be none at all, he magnifies himself ;— in such behaviour there is an impropriety, an indelicacy, a breach of good manners, which is felt by every one ; and, however many persons may content themselves with smiling at it when it seems merely the effect of vanity, all will be disgusted when it is apparently the result of pride.

Whether it be that arrogance is peculiarly unbecoming in a creature so frail and defective as man, or that self-love in each individual revolts against a quality in others, that would attempt to mortify it by a sense of inferiority ; of this we are certain, that there is not on earth any one so insupportable ; and therefore of all others it meets with the severest checks, and seldom fails to ruin the towering fabric it is ever labouring to raise. The highest rank, the greatest talents, the most illustrious achievements, can neither justify nor excuse it ; and indeed it is secretly detested by the very persons who for their own ends submit to soothe it. Mankind in general are more penetrating and cautious than you will readily believe, with regard to both the encroachments of the proud, and the artifices of the vain ; and if you wish for their esteem, you must not think of taking it either by force or surprise.

But I go farther, and say that, though the follower of fame should have the prudence to conceal his eagerness in the chace ; if yet he appear to pursue it ultimately for its own sake ; if he be found more desirous of receiving than of deserving praise, more solicitous to be admired than amiable ; or if there be reason to suspect that he obliges others only, or chiefly, to recommend himself ; let his merit in that case be what it may, so great a blemish will forever darken it : so selfish a motive is sufficient to throw a shade on the most brilliant action ; and it has been justly remarked, that when one would lessen the reputation of the actor, we need only impute to vain-glory that conduct, which, proceeding from a noble principle, would have merited and received high commendation.

It does honour to the sentiments of the human heart, that we cannot help venerating the man who shines on in a superior orbit of worth, without the affectation of shining,

who is neither stopped in his course by the strife of tongues, nor tempted to stand still that he may listen to the sounds of applause. In reality, the less you are seen to covet that, the more you are likely, if you deserve, to obtain it. I appeal to the observation of all ages. Who has not heard that praise will follow virtue as her shadow while she moves on, but fly her the moment she grows vain and turns to catch it ?

Let us advance yet farther, and suppose the over-conscious candidate for fame to escape the common snares, and to arrive at his favourite object ; I mean, in appearance. How far may he still be from it in truth, for aught that he knows ! How seldom can any man be sure, that the approbation he receives is either quite sincere, or not attended with heavy abatements ! How rare is that inflexible veracity, which will not yield, on some occasions, to the desire of gratifying an acquaintance, a companion, a friend, with a degree of commendation not exactly measured by the opinion entertained of him ! Where is the breast furnished with a window, which shows you distinctly all that passes there relating to yourselves ? Where is the man of such infallible intuition into the mind of any other man, as to discover the share of real regard he may happen to possess in it, if from prudence, bashfulness, or reserve, the latter is not disposed to express it ? Where, I will venture to ask, is the individual, that has penetrated every thought, wish, sensation, respecting himself, in the most intimate, most endeared, most confidential associate of his soul ? And might I not be forgiven if I should even proceed to ask, Where is that perfect esteem which precludes all exception however secret, which leaves no room to regret in silence the imbecility of our common nature ? The beautiful phantom, I am aware, is much talked of amongst the tribe of lovers, and the fond admirers of visionary excellence ; but the experience of life, and the coolness of reason, will seldom, I believe, give it much credit. He, I presume to assert, is but little acquainted with the world or himself, who hopes to meet very often with those who either shall not, on a near inspection, find in him some failings, or, whilst they are so kind as to applaud him for all his virtues, will be so frank as to inform him at the same time

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of all his faults. What do I say? Where, alas! is the singular man, that would thoroughly relish such frankness? But if this be the case among the best and wisest friends, what is to be expected from others? How are we to understand their smiles? how estimate their compliments? It is indeed a humiliating idea, that in the general currency of seeming benevolence and respect, there should probably be so little genuine coin. Surely they who are greedy of popularity might learn some moderation, if they would reflect, that they are often paid with counterfeit applauses; as those may be satisfied, whose endeavours to deserve well of mankind are rewarded with sterling praise, though, like our purest gold, it is not without alloy.

Address VI.

ON THE SAME.

DID the turn of education, in these times, resemble that which obtained in the best ages of antiquity, there might be less need to caution you, my young friends, against an immoderate desire of praise: for the chief object then was to make the love of fame coincide with the love of virtue, to kindle in youth an emulation of those qualities, exertions, and achievements, which marked the greatest men, were honoured by the wisest, and might procure them in their turn the suffrage of their country, of mankind, and of future generations. But in our days—I am sorry to speak it—the case is different; I said once before—I say it again—that youth are now, in effect, most commonly taught to seek reputation and consequence from any thing, or every thing, but worth and capacity. The ardour of ambition, natural at their period, being thus diverted from the line of excellence, in which alone they could find a noble and satisfactory renown, stimulates them with unceasing violence to the search of imaginary celebrity, from little, often from contemptible, and not seldom from polluted sources.

But that the passion for applause, when it falls under better direction, may still be too vehement, we have already seen in part; and as this extreme is frequently a spring of much disorder and distress in the advance of life, we wish to guard you yet more strongly on this side.

We will suppose you, Sir, to have actually attained the popularity you so eagerly pursue. How easily is it lost! Your less fortunate competitors will envy and defame you: those who had before gained the summit, will be too apt to push you down: a thousand eyes will be turned upon you together. “A city set upon a hill cannot be hid.”

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The causes, which will in that case expose you to a narrow and severe inspection, have been frequently detailed by different writers. I will just mention some of them : the malevolence of many, the curiosity of most, the combination of numbers to find out and lay open the infirmities of an exalted character, as furnishing an apology for the like frailties in themselves if they have them, or matter of triumph if they have them not ; the vanity too of appearing more sagacious than their neighbours, by detecting blemishes in what the generality admire ; then the amazing propension, which is often found in persons not otherwise ill-natured, to play the wit, or the censor, on respectable names ; and, let me add, its being so much easier to depreciate with vivacity than to commend with judgment, to raise the laugh of ridicule than the smile of approbation, on the subject of a merit which by its distinction awakens jealousy, or mortifies conceit. But think, my auditors, how few are qualified to stand such a scrutiny !

Where, alas ! is the man, and what is his name, who can boast a vigilance that is never suspended, or a virtue that is never relaxed ; whose attention to the great outlines of wisdom, or of duty, shall not sometimes leave the lesser strokes in his character unfinished ; or who, if he is impelled by too eager a thirst of fame, shall not be sometimes hurried into the miscarriages hinted on a former occasion ? Even the smallest stain is perceptible in a conspicuous reputation, as the least blemish is observed on a bright complexion : but, if a larger spot, or fouler tint, should unhappily light upon it, the whole is obscured at once, and more deeply disgraced for the splendor in which it first appeared.

To proceed in the argument : Let me figure a young man so circumspcct, and so successful, as to suffer neither from the attacks of others, nor from his own misconduct ; yet such is the nature of mankind, that he will not find it possible to keep alive the public admiration, without exertions of which few are capable, and those not only still continued, but still increasing. The world is apt to rise in its expectations, from any character, in proportion to the praises it has conferred ; and, if those expectations,

however unreasonable, are disappointed, its applause, however merited, is withheld : it measures perfection by the standard, not of human ability, but of human fancy : in seeking something new, it often seeks what cannot be obtained. Different excellence will almost always, for a while, draw off its attention from that which is greater, if the last has been for any time contemplated ; so impatient, so insatiable is the desire of variety, and so ready is the mind to grow weary even of admiring. Kind affection, and solid esteem, may remain forever steady, forever unimpaired : but all strong emotions are by their very nature transient ; one reason, probably, why he that studies to please and entertain, will succeed much oftener than he who aspires to elevate and surprise, let the resources of the latter be never so great or so many. The mind that has been fatigued with gazing at elevated characters, or transcendent talents, wishes to repose itself on the view of such as are more common and domestic ; like the eye, that, being strained by the awful and majestic prospect of mountains, and of seas, turns with pleasure to the gentle rivulet and the humble valley.

Consider farther, that, as the acquisition of distinguished fame is an affair of great difficulty, and accompanied with numberless disquietudes, and as when acquired it may be easily lost ; so when this happens, it leaves its lovers in dejection and misery : for, if they could seldom be satisfied with the praises they received, if they were often disgusted by those very praises, as deeming them far below their desert, what, think you, must they endure from censure, from contempt, from bitter reproach, and more bitter derision ?

Shall any of you then, my honoured hearers, and beloved friends, shall any of you put your felicity or your importance to so great a hazard, by building them on popular opinion ? Shall any of you leave it in the power of every malicious, and of every foolish creature, to poison with their envenomed tongues all the sweets of your youth ? Or will you resign to their petulance and nonsense the fortitude, the elevation, the heart-felt delight, that naturally belong to conscious goodness ! God forbid !

But to rise one step higher ; let us grant for a moment
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that extraordinary applause could be preserved to the last, without interruption from calumny, disturbance from criticism, or diminution from the languor and inconstancy of the spectators : is it, after all, necessary to a happy life ? I cannot think it. The longer a man lives, and the more he sees of the world, he gradually cools from that passionate sense of glory, which is so apt to inflame the youthful mind, and, by possessing it with an enthusiastic admiration for attainments which few have opportunities to display, makes it overlook the immediate course of action pointed out by Providence ; till, after a long time spent in this airy contemplation, and many fruitless efforts to approach the shining forms of heroic fame and unequalled virtue, placed at so great a distance, the enchantment is at length dissolved, and the phantoms vanish.

But are we thence to conclude, that attainable approbation is of no importance to self-enjoyment, or that the temperate desire of it may not be indulged ? You have heard the contrary at sufficient length. The only questions that remain, as to these points, are, By whom you wish to be commended, and, For what ? Answers to both might, in some measure, be collected from what has been offered already ; but so much depends upon them for the regulation and comfort of life, that they deserve a fuller consideration.

As to the former question, Who, or what sort of persons they are, whose applause you should value ? it is obvious to answer, in the first place, not the many-headed and wrong-headed multitude. I speak of their testimony, merely with regard to itself, not with regard to its appendages or effects.

Private business may, and public stations will, make it necessary to please great numbers, as far as they can be pleased with a clear conscience ; one for the sake of personal advantage, the other for that of general utility. Statesmen, for example, of whose object a main part ought doubtless to be the welfare of the people, are especially called upon to study them ; and those in that situation who do not study them, betray an equal want of political wisdom, and ignorance of human nature, or something worse ; particularly in governments designed to be free.

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Under such governments the people may be led, but will not be driven, even to their good ; and therefore the statesman, who proposes this, should be at pains to convince them of his kind intentions, by treating them with that degree of respect, which, though their separate characters may not always challenge it, their collective consequence will still claim. Nor let him apprehend, that by a such a conduct he would stain his dignity—true dignity at least—there can be none without benevolence.

Liberal views, and an enlarged humanity, will, as often as may be, take mankind by the fairest handle, and seek their felicity by influencing their opinions : they will not be made happy in spite of themselves. It is the duty indeed of every virtuous man, whatever be his sphere, to engage, if possible, the imitation of all who witness his example, by conciliating their esteem for that purpose. But pray observe, that he who should prize it simply on its own account, any farther than as it may be the result of reflection and knowledge, would be guilty of a poor and a wretched ambition. Who has not heard, that popular praise is infinitely whimsical, precarious, changeable ; unless where it is the dictate of instinctive gratitude and affection, excited by benefits, of which the feelings of mankind can judge from their general and permanent effects ? Who has not heard, that, in other cases, it is often lavished where there is nothing to deserve it, withheld where there is a great deal, and given or recalled by turns, just as humour, chance, or fashion leads ?

As few are careful to examine merit, or its opposite, on most articles, yet fewer are qualified for the task. Two or three individuals, who possess, or are supposed to possess, superior discernment, give the key to the rest. The public is generally content to echo their voice. When little interested, it is apt to be lazy, and loves not the trouble of thinking for itself. As to the common herd, they are, like all other herds, merely sequacious, still following in the track which is trodden before them. But can any of you, gentlemen, deem it so very honourable, or delightful, to be praised by such as understand not what is praise-worthy ?

“ If,” says a noble author, “ a musician were cried up to the skies by a certain set of people who had no ear in music,

music, he would surely be put to the blush, and could hardly with a good countenance accept the benevolence of his auditors, till they had acquired a more competent apprehension of him, and could by their own sense find out something that was really good in his performance. Till this were brought about, there were little glory in the case; and the musician, though never so vain, would have little reason to be contented." The application is easy to every species of desert.

His Lordship indeed subjoins, "They who affect praise the most, had rather not be taken notice of, than be impertinently applauded." But in this he is surely mistaken, few of that character being so very delicate. It is wonderful to think on what garbage a keen appetite for fame can often feed; it were mortifying to tell how many men, and women too, not the most ignorant or contemptible, are gratified with the adulation of fools.

To a distinguishing and elegant mind, the approbation even of the well-meaning cannot appear a very important object, if they are withal illiterate and uninformed. It may be a mark of kindness on their part; and so far, no doubt, it is agreeable: but on yours, it can be no certain proof of merit; unless indeed they happen to live with you, and you are conscious of treating them, not with a mean solicitude about their applause, but with dignity and humanity at the same time. In that case, I cannot help thinking, their honest suffrage does you real credit. If what has been said be true, that the greatest heroes in public are seldom found such by their domestics; it will follow, that he who discovers the best dispositions at home, may be fairly numbered among the most estimable characters.

But to grasp at admiration from the gaping croud, must ever be the effect of a coarse taste in what relates to fame. Alexander, whom the world has been accustomed to call Great, was unquestionably a man of high spirit, though he made a lamentable use of it. However ill directed in other respects was his love of glory, he had the sense to seek its gratification from the most competent judges in those days. Of him it is recorded, that after a laborious and painful march in the heat of a parched soil and burn-

ing climate, having sat down by a fountain, and relieved his thirst with a draught of water, he exclaimed, "O Athenians, how much do I suffer, to be praised by you!" The Athenians, it is well known, were at that time the people, of all others, most celebrated for learning, wit, and eloquence; and therefore this noted son of ambition, though a declared enemy of their State, was nevertheless anxious to gain their esteem. What pity he did not strive to purchase it by being the deliverer and protector, instead of the pest and destroyer of mankind!

To return to the multitude, whose acclamation seems sooner or later to be a favourite aim of uninstructed nature; it is observed of them by a profound philosopher, that they commend the lower kinds of virtue, admire those qualities which are of the middle order, but have no conception of such as are most exalted. The few, the few alone, can confer the noblest reputation, because they only comprehend what deserves it.

Is it necessary to add, that the applause of the vicious and the unprincipled, be their understandings rated never so high, ought not to interest you for its own sake? If your merit should chance to procure you regard amongst the weak or the wicked, or both, I know not what should hinder you from availing yourselves of it to every just purpose: but between this, and putting a real value, in point of estimation and choice, on the attachment of foolish, or of bad men, there is manifestly a wide distinction.

That bad men have often good and even great parts, is but too true, and much to be regretted, since their pre-eminence of talents only qualifies them for pre-eminence in mischief. Their fatal success in seducing the young, may well be considered as a mournful instance. There is not, perhaps, in the whole circuit of society, so pernicious a character, so pestilent a demon, as an accomplished profligate. His power to seduce, and to ruin, furnishes indeed a deplorable reflection.

Not to speak at present of his infernal triumphs among the other sex, what shall we say of the fatal dexterity which he practises amongst his own? To be applauded by a man who has the reputation of wit, taste, literature, and those arts of pleasing that are too often irresistible; to be

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introduced by him to his gay and lively acquaintance ; to be even admitted into the list of those whom he vouchsafes to style his friends—where, I had almost said, is the youthful mind that would not take fire at the idea ? But, if this man be destitute of worth ; if, not contented with joining the circles of vice, he takes a pride in giving them the tone ; you perceive at once how easy it is for him to mislead unguarded inclination, and admiring inexperience. Of the unhappy young men who have relinquished the path of rectitude, it will, I am persuaded, be found, that the greater number were not more allured by the song of pleasure, than by “ the whistling of a name,” among these leaders of fashionable iniquity.

To whatever cause it be owing, the fame of a sprightly humour, of a brilliant imagination, of superior knowledge, of the faculty of entertaining company in the most agreeable manner, carries with it some strange bewitching influence : and to be distinguished by such as possess, or are supposed to possess, those endowments, is perhaps, next to being master of them, the most dangerous temptation that can assail a youth of vivacity and ambition, wherever they are not under the control of wisdom ; since there is scarcely any folly, to which they are not, by many, thought capable of giving not only a sanction, but a lustre.

Some are even so ignorant as to believe, that the brightest talents, and most attractive accomplishments, are met with chiefly among the licentious and the profane. The prevailing cast of their conversation must be considered on some other occasion : I will only say on this, that it is often polluted with so much indecency, and disgraced by such a mixture of abuse against every son and daughter of virtue, that he, who is determined at all adventures to be acceptable among such associates, must, by a strange inversion of the stated order, descend to honour, and sink into renown.

When the pageant of popularity is dressed up by worthless hands, (for then is it a pageant indeed) and presented to a young man as a lure, should he not, instead of allowing himself to be dazzled by it, pause—and ask, What am I to sacrifice for this ? What truth, what manhood, what peace of mind, what approbation amongst the best judges ?

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He that for the sake of outward report gives up inward character; he that to stand well with the croud, falls out with himself, will sooner or later be convinced, that he has not made a very wise exchange, that the loudest acclamations of the million can hardly conquer the murmurs of an offended conscience, and that his own mind were better worth the pleasing than the whole world beside.

But let us suppose, what may sometimes be the case, that the bad should concur in the verdict of the good: yet still we say, that this concurrence cannot yield much satisfaction to the well-disposed and well-instructed: for, as you never can be sure that such testimony in your favour is sincere, or that it does not proceed from some sinister view, so it will appear to have very little value, when you recollect that they who cry, Hosanna! to-day, may exclaim to-morrow, Crucify! Or, if they should not be quite so changeable, yet as they are at heart no friends to virtue, it cannot be imagined they will ever be thoroughly reconciled to her followers, or ever steady in applauding them. God himself is pleased with the celebrations of the righteous: but the praises of the wicked, as well as "their prayers, are an abomination to him."

Will it not follow from what has been suggested, that reputation, amongst those who to an enlightened understanding join an upright heart, is alone valuable, considered as a reward of worth? There are, no doubt, as was before hinted, situations in which the most conscientious man not only may, but should, like St. Paul, "seek to please all men for their good." If however he should miss his aim, and meet with censure where he merited praise, he will, or ought to adopt the sentiment of the same admirable person, "With me it is a very small thing to be judged of man's judgment: he that judges me is the Lord." But as no one was ever more revered by the pious than St. Paul, so every man of principle will have justice done him by some; and the attestation of—were it but one intelligent and virtuous spirit, will be to him a sound so grateful, that, though in the world's ear it may be drowned by the noise of defamation, it will yet, in his, countervail all that clamour, and vibrate, so to speak, like the voice of a seraph, like the words of Raphael in the ears of our first father, as described by the poet.

The dangers and disquietudes that embarrass the pursuit of indiscriminate fame, you have seen. A particular felicity attending the path to honest and judicious commendation, is its being exposed to scarcely any solicitude or perplexity. Why? Because, if a man of sense and probity can but satisfy himself, I mean the judge in his own breast, he will satisfy all others that deserve his care. To say the truth, Sirs, I am apt to believe, that, difficult as it may often be to escape the reproach of other men, it is yet more difficult for such a person to escape his own. A conscience tender, awake, and well-informed, is wonderfully perceptive and delicate; insomuch, that he who is under its direction, may be sometimes highly applauded by the candid spectator, when from an amiable, though perhaps too quick sensibility, he is condemned by himself. An exquisite feeling of right, it cannot be denied, is liable to run into the scrupulous and the timid, in minds naturally diffident, as the finest edges are frequently the soonest turned. This, however, is an extreme, against which I am not very anxious to warn the youth of these times.

After what you have heard, little, I apprehend, need be added, to determine the qualities and actions for which you should wish to deserve approbation. If it has been discovered, that judgment and integrity alone can confer the recompense of genuine honour, it must be obvious, that the same acquired by vicious qualities, or hurtful actions, is unworthy of your regard. He who fired a temple, that he might be talked of, was an impious fool: it is true, he gained his end; but to be talked of with indignation and contempt, rather than consigned to peaceful oblivion, can only be the desire of a man wicked even to madness.

It has indeed fared much better with many, whose guilt, though in one respect less flagrant, must yet, when viewed in a moral light, appear unspeakably more atrocious: I mean those sanguinary heroes, who, stimulated by the falsest ideas of glory, fought it in the slaughter of nations, and the devastation of the world; I mean your Philips, your Alexanders, your Cæsars, your Pompeys, and other such public robbers, and celebrated destroyers, whom numbers perhaps, that now hear me, have, by an education the most

erroneous imaginable, been led to think of with admiration. In nothing, surely, have poets and historians done greater disservice to the interests of humanity, than the delusive splendor which they have often spread over the memories of men who ought to have been transmitted to posterity with the deepest brands of execration and horror, notwithstanding the great and popular qualifications by which some of them were distinguished. To the magic of genius in those writers, must we not, in part at least, attribute the avidity and rapture with which a youthful fancy devours the story of such bloody adventurers, surveys their victories, and follows their triumphs, inflamed with almost the same frenzy of conquest, and, in despite of sensations habitually gentle and generous, exulting in their detestable prowess; like them forgetting, at the moment, all the rights of society, and even neglecting the tears and cries of widows and orphans, amidst the shouts of men, who, in quest of a turbulent fame and unbounded empire, wantonly violated whatever was most venerable, dear, or delightful on earth?

But why are not teachers in general at pains, (some, I am sensible, are at the greatest) to guard their pupils against this early enchantment, by displaying before them the infinite superiority of such as have by wise institutions, salutary laws, and a happy attention to the arts of peace, and the manners of mankind, proved themselves really deserving of transcendent honour? What indeed are the names I just mentioned, with innumerable more of the same stamp, when weighed in the balance of impartial reason? what are they to Moses, David, Solon, Lycurgus, Numa, Alfred, William Prince of Orange, William Penn, and other illustrious characters of patriotism and wisdom, recorded in sacred and civil history, not to insist here on that of the greatest Deliverer and Lawgiver the world ever beheld?

But though formerly transported with, what appeared to you, the famous exploits of ancient or modern ravagers, you have not now a wish to imitate them, were it in your power. More mature reflection has taught you an abhorrence of rapine, bloodshed, and desolation, by whatever show of courage, or pretence to heroism, disguised. The chief danger at present is, lest young men should seek an imaginary

imaginary reputation in the walks of pleasure, or pursue it in the airy chace of frivolous attainments. Those who seek it in the first shall be considered afterwards. Of the last, are there not numbers who deride the notion of virtuous renown, who laugh at every idea of disinterested zeal, extensive utility, and heroic worth, while they seriously admire, and pant to be admired—for what? For some puerile accomplishment, or petty quality, which gives no value to life, leaves them at best but cyphers in society, and provokes men of sense to despise their youth—Yes, ye ambitious triflers, your youth may be justly despised, when dignified by nought that is useful or laudable, when your fairest days are marked only by anxious efforts to shine at the tavern or the tea-table, at a ball or a card party, at a concert or a court.

I am far from thinking, gentlemen, that in this very imperfect condition of our nature, either philosophy or religion forbids any of those inferior studies, attentions, or embellishments, which serve, consistently with innocence, to entertain, to enliven, to promote good-humour, and preserve that mutual satisfaction, that easy complacence, so necessary in society, which a continued strain of the graver virtues and the higher acquisitions, were it indeed practicable, would be in danger of precluding. But I must entreat you to observe, that they cease to be innocent, and lead both to degeneracy and disgrace, when they make men fantastic, effeminate, conceited; when they exclude or overtop a regard for the praise of wisdom and piety.

Of the subordinate parts, if we may so call them, that belong to the general drama of the world, it cannot be doubted, that to fill them up well, deserves applause, and that he deserves but little, who, whatever walk may be allotted him, forgets to aim at excellence. Let those therefore who apply to any honest occupation, however low, labour to be masters in it. In this way they will be sure of commendation to a certain degree. We are so made, as to be taken with eminence, in whatever line it appears.

But let no man direct his principal ambition to the reputation of mere ability. To what then? To a character for worth. Amongst a number of competitors it is

not to be supposed, that many can acquire a distinguished name in their particular callings or professions : but certainly there is nothing to hinder any man from being very honest, very virtuous, very humane ; and we have seen that he who is so, will be loved and valued by those who know him, when all the capacity in the world will be insufficient to save from contempt, or detestation, the vicious and abandoned.

What is the result of the whole ? Bear witness, earth and heaven ! bear witness, men and angels ! there never was, there never will be found, any firm or permanent foundation for a fame thoroughly estimable, but that which is laid in goodness. If rank, affluence, authority, talents, if any, but especially if all of these are added, that goodness will of course be more diffusive, and consequently more conspicuous. Its merit too will be the greater, as it conquers the more temptations. But he will ever, in the sight of all true judges, appear the most honourable, be his station or circumstances what they may, who steadily prefers the testimony of his conscience to the encomiums of ten thousand tongues, and had rather be the best than the greatest man living ; who, if he possesses a well-earned reputation, instead of being elated by it, becomes only more circumspect, modest, unassuming ; and, if he loses it unjustly, is not depressed ; if encouraged by the voice of the public, devotes himself with warmer zeal to the public service, but if otherwise, loves it still, and does his duty. What shall we say more ? To affect virtue, for the sake of praise, never can be right ; to deserve praise by practising virtue, must always be desirable : to regard the first chiefly as an auxiliary to the latter, is wise ; and to employ it only as an engine of usefulness, is generous, noble, glorious.

Address VII.

ON LOVE.

THE desire of praise, which we have found so powerful in the minds of young men, never perhaps operates so strongly as when it comes to be actuated by the contemplation of the female sex, particularly of those individuals amongst them whom nature or accident throws in its way, and whom the peculiarity of the temperament concurs with the character of the heart, to select as favourite objects. From this period, indeed, it is apt to be accompanied with a passion unspeakably interesting, and of so mighty an influence, when it takes full possession, as to absorb, in a manner, all other propensities, or rather convert them to its own use, give them its own stamp, and nearly reduce to a level the feelings of mankind; no diversity of turn or condition, of genius or culture, being able to produce any very essential difference in the behaviour of lovers as such, unless where the sanctity of honour, or the debasement of vice, occasions that difference.

It is recorded of the youthful patriarch Jacob, that "he served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days, for the love he had to her." How amiable an attachment! how animating a motive! how cheerful and happy a service! Attend, ye sons of virtue, whose bosoms beat with the same beautiful affection; attend, whilst I endeavour to display its foundation, dignity and influence. Listen also, thou slave of appetite, who hast submitted to drag the chain of a harlot, to flatter her vanity, and humour her caprice, to feed her insatiable rapacity, and tamely endure her violence, at the very time that thy reason despised her for her want of worth, and thee for so vile a bondage; listen, and learn the difference between sensual desire and honourable love.

The meanness and misery created by the first, wherever it domineers, I purpose to expose on some future occasion. The opposite character and consequences of the last, when attended with discretion, and prospered by Heaven, I will now try to represent, without any apology for addressing you, in this serious style, on a subject too often treated with levity, but sanctified, as you see, by no less an authority than that of holy writ, complicated with the deepest sensations of human nature, connected with the dearest concerns of society, and productive of the most important effects on the tempers and manners of men.

To you, my younger brethren, I cannot help thinking it of singular moment. From the attachments which you shall form for particular persons of the other sex, your lives will probably receive their prevailing colour. If those are well directed, these will generally be virtuous and desirable above all others : but, if the heart is early biassed to wrong objects among women, who does not know that the consequences are often peculiarly fatal ? And in an age like the present, when the conduct of the passions is the last thing usually taught in education, or thought of afterwards, and when so many circumstances conspire to mislead them, God knows how necessary it is to guard you on that side by all possible methods, of which I am persuaded none can be more efficacious; next to religious considerations, than impressing you strongly with the sweetness and nobleness of a tender affection well pointed. “ Jacob served seven years for Rachel ; and they seemed to him but a few days, for the love he had to her.”

Our patriarch possessed neither fortune, nor the prospect of it ; and the lady's father was one of those wonderfully prudent parents who sell their daughters, just as they would sell their cattle. What could the lover do, but comply with the hardship of his situation in the most graceful manner he was able ? A decent provision was requisite, as well for the young woman's sake, as for his own : nor did he wish to steal her from her family, that he might gratify the rash impulse of appetite, without regard to order or propriety ; for, had this been the case, he might doubtless have found sufficient opportunities : but he valued her peace and reputation too highly to venture on a step

so little conducive to either ; and, surely you must own, he could not have given many clearer proofs of the purity with which he loved her : but he loved her with such ardor too, that, rather than not obtain her, he was willing to undergo the labour of a seven years' servitude, and afterwards, as it should seem, of seven years more ; the father having, at the expiration of the first term, instead of fulfilling his engagement without any further claim, doubled his demand. Of all dispositions, avarice is perhaps the most unfeeling. It has no consideration for the sensibilities of the heart : it cannot comprehend them : it even treats them with contempt ; and, when armed with power, there are scarcely any ties of honour, or of justice, which it is not prepared to violate.

But though the covetous Laban took such dishonest advantage of Jacob's tenderness for his daughter, it was at once so steadfast and fervent, that her charming image, the exhilarating hope of calling her his at the stipulated period, and may we not add the feminine meekness, the maiden endearments, the soft approving smiles, with which her esteem and gratitude would reward him during an interval that must otherwise have been insupportably tedious, concurred to make it glide away with delight. Or, if to his impatience the time might now and then appear long, yet still to his love the trial would be short ; for thus, I think, we are to understand the passage ; nor will my more susceptible hearers hesitate to acknowledge, that it contains one of the finest, no less than one of the truest touches of nature. With such indeed the scriptures abound ; and of the men, who treat those sacred volumes with scorn or indifference, we may venture to say, that, if they are in earnest, they so far discover a defect of taste and sentiment, as well as of faith and devotion.

What is here told of our patriarchal lover, affords us the fairest ground that could be desired, for contemplating the spirit and tendency of a virtuous passion, whilst it places both in the most agreeable light.

Need I premise, that I think of something far different from those little fluttering fondnesses between boys and girls, which are occasioned by the play of the fancy, and the dance of the blood, before judgment has had leisure to acquire

acquire any interest in their choice, or any direction of their conduct? Such early emotions are commonly as fleeting as they are frivolous. The reciprocal charm of moral qualities has hardly begun to operate. Not that it is not frequently possessed on both sides, and sometimes perhaps in a more pleasing degree than ever after : but, as it is not attended with the same enlightened consciousness in him or her who possesses it, so neither is it equally unfolded to the superficial eye of the youthful admirer, who is taken only or chiefly with the external form, and feels the corporeal propensity without any very distinct conception of its design. Guard, my young friends, against so puerile a folly. It will make you boys indeed, and keep you so—who can tell how long? You will sink into mere triflers, at the very time that you should be diligent learners : You will become the sport of imagination, conceit, and passion, just when you should be acquiring principles of sobriety, modesty, and self-command. It is from giving way to those idle insignificant palpitations of the juvenile bosom, from learning to call them by fine names, and from supposing such as feel, and such as excite them to be fine people, whose business it is to charm and to be charmed, that multitudes of our youth shoot up at once into cock-combs under the notion of lovers, long before they are capable of comprehending what the character means. Instead of a masculine virtue and firm deportment, they contract, in the beginning, an effeminate turn and fantastic manners. Dress and show, and slight accomplishments, grow into objects of the first consequence : complimentary speeches and empty prattle are adopted as the favourite tone ; and when they meet their congenial coquettes, all is flattery, and froth, and nonsense, and levity, which the parties, poor things ! fondly mistake for being mightily enamoured of one another.

Need I, amongst the many ill effects of such an error, mention that it will frequently, if not generally, prevent any chance of their ever after experiencing the sweets or improvements of a serious and honourable passion ? Or is it necessary to prove that this last is an attachment of a much superior kind ; that, whilst it secretly operates on the senses and fancy, with a force proportioned to the
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complexion and habits of the individual, it has its principal seat in the soul, awakens all her better instincts, and through every stage of its progress is inseparable from ideas of esteem on the score of internal qualifications, whether real or supposed, whether they are read in the outward appearance, or learned by report, or discovered by intimacy?

Put the case of a young man, whose mind is not yet polluted by vice, or perverted by vanity; two things that must always preclude a thorough affection of the tender kind: for how is it possible that vice should be enamoured of its rival, or that any one should truly admire another whose vanity concentrates his admiration upon himself? Figure this amiable and uncorrupted youth to be seriously in love, and consider in what manner he will be affected. In some such, I apprehend, as the following.

He will ascribe to the attractive object a purity, an elevation, a super-eminence of worth, that places her above the rest of her sex. He will contemplate her idea with a kind of religious reverence. To dwell upon it without interruption or disturbance, he will often steal away into solitude. In the hurry of business, his thoughts will fly to her, as the only creature whose approbation can crown his success at last, or whose company can relieve his cares for the present. In the midst of amusement he is for the most part silent, absent, unamused, sees nothing, hears nothing, is impatient to be gone, that he may gaze on her looks, and listen to her voice; all other faces appearing to him without allurements, in comparison, and all other music dull. Among strangers he has little or no joy, because he cannot talk of her virtues, graces and accomplishments. To expatiate on these is his highest indulgence, in conversing with his friends. If they attend to her praise with good-nature, he is particularly gratified: if they assent to it with marks of lively applause, they oblige, they delight him beyond conception; he is all fluency, vivacity, rapture. If any of them should, on the contrary, presume to depreciate her character, to decry her talents, he would be shocked to the soul; nor could any former intimacy or kindness excuse in his eyes so gross an affront. In her superior presence he is always
modest.

modest and respectful, often timid and embarrassed. The very same person, who is on her subject eloquent to others, is at times incapable of uttering a word to herself, and can only express the veneration he feels for her by his looks, his sighs, and his confusion. In this situation he is penetrated with a sentiment alike refined and interesting. That bold suitor who appears confident of succeeding with the person he addresses, and was never sweetly bashful in her company, is not a lover, but a sensualist, or a mere pretender, who plays his part for some selfish purpose. The young man I now describe, dreads, as the greatest misfortune that could befall him, offending the woman of his heart; whilst he considers her esteem not only as the surest proof of worth on his side, but as its noblest reward in this world. He would shrink at the thought of hurting her delicacy by any thing in his behaviour, language or appearance, rude, or coarse, or forward. Were he to fall among loose men, who showed a disposition to laugh at his sensibility or anxiety where she was concerned, and who scrupled not to insinuate that he ought to divert those grave humours by associating sometimes with certain convenient females of easy virtue, as they love to speak, with what abhorrence and contempt would he treat their system! Should any of his connexions or acquaintance solicit him to leave the object of his choice for some other woman of greater beauty, rank, or fortune, what disdain would fill him at the proposal, what displeasure at those who made it! When he reads or hears of a professed lover attempting to seduce some innocent creature whose greatest error is believing such a wretch, he will burn with indignation at professions so impudently false, and a conduct so flagrantly repugnant to the sacredness of genuine affection.

These, if I mistake not, are a few of its characteristic features in the male mind, (for of that I now speak :) but from the most eminent of these we are surely warranted to infer, that it derives its origin from virtue; that it is of a generous and noble nature; and that the animal impulse which usurps its name, but wears an aspect and produces effects so extremely inferior always, and frequently so shameful and ruinous, ought never to be dignified with the honourable appellation of love.

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With respect to the strength of this passion, it matters not, in many cases, through what avenues the esteem which gives it birth is admitted ; nor with what degree of readiness or deliberation it finds admittance. Love at first sight has, doubtless, often proved sufficiently foolish, and often drawn after it the most pernicious consequences. A prepossession so hastily formed, is at no time the clearest mark of a guarded mind. Still less can it ever, in the first instance, lay claim to the sanction of sober intellect ; and that affection will, without question, be commonly the most solid and lasting, which grows by insensible gradations out of long acquaintance, and frequent fellowship of minds. Nevertheless it cannot be denied, that some of the most elevated and delightful alliances, which have subsisted between the sexes, took their rise, on the man's side at least, from impressions almost instantaneous in the beginning, however they might afterwards be confirmed and improved by time and cultivation. On the woman's part, indeed, too quick a susceptibility of passion has been justly pronounced very little becoming the delicacy of the female character—I said, Too quick a susceptibility of passion. The sentiment of a tender liking suddenly awakened in the soul by the mystic power of physiognomy, or deportment, or conversation, as denoting an internal character, formed to attract a particular mind, I conceive to be a thing perfectly compatible with the correctest feelings and the purest ideas.

As to our patriarch, it is evident that he was enamoured of his Rachel at the first interview, which the history relates in a very natural manner, with circumstances extremely beautiful. Let us read the narrative in its own inimitable style : a paraphrase would destroy it. “ Then Jacob went on his journey, and came into the land of the people of the East. And he looked, and behold a well in the field ; and lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it ; for out of that well they watered the flocks : and a great stone was upon the well's mouth. And thither were all the flocks gathered : and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in its place. And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye ? And they

they said, Of Haran are we. And he said unto them, Know ye Laban, the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him. And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well: and behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep. And he said, Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go, and feed them. And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth: then we water the sheep. And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them." Such were the simple, unambitious manners of those days. Say, ye daughters of beauty, were they the less virtuous, or the less happy? Mark the sequel. "And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept." Can you help applauding his attention, his courtesy, his sweet sensibility, the undissembled transport that flowed at his eyes from his swelling heart? Or will any of you suggest, that those tears were unmanly, or this native burst of tender passion unbecoming? Let me not suppose you such utter strangers to the loveliest movements of the human mind.

That Jacob was not wholly unacquainted with the merit and appearance of Rachel before he saw her, may be readily presumed from the near relation of the two families. But who knows not, that such previous notices are often far enough from insuring affection, when the parties meet; and that the eye may look with indifference, perhaps with dislike, on an object of whom the ear had received the most flattering description? The divine accord of virtuous love must arise from a source that lies much deeper. It can be found only in minds that are unison.

Among the wonderful harmonies of nature, it is worthy of particular remark, with what perspicuity kindred souls shall discover, and with what joy recognize each other, the moment they come together, as though they had been acquainted and attached in some pre-existent state,
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and only waited for an opportunity of renewing, in this world, their former intercourse. How propitious an event, when they are permitted to meet ! What multitudes may be seen to wander up and down with restless anxiety, and to wear life away in an impatient search after their congenial spirits, without ever finding them !

When the heart has long sighed and panted for its mate ; when it has repeatedly pleased itself with the hope that this or the other was the darling object, whose idea had so often excited tenderness and enchanted imagination, but has been repeatedly disappointed and checked ; what despondence must be the result, what shrinking back into its own solitary void, if not supported by proper considerations ! Persons so situated ought to reflect, that of forming this union, however desirable, there can be no necessity but what themselves create, by neglecting the discipline of their passions, the regulation of their fancies, and the pursuit of such pleasures as providence and piety have placed within their reach.

To proceed upon a point which cannot be stated too clearly ; let none conclude, from the warmth my argument may inspire, that I wish to recommend a romantic or over-strained attachment, though never so sincere and well-intentioned. It would ill become a minister of religion, to utter a sentence in favour of any thing so repugnant to that spirit of sobriety which religion teaches respecting every terrestrial connexion. To dream of paradise in whatever state of life, is to forget both the defects and the distresses inherent in the condition of humanity. If the garden of innocence itself could not secure the first pair against frailty or sorrow, what is to be expected by their guilty offspring, condemned to wander the wilderness of the world, through multiplied snares and calamities ? Yet such is their folly, that, whatever strikes their imaginations with delight and wonder, they suffer at once to captivate their hearts, without staying to consider whether it be calculated to preserve respect, or to insure contentment.

Among the young in particular, where the intercourse of the sexes is concerned, what can be more visionary, or absurd, than the notions often entertained of angelic

excellence and consummate happiness ? on these occasions nothing is talked of but rapture, transport, ecstasy, perfection, felicity supreme ! Such extravagance must appear abundantly ridiculous to those that are not seized with the same phrenzy.—I said, Phrenzy. What was remarked long ago is certainly true : “ There have been many men who have run out of their wits for women.” Nor can it be denied, that philosophers and heroes have frequently been of the number ! this strange mysterious passion getting the better at once of all their wisdom and magnanimity, when off their guard. It is indeed astonishing, to what extremes of violence, fury, infatuation, minds otherwise strong and enlightened have been driven by a single idea of the kind, which they permitted to engross and inflame them. Some female object, in whom the impartial spectator could see nothing extraordinary, perhaps little amiable, perhaps much of the reverse, has had power to dazzle, to blind, to bewitch, to impel them to madness. And has female nature always escaped untouched ? Let poetry, let history, let observation tell. Ah, my sisters, with what peculiar vigilance ought you to watch over your imaginations on this quarter !

To the virtuous of your sex God has frequently given superior generosity of affection. But is there not frequently too, connected with it, a tendency to enthusiastic fondness, which, without a powerful counterpoise from the side of duty and discretion, may be exceedingly dangerous on a thousand accounts ? Although your reputation and honour should remain unhurt, what formidable inroads would be made on your quiet and comfort, on the sobriety of your minds, and the delicacy of your manners, were you to harbour a wild, fantastic, and agitating prepossession !

Let me not be despised for inculcating, on either sex, prudence in this particular. I am not insensible, that fond lovers and fine ladies detest the very name of prudence, and that any one who offers, with whatever caution, to hint advice of this sort, is in danger of being deemed equally unfeeling and sordid, or at best but little acquainted with true gallantry. To talk of reason, or to think of circumstances, where the dear, the charming passion is in question ; what an infringement on the rights of love ;

love ; what an affront to the prerogatives of the fair !— Foolish and contemptible ! as if he must necessarily be a cold lover, who is not a distracted one ; or as if that man was wanting in deference for worthy women, who wished to estimate their worth with discernment, and point out to them, as well as to his own sex, the path of wisdom and happiness.

To follow without fear the start of the moment ; to sacrifice all that can give lasting satisfaction, or solid consequence in life, for the sake of appearing prodigiously disinterested and heroic ; in a word, to indulge the present impulse, at whatever hazard to both parties for the future ; this, my young friends, may sound like spirit and boldness to those that are yet unacquainted with hardships, and ignorant how soon fancy and ardour are chilled by poverty and neglect. But I aver, in the face of prejudice and nonsense, and I conjure you to remember it, that the noblest affection, and the most permanent, will ever be found in those hearts where sweet susceptibility and an amiable tenderness are supported by real esteem, and regulated by the soundest understanding, in humble assiance on the divine direction and favour.

So much indeed has been said by all ages concerning the blindness of this passion, in what relates both to the qualities of its object, and the effects of indulging it without control, that most people seem to think that such incapacity of judging is a weakness inseparable from it. But what other passion can you name, that is not prone to magnify its purpose, or not disposed, in the eagerness of its pursuit, to overlook the dangers and evils that may arise ? Where is the lover of wealth, of power, or of fame, whose partiality for his favourite good, and impatience to enjoy it, has not imposed on his judgment, by adding to the darling possession imaginary splendor, and withdrawing his attention from the hazards and inconveniences to which it may expose him ? But are we therefore to conclude it impossible, that wealth, or power, or fame, should ever be valued with reason, or sought with moderation ? Because most lovers of the sex seem, for awhile at least, to be under a species of enchantment that places them in fairy land, and represents their admired objects beyond

beyond the life, does it follow, that no man can be tenderly attached to a virtuous and reasonable woman, without losing his senses, or forgetting his duty ?

The extravagant conceits, so commonly observed in the class of people called lovers, may be deduced in a great measure from the warmth, and aptitude to wonder, which are natural to youth and inexperience : but, as if these were not of themselves sufficiently imposing, almost the whole tribe of versifiers, novelists, and romancers, have conspired with them to mislead unguarded minds, on this subject. How ? By exhibiting gaudy pictures of a passion which is originally but too alluring ; by, in a manner, deifying that passion, and the imperfect beings who excite it ; by frequently holding up to its view an excellence more consummate and more wonderful than ever existed among mortals ; in fine, by placing its gratification, and the whole apparatus with which art, not contented with the simplicity of nature, has embellished it, in such lights as beguile the credulous votary with expectations that never can be answered.

If the productions of a chaster fancy lay open the inquietudes and calamities occasioned by love, when it is either inordinate or ill directed, they often make little impression upon the young reader, whose soul is pre-occupied by those florid ideas, and rapturous descriptions, which he has met with elsewhere, and which are so particularly flattering to his inclinations. He swallows with greediness the sweet poison, but neglects the antidote, as less agreeable : he promises himself a more propitious destiny than has been experienced by others, and makes no doubt of managing his attachments, and his joys, with greater propriety than has been practised by numbers in the same situation. Would it be any wonder if, when he comes to the experiment, he should be equally disappointed ?

Do we censure then, in general, what may be termed the poetry of love ? Such rigour is far from our thoughts. When the mind is warmed and exalted by this strangely animating propensity, it will, no doubt, be addicted to glowing representation and lofty imagery ; it will fix with eagerness on whatever is most shining and delightful in
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the prospect before it, and, as much as possible, turn away its eye from circumstances that might breed disgust, or damp admiration. It may be observed, even of those whose temperament is naturally cool, that, when they are fired in their turn with the enthusiasm we speak of, their thoughts acquire a tendency to flow in verse, which is never felt by them at any other period ; and they adopt insensibly such passionate language, and tender appellations, as would, in a different state of mind, appear to them fantastical and childish. From fits of this kind, perhaps, the wisest themselves are not always exempt : but in calmer intervals, and these, it may be presumed, will return most frequently to such, their good sense and serious principles will dispose them to reflect, that there is nothing on earth completely excellent or blest ; that there are abatements in every condition ; that the brightest characters have their shades ; and that Infinite Perfection only can fill the wishes of immortal man. In this way, the transition from the poetical colours of an enamoured imagination to the plain prose of ordinary life, will not seem too wide ; or rather, both united will make an agreeable composition of the natural and the elevated, of the pathetic and the easy. How much better than the idle flights and frivolous raptures of an ungoverned passion ; which, after winding up the fancy for awhile above the measures of truth and moderation, leave it to sink into the dejection and spleen of deep disappointment, or at best into the tiresome flatness of insipidity and languor !

Who has not heard that many have lived to treat with coldness, perhaps with bitterness, perhaps with execration, cruelty, brutality, the very persons whom, in the days of courtship, they used to talk of adoring ?—Adoring ! It is a style I never could endure to read or hear from one human being to another. Adoration, my friends, and the whole set of words and phrases in that strain, are surely indecent in a high degree, when applied to any object but the alone Supreme.

This perversion of language, not more destitute of piety and decorum, than of sober reflection and sound judgment, has, as we hinted before, been assiduously propagated by the wanton poets of all ages, and in latter days has received

ed particular encouragement from those monstrous things (I mean the common mass) so well known under the title of novels, romances, and I know not what puerile and preposterous histories, said to be taken from real life, though they often betray the grossest ignorance of it, and commit the most palpable errors against the rules of probability. Not contented with such impertinence; not contented with often describing their heroines as absolutely perfect, and their heroes as the very models of whatever can be imagined most magnanimous, most graceful, most generous, most accomplished; they seldom fail to introduce the latter worshipping the former as divinities, and both corrupting each other with perpetual adulation a little more or less disguised. Instead of labouring to lower the romantic hopes, to moderate the ecstasies, and chasten the intemperate fancies of the readers, who are chiefly the young, the dissipated, and the debauched, is there not reason to fear that they pursue a very different design, and frequently foster all those disorders by suggesting improper images, painting inflammatory scenes, and throwing false delusive lights upon a passion which they are pleased to call love, but which, far from meriting so respectable a name, has in all generations proved, by its excesses, the degradation and the plague of human kind?

I cannot help thinking, that youth and society are much indebted to the few authors (what pity they should be but few!) who have employed their genius more directly to counterwork the pestilential influence of such writings; to contrast a low and agitating appetite with the comfort and dignity attendant on an animated, but calm reciprocation of esteem and complacence; to present before the mind deserving, but not faultless objects of affection; to display the perturbation, the mischiefs, the complicated misery, proceeding from irregular, immoderate, and misplaced attachments; to set forth the frequent necessity of mutual patience, even in the union of the worthiest spirits;—what shall I say more?—to furnish compositions of the inventive kind, that at once awaken and gratify curiosity, delineate and distinguish characters, captivate the imagination, and touch the heart, without transgressing any law of religion, of virtue, or of nature. Were the time mispent
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by so many young persons on the common run of poetry, plays, and novels, to be employed only on pieces written in this style, what advantages might be expected to ensue? Their taste, in a matter relating so nearly to the felicity of life, would be set right in the beginning: they would learn betimes to look on beauty, fortune, parade, as no way essential to a happy connexion: they would enter thoroughly into the charm of a chaste and manly passion: they would be convinced that legitimate love can only be the child of virtue meeting virtue in two correspondent minds; that such affection will always produce respect, and be in return preserved and heightened by it; that this respect demands real, but not immaculate excellence; and that wherever a tender attachment arises from the best perceptions, and rests upon the surest grounds, there sensual indulgence will be least valued, and the idolatry of courtship will appear unbecoming, frivolous, and fulsome.

Having mentioned the idolatry of courtship, I am led on to remark more particularly, and it shall be our last consideration at present, that no regard from one creature to another can be right, which would either exclude or rival the love of the Creator. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," is the pious and paternal admonition of the inspired divine, of the venerable St. John, whose soul, like that of his Master and Friend, seems to have been a composition of meekness, lovingness, and fervour, but, like that too, regulated, refined and heavenly. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," is a caution I would earnestly enforce on the youth of both sexes. I refer not now to its primary signification. I want to guard you against the misplaced homage of the heart. To what created object that is directed, matters not very much: its alienation from the uncreated Being must, in every case, be considered as a fundamental breach of man's first duty.

Shall I add, that the most virtuous characters are by no means out of danger in this instance? Think not, my honoured hearers, that the admonition is necessary to those only, who, with a profaneness equal to their folly, boast of joining the votaries of Venus, and conducting their credulous paramours to her shrine. When young people,

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full of vivacity and ardour, have caught the flame that glows in the lover's breast, be assured there is the utmost hazard of its spreading, like an impetuous conflagration, through the whole extent of their faculties, so as to swallow up, for a time, other views and other feelings, of high importance, and not even to spare those of piety itself. What appears extraordinary, the hazard will be greatest where there is the greatest benignity and the finest spirit: for there this fond bewitching impulse will be most apt to burst into a blaze; and it is odds but to him who is thus on fire, the whole universe beside, with all its interests, shall seem a trifle: nor will the transition to a forgetfulness of its Author be improbable or difficult, when the heart is possessed by an interfering object, which it figures to be every thing that is admirable, glorious, unparalleled, and as such entitled to the throne of its affections—What! to the throne of those affections which the Almighty formed principally and ultimately for himself, as he alone is adequate to their boundless extent and duration? What! shall an immortal mind make to itself a graven image of mortal beauty? Shall a heaven-born soul, capable of ascending to the Fountain of Felicity, ever full and ever new, stop short at a scanty passing rivulet, and be content to proceed no farther? Surely, Sirs, that man is much to blame, who suffers his happiness to be wholly, or chiefly dependent on the creature of a day. Surely, the lover that adopts this language (and who knows not how general it is?) may be said, whilst he worships his mistress, to dishonour himself and his Maker at the same moment.

At what rate, think ye, are we to estimate the sense and modesty of those females who expect to be thus addressed, and conclude a man to be not in love, who, reserving his devotion for the Omnipotent, disdains “to bow down before them that are no gods?” From such, I confess, I should not look for any eminent degree of condescension, duty, or compliance: nor should I be greatly surprised, were their adorers soon transformed into their tyrants; as, on the other hand, I should believe, that he was likely to be the truest lover, the tenderest friend, and the best husband, who, beginning at the Father of Spirits, contemplated

plated some amiable daughter of his, that resembled him in purity and goodness, and whose highest ambition upon earth was—to be loved and cherished for his sake.

From the attractive qualities which he has distributed amongst his offspring ; from his adapting their minds to the mutual agency of this intellectual and moral magnetism ; from the enchanting ties, by which the hearts of the worthy and the pious are often united, with an appropriation ineffably endearing ; from the numberless purposes of public utility and private delight, which that union is calculated to serve ; from all these considerations we are convinced, that honourable love between the sexes is both the will and the work of their common Parent : and we know from the highest authority, that the state of life, to which it naturally tends, was appointed by Him from the beginning of ages. But observe, I beseech you, that if, permitting a passion, in itself innocent, virtuous, useful, to trespass the bounds which reason and religion have fixed ; if, forgetting that, even with the wisest management, it often proves but a bitter sweet, and a pleasing anguish, you should attempt to rest in it as your final aim ; if, neglecting your larger connexions with society, the improvement of your mental powers, and the great concerns of your salvation, you should confine your cares, and joys, and hopes, to this one attachment ; observe and remember what I say, it will lose its original value, and become a source of infinite folly and disorder ; your spirits will be enervated and narrowed ; you will forfeit every pretension to firmness and dignity ; and the Most High, who “ will not give his glory to another,” nor suffer with impunity any creature to rival him, will render the very affection I recommend, an occasion of additional disquietude, deep disappointment, and endless vexation. To express and conclude the whole in a few words, esteem what is estimable, love what is lovely, in beings like yourselves. Why not ? But see that you regard them only as so many rays of less or greater lustre, intended to conduct your thoughts to “ the Perfection of Beauty,” and the Centre of souls. Let it never be forgotten, that Sovereign Excellence alone can claim sovereign veneration ; and that the end, the glory, and the happiness of man, must forever consist in what a late poet has termed, “ The applauding smile of Heaven.”

Address VIII.

ON THE SAME.

OF love in general we are told by a masterly writer, that “it is the grand leading affection of all, the great instrument and engine of nature, the bond and cement of society, the spring and spirit of the universe; that it is the whole man wrapt up into one desire; that the soul may sooner leave off to subsist, than to love; that this affection, in the state of innocence, was happily pitched on its right object: for then,” adds he, “it flamed up in direct fervours of devotion to God, and in collateral emanations of charity to its neighbour.” Led by this last consideration to reflect on love, in particular, as operating between the sexes, he subjoins, “It was not, then, only another and more cleanly name for that coarse and filthy passion which pretends to ape it. No, it was a vestal and a virgin fire, and differed as much from that which usually passes by this name now-a-days, as the vital heat from the burning of a fever.”

Let us not suppose, however, that the ardours of a pure attachment are universally extinguished among men. It is to be hoped they still glow in many a bosom. We wish, gentlemen, to see them kindled in yours, as soon as situations and circumstances shall favour, and would willingly convince those who prefer the unhallowed flames of incontinence, that they give up refinement, dignity, and some of the most delightful sensations that can warm the heart, for wretchedness, degradation and depravity.

Partly with this view, and partly to pave the way for what I am now to offer on the effects of honest love, I have already attempted to trace its nature, foundation and limits. What has been advanced on so interesting a subject,

ject, I take it for granted, you have not forgotten. I trust, you thoroughly understand that I do not plead for a puerile, foolish, romantic, or extravagant passion, generated only by the senses, or nursed by the fancy alone. Let the licentious, the frivolous, and the gay—let profligate poets, prostitute novelists, artful debauchees, and ignorant boys, magnify a propensity made up of appetite without affection, of prepossession without reason, of inclination without esteem; let them labour to exalt into importance a sensation indulged beyond the measures of prudence, or against the rules of decorum, the laws of virtue, and the commands of religion: but far be it from a preacher of truth and righteousness to join in such language, or give any countenance to a system so incompatible with the best concerns of earth and heaven.

Our remarks on this occasion must also be understood with exceptions. The wishes of the heart may, through a mistake of the head, be pointed from the worthiest principles to an unworthy object; and, even where that is not the case, an affection which deserves to be happy, on account of its purity and elevation, may, from untoward incidents, unfavourable conjunctures, or an unwise though well designed conduct, be productive of the utmost misery. This is not the period of final retribution: the next world will make amends to the sincerely good, for whatever evils they suffer in the present, from the imperfect condition of their being.

Having said thus much by way of introduction, let us proceed to observe in the first place, that generosity is an inseparable attendant of the passion we are now contemplating. “Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.” Yes, my friends, to the heroic sense of true affection, labour is an amusement, and hardship a pleasure; great burdens feel light, and seven years seem but a few days. What will a man of any spirit not be ready to perform, to suffer, to sacrifice, for her whom his soul loveth? Every thing conducive to her felicity, and consistent with his duty, will be welcome to him as good news from a far country, or the unexpected discovery of a hidden treasure. Of hidden treasure, said I? What were the wealth

wealth of the creation, to the hope of being beloved by an amiable woman ?

It has been long agreed among the best judges, that this connexion of the heart has nothing to do with an estate ; that as soon as you experience its ennobling energy, the usual ideas of splendor, and affluence, and rank, and fashion, will fade from your imagination ; and the obscurity of retirement, with her who constitutes your world, will be accompanied with a satisfaction, which the bustle of company and the parade of fortune can never confer. Believe me, Sirs, they are utter strangers to the elegance and glory of the tender passion, who have not found themselves disposed to yield, if necessary, a great interest, for the sake of securing the greatest personal one, next to the love of the Creator ; I mean that of an estimable female, formed to double the joys, and diminish the sorrows of life, by a tender and unwearied participation of both.

Would you reckon him a generous man, or a real lover, who preferred any selfish indulgence, to the happiness, reputation, or ease, of a deserving woman ; who, to gratify his sensuality, his avarice, or his ambition, could endure the thought of involving her in dishonour or distress ? And what shall we say of those, that can descend to the baseness of taking to their bosom a wretched victim who is dragged by violence, or a mercenary creature who is lured by hire ? Where is their delicacy, where is their pride ? Despicable men, who can bargain for the possession of a body without the consenting soul ! Wretched sensualists, who debase yourselves beneath your nobler fellow animals ! They never meet in the mysterious rites which nature has taught them, but from the impulse of mutual inclination. The human voluptuary is the single being in the universe, whose eccentric and inordinate desires seek their gratification separately from the all-pervading, all-inspiring, all-exalting charm of reciprocal fondness. Why does not every female of sensibility and understanding treat with indignant scorn the libertine that dares to affront her, by offering to buy her hand without her heart ?—But he professes to admire the last, and makes a hundred high-flown speeches which he has made to a hundred other women.

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And can you, my too credulous friend, be at a loss to distinguish between the jargon of gallantry, and the native, simple, unstudied eloquence of a virtuous passion? Do you not perceive, that the man I speak of considers you as at bottom a courtesan, who is ready to sell him, with more or less form and ceremony, her meretricious favours? But how can such a man, if he has a grain of spirit left, endure the thought of a connexion with that woman, who for more money, or higher rank, would in all probability give the preference to the silliest, the ugliest, or the most abandoned fellow breathing.

The very proposal to bribe tenderness must ever prevent it. True tenderness can only be felt by the ingenuous and the undepraved. The bad of both sexes have outlived the possibility of it. Those do not even wish for real attachment from others, who have none themselves. Among such characters, a specious exterior, a splendid figure, trivial amusements, and low pleasures, are all in all. Fain would I persuade the better part of men, and of women, to be on their guard against the contagion of both: fain would I persuade the former never to forego the sacred joys of virtuous love, for aught they can find in a common prostitute, in a kept mistress, or in their neighbour's wife: and fain would I impress upon the others a conviction, that mere men of the world can wear the softest demeanour, and practise the warmest address, with hearts as hard and as cold as marble; meaning themselves at the moment that they affect to look and talk with rapture to an agreeable woman, labouring to captivate for the sake of diversion, and contriving to seduce while they swear eternal honour.

How different the disposition of our patriarch! Instead of attempting to deceive the lovely Rachel, or sporting with her peace, he was sincerely desirous to win her hand, because she had won his heart; and he nobly resolved to merit, before he claimed her. Disdaining the meanness of merely purchasing her person, he joyfully submitted to a long service, that he might prove himself worthy of those affections, without which the possession of

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* See a Discourse, by the author, on the Character and Conduct of the Female Sex.

that person could have given him but little pleasure, governed as he was by honourable principles.

Nor was his predilection for the lady lessened after he had obtained her, or his zeal for her welfare at all abated, as too frequently happens in wedlock. It must not be omitted, that in marshalling his family when he left the house of Laban, and was about to meet his brother, whose hostility he so much dreaded, he put the handmaids and their children foremost, Leah and her children next, but Rachel and her son hindermost. Why? Because, setting the highest value on her, he would have her farthest from the danger, if it might be escaped, and last in the suffering, if it proved unavoidable.

What says scripture? "Love is stronger than death: many waters cannot quench, nor the flood drown it." And what says observation? Love is too pure and gentle a passion for a heart corrupted and hardened by covetousness, by luxury, or by intemperance. True generosity, which is its very soul, can never reside with such ignoble vices.

There is a spurious kind of liberality that affects to resemble it, though really nothing better than a disguised selfishness. Who has not heard what sums have been lavished, what hazards have been run, and what mischiefs encountered, in the service of strumpets, with an appearance of the greatest unconcern and bravery; insomuch that their dupes have been cried up, by them and by one another, as the most generous and gallant of men, when all the while they were only stimulated by an inglorious appetite, or an unaccountable caprice, that drove them into a state of frenzy and captivity together; during which the calls of honour were shamefully neglected, and the claims of humanity most barbarously violated? When the beauty, or the art, that bewitched and enthralled them, lost its operation; when desire was satiated, or novelty drew them to different objects; with what savage insensibility have they abandoned to want and woe the helpless beings, for whom so lately they made such costly sacrifices!

Has a man of this stamp formed a design upon the virtue of some weak unsuspecting maiden? He pretends the warmest

warmest concern for her happiness, as well as affection for her person : he proceeds to load her with presents : perhaps he contrives opportunities of entertaining her at great expense. To impose on her credulity and secure her confidence more completely, he is sure to vow invariable constancy : “ He will never forsake such a sweet angel ; he would sooner part with life itself ;” and so forth. You have anticipated the sequel : not many months, peradventure not many weeks, it may be but a few days, after he has robbed her of her innocence, which perhaps was all her portion, the fated spoiler leaves her with that unfeeling coolness which is a sure characteristic of confirmed perfidy ; leaves her to shift for herself, in the midst of shame, and anguish, and horror, and despondence, and snares unnumbered, that are now more formidable than ever, as she has less power, less resolution, and less encouragement, to resist them ; while he turns himself, with renewed assiduity, to other quarters, and there repeats the same appearances of bounty, and the same deceitful protestations of regard, with the same undissembled zeal to destroy. Meantime, his associates are loud in the praises of his liberality ; and the wretch himself has the impudence to talk of tenderness, of honour, and of love. Righteous Heaven ! what obliquity, and what obduracy, are produced in the minds of men by habits of voluptuousness !

But the practices of this mighty generous tribe do not always stop here : it often happens, that they go at last into the state of matrimony, without a single spark of either affection or esteem, but merely from views of interest, to repair the wastes of former prodigality, or supply the materials of new riot : and when they are married on motives like these, what is to be expected, but that their devoted partners should, notwithstanding the fortunes they may have brought, be hated and neglected for the wanton and rapacious creatures, to whom long custom and low propensities have chained them ?

Among the curses with which offended nature punishes these heinous transgressors of her laws, it is not surely the least, that, galling as their chains must necessarily prove, they have lost the power of shaking them off, and recovering

ering their internal freedom, or, what were yet better, of exchanging those heavy bonds for the voluntary and soul-delighting, because soul-approved ties, by which virtue knits together her male and female votaries. No allure-ment of beauty, no lustre of sense, no sport of humour, and no sweetness of affection, in the woman who is un- fortunately married to a man of this character, can hinder his vagrant and corrupted passions from preferring to the pleasure of her society

——“ The bought smile
Of harlots ; loveless, joyless, unendear'd,
Casual fruition.”——

The single recollection that she is his wife, chills his fancy, and disgusts him at the very person, whom, had she no such claim to his tenderness, he would even adore. What depravation and barbarity ! How mournful the lot of the much-injured sufferer ! How different the situation of this pair from that described by the poet !

——“ Happy they ! the happiest of their kind !
Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.
'Tis not the coarser tie of human laws,
Unnatural oft, and foreign to the mind,
That binds their peace—but harmony itself,
Attuning all their passions into love ;
Where friendship full exerts her softest power,
Perfect esteem, enliven'd by desire
Ineffable, and sympathy of soul ;
Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will
With boundless confidence.”——

Alas, that the originals of so lovely a picture should grow every day more rare.

When was there a period, since this country became civilized, in which the nobleness of love was so little known as at present, in which the passion itself was so much a stranger among the upper ranks of life, in which marriage was so avowedly a matter of traffic through almost every class of society, or the feelings of the heart so seldom consulted by either sex ? But why speak of these ? What have the feelings of the heart to do with the lust of gold, with the rage of show, with expensive pleasures, or a perpetual round of dissipation ? It is certain, that all the softer

softer and finer affections naturally shun noise, and ostentation, and sordid interest, and vulgar luxury : nor can they be so much as understood by the worshippers of wealth or grandeur, by the slaves of sensuality, or the fools of fashion. Describe to such, in particular, the power of that tender, yet magnanimous sentiment, which we are now surveying ; inform them how often toil and danger have, by its wonderful chemistry, been transmuted into delight and triumph ; inform them what pains and losses have been sustained with fortitude, nay, embraced with rapture, for the sake of an estimable object, a man or a woman of worth, to whom the soul was attached ; inform them that this celebrated principle shall inspire achievements, to which no personal consideration, or separate enjoyment, could have incited ; add, that death itself, if necessarily encountered in such a cause, seems divested of its terrors, and learns to smile : What will be the consequence ? They will laugh you to scorn for ideas which must appear to them chimerical, because unlike any thing they perceive in their own minds : they will treat your discourse as the dream of musty antiquity ; or, at best, they will hear it with total indifference. In short, Sir, you might just as well talk to the blind about the beauty of colours, or to the deaf about the melody of sounds.

But for you, my honoured hearers, who have not in the bustle of a selfish world lost the delicious sensibilities natural to youth, let me indulge the persuasion, that you can readily comprehend the joy of loving, and being beloved, on the most delicate motives of esteem and zeal. To confirm you in so pleasing a conception, you will find from all history, as well as from the best philosophy, that whatever the most enlightened minds have held noblest in human life, has always been strongly marked with characters of generosity, self-denial, or the spirit of sacrifice : and that this has been remarkably the case of an honourable attachment between the sexes.

But to advance in the argument : Pourtray to yourselves a youth animated by such attachment, together with the most liberal dispositions ; what is there excellent or becoming that may not be hoped from him, in proportion to his birth, his breeding, and his condition ? Let the

roughest clown, the coarsest boor, be but smitten with the unadorned attractions of some pretty simple maid, the smiling daughter of native and rural innocence ; he shall instantly be transformed, by a sort of happy magic, into a mild and courteous being : every attention to please, every exertion to serve, to aid, to protect her, every ambition to appear in her eye distinguished by his strength, his prowess, his undaunted resolution, and various rustic accomplishments, all these will spontaneously discover the emotions that actuate his honest bosom : in a word, he is moulded into a gentle and superior creature. His parents and neighbours behold him with a mixture of satisfaction and surprize : in homely phrase, and with approving merriment, they remark to one another the extraordinary alteration. But now, if so great a change is wrought in his instance, what may not be expected from the same cause in spirits better born, better cultivated, and placed in situations more friendly to the polishings of the mind and manners ?

“ Many advantages,” says an admired author, “ are reaped by a young man from a virtuous passion, towards the better conduct of his life ; as, a certain complacency to all the world, a strong desire to please wherever it lies in his power, a circumspect behaviour which renders him more particularly acceptable to his friends and acquaintance. Love,” it is added, “ will have the same good effect upon his fortune. He will increase in riches, as he increases in those arts which make him agreeable ; and inspired by so noble a motive for the care of his affairs, as a belief that the favourite of his soul is to be concerned in them, he will practise frugality, assiduity, discretion, perseverance, with ease and pleasure.” It has likewise been observed, that “ this elegant affection, taking possession of a man’s thoughts, makes him appear a gentleman without studying it, and is in effect a liberal education.”

Compare for a moment the manly tenderness, the graceful address, and the unaffected ideas, of a lover on right principles, who leaves not his virtue or understanding behind him, when he waits on the object of his heart, compare them, I say, with the foppish airs, the fulsome compliments, the flattering premeditated falsehoods, and the artificial

artificial dancing-school deportment of a coxcomb, who aims, in the company of women, at nothing more than his own amusement and consequence, by attracting regards which he cannot return, but which he purposes to boast of amongst a set of insignificants, as vain and as vicious as himself—Can you forbear to be struck with the contrast?

Were any one to ask me, which I esteemed the most effectual, easy, and compendious method of learning true politeness, lively and agreeable sentiments, and a manner of expressing them at once natural and delicate, I should certainly point him to the society of the most respectable and best educated women he could find: I should tell him, that the most accomplished characters of our sex have always been distinguished by their attachment to those of the other: but I should go on to add, that when the heart becomes more fixed by an appropriating passion for one lovely individual, the enlivening and refining energy under consideration is then experienced most happily.

A man in this situation often rises, without labour or study, to a strain above himself: his imagination, if naturally ardent, takes wing, and soars more sublimely: his benevolent affections assume a vigour and a sweetness unknown before. Should the darling object indeed chance to be ill treated, the offender will, no doubt, incur warm displeasure; nor will our lover easily be persuaded to smile on him or her who has traduced the reputation or interrupted the peace of her who of all others he holds dearest: neither do we affirm, that, if he should at any time be in a state of painful suspense about his interest in the person beloved, he will then feel very meekly, or behave very graciously, towards others. But, except in such cases, every impulse of benignity and kindness, whether more extended or more discriminating, will receive an additional strength from those generous emotions, which we have seen connected with this passion in its happiest form.

It is to be considered too, that he who is sincerely in love with a woman of gentle, sympathizing, and friendly dispositions, will be ambitious of preserving her approbation if he has been so fortunate as to obtain it, by copying her temper. To say the truth, all her virtues will be attended with an assimilating influence on his character.

Who knows not, that we slide insensibly, and yet rapidly, into a resemblance of those we admire? The daily and affectionate contemplation of excellence is perhaps both the shortest and surest way to excel; especially when the standard before us is one that eminently engages the heart. Between two minds of the opposite sexes, that are tuned to one another, there may be much diversity in many particular notes: but the general ground and air are the same, and the different parts serve only to complete the harmony.

I must be understood to suppose throughout, that this beautiful harmony is not broken by jealousy, suspicion, or fear of unkindness, on either side; for it cannot be denied, that the tender passion is often but too obnoxious to such disturbance, and is commonly more anxious as it is more tender. The respectful modesty which love impresses, is liable to run into an excess of diffidence, by creating apprehensions of inferiority and unworthiness, that too readily doubt the return of affection. True love, it has been remarked by a person of much sentiment and observation, so totally annihilates self-love, that we can scarcely believe we deserve the regard we wish. An adverse look, a cold demeanour, even a short delay, gives pangs to a mind possessed with this passion; nevertheless it is over-paid, greatly over-paid, when you find your terrors were but the mists which arose from the fervent heat of that sun of the soul.

We never said, gentlemen, we never thought, that even the sweetest and noblest of all unions can pretend to be secure from weakness or inquietude: but when Heaven is pleased to prosper the virtuous lover, when all is animating hope, and joyful complacence, my doctrine is this; that then every laudable and meritorious action appears connatural, an engaging carriage and conversation follow of course, and the strictest rules of truth and rectitude, of temperance and purity, soften into so many easy modes of pleasing.

Having mentioned purity, I must tell every young man who hears me, that, next to the restraints of religion, there is not perhaps any preservative from illicit pleasure so powerful, as an honourable and steady affection for a

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woman of worth and sweetness. The female, indeed, who is foolish enough to imagine, that, because she is handsome, she may be capricious, or that the laws of decorum require her to treat her lover with rigour, will not very long recommend either virtue or herself to his esteem: but when modesty and gentleness, meeting in some amiable fair one, have captivated the heart of an ingenuous youth, the idea of gaining hers will be attended with such exalted pleasure—and innocence, as exemplified in her person, will appear so respectable, that he will be afraid to violate it in his own: or rather, he considers, that from the moment he resigned himself to the mistress of his soul, he was no longer his own, and that unfaithfulness to her were disloyalty and treachery together.

Would Jacob, think ye, have found his seven years' service but as that of a few days, had his liking for Rachel been of such a nature as to admit infidelity or deviation? Had he from time to time thrown himself loose amongst other women, is it to be conceived his tenderness for her could have continued to inspire an alacrity of toil, so incessant and unremitting? No, my friends, true affection for a person who at once deserves and returns it, having taken hold of the heart, will fix that down with such sweet enchantment, as not to suffer it to wander after the dishonest allurements of a harlot. The lustre, dignity, and softness, of female virtue and attachment united, will be an immediate check on every improper desire, should it offer to intrude; and the genuine lover will be seized with a just disdain of forgetting those fairest attractions, for—what shall I call them?—the leathsome caresses of creatures, who, stript of innocence, lost to decency, and dead to all the best sensibilities of the sex, hire themselves out to brutal appetite, or temporary fondness. Happy, thrice happy that youth, who, by the protection of the Almighty, and the power of virtuous endearments, is defended from their snares!

Is there not reason to believe, that many men have been ruined by habits of drinking, of debauchery, of gaming, which they contracted in consequence of disappointments on the subject of a commendable passion? While they were under its restraining influence, and supported by the expectations

expectations it raised, their behaviour was regular and steady : but when, from some cross accident, or other cause, the lovely enthusiasm was extinguished, and all their flattering hopes were defeated, they became ungovernable, and in a fit of rage abandoned themselves to corrupting companions and worthless women : business and application were neglected as tasteless and tiresome, the object that quickened them having failed : all the sober part of the sex was forsworn, because they had forfeited their interest in one individual : perhaps, from admiring, but the day before, the charms of decency and virtue, they rushed with execration in their mouths, and bitterness in their bosoms, to the haunts of vice and infamy. From that period they were undone.

Meanwhile, to urge the mischief often incurred in those circumstances, as an argument against cultivating the affection we recommend, were neither natural nor just. Where, I wish to be informed, is the terrestrial attachment, that may not disappoint the heart which entertains it, with whatever sobriety ? Because no such thing is found to exist, must the heart, therefore, never admit that sweet soother, *hope* ? If sanguine expectation of any sort is frustrated, will there not still be danger, that he who rashly indulged it shall fly to some extremity or other for comfort ? What, but good sense, and the consolations of piety, can effectually support the soul, when shocked by the failure of a favourite prospect from any quarter ? If the brain-sick lover, who promised to himself a paradise in the woman he admired, despairs because he cannot obtain her, and plunges headlong into the gulph of ruin, must the character of a virtuous affection suffer from his conduct, or from his reproaches, whose blind zeal could do it so little honour when he was disposed to praise it ? Is there not ground to apprehend, that any other event, equally destructive to darling views of interest or ambition, would equally overset his unbalanced mind ? Has not this happened in numberless instances ?

If a man of probity and understanding discovers that he has thrown away his fondest regards on a jilt, who perhaps used every art to attract them ; however he may, however he must, be deeply wounded, in all his better feelings.

feelings, for the present, he will yet afterwards esteem himself happy that he made the discovery before it was too late: he will lift his thoughts with gratitude to that Providence which rescued him from that dreadful precipice, and with devotion to those invisible objects which can never deceive him. His painful remembrance of so base and so wanton a treachery will gradually wear off, with the help of amusement, conversation, books, friendship, plans of useful industry, or honourable exertion, at a distance from the false and selfish creature that inveigled and cheated him, the company of worthy women, the sentiment of a becoming pride, (such a pride there certainly is) and the lenient hand of Time, will concur with the rest to heal his anguish, and re-establish his tranquillity. I will add, that, though a delicate and susceptible spirit cannot easily transfer its tenderness from one person to another, and though a second attachment of this kind is seldom perhaps so fervent as the first, nevertheless, the man in question may, by choosing more auspiciously a new object, find double reason to bless Heaven for his former disappointment.

The vexation suffered in such cases, by the common run of men, will scarcely, I believe, break their hearts: the unmanly and miserable expedients from which they seek relief, we must alike pity and condemn: and with relation to the subsequent likings and marriages which they frequently contract, when weary of a dissolute life, if not worn out by it, I will only say, that no very high felicity can be often expected to ensue, for reasons which might easily be assigned.

Let it not however be forgotten, that there are instances of those who, after wandering long from order and happiness, have been brought back to both by the soft yet irresistible attractions of amiable women, whom pitying Heaven placed in their way, to save them from final reprobation, and set them up as signal monuments of the joint power, which the Author of goodness has conferred on female excellence and holy love.

Address IX.

ON FRIENDSHIP.

I ENTER with peculiar satisfaction upon the present subject, persuaded that it cannot fail of being particularly agreeable to you, whose breasts retain their native tenderness, beat with the spirit of generosity, and burn at the very name of friendship;—friendship, that noble relation, so far superior to the common connexions of birth or accident, of business or amusement; that delightful union of hearts, which is formed by intimacy, founded on esteem, sanctified by virtue, cemented by a similarity of views and inclinations, whether more or less apparent, and preserved by the reciprocation of kindness and confidence, of sympathy and zeal.

We are told by the Hebrew sage, that “a friend loveth at all times,” and that “there is a friend who sticketh closer than a brother.” Experience indeed has frequently shown, that it is very possible for the latter to prove inconstant, treacherous, malicious, as on the other hand it is certain, many have found in the arms of friendship, that protection which was denied them in the arms of nature.

But the Hebrew lawgiver carries his idea of this sacred tie yet higher; for when, in rising from brother to child, and from child to wife, he places the last as near “as a man’s bosom,” it is remarkable, that he places a friend still nearer, estimating him “as a man’s own soul.” A friend has, on the same account, been styled *another self*.

In truth, the affection we speak of has not seldom reached a sublimer height than even this. It has in a sort annihilated the first self, and experienced superlative pleasure in the most expensive sacrifices to the second. Such a friend was Jonathan. Read his pathetic story, and let
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your heart comment upon it: What a book would the Bible appear to numbers, who are now unhappy enough not to relish it, were it perused attentively with the assistance of that best expositor!—Jonathan lost sight of his personal interests in his ardour for those of his friend: or rather, perhaps it may be said, forgetting his single and separate existence, he enjoyed, in the thought of the other's advancement, a bliss beyond what he could have derived from his own.

Well might David, in his lamentation for that extraordinary man, exclaim, "Thy love to me was wonderful;"—mark the very singular expression that follows,—"passing the love of women." It is sufficiently known, that heroic tenderness has been displayed by many females. The examples of this kind recorded by the impartial pen of history, or even discoverable within the sphere of our own acquaintance, if that has been tolerably extensive, might surely teach our sex a little more equity in their opinions of the other. If men are commonly, and, as I presume, for the most part justly, supposed to possess greater strength of mind in science, in council, in action, and in danger; let them acknowledge, however, that in generosity of soul, and nobleness of attachment, they have been often surpassed by women. You must, I think, allow it to reflect some credit on the sex, that the instance of Jonathan should be thus held up as a rare exception to their pre-eminence in love; a pre-eminence which it seems had, as far back as the days of David, been distinguished to a proverb.

But though this virtuous passion, whether in men or women, be doubtless a beautiful principle, as we have lately seen, and in particular cases productive of marvellous magnanimity, we must yet confess, that upon the whole, and judging by its ordinary tenor, it is a less exalted principle than friendship! having naturally a nearer connexion with the senses, and usually leaving the heart inferior scope for the communications of a more diffusive and disinterested benevolence. It is unquestionable, that the warmest lovers have not been uniformly the kindest friends; but, I believe, we may affirm, that he who manifests the truest sense of friendship, will be capable of every thing most

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meritorious in love, should he once be smitten by its powerful influence. In like manner, it has been observed, that, though a brother is not always a friend, yet a friend is always a brother.

It were easy, gentlemen, if it were necessary, to repeat, on this occasion, many fine, and many strong things in praise of friendship, from the most admired authors both ancient and modern; who seem to have taken a kind of ambitious pleasure in adorning its shrine with whatever is most delicate in sentiment, illustrious in facts, lofty in imagination, or eloquent in words. They were probably willing to be thought enamoured of a quality, which they considered as pre-supposing a number of the most eminent virtues; as implying the highest excellence in man, next to that wisdom which is immediately from God; and as diffusing over human life such lustre and gladness, that, in the language of the Roman orator, to banish friendship from society, would be like depriving the world of the sun.

There certainly is, in this celebrated disposition, indulged to its full extent, a generous glow, a conscious greatness and amplitude, unspeakably soothing to the soul; who seldom perceives herself so amiable, or so respectable, as when flaming and expanding with the love of kindred minds, and pursuing plans of communicated happiness. That which the most enlightened and the most elevated spirits, of every age and country, have unanimously concurred to extol, must undoubtedly possess some intrinsic and transcendent worth and dignity, beside the nameless advantages which accrue from it.

But you, my young auditors, have no need of high encomiums on friendship, to raise it in your estimation. Youth is the favourite soil of this, as of all other social affections. In men whom age has cooled, and experience cautioned, who have suffered from the worthlessness of many, and from the selfishness of more, the fund of confidence and sensibility, with which they began the world, is too often exhausted: they are little inclined to form new connexions, and however they may cherish such as are old, partly through the power of habit, and partly through the remembrance of that smiling season from
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whose contemplation, even long after it is past, they now and then catch a reviving ray, yet the enthusiasm with which they then loved is felt no more, unless perhaps by a very few hearts originally cast in a finer mould. Safety and ease are chiefly sought by declining nature : necessity succeeds to choice ; and the charm of fervent esteem and fond complacence is chilled and shrivelled by the coldness of worldly policy.

But such, alas ! is the mixed condition of humanity, as to admit of no advantage without some abatement. At the same time that the young are qualified to enjoy intensely all that is most exquisite in the sweetest emotions of the bosom, there is infinite danger, lest they be hurried by eagerness or betrayed by credulity into extravagant attachments and pernicious intimacies, under the specious semblance of friendship. By expecting more from its gratification than it can give where it is realized, and by seeking that gratification where it cannot be found, endless disappointments are sustained, and fatal mischiefs are incurred. The good, which might be obtained in the line of moderation, is lost in the pursuit of a phantom : chagrin, disgust, and dark suspicion, are generally the result through the rest of life ; and numbers, that set out with kind affections and laudable sentiments, finding themselves deceived and undone by unprincipled companions, whom they meant to cultivate as virtuous friends, are prompted to conclude, that friendship and virtue are empty names ; a conclusion big with wretchedness, horror and desperation.

To the prevention of these evils we would willingly contribute, by warning you to avoid unreasonable hopes, and to stand on your guard against the impostures and the hazards, to which your honest ardour and your little experience may lay you open, from the false, the frivolous, the licentious, and the low.

It is painful to think, that youth have commonly least discretion when they want it most ; I mean, when they are contracting regards, and forming unions, which may probably determine the colour of their whole existence. Happy, indeed, beyond comparison, are those young men, whom the wise conduct of their parents or other connexions,

ions, or some peculiar favour of Providence operating in whatever manner, has early led into safe and honourable associations, not only in the road of study, or of business, but in that which chiefly engages the heart, and gives the most immediate direction to its principal movements.

This, my beloved hearers, this I conceive to be the great decisive point of time, the awful era, at which your character and fate are usually fixed forever. And, O incomprehensible Power, who presidest over all, on what slight, unimagined, and almost unperceived contingences, does so mighty a concern seem frequently to depend! Is circumspection then or vigilance, is counsel or admonition, wholly precluded? We hope not; and whilst we devoutly pray that Heaven may place you in situations the most auspicious for the formation and culture of the best attachments, it may still be of use to point out some capital mistakes, that are daily committed in this momentous affair.

There is indeed a class of mortals, on whom no advice, respecting this or any other matter, can impress wisdom, and for whom, when they suffer for want of it, there is no reason to feel much regret. We have seldom seen, that the airy and the conceited are deeply hurt by any disappointments they meet with, in the article under consideration: to-day, they can be wonderfully flattered with the smiles of complaisance, with the protestations of esteem, with the offers of service so familiar amongst the men of the world; they can readily ascribe the whole to their own distinguished merit; they can boast, in every company, the number, the consequence, and the zeal of their friends: and yet to-morrow, when all this perhaps proves on trial to be nothing more than the illusion of a sanguine fancy, they can support the discovery with great composure, from that self-delighted disposition which nothing can ever thoroughly mortify, and that invincible confidence which they still retain in their own power, of securing more solid and permanent connexions. In truth, we are persuaded, that of all human follies, vanity is the least exposed to serious or lasting distress of any kind. Whatever transient wounds she may receive, (and it must be owned she is liable to receive many from a thousand competitors.

competitors of her own stamp) she finds a speedy remedy in the dear complacence with which she always regards herself. By a certain lightness and elasticity belonging to her composition, she springs from object to object; and that gratification which one may fail to yield her, she has no doubt of obtaining from the next.

Should it be asked, by the way, whether a person in whom vanity predominates is capable of true friendship; the question, I think, may be easily decided. It is evident, he loves himself too well to love any others very warmly, except as they may by some means add to his importance in his own eyes, or in those of the spectators; and, if at any time he should apprehend his kindness to interfere with that importance, we may readily guess which will be renounced. The vain are cowards, wherever their figure is concerned: their favours have still an ultimate reference to themselves; an idea utterly incompatible with that noble sentiment of generosity, which we have found to be the sovereign attribute of a friend. Yet must it be owned, that they sometimes possess a large share of good nature, appear in many instances extremely liberal, and submit to many inconveniences, and even hardships, for the sake of obliging. Such as know their ruling passion may, by cajoling it, (an art which little minds can practise without difficulty) draw from them almost any emolument: nor should those who are indebted to them, without meanness, examine too nicely the motives of their conduct. Human actions are seldom influenced by one single principle, and considerable degrees of virtue often mingle with very different ingredients.

From vanity to pride the transition is not great, though their characters are sufficiently distinct, and though our sensations regarding them are not less so. When vanity is frustrated in her exorbitant hopes from others, we smile; when this is the case with pride, we triumph. And it must ever be the case, while those who are actuated by that most obnoxious, most offensive, most insufferable of all spirits, claim a heart which they will not, which they cannot return, it being wholly engrossed by themselves; while they challenge unbounded respect, and show none but to serve their own purposes; while they deem no at-

tion, zeal, or deference, adequate to their desert and dignity; in short, while they seem to think, that all mankind were made for them, and they to lord it over all. It is indeed impossible not to rejoice, when such are disappointed and humiliated. There is a selfishness, an insolence, a malignity, inherent in the proud, that must eternally exclude them from every bond of amity with God and man. "They are of their father the devil, and the works of their father they will do." Nor are they less absurd than hateful. It raises a mixture of contempt and indignation, to hear them, who could never endure an equal, or a rival, talk incessantly of their friends; to see them arrogantly construe civility into esteem, and the common offices of humanity into marks of particular attachment; to observe, that if you are wanting in the least punctilio of that profound regard, which they take it for granted is their right, you injure, you affront them, beyond the power of forgiveness—But let us quit them for better objects of contemplation.

It frequently falls out, that immoderate expectations from the kindness of others, are a source of bitterness to those whose virtues seem to merit a milder destiny. They are often the error of an excellent heart, which, feeling itself fraught with the worthiest affections, makes no doubt of finding the same in others, grasps with eagerness every appearance of friendship, is unwilling to question even the slightest evidence, and, though peradventure repeatedly deceived, is still prone to rely; with such enchantment is it drawn to its object! When at last it is torn away by indubitable proofs of dishonesty, insensibility, or fickleness, from one or more to whom it grew, perhaps for a course of years; blessed Heaven, what bleeding agony is it condemned to endure, till honest disdain and just abhorrence come to its aid, and, tempered with the lenient powers of religion and time, compose a balm to heal its wounds!

I will suppose, Sir, that you have hitherto feasted your soul with the ideas of delicacy and candour, of warmth and constancy, of spirit and forbearance, as all meeting in your friend, though qualities seldom combined in other men; and that you are delighted with the overflowings of mutual esteem, the interchange of unreserved confidence,

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the conferring of favours which you believe to be valued as they deserve, and the receiving of returns whose sincerity you would hold it the highest injustice to suspect. You exult in this intercourse : you congratulate yourself a thousand times, on a happiness you seem peculiarly formed to relish : you desire nothing so much as its continuance ; I speak of your wishes for the present world. But—something intervenes to blast the whole, something which you did not apprehend, and the effects of which you may not have it in your power to remedy. What a shock to all your kindest feelings ! What an extinction at once of your dearest pleasures ! Where, in this wide creation, is the enjoyment or the prospect that can compensate either, so long as the anguish inflicted by them is recent and alive ? Nor do I see how such infelicity could be certainly prevented. Who can read the stupendous volume of futurity ? Who can fathom the mysteries of the human mind, or discover the turns of temper that lurk in it, before they are brought out and developed by particular junctures or occasions ? Were you to resist all the generous impulses, or suppress all the virtuous tenderesses of your nature, when excited by a character of apparent and unsuspected probity ; were you to say, Hold, my heart, thou must not go forth to that individual, though he seems made to meet thee in the sweetest points of friendship, though he carries in his aspect, demeanour, and conversation, the inexplicable magic thou art so ill able to withstand ; it would be unnatural, it would be impossible. Perhaps there was but one precaution practicable in your case ; and there is but one course to be pursued by you hereafter ; namely, that of cultivating a more sober attachment, regulated by a juster estimate of qualities at best imperfect and precarious, by a more frequent survey of life, as continually subject to vicissitude and vanity, and by a stricter attention to your own defects, with less flattering hopes where there is nothing certain, and nothing complete. In this way, my dear Sir, you may reap advantage from an event, which has, to many, occasioned unmingled sorrow. Your past misfortune will be alleviated to your memory, by reflections on your improvement in modesty, temperance, and wisdom : your future tranquility

tranquillity will become less dependent on others; and the insufficiency of mortal friendship will induce you to seek more earnestly the divine.

The distress I have now painted, may perhaps appear imaginary to some of my hearers, who have as yet suffered nothing from the selfish, the perfidious, or the inconstant, having been hitherto cherished in the bosom of parental affection and domestic peace. They will not readily suspect the very different treatment which may await them when they leave that sanctuary, nor conceive the pangs their innocent breasts may be doomed to undergo from treachery and malignity under the mask of friendship: but they should be told, that those who are utterly ignorant of its spirit, are forever pretending to it; and that the greatest pretenders on this subject, as on all others where either morality or religion is concerned, are the greatest hypocrites, and therefore should be avoided with the utmost care.

Not that such persons always mean mischief. Knowing this virtue to be held in high valuation by the more reputable part of mankind, many of them hope, that, in talking about it, they shall pass for people of importance and refinement in the same way: and some of them, it is certain, have acquired such plausibility of profession, as easily imposes on the young, the affectionate, and the unsuspecting; who accordingly seldom or never escape being deceived by it, and whom nothing less than long and severe experience of its fallacy will probably ever be sufficient to arm against its insinuation. Their self-love, meeting with their better feelings, takes fire at the declarations of attachment, fondness, fidelity, friendship, without staying to inquire into the sincerity or probability of those declarations. With impatient ardour their hearts fly out, to embrace and return assurances so pleasing. On their side all is gratitude, respect, confidence, ecstasy; when on the other—alas!—what?—need I tell you? nothing is meant, and nothing felt, but merely the affectation of a style which is fancied to be sentimental, and which is found to be agreeable.

I know not whence it happens; but, if I am not mistaken, the smoothest talkers, the most specious haranguers

uers in company, seldom approve themselves persons of the most solid worth, or real efficiency, in the practical scenes in life; whilst, on the other hand, the sincerest proofs of substantial regard, and active zeal, are frequently received from those whose plain phraseology, and unprofessing manner, engage but little attention, and excite no expectation. There are, it is true, exceptions; enchanting characters, of whom it may be said, that their words are not more ready or more emphatical than their deeds, that their conversation steals not into the soul with a sweeter charm than their conduct gratifies all its wishes, and answers all its hopes.

I am apt to believe, indeed, that there is not always proper allowance made for the different modes of behaviour amongst men on this very head. The charge of flattery, for example, is sometimes brought without foundation against those whose frank and liberal nature is such, that, wherever they feel strong approbation, they cannot easily refrain from speaking it: their warmth and cordiality can hardly be reconciled to the dryness and reserve so frequent amongst others: they love a passionate friendship, are transported when they mix with souls of fire, and damped by the contrary appearance of frigidity. What from an habitual flow of benevolence, what from an actual desire of encouraging capacity and virtue, and what from the lively satisfaction they feel in the discovery or the report of merit, they are ready to vent themselves so freely in terms of praise, as to pass sometimes with those of a cooler strain for mere men of compliment. But surely you will own, that between the unstudied and unhackneyed commendation incidentally inspired by this goodness of heart, this vivacity of complacency, and the formal or courtly flourish of trite panegyric and fulsome applause, there is an essential difference, which persons of discretion and modesty cannot be very long at a loss to distinguish. Nature indeed has imparted to truth, her favourite offspring, certain features, tones, airs and expressions, which, though it may be difficult to describe or particularize them, yet such as are accustomed to observe the world in its familiar intercourses, and not blinded by self-conceit, will learn in many, perhaps in most cases, to discriminate from the

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the countenance and voice, the demeanour and style of dissimulation, that is continually labouring to resemble her ; beside those other rules of judging, which are gradually unfolded by the practice of life.

The practice of life, and that knowledge of men which it may be expected to produce, should certainly teach us, amongst other important lessons, these two ; first, a necessary watchfulness against the impositions of fraud and affectation in others ; and next, what is inseparably connected with it, a wise restraint on the propensity to confidence and openness in ourselves, especially if that propensity be very strong, as it commonly is in generous and ardent minds. Such, we have already hinted, will find those lessons sufficiently difficult : nor am I sure, that any observation of the world, or any suffering from its deceit, will be ever able to make them great proficient in political prudence. They will, I doubt, to the last, indulge themselves in esteeming and trusting some or other of their acquaintances, to the same height of enthusiasm as usual, let the consequence be what it may. A person so framed cannot exist out of this element. His heart may as soon cease to distribute the vital stream that passes through it, as to throb with those affectionate feelings, which it was formed to admit and circulate, in maintaining the nobler life of friendship. It may break ; it may die : but whilst it lives, and is fit to perform its office, it must absolutely enjoy the comfort of loving and confiding, even if it should be denied that of a just return.

People of this character, however, ought to be reminded, that if they are often deceived by pretended friends among the empty or the superficial, they have themselves chiefly to blame. Simplicity and inexperience may excuse at first your falling into snares of that kind : but assuredly it is the part of good sense, and manly resolution, to guard you against a train of disappointments from so contemptible a quarter : nor can those be thought entitled to much pity, who complain of the faithlessness of mankind, because they have been frequently cheated in their expectations from fools and triflers ; because they could not find sensibility or truth, solidity or steadiness, among the slaves

of dissipation, the practitioners in ceremony, and the apes of sentiment.

But you, Sir, perhaps have been deluded by artful dissemblers, whose talents are as agreeable as their principles are vicious, whose whole study is to cover the worst designs with the most captivating manners, who can imitate friendship's sweetest smiles, adopt her warmest language, and sometimes exceed her genuine votaries in the appearances of zeal and liberality, at the very moment that they are meditating the blackest deeds of malice or of villany. In this case, I confess, you are truly an object of compassion. History and life swarm with examples of persons, especially of youth, undone by such accomplished traitors in the guise of friends. Before you are lost in like manner, let me conjure you to break, without delay, from their dangerous society, whatever pain the effort may cost your own sensations, or whatever abuse you may suffer from their resentments. Be assured, that where the powers of seduction, by which you have been thus far entangled, are so great, nothing under God can save you, but a speedy, open, and lasting retreat.

When connexions that passed for friendship could be no longer cultivated with prudence, it has been customary to caution men against a sudden and declared breach, and counsel them to withdraw insensibly and silently. This may be right in many circumstances. The world is not concerned to know any thing of the matter : to proclaim it, would do no good ; and to conceal it as much as possible, may prevent a variety of inconveniences. But in situations where your character or your virtue is at stake, it appears to me, that your separation should be instant, decisive, and avowed. In the case I have just described, a different conduct might be ruinous. To remain near the net that formerly ensnared you, were presumptuous folly ; and it is only an immediate, clear, and constant renunciation of intimacy with those insidious destroyers, that can insure your innocence or your peace.

It is a remark no less just than common, that we may judge of persons by the company they affect. Who knows not the attraction of conformity, and the force of example ? We naturally take to those whose opinions, inclinations,

tions, and manners, are most like our own, at least in the leading instances of life ; and nothing perhaps conduces so much to ascertain, or to mould a character, as daily intercourse and chosen familiarity. Of him who walks with wise men we believe that he is wise, or we conclude that he will be so. On the other hand, there cannot be a worse symptom of any one, than his being attached to low and worthless companions ; for, if he is not already low and worthless, he must ere long become such by continuing to frequent them. How many promising plants of virtue have we seen wither in the air of "evil communication !" Into so unwholesome a climate you may be led by accident, or drawn by curiosity, or carried by business, or betrayed by art practising on ignorance. But lay it down for an infallible rule, that, if you have a proper regard for your best interests, you will not continue there without necessity, after you are aware of your danger ; which may for the most part be soon discovered from something or other said, done, or proposed, that is incompatible with principle, or offensive to decency. He, indeed, is a fortunate young man, who escapes from such an atmosphere without infection. What amusement can corrupt associates afford, or what service can they render, which deserves to be weighed against the advantages and pleasures of wisdom ? Nor will her followers be unwilling to receive you into their cheerful and benevolent circle, if they perceive you in earnest to join them.

When I say this, I should warn you, at the same time, not to imagine that you can form a friendship, or correspondence of the heart, with every good man you meet. In the first place, men may be very good, as far as the great outlines of duty go, and yet not very amiable in their style of conversation, their cast of temper, or their turn of manners. And even of such as are, supposing many such within your reach, a felicity which rarely happens to one man, how few can you reasonably hope to find with that peculiar texture in their minds, or those characteristic features of fancy, of understanding, and of affection, which suit your particular taste and feelings !

To take it ill, or to think it strange, that you find not more, that every eye melts not with sympathy, that every heart

heart glows not with affection for you, would argue but little knowledge either of yourself, or of mankind. Permit me, Sir, to ask, what right have you to require, that others should be formed on your model, any more than they have that you should be formed on theirs? If they were offended or surpris'd, that you did not clasp them to your bosom, would not you justly pity their presumption and folly? Can you seriously believe, that your character is a complete standard of rectitude, that your judgment is an infallible test of truth, and that your deportment should be uniformly copied by all that would excel or please?

Though rectitude and truth be essentially and eternally consistent with themselves, is it not manifest that the former admits of innumerable modifications; and must it not necessarily happen, that the latter will strike different intellects, of different cultures, in different situations, with an endless diversity of views? The material world, we know, exhibits a marvellous theatre of variety; and in proportion to our acquaintance with the moral, we shall discern upon it the same stamp of that unbounded genius, if the phrase may be allowed, which belongs to the Author of both. We speak of the almost infinitely various circumstances and shapes, under which the general principles of virtue operate through the wide-extended sphere of society. And with regard to external behaviour, the prevailing humours of men, and what may be termed the moving pictures of life, do we not perceive, that the taste and colouring are often no less wonderfully diversified, wherever human nature is not sunk in barbarism, subdued by slavery, or stiffened by fashion, but left partly to her original scope, and partly committed to her acquired energies?

But having mentioned these, I would observe, that, in the most advanced state of civilization, there is such a mixture of sensuality, softness, and concealed selfishness, as precludes in a great measure those magnanimous sentiments and strong feelings which are requisite to a noble friendship. What is the consequence? That in this luxurious and effeminate age, where under a polished exterior, and many specious appearances, the heart is at once enfeebled, contracted and warped, a noble friendship becomes more and more uncommon.

In truth, I fear, it never was very prevalent. The qualifications which must form, and the coincidences which must favour it, are too many, and too extraordinary, to be frequently expected in the present condition of our being. Had examples of this kind been more numerous, they would have been less memorable. The few which stand on record, have been collected from different and distant ages and nations. They shine like those refulgent but partial rays, that sometimes dart through little openings of a general cloud, which happens to cover the rest of the hemisphere. Or they may be compared to meteors of remarkable lustre, that now and then relieve and enliven the gloom of night. The instances to which I allude, are so conspicuously luminous and beautiful, that the mere description of them, especially when aided by the pathos of genius, is apt to seize susceptible minds with admiration and rapture. I am not indeed sure, but that, when the fancy of the reader or hearer is more than ordinarily warm and florid, the impressions thus produced in the days of youth, may inflame it with hopes which are never afterwards sufficiently moderated, and very seldom justified by the event, of rising to the same sublimity, and finding friends of equal elevation.

You may deem me rigorous, in labouring to check a luxuriance not only so pleasing in itself, but so innocent in its cause: and yet, when you reflect on all you have heard, you will perceive the necessity of this moral discipline. Perhaps we might go so far as to say, that one of the earliest lessons, which should be inculcated on young men of lively spirits, is to distrust their own vivacity on all or most subjects regarding practice. It is certain, that from this root, which is usually strongest in the richest soils, the principal evils that embitter life have often sprung. There is a voluptuousness of the heart, as well as of the senses, which, though infinitely superior on the score of dignity, and frequently connected with the purest virtue, may yet in many cases require mortification no less than the other. Without the mental sobriety which prudence teaches, you may be involved in the same calamities, though not in the same guilt, by the best passions as by the worst.

Prudence,

Prudence, I am sensible, is not entitled to the praise of a sublime attainment. It is often found in common minds; and it is sometimes not found in the noblest, or the brightest. But these never seriously justify themselves for the want of it: they are sorry, they are ashamed, when conscious of having transgressed its laws. None but libertines, or fools, presume to call it a sneaking disposition, a low-souled quality, the mark of a sordid character, or at the highest a mere servant to the virtues. The wise ancients always considered it as one of those virtues, and always treated it with respect, as of cardinal importance. But you need not wonder when you hear it degraded by some wretched creatures, who are violating daily its most indispensable precepts, and who have even the insolence to boast of despising it; in the hope, I suppose, of being ranked among men of spirit and genius, because such have not often been remarkable for prudence. May you, gentlemen, never be guilty of so indecent an affectation, nor yet of the unhappy conduct which generally occasions it. Let integrity be your first care, and your next, discretion. You cannot too much disdain or abominate cunning, and all her serpentine brood: but discretion or prudence is of a very different order, and belongs to a very different race. She is nearly allied to wisdom; and, if you except religion, she is the surest guard of integrity, and the safest guide of life.

One of her main dictates is, to be diffident of your own judgment where you have not proved it, especially in matters of consequence to your morals and your peace: but both will depend in a peculiar degree on your choice of friends; and therefore be advised to proceed in it with great caution. The knowledge of men is to be gained by experience, rather than by books. Not many of the last paint them true: something is mistaken, exaggerated or diminished: and if a few masters exhibit them as they are, that is, for the most part strangely mixed and shaded, the sanguine eye of youth catches at the splendid tints and the agreeable features, but overlooks those of another kind; whereas experience, being immediately conversant with the originals, sees their real countenance and natural colour. As for mere speculation, it is so apt
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to proceed upon systems instead of facts, that very little indeed can be learned from it, where facts are chiefly in question ; and flattering systems will be always preferred by juvenile minds, to those of a severer cast. What is the inference ? It is this, that you ought never to form any intimate connexion, which your parents do not clearly approve.

Your parents having tried the world, must doubtless be better judges of it than you who have not ; and they will be disposed on such occasions to study your sobriety, your character, your interest, whilst you are prone to think only of your gratification : they consult your happiness for life ; you, the entertainment of the hour : they know that present pleasure is often pernicious, and, at best, but a small portion of the felicity for which you were designed : you are too eager in the pursuit which engages you at the instant, to weigh very carefully the consequences, or to extend very far your views of future good : from a warmth and candour that have not yet been damped by cruel treatment, you are too unsuspecting to apprehend danger, falsehood, or malice, where you hear nothing but the language of affection, and see nothing but the face of complacence ; when your parents, who know how often these are assumed to deceive, may fear lest you should be betrayed by your simplicity. They, indeed, may sometimes carry their suspicions too great a length, and often measure both men and things with an over scrupulosity, having often, it is probable, been disappointed by both ; but in general, their estimate will be nearer the truth than yours, and you will be safer in following the line of caution which they recommend, than the indiscriminate impulse of your own ardour : you may, it is true, be less delighted for a time ; but you will commonly afterwards be delighted more and longer. In short, they inquire into the principles, the manners, the circumstances, and the relations, of those with whom you associate, or wish to associate ; whilst you consider only appearances and professions, the power of talking and amusing, with the readiness to comply and oblige at all adventures. Give me leave to say, If you have any reflection, you cannot but perceive the extreme difference, in point of soundness and security, between
these

these two modes of judging ; and if you have any fairness or openness you cannot but own it, and condemn, as neither dutiful nor wise, those young persons, whoever they be, that venture to choose their companions—I will not now call them their friends—against the consent, or without the suffrage, of their parents.

Permit me to add, that next to the infatuation and impiety of opposing or disregarding yours in a matter of this magnitude, were you indeed capable of it, would be the folly, meanness and unworthiness of carrying on, without their knowledge, any intimacy which concerned either your hearts or your fortunes. That correspondence should be avoided, like destruction, which appears in so questionable a shape, as not to be fit for a father's or a mother's eye. If any of you are unhappily engaged in such a correspondence, abandon it, I conjure you, abandon it, without a moment's delay. Such a correspondence has been often fatal. In many instances, it is to be dreaded more than the most artful stratagem of your most inveterate foe. What do I say ? Your worst enemy cannot draw you into guilt, or shame, or unpitied sorrow, without your own concurrence : but here, Sir, you expose yourself, for aught you know, to all these hazards, with much deliberation, and at the expense of much contrivance on your part : you reduce yourself to a state of conscious littleness, of low anxieties, and painful apprehensions, lest discovery should overwhelm you with confusion. But were there no other evil attending your situation, do not you blush at the thought of writing, conversing, acting, living under a cloak of concealment ? Can you enjoy that which you dare not avow ? Can you be happy in receiving letters which you must hide, as if they were stolen, or in paying visits from which you must slink away “ as a thief in the night ? ” Will you honour with the appellation of friend, that person who can consent to all this ? The very idea would fill you with indignant scorn, were you not intoxicated and blinded by your passions. But it is wonderful what absurdities people can swallow, and to what humiliations they can submit, for the sake of momentary indulgence. The wisdom of a man, and yet more the faith of a Christian, would save you from both : they would teach you to sacrifice little

interests though present, when incompatible with superior objects, though remote ; and always to seek your satisfaction in your duty.

But perhaps you will tell me, that your parents are known to be unkind and unreasonable, that their caprice would deny you the amusements suited to your time of life, and particularly, that their jealousy would preclude you from cultivating any agreeable connexion whatsoever. — Are you certain ? Do you not mistake them ? Have they not been misrepresented ? Are none of your companions disposed to inflame your prejudices against them ? Have they never been provoked by yourself to a seeming severity, which they would not else have shown ? You must allow me to suspect, when I hear such complaints from a young man, that they are seldom well founded. This is not the age of rigour. Parents in these days are apt to be but too indulgent. Suppose, however, that yours are the reverse ; it still becomes you to comply with them, so long as they require nothing unlawful ; nor is it by any means impossible, that, by a submissive and affectionate carriage, you may soften them into gentleness, or at least obtain from them favours which you can never hope, and should never wish, by a different behaviour to extort.

Of the infelicity suffered by mortals, especially in domestic scenes, I verily believe, the greater part proceeds from petty indiscretions rather than from great vices. Those parents in particular, who render the condition of their children uncomfortable, would often make them happy, if the children themselves did not, by their petulance or imprudence, tease and irritate them. The generality of boys and girls, who have not been wisely educated, attend only to the gratifying of their own inclinations, and forget that their fathers and mothers ought always to have the pre-eminence. I am persuaded there are comparatively but few at any age, or of any class, who might not be conciliated, in some degree, by good-natured and well-timed attentions.

It may be proper however to remind parents, that they, of all people in the world, should give most allowances to those youth whom Heaven has put under their care, with a peculiar confidence in their tenderness : nor is it either
equitable

equitable or just in them, to require from young creatures the same cool reflection, or the same uniform moderation, which may be expected from such as are advanced in years. The truth is, that, in this relation as well as others, there are some unnatural, and some preposterous beings, whom no sweetness can win, and who are only the more peevish, or even tyrannical, for being treated with modesty and deference. When this is the case, it should be considered as a trial appointed by Providence for purposes undoubtedly gracious, among which may well be reckoned, improvement in patience and sobriety, two of the most necessary qualities in life.

At the same time, it is but fair to add, that if parents, whose children are disposed to be every way dutiful, will yet use them barbarously, or chill them by perpetual fullness, or shock them by frequent fits of passion and violence, they can have little reason to complain, should their children become less attached and less observant, or should they fly, as often as they can, from scenes so discouraging and so disgusting, to any associates who may come in their way. Foolish, and unworthy! Is it thus that you provoke to wrath, that you force on danger, perhaps on ruin, the very persons whose security, virtue and welfare, you are bound by every tie to consult? Is it thus that you fling from you the glorious privilege of making your families blest? Is it thus that you clothe yourselves with terror, in those eyes to which you should appear with the divine attractions of love and goodness? Gracious Heaven! can you endure to think of turning those houses, which should be habitations of peace, into prisons, and yourselves, who should be the guardians of your offspring, into their jailors? Can you bear the reflection, that instead of causing their honest hearts to palpitate with joy and gratitude every time you enter, you, their parents, the instruments of their existence, and who ought to be the instruments of their happiness—that you should by your dreaded presence, quash every comfort which began to rise when you were gone, and kill the little buds of affection, which, did you but smile upon them, would break forth like those of the spring at the sun's reviving rays?—On wrong behaviour, you cannot suppose that we wish you

to smile : neither do we expect, that in any case you can smile always : we allow for a thousand circumstances in which your thoughts may be naturally too much absorbed, or your feelings unavoidably too distressed, to admit the instant emanations of tenderness and complacency. But, O Sirs, what pity is it, that you should indulge habits of ill temper or discontent on any occasion, and especially in the very places where tranquillity and kindness ought to dwell as in their favourite residence !

To such children as are favoured with wise and affectionate parents, we cannot help saying, it will be remarkably their own fault, if they do not improve a circumstance so exceeding favourable, into the greatest felicity ; I mean that of cultivating those parents as their most faithful counsellors, and their most precious friends ; friends whose sincerity, whose benignity, whose zeal for their welfare in all respects, will rarely be equalled by any, with whom they can afterwards hope to be connected. In reality, I conceive there is but one character beside, that can ever rival them in these points, or surpass them in the power of conferring heart-felt delight, namely, a prudent, virtuous and amiable woman, united with you in the bonds of holy wedlock and tender esteem.

From persons beyond the endearing circle of a family, who have seen many days, more especially if they have also experienced much distress from the injustice and ingratitude of mankind, I would not encourage you to look frequently for the softness or generosity of friendship, as I hinted in the beginning. But there is a lower degree of it, and still very valuable, to be found in such, if they are persons of sense and worth, and if you have enough of both to gain their confidence.

I have known some aged people who appeared to be wonderfully soothed and attached, when they met with young minds that listened to them with a kind of filial attention and docility, that honoured their virtues, revered their years, and studied to lighten their burthen. Being happy in an original benignity of temper, which principle had still preserved, and having to sound, perhaps to excellent, natural understandings, added a large fund of observation, their remarks and narratives were peculiarly amusing,

amusing, interesting and instructive : nor would it be easy to express the eagerness with which a circle of ingenuous youth, sitting round them, imbibed entertainment and wisdom from their communications ; the triumph they felt on seeing themselves privileged with their regard, and the zeal they discovered to assist their infirmities, or mitigate their pains, as occasion might require. I know not, that the utmost warmth of juvenile friendship could ever yield to well-formed spirits such elevated delight. Of this I am very sure, that those hearts are made of stone, which can, at a period when all should be tenderness, and virtuous susceptibility, look upon age thus amiable, and thus dignified; with contempt or indifference. Nor am I less certain, that they who know how to avail themselves of its society, are in the fairest road to the best improvements. Intelligence and goodness, adorning grey hairs, are absolutely irresistible, wherever there is a soul to discern the venerable attraction. May you, gentlemen, never have the misfortune to be intimately connected with any of either sex, who could read without admiring it, the character of Mrs. Shirley, in the History of Sir Charles Grandison, or that of Mr. Allworthy in another book, which I am sorry, for his sake, I cannot recommend without a particular caution, as it exhibits, at the same time, the picture of a young man too alluring by his better dispositions, whilst he indulges to criminal and hurtful propensities.

It is indeed to be lamented, that the writer should, though without intending it, have given so imposing a varnish to immorality. I warn you against the delusion, and entreat you to remember in all such cases, that no qualities, however pleasing, however captivating, can make amends for licentiousness. I should not have hinted at this production, had I not reason to apprehend it has done harm amongst youthful readers of both sexes, and were it not still in the hands of many. But may we not here remark with satisfaction, that whilst it, and some other writings of the same author, seem, upon the whole, calculated to produce more evil than good, a near relation of his, well-known, is constantly employed in counterworking; with singular sagacity and diligence, the mischiefs to which the public is exposed, from the effects of early excess in general,

general, and of the profligacy that so frequently grows out of it? Whatever blind imputations may be propagated against the extraordinary person to whom I refer, by bad men, from motives which may easily be guessed, I cannot but think that his unparalleled usefulness, as a magistrate, in detecting crimes on the one hand, and his admirable plan for preventing vice on the other, by a most wise and charitable institution, of which he was the founder, will transmit his name to posterity with distinguished honour.

To return, and to speak at large, it is always matter of regret, when either in books, in life, or on the stage, the disapprobation which ought to be excited by iniquity or folly apparent in any character, is not only effaced on viewing the agreeable endowments that accompany it, but the folly or the iniquity itself seems in a manner to receive countenance and encouragement, from their neighbourhood to those endowments.

As to the stage, it is peculiarly pernicious when this is the case; and amongst other representations which should be utterly banished from it, *The Beggar's Opera* is surely one. To proscribe forever so dangerous a piece, would reflect reputation on the managers of our theatres; and if they forget to do themselves that credit, I heartily wish the law might interpose its authority. What can be more dangerous to the morals of unguarded youth, than to have their eyes and ears familiarized with objects and scenes of vice, especially when accompanied with the advantages of action, music, wit and humour; and yet further, when softened and recommended by certain mixtures of good nature and kind affection? Offenders of this stamp should never be seen or heard without necessity; as the most impudent and abandoned should never be presented in any lights but such as may strike with horror.

But perhaps you will tell me, that I have wandered from my subject. I deny it. My subject is friendship, and my purpose was to inquire by what means you, my beloved charge, might be saved from contracting vicious and imprudent attachments, and guarded against the particular snares most likely to entangle you on that side. Now, I think, we have discovered and proved, with sufficient clearness, that your best security, next to God's direction and guardianship,

guardianship, which I pray you may in this, as in all other instances, implore and obtain, will be to frequent the company, and follow the counsel, of persons in years, whether parents or not, who unite cheerfulness and benevolence with wisdom and piety. Nor do I speak merely from speculation. I can aver with sincerity, that all, or almost all the virtuous youth I have known of either sex, have been those who enjoyed and improved the inestimable blessing of such company and such counsel. I could at this moment point to some individuals of uncommon worth, the rising ornaments of religion and humanity, who are ready to acknowledge with grateful pleasure, that they stand indebted, for their most valuable attainments, to their frequent and intimate communion with people much their seniors; people who, from nature or from accident, were led to cherish them in their bosoms, and by whose conversation and example they were sweetly and almost imperceptibly nursed into what they are. Such, I trust, shall never suffer themselves to be drawn into close connexions with any, let their accomplishments in other respects be what they may, of whom they know, or have heard, that they slighted those richest sources of improvement and delight.

But is it possible to say all this, and yet omit expressing our surprise, that persons stricken in years do not more frequently endeavour to engage the esteem and confidence of well-disposed youth? Alas! you little know what power you have, had you also the inclination, to charm them into goodness. You little know what divine satisfaction you forfeit, when, instead of attracting them by the double tie of love and veneration, and impressing their hearts with the wisest and happiest lessons, you disgust them at yourselves, and at every thing of this kind, by impatience, superciliousness, or spleen. But if you are insensible to noble considerations, think, I beseech you, what guilt and woe you may incur, should your forbidding behaviour frighten those youthful travellers, perhaps your own children, from the paths of purity and peace. But for you they might have been happy forever. Can you support the idea?

It is indeed certain, that many of the old are not at due pains to preserve those placid dispositions, which would alike cheer their last stage to themselves, and render their society

society both desirable and useful to others, to the young especially. But the young should consider on the other hand, that numbers are so worn with care, or disappointment, or decay, or disease, or peradventure with all these jointly, as to be no longer capable of showing the good humour they were wont to discover, or their taste for those friendly intercourses which they formerly enjoyed, as the chief seasoning of life. Now is the proper time for you, if duty calls you, either from connexion or situation, to cultivate virtues of higher relish than all the pleasures that the gayest companion could ever impart; I mean forbearance, mildness, sympathy, and sweet attention, to ease the inquietudes of age, and support the weary pilgrims in their descent to the grave.

As for those people, whether older or younger, who are all involved in caution and secrecy, in management and mystery, be assured that, let them wear whatever appearances of wisdom or importance they will, you can derive from them neither advantage, nor instruction, nor entertainment, to reward your attempts at their intimacy, should you on any occasion be advised or prompted to court it: for I cannot suppose, that you would ever court it of choice: the character I draw is naturally infrigidating, and odious to youth of the least generosity or openness. Setting aside the danger, which is but too probable, of your being sooner or later grievously betrayed by such politicians, what could you expect from them at best, but counsels or aids, on the kind or upright intention of which you could never rely with certainty? Whilst you laboured in vain to possess their confidence, they would be willing enough to accept of yours: whilst you told them with simplicity of soul all you thought or felt, they might seem perhaps to tell you something in return; but, depend upon it, you would then know as little of their real opinions or inclinations as before—except it were this, which a small share of discernment indeed might teach you, if you would take the trouble to use it, that neither their inclinations nor opinions were worth the studying, unless the necessities of business made them so; in short, that they were at bottom but poor creatures, of vulgar minds and narrow breeding, or, however, of no genuine ability or sterling value.

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For you who are entering the world, that great theatre of dissimulation, it would doubtless be a good rule, whatever difficulty the ardent and unsuspecting may find in observing it, not to throw away your secrets on those who keep back their own. By acting differently, you will prevent the freedom of communication from the wise, who will think the worse of your understandings, though perhaps they may think the better of your hearts; and by such frankness you expose yourselves every way to the cunning, who, if they should not be wicked enough to hurt you in your interest, will yet most assuredly divert themselves at your expense. To reconcile candour with prudence, and the confidential spirit of friendship with the guard of habitual circumspection, is indeed an arduous attainment, and in the case of some tempers, I believe, the most arduous that could be proposed.

When the worthless and the frivolous suffer from indiscretion, we seldom feel much concern. But those are always objects of our pity, that from a want of distrust, occasioned by the warmth of their benevolence, and by too favourable sentiments of mankind, become the prey of the artful, the selfish and the malevolent; a set of beings, who, if they have once seriously injured any man, never fail from that moment, and for that reason, to hate him as long as they live, more especially when they find that he comes to know them. This knowledge, it is commonly thought, in such cases, a very necessary piece of wisdom to conceal. But I have not often seen young persons of honour and sensibility, who were so cautious: they could not suppress their honest indignation: and, to confess the truth, I loved them the better for it. Nothing in life can recompense a good mind, for the pain of perpetually stifling its emotions, and parrying, with the vigilance of a fencer, the strokes of envy or injustice. To shun forever those who are disposed to strike them, to pray for their amendment, and to set a better example, appears to me at once the wise and the Christian part, in situations of this nature.

To proceed but one step farther at present, let me say somewhat about forming connexions of the amicable kind, with men of learning. If they are also men of principle, and will permit you to repair with them to the temple of

friendship, you would be strangely wanting to yourselves did you neglect so happy an opportunity. If you have ground to believe that they are not men of principle, you cannot be too careful to avoid their intimacy: they certainly are, of all others, the persons who can hurt you in the most essential manner. What multitudes of youth, who were unfetted in their faith, have been ruined in their morals, by associating with ingenious libertines and infidels! Nor would I advise even the best established of my young auditors, to venture very freely among such company. I am sure, that no entertainment to be found there could make you an adequate compensation, should your minds be shaken, and at last your hearts corrupted, by cavils and witticisms, to the prejudice of virtue and religion, whether more or less avowed.

But suppose you do not run any risk of this sort, among those scholars whom you wish to make your friends: have you room to hope they will return your attachment? Do they appear to resemble that truly venerable and justly admired instructor and patron of youth, the Athenian sage; or that excellent Roman, the generous as well as accomplished Pliny, whose memory derives the highest honour from his indefatigable endeavours to befriend and promote, in every possible way, bashful and deserving young men, particularly those of his own profession?—Blessed Heaven! what is there in society, either noble or prosperous, which might not be brought about, on the same plan, by persons of eminence and talents at this day?

In ancient ages, the lovers of literature and philosophy seem, from their writings, to have been animated by an uncommon spirit for the best conversation, and the most friendly correspondence. It is one of the lights in which antiquity shines most conspicuous: it reflects a lustre on the hearts, no less than the heads, of many great men, by whom Greece and Rome were adorned in their politer periods. Such urbanity of wit and manners, such mutual readiness to listen with respect, to argue with modesty, to contradict with candour, and to approve when they could, like gentlemen and like friends, demonstrate an exalted vein both of sense and good nature, that cannot be sufficiently commended. Is it copied as it deserves, by the vo-
taries

raries of knowledge and erudition in these times? May I presume to say, that the selfishness and vanity of modern life has too often infected our men of parts themselves; and that many of them have betrayed jealousies and meanesses, to which it might have been expected their acquirements and their characters would have made them superior? It is matter of equal humiliation and regret, that the mind of man, even in its most cultivated state, so seldom rises to aught uniformly sublime or enlarged. A principal misfortune of this age is, that intellectual improvements are much more studied than moral; that when the understanding goes in quest of truth or science, and the fancy is smitten with objects of taste and criticism, the passions are commonly left to themselves, under as little control or regulation, beyond a certain smoothness of appearance and demeanour, as can be found among the lowest of the people. In general, no endowments connected with the heart are half so much regarded now as the refinements of a fashionable system, the fallies of a lively wit, or the brilliancy of external ornament. And yet I am inclined to think, that, in the eye of reason, none of these entitle their possessors to equal praise with the unaffected modesty of a Buccleugh, or the unwearied philanthropy of a Dingley, a Thornton, a Hanway, or a Howard.

Improvements in learning and the liberal arts ought undoubtedly to produce liberal sentiments, and an extensive benevolence; and when they have this effect, we can imagine nothing more estimable than themselves, or more desirable for youth, than to be intimate with such as are masters of them. But when distinguished taste and literary eminence are disgraced by pride, by envy, by rancour, or paltry rivalships, what shall we say?—What can we say, but that we should watch over our own tempers in our inferior scale of capacity, and feel a just concern for the frailties of human nature?—Meantime, I am happy in being able to inform you from the best authority, that the public will soon be furnished with full evidence, to prove Addison was by no means the jealous, dissembling and invidious character a celebrated contemporary wit and poet represented him. It will surely give universal pleasure, to see

see so vile a slander against so amiable and so useful a writer completely refuted.

Upon the whole ; without wishing to extinguish in your breasts a single spark of candour or generosity, we would only consult your ease and happiness, by advising you to correct those mistaken or exaggerated ideas, on the subject of this address, which might expose you to the severest disappointments, or even plunge you in the worst mischiefs. If you are treated by most of those about you with civility, if you receive from many of them marks of kindness, be thankful : it is more than has fallen to the share of thousands not less deserving : it is full as much as you could, with any probability, expect from the bulk of mankind. For the peculiarities of friendship you must look elsewhere : I mean, to the handful of singular spirits whom Heaven has moulded of finer materials, and animated with a portion of its own fire. If from amongst them you can each of you draw one, or two, or peradventure three, that shall correspond to your best sentiments respecting this most precious of earthly blessings, you are fortunate, you are happy indeed ! Trust me, Sirs, the lottery of life does not abound with such prizes—If you will not believe me, “inquire, I pray you, of former days ; ask of the generations that are past, since the day that God created man upon earth,” whether, in all their long succession, through the mighty track of time from the beginning till now, they have seen many men who could boast the possession of more than a few, a very few, well tried, thoroughly approved, truly sympathetic, and never-failing bosom friends !

A D D R E S S E S

T O

Y O U N G M E N .

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By JAMES FORDYCE, D. D.
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IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L . II .

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Address X.

ON FRIENDSHIP.

IT has been always supposed of courts, that they are particularly marked by false pretences to friendship; in other words, by the worst passions, or by the coldest indifference, under the warmest professions of respect and honour, attachment and service. But is there any reason for supposing, that such dissimulation is much less common in cities; or that it is not sufficiently practised in smaller societies, and more confined situations? in short, wherever wealth is possessed, or the desire of it strong; wherever vice has hardened the heart, or luxury enervated the soul. We have already seen, that, as society grows more highly polished, sincere affection becomes more rare. An earnest attention to appearance, a boundless ambition of splendor, an incessant study of conceit, in default of that genuine refinement which can only be attained by delicate minds—all these, so manifestly characteristic of the present age, co-operating with its more depraved dispositions, are powerful enemies to the purity and solidity of friendship. But, since youth is still easy of belief, and its credulity, in points that interest its regards, is often peculiarly dangerous, we have been at some pains to admonish you, my young auditors, against the deceits and errors to which you are most exposed on the side of your kindest propensities.

The last caution we presumed to offer, turned on the necessity of confining your expectations to a small number of bosom friends. The feelings that belong to such are, in truth, too important, and too discriminating, to be entertained for many persons by the same individuals. They resemble a fine river; which would lose its force and beauty

ty were it broken into numerous streams. The human heart cannot receive a multiplicity of objects into its most inward and favourite recesses : nor should any of you be forward to imagine, that you can be admitted there, by every man who professes good will, even supposing this profession never so true. If his mind is not exactly attuned to yours, it is impossible that you and he should unite in the finer accords of life : and yet with some other minds he may blend in a beautiful harmony ; as you, in your turn, may find those whose particular tones of temper and intellect shall be no less happily in unison with your own. And thus the concert of society at large will be more varied, more extensive, and more complete.

When we speak of friendship, we should carefully remember the distinction between that which is common and imperfect, and that which is peculiar and transcendent. The former should properly be termed acquaintance, familiarity, fellowship, being in fact little or nothing more : the latter, which implies the noblest alliance and closest communion that can subsist among men, the most intimate and endearing correspondence of principles, views, pursuits, and enjoyments, is alone entitled to the glorious appellation of friendship in its full force and emphasis. The former may be easily contracted, and as hastily dissolved, by the most trivial accident : the latter, however it may sometimes take its rise from circumstances apparently fortuitous and inconsiderable, is established only by time, by reflection, by a nearer and nearer intercourse, and a mutual approximation of hearts, till they at length meet and mix in one lovely mass, with an union so complete and so delightful, that they can never after be divided. The former often rests on the slightest grounds that pleasure, or profit, or humour, or amusement, among the slightest spirits, can furnish : the latter is always built on solid esteem, and reciprocal affiance, among persons of sense and probity. The first admits of many degrees, and is liable to many variations : the second is by its nature always exalted, and in its essence always uniform, though it may at particular junctures, through human imbecility, wear a different appearance. The first, we know, may take place between a great number : the last, we hear, can extend to a very few.

few. It has been even questioned, whether a man can have more than one friend, in the highest acceptation of that title. The first is subjected to a great variety of rules, restrictions, precautions, settled forms, and necessary guards: all these are generously despised by the last, which is too upright and honourable to require, too dignified and free to endure them. Once more—the former must be fostered and kept alive by observances, obligations, compliances, submissions, that are the effects of design, of study, of a system referring immediately to interests and gratifications of the selfish kind; while the latter is maintained by the vigour of its own native movements, and nourished by a spontaneous flow of affectionate feelings, kind offices, and confidential communications. In so many respects, gentlemen, does that friendship, which, as I said before, is common and imperfect, differ from that which is peculiar and transcendent; a difference long ago remarked by the best writers of antiquity, and which serves to prove this melancholy truth, that the sublimest relation in human life must necessarily be rare, as is the case with every thing excellent, since it can only exist among minds superlatively liberal and great, whose number, we have too much cause to suspect, never was, and never will be, considerable.

If this be true, what are we to think of those, whose undistinguishing vanity, or artificial plan, promiscuously includes, under the denomination of their friends, every worthless and every vulgar creature with whom they happen to have any connexion, no less than the most elegant and virtuous characters? For my own part, I am apt to conclude, that all who thus degrade the name of friendship, are strangers to its nature, and that such language is the contrivance of knaves, or the effusion of fools. I mean not, you may believe, to comprehend, in this charge, the professional mode commonly observed by a well-known religious sect, of calling each individual they address, Friend,—in imitation of an ancient idiom, which many of them have too much understanding and integrity to confound with the dictate of the heart, when it would express a particular and appropriating regard.

In looking round for the blessing we celebrate, some of you, who are struck with its superior dignity, may probably
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hope to enjoy it among those whose elevated rank should inspire them with elevated sentiments. That such are sometimes susceptible of genuine friendship for their equals, and for others nearly so, I have no doubt; but must take the liberty of saying, that I do not wish you to be too ambitious of cultivating close attachments among persons who are much above you in station. converse with them, if you will, as often as you have a fair opportunity, that is, as often as you can see them without being intrusive, or making yourselves dependent, or resigning any better object for their acquaintance. By this intercourse you may acquire a more extensive knowledge of the world, on many accounts useful, with a gentility of address and manner by no means to be neglected. But, as for that commerce of hearts which unites real friends, which supposes the utmost ease and freedom, which disdains every claim to superiority, and every air of stateliness, you have but little reason to expect it where your situation is very unequal.

There is no absurdity too gross to be swallowed by self-love, when long pampered. It is usual for people of birth to meet with such indulgence and submission in their earliest years, and as they grow up to find such respect and adulation paid them on all hands, that we are not to wonder if they commonly entertain much too exalted an opinion of their own importance. In reality, one would be tempted to think, they considered themselves as a species different from the rest of mankind, and imagined that all others are obliged by nature, as well as custom, to study them, to admire them, to applaud them, to serve them on every occasion, and to deem it a sufficient recompense, if they are graciously pleased to accept the humble tribute. Yet, would you believe it?—this absurd arrogance is often associated with the utmost meanness. There is no condescension, no humiliation, however low or mortifying, which those great ones of the earth have not, many of them, practised towards their inferiors, when they had a point to carry. But mark, I beseech you, with what facility they can lay aside, as well as put on, the mask! When they come to have no farther use for you, they will be capable of throwing you off, with a tranquillity

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the most undisturbed, and forgetting you, to all appearance, as completely as if you had never been known to them, or as if it were the privilege of quality not to blush at those things which would cover a plain man with confusion.

To adopt the words of a pious and eloquent preacher, formerly at the court of France, who, animated with a zeal as bold as it was enlightened, scrupled not to deliver the most unpalatable truths in the very centre of flattery—
“It is but seldom that the great enjoy the sweetness of friendship, or have much relish for the charms of being loved. They have not indeed esteem enough for mankind, to be touched by their affection. Prepossessed with a conceit, that others owe every thing to them, they fancy that they owe nothing to others. They are not sufficiently acquainted with the value of a heart. Long accustomed to receive fictitious regards, they become insensible to real tenderness. The respect due to rank they mistake for that which belongs to merit only. They are more solicitous to procure homage, than to engage attachment. Friendship being more sincere than adulation, and therefore less eager, less officious, appears to them a dry and barren thing. Friendship, that best resource under all the chagrins of life, that delightful bond of society, is to their feeling an uneasy tie, and to their taste an insipid pleasure.”

Is it necessary to say, that these remarks stand confirmed by a cloud of witnesses? Have you not read of multitudes, who, fascinated by the smiles, and transported with the professions, of “men of high degree,” long courted and long trusted them, till, disenchanting by their treachery or their caprice, they were forced, with the king of Israel, who knew them full well, to pronounce them “A lie?” You may believe he did not mean to apply so heavy a charge universally; and you may be assured we do not.

But if you ask, Why at all these pains to expose the worthlessness of the unprincipled great, with whom but few of you, comparatively speaking, can have much connexion? I answer, Because young men in particular situations have been often tempted by false ambition to give up their time, their independence and their integrity, for the precarious

precarious phantom of favour with those, whose attachment or confidence, even when purchased at so dear a rate, is only a transient humour, in which there is little sincerity, less zeal, and no steadiness : but these inconsiderate youth, bewitched by a species of vanity, which not many in the same circumstances are endowed with sufficient strength of mind to resist, and relying on the most deceitful of all possessions, have sunk at length into the lowest sycophants, and the merest slaves ; when, pray observe—had they scorned such debasement, and bravely exerted their talents in different ways, they might have secured the most solid and permanent advantages, with the additional consciousness of dignity and virtue.

In short, though we readily acknowledge, that persons of eminence, who confer lustre on their condition, instead of only receiving it thence, are worthy of double honour, and though we certainly think that you should behave to them accordingly, as occasion may offer, yet still we would advise you to seek the joys of friendship chiefly amongst your fellows, in that happy nearness of rank, that unbought complacency, and that unstudied communication of sentiment and kindness, without which friendship must ever be defective and unsatisfactory.

You will take notice, gentlemen, that I said, Nearness of rank : as not conceiving an exact equality requisite to the intercourse in question, though this has been frequently supposed. They, alas ! are ill qualified for the most delicate and generous of all unions, who would measure their regards by so trifling a consideration as that of standing a little higher in the scale of society. Spirits of true worth, and raised understanding, lose sight of such disparity, wherever they see a correspondent mind. Such disparity has, by some wise men, been accounted even desirable ; probably, as affording the means of greater usefulness on one side, whilst it supplied the other with opportunities of giving comfort and relief under the ceremonies and cares attendant on places of elevation.

We know that Jonathan, in his choice of a friend, overlooked a very wide difference of condition. The son and heir apparent of a king pressed to his heart a shepherd from the fold. “ The soul of Jonathan was bound up in
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the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." The obscurity of David's station had not been able to suppress, or hide, those extraordinary virtues and accomplishments, which were formed to kindle into a blaze the congenial bosom of the young prince : and this glorious youth preferred the sweets of such a friendship to all the luxuries of a court, to the prospect of royalty itself, and to that which human nature is perhaps least able to resist, a perpetual train of parasites.

Of princes in general, and others placed on the heights of life, it is a particular unhappiness, that as they have seldom the generosity to be captivated by merit alone, so they are seldom approached by those who have the fortitude to rely solely on that merit, and the virtue to disdain preferment or patronage when it is only to be gained by flattery. The greatest monarchs, indeed, have perceived, that not all their power and greatness, with the incessant soothing and obeisance which these procure, could yield them pleasure, without the participation and counsel of some person near them, whom they often wished to make a friend, but whom the infelicity inseparable from thrones would very rarely admit of being more than a favourite.

The most perfect friendship that can subsist in the case of subordination, or peradventure in any case but that of happy wedlock, is what obtains between a wise parent and a dutiful child, where there is much benignity on one side, and a well-taught mind on the other ; where the air and voice of authority are softened into the tone and aspect of superior graciousness, and the idea of obedience is forgotten in the alacrity of affection ; where there is no room for rivalry or jealousy, the parent delighted with the attention, respect, and tenderness of the child, and the latter transported with the venerable smiles, easy confidence, and lovely condescension of the former ; the former filled with the purest satisfaction to find his child rewarding his cares, answering his wishes, realizing his hopes ; and the latter contemplating his parent with piety, gratitude, and ambition to secure his esteem, to mitigate his troubles, and to support his age ; while both look forward with religious rapture to the days of eternity, when the one shall triumph in the thought, that he has been the instrument of adding

a new immortal to the number of the blessed, and the other shall regard and celebrate that instrument, under God, with endless sentiments of reverence and joy. I question, indeed, whether humanity affords a fairer copy of the friendship which the good maintain with their Maker, the great Father of spirits, than the intercourse now described: it carries with it such sanctity, is so free from all irregular and sinister motives, and unites so divinely the mildest and the noblest feelings of the soul. I congratulate those amongst you, that comprehend it from their own experience. There is not perhaps, on the part of youth, a stronger proof of beautiful sensibility, or a surer guard of right conduct. I have known some young persons, who, long after they lost their excellent parents, derived such sublime delight and edification, from the dear remembrance of those peaceful and improving years which they had spent in that best of societies, as always inspired them with a scorn of worthless and of low companions, of guilty connexions, and of noisy pleasures.

Spirits of so virtuous a strain want but little instruction upon the present subject. Minds of less elevation we would proceed to admonish against the delusive hope of forming, without very particular encouragement, a real friendship with those who are much their superiors in point of fortune; what was said on the last article applying pretty nearly to this. Here indeed we make exceptions, as we did there: but the admonition we offer appears peculiarly necessary in these times, when opulence, the figure it gives, and the splendor it is more than ever ambitious to exhibit, are continually glittering in the eye of youth, and firing the untutored fancy with extravagant ideas of the happiness to be reaped from being connected with its possessors.

Among the reasons why our Saviour pronounced it so "hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," may we not presume this to be one, that affluence seldom leaves the soul open to those benevolent affections, and holy sympathies, which constitute a principal part of true religion, and a main ingredient of future felicity? And wherefore, divine Master, were thy intimacies on earth almost always confined to persons in humble circumstances,

stances, but because there thy penetrating mind discovered the best dispositions, and there thy feeling heart could unfold itself with the greatest freedom ?

We allow indeed, that native liberality, exalted and fortified by principle, will prevent the selfishness and arrogance so apt to be engendered by riches ; and when this is the case, we are at a loss to say whether he is happier or nobler, who, having wealth, has also worth and understanding to improve it for the purposes of public beneficence and private friendship, without regard to any other considerations than those of propriety and merit meeting with the amiable impulses of his own bosom. To such a man—and some, more than some such men there are, even in these times—to such a man, reason looks up with reverence and love : religion smiles upon him as one of her most deserving sons ; and human nature is tempted to be proud of her relation to a character so honourable. Need I subjoin, that if you know such a man, and find him disposed to embrace you with amity, you have in more senses than one found a treasure ?

To him you may apply, on him you may lean, with safety and freedom. He is equally above the baseness of betraying you, and the meanness of turning his favours into a traffic. He, my dear hearers, is none of those wealthy barbarians, or purse-proud tyrants, who imagine they may insult or abuse, upbraid or overbear, because they have obliged. His liberal soul will dispose him to treat you the better afterwards, for having formerly served you ; and his feelings of delicacy, to reckon your confidence and attachment a rich reward for the greatest kindness he can confer ; as, in conferring it, they will teach him to shun every appearance of conscious superiority, on account of his situation. Next to the joy of “honouring God with his substance,” by works of piety and charity, he will deem it desirable, because it renders him more useful to the particular objects of his esteem and tenderness.

It may be observed, that many who are not rich themselves affect to despise those who are, and to talk of large possessions with a disdain which they do not feel. Without adopting their language, we cannot but think it one of the infelicities attendant on men of opulence, as well as on
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men of rank, that while they are perpetually encompassed by a cloud of flatterers, they can seldom be sure of having a single friend; how much soever their vanity may wish to mistake the simper of obsequiousness for the smile of complacency, or their ignorance to suppose that the badges of servility can be converted into what the scripture calls "the cords of love, and the bands of a man." Nothing but the consciousness of rectitude and benevolence, can thoroughly convince persons who unite sense to quality and fortune, that the professions, praises, and services of those about them, may be sincere. In proportion as men value themselves on external distinctions, their demands on the respect of others will generally rise; and often from a strange cause, namely, a secret apprehension of the weakness of their claim on the score of desert; like jealous usurpers, and despotic sovereigns, who are ever labouring to enforce by power what they cannot challenge by right. It is thy prerogative, O Virtue, to reign over "a willing people," and to know that the love of thy subjects is "without dissimulation."

But does not Solomon say, that "the rich have many friends?" He does. By these, however, he could only mean the tribes of dependents, mercenaries, and sycophants, that swarm about affluence, professing the highest regard without entertaining the least, any farther than it may concern their own interest. The wise king was too well acquainted with mankind, and had too just a notion of the friendly character, to fancy it could belong to the selfish and the fordid. Riches may purchase adulation and observance, the shouts of unmeaning applause, the caresses of prostitute beauty, and all the forms of a spurious friendship: but genuine respect and affection cannot be sold. Hearts, like wisdom, "are more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared with them." Like the attestations of truth, they can only be obtained by being merited; and if they are enjoyed, it must be like the blessings of religion, "without money and without price." Nor can rich men with reason take it ill, if they are estimated by others, on the same principle upon which they estimate themselves: if, when they seek to surprise you with the pageantry of fortune, and
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perhaps to overawe you with its pride, you pay them just so much regard as they can fairly challenge, for advantages which may be equally, or in a yet greater degree, possessed by the veriest fool, or the rankest knave.

Are you, Sir, desirous that I should prize you for better things than silver and gold? Do you reckon my attachment worth your care? You must engage me by your temper, by your conversation, by your manners. If these correspond to my sentiments and feelings, if you will leave me in possession of "the liberty with which God has made me free," and will treat me with confidential kindness, I shall deem myself happy in your friendship; and though I should never receive aught at your hands, I shall still love and honour you. But remember the terms of our commerce: I cannot sacrifice my understanding; I cannot force my principles; I cannot applaud when I do not approve, assent when I am not convinced, or, like the venal herd, cringe and fawn to yellow dust, or yet be persuaded that a fine house, a gay equipage, or a great estate can confer a right to domineer or to dictate. Should you mistake me, or forget yourself, so far as to expect this complaisance, and to show by your behaviour that you expect it, I must be excused; if I make my escape from the chilling influence of such company, to the genial society of unassuming and unaffected friends, where I can lay open my soul without restraint, and listen by turns to the enchanting voice of truth, of sympathy and of freedom.

It has been always remarked, that the most unpretending characters are those of intrinsic value and inward dignity. It is only to such, (and you will commonly meet them in the middle walks of life) that I would counsel you to resign your affection; for such only will return it, because they alone who perceive worth in themselves can cherish it in you. How often have we seen the honest sensations of nature, the beautiful tenderesses of youth, suppressed and deadened as men advanced to wealth and preferment? How often have we seen those, who on lower ground appeared sincere, benevolent, engaging, become unamiable, unfeeling, and artificial, when they rose to higher!

But when we warn you against the mistaken ambition of courting the friendship of those who consider themselves as much above you, we should be sorry to think of your contracting an intimacy with persons of an abject character, of sordid condition, or greatly your inferiors. A generous and seasonable condescension, indeed can never degrade you, but, on the contrary, will do you honour in every discerning, as well as Christian eye; whilst a supercilious behaviour is at once unworthy and contemptible, no less than offensive and disgusting: it is a sin against the majesty of our common nature, at the same time that it looks as if a man could not trust to his power of procuring respect by deserving it. Nor would we insinuate, that singular excellence may not be discovered in the shade of obscurity. But it will easily be understood, that, though distinguished virtue, wherever found, or however depressed, should still be cherished and revered, you ought in general to avoid any peculiar familiarity with those, whose want of repute might take from your consequence without adding to your improvement, or whose obnoxious situation might involve you in difficulties that would impede your success and your usefulness.

If you have chosen your friends well, and should at any future period find your liberality particularly called upon, to assist them under misfortunes, you cannot exert it too warmly. If touched by that celestial fire which flamed in the bosom of Jonathan, and some other heroic persons of the same stamp, you should display on such an occasion all the grandeur of disinterested zeal and self-sacrifice, so much the more glorious for you, though modern judges might pronounce it madness. But let it be remembered also, that your felicity in the progress of life, your advancement both in worth and breeding, and your acceptance among the good and wise, will depend not a little on your connecting yourselves early and closely with those who to sound morals join a sense of station, and a regard for fame.

We read in English story of a prince, who, though he disgraced his youth, by consorting with creatures far beneath him, of vulgar manners, and infamous lives, had yet the vigour and greatness of mind to atone for that debasement afterwards, by a conduct alike royal and exemplary.

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But it was a rare instance; and when we see young men let themselves down to such companions, whether from the petty vanity of being at their head, or from an unrestrained propensity to coarse pleasures, what can we think, but that, as they certainly betray a groveling taste for the present, so they will probably contract habits of incurable profligacy and meanness? There is not perhaps any thing relative to youth, more strikingly obvious, or more universally acknowledged, than the corrupting and ruinous influence of low company. One favourite associate of this kind shall have power, by his importunity and insinuation, by his flattery or banter, nay, by a smile or a frown, without speaking a syllable, to counteract and render fruitless, in a few moments, all that reason, authority, conscience, honour, interest, earth and heaven united can urge in recommendation of a right behaviour. But whilst you, my auditors, are intimate only with gentlemen, or such as, without the name, have yet in many respects the spirit and deportment of gentlemen, although without higher principles you may too often go astray, (I am sorry to think how often, so common is it now for that character to deviate from the strictness of its ancient rules) still however a sentiment of dignity, and a feeling of reputation, will prevent your total degeneracy: and, if to elegance of manners, and refinement of ideas, your friends superadd a regular piety and steady virtue, what is there beautiful, or good, or truly excellent, amongst men, to which you may not rise, by cultivating such a commerce?

In fine, I must conjure you to avoid a chosen familiarity with the vicious and the frivolous of whatever condition. I said familiarity, because it can never, among such persons, improve into the sacredness or stability of friendship; and I said, a chosen familiarity, because many of you may be often forced into their company by inevitable causes. Of those who mix with the world, there are comparatively but few whose independent lot leaves them the unlimited power of selecting their own society; and of them there are yet fewer who have the spirit or the sense to assert this invaluable privilege. In fact, the most part of rich men enslave themselves to the ceremonial of life, and to the humours of others, even more, very frequently,
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than persons of the most moderate fortunes. This is true, that he who values probity and peace beyond all secular gratifications, will certainly prefer a decent competence, with the liberty of enjoying undisturbed a small circle of worthy and sentimental friends, to the largest prospects of opulence, if that is to be obtained only by intimacy with the debauched or the dissipated. Give me, indulgent Heaven, give me for my dearest companion, the man or the woman to whom I can still repair, with virtue and tranquillity in my train; and from whom, when called away, I can retire without remorse, or the least painful retrospect on time mis-spent, sincerity forfeited, talents abused, business neglected, temperance or purity, benevolence or piety, good-nature or good-breeding, offended. Were fashionable friendships, and the common run of juvenile intercourse, to be tried by this test, in what light, think ye, would they probably appear?

Forgive me, gentlemen, if on such an occasion I speak with the utmost boldness. My duty to God, and to you, demands it. In his name I lift up my voice, to give you warning against a set of smiling miscreants, "that lie in wait to deceive, that sleep not except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away unless they cause some to err," amongst unheeding youth, whose looks, whose words, whose passions, whose appetites, they watch and study with an insidious eye, to find out how and where they may assail or undermine their innocence.

I will not attempt a minute description of the monsters whose regular occupation it is to seduce and destroy; who fatten in savage luxury, by selling to voluptuous men those spoils of female youth and beauty, which indigence, or idleness, or ignorance, has thrown into their clutches. May good angels protect you from so base and so barbarous a commerce! In the mean time inform us, ye magistrates and men of authority, why the thunder of the laws is not more frequently and more effectually discharged on such infernal foes of society. Is the brothel the place where the British youth should receive their education? Are panders and prostitutes the persons with whom they ought to contract an intimacy?

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But there is a species of tempters yet more pernicious, as they are less avowed. Mark them well. They wear the fairest aspect of courtesy, kindness, generosity. Alas, how attractive many of them appear! What pity that the faculties of pleasing should be so often debased into the instruments of ruin! Let me strip those polished perverters of their mask. They seem all affection, and fervour, and zeal. It is your entertainment, and your gratification, they profess to seek. They only aspire to the honour of introducing you to a free and happy life, or of aiding you in the chace, if already entered. Imagination dances to music like this. How delightful to follow such obliging direction! Can one doubt the sincerity, or resist the suggestions of such disinterested friends?—Such disinterested friends!—Credulous boy! to believe thus implicitly the pretences of those who would lead you astray from your duty, from your parents, from the path of wisdom, which your heart tells you in a sober hour is the only path of peace! You know not that all this while they are practising on your simplicity, for some purpose of their own; whether it be pleasure or gain, or importance, or perhaps the sad consolation of having one companion more in vice and misery, like that forlorn spirit who hopes to find some mitigation of his woe in plunging others into the same lost condition.

The characters I paint, feel at moments, that they are lost; and can their attempts to ensnare you be prompted by true regard? When they have accomplished their ends on an unwary youth, what is more common than to see them abandon him to wretchedness and infamy? Trust me, Sirs, the fellowship of men without principle, as they should be called, of men of honour, men of spirit, men of the world, as they call themselves, ought to be shunned like the pestilence. Even when they do not wish to taint you with the least degree of wickedness, their intimacy is still destructive. If you ask, how? I will tell you. It insensibly relaxes the nerves of resolution, warps the ingenuity of nature, contaminates the fancy, inflames the passions, pollutes the whole current of life in its source by instilling disaffection to religion, undutifulness to parents, aversion to authority, a disregard for the sabbath, a disbelief of the scripture, an irreverence for the name of God,
a contempt

a contempt of order and decency, a neglect of reputation among the virtuous and the grave, a rooted dislike to serious conversation, to serious men, to serious objects of every kind.

I say not that these effects are produced all at once, or that, by consorting with the giddy and the profligate, you will certainly proceed quite so far. But all experience confirms the general remark of the heathen poet, quoted by a christian apostle, that "evil communication corrupts good manners." It is sure to operate on the soul, as poison operates on the body, with more or less malignity as its composition is more or less subtle and potent. The person lives not at any age, least of all at that when the mind is known to be most susceptible, who can avoid taking a tincture from those with whom he mingles, not, as we hinted before, transiently and through necessity, but habitually and from choice. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed," said the deepest observer of life that ever existed among the sons of Adam. With what unequalled emphasis has he cautioned young men against the first approaches to familiarity with the bad! I say the first approaches, well knowing with what resistless and increasing rapidity those are drawn in, who venture but to touch on that dreadful whirlpool. Would to God his words were engraved on your hearts, in characters which no time and no temptation should have power to efface!—"Enter not into the path of the wicked; and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it: pass by it: turn away from it and pass away"—where the several ideas rise above each other with a beautiful gradation, and form altogether one of the most pointed and awakening admonitions that could fall from the pen of Wisdom. No; there is not in all her school a lesson of more importance, than that of shunning even the remotest tendencies to unnecessary association, or what is commonly termed friendship, with unprincipled men: in which number we do not comprehend only the debauched, the openly impious, or the scandalously profane; but the dissipated too; yes, the dissipated in the least criminal acceptation of that word, or those who, on a competition between duty and amusement, are accustomed

to prefer the last; transgressing, or forgetting, or superficially performing, the first, for the sake of enjoying more freely their light and airy pleasures.

I am not ignorant, that, when preachers and others inveigh against the trifling turn of the times, they must lay their account with being considered by many as rigid censors, or at best as mere declaimers. Provided no enormity is committed, provided the general rules of decorum are observed, Where, it has been frequently asked, is the evil of a gay life? I will answer the question, by asking another: is there no evil—remember, Sir, I talk to a being who calls himself rational, and believes himself immortal—is there no evil in such habits of listlessness and levity as indispose the soul for recollection, for devotion, for self-converse, for sober counsel, for reasonable society, for solid study, for genuine friendship, for every thing that can improve and ennoble her here, or train her to perfection and happiness hereafter? But is not this literally the case with those that resign themselves to idle and insignificant companions?

I will not speak now of the patriarchs or prophets, of the evangelists or apostles, whose elevated calling required, no doubt, an extraordinary spirit of abstraction from the customs and fashions of the world. But, were any others among the good and great characters recorded, in sacred or civil story—were any of them, I say, to revisit our earth, who do you think are the persons they would select for their associates and their friends? The trivial and the vain, the vagrant and the thoughtless; or the considerate, the staid, and the sober-minded? I appeal to your own conviction.

But perhaps you will plead, that, whilst we address you in this style, we forget your youth. What is there then about the profligate, or the volatile, that should render their communication preferable, in the esteem of young minds, to that of the discreet and the virtuous? By the last, I mean not those who only affect such qualities, who cannot, or who will not, distinguish between prudence and scrupulosity, between religion and gloom. There is a demeanour manly but not severe, sedate but not formal, often serious and often lively, unblemished and condescending

ing at the same time, that carries with it an attraction not to be found in any mode of behaviour taught by fashion, or applauded by fools. The joys of wisdom never end in a sigh, except it be the sigh of tender affection, or generous pity, by which the heart is made better, and consequently happier : nor does that venerable power prohibit or discourage the innocent sportiveness of wit, or even disdain its seasonable aid, though she checks those irregularities, and condemns that malignity, to which it is too often subject. Or can you really apprehend, that to be wise, it is necessary to be dull ; that a man's understanding will be the worse, for his having employed it on the best objects ; or his talents the less brilliant, for his not abusing them ; or his conversation the less cheerful, for his being easy in his mind ; or his manners the less pleasing and courteous, that his principles inculcate and inspire every kind affection ?

Trust me, young men, your deepest concerns will make no impression upon the frothy, whatever they may pretend : you can have no hold of the worthless, let them profess, promise, vow, or swear what they will. Habitual dissipation is utterly inconsistent with true sensibility ; and, however those who want virtue themselves may be compelled by their consciences secretly to revere it in you, be assured they will never cordially love it. Study the conditions, inclinations, and abilities, of those about you ; and, as far as probity will permit, make them subservient to your own advantage ; but look not for the sympathetic tear, the sweet emotion, the endearing intercourse, the sober and the candid counsel, the zealous assistance, the unwearied support, the unalterable fidelity, with the other lovely fruits of a heart-felt and well-rooted friendship—look not for these from such as are elated by rank, or hardened by riches, or enervated by sensuality, or carried away by the tide of folly.

Address XI.

ON THE SAME.

THEY whose minds are not formed by nature for the finest of all connexions, will be apt to consider what has been already offered on this subject as frivolous, unmeaning, and insipid : but better spirits will be happy to hear yet farther of an intercourse,

“ When heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,
“ Each other’s pillow to repose divine.”

For the gratification and improvement of such amongst you, the present address will turn upon a comparison between the solidity, beauty, and sweetness of friendship as subsisting, where indeed it only can subsist, in its genuine excellence, among persons of worth, and the poor wretched phantom which assumes its title among those of a different character. We mean to trace both through a variety of views and situations ; and from this induction of particulars we shall, I doubt not, sufficiently discover the infinite superiority of that holy, sublime, and immortal relation, to all the boasted ties which profligacy or vanity would fain dignify with so venerable a name.

If, beside affording pleasure and edification to the more affectionate part of our auditors, we could, by any thing we shall now say, awaken an emulation of their enjoyments in breasts less amiably disposed, we should reflect on this attempt with double satisfaction. It surely requires no extraordinary good nature, to find complacence in contributing to the felicity of others at so easy a rate.

We begin with observing, that rectitude of heart has ever been justly regarded as the only firm foundation of the union we recommend ; and that the species of friendship, which men destitute of principle profess for one another,

other, amounts to little more than combinations in vice, or at best, partnerships of interest, ambition, or amusement, without any real or durable esteem and confidence. That such men have often done great things in the way of generosity and zeal for their companions, and sometimes even greater things than several who in strictness of morals surpassed them, we readily acknowledge, whilst we sincerely regret, that the latter should allow themselves to be outstripped in any commendable quality. But it is certain, that constitutional kindness frequently operates, in a very powerful, though irregular manner, on minds much corrupted in other respects. And is it not probable, that libertines may be desirous of making some atonement to the world, and to themselves, for irregularities which neither can seriously justify; that, secretly humiliated by their inferiority to the virtuous in those instances, they would gladly outdo them in such as are consistent with their favourite inclinations, and that they flatter themselves with the hope of at last eclipsing, by the same of their liberality, persons whose reputation for strict honour and self-command appears to darken them? Or is it unlikely, that they expect to derive some consolation from thus strengthening their party against men of sober life, whom they never can forgive for daring silently to reproach them by a purer conduct?

But does it not, you will ask, seem as natural, on the other hand, that they should conceive a close attachment for one another, on account of their mutual resemblance, since it is universally agreed that similarity of character is among the strongest incentives to mutual affection? True; but a farther inquiry will arise, whether the affection in this case can ever be improved into the nobleness, the deliciousness, the permanency of friendship? I say, No. For in the first place, it depends on a correspondence of such dispositions, and such proceedings, as neither of the two persons supposed to entertain it, can heartily approve in the other, or in himself. Let licentious men do their utmost, they never will be able to procure for vice the calm, the settled sanction of the soul: and trust me, Sirs, you will find it difficult to love in good earnest, and with much perseverance, any one whom you cannot esteem, or

to continue your admiration of that in another, which you are forced upon reflection to condemn in yourselves. Nor will the greatest natural advantages, acquired talents, or external accomplishments, no, nor yet the most important services by which it is possible for a companion to recommend himself, be able in your better judgment, and at a cooler hour, to compensate the want of those moral qualifications, that clear integrity, that genuine worth, which can alone beget a rational, tender, lasting respect and reliance.

To flatter your vanity, to indulge your caprice, to promote your merriment, your pleasure, or your schemes of whatever sort, is one thing: to command the applause of your reason, and charm the feelings of your heart, is quite another. People of little delicacy can be gratified with favours from the foulest hands; and people of no sincerity can smile most graciously on those whom they despise or detest: but a man of virtue, though he may often see it necessary to make use of those who have none, and though he will always do justice to their abilities and actions so far as they merit praise, will never, never think of ranking them amongst his friends, or profess to treat them as such. True friendship has that purity of motive, that majesty of sentiment, as to shun and scorn the profane herd, those unhallowed and ignoble creatures who would offer to intrude upon its intimacy. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed? What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" Men who have lost, in the spirit of the world, the powers of just discrimination, and sweet sensibility, may say what they will: but benevolence and selfishness, truth and falsehood, humility and pride, can never happily coalesce or mingle.

This leads me to add, that there can be no cordial communication, where there is not a consent of minds, in those points which are exempted from the uncertainty of change, and the contention of rivalry; a privilege, which the objects pursued by the men of the world must never claim, and that is only enjoyed by those whose wishes spring forward into eternity. It has been well remarked, that good souls are kindred souls, because goodness is the same

same in every one, influencing the mind by the same principles, and pointing it to the same designs, in all the highest concerns of life. In reality, the ultimate aim of the best characters is alike directed to one great, unalterable, and undivided portion, which they wish and hope to enjoy together, in the regions of perfect friendship; while the bad are severally following some favourite interest here, in a thousand tracts which perpetually cross and interfere with each other. As their confederating principle is the gratification of their passions, it must unavoidably happen, that whenever those passions vary into opposite lines, as is forever the case, suspicions and jealousies, heats and animosities, will of course arise; and the same persons, who seemed yesterday inseparable friends, shall to-morrow become inveterate foes, from the mutability of their apprehensions, and the contrariety of their ends. The desires of bad men are like the unclean spirits described by our Saviour, as "walking through dry places, seeking rest and finding none." Believe me, gentlemen, it is only in the peaceful paths of wisdom and piety, that human beings can find a happiness, which, whilst it satisfies each individual, unites them in the bonds of divine and everlasting love.

The votaries of vice, and the fools of fashion, may vaunt, if they please, of their reciprocal regards, of that jovial society in which they try to relieve the weariness of appetite, and those polite visits which they pay one another, to escape from themselves: but, as they meet without cordiality, so they converse without confidence, and part with coldness, if not disgust. Such at least is the general run of those that have outlived the fondness of youth, to which indeed scarcely any thing comes amiss, but which, when it ceases afterwards to ferment the mind, leaves all there vapid and dead, if not excited by superior principles.

Have you never had occasion to observe those little pitiful guards and stratagems, and modes of imposition, commonly practised on both sides by the persons I refer to, and often at the very instant that he who saw not through the farce, would fancy them to be the kindest friends in the world? How contemptible and wretched!

Or,

Or, if you will suppose them linked together in a more confidential alliance, by means of some particular object which they are jointly pursuing, would you be surpris'd, if, destitute of probity, they engaged in plans or measures so dishonourable, that they could not but inwardly reproach one another for the ignominy of their conduct, and, on separating, say each to himself concerning his partner—“He is a knave?”—Go, ye unworthy men, and be proud of such a friendship, if you can.

Even in the common intercourse of society, a man of feeling is apt to be shocked at the discovery of deceit or dissimulation. The honest heart shrinks back from every kind of commerce, in which it cannot indulge its propensity to esteem and affiance. Talk to it of throwing itself open to the false or the hollow, and it turns away with indignant contempt. Be the manners ever so smooth, or the talents ever so captivating, or the address ever so fine : if the morals are unsound, if the character is doubtful, something within will whisper to him whom the world has not yet corrupted, Stand upon your guard against such an associate : but if a person has proved himself a cheat, or a dissembler, they must be insensible, or infatuated, with a witness, who can ever think of making him a friend.

Prudence says, you should not trust a drunkard with your secret, nor a gamester with your estate, nor a hackneyed courtier with your interest, nor an artful debauchee with your sister, your wife, or your principles, nor a rash man with your safety, nor a passionate or a capricious man with your peace and comfort, nor a foolish man with aught you value, nor any man with your reputation who disregards his own. But, if this be true, can you want farther demonstration to be convinced, that every one of these is incapable of friendship? Can you believe, that those who are under the power of fancy or appetite, of fashion or humour, may yet be depended on for their fidelity, discretion, or constancy, in a cause which requires the greatest? Can you believe, that those who have betrayed others, will certainly never betray you; that those will offer the best counsels, who habitually follow the worst; or that they, who are ready to make the most im-

proper compliances with such as they call their friends, will not look for any from you, should you admit them to familiarity?

It must here be remembered, as a maxim of main importance on this article, and a maxim uniformly inculcated by the most admired moralists from the days of antiquity, that no friendship can bind you to do an ill thing, or justify you in doing it. Why? Because the obligations to duty at large are prior and superior to all the ties of that particular relation, as indeed they are to those of every other one, how respectable soever it may be within its proper boundaries. Nor should it be forgotten, that, as the immediate operations of friendship are necessarily confined to a narrow sphere, namely, the individual to whom they point, so they must be always subordinate to the pursuit of more extensive interests, those of our family, of our country, of our religion, of mankind: and, if the dearest friend we have on earth, should solicit or tempt us to transgress, on his account, or any account, a clear law of nature, or a plain dictate of conscience, he must be denied, he must be withstood to his face. I appeal to yourselves. "Whether we ought to obey God, or man, judge ye." On this ground, and none I think can be more solid, or more comprehensive, may we not finally conclude with the fullest evidence, that it will be impossible for you to "hold fast your righteousness," and maintain at the same time a close friendship with corrupt men, since they will be frequently demanding, or expecting from you compliances irreconcilable to virtue, so that you must either renounce her or them? But need you to be told, that you had better break with all the world than with your Maker, or yourselves?

In whatever view then we consider this matter, it will still be found, that a mutual, prevailing, and permanent sense of goodness is the only invariable centre of the union in question; and that the unsanctified leagues and fashionable intimacies, which borrow its name, are little better than ropes of sand, that have neither consistency, reality, nor beauty.

Let us next compare them in point of delight. And here we will suppose a small select society of intelligent, good-natured,

good-natured, and well-disposed youth, amongst whom the stiffness of ceremony, the sharpness of raillery, and the venom of envy, were wholly excluded; who, drawn together by the conspiring impulse of kindred dispositions, seized every opportunity of meeting at a distance from noise and nonsense, to enjoy undisturbed “the feast of reason, and the flow of soul.” We will suppose, that this happy society understood how to blend reflection upon the sublimest themes with the sprightliness of candid wit, and all the agreeable colouring of fancy; that with confidence and safety they unboomed themselves on whatever was most interesting to each; that they often consulted on projects of private improvement, public usefulness, and virtuous fame; that they spoke their opinions on every head with modest freedom, and listened to one another with respectful attention; that they frequently diversified and enlivened conversation with that sort of reading in which entertainment is the vehicle of instruction; in a word, that without apprehension, and without study, they gave scope to the finest effusions of the mind, and of the heart. And now imagine that you behold this chosen band in those passages where they appear most visibly affected by the communications of friendship. An honest rapture glows in their countenances: every eye beams with benevolence and sentiment: every bosom catches from the rest additional ardour on the best subjects; and all present receive and give a felicity which is multiplied by the collision and rebound of ideas, and which, as the social spirit rises and still rises, is kindled into a flame of sacred enthusiasm, that runs with resistless energy through the whole amiable circle—Amiable indeed, and blessed, if any thing amongst men can deserve such epithets! Would it not resemble in part what we have been taught to believe of heaven? Would not the angelic spirits who are sent forth from that world by the common Parent, “to minister to the heirs of salvation,” be almost induced to suspend for a while their higher harmonies, in the pleasing contemplation of their mortal brethren, thus emulating some of their employments; and when they witnessed, though invisible, a scene of so much happiness, would not their friendly natures experience new accessions of transport,

port, and at last dispose them, by a kind of divine sympathy, to burst into louder and yet louder tones of praise?— Say not that the scene we paint is impossible, because it is rare. So are all the more exalted forms of humanity in a degenerate age. Think not that the little ring of friends, we have figured, would affect a refinement above the reach of men. What is there of innocent diversion, or convivial joy, which they might not, on every proper occasion, mix with their nobler intercourses? Would mirth and festivity have the worst relish for being corrected by temperance, and seasoned with wisdom? When our young friends parted to business or retirement, with what sincere satisfaction would they review the hours they had passed together; and when they recollected the undissembled approbation by which they had encouraged each other to excel, how sweetly would the expressions of it be repeated by the echoings of conscience! With what augmented vigor and alacrity would they advance to the remaining conflicts of virtue, while their ears, so to speak, resounded with the gratulations and triumphal shouts of their confederates and fellow-foldiers!—When I think of this, I cannot help imagining to myself, however imperfectly, the holy exultation that must have swelled the soul of a Nathaniel, of a Lazarus, of a John, every time they reflected on the testimonies of complacence and affection, with which they were privileged by the great Model of friendship.

That friendship is not authorized by Christianity, has been alleged without foundation. Though not directly enjoined in our Saviour's discourses, it is yet powerfully enforced by his example. Who has not heard of "the disciple whom Jesus loved," honouring him in his life with distinguished tokens of esteem, and at his death with a mark of confidence that could only proceed from particular attachment; I mean, in committing to the filial protection of that disciple, rather than any of the rest, his helpless and sorrowful mother, whom, in the true spirit of the purest friendship, he thus left him as the most precious legacy he could bestow.

By the way, this recalls to our remembrance the very beautiful story of three friends, one of whom being about

to die, and having nothing to leave but an old mother; and a daughter unmarried, bequeathed them to the other two, who were in better circumstances; with an express desire that one might cherish the ancient parent, and the other portion the young woman, whom he was to see prosperously married; or, if he lived not to discharge that agreeable office, the first was to have the pleasure of performing it. Bequests so extraordinary, failed not to draw sufficient ridicule on the testator, from vulgar minds; but the heirs accepted them with much contentment. However, he who received the young woman having died some years after, the only surviving friend took her under his care, and in a short time disposed of her in wedlock, the same day with an only daughter of his own, settling upon her an equal share of his fortune. Here, it will be allowed, was an illustrious display of friendship on all sides: but to me, the sentiment of him who made the will appears the most glorious, as manifesting the most exquisite sense of the claims which belong to that elevated relation, and the most obliging reliance on the worth of the executors. Their generous hearts he measured by the noble feelings of his own, which told him, that if the situations had been reversed, he would have been happy to undertake and fulfil the charge he now gave. But to return to our Saviour:

Who has not heard of his frequent and familiar visits to the family of Lazarus, of his singular attestation to the piety of Mary, of his friendly admonition to the anxious Martha, and of the tenderest sympathy he showed for both at the grave of their excellent brother, whom he literally terms their and his friend? But why the discriminating affection we speak of is not inculcated by any precept of the gospel, has been very naturally accounted for on principles in which all are agreed. How should that be made the object of a command, which is purely a matter of free choice, and so delicate in its nature as to render the meeting with those who are qualified for it, altogether uncertain? The institution of Christ was designed to enlarge the hearts of men beyond that contracted policy of states, and those partial regards for individuals, which had warped and engrossed them: to inspire universal benevolence, and estab-

tablish among mankind a general brotherhood, to which the peculiar and appropriated alliance under consideration is, if not duly balanced, in some danger of proving unfavourable. But still, wherever the charitable and comprehensive virtues, implanted and propagated by our holy faith, have taken the deepest root, there the best friendships will not fail, if other circumstances concur, to be cultivated with the greatest advantage. Of the primitive believers, into whose bosoms the spirit of their Master had descended with full force, we are expressly told, that, "they were of one heart, and of one soul; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed were his own, but they had all things common." Perhaps it would be difficult to describe the power and empire of friendship in stronger words.

If you look into the history and writings of St. Paul in whom the gentle and the heroic affections which adorned the Author of our religion, appear to have been eminently united, you cannot but observe that he breathed the very flame of friendship for those who were his more immediate associates and auxiliaries in the cause he had espoused. And then, if you look back into the Old Testament, of which the moral tendency coincides perfectly with that of the New, you will find this high relation both exemplified and celebrated with the utmost beauty, as we remarked on a former occasion.

But, alas! whilst we reflect on these things, we cannot but feel some discouragement in recommending a connexion which is now so seldom beheld in its primeval splendor, and of which the present selfish and inglorious system of dissipation and luxury leaves us so little room to hope that it can now be often realized in its full extent. Do ye, however, wish to possess the surest means of mitigating your misfortunes, of relieving your anxieties, of solving your doubts, of doubling and exalting your pleasures; of disentangling, multiplying, and brightening your ideas; of regulating and maturing your judgments and imaginations; of being admonished with good nature when you are wrong, and animated when you are right with generous praise; of obtaining faithful advice when you want it most, without superior airs of wisdom,—kind attention to your conduct,
when

when you are least on your guard, without officiousness or scrupulosity,—unwearied assistance, without noise or ostentation, wherever your welfare or comfort in any shape requires it; and finally, of disclosing with safety the dearest secrets and inmost sensations of the soul? We still hope such felicity may be found. Such felicity will be found by those that are the favourites of Heaven. To find it, you who love whatever is happiest, and most divine, will not account any possible pains too great. A virtuous, intelligent, and feeling friend, will richly reward you: and having found him, you will beware of forfeiting the inestimable prize.

A well-formed friendship indulges not false delicacies; but, as it practises, so it demands those that are real.

“ Reserve will wound it, and distrust destroy.”

A generous openness and unsuspecting confidence are amongst its chief attributes and preservatives. He who first taught the maxim of conversing with our friends as if they were some day to become our enemies, might be deemed by himself and his disciples wonderfully wise: but the affectionate and the noble will abhor that frigid caution, which would rob the heart of its highest enjoyment, the pouring itself out with fulness and freedom on those subjects that interest it most. The sublime spirit of friendship never inspired their breasts, who would regulate its movements by the sordid rules of political management. Let me be repeatedly deceived by the perfidious, and laughed at for my simplicity by the cunning, rather than submit to be the slave of suspicion, and chained up by pitiful fears, and miserable jealousies, at the very moments that nature pants to break through the trammels of art, and fling herself without restraint or study into the bosom of a friend.

Not that the laws of prudence or propriety are to be wilfully violated in this commerce. He that has a true respect and tender affection for another will treat him well of course, and would tremble at the thought of affronting or hurting the man whom, of all others, he most wishes to please. Gross familiarity, and offensive manners, are not perhaps more repugnant to the character of a lover, than of a friend. There is, in both connexions, something that
tends

tends to polish and to soften ; though the last will never, like the first, be in danger from effeminacy. In the beginning of a fervent friendship, the common forms of life may possibly be omitted without much hazard : but when the intercourse is no longer new, and its first ardour is somewhat abated, they will often be necessary to prevent that disgust or indifference which is produced by a blunt and unguarded behaviour ; though they must never be suffered to banish sincerity, or ease, without which friendship is instantly transformed to insupportable ceremony, or polite dissimulation.

Would you preserve the attachment of a person raised above the vulgar in his views and dispositions ? It is not to be done by courtship, bribery, or expensive gifts ; things which have no connexion with the sensibilities of a good mind ; but by the continuance of those virtuous qualities that originally engaged him, accompanied with sweet attentions, and little seasonable marks of remembrance and regard, which will show you to be occupied with the image of your friend, independent of important occasions to call it up, and which the friend will not estimate by their intrinsic value, but by the amiable propensity that is forever prompting them.

In friendship, as in love, the least trifle is of consequence, when meant for a token of affection. Where this union is happily formed, that mighty magician, the heart, touches every link of the chain into a peculiar lustre. Those who can only be attracted or bound by lucrative considerations, and continual favours, are not friends, but mere courtiers, or politicians. If you, my dear youth, are cast in a better mould, though you will be always ready to render the man of your choice the greatest service, you will never think of exacting the smallest in return. If he is acquainted with your situation, you will leave him to judge what he can do for your interest ; and you will accept his assistance with pleasure, not as the payment of a debt, but as a free-will offering, a new proof of his friendship, and a farther incentive to yours. If he is ignorant of any difficulty or distress in your condition, which you know it is not in his power to remove, you will not be always forward by explaining it, to give him fruitless inquietude.

etude. A mind truly noble will often devour its anguish in secret, rather than inflict too much pain on another by unnecessary communication. There is infinite delicacy in that parable of our Saviour, where he represents a poor good woman, probably a lonely widow, who had lost a part of her little store, seeking it by herself with silent uncomplaining solicitude, and when she had found it, calling her friends and her neighbours together, that they might rejoice with her on the occasion; thus careful to save them from every degree of uneasiness, and desirous of sharing with them only her joy. Generous sentiments are always great, but most so when seen in low circumstances.

I would not indeed advise you to look for them very frequently in any station. Never put your friends to too severe a test. Never expect from them too much. Contemplate their excellencies with delight: look upon their frailties with forbearance: celebrate the former, when you can do it without danger of exciting envy, inflaming malignity, or diverting dullness: spread over the latter the veil of secrecy, if they are not known; and if they are, apologize for them when you have an opportunity, but in such a style as not to encourage imitation, or furnish folly with an excuse. He that can hear the man whom he professes to love and honour, ridiculed or censured in his absence, and not defend him as far as reason will allow, is a coward; and should he be base enough to join in the jest, or the satire, a baseness by no means uncommon, he is a traitor into the bargain. I am sorry, for the sake of human nature, to observe how few persons have the probity or the fortitude, to speak up for a friend, who is not present to plead his own cause, when attacked by malice, or by ignorance. In a world where so many are busy to invent scandal, and so many more to spread it, would you show yourselves actuated by true friendship? Never give up its object to any individual, or to any company, for any consideration upon earth; nor finally credit aught to his disadvantage, which you do not see with your own eyes. Where this rule is not observed, there can be no cordial or constant attachment. "A whisperer separateth chief friends," was a remark of Solomon; and we may subjoin,

that those who listen to the voice of slander will never be happy in themselves, or steady to others. The truth is, it cannot be hoped, that they should be steady to others who are not happy in themselves. Habitual disquietude undermines all the finest affections.

If fidelity be the first law of friendship, candour may well be reckoned the next. Indeed, the one will not be observed, if the other is neglected : that is to say, if there is not a prevailing disposition to be pleased as well as to please, to put the fairest interpretations on doubtful appearances, and to make every kind allowance for error and infirmity, for starts of temper, for inequalities of manner, for incidental and transient relaxations of zeal and fervour, for hours and days of flatness, insipidity, and seeming indifference ; for every thing, in short, but insolence, vice and treachery. What pity, that, of all things good and rare in society, the best should be the rarest, I mean an uniform reciprocation of good-humour and mild forbearance !

We proposed, as you will remember, to set forth the superior felicity of true friendship. We began the attempt, but soon felt a damp from the observation of life, so little encouraging to the sweet enthusiasm of our subject. What we have been led to add will help you, gentlemen, to conceive why this admired relation is so seldom productive of the delicious fruits you are taught to expect from it by its fond panegyrist of every age. If men will bargain for affection, which can never be bought, or mistake the frolics of the blood for the feeling of the heart ; if they will turn friendship into a negotiation, or an adventure ; if they will choose its objects, without regard to character, understanding, or any solid and permanent merit, attached only by what is calculated to amuse the fancy, or gratify the passions ; or, if having made a better choice, and acting on higher motives, they afterwards forget to “ show themselves friendly,” are indiscreet or indelicate in their intercourse, unreasonable in their requests, or sanguine in their expectations ; suspicious or splanetic on slight occasions, easily provoked, but not easily reconciled ; fonder of new than of old connexions ; capricious, variable, or uncertain ; apt to reveal the trusted secret, or resign the assailed reputation,

tation, whether through want of faithfulness or want of resolution; can you wonder that in these cases, and others of a similar kind, the alliance we are recommending appears not to answer the exalted ideas you have been accustomed to entertain of its beauty and efficacy? Is it surprising that a flash of lightning should not possess the steady lustre of the sun; or yet, that the sun, when obscured by clouds, should not gild and gladden the creation, as when he breaks forth in all his brightness?

But let us now for a moment recollect the benign effulgence with which we have sometimes beheld that higher luminary, true friendship, irradiating and cheering such hearts as were framed to receive and reflect its rays; and, when full of this image, let us contrast with it the illusive and transitory glare of that which apes it in the mutual professions of men without principle or sensibility. However specious those professions may seem, they cannot, I think, give much delight to any but the conceited or the credulous; for, in the first place, what security can persons destitute of worth, or of feeling, ever have against perpetual deception from one another? how be ascertained of their regard who want integrity? or what room is left for unsuspecting reliance, where the selfish passions predominate on both sides? And in the second place, what satisfaction can be derived to the soul from the highest compliments, or the loudest acclamations, when they are not seconded by her voice? Believe me, Sirs, when she refuses to join her sweet symphony of inward approbation, the most laboured strains of praise from without, are but "as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

You have not forgotten the little circle of virtuous and intelligent young men, whom we represented as enjoying together the concert of minds. Think of them again, and then figure to yourselves a knot of foolish and dissolute youths, assembled under the notion of friendship, for their reciprocal gratification. Let us see what mighty contributions they can bring to the common stock of pleasure. Far be it from me to conceal their talents, or suppress those achievements by which they are ambitious of displaying their zeal for their associates. I readily acknowledge they can feed conceit, foment inclination, remove the embar-

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rassment of blushing, and harangue in honour of debauchery : they can laugh at order, authority, virtue, religion, and their advocates ; depreciate the female sex, maintain with the poet, that “ every woman is at heart a rake,” and give much information concerning those of the worst fame : they can fill up with ribaldry the vacuities of wit, make a mock of sin, and call hell a bugbear.” The language of obscenity, the cup of intemperance, the sneer of scepticism, and the bluster of oaths, they can circulate with a freedom which they conceive to be prodigiously brave. By these means they assist one another very notably in the ways of vice, encourage the forward, embolden the fearful, dispel some troublesome scruples, and for a while at least lull others asleep. Ah, ye infatuated boys ! could you lull them asleep forever ; could you prevent them from waking in darkness, in distress, or in death ; could you secure your companions from the future vengeance of a guilty mind, you would then indeed do something ; and though even then we might not allow you to merit very eminently the title of friends, we should yet own, that you surpassed many who assume it. But you of this audience, whom we wish to preserve from such dreadful friendship, tell us, what is there in all the impertinence, revelry and profaneness to which we refer, that can challenge the character of real joy, or compensate the loss of rational, manly and refined communication, where cheerfulness and amusement are not precluded, but, on the contrary, heightened by a judicious mixture of seriousness and reflection ; where all the harmless unbendings of merriment are found consistent with the strictest rules of a liberal piety ; where the streams of good-humour are fed by the fountain of a good conscience ;—what shall I say more ? where sense, and decency, and truth, and knowledge, affection engendered by esteem, and confidence inspired by both, concur to sweeten and dignify the whole ?

Address XII.

ON THE SAME.

WHENCE is it, my respected auditors, that in proposing a plan of high enjoyment, drawing a character of true heroism, or describing a scene of action which shall both interest and charm, the best judges of life have generally been careful to represent friendship as a principal part? The reason must be sought in the sensations of the soul. Whatever she finds most affecting, noble, or delightful on other accounts, would still appear to her defective, without some particular reference to this superior communion of minds: an image from which, accordingly, the descriptive and imitative arts have often derived their chief power to please, and to move. In a word, though men may be frequently entertained and excited by objects that borrow no assistance from the idea now mentioned, it is certain they are never so fully gratified, or so feelingly impressed, as when the friendly strings of nature are touched with the greatest skill, and taught to yield the truest harmony.

But there is no situation in which this beautiful effect is experienced with such advantage as in distress. Then, indeed, the heart feels a peculiar impatience to pour its story into the ear of a friend, and receive from the mere communication a degree of relief not to be obtained from the whole world beside. The sympathetic tones with which it is answered by a spirit in unison, are then celestial ravishment. The starting tear, the rising sigh, the tender look of fellow-feeling, are, even without a word spoken, like precious balm to the wounded breast. But who can sufficiently express the consolation which anxiety, disappointment, dependence, sorrow, contrition, remorse when

sinking into despair, have derived from the cordial influence of holy friendship? Well might it be termed, "the medicine of life." A state of suffering has been always considered as the surest test of its value, and the noblest sphere of its operation. Will you indulge me with a patient hearing, if, in one address more on this inexhaustible theme, I proceed to show you some of the comforts enjoyed in a virtuous friend at seasons, when the leagues formed by vice are impotent and vain, disgusting and vexatious?

They are seldom, perhaps, more so than under the restlessness and anguish attendant on a sense of guilt, when roused by affliction from the slumber in which ease and flattery had lulled it. Grant, Sir, that the companion of your gayer hours, who soothed your follies, and shared your riots, afterwards manifested, on your falling into adversity, a tenderness and solicitude not very common among persons of his character, who have been often observed to abandon in their greatest need those that in their prosperous days they loaded with protestations of fidelity. Suppose this more honourable associate to employ his utmost endeavours for your succour: but that in the meanwhile your calamity presses, your spirits are dejected, and a recollection of past misconduct awakens the terrors natural to conscious iniquity; terrors which, when they rise in their full strength, can shake the stoutest sinners to the foundation. In this sore trial, how shall he support or console you? he, I say, whose passions and principles are of the same unhappy cast with your own? How shall he open in your mind those sources of penitence and peace to which he is himself a stranger? Perceive you not at this instant, that his visits, his conversation, his attentions, all the proofs of sympathy which he can give you, must ever be inadequate to circumstances like yours, having "no relish of salvation in them," no reference to futurity? Perceive you not that your inward perturbation must, instead of being allayed by any thing so superficial, receive an increase from the very presence of the man, who, during your wild career contributed only to stimulate and blind you, as it brings to your remembrance transgressions which you wish to be buried in eternal oblivion?

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But now suppose a man of virtue to have been thrown off his guard, and by some grievous deviation, to have lost the joys of innocence : suppose him agitated by the painful reflection, and anxious to regain his former path. Let him lay open his condition to a wise and pious friend : let that friend address him with the eloquence of kindness, compassionate the frailty of his nature, remind him of the mercies of his Creator, point his “labouring and heavy-laden” soul to the great Restorer of fallen humanity ; and encourage him to rise in the strength of Heaven, and pursue his way thither with augmented vigilance and steadiness—where shall we find language to set forth the comfort, the hope, the humble but joyful sense of divine forgiveness and immortal triumph, that such communication will diffuse through his bosom ? Would you wonder if the friendly visitant should in this case appear to his enraptured thoughts as some ministering seraph, sent from the throne of goodness to his relief, or if such seasonable words should vibrate in his ear like the melodies of paradise ?

It is no uncommon remark, that friendship has been given more especially to the afflicted, for lessening their troubles by dividing them : and may we not add, that in subjecting man to so much evil, it was probably one main purpose of Providence, to furnish a larger field for the exercise of this divine affection ? There is not, we are certain, in all the attractions of prosperity, that power of inciting friendship, which it is sure to find in the distress of its object ; so mercifully has the Almighty contrived, that its energies shall then be most ready and efficacious when they are most useful and necessary. It is apparent from history, that the highest strains of this virtue have been usually discovered in such conjunctures of public affairs, as exposed the properties and lives of individuals to the greatest danger ; those magnanimous qualities, which enter into the composition of a noble friendship, being then more strongly kindled into action, and the human mind exalted by the importance and arduousness of the occasion above its ordinary pitch ; as if the production of heroes, and that of friends, depended on one and the same cause.

We have seen a writer, who carries his praise of the character we are surveying, so far as to intimate, that its participations are capable of impressing on difficulty, hardship and sadness, something sweet and engaging beyond all that can be found in a pleasurable lot. In truth, I am persuaded, that a man of sentiment rarely feels himself so deserving of respect, as when tenderly touched with the misfortunes of a friend, and earnestly employed to relieve them; nor have I any doubt, but the more strenuous his efforts are in such a cause, and the sharper his sufferings, his heart will swell with the happier consciousness, and look down with the greater superiority on whatever is deemed by men of the world most magnificent or voluptuous. Beatific friendship, celestial power! how pre-eminent are the pleasures inspired by thee above all that vice or folly can boast! The latter, it is well known, cannot bear reflection: the former, it is equally certain, can not only support the strictest, but are renewed, improved and heightened by it; and the soul applauds her choice, even when she suffers most severely from any distress which befalls her partner: the pain she endures on that account is by thy divine spirit consecrated into virtue, and sublimed into enjoyment. What dignity, what felicity must have elated the soul of Pythias, when, without application on the part of his friend, he offered himself as hostage, under forfeiture of his life, if the other did not return on a certain day, from visiting his family, to suffer the unprovoked vengeance of a tyrant! What heroic and rapturous sensations must have fired in their turn the breast of Damon, when he flew on the wings of zeal to ransom the life of the man who preferred his safety to his own! Glorious contention! How much unlike the miserable competitions of modern effeminacy and dissipation!

While the generosity natural to young men still prompts them to entertain exalted ideas of friendship, they are too apt to be driven by their passions into an eager pursuit of pleasure, amusement, variety and fame among crowds. To sparkle in the view of numerous spectators, as persons of taste, in what relates to gaiety and figure, is frequently their highest wish. With this aim, they are led to court a large acquaintance; and many others being as idle and

as vain as themselves, they find no difficulty in widening the circle of their companions. As they choose with little nicety, and proceed with little moderation; as novelty is soon exhausted, and contest is forever arising where the prizes are but few; it often happens, that before they have advanced very far, they are weary, disappointed, mortified. The human heart is not formed to be long at ease, in the midst of tumult and rivalry. Fatigued and chagrined, time after time, our youthful adventurers are willing to retreat from the bustle, and to enjoy a friend or two in private. But how seldom do they pitch on those who can compensate the vexation they have undergone in so tiresome and fruitless a course, by helping them to improve their experience, and turn their feet into the paths of peace and true glory! On the contrary, the very men they have selected for their chief favourites are generally disposed to lead them, by their conversation and example, yet farther astray, and to harden them against every salutary conviction, in those languid pauses of indulgence and ambition, with the hopes of new and higher delight in the same way. Thus are they trained on to fresh folly and disappointment: those friendly affections, which should be their solace, are only the occasion of more misery; and life is worn away without satisfaction, and without significance. How different the case of him, who, having learned early to make a right choice, can from the hollowness of popular objects, and the jostlings of the giddy throng, take refuge amongst a few individuals qualified to advise, and cherish, and comfort him in the best manner; to aid his virtue when it shakes, and by their approbation to confirm its victories!

It is a well-known remark, that the different periods of rational life have their respective and peculiar advantages. In the number of those which youth has over age, may we not reckon its being so much more easily pleased? At least we may question, whether the benefits acquired by greater experience and maturer reflection often countervail the loss of this happy facility. In many instances, we are sure, the observation of Solomon holds true, that "he who increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." Those of the clearest discernment in men and manners find

find the fewest characters to their taste; and while the raw and the undistinguishing can take infinite pains to attract and seem attracted wherever they converse, persons of a more enlightened and delicate spirit are still for lessening the sphere of their intimacies, and look upon a multitude of acquaintance as fortunately exchanged for a single friend, to whom they can fly as to an inviolable sanctuary from the officiousness of the weak, the persecutions of the wicked, and the perplexity of their own minds. To say the truth, such a friend is a world in himself, and will be valued accordingly by every one who has sense and worth enough to appreciate him.

The comfort of this intercourse is peculiarly relished in retirement. In that situation, which cannot be always avoided even by those who dislike it most, what shall they do to beguile the time, without some companion, who can divert their weariness, and enliven scenes which no beauty of nature, or elegance of art, or affluence of fortune, could long render amusing to the uninformed, the restless, and the gay? To such, indeed, a state of this kind, continued for never so short an interval, grows insupportably tiresome and gloomy: to such the sun shines in vain, and the fields, the gardens, the woods, and the rivers, (so delightful to poets, philosophers, students and sentimental spirits) are all uninteresting and dull. The consequence is, that such must quickly fall back upon their own minds; where finding neither variety nor satisfaction, they sigh for some favourite acquaintance who shall call out their feeble ideas,

“And whirl them! (happy riddance) from themselves.”

At length the much-wished visitant appears: they are relieved like a prisoner just escaped from his solitary cell. Creation seemed to them a prison whilst alone: the society of a single intimate brightens and embellishes the whole theatre around them: they acquire new vivacity; and their faculties, whatever these are, expand by communication. In truth, one had better speak to a statue than keep his thoughts long pent up in his own breast. But, ye powers of sensibility, what words can paint the attractions which the participation, the voice, the demeanour, the very aspect of a true friend diffuses on every object,

ject, to those that are formed for enjoying a well-timed recess! Have not some of you, Sirs, experienced this enchanting effect? With the gaiety of heart inspired by the approximation of a kindred spirit, did not you contract a greater fondness for the places, the walks, the accustomed retreats where you frequently conversed with the inmate of your bosom? Did not the works both of art and nature assume in his presence fresh lustre? In a word, was not all about you illuminated, so to speak, and touched into higher perfection, by the genius of virtuous friendship?

We might mention, farther, the difficulties in business, the traverses of fortune, the failure of hopeful plans, the loss of pleasing companions, the death of parents and other relations, endeared by nature and by habit, whose removal may expose the survivors to the greatest evils; in short, a variety of trials incident to men, that call forth the consolations of friendship, and prove them to be only surpassed by those of religion, to which indeed they are nearly allied, as we have already seen, and may yet farther see. But we will go on to some other less familiar, yet peradventure not less interesting considerations.

To me it appears a very valuable fruit of the commerce we are estimating, that it frequently imparts to age a vivacity and a pleasure which, though less conspicuous and active than those experienced by youth, are often more satisfactory, because more serene. We have personally known some excellent people, the evening of whose days seemed, like that of autumn, gladdened with a soft, but sprightly gleam, which was wonderfully agreeable, while they moved on to their peaceful setting, beloved and venerated by their families and all about them. How much happier than those who, having outlived, or, what is comparably more calamitous, been forsaken by their natural connexions, have not found the desolation repaired by a friend!

“Poor were the friendless master of a world.”

He were poor at any period, in the vigour of manhood, or in the bloom of youth; being destitute of this most necessary resource, and partnership of the heart, without
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which that must ever feel a want beyond the power of the universe to supply.

As we hinted on a former occasion, the mightiest monarchs have found all their most flattering advantages tasteless, wearisome, insupportable, without the communication and counsel of some favourite subject, in whose breast they could disburden the cares of royalty, and enjoy the sweets of confidence. But without thinking now of emperors, or kings, or their ministers, of Sully, or Mæcenas, or Haphæstion, or Henry, or Augustus, or Alexander the great, turn your attention to yourselves, and look forward. It is not so vast a way as you may fancy, to that season of decline, when, supposing your condition favourable in many other respects, much of your relish for its pleasures will be over, and of your early companions, who by sharing them with you might have contributed to exhilarate your spirits, the most part will be gone to the land of forgetfulness. But what a comfort, in that case, if you still possessed one or two well-tryed and well-principled friends, who were able not only to amuse you by their good-humour and cheerful conversation, but to revive the frequent languors of decrepitude, and to alleviate its unavoidable infirmities, by turning your views from a world, where you will have suffered many a painful breach and bitter disappointment, to the regions of unmingled joy and immortal youth! By the timely aid of such communion, you may learn the art, understood by so few, of growing old with a good grace, and be prepared to sustain the weight of years, not with submission merely, but with dignity too.

Among the numerous classes of human misery, it is not perhaps easy to figure a being more forlorn than the man who is sunk in the vale of age without a friend to console him in the remembrance of past calamity, to support him under the pressure of growing frailty, to direct his hopes beyond the dreary scene that is closing round him, to address him in that voice of affection which gives warmth and persuasion to the language of piety, to talk to him of the glorious things which are in store for the servants of God broken with the toils of life, to tell him of that Divine Redeemer, at whose sight, whilst yet an infant,

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the devout old Israelite could in a holy rapture wish to die. How mournful must it be for a person of sensibility, who has survived whatever he held dearest on earth, to see himself left alone like some solitary shattered tree on a barren wild; to see the world, which perhaps he had long entertained and obliged, forgetting him because he can oblige and entertain it no longer, and those kind hands mouldering in the dust, which, had they still lived, would have propped his tottering frame, when the gayer associates of his laughing days are either vanished in the grave, or withdrawn to more amusing society than he can now furnish! What, not one worthy faithful friend to bear him company, to nurse his weakness, to soothe his pains, to overlook his starts of peevishness, to assist him in beguiling the tedious hours, in settling his last accounts, in smoothing the passage to his long home! Merciful Creator, may we never know the misery of being abandoned to helpless solitude in the midst of feeble age: teach us to cultivate in the preceding stages of our journey, those sweet sympathies of the soul which reason approves, and religion consecrates, which depend for their gratification but on a few fellow-travellers, and will continue to relieve us when wearied, and refresh us when worn out, with the length of the way. It is the unrivalled glory of virtuous friendship, that when all other attachments, sprung from fancy, appetite, or interest, fall off and fade away, it remains, "like a tree planted by the rivers of water," fresh and vigorous, the joint growth of invariable esteem, affection and principle.

But carry your thoughts a little farther: imagine yourself, Sir, about to lie down upon your last bed: suppose, what I pray Heaven may be only a supposition, that you are but indifferently prepared for it: whom would you wish to visit and comfort you in so awful a situation? Any of those jovial companions who now endeavour to divert from your mind, as well as their own, all grave reflections? Try then, if you will, the experiment: send for the most sensible you can single out from their whole number: inform him that you look upon yourself as a dying man, and desire his advice and assistance: what will he answer? Most probably, that you shall yet recover; that you are only

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low-spirited,

low-spirited, or by no means so ill as you apprehend ; that you should keep a good heart, that you shall live to see many happy days, and so forth. At this easy style you are disappointed. He that feels himself sinking down under a load of insurmountable disease, is hurt by so slight an address. You will signify to your visitant his mistake : you will assure him, the matter is become too serious for such sort of talk. What will he do next ? It is likely, that altering his tone and countenance into an expression of more concern, and perhaps joining the tear of natural tenderness, he will intimate his sorrow, if it should be as you conceive, and will add very sagely, It is a debt we must all pay : it is pity a man of spirit should ever die ; but since it cannot be avoided, you must even submit to your fate as gracefully as possible : with more to the same purpose. And is this all ? Can you give no better consolation to a person in my condition ? The necessity you urge is one of the very evils I lament : but the greatest is the dread of an hereafter. Tell me something that may calm the apprehensions of guilt which now beset me ; something that may mitigate, if it cannot remove, the agonies of dissolution ; something that may instil, if it be not yet too late, the hopes of pardon into my anxious soul. He will then, it may be presumed, reply, that God is much too merciful to punish his creatures for a few trifling and transient pleasures ; that he gave them passions to be gratified ; that in gratifying yours you meant no harm ; that you was very good-natured, did many generous things, injured nobody but yourself, and therefore have nothing to fear. Is this a strain fit to satisfy or compose a mind alarmed at the approach of death, agitated by the forebodings of conscience, and trembling over the stupendous abyss of eternity ? Go, thou miserable comforter, and mock not that poor afflicted youth with considerations calculated only to wound him deeper : for I think they can scarcely deceive, I am sure they cannot help him. Go, and learn to provide more effectually against the terrors of thy own departure, whenever it shall happen. Alas ! my hearers, would you dignify with the name of friendship, that species of regard, which must in every valuable sense prove so despicably useless, at his greatest
extremity,

extremity, to the man for whom it is professed? Are none of you, whilst I speak, ashamed of having suffered any to impose so vilely on your understandings, as to make you believe they merited your highest esteem and confidence—they who, if they considered you at all, and not themselves merely, considered you but as the sport of appetite and accident, that must, after a few years of indulgence and vanity, be parted from them by an irresistible stroke, which they have no sollicitude to soften when it shall fall, and which will leave them without expectation or desire of re-uniting? And is it nothing to them, that the men whom they choose for their associates, whom they extol as the most agreeable characters living, with whom they pass what they reckon the happiest part of their time, and without whom they are ready to declare that life would be insufferably dull—is it nothing to them, that when a short and uncertain space is measured, those very men shall, with all their imperfections on their heads, plunge into night eternal, to emerge no more? There seem to me in such minds a poorness of thought, and a want of feeling, equally piteous and contemptible. The imagination, the judgment, and the heart, revolt together from a system that frustrates and mortifies every nobler ambition, and every better hope, they can entertain. Many of you, I am persuaded, see it in this light, and have too much taste, shall I say? as well as too much worth, to be satisfied with that inferior and defective commerce which breaks up at the grave—What! shall your highest esteem, your tenderest endearments, your constant services, your fervent wishes to give and to receive delight, be all thrown away on objects that may in a few days be to you as if they had never been? “Such a transitory tie, says a forcible writer, gives a second dart to death, and a double dissolution to departing man; that of soul and body scarce more severe. Would to Heaven, cries he, that all friendships were evidently friendships of immortal men; such I mean, as give proof of their having each other’s everlasting interest at heart!”

What sweetness and sublimity would not those connexions, in this case, derive from the consciousness of their elevated tendency and unceasing duration? The amiable man,

man, who now possesses and returns so large a share of my affection, will continue to possess and return it ten thousand ages hence, with new improvements proportioned to new excellence, and in happier circumstances that shall admit of no termination. Our present consonance of thought and disposition is only a prelude to the joint part which we shall bear in the never-ending anthems of heaven. Such a consideration, duly impressed, would serve above all others to support under one of the heaviest blows that can reach a susceptible breast.

You guess to what I refer: perhaps you have felt it: perhaps, Sir, you have lost a virtuous friend. I sympathize with you sincerely: I know too well what you must suffer from the recollection. But you should remember at the same time, that you have not lost him forever: far otherwise: he is gone before you but a little while to the abode of celestial amity, where he ardently expects you to follow him, where he will welcome your arrival with infinite pleasure, and where you shall unite once more, beyond the possibility or the fear of a second separation. It is true, you beheld him overwhelmed with sickness, and agonizing with pain: that face, which you had often contemplated with particular satisfaction as the picture of his mind, grew pale and ghastly: those eyes that were wont to melt at the tale of woe, or the sudden touch of a generous idea, to smile with the sweet emanations of a kind and complacent heart, or to radiate with the peculiar lustre frequently attendant on sense and spirit, those very eyes you saw closed on the world, and on you: yes, and the soul, the beloved and the loving soul, that often assisted yours to mount, is fled to its native dwelling; and you are bereft of its inspiration. Tears will sometimes flow, while busy memory is recalling the mournful scene; and let them flow: they are the tears of sensibility and virtue. Your Saviour wept for his friend Lazarus. But whilst his pattern warrants your grief, his promises console it: your tears are tempered by resignation, or rather exalted to rapture, when you reflect that he is "the resurrection and the life," and that, in the magnificent train of his followers whom he shall raise up at the last day, you will find your lamented yet happy friend, brightened into a higher

higher form of being and enjoyment. But who can describe the gratulations, that will pass between triumphant spirits, formerly joined by the purest ties, on their re-union in the sacred and indissoluble bond of perfection? Will it not be wonderfully pleasing, to witness the graceful modesty with which they ascribe to each other's influence a principal portion of bliss they enjoy, while they look forward with reciprocal transport to the landscape of ever-blooming and ever-growing felicity, that opens before them in those friendly regions?

It has indeed been questioned, whether good men will thus recognize one another hereafter? But to imagine that they will not, were to represent their condition in heaven as less complete than it is on earth; would infer the annihilation of those ideas, sentiments, and sympathies, by means of which they are attached to certain characters and persons here, whom they presently know and easily distinguish from all others; and were actually to suppose, that all those finer discriminations and dearer intercourses of the heart, which have ever been numbered among the divinest pleasures of this life, and the surest proofs of elevated understanding and affection, will cease in another; that our intellectual faculties and moral propensities will at least have objects totally different from some of the noblest that now engage them; that the bodies we shall receive at the resurrection will bear no resemblance to those which we wore in the days of nature; in short, that all the peculiar and distinctive features which mark and diversify the minds of the best people here below, and are often conspicuous in their countenances, will be erased, and the particular regards we now feel for their respective virtues absorbed in the less interesting, and therefore less delightful esteem of general excellence. But are these things probable? are they consistent with that great principle of analogy which appears to be a fundamental law of the supreme government? Would they not disappoint, in some measure, the expectations which the worthiest spirits of all ages and countries have been disposed to indulge on the subject of future rewards, as adapted to a community of blessed beings, who were formerly linked together

by various mental combinations, and characteristic tendencies?

Expectations so universal, and so perpetual, could only be prompted by the constitution of nature; they could not be the result of incidental or partial refinement. It is not truer, that they were entertained by the politest philosophers of antiquity, than that they are found at this day among the wildest savages of different nations.

It is a way of thinking in which we are strongly supported by revelation. There we are taught to believe, that the scenes which have taken place in this probationary state will be recalled to memory in the period of future recompenses; without which, indeed, I see not how those recompenses could be distributed to moral agents with the least propriety. But will not such recollection necessarily lead to that of our virtuous friendships among the rest, and naturally revive the spirit of union, and the sentiment of preference, which gave them birth?

There likewise we learn in the clearest manner, that the great body of obedient believers who entered into being in the same region of the universe called earth, who were subjected to the same circumstances of general trial, in order to the subsequent enjoyment of the same common felicity, shall, after being conducted by the same divine Leader and Deliverer through their terrestrial conflict, be raised together, judged together, acquitted together, and together established in one everlasting community of love, to inhabit jointly one capacious and undecaying metropolis known by the name of Heaven, or the New-Jerusalem, or the City of the living God, the centre of his vast immortal empire, and the eternal abode of his whole blessed family. But to repeat a question which has been very properly asked on this subject, "Is it possible that we should be happy hereafter in the same seats of joy, under the same perfect government, and as members of the same heavenly society, and yet remain strangers to one another? Being in the same state with our present virtuous friends and relations, will they not be accessible to us? and, if accessible, shall we not fly to them, and mingle hearts and souls again?"

It may be further argued, What Christian can doubt, that we shall see and know the glorious body of our Saviour advanced above the sublimest orders of angelic existence? And if one corporeal form may be seen and known, why not more? If our elder brother, as he has been sometimes styled, why not others of our sacred fraternity, whose bodies, we are expressly assured, will be fashioned like his? If the twelve thrones of the judges of Israel shall be so eminently splendid, as we must conclude from what we are told, how, it has been also asked, shall we not distinguish and acknowledge them? If the three disciples on the mount of transfiguration knew Moses and Elias, how much more shall we know those illustrious saints in the world of perfect vision? If even the rich sensualist in the prison of despair, is said to have known Lazarus and Abraham at an unapproachable distance, can we believe the inhabitants of heaven to be endowed with less discernment? Should you object, that it is only a parabolical representation, you will still allow, that He who delivered it, not only proceeded on the prevailing doctrine of mutual knowledge in a future state, but had too much veracity to affirm, that any thing was done which could not be done. It may be added, that when St. Paul admonished such as mourned the death of their friends, "not to sorrow as others who have no hope," since, "them that sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him," the argument would not appear completely satisfactory, unless it included the prospect of recognizing and of renewing former intimacy with those friends at the resurrection of the just; the heart, without this, being still left to the apprehension of forever losing one of its purest enjoyments, the known communion of such as it had long loved and cherished from the best motives. The same inspired man, speaking elsewhere of those whom he had converted to the faith and practice of Christianity, asks with a kind of friendly exultation, "What is our hope, our joy, our crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus at his coming?" But does not this style plainly imply that St. Paul expected to see, and know, and triumph with those beloved disciples at the final consummation? And may not such in every age, as have had the peculiar happiness of training

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others to virtue and glory, derive peculiar delight from the same idea?

Having repeatedly mentioned the resurrection, I would only observe yet farther on this article, that if the internal character is frequently discoverable through the dusky veil of matter with which it is now enveloped, we have surely reason to think it will shine out, with an effulgence impossible to be mistaken or overlooked, when the soul is clothed with her lucid, transparent, ethereal, and incorruptible body, at that last and brightest period.

These are a part of the reflections with which I have comforted my own mind, when it has pleased the Almighty to take away some precious individuals whose society was sweeter than the light of day; and I thought myself called upon to lay them before you, my honoured hearers, when I was recommending a connexion, which, without the expectation of meeting again in the mansions of eternity, would, on the disjunction of virtuous friends at death, be a source of anguish only augmented by superior worth and intellect, as the dread of it even at a distance would be apt to embitter many of the preceding scenes. It is certain, that the finest understandings and the warmest hearts have naturally the most exquisite feelings on the point of friendship; and were its pleasures to terminate with a few precarious years, the very improvements which tended to heighten them on one side, would from so gloomy a prospect, be in continual danger of destroying them on another. But blessed be that divine religion, which, whilst it unites the souls of its votaries here in the loveliest affections and the loftiest views, encourages and consoles them, under all their anxieties and sufferings, with the lively hope of an interminable existence, through which they shall travel together, forever undivided, forever undisturbed, free from all imperfections, and attracted still closer to one another, as they approach nearer and nearer to Him who is their common original, object and end.

Never perhaps is the pre-eminence of virtuous friendship above all unhallowed attachments, more manifest, than when viewed in the light of eternity; a light from which, indeed, the distempered eye of vice turns away
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with aversion and anguish. The idea of meeting hereafter, which administers so much consolation to the good under the grief of parting here, the bad dare not entertain. To them the prophetic power of conscience whispers, that such an interview will terribly aggravate their misery. What sounds of wrath and woe are those which I think I hear? They are the reproaches and upbraidings of reprobate souls in the other world, who whilst they lived in this were perpetually talking of esteem, and confidence, and zeal for each other's happiness and honour. How are they shocked and stunned to encounter those doleful regions, which many of them were accustomed, at their wanton revels and infidel resorts, to treat with derision, as existing only in a frightened fancy! The enchantment, which united them in the hour of delirious mirth, is dissolved: they are all awake, and sober to amazement: their mutual efforts to ensnare and corrupt, of which they once boasted, appear to them now in their real malignity. Every companion in sin is transformed into an object of loathing: every lost creature, that any one contributed to ruin under the pretence of kindness, turns upon his seducer with execration and rage. Say not that this is mere preaching: it is a language agreeable to the deepest convictions of mankind, when they have had no other instructors but nature and philosophy.

In conformity to those convictions, some of the ablest writers, both ancient and modern, have represented a variety of foolish and profligate characters formerly known upon earth, and now in the abodes of departed spirits, conversing together with great severity of recrimination: nor is it probable, that the scenes introduced by those authors would be productive of the lively impressions received from them by readers of the soundest judgment and the best taste, were the faith of futurity, on which they are founded, not the genuine persuasion of the human heart. If the personages in question address each other in a style less passionate or violent, than that which we believe to be employed by the forlorn inhabitants of the infernal mansions, it is no objection to our doctrine. The genius of such compositions did not lead so directly to shake the mind with solemn terrors, as to place before it

it a sober, though striking picture of the sentiments which the characters they draw may be readily supposed to express of themselves, and of one another, when the illusions of vanity, and the temptations to flattery, are no more. Then indeed it were some alleviation of wretchedness, if the profligate and the foolish in general were suffered to fly each other's hated society, and to mantle themselves up in impenetrable darkness. But what reason is there to hope, that those double offenders, who, not satisfied with their own undoing, persist in seducing and hardening others at present, shall escape so natural a punishment as their future accusations and bitterest curses? Let me conjure you, my beloved hearers, not to venture on the dreadful experiment; and let us quit a consideration so big with horror.

Address XIII.

ON A MANLY SPIRIT, AS OPPOSED TO EFFEMINACY.

HE that, in times like these, when a masculine virtue and deportment are become so unfashionable, attempts to recommend them, may lay his account with being deemed by the greater part sufficiently awkward, or at best romantic, in his notions. Even of the few, whose minds and manners are not yet enervated by the surrounding contagion, some will probably apprehend that he takes the subject on too high a key. They are willing, for their own share, to be as good and wise as they can in private, and perhaps secretly to cultivate the seeds of internal greatness: but to avow these dispositions openly, in the present state of the world, they would consider as the certain way to draw upon themselves a ridicule, which they are not so well prepared to sustain. The truth is, that the sentiments of an undaunted and uncomplying probity are now-a-days regarded by the many as mere theatrical rant, or fictitious heroism to be found only in books, and the imagination of here and there an idle visionary, dreaming in his closet, and wholly ignorant of life and nature. But if a Scipio, if a virtuous heathen, without any other aid than that of innate magnanimity, would not despair of the Commonwealth in a dangerous conjuncture, and was justly applauded for his fortitude, shall a Christian believer, who trusts in the power of God, and in the operation of truth upon the souls of men, shall he be thought to blame, for hoping that numbers of his fellow-citizens, degenerate as they are from the sober and manly character of their forefathers, may nevertheless be in some measure recovered; and that, when they are, their honourable exertions, in union with those of others who remain uncorrupted,

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rupted, may, under Providence, contribute to save their country?

That she is in imminent danger from the prodigality, profligacy, and unfeeling luxury of her inhabitants, what considerate man is not ready to acknowledge? Are not the strictness, the hardiness, and the noble spirit of our ancestors, exchanged in the generality of us, who boast our superior improvements, for a selfish and vicious effeminacy? Have not the follies and disorders, which were in former ages confined to the higher classes, at length infected the middle ranks of people with a degree of extravagance and vanity that is amazing? And is not the same madness spreading from them to the lowest of the people, who are passionately ambitious of imitating those next above them as far as their circumstances will allow, and, when they cannot reach the same gratifications, grow outrageous in their discontent and their crimes? Does not such general and extraordinary corruption carry a portentous aspect with regard to the religious, moral, and political interests of the community? Are not all these intimately connected in every nation? And has it not been universally found, that they advanced and prospered, or declined and perished, together?

That the period in which we live is entitled to praise for its progress in sciences and arts, in experimental philosophy, in critical learning, in all matters of taste and elegance, in the accommodations and embellishments of society, and what is better than all the rest, in its numerous and unparalleled foundations of the charitable kind, it were uncandid and absurd to deny. We could dwell with pleasure on the munificent things that are done every day in this kingdom, and particularly in its capital, for the prevention or relief of calamity in almost every imaginable shape. We could even with rapture point to great numbers of both sexes and different conditions, as to so many good angels habitually employed in diffusing consolation through the abodes of sorrow, and sweetly solicitous to discover by what means they may most effectually alleviate the miseries, and lessen the vices of mankind. We are equally delighted to know, that amongst individuals of all orders, much virtue and many good qualities in other ways

ways still exist, though the effects are not immediately perceived by the public eye, being concealed or overlooked from a variety of causes.

It cannot however be dissembled, that the strongest characteristic of the present age, considered at large, is a predominant love of show, dissipation, and revelry. When wealth employs genius, dexterity, or diligence, to contrive and heighten innocent amusements, none but the illiberal or the gloomy can be displeased: trade and manufactures are promoted; skill is exercised and improved; social delight is varied and exalted; piety is not offended or forgotten; the virtues and the graces go hand in hand. But when application, taste and talents are prostituted to such as can buy them, for the purpose of devising, without limitation and without end, new modes of pleasure, ruinous by their expense, inflammatory to the passions, productive of softness, idleness, sensuality, debauchery; tending to alienate the heart from the company of the wise and worthy, from the duties and joys of domestic life; to indispose it for the sentiments and offices of devotion; to beget a disrelish for virtuous attachment in those that are not married, to supplant affection in those that are; and thus to undermine the very foundations of private, and consequently of public happiness;—when this is the case, can you easily conceive a more alarming symptom, or a more fatal perversion?

Many of you know, that so long as Athens and Rome retained the masculine spirit of their games and sports, the frugality and simplicity of their manners, their reverence for religion, their respect for the claims of friendship, for the sweets of home, for female decency, and conjugal fidelity, those celebrated States continued to shine with superlative glory; but that, when security, opulence, and effeminate refinements, introduced an universal relaxation in these particulars, they visibly fell from whatever was elevated and magnanimous. The Roman people in particular drooped, their very faculties decayed, their ruling ideas were debased; a passion for riches, for magnificence, for adulation, for the most enormous intemperance and profusion, supplanted the love of their country, and all those heroic achievements by which their ancestors had

protected and adorned it : in short, they became—what? feeble, timid, dependent, venal, slavish, and false ; the flatterers and tools of tyrants, treacherous, ingrateful, jealous of all around them, wretched in themselves, arrogant and despairing by turns, dreaded for their mischief and scorned for their meanness at the same time. The condition into which their descendants are sunk, the abject servility and deep depravity of modern Italy, as well as the grossness and barbarism of modern Greece, will forever attest the baneful effects of that extravagance, and those diversions, which, under the pretence of national wealth and greatness, debauch, degrade, and debilitate mankind.

If we consult the English history, what do we learn there? In those days, when the heroic qualities and sagacious counsels of the highly accomplished, though not very amiably feminine, Elizabeth, commanded the respect and engaged the confidence of her subjects ; when dignity and economy were united in her court ; when spirit and prudence equally marked her regulations ; when men of the greatest ability, vigilance, and virtue, were patronized and employed ; when military skill and valour were eminently encouraged ; when politeness and gallantry walked in the train of literature and knowledge ; when the fashionable pleasures, and established pastimes, were moderate, hardy, animated, and rational ;—in those illustrious days the people of England appeared with real majesty ; they baffled with ease the machinations and attempts of their enemies, though the most powerful and political in Europe : they excited, in other countries, terrors which they had never felt for their own : nothing could appal their bravery, corrupt their loyalty, or cool their zeal ; unbought and uncourted, they espoused and executed the measures of a sovereign, whom they had so many reasons to revere and trust. While neighbouring nations were over-run with conspiracies, seditions, and scenes of blood, they enjoyed all the benefits of peace : commerce was extended ; manufactures were improved ; arts and learning were cultivated with success : in a word, they enforced veneration from the whole world ; their capacity, courage, regularity, discipline and splendor were admired and extolled by
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the best judges in foreign lands ; whilst at home they were happy in their abundance, in their order, in their unanimity, and in their queen.

From the habits of temperance and wisdom which they had contracted under her inspiring influence, they were generally disposed rather to contemn than copy the imbecility, luxury and vanity of her pedantic successor ; however vilely he might be flattered by too many individuals, who sacrificed their understanding and independence to avarice or ambition. The meanness and worthlessness of James would not, you may believe, disgust the better part the less for their comparing him with a predecessor so respectable on many accounts, though it must be owned much to blame on some ; nor would their discontent be diminished, when they found that his administration was reproached and despised abroad at the same courts where the preceding had been applauded and honoured. There indeed they themselves continued to be objects of just esteem, for the spirit of sobriety, manliness, and elevation, which they still retained, being neither infected by the low vices, nor allured by the little amusements, nor awed by the arbitrary maxims, of their monarch.

Through several subsequent reigns the same dignified character failed not to display itself. In that of the first Charles, it operated too powerfully to leave room for any public diversions but such as were decent, temperate and chaste. Such indeed was the character of the prince himself, at the same time that, with a regularity of conduct not very common in persons of his rank, he was by no means an enemy to elegant pleasures, or innocent mirth. Then, as we learn, began to appear a strictness of principles and manners, which in those days was treated, by light and by prejudiced minds, with every mark of derision, and which continues in ours to be frequently branded with the odious names of fanaticism and hypocrisy. That it was disfigured by these in great numbers, will be questioned by none who reflect on the frailties and disorders incident to human nature. That in not a few who were sincere it ran into a gloomy scrupulosity, and unamiable austerity, will also be acknowledged. Nevertheless, we must still think, that the vigour and purity of the most eminent

eminent writers at that period ; the exemplary fortitude and self-denial discovered, not long after, by a large body of men, in the expensive sacrifices they made to the rights of conscience ; the very tender sympathy and esteem expressed for them, and for others who suffered on account of what they believed to be their duty ; the just indignation felt at their persecutors, and the very arduous struggle perseveringly maintained against the most dangerous encroachments ; we must, I say, be still of opinion, that such effects proceeded, on the whole, from a strong sense of whatever was important and sacred amongst men.

In the scenes which quickly followed, a peculiar strain of seriousness and magnanimity was often manifested, notwithstanding the sanctimonious affectation too frequently blended with it. Effeminacy, and her languid wanton train, could hope for little indulgence, at a conjuncture when the plainness and parsimony of an unpolished soldier, who assumed the gravest airs of religious solemnity, were united with a determined aim to render the nation prosperous, great and formidable. The profound reverence which its manly and resolute temper under his administration impressed on all Christendom, can never be forgotten.

So deeply rooted was this spirit, and so hardily had it been nursed through a long series of the most strenuous exertions, that neither the blandishments of a lively and voluptuous monarch, nor all the banter and licentiousness of his favourite circle, were afterwards able to subdue it. In spite of that circle ; in spite of the ridicule and opposition to be expected from profligate courtiers, and prostitute wits ; in spite of the deference, the adulation, and the selfish views, with which kings are commonly approached ; there were not wanting, even in the presence of the dissolute Charles, those who had virtue and dignity sufficient to tell him of his debaucheries, and to admonish him against them. The people in general, though they could not hate the person of a man whose affability was irresistibly pleasing, yet murmured at his indolence, loudly condemned his vices, never relished his government, were shocked at his employing the taxes of the nation to corrupt its morals, and openly testified their abhorrence of his

his mistresses. The amusements which he had transplanted from abroad were but little propagated beyond the limits of his palace: they suited not the taste of a nation, whose ruling character was still serious and masculine, however much the return of quiet had contributed to soften the rigid demeanour and maxims of a particular class, who had tinctured the rest; and whatever pains were taken to infuse the love of jollity and riot. In a word, though needy and vicious poets, though mercenary and obsequious courtiers, though their dependants and connexions, with such others near them as they could immediately influence—though all these were combined to flatter and copy the immoralities of their sovereign, and thus to spread the infection; yet this, it has been justly remarked, was not the prevailing inclination of the kingdom: the dissoluteness of manners, imputed to it at that period, was not universal: multitudes of all ranks, and of both parties, preserved the fund of pious morals, and manly principles, by which they had been long actuated; and where duty or firmness were less the motives, prudence and decency continued to operate; many conspicuous instances of private worth, and of public zeal, were still seen; and glorious proofs were successively given of an integrity and magnanimity alike calm and invincible.

Nevertheless it is certain, that the seeds of irreligion, vice, and luxury, which were then so industriously sown, came in process of time to shoot up but too strongly, and to be cultivated with a success which has, with greater or less rapidity, been ever since advancing to the height it has now gained. This event, it is well known, has been eminently promoted by the unrestrained importation of foreign fashions, ideas, and diversions, in all their variety of extravagance, together with a perpetual accession of wealth for a number of years from different sources, and particularly of late from the plunder of the East, whence it is believed but few have come home enriched, without leaving behind them the curses of ruined families and desolated provinces.

If, in a country highly polished like this, where the arts would naturally minister to its pleasures with an assiduity proportioned to the rewards it was willing to bestow,

those pleasures have kept pace with its opulence; and if such opulence, weary of former gratifications, or disgusted at finding them still rivalled by its inferiors, is constantly seeking new refinements of vanity and indulgence; we cannot surely be surpris'd, however we may be grieved, at the enormous increase and shameful effeminacy of our modish entertainments.

We shall wonder the less, though we must lament the more, when we reflect how much this great evil is fostered by the most part of our young nobility and gentry. Sent abroad for the supposed purpose of improvement, without any foundation in principle or knowledge, do they not, after roaming a while through Europe, in trivial and ignominious pursuits, generally return more depraved and foolish than they went? By witnessing the contemptible bigotry of the church of Rome, by hearing the infidel and impious conversation so common in France and Italy, and by imitating the vicious customs established in those countries under the notion of a superior gallantry, are they not usually confirmed in their disaffection to all religion, and their scorn of every thing sober, sedate and manly? To show that they have travelled, and are now complete gentlemen, they never rest till they have instructed our youth at home in yet higher forms of amusement and licentiousness, if possible, and debauched as many married women as they can. Our youth at home are proud to learn of such accomplished masters, and impatient to figure in the same, or as nearly as may be in the same style, at whatever expense of fortune, or health, or honour, or society.

Here let us pause for a moment—An alarming prospect rises to view—What great and powerful nation has ever existed, that tended not, by the natural operation of commerce, wealth, and dominion, to a selfish, vain, and luxurious effeminacy, till at last it sunk into a total depravation of morals and principles, which, by a close and obvious connexion, ended sooner or later in weakness, disgrace and ruin? But if wise men and prophets say true, this nation—yes, my friends and countrymen, Britain, our common mother, nurse, and protectress, Britain is not removed very far from such a state. May the gracious
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Power who has so often interposed for her safety, disappoint their forebodings, and avert the omens that excite them !

Among these have been chiefly reckoned a set of youth, I say of youth, dissipated in idleness, plunged in debauchery, infected with avarice, maddened with gaming ; a set of youth, wasting their substance, if any they have, in prodigality, or practising if they have none, every method that meanness or artifice can suggest, to get money, for the sake of—what ?—of spending it in every folly that appetite or vanity can prompt ; a set of youth who, not content with throwing down the ramparts of virtue, which natural modesty had erected in their minds, have, for the purpose of indulging their passions without control, proceeded to the effrontery of “glorying in their shame,” and putting every mark of contumely on such as will not “run with them to the same excess of riot ;” a set of youth, that sneer at the names of chastity, temperance and religion ; that place the highest proofs of spirit in bidding defiance to the laws of these, and laughing to scorn the antiquated notions of a sound faith and an unblemished deportment ; that think nothing so shrewd as to pick the pocket of a companion at cards, nothing so genteel as to keep a mistress, nothing so gallant as to commit adultery, and nothing so brave as to make a jest of damnation—what shall we say more ? a set of youth languid, enervated, perhaps distempered, perhaps putrid, in consequence of their irregularities, and those, it may be, of their parents.

But pleasure, we are told, elegant pleasure, is the object to which every thing else must yield. Alas ! it is not understood, it is totally mistaken, by those half-witted, half-souled sons of effeminacy. Where, ye wretched pretenders to refined delight, where are the interesting energies of a useful and honourable activity, the animated emanations of a sound and enlightened understanding, where are the deep-felt thrillings of generous affection and tender sympathy, the sweet reciprocations of confidence and esteem, the lovely, the raptured perceptions of moral beauty and intellectual good, the modest but joyful sense of conscious worth, the towerings of a noble ambition, the transporting hopes of immortality ; where, I ask, are those
highest

highest satisfactions which give the chief relish and dignity to life, and without which it is at best but a vulgar and insipid thing? To them indeed you, whom I just described, are utter strangers. You have neither spirit to cultivate, nor sentiment to comprehend them: your internal sight is dimmed by prejudice, or distracted by folly: you perceive not the living forms of truth and virtue, which have been admired by the wise, the pious, and the manly, in all ages: or, if at any time Providence recalls your attention to those superior objects, and rouses you for a while out of the lethargy that has lulled your faculties, you dare not trust yourselves with your own convictions; you want the courage and the vigour, as well as honesty, that are requisite to follow the voice of conscience; the tone of your minds is broken; you are frittered by vanity; you are dissolved in vice.

What the well-wishers of Britain, and of mankind, are to expect from such a race, I leave them to judge. That the picture is too like the generality of our fashionable young men in the upper classes, and of their fond imitators in the lower, it were not candour, but ignorance, to deny. Are these then the persons who must ere long possess the various departments in the great scale of society? Are these the persons that must shortly sustain the characters of lovers, husbands, fathers, masters, friends? Say, my country, are these the young men whom thou hast destined to protect thy daughters, to educate their posterity, to execute thy plans, to assert thy cause, and perpetuate thy honours? Yet let us not despond; let us be charitable; let us be just. That there still are many encouraging exceptions, we acknowledge with pleasure; nor is the attempt in which we are now engaged a proof, that we wholly despair of the Commonwealth, emasculated and corrupted as are the greatest part of her offspring.

We have already endeavoured to account, in some measure, for their degeneracy. It will appear yet less astonishing, however, as we hinted before; it must always be affecting, if we consider the modes of education which prevail at present. Let us briefly trace them, even as far back as the nursery. There, indeed, the whole character of boys is commonly perverted and ruined. How? By a
cruel

cruel indulgence of those desires, passions, fancies, and humours, which should be early checked and regulated, and which, because on the contrary they are fostered in their wild luxuriance, quickly shoot into a strength that is seldom afterwards subdued without great difficulty. The little creatures are flattered, dressed, decorated, pampered, gratified with money, and entertained with continual encomiums on handsome faces, fine clothes, good eating, great riches, high rank, and other such edifying topics—By whom? by the very persons whom they are taught to regard as the patterns of wisdom. What is the result? Their bodies are debilitated, and their minds debased: they are rendered children for life, disqualified to endure fatigue, hunger and hardship, without unmanly complaints; apt to be deranged by the slightest accident, and discomposed by the least contradiction; to be violent, vain, capricious, head-strong, luxurious, mercenary, selfish; slaves to their appetites, tyrants to those about them; and thus, in the very rudiments of their existence, so to speak, unfitted for whatever is strenuous in action, firm in suffering, philosophical in life, and amiable in manners. Such, I am sure, is the natural tendency of the conduct we reprobate; nor can I help thinking, that we often perceive in the nursery the embryos of those distorted beings called fops, fribbles and coxcombs—So at least they were wont to be called; but it is one of our late refinements, to give them an Italian appellation. You may smile, if you will: I am in earnest when I say, that the lax nerves, the ludicrous decorations, the affected jargon, the trivial conceits, the courtly simper, the soft insipidity, and the unfeeling heart, of the thing now termed a—but no, I will not name it—may generally, in the first instance, be attributed to the effects of the nursery, whatever improvements of the same kind it may afterwards receive in the school of fashion.

If the enfeebling and depraving influence of such culture is often happily counterworked by reflection, experience, adversity, in the succeeding scenes; if many boys are by the original energy of nature, and the gracious discipline of Providence, enabled to outgrow the futile habits of their early years; no thanks to those wicked or foolish parents who did every thing to spoil them. Ah, ye mothers

ers of Britain, what a mighty task is yours! Of what superlative importance to the happiness of mankind! How much have those of you to answer for, whose fantastic fondness has, from the very days in which you ought to have laid the foundation of virtue and glory, entailed corruption and dishonour on your offspring! How strangely different from the mothers of antiquity, who, having bred their sons to every thing manly and heroic, were accustomed, when they went out to fight for their country, that great predominating object to which all others gave way in their affections—were accustomed, I say, to charge them either to come back victorious, or to be brought back dead, choosing rather that they should not live than live in shame!

When we mention this, we cannot help admiring many of the expedients made use of, in the purest times of the ancient Commonwealths, to inspire their youth with magnanimity. Beside that education was made the immediate concern of the State, and the children of individuals were regarded and treated as the children of the public; what impressions, think ye, must have been necessarily produced on young minds by witnessing the laurels, the crowns, the triumphs, the trophies, the monuments, the statues, with which illustrious conquerors and patriots were rewarded, and by hearing the funeral orations and the festive songs in praise of their valiant and virtuous progenitors, who had consulted, pleaded, struggled, bled in behalf of their country? If, by the desire of kindling in their youth this ardent passion for glory, those high-spirited people, who felt it so strong in themselves, were carried to the extravagance of erecting temples and paying divine honours to their heroes and common benefactors; it will still be admitted that the practice must have been marvellously animating. The Grecian games to which St. Paul so frequently alludes—St. Paul had too large a mind, and too just a taste, not to avail himself freely of every argument that could enforce the precepts of the religion he preached—those celebrated games, where superior merit in almost every kind was recompensed with proportionate renown, and to which the concourse was immense, would, you may believe,

lieve, not lessen in the breast of wondering and ambitious youth, the love of well-deserved fame.

It must be owned, that in the Lacedemonian republic, the forms of education, and indeed the whole spirit of the laws, tended to suppress some of the finest, and almost all the gentlest feelings of human nature, as well as violated several moral obligations which ought never on any pretence to be infringed. But at the same time let it be confessed, that they were well calculated to breed a temperate and hardy, a modest yet enterprising, an obedient yet determined race of warriors, citizens and patriots. Nor was the idea of public zeal, as swallowing up all the selfish passions, ever elevated to so stupendous a height as among the Spartans. Of their young men it is recorded, that when they walked the streets, you might as soon have turned the eyes of a marble statue upon you as theirs; such was their sobriety of mind, and modesty of demeanour. But then observe, this was accompanied with a courage so intensely daring, that in battle an enemy was not able to look them in the face; neither did they know what it was to be afraid of dying for their country. Who can forbear to contrast them with those pert coxcombs and effeminate foplings that one meets in almost every street of London and Westminster?

When you see a girl, who has not only been flattered for the natural advantages of her appearance, but early initiated in all the mysteries of dress, and frequently told what additional attractions she derives from certain modish embellishments—when you see her looking at herself with an air of triumph, on account of her gay attire and glittering ornaments, you cannot approve of such behaviour even in her: it seems to betray some want of that propriety and modesty which peculiarly become the female character. A composed and dissident deportment would affect you in quite another manner. Yet you are willing to make allowance for her on the score of her sex, as well as her age and situation. But when you witness the fantastic airs of a creature who calls himself a man, decked out in the extreme of the fashion, strutting along with a visible delight in his own finical person, and with a vacant yet consequential face, seeming to challenge admiration from every spectator,

ſpectator, you are then filled with a degree of contempt which it is not eaſy to expreſs. Not but this ſilly vanity may be found, ſometimes, where there is much good-nature, ſpirit and honour. When that is the caſe, it is only the more to be regretted, appearing particularly ungraceful in ſuch company. From perſons of ſenſe and virtue, we commonly expect a ſuperiority to thoſe follies; and where ſuch qualities are eminently poſſeſſed, they will beget a generous diſdain of this degrading ſoftneſs. “While the man of body, ſays the incomparable Richardſon, takes the greateſt care to ſet out and adorn the part for which he thinks himſelf moſt valuable, the man of mind will beſtow moſt pains in improving that mind.” I would not, my auditors, be underſtood to inculcate a total diſregard for every thing connected with fashionable apparel. A young gentleman, it has been juſtly remarked, ſhould neither be the firſt, nor the laſt, in the mode. To go to its utmoſt height, is not manly; and to remain in its loweſt form is not neceſſary. Singularities of various kinds are often united with an excellent underſtanding, and an excellent heart: but to affect them can never be right.

A noted writer of advice to a ſon, ſays on this ſubject, “Wear your clothes neat, exceeding rather than coming ſhort of others of like fortune; a charge borne out by acceptance wherever you come: therefore ſpare all other ways, rather than prove deficient in this.” Had he ſtopped at the firſt part of the ſentence, we ſhould not have found any fault. Neatneſs muſt always be deſirable, ſo long as it is not the effect of laborious or minute attention: but we can ſee no reaſon for what he has added. The laſt clause contains a wretched ſentiment. If you except particular occaſions, and eſpecially the caſe of going abroad, where you wiſh to be admitted among genteel ſtrangers, or even well treated by the common people; I am apt to believe, that a polite addreſs and engaging converſation will, with a plain but becoming habit, ſeldom fail to procure both notice and reſpect in every company where a ſenſible man would deſire to be the object of either. On this article, indeed, perſons of condition poſſeſs, when they are known, a ſingular advantage: they may often go plainer than many of their inferiors. Their rank is ſufficient to recommend them in
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most places, with very little assistance from other circumstances, as far at least as exterior regard extends. To say the truth, it frequently excites in vulgar spirits an admiration, and a reverence, merely for its own sake, which are due only to superior virtue and capacity. Meanwhile I am always pleased in a certain degree, when I observe people of station disposed to dress as often as possible with simplicity; and yet more when their deportment is of a piece: nor should it be forgotten, that many of them are agreeably distinguished by their ease, their unassuming manners, and their unostentatious appearance. What pity but the same persons were always equally marked out by their principles, by their talents, and a laudable imitation of their illustrious and truly noble ancestors!

It is not to be denied, that numbers who have neither quality to justify at times extraordinary splendor, nor affluence to support it, are yet more devoted to show, and the luxuries usually attendant on it, than not a few who are much above them. The extravagance, indeed, which spreads like wild-fire through the lower walks of society, and produces such havoc of fortunes and of morals, struck at first every sober eye with astonishment and grief, but is become now so common, and consequently so familiar, as to make very little impression—save on those who personally suffer by it. On what multitudes has ruin, like a deluge, rushed from this source!

I know it has been repeatedly and confidently pleaded, that the unusual prevalence of public diversions, which the present effeminate system of nurture concurs with other causes to promote, is a mighty advantage to trade and manufactures. Were those diversions frequented only by such as could well afford the requisite expense, the argument might hold. But is there not ground to suspect, that the epidemical passion for costly assemblies and other modish entertainments, beyond the limits of real ability, is the chief occasion of the distress incurred by so many persons who furnish the necessary preparations, and of course by their connexions, as well as the individuals and families immediately concerned.

Let us suppose, however, that manufactures and trade were on the whole gainers, and that the persons who indulge without control to such pleasures were not deep losers in their pecuniary interests, which it is yet certain they often are, not only from the immoderate sums actually expended, but from neglects of business, habits of indolence, and a growing propension to every kind of prodigality; I will still ask, were not the community in general happier, much happier, without this excess? Or will any reflecting man, who is conversant in history, and friendly to virtue, maintain, that opulence or grandeur, at whatever height they may arrive, can compensate to a nation the loss of its good order, wise economy, and masculine spirit?

To proceed in our survey; the effeminacy of the times, though extreme, will surprize us yet less, if we next attend a little to the style in which the majority of our young gentlemen are bred, after their nurses and mothers have done all in their power to render them insignificant. How seldom are they, when placed under the care of masters, instructed in any thing more important or valuable than the means of knowledge, or the forms of business, with a few exterior and subaltern accomplishments, of which the main intention is to confer a little smartness and gentility! How few teachers, in comparison, have the inclination or the talents to "principle them in virtue's book;" to inflame them with the love of truth, of temperance, of divine philosophy; to exalt and direct their aims for life, and for immortality; to animate their bosoms with those benevolent affections, and liberal views, which comprehend the whole circuit of social good, of a commonweal, of universal humanity, and which, when afterwards called forth in different situations, will impart a lustre to existence by proving the sources of extensive usefulness, and the ingredients of a conspicuous character! To train young minds in this manner, supposing them capable of such culture, what various attainments and generous ideas are requisite! what extent of erudition, what powers of persuasion, what insight into the heart, what unwearied assiduity and unextinguishable zeal! But is it to be imagined, that in these days, when dancing-masters and French teachers,

teachers, "singing men and singing women," with all the other ministers of fashionable amusement and unbounded pleasure, are in such repute, whilst a liberal and virtuous education, if thought of at all, is thought of only in the next degree,—can it be reasonably imagined, that under those circumstances, persons qualified as we have just mentioned, should be found in any considerable number, willing to submit to the fatigue and solicitude and mortifications inseparable from the business of educating youth with real advantage? I said, in any considerable number; for that there are such we cheerfully acknowledge. May the merciful Father of the world raise up more! They are without question among the most meritorious members of society.

That in our public schools the learned languages are taught with success, though not without a waste of time which might well be spared; that both in them, and in our universities, there are masters and tutors who would reflect credit on the highest literary stations, it were unfair to deny: but is it unfair to affirm, on the other hand, that the morals of young men are often debauched in those places; that amidst the forms of regularity, and the show of rules, shameful disorders are often committed, and solid study deplorably neglected, while not a few of the professors content themselves chiefly with the luxurious enjoyment of that academical wealth which the royal and worthy founders consecrated to the propagation of piety and learning? Are these then the illustrious seminaries that in former days sent forth so many men fitted to shine in every sphere of science and virtue, men that manifested, by their own bright example, to what elevation sound knowledge and ingenuous breeding can lift the human mind? That there are now alive persons of different orders, who have discovered a just emulation of such renown, and are indeed among the luminaries of the age, we gratefully remember: but what serious man can look back on those celebrated feats of ancient literature, without a sigh, to see them dishonoured by almost every species of modern insignificance; to see libertines and fribbles issuing in swarms from the same halls, and the same colleges, where principle and manhood were wont to reside? How much better for them

them and for society, if such youths had been bred in the lap of simple nature! Have we not met with plain untutored boys, who, in comparison of them, were heroes and philosophers?

Without entering into a detail of the education in vogue, I would only ask, whether its general tendency is not to make our youth gay instead of sober, vain instead of modest, smatterers rather than scholars, and smooth rather than polite; at the utmost, pleasing triflers, and plausible insignificants, instead of useful characters and amiable companions; to form coxcombs and coquettes, not estimable men and attractive women; to accomplish them as good dancers, instead of good citizens, and teach them to dress well, rather than to act wisely? For my part, I am far from wondering at the frivolous and vitiated turn of the age. How should it be otherwise, when worldly maxims are so much more inculcated than religious truths, and the punctilios of behaviour than the rules of morality; when the acquisition of language is preferred to the exercise of reason and the attainment of wisdom, the little outside appearances of breeding and complaisance, to that real courtesy which is the result of a kind disposition, prompting decent respect and sweet attention; when specious sentiments take place of genuine principles, and a superficial uncertain honour, of an invariable and thorough integrity; in short, when the knowledge of the world is considered as the chief science, and the cultivation of the virtues is forced to give way to the study of the graces?—Poor Chesterfield! such was thy wretched system for the education of a darling and only son! What pity thy agreeable talents had not been more worthily and more happily directed!

That celebrated man certainly possessed a brilliant and easy wit, much elegance and fluency of pen, with a good share of taste, and a considerable tincture of learning. His remarks on a variety of topics are both sprightly and just. Many of his instructions are sensible and important. He was well acquainted with that part of the species which he had seen; not indeed the best of either sex, as is sufficiently apparent from his representations of both, of the female especially. His frank confessions of former follies
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and vices deserve commendation; and it is impossible not to be pleased with the warmth and benignity of his paternal affection. But what, after all, was his main concern for its object? Why truly, that this son, about whose figure and fortune he was immoderately anxious, should be a complete man of the world, or, what is usually styled, a fine gentleman, and a person of ability, insinuating, popular, applauded, successful: for, pray take notice, we meet not, as I remember, in two large volumes, with a single sentence pointing to the immortality of man, or the approbation of God, or any other great principle of human excellence. Amidst many useful observations on life, and many necessary axioms of prudence, the most trivial lessons are taught; and his well-known favourite doctrine is, without the least attention to human nature, so incessantly repeated, that it could scarcely fail to disgust, instead of impressing the young man for whom it was designed.----That he should even not scruple recommending to his son the imitation of a deeply criminal fashion in foreign gallantry, is indeed shocking, and what ought to excite abhorrence in every one who retains any sense of decency.----Shall I add in a few words, that to allure, to sparkle, to shine, to flatter, to be flattered, and to rise, at whatever expense of truth, of rectitude, or of regard for nobler pursuits, are held up as the highest ends of existence; and instead of forming the person in question into a just model of improved and elevated nature, to frame him into a mere courtly artificial being, or rather to fabricate and hammer him into a piece of polished machinery, was the supreme solicitude of that man to whom our modish youth in this Christian land look up, as the all-accomplished pattern, judge and master of life and manners?

But, that we may draw to a conclusion, let us now in the last place follow those pretty gentlemen—for such they wish to be thought—let us follow them into the world. What do they see and hear of there, but betting, and gaming, and intrigues, and cabals, and places, and posts, and pensions, and stars, and garters; court favour and family interest, statesmen regularly buying votes, and their opposers frequently seeking power; almost all mankind bow-

ing in the temple of Rimmon, or else worshipping in that of Mammon? to which last idol, indeed, the apparent votaries of the other direct the homage of their hearts! In the early ages of Greece and Rome, glory was the great object of men's devotion. In our times, it is money: every thing now is sacrificed to money: ambition itself, vanity, pride, all the passions, wait on avarice, "even as the eye of a man-servant on the hand of his master, and the eye of a maid-servant on the hand of her mistress." Money, my friends, money is now prized and pursued as that which can purchase all things—And so it can, a few trifling enjoyments excepted, such as good health, true contentment, a good conscience, and unfeigned esteem. As to merit, ability, rectitude, patriotism, and the honours which were wont to attend them in the genuine respect and sincere applauses of the best men; this more sagacious age has discovered, that such airy qualities, and shadowed acquisitions, might formerly do well enough to satisfy those who were infected with the knight-errantry of virtue; but that they signify little now-a-days. Why? Because they would go for nothing on the turf, at the gaming table, in the circles of splendor, the abodes of luxury, or the resorts of dissipation. Such, my dear hearers—but "tell it not in" France, publish it not in the streets of Madrid—such are the scenes, the very honourable and highly-improving scenes, which must form, and finish, and send forth from time to time, the hopeful personages that are to be the fathers of the next generation, that are to command our fleets and armies, that are to sit in the British Senate, and give law to half the globe; that are to fill the chief offices of government, and assist in the councils of their sovereign; in a word, that are to watch over the dearest interests of liberty, religion, and mankind. Eternal God! what but thy wonder-working Providence and Spirit can save this nation from utter profligacy, ignominy, and destruction? Ah, my young men, what superlative praise would redound to you, whom I now address, were you, in the several spheres for which you are intended—were you, I say, to unite with the wise, the worthy and the brave who yet remain, and to vow in the
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name of the Omnipotent, that you will exert every faculty which nature has implanted, and every talent which principle can incite, to stem the torrent of general corruption, to oppose against effeminate manners a masculine virtue, to "quit you like men" in despite of enervating fashion, to show amidst the surrounding slavery of vice, that you have "the rule of your own spirits;" and wherever duty, wherever honour calls, there "to play the men for your people, and for the cities of your God!"

Address XIV.

ON A MANLY SPIRIT, AS OPPOSED TO COWARDICE.

IT has been observed, that to complain of present degeneracy from former days is common in every age, but that the complaint is always weak and unjust; that mankind are still much the same; that there is nearly an equal quantity of virtue and vice still subsisting in the world; that it is only distributed in various proportions, through different countries, at different times; and what is taken from the general stock in any one nation, at any particular period, is transferred to some other. The first part of the observation may be true: but we can by no means subscribe to the rest. If human nature remains always uniformly the same with respect to her essential principles, they are yet influenced in their operation by so vast a diversity of external and accidental circumstances and situations, as to occasion, in the succession of ages, appearances the most different, and often the most opposite, that can be imagined. The original properties of the soil may continue; but the produce may be totally changed by the state of the seasons, concurring with that of the culture.

We appeal to history for an instance or two, out of many which might be adduced. You will not say, that, in the times when polytheism universally reigned, there was to be found among men the same degree of purity, of probity, or of mutual benevolence, which has been since frequently discovered in those countries, where idolatry gave place to the knowledge and worship of the One Supreme. The best days of pagan antiquity might display, here and there, higher flights of friendship, fortitude and
patriotism

patriotism than have been often seen in after generations that enjoyed superior light; owing, we suppose, chiefly to a stronger passion for fame, anciently propagated, as has been before remarked, with equal assiduity and skill by lawgivers and others, who laid hold on the love of glory implanted in the human mind, as the most powerful handle they could employ for inciting to those actions that would aggrandize their countrymen, and reflect honour on themselves. By joining with this motive institutions directly calculated to inspire temperance, patience of toil, fearlessness of danger, disregard to wealth, and a zeal for their country; they certainly produced wonderful effects in the way of magnanimity and heroism. But then those splendid exhibitions were unequal, interrupted, and too commonly obscured by scandalous vices, or great failings which the actors seemed little solicitous to avoid, for want, no doubt, of purer principles, and more comprehensive aims, than any of a secular kind. Trust me, gentlemen, a conduct more regular and blameless, an integrity and a generosity of wider scope, with all those qualities of the heart which are most conducive to the happiness both of this world and the next, will be cultivated extensively in such parts of the earth alone as are enlightened by true religion: I mean, that divine system which, whilst it enjoins and exemplifies all the duties incumbent on man, enforces them by sanctions of infinite and eternal consequence, and instructs him by what power he may perform them. Its actual influence in meliorating the tempers and regulating the lives of its disciples, in those nations where it was first embraced, has been acknowledged even by some of its greatest adversaries.

When this light from heaven was afterwards almost wholly intercepted by the thick shades of superstition and ignorance, that enveloped Europe in the dark ages, what became of the virtues which had flourished under its influence? Into what other regions were they transplanted, so as to make amends elsewhere for the enormities and abominations which had grown up in Christendom during that gloomy night? Was not the world manifestly and greatly worse than it had been for a number of generations preceding?

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When a combination of causes sufficiently known had, under Providence, brought about the blessed reformation from popery; gracious God, what an improvement was instantly made by religious knowledge, in the minds and morals of mankind! And this improvement has on the whole continued in every country where a rational piety is professed. In Britain its efficacy is still proved by the exalted virtue of some; by the decency, the humanity, and the moderation of more; by the mild and equal temperament of the laws in general, and by the justice and equity of those who execute them. Nevertheless we must declare our opinion, that the age in which we live is a declining age with regard to its ruling manners and principles: it is degenerated from the principles and manners of some that went before.

Amongst other proofs of the melancholy fact, we have found in the foregoing address, that this nation is unnerved and corrupted, by luxury and effeminacy, to a degree far beyond any former period. The disease is more largely spread, and more seriously threatening: that is to say, it has infected all classes of men, and extinguished in most individuals that lively reverence for the Almighty, and those generous feelings for the public, which only can preserve a people from ruin. The truth is, superfluous riches have always, and every where, sooner or later, produced this effect. There are but few men who have faith or virtue sufficient to withstand the enfeebling, contaminating tendency of affluence. Hence, I say, hence have proceeded principally the decline and fall of the several States recorded in story, which, having risen to the summit of prosperity, were thrown down partly by the turbulent and partly by the emasculating passions, that never fail to be engendered by ease and opulence. Still however "there is a remnant in our land;" and fain would we contribute to increase it. Our last attempt was to recommend a manly spirit as opposed to effeminacy. Let us now recommend the same spirit as opposed to cowardice: a topic closely connected with the other, and perhaps more needful at this time than ~~may~~ at first sight be apprehended.

There are instances of courage, which I conceive to require more strength of mind, and in which the present
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age appears to me exceedingly defective. We will touch on some of them, after we have pointed to the virtues that should adorn the military character.

It seems natural to imagine, that effeminacy would intimidate and unman her votaries, in the camp, and in the field. Yet the fact is different, with regard to many that are bred in the utmost softness and delicacy. It is but fair to own, that the greatest fops have been often found among the bravest men. We likewise know, that nothing can exceed the intrepidity of those savage nations, where it is the mode for every man to paint and decorate himself in the most fantastic manner, and, except when engaged in war or hunting, to indulge the last degree of sloth. Undoubtedly there are in many persons secret springs of resolution, whether native or acquired, which the most relaxing forms of life cannot destroy, or yet prevent from acting with wonderful elasticity on particular occasions. To whatever cause it be owing, cowardice in battle is probably a species of dishonour that will seldom be incurred by our British youth, under leaders in whom they place a confidence.

With how much pleasure could we tell of the laurels they have so often reaped, in contending against the enemies of their country! With what peculiar satisfaction, I had almost said pride, could we expatiate on the daring enterprises and astonishing exertions both of our fleets and armies, in the last ever-memorable war! Above all the rest, how would imagination glow at the remembrance of that young man, "who" (in the nobly emphatic words made use of by an admiring and grateful nation, when she voted a monument to his memory) "surmounting, by ability and valour, all obstacles of art and nature, was slain in the moment of victory, at the head of his conquering troops, in the arduous and decisive battle against the French army near Quebec, fighting for their capital of Canada!" Glorious and inestimable suffrage! inspired by sentiment and bestowed with fervour, as well as expressed with force and dignity! A suffrage re-echoed by every voice, and felt by every heart to this day! A suffrage which the future sons of Britain will read with tender veneration, and which so well became an occasion that will shed lustre

on her annals to the latest posterity! Happy land, that gave birth and education to the youth, who thus died in the arms of victory, as he had lived in the bosom of virtue!—General Wolfe was not less virtuous than brave. His sobriety, his gravity, his strict attention to military discipline, his ardent thirst after knowledge, after those branches of it more especially that were connected with his profession, had marked him out an object of public esteem and reliance, before that last and most distinguished opportunity of proving to the world how completely he deserved them. With what emulation ought his example to inflame our young men of the army! Or will they choose rather to forget him like Voltaire, who, in recording the very engagement now mentioned, is pleased to suppress the name of Wolfe?

But we have not the smallest doubt, that many of them are persons of honour and capacity, no less than of spirit and resolution. We could point to one of this class, who is known, by his very numerous acquaintance, to unite in his single character the best qualities of the soldier, of the gentleman, of the scholar, of the friend, of the man of hospitality without show, of the man of piety without pretence, who is bigotted to no sect, but not ashamed before any company to worship the Almighty at home, after having worshipped him in his temple. Where is the man who can withhold his respect from such a character? Were there a wretch so worthless as to deride it—the amiable Oughton would be the first to do him good.

Of the greater part in the same profession, what shall we say? How debauched, profane and frivolous! We have been told, that no other army in Europe is dishonoured by so many profligates and triflers as the British. If this be true, what a reproach to our country! Were it the fashion for the troops of other nations to neglect the forms of piety and decency, we should less wonder at the behaviour of many amongst our own. But that is by no means the case. We should wonder at it yet less, did not their sovereign set them so different a pattern. At least it might be expected, that our officers of rank would show a little more disposition to imitate his sobriety, his regularity,

ity, and his many private virtues. Or do they imagine, they may be equally acceptable to him, though they pursue a conduct the reverse of his own? Could they once be made sensible, that it would give him pleasure, if they copied, for instance, the punctuality with which he attends on the public offices of religion, one would hope that, instead of treating these with open and habitual contempt, they might be willing, from good policy, if not from purer motives at first, to wait, as often as their situation allowed them, on the Lord of Hosts, and the God of Battles, in his sanctuary. Purer motives might influence them afterwards. Meanwhile, there is no doubt but those next under them would think it prudent to adopt their practice, and that the effects would soon extend to the lowest man in the army. Would the army suffer in its discipline, in its character, or in its valour, from such an alteration?

There have been periods, when the example of royalty visibly operated on persons of various classes in this kingdom. What is the reason that it seems to have lost its operation at present? What is the reason, that even when it appears in its meekest and most unaffected graces, it now fails to attract imitation? Who knows not, that in these times, the common run of women carry their heads higher at an ordinary visit, than the queen of Great Britain carries her's on her birth-day?

Whence it happens that most of our military men are dissolute and empty, may not, after all, be very difficult to explain. Is there not ground to apprehend, that of the youth connected with families of any figure, the generality who embrace this way of life, are prompted by considerations very different from the love of service, or the desire of fame, or the spirit of patriotism, or a principle of loyalty—in short, that they hope to find the army a sanctuary for idleness and vice, by flying to which, they shall at once get rid of study, application, domestic restraint, and the painful fetters of decorum that are expected to confine other men; and where, at the same time that they have chances for preferment, they may improve in those easy fashionable airs and practices, by which the profession is supposed to be particularly distinguished? As

they question not, conceited things, but wearing a sword will make them brave at once, so they take it for granted they shall commence fine gentlemen the moment they put on a cockade and a scarlet coat. Beside figuring on the parade, showing at a review, keeping guard in their turn, and going through the other usual forms; to trim and embellish their dear persons, to look wondrous smart, to prattle nonsense with fluency, to flatter smoothly, to swear boldly, to blaspheme aloud, to drink deep, to play at whist, to sparkle at assemblies, to corrupt women in time of peace,—and in time of war, to kill men, merely because they are bid;—these they consider as the glorious occupations and accomplishments of a soldier. There have been times, when it was thought manly to assume the character from more respectable views; and there is a country, of which we are apt to entertain too low an opinion, I mean France, where it is thought so still, and where it is esteemed by the military youth, a point of honour to study whatever belongs to their profession. That those of Britain will, notwithstanding the licentious and frivolous turn too prevalent among them, continue, when called upon, to display sufficient valour, we have already declared our persuasion: but we wish them to display it on higher principles, and in the days of peace to act such a part, that they may be justly numbered among the guardians of society, and the ornaments of their station, instead of reflecting dishonour on the last by debauching the morals of the other; and that, if it should be their fate hereafter to fall in the shock of battle, their parents and friends may have the consolation of seeing them leave an unspotted name, and of being assured that they rose from the bed of honour to the crown of immortality.

Far be it from us to lessen the reputation fairly gained by our gallant officers on one occasion or another: but they must forgive us if we regret, that any of them should tarnish their fame by a subsequent behaviour less manly; that after having conquered their enemies, they should be enslaved to their passions; that after having taken forts, and towns, and cities, they should not be able to “rule their own spirits.” Some of them, no doubt, may deem it a mark of bravery to follow, at all hazards, what they style pleasure;

pleasure ; to burst through every barrier of conscience and humanity, that would stop them in the pursuit : but how much better were the boundaries of resolution understood by him who said :

“ I dare do all becomes a man to do :
Who dares do more, is none.”

Amongst other temptations to which gentlemen of the army are exposed, is that of omitting to consider themselves as immediately connected with the community, under the generous and respectable character of its defenders in case of danger. From the exclusive ideas of being appointed by their prince, of being subordinate to their leaders, and obliged, as they conceive, to fight at all adventures, without the least inquiry into the justice of the cause, they are too apt to look upon their situation as separate from the rest of mankind, and to forget that there is nothing truly brave, but what is strictly honourable. Indeed I have often thought it a piteous thing for a man of education and sentiment to hire himself out, as an implicit instrument of destruction, whenever he shall be ordered to assist in the quarrels of kings, or of their ministers. Let me not be mistaken : I point to no particular conjuncture. Are the laws, the liberties, the constitution, the safety, or the real welfare of your country at stake in your opinion ; it well becomes you to step forth for her protection, “ to play the man for your people, and for the cities of your God,” as we mentioned on a former occasion : and he were a poltroon, who should at such a crisis refuse his aid, if it became necessary. But alas ! the general system of life is so perverted by ambition and avarice, that, to gratify these, multitudes of human beings, aye, and in Christian nations too, are ready, at a moment’s warning, to plunge the world in blood and misery, without concern, sensibility, or hesitation. All this, we shall probably be told, is unavoidable. If it is, how deeply to be lamented ! But we will pursue the argument no further, it is too painful. Read Telemachus, and study the New Testament.

In the mean time, let me caution you against that false species of courage, into which youthful fire is easily transported, unless where it happens to be of the gentlest kind.

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There indeed it appears but seldom, that is, when kindled by occasions of importance; and then it mounts into a flame, which subsides as soon as the purpose is served, without leaving behind it any mark of heat, or of boastfulness. This may be termed the heroism of nature, and when exalted by principle, as well as guided by judgment, produces a strain of the truest magnanimity. The other is fool-hardiness at best, is often accompanied with a boisterous and braggart manner, and not rarely degenerates into savageness and brutality; forming the character of the mad hero, who, to borrow the very emphatical language of Solomon, "casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, saying, Am not I in sport?"

Are any of you, my auditors, naturally rash and impetuous? Claim not on that account the praise of a manly spirit. Such vehemence is often observed in the weakest and most womanish natures: it is mere noise and confusion. The helm of prudence is lost; the voice of conscience is not heard in the storm, a storm of your own raising: you drive before it without reflection, and dash on whatever rock lies in your way, without perceiving the mischief till you are wrecked: or, if you make some efforts to gain the haven, you are spent by their violence, and miss it in your rage. Those wild impatient fallies, which your self-love would willingly pass for courage, "betray the succours of reason" not less than fear itself. You often rush on lasting misfortune, for the pleasure of following a blind impulse, which inflames you in an instant, but for which you will severely condemn yourselves soon after. Thus you make life an alternate scene of perturbation and remorse. Who can tell but you may even be precipitated in an instant to do something, of which the remembrance will poison all your succeeding days, and add double bitterness to your last hour? You may flatter yourselves indeed, or be flattered by your companions, into an opinion that you are wondrous brave: but, in good truth, you are at the utmost bold without discretion, and daring to no purpose. You consider not, that the hurricane of passion is a very different thing from the firm but calm proceeding of a well-directed and well-determined soul; that the last belongs to real dignity and strength

of mind ; that the first is frequent among the vicious and the vulgar ; that, if the former could cease to be hurtful, it could yet never be beneficial, either to society or a man's self, whereas the latter is the regular path to happiness and honour.

I know it is common to say, that such a person is very passionate, but very good-natured. It appears however an odd way of speaking. That in the intervals of his choler he may show much kindness, and the more for being desirous to make reparation, I do not question ; neither is it unusual for ardent spirits, that are easily kindled, to be capable of the highest generosity : but he seems to me sadly deficient in good-nature, who is not restrained by it from saying or doing the rudest, perhaps the most injurious things. That he did not deliberately intend them, is but a poor excuse for offences which are frequently repeated ; and as for any generosity or kindness he may be willing to display when he is cool, I must needs think them a sorry compensation to those who suffer from the starts of his passion. Learn, Sir, Oh ! learn betimes, to command your temper. Without this you never can be uniformly amiable ; and, let the hectors of the world pretend what they will, without this you can never be truly gallant ; your courage will be temerity, and your honour pride. To swell, to redden, to fire on the slightest offence, is every way unbecoming in a man : to be " easily entreated," and not easily provoked, is highly worthy of a Christian. " He that is slow to anger," says an unexceptionable judge, " is better than the mighty ; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." It is the sentiment of Solomon ; to which we may add another, equally true and beautiful, whose author I forget : " A coward has fought ; a coward has overcome ; but a coward never forgave." Were I to be asked, Who is the greatest hero ? methinks I should answer, Ho who, though by nature warm, hasty, and irascible, yet habitually controls and governs himself ; not " to be seen of men," but from a principle of duty. Other temperaments leave a person some leisure to reflect, before he shall proceed to indulge them : this bursts forth at once, without previous warning ; the smallest spark sets it in a blaze ;

and the man is out of himself at this moment, who was calm, reasonable, and wise, the last. But to proceed.

Much as the Roman valour has been extolled, and stupendous as it seemed in many instances, I cannot for my part praise it so highly. What after all was its main object, but without provocation to plunder, and without right to enslave the rest of mankind? True it is, they sometimes discovered, in the midst of conquest, a spirit of moderation which did them honour; and in the career of what they had been taught to consider as the height of glory, they often performed acts of singular greatness: nor is it to be denied, that their admitting the vanquished nations into the rank of Roman citizens was as creditable for themselves as it was flattering to those they had subdued; and that there is also some truth in the observation of their having conquered the world by the charm of their virtues, more than by the terror of their swords. But then their triumphs or public entries were detestable, how well soever they might be calculated to inflame courage and excite emulation. A more enlightened morality can never be reconciled to the base and barbarous insult of exposing to the greedy gaze of a rude and petulant rabble, captive generals, princes, kings, disgraced by fetters, and glowing with indignation, or congealed in despair. Blessed Heaven! how superior to such outrage is the charity of the gospel; whose Author when he entered triumphant into Jerusalem, was still "meek, bringing salvation," and even weeping over that devoted city which he longed to save from ruin, but which had returned all his kind efforts with malignity and scorn!

Not to insist here on the deportment of those magnanimous men the apostles, and primitive believers, who manifested so much mildness and lowliness amidst their unequalled victories over the passions and prejudices of the world, I cannot forbear to mention a Christian hero of latter days, who has always appeared to me among the most elevated of mankind. I think of Edward, the *black prince*, as he was commonly called from the colour of his armour. Having conquered and taken prisoner the French king, so far was he from treating him with insolence, or showing any signs of elation on his extraordinary success, though

though but a youth of twenty-seven years of age, that he studied to soften, and if possible beguile the infelicity of his royal captive, by every expression of sympathy and respect, by doing justice to his valour, by ascribing his own victory to Providence, by even serving the unfortunate monarch's table, which he took care to furnish magnificently, and standing behind his back in the time of the repast, as a token of the deference due to majesty from one who was only a subject. Such indeed he was, his father being then alive. But may we not pronounce him greater than a hundred kings who had ruled as many nations and subdued as many provinces? This illustrious young man had all his passions under his command: he was a kingdom to himself: his mind was alike imperial and gentle; and his whole life stained with no dishonour, adorned with every virtue, proved that his behaviour on this occasion was the pure result of magnanimity.

But why do we speak of one man, when we would enforce this greatness of mind which our religion is adapted to inspire? Come hither, ye mighty warriors of heathen name, ye celebrated conquerors who have struck the world with astonishment, come hither, and from persons of the lowest rank and education in this country learn the virtue of applauding a brave, of raising a fallen, of encouraging a vanquished foe. What say ye, Sirs? Whilst you muse on these things, does not the fire of true heroism burn; or can ye fail to bless the Founder of an institution, that has thus vindicated the rights, and improved the affections of human nature; that has shown you how you may blend the softness of pity, and the nobleness of generosity, with the vigour of resolution; how you may rise above fear and pride at the same instant, and superadd to the defeat of your enemies the yet greater conquest of yourselves? Let it never be forgotten, that when the bravery of this nation had, in the last war, overcome the forces of France, the piety of this nation clothed and fed her prisoners.

Believe me, gentlemen, nothing can be more unjust than the aspersion cast upon religion by her adversaries, when they allege, that she contracts and depresses the soul, by enslaving it to false terrors and selfish cares. Such indeed

is the character of superstition, her wretched counterfeit : but her natural and genuine tendency is the very reverse. While she expressly calls upon her followers “to be of good courage, to quit them like men, and be strong ; to resist unto blood, striving against sin ; and even to lay down their lives for their brethren,” if necessary ; she kindly delivers them from those fears, anxieties and sordid passions, that would cramp and debase the heart, and inspires them with disinterested benevolence, virtuous resolution, inward serenity, and immortal hope : or, to give you her description in three words from one who knew her well, she is “the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

It has indeed been lately asserted by a sprightly writer who pleads her cause, that valour, or active courage, is totally incompatible with the genius of Christianity. But he forgets that valour, like many other qualities, is sanctified and meritorious, or the contrary, just as it is under right or wrong direction. He “objects not to the praise and honours bestowed on the valiant by those who enjoy safety and affluence through the intervention of their dangers and sufferings.” But suppose them to be actuated in this case by benevolent and pious principles, (and certainly the supposition is not impossible) shall it yet be said, that they cannot be Christians ? The moral virtues themselves are not recognized by the gospel, unless they are influenced by its precepts, or cultivated in subserviency to its ends. What is often esteemed valour, we readily confess, has done infinite mischief among mankind ; but the virtue which properly deserves that name, has nothing to do with the fierceness of a savage, or the barbarity of a gladiator, or the impious desperation of a suicide, or the insensibility and turbulence of a Charles XII. or the spirit of conquest in an Alexander the great, as he was erroneously styled, or in any other public or private robber and destroyer whatsoever ; nor yet with those laws of honour, as they are most absurdly called, which prompt a man in cold blood, with much form and deliberation, to assault the life of another, perhaps a companion, perhaps a benefactor, perhaps the father of a numerous family, perhaps a person with whom the welfare of a community is nearly connected,

ed, whilst he hazards his own for a punctilio. What shall I say more? True valour has nothing to do with any kind of bravery that is not guided by the light of reason, or excited by the calls of justice and humanity. With such instances of brutal or unhallowed resolution, a real Christian has nothing to do: his principles disapprove and detest them: nor does he think himself warranted to repel every slight affront, every unessential injury, or yet implacably to resent the greatest wrongs, how much soever he may afterwards distrust or shun such as did them. But will it therefore follow, that he must never in any case exert an active courage? What! not in his own defence, or that of a valuable connexion, or an important interest, when dangerously attacked? What! not in defence of his king, and the sacred or civil rights of his country, when directly invaded, or visibly threatened? It is impossible that those who embrace this doctrine (and they are a numerous sect) can have attended duly to the consequences, were it universally adopted: they would be dreadful: I mean that, till such time as "the Christian nations" became unanimously "nations of Christians," the best part of the human species must every where, and on all occasions, fall an unresisting prey to the worst; and law, and liberty, and property, and religion herself, peradventure too the lives of her disciples, be tamely sacrificed to the demons of avarice, ambition and bigotry.

It may be worth remarking here, that when the soldiers who had been convinced by the preaching of John the Baptist, came to ask him, "What they should do," he, instead of directing them to relinquish their employment, simply warned them against its temptations. To say nothing of those among the good and great men celebrated in the Old Testament, who fought "the battles of the Lord, and in the name of the Lord did valiantly;" it should be remembered that the New has recorded two devout and virtuous persons of the military profession, who were distinguished objects of the divine regard and approbation, and of whom it does not appear that they received the least instruction to quit their calling: I refer to the Centurion mentioned in the gospel, and to Cornelius, whose story is related in the Acts of the Apostles. In arguing
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for a manly spirit, as opposed to cowardice, these few remarks seemed necessary to remove the objections so recently thrown in our way.

From speaking of active courage, let us now go on to a comparative view of that which is passive, which is so strongly enforced by Christianity, and which, we have no doubt, will, on some accounts, be found deserving of more commendation than the other, even in its most laudable form; though this idea will not easily be admitted by young men. They, we know, are fond of enterprise; and when their spirits are warmed more than ordinary, they would rather meet danger than await distress. But the truth is, that calamity supported with patience, furnishes often a stronger proof of fortitude than hazard encountered with whatever prowess. We do not allow the name of patience to that power of enduring evil, which proceeds either from cold indifference, or complexional hardness, any more than we would extol that prowess which is possessed by such as seem not to have the sense of fear in their constitution. The number of these last is probably, indeed, not very great. Be that as it may, the courage of a mastiff can never merit much applause: but they whom the principles of duty and honour enable to surmount their natural apprehensions of danger, so far as to face it with calmness, and to persist in this conduct as long as necessity requires—they, gentlemen, are the persons who deserve the praise of valour in action. On the same ground we give the palm of fortitude, or constancy in suffering, to those who, while they feel it in all its sharpness, continue to bear it without repining or wearying. And this, we say again, affords for the most part a clearer evidence of the manly spirit we recommend, than the boldest deeds acted in the field, or in the breach. It will, I think, be acknowledged, that the latter are most frequently the effect of a sudden and temporary rally: that in martial exploits, especially in the general conflict of battle, the dread of disgrace, the hope of advancement, the common danger, the chance of surviving, the example of others, the presence of companions, the sentiment of emulation, the desire of being thought personally brave, a regard to national character, the heat of blood occasioned by the violent exercise and
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the surrounding ferment, together with a mechanical force of mind excited by the whole collected energy of the occasion, that all these circumstances, meeting in the same moment, may produce achievements of the most splendid appearance, which shall yet by no means be a certain indication of habitual courage. But now suppose what has been often seen, heavy affliction befalling a susceptible soul, and sustained, without one impious or indecent complaint, soberly, quietly, meekly, and for a long space of time; will you not own this to be a satisfactory demonstration, an unequivocal test, of resolution equally genuine and estimable?

To despise death, or appear to despise it, in combating an enemy, is a behaviour which I am sensible has been applauded above most others, in every age of the world. It is certainly a behaviour which the human mind is formed to admire. And yet, perhaps, there are few attainments of more ambiguous merit. Among those who have seemed to look with unconcern on "the king of terrors," amidst the shouts and tumults of an engagement, the noise of drums, the clangor of trumpets, the clash of arms, and all the dreadful thunder of artillery, there have been numbers who afterwards, in the stillness of the chamber and loneliness of night, during the progress of a disease, beheld the slow but sure approaches of their end with a pusillanimity that did not give any exalted notion of their former courage. But to say the truth, the fortitude necessary in the field of battle, and that which is required on the bed of death, are distinct qualities. Nevertheless we are persuaded, that the faith and virtue of a Christian would add greatly to the fidelity and firmness of a soldier. He, beyond comparison, has the best reason for possessing himself, and the strongest motive for doing his duty in scenes of danger, who has nothing to fear, but every thing to hope, in a future existence. Did we not know the astonishing inattention of most men to the awful objects of another world, it would appear indeed past conception, how such of our military as believe in them, and yet are wholly unprepared for meeting them, can be wrought up by any means whatever to that pitch of intrepidity which they often display in fight; how they can expose their breasts

to the sudden stroke of death, when within they feel no security, perhaps entertain no expectation of being happy beyond it. How shocking the idea, had they time to recollect it, that in the twinkling of an eye they may be dismissed from every pleasure and prospect here, into a state untried, unseen, unknown, for which they have neglected to make any provision! Considered in this view, what peculiar horrors attend the monster War! How mournful to think of an immortal being—

“—at once dispatch'd,

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Cut off even in the blossoms of his sin;
No reck'ning made, but sent to his account,
With all his imperfections on his head!”

What aggravating pain to reflect on multitudes rushing into eternity in the same situation! It harrows up the soul: let us fly from it to the pleasing contemplation of a good man, of a colonel Gardiner, for instance, dying in the cause of religion and liberty, and, after meriting a laurelled crown, put in possession of “an incorruptible.” Principle, my beloved auditors, principle, in whatever sphere, whether civil or military, whether higher or lower, is still the source of “glory, and of virtue.” We have heard intelligent and experienced officers of the navy affirm, that those of their people who had a sense of piety, commonly proved the most useful and steady in the moment of action, as well as at all other times.

Having again mentioned the navy, we will take this opportunity of avowing the high respect we entertain for many persons who belong to it, and whom, with the brave and honest race of men under their command, we cannot but regard as the surest and ablest guardians, next to the Almighty, of this favoured island. The gentlemen we speak of have long been objects of our esteem, not merely for their valour, which none will either deny or depreciate, but chiefly for their sobriety and decency of manners, their manly worth, their strict care to maintain good order among their inferiors, and to discourage the contrary, both by their authority and their example; let me add, for that rational conversation, and those improved understandings, which discover how far they prefer the pleasures of reflection

reflection and study to vicious and effeminate pursuits—Alas, that one who lately adorned their distinguished list should now be numbered with the dead? The honoured memory of Bentinck recalls the image of a man who possessed the masculine character in an uncommon degree: but, what rendered it peculiarly interesting, it was adorned by much knowledge and many liberal acquirements, illuminated by a large share of sentiment, as well as vivacity, and tempered with the happiest domestic affections. That such a man should be cut off in the strength of his age, and that, if he must fall so soon, he was denied the comfort of falling in defence of the country which had adopted him, may be reckoned among those circumstances of human vanity that fill the mind with solemn reflection and tender concern.

To return from this digression, let me entreat you, my young hearers, still to remember that rational fortitude is, in all situations whatsoever, a quality very different from mere constitutional courage, from the fullen pride of the stoic, from the assumed bravery of the blusterer, and also from that more plausible species of resolution, which the heroes of this world have often practised from the love of glory. The magnanimity inspired or supported by principle, is less showy indeed, and less talkative. A person really endowed with it, pretends not to appear one whit less sensible of his sufferings, than in truth he is. To look at him, and listen to him, under their immediate pressure, those who affect to pass for philosophers, or pique themselves on what they are pleased to style spirit; who have no comprehension of what is meant by “the joy of grief,” no relish for sacred melancholy so sweet to sentimental minds, and no reverence for the inflictions of the Supreme Ruler that strike pious hearts with awe,—they indeed would sometimes be ready to suspect this man of despondence. Yet his soul is resigned: he speaks what he feels; but he murmurs not: he feels as a man should; but he submits as a good man will: his submission is at once humble and affectionate, serious and placid, the offspring of sadness and hope: he knows himself, and his Maker, too well to adopt the language of those boasters that used to harangue about defying adversity, and provoking the

utmost rigour of fortune. But, as he “despises not the chastening of the” sovereign Parent, so “he faints not when rebuked of him.” The storms of life may shake the fabric of his happiness, but they cannot destroy it: “for it is built upon a rock;” and that rock lies within, sustained by the power of the Omnipotent. When nature would shrink from the lot assigned her, religion comes in to her assistance. The tear of sorrow is often transformed into the tear of rapture, while the eye that sheds it is lifted to Heaven. “The cup which my Father has given me to drink, shall I not drink it?” is a thought that was never cordially entertained, without leaving some impression of gladness or serenity. (We must not forget to subjoin, than when virtue suffers,) the compassionate acquaintance, the amiable companion, the zealous friend, are sure to administer relief or comfort, to succour by substantial services, or to soothe by kind condolance. What is the result of all? New degrees of acquiescence in the unerring order, higher aspirations after the joys of eternity, a happier progress in the school of wisdom, and a quicker sensibility to the claims of sympathy and goodness.

You will understand, that what I have now said refers to the inevitable ills of life, those which must be borne as the strokes of an irresistible Providence, or which cannot be avoided without the forfeiture of a good conscience. Whatever calamities may be fairly prevented or remedied, it is the part of fortitude, no less than of prudence, to obviate or remove. To be resigned, is not to be spiritless; and patience and indolence are very different qualities. To lie supinely under misfortune, is not equanimity, but cowardice; to expect from the Almighty help or deliverance, without any active endeavour to obtain it, is not faith, but fanaticism, presumption and sloth united. He is the right believer who performs his duty with vigour, and waits the event with cheerfulness. Religion promises nothing to the idle, but much to the diligent. And why should not he bestir himself in every honest way, who may thus hope for the divine patronage? Why should not industry and capacity be employed under an administration that generally prospers them, to encourage their exertion; though it sometimes denies success, to teach humility and dependence?

dependence? But indeed the greater part, at least among the higher ranks of life, are become languid and dastardly together. Inordinate pleasure has relaxed the sinews of application, and weakened the nerve of endurance. Of those who have hurt their health or their fortune by extravagance, how few possess the courage of voluntarily retrenching, for their own sake, or for that of their connexions!

It may be added, that a manly and a Christian spirit lead to the same behaviour, in scenes of suffering, as well as of action. They are neither of them tame; but both include an ultimate superiority to those external possessions, which no virtue can universally attain, and no wisdom can always ensure: the petty vexations hourly incident to men, they learn to despise: they pity the imbecility of being discomposed with trifles: they condemn alike the folly of creating imaginary, and of magnifying real distresses: they both remember, that "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," and both consider that the world is a state of probation, in which not he who meets the fewest trials, but he who bears those appointed him in the best manner, is the happiest man. It deserves to be remarked, that in this instance philosophy and Christianity have the same scope, though the principles of the one are inferior to those of the other; and that they agree in giving fortitude the name of virtue, by way of preference to all other qualities; probably, because above all others it has self-denial for its ground, and because its structure is above all others distinguished for strength and elevation.

A virtuous man rising above his misfortunes, like some impregnable rock, which stands unmoved by all the winds and waves that beat upon it, has been an object of universal respect and complacence from age to age; one of those images on which the minds of men have dwelt with a kind of reverential pleasure. Who, that has heard of the sufferings and patience of Job, can help thinking of him with that sacred and awful delight, which one would feel on surveying the remains of some venerable temple? But put the case of a person supporting, with unwearied constancy, evils which he might elude by a compliance with dishonourable terms; suppose him unalterably resolved to sustain

sustain yet worse, to sustain the very worst that can be inflicted, rather than purchase deliverance at the expense of integrity—what words can do justice to the greatness of soul conspicuous in such a behaviour?

At first sight indeed it seems beyond the reach of humanity; and yet you know it has been reached, not merely by a few refined and transcendent spirits, but by the whole army of martyrs: nor by them only. Let us do justice to our common nature, which is the work of God, as well as that divine institution which was ordained to improve and complete it: let us acknowledge, that pagan history abounds with memorable examples of heroic resolution. We pity the bigotry that would exclude them from their share of merited renown. Were not they the offspring of God, as well as we? and if he inspired them with dispositions worthy of praise, why should not we own it? If their motives were defective, or sometimes improper, let us be thankful for a religion that has taught us better: but let us also beware, lest, while we boast higher principles than were known to those brave heathens, we should fall beneath them in our practice. What! my hearers, shall we, surrounded with the splendor of evangelic light, shall we “walk in darkness,” or sink into despair? Shall we, by sacrificing our duty to our safety, our honour to our ease, the glorious triumphs of immortality to the poor passing vanities of time, leave room for a Socrates, a Phocion, a Decius, or a Regulus, to “rise up in the day of judgment and condemn” us? God forbid.

Though I never could admire the sternness of the stoic sect, when it proceeded so far as either to deaden the feelings of nature, or to disguise them; I must yet confess that the preference clearly given by many of the ancients to the idea of what became them, above the enjoyment of riches, of ease, or of life itself, manifested a force of resolution, but seldom, comparatively speaking, found in these days of luxurious indulgence. Some examples we have seen, and without question there are more which we have not seen, of great fortitude in maintaining the post of virtue, against the most dangerous assaults of an adverse world. Trust me, gentlemen, it requires no common magnanimity, for young minds especially, to remain undaunted by
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the persecutions of bad men, at a period when to be sober is in many companies to seem particular, and to be serious the certain means of incurring ridicule, and exciting opposition. How beautiful to behold a modest youth persevering, with inflexible determination, in the path which his reason and his heart have chosen; marching on undismayed, through all the shafts of malice and of scorn that can be levelled at him, whilst, both of his own age, and of those who are farther advanced, “thousands fall on his right hand, and ten thousand on his left!”

By the same erect and superior spirit, is such a person enabled to resist the torrent of ill example, with which the weak and the wavering are carried away, and the continual whirl of dissipation that absorbs the light and the thoughtless. “It is equally,” says Plato, “the office of virtuous constancy, to withstand the attacks of pain, and the blandishments of pleasure;” we may add, neither to be overborne by noise and numbers on the one hand, nor drawn aside by solicitation or art on the other. Here, my friends, here indeed is the grand trial; nor was it ever so formidable as now: for in the first place, we have before discovered, there never was so great a majority openly on the side of vice; and in the next, we have observed, that even the good are every day more slackened in their resolves by the soft insinuation of effeminacy. They still retain many laudable sentiments, but have not the spirit to avow them. They would willingly live to their better feelings, but are afraid of being charged with singularity. They are alarmed at the thoughts of appearing to depart too far from the beaten track, even in the pursuit of wisdom and happiness. From mere pusillanimity they often comply with follies which they cannot justify, and fatigue themselves with amusements which they do not enjoy. They are secretly disgusted at the ways of the world, but dare not express their dislike, lest they should be deemed unfashionable. They hate cards, and continue to play at them. They are sick of perpetual assemblies, and regularly frequent them. They can witness licentiousness and impiety without a frown. They can hear the scoffs of infidels, and the oaths of the profane, without the slightest mark of disapprobation. Shall I speak it?—They can actually
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smile, with an air of cool indifference, at the deep corruption of a venal and a vicious age. Not that they are destitute of worth; but their worth is destitute of vigour: they are undecided, irresolute, cowardly. To cowardice, my auditors, to cowardice in daily life, we may impute many, if not most of its failings and infelicities. Hence that strange fluctuation between good and ill apparent in such numbers: hence their want of energy, clearness, efficiency, in what is right: hence their mean subjection, their shameful slavery to what is wrong. To cowardice we may generally impute their not thinking for themselves, their not living to their consciences, their not venturing to oppose the tyranny of the mode, their indulging customs of which they are ashamed, their frequenting company which they do not approve, their making compliances which their judgments condemn; their often suppressing or dissembling the better feelings of their own hearts, lest they should forfeit the applause of such as have none; their sometimes treating with neglect or unkindness those whom they cannot but esteem, for fear of not pleasing an opposite party, for whom perhaps after all they feel not half the real respect. In a word, they dare not trust their success, or their reputation, to truth, to virtue, and to Heaven: they are in a bondage to petty interests and dispiriting apprehensions. A few generous, determined, manly efforts, might, with God's assistance, set them free: but they are enfeebled and debased by pusillanimity; a pusillanimity which, on other subjects, many of them would disdain. I verily believe, there are many who would mount a breach, or face a cannon, with more firmness than they could stand the laugh of a titled profligate, or of a rich fool, where religion or morals were concerned; nay, who could charge like a thunder-bolt through the ranks of war, and yet, like "a reed shaken by the wind," tremble at the breath of reproach, or derision, from a common acquaintance, on the score of doing well. Nor have I much doubt but there are others who could harangue with boldness before the greatest assembly on earth, and yet be terrified at the idea of being seen, by one worthless companion, to bow with veneration before the Lord of the universe. I even suspect, that among those who pique themselves

selves most on their bravery, there are some so very bashful, that to be caught in the act of conversing like Christians, and immortals, would overwhelm them with confusion.

To any one indeed who has not lived where virtue is unmodish, this may appear incredible: he will not be able to conceive how few in comparison have the courage to assert her rights, or openly to reverence her laws; "to confess their Saviour before men," and follow stedfastly his exalted standard, independent of temporal regards and reigning maxims. A youth not yet acquainted with these would be surpris'd, were I to tell him that the language I now hold will be pitied by many, and laugh'd at by more. But what then? Let not this or aught else discourage you, my dear Sir, from cultivating a manly spirit in its highest description. Be assur'd, that vice in every shape is weak at bottom, let her boast what hardiness she will. Be assur'd, that bad men are seldom long without their secret terrors, however artfully these may be dissembled. Soon or late, "conscience makes cowards of them all." The only genuine, comprehensive and invincible courage is inseparably connected with universal rectitude and religious hope. Study universal rectitude, and cherish religious hope. Wherever indeed the first is found, nothing but mistake or melancholy can exclude the last. Under their joint auspices you will have nothing to apprehend: animated by a sense of that Divine Presence which guards the righteous, you will even "mock at fear," like the war-horse in the book of Job. But why do I speak of so noble a creature? It is wonderful what resolution the meanest animals derive from believing themselves protected by beings of a higher order. How then should he be terrified at the prospect of danger, or the feeling of distress, whose heart tells him that Omnipotence is on his side, who has no unrepented guilt to dash his confidence in his Creator, and no unworthy passion to darken his views of that futurity, the faith of which has in every age embolden'd the weakest spirits, as well as elevated the strongest? Trust not, gentlemen, trust not singly to the ardour of an ambitious, or to the force of a masculine mind. In the days of youth, and of expectation, they can perform wonders;

wonders ; but there are seasons and circumstances, when without superior aid they will prove miserable auxiliaries. A train of misfortunes will generally disarm them ; ill health will spoil them of their trophies ; decrepitude will “ put them to open shame ;” and death, grim death, will “ lay their honour in the dust.”

It is indeed true, that numbers have borne up to the last, against continued disappointments from the world, by mere dint of stupidity, of sturdiness, or of vain-glory, or from some other cause no way connected with their moral dispositions ; when not a few, of indubitable worth, but of a feeble frame and timid temper, have appeared to much disadvantage in the same cases. The vivacity of animal spirits alone shall in a surprising manner support one person under disease and decay, when another, his superior in every valuable respect, shall be sadly dejected, or even wholly overset by them, from the state of his nerves, without any fault of his own. And as to the all-deciding event, we doubt not but particular persons may be so insensible from ignorance, or “ hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,” or blinded by the pride of scepticism, as to set it at defiance, at least seem to do so, whilst a tender solicitude for its infinite and endless consequences, or perhaps the state of their bodies at the time, have clothed it with double terror to some of the best men. But, as has been often said, exceptions do not disprove a general rule ; and give me leave to add, he who now addresses you, and who has by his profession had many opportunities of comparing in the situations just mentioned, the behaviour of those who joined religious principle to natural resolution, with that of those who did not, can boldly assert his having found the balance of composure and dignity great on the side of the former. This, gentlemen, taken in connexion with the reason of the thing, and with all he has heard from other quarters on the same subject, is fully satisfying to himself. Forgive him if he pauses for a moment to pray, that he too may be an instance of the pleasing truth : nor can you be much offended, if he intercedes with Heaven for you, his hearers, that you may be enabled to suffer the evils under consideration with real fortitude ; and especially that, instead of meeting death

with

with horror, or cowardice, or brutal indifference, or fictitious bravery, or false hope either of happiness or (dreadful alternative!) of annihilation, you may encounter this unavoidable enemy of man like those virtuous believers, who, after sustaining with firmness and piety the preceding conflicts of life, have engaged in its finishing struggle with a sacred magnanimity.

How different from that temper with which the last terror is braved by the duellist and the suicide! We mentioned both some time ago, but have not left ourselves room to consider them now. They, with another desperate and unhappy character, that of the gamester, who like them mistakes madness for resolution, will furnish ample matter of useful and affecting speculation in some future address.

To wind up the present. Are you, my young men, possessed of instinctive courage? Value not yourselves on that account: the same may be found in an assassin, in a drayman, in a brute. Are you capable of artificial valour? It shows as little intrinsic merit as the other, since it may be equally acquired by those of the most vicious dispositions. Do you perceive in yourselves the love of renown, and the soul of enterprise, congenial to the best-born youth? Prove them by your spirited and honourable exertions in the different employments you embrace, especially by your ardour to deserve well of mankind. It is true, they have been often perverted to the vilest and most pernicious purposes: but certainly they may be made the ground-work of a worthy and useful character. Fail not, I beseech you, to build upon them an active benevolence, an unwearied perseverance, the "contumacious probity" of the Athenian sage admired by Cicero, the pious intrepidity of the son of Jesse recorded in scripture, the singular uprightness of "the man of Uz" applauded by God himself.

"Be this your brazen bulwark of defence,
Still to preserve your conscious innocence."

And do not forget to join the generosity of self-denial, and the vigour of temperance, two qualities that wonderfully fortify and ennoble the mind. Be sure also to add the superiority that springs from a contempt of little passions, paltry conspiracies and pitiful concealments; the holy
boldness

boldness conspired by a decisive and invariable preference of a future life to the present; and, in fine, the animated exercise of rational devotion daily ascending to its native skies, and gradually carrying you up thither. What will be the issue of all? Mark it well: we proclaim it aloud: it is the chief ambition of the bravest spirits: it is the fairest hope and the firmest stay of virtue in youth, in manhood, and in age---Immortality, immortality!---When the deserters from reason, and the heroes of a day, when those who had not the courage to discharge their duty, and those who sought only the praise of men, shall be consigned to everlasting shame; when the monuments of mere human resolution shall be no more, and the annals of secular fame shall perish in the funeral fire of nature, you, my respected friends, you, who faithfully adhered to truth and goodness in a luxurious, vain and unprincipled age, shall receive from the infallible Judge, palms of victory, and wreaths of glory, beautiful as paradise, and undecaying through eternity.

Address XV.

ON THE BEAUTY OF HUMILITY.

HE who discourses to young men on ambition and enterprise, on valour in the field, or fortitude out of it, and other points connected with a manly spirit, may expect in general to be heard with attention and favour: but he who undertakes to inculcate, on the same persons that precept of our holy religion, "Be clothed with humility," must not be surpris'd, if they should listen with some reluctance, and afterwards remark, that however such a garb may suit well enough particular professions, situations and ages, it is too grave for youth, of too dark a hue, and too homely a texture, for those who are entering on the public theatre, and naturally desirous of striking the spectators by the vivacity and lustre of their first appearance; in plain terms, that there is danger lest they should be disheartened and degraded by learning to be humble. Nevertheless they may discover, in process of time, that they were under a mistake; that the disposition here recommended is not only the most decent, but in truth the most engaging of all others; that it is no way incompatible with an elevated character; that on the contrary, the noblest minds have been most eminently adorned with it. Sooner or later too they may be convinced by experience, that pride, whatever show she may make, or whatever deception she may practise, for a while, is secretly conscious of as much imbecility as insolence, and seldom fails at last to incur a mixture of contempt, dislike and indignation. But this kind of conviction we have seen attended with so many mortifications in some of our acquaintance, and yet after all produce so little improvement, that we would willingly prevent its necessity in your case, my beloved hearers, by setting before you the folly and odiousness of pride how-

ever disguised or decorated ; as we should be happy to promote your early and lasting acceptance by effectually recommending to your choice the unembellished but irresistible attractions of her opposite.

It is a pretty allusion I have somewhere met with, that Rebecca's beauty and jewels, though at a distance hidden by the veil with which she covered them, would notwithstanding, when observed on a nearer approach, be much more pleasing for this temporary concealment. The attire of the soul is, like that of the body, most becoming and agreeable, when it has least glare, and no affectation.

It must be confessed, indeed, that there is not any period of life at which men appear much disposed to put on the sober garment of humility, however highly they may approve it in others. Self-love revolts against the practice of this virtue, though in the commerce of society something like it is hourly pretended, in part no doubt from a secret persuasion, that the reputation of it at least is desirable. Almost every man calls himself the humble servant of every man. But how few are there who seriously mean any thing by this phrase ! Must it not commonly be set down among those empty, though plausible forms of speech, that have, in the progress of false refinement, been introduced by art and vanity combined, under the mask of courtesy and submission ?

Genuine humility is, in fact, the most unprofessing of all virtues. She is the parent of true simplicity : she may be known by a certain mild and silent influence, which she never studies to display : and, except when piety or good manners make it necessary, she avoids all those words, gestures and appearances of the humble kind, that might draw the attention and praise of men. Like her divine Exemplar, she is "meek and lowly in heart ;" but in language and deportment conforms herself to established custom, as far as it is innocent. That she is seen and accepted by the Almighty, satisfies her warmest wishes.

Those who seem ready on every occasion to speak meanly of themselves, would be mortified by neglect, and stung by censure, from the silliest creature living. One of the proudest men I have ever known, and who could the least endure to be charged with any imperfection, was perpetually

ally exclaiming, in a most lamentable tone, against the degeneracy of the world, and the depravity of the heart. Those who affect to depreciate themselves in conversation, inwardly hope not to be taken at their word, and would be wofully disappointed if they were. Such self-condemnation is one of the numberless traps which are daily laid for applause. There is not indeed any vice, that assumes a greater variety of shapes than pride, or that walks the world in more disguises.

The artifices which men employ to acquire importance, and attract admiration, are usually more or less refined, according to their different degrees of understanding. But trust me, Sirs, the nicest management of this sort seldom passes undiscovered; the persons on whom it is attempted, having for the most part, within themselves, too sure a test by which to examine and detect it in their neighbours. When detected, it meets with no quarter; and thus pride is doomed to defeat her own end, to miss the fame she seeks, and to incur the disgrace she dreads. Humility on the other hand, when attended by good sense and good conduct, has nothing to fear from the self-love of the by-standers, disarms prejudice in all but the malignant, and conciliates from the candid singular regard. "Before destruction, says Solomon, the heart of man is haughty; and before honour is humility." But a greater than Solomon is here. "Whosoever exalteth himself, says the head Master of Wisdom's school, shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted;" a declaration which occurs so often in the gospel, that we may conclude it to be a favourite maxim with our Saviour. Indeed the scriptures at large lay so peculiar a stress upon this point, and it likewise enters so deep into nature, experience, religion and the best philosophy, that it will deserve all your attention, whilst we consider it at some length.

In direct opposition to such doctrine, it has been asked, "Is not diffidence a bar to fame and success? Does not humility tend to conceal merit, instead of producing it? Does not an important air, a confident behaviour, a bold display even of small abilities, and a daring pretence to more merit than a man possesses—do not these things impose on the cred-

ulous, the indolent, the half-judging ; and are not they often the foremost in the road to reputation and employment ?” On this ground, a late noted free-thinker takes occasion to depreciate humility. He styles it a monkish virtue, and yokes it with a number of other qualities, which he affirms “men of sense have every where rejected, because they serve no manner of purpose ; neither advance a man’s fortune in the world, nor render him a more valuable member of society ; neither qualify him for company, nor increase his power of self-enjoyment ; but on the contrary, cross all these desirable ends, stupify the understanding and harden the heart, obscure the fancy and sour the temper. We justly therefore, adds he, transfer them to the opposite column, and place them in the catalogue of vices.”

Now I apprehend, that this severe sentence has been passed on humility, along with the rest which do not enter into the present question, upon a manifest misrepresentation of the nature of that virtue. The author condemns a disposition which rational believers neither profess nor approve, at the same time that he gives it the name of one which lies at the foundation of their religion. Is this a fair proceeding ? The uncandid artifice will appear by inquiring into the real character of Christian humility. The result we shall submit to your own discernment and justice.

The essence of the quality under consideration, you will find expressed with precision in that passage of St. Paul, where with particular solemnity he admonishes every one “not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly.” We are not to rate our abilities or attainments, our privileges or possessions, beyond their value, which must be estimated exactly in proportion to the pious, the benevolent, and the prudent use we make of them. Nor are we to contemplate only the bright side of our conduct, but to look also at those frailties and failings that shade it in other parts ; since, without this joint survey, it will be impossible to think of ourselves with any degree of impartiality. Whatever elation of heart would betray us into a forgetfulness of our Maker, of our

friends,

friends, or of ourselves, we are carefully to repress; since no advantage or gratification could compensate for a behaviour so unbecoming and so unwise. We are not to reflect on our virtues or accomplishments with complete satisfaction, as if they were complete; and yet less are we to arrogate accomplishments or virtues, of which we are wholly destitute: for in either way we should much mistake ourselves and offend against truth as well as sobriety. We are not ultimately to assume the praise of aught we are, or have, or do; as if we had not derived from God, or did not hold of him entirely, our powers, our enjoyments and our existence: for this were impiety, injustice and indecency at the same time. Neither are we to entertain an over-weening opinion of ourselves, on account of those personal or accidental distinctions, which we have had no hand in procuring: for that were to be guilty of absurdity and vanity alike. Whatever of good we have been enabled to perform, or permitted to taste, we are still to trace back to the Giver and Inspirer of all good; and whatever of the contrary we have done, or suffered, we are, on the other side, to impute to ourselves, with sentiments of penitence where conscience says it might have been avoided, and, where she does not, yet still with sentiments of modesty.

What think ye, gentlemen? Is there any thing in this account unreasonable? I am sure there is nothing unscriptural. What, I beseech you, is humility thus explained, but a just apprehension of our real characters and circumstances, as dependent and indebted, imperfect and guilty; together with such language, and such a conduct, as are without art or study suited to that apprehension? Does it then preclude a consciousness of any worthy disposition or action, of any valuable talent or capacity, or any desirable possession whatsoever? By no means: for that were to preclude an argument in favour of thankfulness, fidelity, and trust. Does the man who is endowed with sincere humility affect to rail against himself; to confess crimes which he never committed, or offences which he never designed; to sink beneath his station, to yield up lightly the respect to which he is entitled; to surrender without
a reason

a reason any just claim supported by the laws of society, or warranted by the forms of life; to wear sordid apparel, to walk with downcast eyes, or tread with timidity and hesitation like a slave in the presence of a tyrant? None ever supposed it, but such as mistook superstition for religion; and none ever said it, but those who were either strangers or enemies to the last.

Because visionaries and bigots, of one church or another, have defaced the fair form of Christianity in general, or distorted this particular feature of it, is the original institution to blame? Did either Christ, or his apostles, practise or inculcate, under the notion of humility, any thing degrading or unmanly? Did they not all assert themselves with great spirit on great occasions?—When I speak of the apostles here, I think of their dignified behaviour after their Master's exaltation. Did they not obtain, from the serious and the upright, the profoundest reverence? Did they not also enforce those affections, and that demeanour, which will never fail to please the better part of mankind? Did not St. Peter exhort the believers to whom he wrote, to “have their conversation respectable among the Gentiles?” And did not St. Paul press, as you formerly heard, the study of “whatsoever things were lovely, venerable, and worthy of praise?”—As to our Saviour himself, did not he caution his disciples against disfiguring their faces like the Pharisees, and order them to anoint their heads with oil, agreeably to the custom of the East in those times: that, when they fasted, they might not appear ostentatious of their sanctity?

With regard to the singular character and manner of the Baptist, it should be remembered, that they were adapted to the singularity of his situation and office: but, though his own life was sequestered and austere, he was far from recommending it to the imitation of others; and at the same instant that he called men to repentance, he sent them back, as was lately observed, to their several occupations in society, with a direction to behave well in each.

And let it not be forgotten, that whilst He who came after him, carried on in the open world the same charitable

table design, with a more alluring address, with such ease and affability, such sweetness and freedom, as well became the friend and brother of men, joining to all the rest the humblest offices of kindness,—still he failed not to maintain an elevation and majesty, that were the very reverse of pusillanimous or mean.

The humility taught and exemplified in the New Testament, is too amiable, and too unaffected, to enjoin the laborious ceremonies, or unnatural rigours of the cloister. It requires no man to put on a shirt of hair, to pine amidst the bounties of Heaven, to tear his flesh with whips, or cripple himself with going barefoot : severities indeed which, formidable as they seem, are yet perfectly consistent with the spirit of vain-glory, and frequently subservient to the solemn impostures of a sanctimonious pride. Such practices belong, at best, to that “voluntary humility” which the wise and manly apostle, we have so often quoted in these addresses, was far from approving. Undissembled lowliness in a well-taught believer is quite another thing. To define it in one sentence, it is sobriety of mind, and modesty of deportment, proceeding from a lively sense of his frailty and mortality, of his trials and temptations, of his promptness to err and go astray, of his many actual mistakes and deviations, and of his total insufficiency for his own security and happiness—from a lively sense of all these, united with an habitual impression of what he owes first to his Creator, Saviour and Judge, before whom he bends with the devoutest gratitude, and the deepest submission, and, next to those who share the same nature with himself, of whom he has reason to believe there are few or none who have not some advantage over him.

Let us now suppose that a young man has learned to think and feel in this manner. Will he find himself under any necessity of studying to appear humble, of practising grimace to conceal hypocrisy, of doing or saying silly things, that he may not be charged with pride? Surely not. Let us see then what effects a temper regulated by such sentiments will produce on his behaviour in some of the leading circumstances of life.

Imagine, for example, that he is unavoidably called upon to speak of his own character, of his probity, his humanity, or his good intentions : how will he acquit himself ? It is a critical situation. He will speak with freedom, with firmness, with a noble simplicity which shows him to be far above any little design of catching applause, and that he only complies with the necessity of the case. Let it be remembered by the way, that the same things which, in talking of himself before general company on ordinary occasions, would be justly pronounced the egotisms of vanity, will, in the privacy of friendship, and amidst the play of humour, be nothing more than the communications of honest confidence, or the effusions of a heart at ease.

Does he at any time hear himself approved ? Another trial of humility ! How will he behave under it ? He will accept and improve such approbation, if his heart tells him it is not undeserved, with complacency in the candour that bestows it, and with zeal to deserve it yet more. If, on the other hand, he is conscious of not possessing the particular kind or degree of merit ascribed to him, he will honestly disavow it, and either acknowledge that it is beyond his reach, or, regretting a deficiency for which he finds himself to blame, will from that moment resolve to supply it.

But figure him to be accused or suspected without cause. In what manner will he then comport himself ? Unless the accusation be of a scandalous nature, or the suspicion such as to affect his character materially, he will feel very little anxiety to answer the one, or obviate the other ; but will rather adopt the admirable sentiment of Plato, who, on being informed that certain persons had spoken ill of him, answered with coolness, “ We will lead such a life that none shall believe them.” And even in the cases now put, he will calmly consider, before he takes any step for his own vindication, whether the attack on his good name comes from a quarter worth his notice, or is likely to hurt him with those, about whose opinion he ought to be solicitous. It is neither humility nor rectitude ; it is pride, or consciousness, or both, that occasion many to plague the world,

world, and tease every creature they know, with laborious and endless justifications of themselves from the charges which happen to be brought against them. Like foolish and fiery duellists, they fancy their reputation, forsooth, to be of such prodigious moment in the opinion of the public, that they must necessarily fight every man from whom they suppose, or would have others believe, they have received an affront. The arrogant, the jealous, and the pragmatistical, are constantly asserting their imaginary importance, constantly claiming I know not what attention and respect, constantly bespattering and belying those who dispute their demands, or disappoint their expectations. Have any of you, gentlemen, suffered abuse from such unhappy beings? The best conduct you can hold is to pity their unhappiness, and forgive their offence, whilst you abhor the malignity that could prompt it, to avoid all connexion with them for the future, to treat their machinations with honest contempt, not to think unkindly of those they may have misled, to persevere peaceably in your duty, and to enjoy the serenity of a good conscience.

But let us return to the humble youth, whose picture we have engaged to draw: you cannot be at a loss to judge of his dispositions in general, towards those who may have wronged him in whatever shape. Who has not observed, that while pride aggravates real injuries, as well as apprehends a thousand which are merely ideal, humility is accompanied with candour, patience, meekness and the whole train of gentle graces? You can readily conceive, that he will neither have leisure nor inclination to indulge resentment against others, who duly reflects how often he has wanted forgiveness himself, if not at the hand of man, yet certainly at the hand of God, and who is diligently employed in correcting his own errors, regulating his own practice, and pursuing objects of which no injustice or malice can deprive him.

The same humility, which thus preserves him from rancour and animosity, will also prevent on his part those little rivalships, ungenerous suspicions, and pitiful terrors, by which pride is continually harassed on every article relative to fortune, condition, appearance, or what may be called

called the figure of life. Whoever is possessed with this evil spirit, is always fearful, lest others should stand in his way to fame, or attract that notice and admiration, which he strives to engross. Hence perpetual peevishness and ill humour; as he will be perpetually obstructed in his schemes, by multitudes whom the same demon impels to the same pursuit. From a state of mind so unamiable, as well as wretched, the youth we are depicting will be entirely free: he will feel no emulation but what is virtuous and noble; and he will take no offence, when denied that consideration which, though he endeavours to deserve it, he pretends not to challenge, nor wishes to court.

It may be remarked, that those who are always laying plots for importance and applause, have seldom any candour, being commonly disposed to suspect every one else of the same artifices; whereas the humble and the modest, not conscious of such designs in themselves, are not apt to impute them to others. The former are least of all qualified to judge of characters in which truth and nobleness unite: the latter too are frequently mistaken in their ideas of men; but always from a different cause, and almost always on the favourable side.

But to advance: suppose the situation, rise or employment of our young friend obscure. Will he be ashamed of them? Never, never, so long as they are honest. If any of these subjects should occur where he is present, he will enter into them with the same readiness as into any topic that would reflect lustre on him in vulgar eyes. If, on the contrary, he is eminent by his birth, his rank, or his profession, will he value himself on these merely, or exact the tribute of esteem for things which in themselves are entitled only to the forms of respect? No: for pray observe, it is his invariable system, not to think himself at all the more worthy for any exterior distinction, or the less so for the want of it, from a firm persuasion, that nothing, but what he chooses or refuses, can justly infer either praise or blame.

The same system will teach him to dread flatterers of every kind, to dread most of all the arch flatterer within. But, mark his generosity! he rejoices in the reputation of
all

all such as he believes to deserve it; and, instead of wishing to disparage their virtues, to aggravate their failings, or give the worst turn to their doubtful actions, he takes a real pleasure in commending them with warmth and liberality, in pleading their excuse when they are unjustly attacked, and placing their characters in the most favourable light when attempts are made to darken them. He cannot be of the opinion of those who think, that whatever honour they add to any, is just so much subtracted from themselves. He, for his share, often loses sight of his own good qualities, in the complacency with which he contemplates those of others, and is more ambitious that a companion, or a friend, shall be praised than himself.

View him in conversation at large. There humility will inspire him with the truest breeding, an unforced attention to the company, and a graceful forgetfulness of his own claims. From him you will have no cause to apprehend that pertinacious spirit, or petulant demeanour, natural to pride, which is so prone to betray itself in everlasting contradiction or dispute, in eagerness to decide, to dictate, to occupy or lead the discourse, to eclipse or outshine every person present. Need I say, that these are things utterly irreconcilable with good manners; that they can never be pleasing either to the self-love, or the common sense of others; and that, unless where they are accompanied with superlative talents, or rather concealed in the splendor of extraordinary understanding, wit, and eloquence, they cannot but create much disgust? From those who have no other pre-eminence, but that of higher station, or larger fortune, they are always offensive to minds of any independence. From equals they are absolutely insufferable. Nor will the youth we describe affect them, in whatever situation. So far from putting himself forward, he will readily give place to those with whom he converses, and gladly afford them opportunities of being pleased with themselves, by listening to them on their favourite topics with complaisance, as often as he can with decency, and allowing what they say its due weight according to his best apprehension. As he piques himself neither on his circumstances nor his parts, if they should
 happen

happen to be distinguished; he condescends, with ease, "to men of low estate," and of mean ability. Those acts of compassion and meekness, to the poor and despised, which the proud consider as a humiliation not to be endured, unless when prompted by political motives, he esteems it his glory to perform, after the example of Him "who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and make himself the servant of all," that he might inundate goodness and diffuse felicity with greater success.

Yet further: Does our young man hear others approved, or see them advanced, in preference to him? What will be his sensations then? Here indeed is no slight trial of humility. Yet that self-denying virtue will teach him, either to acquiesce in the event with a generous complacency, or not to be at rest till he attains such a height; in other words, till he is disposed to obey the apostolical precept, "In honour esteeming others better than himself."

But how, you will ask, is this possible, since, from what we have already seen, he appears to be a character of singular excellence? The answer is easy. It will be natural for a person of his dispositions to reflect, that one may be more learned than himself, another more eloquent, another more witty, another more discreet, another more beneficent, and so of the rest. Without much penetration he will be able, and with far less humility than his he will be willing, to comprehend that his own faults are certainly known to himself, and in their worst aggravations; the faults of his neighbours only by uncertain report, or without the circumstances that might serve to alleviate them.

As he doubts not but those about him may be endowed with some valuable qualities, to which he has no pretension, so if he should in other respects possess a manifest superiority, far from boasting like the Pharisee in the parable, he will piously remember "who has made him to differ," and will fully understand St. Paul's question, "What hast thou that thou hast not received? Why therefore shouldest thou boast, as if thou hadst not received it?"

With regard to the felicity of others, it will give this amiable youth pleasure wherever he beholds it; and if he also is prosperous, he will study to promote the increase and continuance of their satisfaction. But if he is disciplined by adversity, he will conclude that he has deserved it, or that it was necessary to school him into wisdom. At the same time, he will be ready to embrace any opportunity of obtaining for his friends those advantages which Providence has withheld from himself.

But suppose he falls into mistake, indiscretion, misconduct. Who, alas! is exempt from them? The instant he perceives it, he will feel a just concern. Sensible of his imperfection in general, the slightest hint will show him wherein he has erred, should his own apprehensive mind not immediately suggest it; nor will he be forward to justify himself. The humble man alone has the magnanimity of confessing his faults freely, instead of attempting to deny, to excuse, or to palliate them. But still it should be understood, that this man will never, for the sake of being thought humble, acknowledge miscarriages of which he is not conscious.

As for attention, docility, a desire to listen and to learn, a deference to the wisdom of years, to the counsels of friendship, to the authority, whether of divine or human laws; these are qualities essential to such a youth. And how will he stand affected to friendship? Of all men alive, he will cultivate this sublime affection with the highest relish, and exert it with the noblest zeal; because, of all men alive, he will be the readiest to prefer his friend to himself. For the same reason, he will also be found, beyond comparison, the most tender and generous of lovers. To say the truth, a self-conceited, self-enamoured coxcomb is wholly incapable of so fine a passion. He is too much his own admired object, to be attached, from real sentiment or esteem, to any woman upon earth.

And now, what say ye of this picture? It is drawn from observation, from reason, and from holy writ, from the last chiefly; nor do the two first contribute a single feature that disagrees with the representation of the other. Tell me then, ye sons of candour and ingenuity, does the
beautiful

beautiful original merit, in your opinion, the treatment she has received from the author before cited? Does she, in your opinion, “serve no manner of purpose? Instead of rendering the man” who has wedded her “a more valuable member of society, or qualifying him for company, or increasing his power of self-enjoyment,” is she formed, think ye, “to cross all these desirable ends, to stupify his understanding and harden his heart, to obscure his fancy and sour his temper?” Do you apprehend in good earnest, that humility, as now set forth, and as always set forth by those who speak upon the subject without the influence of scepticism, of bigotry, or of superstition, deserves “to be placed in the catalogue of vices?” Or can you believe, that she “has been every where rejected by men of sense?”

Was Addison then, was Milton, was Bacon, with many more of the greatest writers this country, or any other, ever produced—were they not men of sense? Or would our late infidel, with all his affectation of singularity and paradox, have ventured to assert, that they too rejected the quality we recommend; that they “placed it in the catalogue of vices,” or at best deemed it “a monkish virtue?” Or had he forgotten, that the great poet just named did not deem even “humble deprecation” unbecoming man in the state of innocence, having introduced our first father using those very words in his conference with the Almighty, immediately after his creation; of which conference, the amiable critic now mentioned pronounces the sentiments not inferior, in beauty or fineness, in delicacy or justness, to any part of that admirable poem; quoting particularly the lines where Adam expresses himself in this style of lowliness and abasement? In a prayer which was found among the papers of Bacon, written with his own pen, there is a strain of humility worthy the enlightened mind of that wonderful man; whom we hear at once acknowledging, as the gift of Heaven, the virtues and talents he had been enabled to cultivate, and confessing with contrition his innumerable sins, on account of which he felt the hand of God heavy upon him.

It should not be forgotten here, that our author himself turns preacher in recommendation of a quality inseparably

bly connected with the Christian grace we are inculcating : “ Sometimes, says he, modesty means that tenderness and nicety of honour, that apprehension of blame, that dread of intrusion or injury towards others, which is the proper guardian of every kind of virtue, and a sure preservative against vice and corruption. But its most usual meaning is when it is opposed to impudence and arrogance, and expresses a diffidence in our own judgment, and a due attention and regard to others.” He adds, “ In young men chiefly this quality is a sure sign of good sense, and is also the certain means of augmenting that endowment, by preserving their ears open to instruction, and making them still grasp after new attainments.” He subjoins, “ Were the door opened to self-praise, every one is sensible, that such a flood of impertinence would break in upon us, as would render society wholly intolerable.” Thus you see modesty is praised by the very man who reprobates humility. But where did he learn that they were attributes of so opposite a nature, as to be justly one of them an object of approbation, and the other an object of displeasure?—It is worth observing, that as this writer’s joy was to perplex inquiry, and unsettle belief, so the affronted majesty of truth failed not, in the instance before us, and numberless others, to avenge her cause, by leaving his wayward mind to the wanderings of metaphysical sophistry and self-contradiction. Thus indeed it has ever fared with the pride of philosophy, when, forgetting the frame and condition of man, she has cast off all dependence on God, and affected to be only in the cool pursuit of argument, while she was eagerly hunting after the reputation of superior ability, in disputing opinions and ridiculing virtues cherished by the pious and the good. Who, that is not blinded by pride, or by prejudice, can be ignorant that humility includes modesty, as the greater comprehends the less; that the latter cannot be more repugnant to impudence, to arrogance, to indecent self-praise, than the former; and that no man can be truly modest who is not truly humble?

But, after all that has been said in behalf of this virtue, it may be asked by the sincerest friends to truth and piety, Is there not an honest, a generous, a noble pride? Yes, certainly,

certainly, if you mean by these words an exalted sense of honour, or magnanimity in a man's principles and actions. We saw on a former occasion, that St. Paul experienced this conscious elevation in its full extent: "It were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void." But the phrases I have just mentioned, though adopted by the best judges of language, are yet a corruption of it. At least they want correctness, since the temper intended to be expressed by them is not in the least degree hostile to that humility which is literally and directly opposed to pride. I cannot see a reason why any worthy person may not be penetrated with his infirmities, failings, and obligations, on the one hand, and sensible on the other of what belongs to him as a being possessed of upright intentions, destined to glorious purposes, and honoured with inestimable privileges in the creation of God.

But must it not be owned, that humility has been sometimes accompanied, in the presence of strangers and superiors, with an embarrassment, a perturbation, a terror extremely prejudicial to success? Have not bashful youths more especially been sometimes so depressed and chilled by their diffidence in the beginning, that they have never been able to surmount it, or its effects, as long as they lived? All this has, no doubt, happened, though the present is not an age in which it is likely to happen very often. The celebrated author before quoted, says, even of modesty, that "it has a natural tendency to conceal a man's talents; as impudence displays them to the utmost, and has been the only cause why many have risen in the world under all the disadvantages of low birth and little merit." But he ought to have distinguished between modesty and want of firmness, between humility and want of spirit. The one is a virtue; the other a weakness; the one adds to a man's value; the other takes from its currency. There is a becoming resolution, an ingenuous confidence, in asserting, justifying, defending to the last, what the heart believes to be right and true, that is no way incompatible with an unassuming temper, or an unpretending manner.

It should likewise be observed, that bashfulness in the extreme may be frequently the result of too anxious an attention to one's self, too eager an aim to shine or to please, too quick an apprehension of not appearing to sufficient advantage. He is, in truth, the humblest man, who wears the garment of humility with the least consciousness, and the greatest ease.

It deserves to be added, that, however the empty and the forward may often succeed, and sometimes divert, they never delight, they often disgust, and commonly at length sink into contempt, at least among persons of discernment. Such will seldom choose to employ, in business of serious moment, those whose folly and conceit they may sometimes in a vacant hour suffer to amuse them. It is to the solid, the steady, the modest, that they will look for assistance in cases of importance.

Imagine to yourselves a youth of this character; and the following account you will, if I mistake not, generally find to be true. He may at setting out work his way somewhat slowly, as the sober dawn rises by little and little, and softly steals upon the world. But, like it too, his progress will be sure: "his path," to speak in the sublime language of Solomon, "is as the morning light, that shineth more and more, unto the perfect day." By real, increasing, unostentatious worth, he will silently gain real, increasing, unreluctant regard. Free from pride himself, he will not be apt to hurt the pride of other men. He will not expose his weakness by attempting beyond his strength. He will improve on acquaintance, instead of losing by it; and, in proportion as his merit is discovered, the best people will be disposed to encourage it for its own sake, and to love him for not proclaiming it. By accepting their kindness as a favour, he will receive the more. Pride cannot stoop to own itself obliged; but humility is full of gratitude; and gratitude is so very rare, that it is unspeakably pleasing. Who would not confer benefits on a deserving young man, that instead of saucily considering them as a debt to which he had a claim, places them with modesty and sensibility to the credit of his benefactors? His benefactors will grow in their friendship, when they perceive

perceive that he does not grow upon it; and perhaps they will help him forward with the greater zeal, that they are not afraid of his standing in their way. What shall we say farther? He will do nothing impious, for he remembers his Creator; he will do nothing dishonourable, for he reverences his conscience; and he will do nothing insolent, because he respects mankind. But who, that beholds such a behaviour, can forbear to approve it? Accordingly, earth and heaven will smile; men will patronise, angels will guard, and God will prosper him. Before honour "is humility; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

This doctrine, we have already remarked, holds a distinguished rank in our religion; nor in any instance, perhaps, has its author manifested a deeper knowledge of the nature he assumed, with a view to recover and raise it. At the same time that he enjoins, in the strongest manner, the virtue we are surveying, as peculiarly connected with the spirit of his system, and as productive of its fairest fruits, he is not willing to disappoint or damp the original aspirations of the soul. He knows that she contains in herself an astonishing mixture of littleness and greatness; that she is in a state of much disorder and distress, though endowed with immortal capacities for virtue and happiness; that after these last, she is still fighting; that they are not to be attained by vain pretensions, or over-weening conceits; that such things are offensive, foolish, and hurtful; and that by humility, as before delineated, she must gradually rise, through the scale of duty, to perfection and preferment in the kingdom of heaven. Thus the wisest provision is made for humbling without depressing, and for advancing without elating her. From the condition of her being, she is taught meekness and lowliness; and this discipline becomes the ground-work of her highest improvement and elevation.

That which Demosthenes said of action in an orator, Augustine has applied to humility in a Christian. Being asked what was the first thing in religion, he answered, humility; what was the second, he again answered, humility; and what was the third, he still replied, humility.

In a word, he looked on this evangelical grace as the basis of all the rest. We may subjoin, that, as the noblest fabrics have the deepest foundations, so the greatest men, in the best acceptation of the phrase, are the humblest; and they who build the structure of their conduct on a low estimation of themselves, proceeding chiefly from exalted conceptions of their duty, will naturally carry their endeavours to the sublimest heights of goodness and devotion, and most effectually secure, without confidently claiming it, the favour of God and man.

The beauty of humility will be yet farther apparent, if we now contemplate a little more particularly her admirable tendency to enlighten and ennoble the mind, contrasting her in this respect with her presumptuous but impotent antagonist.

If any of you wanted to inspire a young person yet uneducated, with the justest sentiments and the worthiest affections, would you not wish to find him by nature teachable, complying, and full of simplicity, like a little child of the best temper? You perceive immediately the importance of this reflection, and are convinced on the other side, that nothing can be more unfavourable for the cultivation either of the understanding, or of the heart, than an original turn to vanity, petulance, and obstinacy. The two former indeed may be conquered, though with some difficulty; and I trust they often are: but the last, I fear, seldom is. Obstinacy seems to be the first-born of pride, and both the biggest and worst of all her progeny. What, alas! is to be expected of those who are habitually wedded to their own ways, and their own fancies, from a persuasion that they cannot be mistaken, and that those who would pretend to restrain or admonish, to direct or advise them, are usurpers on the rights of their superior judgment? In this, a haughty man resembles the sluggard, of whom Solomon observes, that "he is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men who can render a reason." Mark him well, and you will find him ready at every turn to condemn or ridicule the conduct and notions of others; to set up his character, and his opinions, as the very test of truth and propriety; to assume the airs of a dictator in al-

most every company, and affect to be still the principal, if not the sole object of admiration, as well as to appreciate the sense and breeding of the few amongst his acquaintance, whom he vouchsafes to think well of, by the degree of applause they bestow upon him. What is the consequence? That he can never learn any thing to purpose, and that he is never familiarized to the amiable equality of social life, or those free communications, and manly discussions, which tend so happily to open the mind and polish the manners, and which may be reckoned among the chief advantages of what is termed, in common language, a club; I mean, where such as form it meet on a footing of reciprocal civility and friendly ease, and agree to regulate their behaviour by the laws of decency and temperance.

I am indeed apt to believe, that, next to the correction of adversity, and the illumination of religion, nothing tends more to make a youth of any ingenuity modest and wise, than finding his intellects tried, his principles sifted, his ideas frequently questioned and debated, and even his deportment and character sometimes turned into a subject of criticism, in the company of lively and sensible associates, who, without wishing to mortify or offend, have too much spirit to disguise or flatter him.

Considerable benefit in the same way may be derived from a wider commerce with mankind. Many boys, naturally possessed of promising dispositions, are early corrupted with vanity. Their little caprices and puerile conceits, which if properly educated they would soon outgrow, are injudiciously fostered by fond parents, and other partial relations, who are incessantly praising their vivacity as wit, the dawnings of an ordinary understanding as marks of genius, and the just observations on which they stumble, in hazarding whatever comes uppermost, as wisdom beyond their years. The intoxication produced by this and other instances of weak indulgence, is seldom cured at schools or colleges, as matters are commonly managed there. From these they issue into the world opiniative, prating, disputatious, troublesome pedants, full of their own parts, and prone to contemn or lessen those of others: but, if they are so fortunate as to mingle with men of distinguished

tinguished talents, to meet with seasonable checks in conversation, and to form intimacies with persons of worth and experience, in that case their original good-nature, joined with increasing sense, cool reflection, and the forms of respect, which they will find practised in the politer intercourses of life, will by degrees mould them into modesty, attention, and complaisance. They will then recollect, with concern and astonishment, how ill they formerly knew themselves, or understood the behaviour that became them.

But now, where a youth is constitutionally impetuous, violent, overbearing, and has not been taught betimes to control his temper, he, instead of being subdued or softened by the social discipline I have been describing, will only be incited to worse fallies of passion and arrogance. Or if, for the sake of interest, power, or popularity, he should assume a smoother manner, and even stoop to the lowest arts of pleasing, as indeed there is nothing low, to which pride cannot stoop in the midst of its loftiest airs, he will not long be able to suppress the ebullitions of his predominant sin. But suppose him so refined a hypocrite as to conceal it under an appearance of habitual meekness, what then? True wisdom, and the milder affections of humanity, must ever be strangers to his soul.

It was not, we may presume, without special reason, that Solomon took such uncommon pains to caution his son or pupil against self-sufficiency. He well knew how peculiarly incident that vice is to youth, from the briskness of their fancies, from the narrowness of their views, from their inexperience of the world and themselves, from their little acquaintance with persons of more years or attainments, from their early desire of consequence, and often, as we hinted before, from the flattery of those who should teach them better. Knowing this, and the pernicious effects of over-rating their own abilities, he guards them against it with particular care. "Lean not to thine own understanding. Be not wise in thine own eyes. With the lowly is wisdom; but a fool is confident. A wise son heareth his father's instructions: but a scorner heareth not rebuke. Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit?"

conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him." Mere folly may be brought to listen, to learn, to submit: but he who thinks himself wise enough already, disdains the thought. In the fluctuation of ideas, that pass through the head of a giddy distracted creature, there may chance to arise some sober considerations, which by repetition shall at length take hold of his mind, and become the seeds of reformation and improvement: but both are precluded, where ignorance and vanity concur to persuade a man that neither is wanted.

Does it then require any high strain of humility for a young person to conceive that he may possibly be mistaken and is still deficient; that he who has read little, is not likely to know much; that he who has conversed with few men, can scarcely be acquainted with many characters; or that he who has often detected, or imagined he has detected, his companions in error, may sometimes fall into it himself? Alas! my friends, the illusions of self-love are so complicated and powerful, that to resist them demands very often no common degree of vigilance and resolution: and yet they are sometimes so gross, that to give way to them argues contemptible weakness. To hear a conceited youth boasting his knowledge of the world, and talking in a tone of triumph, and with a look of fancied penetration, as if he saw through every one, while no one saw through him, such futility cannot but excite a mixture of ridicule and compassion.

There is not on earth a more deluded creature, than the person who is bewitched with this kind of pride; especially if his power and fortune be such as to make him either courted or feared. In that situation, he is condemned never to hear truth. Friendship can only dwell with confidence: but this he banishes; and sincerity retires, or is restrained: advice dares not approach: reproof and remonstrance are out of the question: submission cringes; dependence fawns; adulation "calls evil good, and darkness light." If any, whose circumstances or whose souls set them above such servility, look grave and are silent, their behaviour is construed into conviction and assent. Is this the road to amendment, or edification?

In

In reality, young men of rank and affluence are, to a philosophic eye, objects of pity, from the very causes for which they are commonly envied. Every thing conspires to blind and betray them. But then it should be considered, that the victory will be more glorious as it is more difficult. The few who conquer such dangerous snares, and without elation possess themselves of the honours of virtue, are heroes indeed. Perhaps we might go so far as to say, that humility gives the highest proofs of heroism, in overcoming a temptation by which not only human, but angelic beings have been vanquished. Of this we are sure, that if cultivated on the principles set forth in the beginning, which are, I believe, her genuine principles, she is attended with a greatness utterly unknown to pride, though the latter is perpetually affecting it, while the former affects nothing, and wears what is natural to her, the plainest aspect imaginable. She resembles a modest woman, who is willing to be seen always with the same countenance which God gave her, whether more or less ordinary; as the other may be compared to some females of a different character, who are continually disguising their faces with paint. The former, having no designs on mankind, is simple and sincere: the latter, intent on cheating them out of their good opinion, is full of artifice and dissimulation. But, depend upon it, gentlemen, nothing that is fictitious in life or manners can be truly noble; and those are always the most dignified minds, that are the least dependent on appearances.

It is known that the pettiest advantages of form, or ornament, or fortune, or rank, or reputation, or influence, or authority, or figure, are sufficient to elate the childish spirit of pride. She indeed can heighten them into any size in her own imagination. Nay, like a lunatic as she is, she can deck herself in visionary splendors, when nothing is seen by the spectators but folly, rags, and a sceptre of straw. Humility, on the other hand, judges too soundly to exult in the highest privileges which this world can confer. Those of a corporeal kind, she well knows, are no marks of merit, being wholly the gift of nature, and often enjoyed by the most worthless. The fairest and the
strongest

strongest body, she justly reflects, may soon be enfeebled and defaced by sickness, or pain, or accident; and if, by an uncommon felicity, it should escape all these, it must yet in a few years be impaired and shrivelled by age; till at last it sinks under the stroke of death, turns to an object of loathing, and is buried out of sight in silence and oblivion. Man, she remembers, is of all creatures the most helpless at his birth; an event, which he seems indeed by his cries immediately after to deplore: his infancy is the most tedious and dependent: in that, and in his youth, he is exposed to the greatest number of dangers: through every period of life he is liable to the greatest variety of diseases from his make, of injuries from the elements, of sufferings from every thing around him. Whatever pre-eminence he may possess above the animal creation upon other accounts, she considers that he is doomed to pay a heavy tax for it, in the uneasy recollections, the anxious cares, the alarming apprehensions, the nameless perplexities, humiliations, and sorrows, from which even the best minds are not entirely secure; and that, were it possible to glide through this destined course with perfect tranquillity and satisfaction, still the end of it is connected with circumstances so sadly mortifying, as were alone a decisive proof, that "pride was not made for man." Indeed, she can never wonder sufficiently, that the spectacles of a death-bed and a grave do not kill the seeds of vanity in every human breast; or that any who have witnessed the wan countenance, the hollow eyes, the cold sweats, the convulsive throes of dissolving nature, who have heard the labouring breath, the deep sighs, and the expiring groan, or who have beheld comeliness and vigour transformed into a lifeless lump of deformity and putrefaction, the finest decorations exchanged for a winding-sheet, and the largest estate for six feet of earth—she is astonished, that such could ever after be seduced by flattery, or intoxicated with ambition.

"What man, cries the Psalmist, is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul," that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, his life, "from the hand of

of the grave?" An image most awfully picturesque, by which that inspired poet seems to represent the grave as a ghastly form of irresistible strength, and relentless cruelty, who, while mortals are passing along unconcerned, unsuspecting, and filled with hope, raises himself on a sudden, and putting forth his iron hand, drags them down to his dark and dreary abode! Nor does the insatiable monster ever say, "It is enough." A destroyer he is, whom no human power can control, nor valour withstand, nor greatness awe, nor riches bribe, nor beauty charm, nor genius delight, nor eloquence persuade.----Look at yonder venerable fabric, which contains the tombs of so many nobles and princes, of so many kings and conquerors, of so many statesmen, philosophers, orators, poets; with numbers from among the young and the gay, who formerly danced the giddy round of pleasure, heedless of impending disease; and perhaps with a few who fought wisdom early, but, by what was termed an untimely fate, fell with all their virtues blooming about them—look, I say, at that celebrated repository of the dead, and contemplate the impotence, the nothingness, of all that pride is apt to boast. See the universal leveller, death, with stern aspect and hideous demeanour, stalking from monument to monument, conscious of his victories, and exulting in the splendid spoils of successive generations. Survey at leisure this heart-chilling scene,—and be proud if you can.

But supposing the most conspicuous external distinctions were as durable as they are known to be transient, humility would still think they could never deserve praise, unless properly improved, since they are often bestowed on fools and profligates, to whom God would certainly not have given them, were they of any real value in themselves.

With regard to intellectual abilities and attainments, she is of opinion, that they are only valuable as they minister to the purposes of virtue and benevolence; and that at any rate, they are still so imperfect in themselves, and attended with so many defects in the characters where they are found, the original faculties are so entirely the donation of Heaven, and the means and opportunities of their culture

culture so much the effect of Providence, as should forever "hide pride from man," on their subject. Indeed, without wisdom and goodness, man appears to humility a very poor creature, let him possess whatever else he may. As she pities and condemns him alike, when he is disposed to worship that little contemptible idol called *self*, so it is her unalterable persuasion, that wisdom and goodness are always accompanied, in those who sincerely seek them, with a sense of deficiency and dependence, which leads them forth from themselves to God; and that persons are amiable and great, only or chiefly in proportion to the sacrifices they make to their duty, and their improvement.

From the incense of adulation which pride receives with rapture, and employs every method to secure, humility turns away with disgust or indifference. Pride is so shameless a vice, as often to court, by ways as shameless, applause from the very people whom she despises; whilst humility can be satisfied with nothing less than the approbation of that Sovereign Power whom she adores. This heroic virtue will persuade you, that you have done nothing very wonderful, when you have performed actions, and cultivated sentiments, to which the sons of pride could never rise. Under such influence you will still conceive, and still aspire to, something higher.

On the whole, I submit it to you, gentlemen, which is the most exalted character, he that disregards trifles, or he that sets a value on them; he that is not transported even with uncommon acquisitions, or he that is dazzled with the smallest; the man that, having gained very considerable heights in the steep ascent to glory, keeps his eye fixed on the summit, instead of looking back on his progress with elation, and down on those below him with disdain—or the man who, still groveling at the bottom, or at most advanced but a few steps, yet affects the reputation of having reached the top, and thinks with scorn of many that are actually near it? Once more, he that traces whatever is good in himself, or in his lot, to its source, and aims at a nearer union with infinite perfection, or he who is destitute of those glorious ideas and tendencies, and whose contracted soul creeps along the shallow streams
which

which he is proud of appropriating, whilst his fancy swells them to mighty rivers? You perceive at once the difference.

“It may be laid down,” says a writer of distinguished insight into the hearts of men, “as an unfailling and universal axiom, that all pride is abject and mean. It is always an ignorant, lazy, or cowardly acquiescence in a false appearance of excellence, and proceeds not from consciousness of our attainments, but insensibility of our wants:” How respectable then must be that virtue, which is the reverse of so ignoble a quality!

On this subject much remains to be said, but must now be waved. Indeed we shall never be able to do it justice. It is as comprehensive as it is beautiful. Inestimable humility! thou daughter of religion, thou sister of charity, thou mother of wisdom, thou nurse of knowledge, thou watchful guardian and tutorefs of all the virtues, thou theme of the “meek and lowly” Master! who can sufficiently extol thee? How little are they acquainted with their Creator, or themselves, to whom thou art a stranger! Surely they understand not what belongs to real improvement, elevation, or peace, who hope to derive such advantages from pride. On her the sweet irradiations of Heaven never descended: against her its vengeance is peculiarly levelled. Whatever else we forget, may we always remember, that the best, the greatest, and the happiest men are those who follow most faithfully thy direction, Oh divine humility!

Address XVI.

ON THE STATE OF THE TIMES CONSIDERED AS A MOTIVE TO EARLY PIETY.

“**I** ENTREAT you to hear me candidly,” said the Roman Orator, on a particular occasion ; and then added, “ I will make you to hear me attentively.” We would now adopt his entreaty : the boast which follows it, could be excusable from none but a master of eloquence. We only presume to say, that if you will listen with your usual candour, we will endeavour to deserve the attention with which you have formerly honoured us. The subject we propose is certainly interesting : it refers to important facts, which lie immediately before you ; and, instead of leading into fields of fruitless speculation, its design is to show what improvement and advantage you may reap from the peculiar circumstances of the age in which you live.

The general obligations to “remember your Creator in the days of your youth,” we mean not at present to deduce. They may be an object of future inquiry, alike profitable and pleasing. What we directly intend, is to consider the state of the times, as an additional argument for early piety : an argument, if I am not mistaken, in some respects new ; I am sure, an argument highly worth the regard of every young man, who wishes to think soberly, to act virtuously, and to pass with satisfaction, security, and honour, through this life to a better. As for those who are not yet awake to serious reflection, or who if they are sometimes inclined to admit it, still suffer themselves to be carried headlong by the torrent of fashionable vice, and have no feeling of public concerns ; I can scarcely hope to impress them by what I am going to offer. If such are ever effectually restrained from evil, or excited

to good, it must be brought about by admonitions of a more rousing and awful nature.

That the practice of religion is not without its difficulties and hardships to any individual, at any period, in any country, we pretend not to deny, we wish not to conceal. They will be experienced, in a greater or less degree, by every one who honestly attempts it. But compare the case of a young person, living under the inspection of wise and worthy parents, friends or instructors, at a distance from the contagion of epidemical iniquity, in some calm sequestered scene, where the language of profligacy is not heard, where the violence of party is yet unknown, where pleasure and innocence go hand in hand, and from which industry, simplicity, and contentment, are not banished by the cares or the parade of wealth, by the refinements or the languor of luxury—compare, I say, his case, with that of a youth bred and situated as are most youths of any figure in and about London, and other great towns through the kingdom. Are you not struck with the extreme difference of the two conditions, in the view with which I mentioned them, namely, to prove that while both the young men supposed are equally bound to do their duty, as rational and moral agents, accountable to themselves and to their common Judge, the latter will find his task unspeakably more arduous than the former, and that to maintain his quiet and integrity at the same time, will demand a much superior strength of principle? What I have to say, therefore, is chiefly calculated for the youth of this capital, and such others as are nearly in the same circumstances; but still on the supposition that they retain not only some decency, but some ambition to excel. In a word, whether you contemplate the present state of affairs, or of morals, we say that the practice of religion will preserve your tranquillity impregnable, and your virtue untainted.

By religion, we would be understood to signify a lively, affectionate, and habitual sense of God, in conformity to the discoveries he has given of himself, sanctifying and regulating the temper and conduct of his worshippers, a distinction which has nothing to do with the minute distinctions

inctions of sects, or the miserable disputes of bigots. And when we speak of preserving your tranquillity impregnable, we suppose it will be assaulted, we grant it may be disturbed and shaken; but would intimate that it cannot be destroyed, or overthrown, by any convulsions of the world, provided you are faithful to the interests, and fortified by the consolations of piety. It may be proper to add, that the tranquillity in question will be more or less animated and satisfactory, according to the various characters or conditions of those who possess it; and that it is totally distinct from constitutional insipidity, stoical indifference, or the contemptible selfishness of such as are engrossed by themselves, and the contracted circle around them.

But what, will the gay and the youthful be ready to ask—what avails this same thing called tranquillity? It may, for aught we know, be desirable, to people worn out in the pursuits of pleasure and ambition, who can no longer enjoy the tumult of brisk ideas, and bold exertions: but to spirits all alive and vigorous, starting in the race of glory, and grasping at delight from every quarter, tranquillity is only another name for dulness.—Believe me, Sirs, you are mistaken. An habit of serenity, or self-possession, is the very foundation of all heart-felt happiness; and they can enjoy nothing to purpose, at least not for any continuance, who cannot enjoy their own thoughts. The gratifications of such as are forever flying from themselves, and bustling along in the chase of external objects, that they may shun the cognizance of reason, and the verdict of conscience, are not felicity, but hurry, extravagance, distraction. The first moment of leisure detects the imposture; and the injured mind, when permitted to speak out, loudly declares that nothing can give her satisfaction, but what she can review with complacency, as dictated by her best sentiments, or not repugnant to them. He, my dear hearers, he alone is blest, who dares deliberately look inward, upward, and forward; inward on himself as sincere, consequently upward to his Maker as his friend, and forward to immortality as his portion. Upon this ground he may repose with confidence, under the most alarming aspect of affairs.

Do not apprehend that I am to enter into a political discussion of the questions which now inflame and agitate the kingdom, or that I pretend in any shape to decide them. I am not possessed of the requisite intelligence; and, if I were, this is not the proper place. Far from wishing to augment our heats and animosity, I would gladly contribute to allay them, if it were possible. When they break forth with so much fury, they become as dangerous as they are indecent. Instead of serving to enliven and invigorate the general body, or to render the several parts watchful for the safety and welfare of the whole, do they not evidently tend to divide, and by dividing to weaken and expose it? When men seem resolved, with a fierceness not only unchristian, but unworthy of a civilized country, "to bite and devour" all that differ from them on points about which the most enlightened are not agreed, is there not reason to fear, either that they will at last "be consumed one of another;" or that the common enemy will take advantage of their contentions, and overpower, in its distracted state, a nation which, when united, not all its adversaries have been able to conquer?

Whether, indeed, an attack from our natural foes would yet suspend the differences subsisting at present amongst a people so uncommonly irritated against each other, who can tell? How antipathies so widely diffused, and so deeply rooted, shall be removed; when the minds of the contending parties shall be composed and settled; or what will be the issue with respect to Britain at large, of the great controversy in which she is engaged, where is the prophet that can foresee? That her case is difficult and inauspicious on a civil account, will be acknowledged by such as are least inclined either to despair or complain: and those who reflect on her reigning disorders, who believe in a righteous Providence, and who compare her situation at this day with the history of other countries and other ages, will pronounce it perilous in a moral and religious view. Though ready to own with pleasure, the many instances of private worth and extensive humanity still left, they cannot but look upon the loss of public virtue,

and the extraordinary corruption of principles and manners, so generally confessed and lamented, as symptoms of a very threatening nature: Nor will you, gentlemen, think appearances mended, when you observe the virulence and rancour, the abuse and calumny, now indulged by the spirit of party to a height beyond example.

Has not the ruin of all the great states and empires, of which we read in story, been preceded and accelerated by factions, seditions, insurrections, conspiracies, envy on one side, and jealousy on both; while the functions of government were obstructed or deranged, the operation of the laws was slackened or evaded, and the interest of the community sacrificed to the covetous and ambitious designs of individuals, till at length the struggle ended in the total overthrow of the weakest, and the final domination of the power that prevailed?

How far we of this land are from such a crisis, or how near to it, cannot, I apprehend be determined with any degree of precision. One party indeed will confidently assure you, that it is just at hand: the other will assure you as confidently, that it is at a great distance, or rather that it will never arrive. One party will peremptorily pronounce, that there is neither virtue nor discernment, neither honour nor capacity, nor any good thing whatsoever, in those who espouse the other; as they, in their turn, scruple not to retaliate in the same style, and with the same vehemence.

That vulgarity, ignorance and malignity should behave in this manner, cannot appear wonderful. But is it not astonishing, that persons who discover breeding, sense, and good-nature, on other subjects and occasions, should often lose all command of themselves here, and, as if they were seized with a sort of delirium, the moment that politics are mentioned, break forth into "bitterness, and clamour, and evil speaking, and all uncharitableness?" Is it not astonishing that such persons will allow to none the same right of private judgment which they claim to themselves, and act as if they imagined all were obliged, under the penalty of I know not what anathemas, to think exactly as they think on every question of this kind, though connected with a science

science so extensive, so complicated, and in many particulars so abstruse? For God's sake let us, my friends, practise more modesty and candour.

More modesty and candour will be practised by that youth, who is careful to keep alive, in his own mind, a tender and uniform spirit of true religion: for this will teach him meekness, moderation, forbearance with others, and diffidence in himself: it will teach him caution, "not to judge, that he be not judged;" a readiness to put the fairest interpretation possible on the words and actions of other men, and to hope the best concerning their aims and principles, so long as their lives are unexceptionable, with regard to the essential rules of probity: it will teach him to employ his chief attention upon his own character, and the regulation of the little kingdom within. What will be the consequence? Tranquillity, tranquillity in his own breast, a happy freedom from those angry passions, those ungenerous suspicions, those peevish and hasty humours, which no one that harbours them, in whatever case, can find pleasant, which in disturbing the peace of society, disturb a man's own, which sometimes alienate the members of the same family from each other on the point before us, and always impair the kind affections, and sweet sympathies, that were ordained to be the support and consolation of social life.

Will the person then I am describing suffer no uneasiness in the midst of so much din and discord? Far otherwise. They cannot but appear matter of deep concern to every son of "the wisdom that is from above." A peaceable and gentle temper can never be reconciled to rage or invective; and every man of a liberal mind, the natural result of a genuine and well-informed piety, will experience, at times, much solicitude for the nation; not merely on his own account, or that of his immediate connexions, as forming a part of it, but from a regard to the great interests of religion, of human nature, and of future generations. It will affect him very sincerely when he hears the blackest accusations, on either side, prompted by malice, by selfishness, or by wantonness, without a single sentiment of genuine zeal for virtue, or public good, though these

these indeed are made the sole pretext ; when he sees the meanest slavery to vice among multitudes loud in the cry of liberty ; when, beside the many who have done their utmost to bring even the existence of patriotism into question, by consenting, for the sake of places and emoluments, to defend the very measures they had before condemned, he sees others exposing to scandal that once honoured, and wherever it is genuine, still honourable character, by appearing to confound it with an uniform and indiscriminate opposition to government on all occasions, as the party may require ; when he sees numbers selling themselves to a minister for all services which he may demand—what shall we say more ? when he sees promotion, opulence and pleasure preferred to every thing on earth or in heaven, frequently without the least appearance of respect for the laws of either.

As to himself, he is not ignorant that his system will be equally reprobated on both hands. His moderation and impartiality will be construed into coldness. It is well if his approving of no extreme on any subject, be not imputed to want of principle on all subjects, though in fact, one of the clearest proofs that he possesses it. But the fear of God having set him above the fear of man, he will little regard such censures. There is nothing that contributes so much to produce an independent mind, as being truly religious. From the same superiority, he will behold with generous concern those whose affections and views, though naturally right, have not been able to preserve them from being warped by the bigotry, or overawed by the tyranny of party. He will be ready to discern, and willing to recognize, virtue and ability, wherever they appear, without regarding to which side they belong ; and will ardently wish that all mercenary designs, and unmanly dissensions, were as much as possible forgotten in the joint pursuit of one grand comprehensive object, talked of by so many, and sought after by so few,—the welfare of their country.

As a member of the community, he will approve himself a good citizen by behaving like a virtuous and beneficent man. As a worshipper of God, and a friend to the whole human race, he will intercede for all. “ Save this nation,

nation, Oh Lord! bless thine inheritance; feed them, and lift them up forever. Oh Lord! send now prosperity. Give the king an understanding heart, to judge so great and so divided a people. Make him yet happy as the common parent of a virtuous, united, and flourishing empire. Give our governors integrity, wisdom, magnanimity, at this most arduous juncture. Persuade them that neither power nor riches can yield any satisfaction, comparable to the honour of restoring tranquillity and order. Deliver Britain from her sins, and her enemies. Deliver her from a supine indifference respecting her highest interests. Teach her to know her blessings, and improve them; to consider her ways, and amend them. Send forth, universal Father, send forth the spirit of peace, who sits by thy throne, the emanation and image of thy goodness. May that divine spirit dispose the minds of men to reconciliation on such terms as shall give it solidity and permanence! Convince them in time, that no separate advantage can compensate the loss of reciprocal aid; and that mutual hostility is often by thee punished in rendering it the occasion of mutual ruin. Convince all, thou Lover of holiness and concord, that not by wrath or violence, not by restless ambition, or exorbitant wealth, not by uncharitable systems, or ungodly practices, or any inordinate passions whatsoever;—that not by these, but by piety and benevolence alone, can nations or individuals be blest. And to this end, may the pure and the pacific religion of Jesus prevail!”

Meanwhile, he whom I paint will derive composure and fortitude from his affiance in the supreme administration. “What,” will he often reflect, “what are princes, and subjects, and statesmen, and kingdoms, even the greatest of them, but instruments formed by the Lord of all to execute his purposes, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, whether they mean him or themselves? Are not the hearts of all in his hand? And cannot he turn them by nameless invisible springs without infringing their liberty of choice, in such a manner as shall best secure the happiness of the upright, and the punishment of the incorrigible? However mortals may repine at their own condition,

or fret at that of others, however they may divide or combine, whatever authority they may claim on one hand, and whatever resistance they may make on the other, or how high a confidence soever any of them may entertain in their schemes and operations, the counsel of the sovereign Ruler shall stand forever: his eternal plan shall assuredly be accomplished. The rise, the decline, and the fall of States, their convulsions, revolutions, and periods, are all included in it. This globe, for particular portions of which its rational inhabitants so often contest, like lions and tygers for their prey, but unlike them, not satisfied with their natural powers of slaughter, study killing as an art, and proceed with regularity to destroy each other by system—this globe, vast as to us it seems, is yet but a small province of God's immense dominions. Of the combatants who fight for its different districts, those that survive their dreadful quarrels, will quickly fall by the stroke of a more powerful conqueror: the regions where they now meet in hostile array, and cry, Havoc! will, after the destined ages are past, finally disappear: the prizes that excited competition, and kindled war, will vanish like a dream: the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up; and then—then what?—new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, with her sister peace, shall rise from the common ruin. Happy consummation!” will our young friend exclaim; “thrice happy period, which will more, infinitely more than atone for the sorrows suffered by the righteous, from the many mournful scenes that preceded!

“Nor is this all,” continues he. “The Power who commanded the universe from chaos, can still make darkness light, and touch discord into harmony. From the mass of public confusion, and national depravity, he can, if it please him, call forth particular spirits of a transcendent stamp, who shall, under his influence, be able in a great measure to remedy this depravity, and turn that confusion into the unexpected means of higher order, and of surer quiet. Nay, it is possible, that one noble, one glorious sentiment, impressed by Him on some single mind, or—what shall we say?—peradventure some little, and at

the moment seemingly insignificant circumstance, unconnected with the counsels of men, and appointed by Providence to show their insufficiency, may become in its consequences the source of joy to millions. If reconciliation from whatever cause takes place, if union is re-established, if just subordination and virtuous security shall yet concur to crown our wishes; where is the friend of Britain or the lover of humanity that would not rejoice? But if the unerring Arbiter has otherwise determined, if the worst evils foreboded by the most apprehensive minds should fall upon a guilty land—then indeed the case would be deplorable: yet even then it would not, to the truly pious, be desperate. It shall still be well with him who is reconciled to God, to the family of God, and to the everlasting laws of his government. Whatever losses this man might sustain in the general wreck, he would have no reason to think himself forlorn: the pity of the good would still attend him; there are still resources for the diligent, the prudent, and the virtuous: the peace that passeth all understanding would remain to console and support him: his grand stake, his immortal interest and that of all the just, are secure: the empire of his Father and his God can never be moved or endangered: the Lord reigneth; let the earth be glad: let the multitude of the isles shout for joy—and, Oh my heart!" will he cry, "let us join in the holy transport."

Say not, ye men of the world, that these are the idle speculations, the visionary prospects of enthusiasts alienated from society, and unacquainted with its concerns, or careless of its welfare. No: these are solid ideas, founded in truth, agreeable to common sense, consistent with the soundest philosophy; ideas that have times innumerable cheered and elevated the most reflecting, the best informed, and the most liberal spirits of all generations, in contemplating scenes of distress and uncertainty, as they immediately affected themselves, or as they involved that public about whose prosperity they never were indifferent; I will add, ideas of no less consequence than the glory and happiness of man, large as the universe itself, and leading up in a direct line to the throne of the Eternal. It is only the ignorant or
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the insensible, the vicious or the prejudiced, who cannot enjoy such ideas: we sincerely pity them, as strangers to that system which can alone inspire a rational and unflinching fortitude, or lay the foundation of an impregnable tranquillity, when the face of affairs is unpropitious.

Nor will this part of the argument for early piety appear less forcible, if we proceed, in the next place, to survey the present condition of our morals. Suppose, that after delineating the manners and principles of the times, particularly the visible decay of public spirit, the unbounded luxury of the great, and their insatiable appetite for riches, as necessary to supply it, the rage of pleasure amongst all ranks, the idleness, pride and dissipation of persons who yet retain some decency, and as the chief spring of these evils, a growing disregard to the spirit and practice of devotion—suppose, I say, that after thus delineating the most characteristic features of this country at this day, we should be induced to conclude its power in danger of being undermined, and its constitution of being dissolved, unless an extraordinary change is wrought on its principles and manners; are there not numbers who would treat the whole as common cant, or at best as a kind of language which, however it may impose on the gloomy or contracted, can make little impression on such as think freely? Nevertheless, gentlemen, the substance of the description, as well as the inference, would be borrowed from one of the most candid and discerning historians of antiquity. It is certain that Polybius, though a heathen author, considered the contempt of religion which reigned when he wrote, as productive of general profligacy, and, both united, as portending speedy ruin to the Roman State. That this kingdom has much to fear from the same causes, will, I think be confessed by the majority of serious observers in all professions. They must be sensible, that when a reverence for God no longer governs the body of a people, and consequently the most powerful restraint from vice and incentive to virtue is removed, then the strictest ties and highest interests of society are neglected and violated, many of the worst crimes are committed with audacity, the divine protection is in effect renounced, and nothing is left to preserve very long such

such a nation from running into anarchy, or sinking into slavery.

That a reverence for God is the most powerful restraint from vice and incentive to virtue, might be proved from a great variety of topics. Suffice it now to touch on a few, which may serve to show how peculiarly necessary this sovereign principle is become for those of our youth, who mix with the world in its more active or fashionable scenes. We would only premise, what we must ever lament, that many who have professed the highest regard for religion, have with shameful inconsistency violated her most sacred obligations; and that, when we speak of her influence on human conduct, we still mean in those cases where she is sincerely respected, and faithfully obeyed. Nor can you, my friends, think her in justice responsible for that hypocrisy, against which she denounces the heaviest woes.

But while such as judge less fairly, triumph in the vices of numbers who pretend to piety, we are bold to affirm, that among the individuals within the sphere of our notice, who have betrayed a contempt for it, we have never known one—no, not one, who did not, on the closest inspection, appear to us capable of transgressing deliberately and designedly the laws of truth, or integrity, or temperance, or purity, or friendship, or charity, whenever any of these stood in the way of his ruling passions, and so long as he hoped to conceal or to palliate his actions, if indeed he was anxious to do either.

We can farther affirm, that we have never seen any of our acquaintance, who had been accustomed to attend the institutions of religion, grow remiss in that attendance (we speak not of being casually hindered by circumstances of necessity, or works of mercy) without growing also remiss in other essential points, especially in sobriety, vigilance, and a regular life. And if at length they altogether, or in a great measure, forsook the house of God, we had reason to fear they had first forsaken the path of virtue. Religious exercises were become irksome, as reminding them of a Being they now wished to forget, because they were afraid of him. They now “loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” They could no

longer hazard with any freedom the painful convictions which public instruction might flash upon their minds. As they wanted resolution to reform, nothing seemed left but to suppress as much as possible those serious reflections, that would have obstructed or disturbed them in the career of vice. But are not these so many tacit attestations to the truth of our general doctrine, the importance of piety to morals? And will they not help to account for the increasing neglect thrown upon the worship of the Almighty in this country, and particularly in this metropolis?

We readily admit, that a cool constitution, or an early control, the circumspection of parents, or the admonition of friends, a feeling of character and decorum, an attention to health, to interest, to safety, perhaps we should add a native delicacy of mind, or a certain refinement of taste acquired by books and conversation of an improving tendency, may enable particular persons to escape a number of snares which have entangled others. But the question is, what shall defend them against such temptations as are accompanied with more than common danger from their predominant tendencies; where these too are encouraged by the tone of the times, and where it so happens, that the guards just mentioned do not come in to their succour? It is by no means difficult to imagine a multitude of cases in which neither complexion, nor authority, nor prudence, nor the sense of propriety, interpose immediately to prevent guilt or check inclination, but, on the contrary, many circumstances too favourable for both, conspire with importunity, with ambition, with the mode, to prompt and embolden them.----Tell us, ye mighty masters of wisdom, ye fond admirers of heathen philosophy, tell us by what arts of unassisted reason, or maxims of mere moral virtue, by what ingenious conclusions, or elevated sentiments, frail men and inexperienced youths shall in those situations maintain their ground, and come off conquerors, without deriving strength from religion, without acting as in the presence of God.

Let a young person be so circumstanced, that he cannot retain his virtue, without incurring the derision of his associates; that he cannot hold fast his righteousness without offending

offending some who have it in their power to make or mar his fortune; that he has an opportunity of securing a considerable advantage by a small deviation, or of serving a connexion, a companion, or a man of rank and affluence, to the prejudice of a stranger, or of a poor man; that there is nothing to hinder him from arriving at the very summit of his wishes, but a scruple of conscience, which many would pronounce idle, if not pusillanimous; or finally, that in doing an ill thing, to which he is stimulated by a strong desire, he may either elude discovery, or despise censure, or perhaps find numbers who will not only justify but applaud him:—inform us, I conjure you, what is there to prevent this young man from falling into any of these snares? Will you say, the superior pleasure and glory of innocence, of truth, of humanity, of self-command? Can you then imagine that such considerations, beautiful and dignified as they must doubtless appear to more correct spirits in an hour of tranquillity, when all is calm intellectual perception, that such considerations alone will be sufficient to combat irregular impulses, to withstand improper solicitations, at a moment when the mind is agitated, the fancy fired, the passions in a mutiny, and especially when the flattering hope of fame among the genteel and the gay, as well as of present gratification, incite to compliance? Never believe it; the least reflection upon your own feelings, and the manners of the age, will convince you of the contrary.

When vice throws off the mask, and presents her impudent front, those who have not been used to behold it, or who have hitherto resisted her advances, are naturally disposed to turn away from the monster with abhorrence: but when she conceals herself under the aspect of elegant pleasure; when, supported and recommended by the fashion, she is entertained among those who pass for the best judges in the way of taste; when not politeness only, or gentility, but wit and talents are seduced to plead her cause, and propagate her empire; when the almost resistless charms of music are employed to give her new attractions, or however, to promote that languor and effeminacy which lull the guards of virtue; once more, when instead of wearing her own coarse and obnoxious name, she assumes the more familiar and less alarming title of dissipation—what then?—

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why, then she becomes much more insinuating. And this, I presume to say, is a case which has been as common for some years, as it was rare in the days of our forefathers; when that odious form not having learned the science of smooth disguise, and being still ashamed of her native ugliness, generally skulked in corners. By the unbounded importation of foreign diversions, by the enormous growth of commercial luxury, and the prodigious influx of Eastern plunder, formerly mentioned, she has since taken courage, and walketh forth with great freedom, in the character of a smiling dissembler, amidst all the advantages of dress, decoration, and powerful patronage. In this character, and under these circumstances, she accosts a lively young man, adapting herself to his passions with wonderful address, and equal assiduity. The question returns, and I beg leave to press it, where shall he be furnished with the strength, with the resolution, with the grace required to vanquish her; more especially, if an easy or affluent fortune supplies him with many opportunities of visiting the scenes where she practises her chief forceries—above all the rest, the nocturnal assembly, the inflaming revel, and the maddening masquerade!

When the abstract idea of the joy and honour attendant on conscious rectitude, is opposed by the alluring prospect of sensible good, of solid gain, of popular praise, or of safe indulgence to an impatient propensity, or a rictous imagination, where, alas! is the child of Adam, who possesses such purity of virtue, such sovereignty of reason as shall enable him to reject the alluring prospect, and rest content with the abstract idea, independent---I say, independent of any compensation from futurity, of any reward from a Being at once omnipotent and eternal? But now suppose, that in this dangerous trial, the fear of offending Him “whose loving-kindness is better than life,” as his displeasure is more terrible than death, should like some faithful monitor or guardian angel whisper our young friend as it were in the ear, tell him his hazard, and warn him to “stand in awe and not sin”—for God is present:—here, my auditors, is produced an interest, which, weighed against every other, preponderates by infinite degrees; an interest which it requires but little capacity to comprehend,
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and no extraordinary sensibility to feel; an interest which points to nothing of less magnitude, or shorter duration, than everlasting happiness, or ruin; an interest, in fine, adapted to the plainest conceptions and deepest solitudes of the soul. Whether you speak of social ties, or political institutions, or motives of health, reputation, quiet, and the rest of that class; their influence on practice must unavoidably be deficient. Some of them reach only to particular actions, conjunctures, and modifications of life: none of them necessarily affect the whole of existence: none of them are commensurate with the possible attainments and immortal faculties of man; and they are each unaccompanied with that awful, universal, never-ceasing importance and majesty, which can alone secure a legitimate, entire and endless dominion over the understanding, conscience and heart.

Do I mean to insinuate, that either moral or prudential considerations are of no use in cases of a critical nature? Far from it. The celebrated Hebrew youth, in resisting the blandishments of his master's wife, did not only urge the dread of displeasing the omnipresent Divinity, who, he knew, was then his witness, and would at last be his judge, but argued with great force on the principles of ingenuity, gratitude, fidelity and honour; principles originally implanted by the same hand, frequently addressed in holy writ, as we have found on former occasions, and perhaps entitled to a little more attention than is given them in the discourses of some public instructors. The truth is, that religion adopts into her family all the social and all the private virtues. To nurse and train them, to regulate and assist their operations, is amongst her chief cares; nor does she disdain to strengthen her interest in the minds of men by any innate propension to goodness, or any happy influence of education; all which she traces to the appointment of her parent God, and employs as so many subordinate means of leading her children to Him. But observe, I beseech you—while she allows to every one of them its full value, she still insists, that they shall all have their “waiting eyes towards her,” as both their mistress and their patroness, for support, countenance, and direction.

Among the temporal motives to a right behaviour which she also proposes, I just named reputation. There was, not very long ago, a period when, it must be owned, a regard to that object, and others connected with it, those of credit, business, and general acceptance, produced very desirable and extensive effects on the conduct of men, of young men especially who were setting out in the world, and who depended for their success chiefly on their character. I say not, that every view of this sort is now neglected. God forbid. But I do say, that its efficacy is much less diffusive than formerly, that the love of honest fame does not actuate near so many of mankind as in better ages. An avowed contempt of chastity, prudence, frugality and moderation in the male sex, and I am tempted to add, an open renunciation of domestic duties and enjoyments among the other, in favour of diversion, dress, card-tables, and continual gadding, offend but a few minds, in comparison of those that would have seriously condemned them, when the nation was less rich, and less polished.

But I go farther, and say, that if you will suppose the foulest characters to be clothed in the trappings of wealth, or of grandeur, or to be connected with those who are, or yet boldly to assume an air of consequence, to which they have not the smallest title, they shall often be received with complaisance, if not kindness, by men of unquestionable probity, but who, if they had equal fortitude, would shun them with detestation.

I go still farther, and observe with astonishment, not only that the generality can look upon the worst offenders with a smiling face, or at least with a placid indifference, not only that the feeling of indignation at vice in those who are not guilty of it, and the feeling of shame in those who are, seem nearly annihilated; but that there are many who can make flagrant iniquity a subject of merriment. It has been thought, that when virtue falls into such disrepute, as to frighten people from espousing her cause, lest they should be ridiculed for their pains, it indicates the last stage of public depravity. But the period in which we live, appears to have proceeded a length till now unknown. It is not unusual now for notorious sinners to enjoy, undisturbed, the satire they sometimes incur by their

their crimes: for individuals will still reproach them on that account. No, it is not only “a sport to them to do mischief,” but to be censured when they have done it. They pride themselves on facing the graver part of the world down, and laughing with perfect ease at those things, as frolics and trifles, which, to speak in their language, none but vulgar or narrow spirits condemn as vices and enormities. Let bribery, for example, or venality, or gaming, or adultery, or profaneness, or filial impiety, or base ingratitude, or ruining of innocence, or betraying under trust, let any of these be held up to just infamy: it matters not: the turpitude strikes but few in a sensible manner: a few may loudly condemn: but those against whom the sentence is pointed, comfort themselves with reflecting, that the most are no longer shocked at such things, however they may not approve of them; and that if one has riches, or ability, or expectations, or what sometimes supplies the want of them all, a proper stock of effrontery, he may do what he pleases, and not doubt of still meeting with marks of respect in abundance.

As to a life of luxury and dissipation, of effeminacy and insignificance; the neglect of business or study, of improvement; a habit of licentious or censorious conversation; a disrespect to authority, to age, to experience, and a contemptuous rejection of wise and pious advice—these are all become so common as to excite, in our days of easy forbearance, and philosophic coolness, very little disapprobation, except from quarters, where it is considered as mere professional talk, for which the men are paid, and which can only pass with the ignorant or the illiberal.

If here and there a moral writer among the laity steps forth to instruct the world, what does he effect? Suppose that to the widest knowledge of men, and the truest judgment of things, with a strict regard for religion and goodness, he joins the finest taste, the greatest vigour of expression, and the utmost brilliancy of imagination; still it matters not: perhaps he is read, perhaps applauded by many: but then he is forgotten by most. In the meantime, the productions of the wanton or insipid novelist, the unfeeling sceptic, the silly witling, or the gay licentious

tious man of fashion, are devoured with insatiable avidity, and unceasing delight.

God be thanked, however, many of you, my young friends, have yet escaped the contagion. The ministers of sin and infidelity have not yet had power over you. Those are still your favourite authors, who have consecrated genius, learning, wit and eloquence, to the service of truth and morality. The stated advocates for both may still, as you conceive, be sincere in their office, though they are enabled to live by it, and are therefore with you still objects of respectful attention, so long as their doctrines are not manifestly contradicted by their lives: when unhappily they are, you have yet the sense to distinguish between the former and the latter, and also the candour not to conclude, that those are false because these are unworthy: whilst you abhor the last, you continue to venerate the first. Perhaps indeed you venerate them so much, and retain so strong a tincture of native modesty, that you cannot without surprize and disgust reflect on many scenes, characters, and complications of iniquity, as they meet your eyes or ears in the different walks of life. Nor can you yet behold with unconcern those modes of behaviour, which, though apparently less criminal and pernicious, are notwithstanding far from being harmless or innocent, and frequently prove the fore-runners of great, if not the greatest guilt and misery. How such numbers can seem to throw off all regard for the esteem of the sober and the discerning, you are unable to comprehend; and yet more, how so many can, often at the expense of health and fortune, or even at the hazard of life itself, court the plaudits of libertines, of knaves, and of fools, not merely in preference to the suffrage of the best men and the wisest judges, but with affected scorn and open abuse of them—this fills you with amazement. For your parts, you reckon the approbation of such among the sweetest pleasures and highest honours the heart can enjoy.

These, my dear youths, are very promising symptoms; and yet—shall I tell you?—all these have been frequently found at your agreeable age, and, after encouraging the fairest hopes, have only produced the greater disappointment. Such young persons, relying on themselves,
and

and ignorant of the world, ventured among temptations to which they were unequal. Having perhaps read or heard much concerning the beauty of wisdom, and the dignity of virtue, their youthful fancies yet undebauched were so enchanted with those ideas, as to suppose nothing more could ever be requisite to defend them from vice and folly. Possessed by this lovely enthusiasm, they did not consider that a seducing object always hides at first the wickedness, or the meanness, which might attend their compliance with it, and that flights of untried magnanimity would scarcely be sufficient to surmount the unceasing snares made use of to deceive and destroy them. Above all, they omitted the grand precaution we now recommend.

Say, my beloved charge, are you, in good earnest, solicitous to preserve your virtue untainted, and to enjoy its fruits unimpaired? Then listen a few minutes longer to the words of a friend, who has your happiness deeply at heart. They may be the last he shall ever have an opportunity of addressing to you. May their efficacy be apparent to your friends and your country, when he shall see you no more!

Whilst you study with an amiable ardour all that is generous, refined, and heroic in sentiment, whilst you esteem and cultivate those whom it appears habitually to influence, beware how you permit what is commonly called by that name to be imposed on you in place of religious principle, or as superseding the necessity of Christian faith. Be assured, that every system of philosophy which excludes the Deity, or of morals which affects to forget him, and the most important manifestations of his will to mankind, is defective, erroneous, and treacherous. Be assured, that those who would throw you entirely upon the resources of reason alone, by robbing you of the lights, the comforts, and the aids of revelation, are at bottom your worst enemies, let them boast of what benevolence, rectitude, or reverence for truth, they please. They would, in effect, draw you from a castle strongly fortified, and richly provided, to encounter distress and danger in an open field, under every disadvantage. Let not, my young men, Oh let not the flattery of others, or your own self-love, tempt you to try needless experiments on the power of human resolution.

resolution in repelling mischief, or in going just so far and no farther; a conceit, a chimera, by which multitudes have been cheated and undone. Avoid the first approaches to evil: fly its occasions: fly the instruments and votaries of vice: nor hearken to those that urge a compromise between her and her opponent: they would deceive you, or are themselves deceived: it is a scheme fraught with inconsistency, duplicity, and wretchedness. Conform easily to such customs as do not transgress the line of duty; and participate cheerfully in such pleasures as are adapted to your age and situation, without corrupting your hearts or inflaming your passions. Observe the rules of temperance in every thing, whilst you assume neither airs of austerity, nor the parade of admonition. Let your carriage be at once mild and blameless. Cherish the domestic affections; and as you would not provoke the wrath of Heaven, fail not to honour your parents. Bear with the follies of mankind, but never smile upon their crimes. In settling your religious opinions, remember that none can be right which would render you uncharitable on the one hand, or licentious on the other. Detest bigotry in whatever persuasion: let your moderation be known to all who differ from you with decency; but turn with neglect from the reprobate and the rude; and if any one professing better manners, should insinuate that you cannot be genteel or liberal without a degree of scepticism and profaneness, compassionate his ignorance, and disregard his suggestion.---Nourish your minds, as often as you can, with books and conversation, of the entertaining and of the instructive kind, with such especially as are both together. You will receive from them an elegant delight, which will render you superior to vulgar and frivolous gratifications. Forget not to "search the scriptures:" they have been studied and admired by the greatest, as well as the best men. Quote them in company but seldom, and never lightly. Shun as much as possible disputes about religion: let your belief in it appear by your attention to its ordinances: let its truth and beauty be proved by your conduct. Frequently recollect the presence of God: frequently contemplate his works and attributes: implore daily his direction and blessing.

And

And now hear the sum of all : hear, and lay it to heart : Piety, I say, piety maintained with such a spirit, and on such principles, will be your firmest guard, your surest guide, and your most desirable companion. She will enlighten and invigorate your original feelings of worth and honour : she will enable you to deserve praise without seeking it : she will add sanctity to love, and steadiness to friendship : she will animate you with genuine fortitude : she will teach you to know yourselves, and to be wise by being humble : she will fill you with tranquillity in the worst times : she will furnish you with armour of proof against the most dangerous assaults on your virtue : to that virtue she will add elevation, constancy and sweetness whilst you live ; and when you die, she will crown it with immortality.

THE END.

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