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FRONTISPIECE.



Philemon and his Ass. P. 21

MORAL SKETCHES

FOR

YOUNG MINDS.

And when the closing Scenes prevail,
When Wealth, State, Pleasure, All shall fail;
All that a foolish World admires,
Or Passion craves, or Pride inspires;
At that important Hour of Need,
VIRTUE shall prove a Friend indeed!

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IF a Work solely intended to promote Virtue and Morality, to arm the rising Generation against the prevailing Follies of the Age, and to point out to them those Objects which must regulate their Welfare here and hereafter, be worthy of the Patronage of good Parents, Friends, and Guardians of Children, then these MORAL SKETCHES have little to fear on account of the Reception they will meet with.

This Work contains a great Variety of short Essays, on most

of the moral Duties of Life, and were originally written in French by a Pen, which Death has long since silenced. If the Translator of these invaluable Sketches shall be thought to have sent them into the World in an easy and elegant English dress, he aspires to no other Fame. May every youthful Mind receive as much Instruction and Advantage from the Perusal of them, as the Translator felt Pleasure in naturalizing them into the English Language.

MORAL SKETCHES.

FRIENDSHIP.

IT is said, that the scarcity of any thing encreases its value, and that gold and silver for that reason hold the first place among perishable matters; yet it must be confessed, that there is one thing in this world more scarce than those metals, and that is, a true friend, if such a thing be at all possible to be found. There is perhaps too much reason to believe, that though almost every one talks of a Friend and a Phoenix, no person has ever yet seen either.

As for fashionable friends, these are every day to be met with; but they are like flies that crowd round a honey-pot, only to rob it of its sweets. Such friends are generally found to resemble swallows, who visit us in the spring to enjoy the approaching

approaching warmth of the summer, and quit us as soon as the winter commences. There are few friends who love us equally with themselves, and who will prefer our interest to their own. Men form those connections, which are often distinguished by the name of friendship, either out of interest, for the sake of conversation, and often merely as companions of favourite vices. Daily experience convinces us, that as soon as fortune forsakes us, our friends turn their backs on us, find no more pleasure in our conversation, and we become unworthy of even being a partner in their vices.

Dionysius the Tyrant, wanting one day to speak with the Prince, his son, sent to him to desire him to come and sup with him. The young Prince, being seated at table when he received the message, begged to be excused, and assured the messenger, that he would pay his respects to his father as soon as he had finished his supper, and accordingly fulfilled his promise on rising from the table.

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When the Prince approached his father, the Tyrant asked him, why he did not come and sup with him? "Because (said the Prince) I had five or six friends at my table." Dionysius appeared to be surprised at his son's having so many friends, and asked him if he were fully persuaded of their friendship? to which the Prince replied, that he had not the least doubt of their sincerity.

"Their friendship then (said the father) must be put to the trial, and, for that purpose, order them all to attend you this night in your own apartment. Make them your confidants, and tell them, that you have assassinated the Tyrant, and beg of them to assist you in removing the body, and burying it privately, in order that his death may be kept a secret, till the minds of the people shall be prevailed on to place you on the throne in the room of your father. After having thus experienced their fidelity, come and give me an account of it, that you and I may rejoice together

on

on the inestimable treasure you have found in so many friends."

The young Prince executed the orders of the Tyrant, and put the sincerity of his friends to that delicate proof; but how great was his surprize when he found, that of all those, who, while at supper, with full glasses in hand, protested they would cheerfully die to serve him, not one now offered to engage in so perilous an undertaking, and each stole away one after the other!

The Prince acquainted the Tyrant with the ill success of his experiment, when his father wisely said to him: "My son, for the future, take care in whom you place your confidence. Be assured, that there are few men so happy in this world, as, in the course of their whole lives, to find *one* sincere friend; and that the friends of the table, as soon as the repast is finished, often secretly despise their benefactor."

JOY.

JOY is generally a proof of the contentment of the heart, and is usually the companion of a good conscience. Hence people of a lively disposition are generally preferred to those of an austere, dull, and gloomy cast, whose sour and formal conversation contributes only to inspire weariness and disgust.

I remember, when I was a child, that I took notice of people, who I was told were learned, and who generally appeared to me of so melancholy and gloomy a temper, that they inspired me with a kind of aversion for study. It is not that I expect extravagant joy, which is accompanied with perpetual peals of laughter, and which pleases by chattering like a parrot, jumping about like a magpie, and doing such things as border upon madness; but I am a friend to that gaiety of disposition, which is confined within the bounds of decency, which shews us contented with ourselves and others, which spreads
a serene

a serene and pleasing air over the countenance, and which from time to time produces those little sparks of wit that occasion moderate laughter, leaving others an opportunity to make us laugh in their turn. I cannot endure those severe people, who, under the veil of gravity, wish to impose on the world, and who cannot suffer any other discourses than politics, morality, or philosophy, without mixing with them the least sentiment of mirth, or any little piece of history to amuse us.

Joy is an antidote to melancholy and chagrin, and often gives ease to the infirmities of the body; it enlivens the spirits, and mocks the caprice of fortune; it calms the storm of disgrace, makes us sensible to the pleasures of life, and contributes to prolong our existence here.

SORROW.

IF we contemplate the affairs of this world with an eye of philosophy, we shall find nothing worthy of either our joy or sorrow. The one, however, appears more
reasonable

reasonable than the other. Joy promotes the health of the body; but Sorrow consumes mankind as the fire does wax.

Sorrow is the consequence of disgrace, and that often springs from the imagination, which being generally a false representer of objects, and our ideas being often hurried away by self-love, we are led to consider our sorrows as grievous, when, in reality, they are founded only in weakness. Since then, every thing which we see, possess, love, hate, seek, or shun, in this world, is subject to annihilation, and since every thing which nature has masqued under some form or figure, must in the end be reduced to nothing, why should we make ourselves wretched at the loss of that nothing?

Men are sometimes driven to despair on the loss of their worldly possessions, without reflecting, that they brought nothing with them into the world, and can carry nothing out of it. Others shew an immoderate grief on the loss of a friend or a parent, without reflecting, that man is nothing
but

but an earthly walking machine, and cannot always exist; but according to the course of all earthly beings, must at last return to dust: so that those who die only go a few days before those they leave behind them.

A third person weeps to-day for his extreme indigence, who perhaps to-morrow may be in want of nothing. A fourth is ready to burst with grief, on hearing his reputation wounded by the false tongue of scandal, and builds his wretchedness on empty sounds, that were lost in the air, and could exist only for a few moments. In speaking of Sorrow, I recollect the wise manner in which a sage consoled Queen Arsinoe, and which Plutarch relates nearly in the following words.

“ When Jupiter distributed among his infernal spirits the different offices of his gloomy empire, Sorrow, who is one of those evil spirits, came to solicit a place, but was a little too late, as he had already disposed of the principal places in the kingdom of the dead. Among the employments

ployments which yet remained to be distributed, the master of the gods made his division of the Tears, Sighs, Regrets, and all the sentiments, which the loss of a dear friend inspires, and placed Sorrow at the head of them; but as neither of these infernal spirits ever stay long but with those who receive them kindly, so Sorrow never takes up its abode, but where the Tears, Sighs, and Chagrin, have made a previous possession.

“ This discourse appeared so reasonable to Arsinoé, that from that moment she dismissed her Sorrow, and endeavoured to console herself. Thus those, who do not wish prematurely to quit this world, must banish frightful sorrow from their bosoms, and meet the calamities of this life with heroic fortitude, wisely reflecting, that since the smiles or the frowns of fortune must one day have an end, neither of them ought to give us too much concern.”

CHANCE.

CHANCE is the prime minister of Fortune, and executes whatever that blind divinity decrees with respect to mortals. It flies as swift as thought, and comes as unexpectedly as the thief by night. It sometimes suddenly raises us to honours, for which we should have never presumed to hope; and at other times hurls us, from the summit of prosperity, into the gulf of irrecoverable ruin. It sometimes suddenly presents occasions, which according to the use we make of them, decide our happiness or misery for the rest of our lives.

We may venture to say, that unless we have the protection of Divine Providence, which often so miraculously interferes in our favour, that the life of man is composed of chance events, which accompany him from the cradle to the tomb, and which, like favourable or contrary winds, fill the sails of good and bad fortune, and force him forward, according to their caprice,

caprice, into the ports of Prosperity, or force him on the rocks of Disgrace, where he inevitably perishes. Both ancient and modern history afford us many examples of the uncertainty of every possession in this life.

Depression of the Mind.

THE Depression of the mind, though natural to some people, is generally the consequence of indolence and idleness, and therefore unbecoming in a man. When we employ ourselves about something that is useful, we have not leisure to give way to this strange disposition of the mind, and when we properly fill up our time, we shall always find ourselves the better satisfied with our own conduct. Indolence is what nature never designed for man, but is an invention of his own to torment himself.—It is an enemy, which the wise man shuns, and the fool courts. Animals are ignorant of it, because instinct never teaches it; and man only pines in imaginary languor, because he has the liberty

of so doing. However, terrible as this disorder may be, every one has the remedy within his own reach; and he who procures a livelihood by industry in the most humiliating situation, is preferable to the monarch, who passes his wretched hours in rolling about on the couch of indolence, and leaves his duty to be performed by others.

Nature applies herself to unremitting labour, and never stops for a moment, but is perpetually at work to promote and support her grand and magnificent operations: while man often suffers imaginary evils to depress his mind, and gives way to indolence, rather than exert himself in some useful and profitable employment, which would not fail to cure his disorder, and make him cheerful and happy.

Orestes often complained of the wretched depression and indolence of his mind, and on a friend once advising him, as an infallible remedy, to rouse himself from his lethargy, and apply his time to some useful employment, he replied: " Since there
there

there is no better method of being revenged on time, which destroys every thing, I am determined to let it pass in doing nothing." Such an idea is unworthy of a human being, and I hope will be considered as such by all my readers, whether young or aged.

ANGER.

A CERTAIN Philosopher has said, "Though the rage of anger is but a species of madness of no long duration, it often leaves behind it, in its effects, evils of a lasting nature." It is certain, that the violent emotion it occasions is one of the principal obstacles to the tranquility of life, and the health of the body, since it stifles the judgment and blinds the reason. A few words dropped in a fit of anger, often make a man miserable all the rest of his life, since he may thereby lose those friends in a few minutes, whom he had been many years in acquiring. Besides, that it often discovers the most latent secrets of the heart, it frequently

renders the passionate man ridiculous by the threats he utters, which he cannot have in his power to put into execution. How many persons have passed the rest of their lives in useless sorrow and remorse for having suffered themselves, only for a few moments, to be hurried away by the violence of their passion!

The friendship of a man who gives way to anger, is an incumbrance to sensible people; and his company is a labyrinth, into which we more easily entered, than we can find our way out of it. This is the partition which divides anger from fury, and the passionate man and the maniac have equally the same right to a house of confinement.

Passion deprives a man of the use of his senses, and so effectually dazzles his sight, that he does not see the danger into which he is often headlong advancing. It closes his ears, so that he cannot hear reason, and makes him utter words, which, while they can be of no service

to

to him, may be productive of a lasting injury.

History tells us of a man at a certain court, remarkable for the violence of his passion, who had the insolence to draw his sword in the presence of his king, and who, after having broken it, threw it at the feet of his sovereign, swearing he would never use it more in the service of such a king. It is true, that his sovereign smiled at the extreme folly of his subject, but he presently afterwards deprived him of all his lucrative and honourable employments, and sent him to a loathsome prison, where he had time to lament his folly during fourteen years, when death put a period to his woes.

The passionate man every moment gives an opportunity to those who wish to injure him; and when a man has conceived a hatred against another, and the object of his hatred is violent and passionate, the ruin of the latter is easily accomplished. Of all the seven mortal sins, that of passion is the greatest disturber of human

human society, and that which affords the sinner no pleasure. Thus passion serves only to offend God, to ruin the health, and to deprive us of friends and fortune.

LYING.

A LYAR is the object of universal contempt and hatred; for, as a liar is diametrically opposite to good faith, he must consequently be a very indignant creature. His tongue is the trumpet of falsehood, and his words are witnesses against his pretensions to the title of a man. He never opens his mouth but to his own confusion, and all his speeches contribute to discover his shame, until he becomes as contemptible in the eyes of honest men, as he is odious to the Supreme Being. The hatred and contempt of mankind are at last the rewards of the pains he has taken to spread false reports among his friends. The world, who generally judge wrong on most other occasions, is not so with regard to the
lyar,

lyar, but agree with one voice to censure and despise his conduct. It is in vain that he employs oaths to make himself believed by those to whom he speaks ; for even truth is discredited when it comes from his mouth.

The mean and indignant idea of a lyar cannot be made better appear, than by putting it in opposition to that lively resentment, which every man of honour feels himself obliged to shew when accused of a lye ; he prefers death to such an accusation, and freely hazards his life to wipe off so foul a stain on his character. The Roman history furnishes us with striking examples of the attachment those masters of the world had to truth. We shall content ourselves with relating one instance, which will be sufficient to shew how great was their esteem for truth.

When Augustus, after the defeat of Marc Anthony and Cleopatra, entered Rome in triumph, among the prisoners who followed in his train was an Egyptian priest, of whom fame said he had never
told

told a lye in his life. So extraordinary a character drew on him the attention of all the city, and afterwards was rumoured in the senate; when that illustrious body thought it their duty to do honour to truth, though found in the person of a slave. They ordered him to be presented with his freedom, and, as he was a priest, that he should be admitted among those whose business it was to prepare and make the sacrifices to the Gods. Lastly, to do honour to the reign of Augustus, in which so singular a man was discovered, they erected statues to this virtuous Egyptian, that posterity might be acquainted with this event.

Having thus mentioned what distinguished honours the Romans conferred on truth, it is but just that we should give a striking proof of the indignation they shewed to a lye. In the reign of the Emperor Claudius, a man died at Rome, of whom it was publicly said, that he had never spoken a word of truth in his life. The emperor being informed
of

of this, gave orders that the dead body of this notorious liar should be denied all funeral rites, that his house should be razed to the ground, his possessions confiscated, and all his family banished for ever, in order entirely to annihilate the memory of so wicked a man.

Hannibal, though he was the greatest captain of the times in which he lived, was never able to attract the esteem of the people of honour, who were his contemporaries, for having broken his word whenever he found it to his advantage.—Titus Livius says, that the praises we cannot refuse to his penetration in council, to his diligence in executing every thing necessary, and to his intrepidity in battle, were among the number of those accomplishments, which, in this instance, we are obliged to allow to a wicked man favoured by fortune.

BENEFICENCE.

AN elevated soul feels nothing more sensibly, than the pleasure it receives
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in relieving the unfortunate; whereas the opposite principle, that of a mean and sordid soul, feels itself hurt in the welfare of another. The noble ambition, which gives to the first as many subjects of pleasure, as there are unfortunate persons to be relieved, cannot but be acceptable to God; but the envy, which the latter conceives at the prosperity of another, is a vice peculiar to the infernal spirit.

We cannot nearer approach to the grand model of perfection which is proposed to us, than by employing ourselves in doing all the good we can to our fellow-creatures; for it is by those means we are enabled to resemble, in some measure, our Father who is in Heaven, who, without partial regard, causes the sun to shine alike on all. If the condition of the rich and powerful be worthy of envy, it can be only because they have it in their power to relieve the wretched, and support those who are sinking under the load of misfortune.

Benevolence,

Benevolence, added to power, is surely one of the greatest gifts Heaven has to bestow!

Great and good actions are to the soul as food is to the body; and the beneficence we shew to others during this life, are certain pledges of those which God has promised in Heaven to the humane and charitable. These amiable virtues pass not unrewarded even in this world, since they draw on us the admiration, respect, and love of mankind, and secure to our memory the same honours from posterity.

I remember to have read part of an epitaph, which agrees with my present subject, and is thus expressed: "What I have spent, I have lost; what wealth I possessed, I have left to others; but what I gave is still my own."

It is certain, that the advantages we derive from the expences of our table or pleasures, are of no longer duration than the satisfaction they procure, and that is but momentary. Death strips us

of all our possessions, and gives perhaps to strangers all our wealth we enjoyed in this world; but our beneficence, which we extend to those who stand in need of it, are treasures, which even God lays up in store for us, and which he promises to restore to us an hundred fold, when all our other possessions shall have taken wings and fled away. The interests we derive from our beneficence in this world, are the prayers and blessings of those we have relieved, who incessantly offer up their best wishes to Heaven for our happiness here and hereafter. The pleasure of good actions affords us comfort in our passage through life, and supports us in the expiring moments of our existence.

LAUGHTER.

LAUGHTER is a quality peculiar to man alone, nature not having endowed any other creature with the power of contracting their features into such forms.

Laughter

Laughter is the ensign of joy, and frequently the trumpet of folly.

To laugh on every occasion, is a proof that we are agreeably surprized at the view of every trifle that presents itself, and consequently betrays a simple genius, and the want of discernment. A man, who laughs much, in the end makes himself ridiculous; and the woman, who has this defect, is truly to be pitied; for, besides that modesty, which is the real ornament of their sex, suffers much from it, excess of laughter disfigures the countenance, enlarges the mouth, and swells the cheeks; so that, by giving too much way to this folly, a lovely countenance may be changed into the mask of a fool. It is true, that the dimpled smile is an additional beauty to a fine face, but it must not be accompanied with an unnatural extension of the voice.

It is worthy of remark, that the wisest men are seldom great laughers. It should seem, that their modesty will not allow them an extravagant joy; and I have

known wise men, who have preferred the tears of Heraclitus to the laughter of Democritus. It may not be amiss here to inform the more youthful part of my readers, that Heraclitus was a philosopher who wept for the follies of mankind, and that Democritus was also a philosopher, who, on the contrary, laughed at every thing he saw.

History produces many instances, in which the excess of laughter has been carried so far as to occasion instant death. Valerius Maximus makes mention of one Philemon, who having ordered a basket of figs to be brought to him, was highly diverted on seeing an ass eat them all, and immediately ordered that they should pour down the animal's throat some wine, that the figs might not give him the cholic. This strange caprice threw him into such a fit of laughter as proved his immediate death.

Cælius Rodiginus speaks of a similar fool, named Zeuxis, a famous painter, who, having painted an old woman in a
singular

singular posture, was so struck with the conceit, that death alone was capable of putting an end to his laughter. This is a kind of death as ridiculous as it is unusual; for few men laugh on taking leave of this world: the greater part take their farewell with tears in their eyes, and sorrow in their souls.

EDUCATION.

THE education of a child resembles the culture of plants. It is a soil, in which the infancy of man being sown, produces good or bad fruits, according to the good or bad qualities of the earth. The good grapes we with so much pleasure gather in the Autumn, cost us much care and pains in the spring. Thus, as the good or bad conduct of a man depends principally on his education, a father is obliged, according to the law of nature, to take all possible care, that his child, during his tender years, may imbibe sentiments of the love of virtue, and detestation of vice. This is very easily accomplished during their

their infant state, which, like wax, receives every impression we wish to give it.

Thus, as custom is second nature, so virtue becomes natural to man, and cannot easily be abandoned. It is the same thing with vice, which, by the negligence or pernicious indulgence of parents, having once found a seat in the heart of a youth, is driven from thence with great labour and difficulty.

It should seem, that the whole duty of a parent towards his child, is to give him a good education, and to put him, on his entrance on the commerce of the world, into the road that leads to fortune. Having done this, he has fulfilled all the duties of a parent; but to make himself unhappy in the pursuit of wealth, to deprive himself of the comforts of this life, and to make it a point of his duty to leave large possessions at his death, is a species of madness and folly. The generality of children receive more pleasure and advantage in the possession of what they

they have acquired themselves, than they do from that which is left them.

MAGNIFICENT DRESS.

IT has been observed in all ages, that men of the greatest sense and abilities have despised magnificent dresses, and that the pomp of comedians has seldom suited their taste. It is certain, that true virtue derives its lustre from itself, and refuses to receive any assistance from gold or silver, which are invented only to please children, fools, and coxcombs, who generally judge of mankind by the quantity of lace, with which their clothes are covered.

The man, who has real merit, generally chooses a plain dress, since it gives a lustre to virtue, and despises those embroidered and laced articles, which are much better calculated to cover the body of a horse or a mule, than to serve as a troublesome load to the human frame. Neatness becomes every one: it is generally the index of a man who is punctual
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and exact in all his affairs, in the same manner as excessive expences in costly apparel are a mark of great want of sense, and evidently prove, that the wearer has no other means of attracting attention. Hence he obtains the admiration of the giddy and unthinking, and the contempt of the wise and prudent.

It has been observed, that dwarfs, cripples, and those to whom nature has been deficient in some part of her gifts, are generally the most given to the parade of dress. Their notions are certainly founded on the absurdest principles; for, in wishing to distinguish themselves by ornaments, they draw the attention of every one to the defects of their body, whereas, were they contented with a plain and decent dress, those defects, from motives of humanity, might have been disregarded by the generality of the world. Some people have, indeed, made their fortune by the parade of dress; and these have been generally those who have sought their fortune in the butterfly circles

circles of kings and princes. Such men, however, owe more to chance and their taylor, than to prudence and good sense.

Lastly, it must be allowed, that there are great marks of effeminacy in the excess of dress, and that a too complaisant attention to the prevailing fashions is the effect of a ridiculous softness. Cæsar, being warned by his friends to have a strict eye on Marc Antony and Dolabella, who were forming some conspiracy against him, replied, "I have little distrust of those people who feed well and decorate their persons; I have more suspicion of those who are pale, meagre, and negligent of their dress," meaning Brutus and Cassius, who were never frequenters of the shops of lacemen, nor remarkably devoted to their taylors. The parade of dress should be confined to actors on the theatres, and to those who have their fortune to seek only among women.

AMBITION.

AMBITION.

IT is natural for great souls to wish to procure immortality to their names, in order that a something may remain of them after their earthly dissolution, to collect laurels, and to make them the objects of admiration to posterity. Pliny the Younger made this confession: "I confess, (said he) that nothing employs my mind more than the extreme desire I have of immortalising my name, since such appears to me to be a design worthy of a man of honour and virtue. He, who knows his life to be free from reproach, fears not to have it handed down to posterity."

Certain it is, that the desire of shining in history, of handing down our names to future ages, and to strive to acquire immortality by virtue, is a passion worthy of great men. To obtain that happy end, we find pleasure in pain, we rejoice under fatigues, despise dangers, and even brave death itself. It is certain, that such

such a disposition must be something more than human, and that the soul of an hero displays the clearest sentiments of contempt for every thing that does not tend to immortalise his name.

Virtue serves as a spur to the ambition of these great men, and hence it is not astonishing, that they wish for no other recompence than a lasting remembrance of their glorious exploits. It is natural to abhor sinking into eternal oblivion. He who dies without having done something noble and virtuous, which may preserve him in the memory of the living, is entirely forgotten as soon as his presence is wanting to remind us of him. Men render their names immortal by illustrious actions, serve as models to great men in future ages, and, besides having their names respected by posterity, they have the pleasure to foresee, that their own descendants will venerate their existence.

So powerful was the love of virtue in the remotest ages of antiquity, of which history furnishes us with many examples,
that

that even in those days, when not an idea of the immortality of the soul existed, men wished to immortalise their names by illustrious actions. This cannot appear astonishing; but it is really surprising, that any man should wish to preserve his name to posterity by an infamous action, like Herostratus, who burned the temple of Diana at Ephesus, in order that his name might not be forgotten. However, there is a great difference between the memory of a virtuous hero, and that of an incendiary or assassin. It is like viewing two different portraits; the one representing Marcus Curtius, who was a voluntary victim to save his country, and the other Nero, who killed his own mother out of wantonness:—the first inspires our love and veneration, the other our horror and contempt.

REASON.

REASON is a proper rectitude of mind, which, when joined to wisdom, serves

erves to regulate our conduct in the pursuits of this life. Wisdom consists in the knowledge of divine and human things; it teaches us a due reverence to God, and instructs us in what is useful for the general good of mankind.

Temperance, justice, prudence, and generosity, are the effects of wisdom, but prudence claims the pre-eminence; since, by her assistance, reason triumphs over the passions. Pleasure and pain are equally blended with all the other passions, for desire precedes pleasure, and joy ends it; fear precedes grief, and sorrow comes as its companion.

Reason being the compass by which men ought to direct their course in the commerce of this world, the wise consult it in all their actions, and are thereby enabled to triumph over every thing that opposes its power. Nature has given it to man as a prerogative which places him above all other animals, that it may serve him as a guide to his conduct. Without reason, he cannot find the true
D road

road to felicity, which is enveloped in the dark and gloomy clouds every where spread by the follies and vices of this world. The fool, being ignorant of the value of reason, suffers the vanities and false pleasures of life to lead him astray, and thus becomes a prey to his own naturally bad dispositions.

The power of reason is very great when fortified by the knowledge of God, and by obedience to his laws. It was reason that supported the chastity of Joseph in the severe hour of trial, and corrected the boiling impetuosity of youth. Innumerable are the instances of this sort; but we shall conclude with observing, that there is no passion which reason cannot conquer, when it is left to itself to act freely.

CIVILITY.

CIVILITY is the consequence of a good education, and the true mark of a polite parentage. It has the property of attracting the good opinion of people
at

at a little expence, and even brutality yields to its power. It costs nothing, and often procures us the greatest advantages. It is certain, that civility has extraordinary effects; for it forces men to be honest, makes avarice ashamed of itself, softens the savage heart, and keeps the clown at a distance. To a great prince, it is as an invaluable diamond in his crown; among the nobility, it is a precious ornament; and among the vulgar, it is a wonder if ever found. It is a great recommendation to a literary man, and often procures more honour thereby than from his literary abilities.

However, as appearances are often deceitful, the excessive civility of a man is sometimes suspected by the wise; for it is not uncommon to meet with that sort of people, who load with civilities those whom they mortally hate. Perhaps, the surest method is, to measure the civilities we receive from others by our own merits, and to accept of no more of it than is due to us, but to regard

the rest as raillery, or as a snare laid to entrap us.

FIRMNESS OF MIND.

IT is from the hand of Firmness, constancy, or stability, call it by which name you will, that virtue receives her crown of glory. It stands immoveable as a rock, against which the furious billows of the ocean vent all their rage in vain, and is proof against all the vicissitudes of this world. Indeed, there is something divine in the virtuously-resolute mind; for it is always the same, and does not, camelion like, attract the colours of every thing that surrounds it.

Firmness represents a faint image of eternity, and is the perfection of all the virtues, since without the assistance of the former, the latter could have no stability. Before Firmness, all the bad influences lose their force; for it teaches us to support the ills of life without regarding their weight. It is a sure pledge of a happy futurity, and is hap-
piness

piness in itself. It regrets not the past, nor stands in fear of the future; for it foresees events that are to happen. Fortune has no power over it, and the arrows of chance, whatever they may be, cannot pierce it. It fears nothing from the change of times, for it is always the same till its final dissolution.

INSTABILITY.

MEANNESS under misfortunes, and insolence in prosperity, are derived from the same source. An excess of sensibility in the mind, humbled by the unexpected reverse of fortune, endeavours by meanness to excite compassion, being the only power it is capable of exerting, with any hopes of success. On the other hand, insolent prosperity, supported by self-love so natural to man, presents to his imagination the idea of superiority derived from fortune, which makes him place himself in a rank superior to the rest of mankind.

The first unquestionably is the mark of a degenerate soul, though the world in general consider it as prudence; and the second is a ridiculous folly, though they may christen the pride of the favourite of fortune by the name of a noble haughtiness. No sensible person can approve either the one or the other; for to change from meanness to insolence, or from insolence to meanness, according to the different circumstances of life, mark the slavery of a soul to the passions of a corrupt heart.

The noble and generous soul despises being mean in adversity, as much as it does insolence in prosperity. It feels nothing from the humiliating shocks of misfortune, nor is puffed up by the insolence of prosperity, but always remains tranquil and composed in every condition, being fully persuaded, that man is but a shadow, and life but a dream.

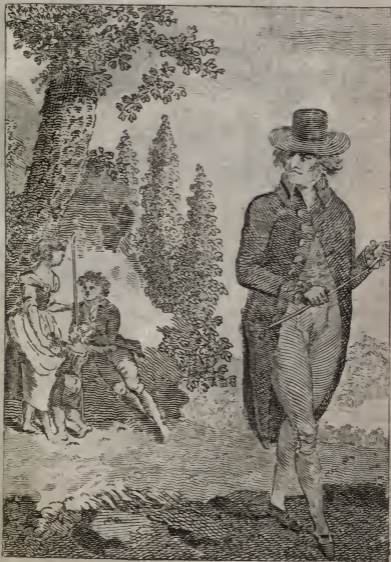
ENVY.

OF the seven mortal sins, Envy is one, which troubles most the repose of mankind; and as it has its root in the excess of self-love, it is no wonder, that its venomous fruits poison the repose of the generality of mortals. Envy induced the arch enemy of mankind to seek the means of destroying the felicity of our first parents; and, probably, from the moment they eat of the forbidden fruit, this horrid vice passed from the Devil into man, not only to destroy those into whom it first entered, but to be the rock, on which millions of men have split when they least expected it.

When we examine the envious man, he appears to resemble a demon, better than any other copy that can be traced of that original; and if we can in this world form any ideas of eternal punishments, the envious man can, from his own feelings, give us some account of them. So great is his disorder, that the
happiness

happiness of others encreases it; and, if he be capable of receiving any comfort, it can be only from the misfortunes of his neighbours,

It seems to the envious man, that the happiness of another is a robbery committed on him, and that fortune has been guilty of a crime in neglecting him. He is hungry when he knows that another man eats, and the cold freezes him in proportion as another is warmed. He is night and day restless in inventing obstacles to oppose the happiness of others, and his soul knows no joy but in the destruction and ruin of his neighbour. His two greatest favourites are lies and falsehoods, and he feeds on his own heart, which he gnaws night and day. His eyes appear like furies, and his hair is composed of serpents. His mouth is the entrance of the infernal regions, and his ears the receptacle of false echoes. His hands are the claws of a tyger, and his feet those of a horse, which are perpetually kicking. His breath is a devouring



The Envious Man.



vouring flame, and his words are cutting razors. Lastly, he is deserted by God, execrable to men, and the darling of the Devil.—My pen stops short with horror.

THE SOVEREIGN GOOD.

THE ancient philosophers had different opinions concerning what constituted the happiness of man, and what they commonly called the sovereign good. Eschines placed it in sleep; Pindar maintained, that it consisted in health; Zeno believed, that it was found in the crown, which they placed on the head of him, who carried the prize in the combats; the Corinthians placed it in gaming; Epicurus in voluptuousness, and many others placed it in honours, riches, and dignities; but Aristotle considered it as consisting of virtue and wisdom.

It is, however, clearly evident, that among the Pagans, who had no knowledge of the immortality of the soul, each naturally placed the sovereign good
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in that which most flattered his ruling passion. Since the greater part of the things of this world have no value in themselves, it is the imagination of each particular that must fix their price.

Eschines, for example, was undoubtedly a phlegmatic and indolent man: he consequently believed that the sovereign good consisted in sleep, which his habit of body made him prefer to every thing else.

Pindar, who seems to have been of a weak and sickly constitution, could not make use of great exertions, and therefore preferred health to all other things.

Zeno, undoubtedly the son of a prize-fighter, loved manual sports, and placed the sovereign good in the superior knowledge of boxing and wrestling.

The Corinthians, who were a lazy and worthless people; placed all their felicity in gaming; witness Chilo, one of the seven wise men of Greece, who arriving one day at their city, found them

them all engaged in those ridiculous employments.

Epicurus, the true friend to good living and voluptuousness, placed his happiness in the gratification of the senses.

Aristotle, who had some ideas of the immortality of the soul, placed the sovereign good in virtue and wisdom. It is not at all surprizing, that this philosopher should have sentiments so just; for, having some ideas of a second life, he could not think in the rude manner of his ignorant cotemporaries.

It is not a little surprizing, that among all the philosophers and men of great genius, which antiquity has produced, none of them have thought of placing the sovereign good in *indifference*, since, when it is sincere, it places man in a state of equality, and raises him above every agitation, which the revolutions of time can give to mortals. It should seem that a Pagan, who knows nothing of the immortality of the soul, and who

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looks for nothing beyond tranquillity, which is the most pleasing of all the vanities of this world, would place the sovereign good in indifference.

CONFIDENCE.

IT is certain, that we cannot be too circumspect in our choice of the person we mean to make our confident, and entrust with the secrets of our hearts; for, generally speaking, we make ourselves the slaves of those, to whom we open the secrets of our bosoms. A good and generous heart too often and too easily opens itself, which is frequently taken advantage of by the artful, treacherous, and false friend.

The temper of mankind is so inconsistent, that he, who to-day loads us with careffes, may to-morrow conceive for us a hatred, which breathes nothing but our ruin: so that the confidence we have placed in a person, whom we considered as a valuable friend, may one day, when his sentiments for us change,
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forge those words, which we have incautiously entrusted him with, into arrows that may deeply wound us. The daily experience this world affords us, admits no doubt of the truth of this observation. However great our friendship or esteem may be of any man, prudence directs us to be very cautious, and to make our own bosoms only the repository of the latent secrets of our hearts. The old proverb truly says, "The words of a wise man lie at the root of his tongue; but those of a fool play on the tip of it."

BRAVERY.

BRAVERY and Liberality are two qualities which seldom fail to attract the esteem of mortals: the first displays a contempt of life, and the second regards riches with an eye of indifference: two things, to which men in common shew the strongest attachment.

However, the excess of either merits contempt; for, whenever we lose sight of prudence, the first becomes temerity,

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and the second prodigality : two vices as prejudicial to our happiness as they are contemptible in the eyes of the wise. Temerity prevents a man from thinking of the true value of life, and exposes him to the dangers of death on the most trifling occasions; while prodigality, not reflecting on the bitterness of want, prostitutes itself to contempt, inseparable from poverty. When bravery is not accompanied by the virtues, it places a man in an awkward situation, since courage can be displayed only against enemies. When the sword of war is sheathed, bravery then languishes.

History is full of the heroic and illustrious actions of great men. Those of the famous Prince de Condé, under the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, merit esteem; but much more do I admire the bravery of Viscount Turenne, who shone as much by his prudence, as the other dazzled the eyes of the public by his rash exploits. Condé was said to have an eye on the throne; but too
much

much fire reduced his projects to smoke. Turenne supported his character by valour, prudence and generosity. Condé, after having braved death in a thousand shapes, at last died peaceably in his bed in an advanced age; whereas Turenne, without ever having rashly exposed his person to danger, was killed by a cannon ball. The decrees of God are impenetrable.— Let us always adore them.

A GOOD HEART.

THERE is no qualification of a human being more to be prized than that of a good heart; for besides being a source of true felicity to him who possesses it, it is a treasure to those who come within the reach of its beneficent and generous influence.

A good heart feels for the misfortunes of others, and commiserates all those whom inability prevents him from assisting. He, who possesses a good heart, puts the best face upon little errors, and is ingenious in concealing the defects of

mankind. He considers the misfortunes of his neighbour as a letter of recommendation, and endeavours to persuade himself, that misery is a sacred thing. If his eyes be shut to the weaknesses of others, his ears are also deaf to the malevolent insinuations of evil minds. His tongue moves only in the praises of every one, and he is mute when called upon to support the maledictions of others. He endeavours to promote universal felicity, and sincerely rejoices when he has it in his power to extend it. It is with regret he sees differences among friends, and he spares neither time nor pains to bring them to a right understanding with each other. He endeavours to soften the rage of the passionate man, and is struck with horror at the idea of every act of revenge. He knows not what envy is, and wishes well to all the world. He comforts the afflicted, and does not, in any shape, add to the load of misfortunes. Indeed, a good heart may be called the perfection
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of the virtues, and the presage of a happy eternity.

It is to be lamented, that, in our age, the goodness of the heart is little in fashion; but this arises from the general corruption of manners, and that vice now impudently assumes the name of virtue, and that most virtues pass for a signal of weakness.

INTEREST.

INTEREST is the principal end of the greater part of the actions of mankind, and all ranks of people are subject to its influence. It is the pursuit of every one, and is the only machine that puts things in motion. To such a height is its influence raised in these days, that among most mortals it is suffered to take place of sense and reason, since every action, which has not interest for its object, is considered as indiscreet and absurd. Self-interest, however, when it loses sight of truth, reason, and justice, is a most pernicious quality.

dangerous to the community at large, and proclaims its possessor to be a vicious person.

“ Interest (says an ingenious French writer) appears to me to resemble dust, which the demon throws into the eyes of men, in order to make them blind to justice, duty, honour, and friendship. It is Interest that stifles the natural sentiments of relations for each other, embroils man and wife, sows the seeds of hatred among brothers and sisters, and extinguishes friendship among friends. The great make use of it as a pretence to commit the most unjust actions, and to the vulgar it serves as an excuse for dissolving the tie of obedience they owe to their sovereign. It makes courtiers slavish, soldiers rash, ecclesiastics hypocritical, and merchants deceitful. Thus it becomes the master of the other passions, often subdues them, and leads them in triumph. In public, it assumes the name of prudence, but privately it stoops to any meanness or injustice that can promote its ends.”

FORTUNE

FORTUNE CHANGES THE MAN.

“HONOURS change our manners, (says a noble Roman writer) but not always for the better.” It is so common a thing in the commerce of this world to see men, who rise to honours and riches, change their behaviour, temper, views, and inclinations, that we are not at all surpris'd at it.

What a folly to forget ourselves, to be no more found, merely from having changed situation! What injustice to neglect old friends on the empty parade of a new fortune! It is in fact telling all the world, that he is not deserving of his fortune; and that the imaginary felicity of riches is preferable to the real enjoyments of virtue.

We may say, that the acquisition of a fortune is of no service to the memory, since we frequently observe, that the happy man forgets to-day the person who yesterday assisted him, and knows not even the name of him, who helped him
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in the beginning of his career of fortune. As gold is proved by the fire, so is man by prosperity. If the former properly stands the assay, and the latter preserves its integrity amidst honours, they may be then said to have arrived at a state of perfection.

Great God! how miserable is the lot of man! In prosperity, he forgets every one; and in adversity, every one forgets him. In prosperity he appears to have lost his senses; and when loaded with misfortunes, he is said never to have had any. In his sudden elevation, he becomes discontented with all the world; and, when hurled to the bottom of the wheel of fortune, all the world are discontented with him. He who basks in the sun-shine of fortune should remember, that riches sometimes take the wing, and suddenly fly away from us. Happy is he who reflects, that old money, old wine, old books, and old friends, are objects worthy the attention of every man of good sense.

LIBERALITY.

LIBERALITY.

EVERY one who is in the possession of wealth, has it in their power to do much good ; but it does not always happen, that those who have it in their power, know how properly to use it. It is a secret reserved for noble souls, who consider the person, the time, and manner, of properly conferring a favour. Whereas there are many people who give disgust by the manner in which they do a kindness, and lose the merit of it by the awkward mode of doing it. People who affect to be generous, never give but with ostentation ; but true liberality is always the same, whether it be in private, or in the face of the whole world.

There are others, who, considering themselves as under the necessity of assuming the character of liberality, act in so proud and haughty a manner, that the favours they bestow rather encrease the affliction than relieve the necessities of those who receive them. True liberality

is always performed in such a maner as to enhance the value of the gift. It is only true and genuine generosity, that knows how properly so to season its gifts, as to render them palatable and pleasing to all who partake of them.

HOPE.

WE cannot but consider Hope as a strong mark of the Divine pity; for, after the fatal fall of our first parents, which entailed upon us all the miseries of this painful life, how could we be able to support them without the hope of a change? In true hope, which is the consolation of the unfortunate, is the only support of mortals in this world; for that revives the most dejected spirits, and whatever evils may befall a man, so long as hope accompanies him, it will not fail to support him. Like some powerful cordials, of which but a few drops serve to strengthen the heart, however weak it may be, it has the virtue of encouraging those who, amidst the adversities of this
life,

life, are in want of courage to persevere to the end of their mortal career. Poverty, sickness, persecution, and all the other ills of this life, are softened by hope.

FLATTERY.

A PHILOSOPHER being one day asked, which were the most formidable animals to men, he replied, "Among savages, it is the slanderer; and in domestic life, the flatterer." Certain it is, that the flatterer unites in his character many infamous vices; for he is a liar, in speaking those things which he does not believe; he is deceitful, in speaking contrary to his sentiments; he is a coward, not daring to speak what he thinks; he is wicked, because he pours oil on the fire of the self-love of another; he is impious, in praising the vices of his neighbour; and he is the enemy of those he calls his friends, since by his flattery he encourages them in their evil courses.

Flattery is a sweet venom, with which the great are poisoned, who are too often persuaded,

persuaded, that their vices are only imperfect virtues. It is astonishing, that to such a height has this vice got in courts, that, without flattery, no man can there hope for any success. Indeed, self-love must have obtained a powerful dominion over the heart of man, since it suffers us to receive the incense we do not merit, and makes us like the flatterer, who mocks our understanding, by attributing to us those qualities we do not possess. Nothing is more universal than to hear men exclaim against flatterers; but there are very few people who quarrel with a man for telling him too much of his own merits and understanding. In short, there are some passions that will leave us as we advance in age, but the love of flattery will pursue us to the grave.

FAMILIARITY.

TO know how to keep familiarity at a proper distance from the commerce of friendship, is a science, to which the world do not pay the attention it merits. To
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shew its inestimable value we need only remark, that it is to this science that friendship is indebted for its duration. Friendship is founded on esteem, and esteem is a tribute due to merit, but as every man has his weaknesses, familiarity soon discovers them, and imprudently checks them, without considering, that the self-love of every man is wounded when we bear hard on his foibles; and thus the good harmony between friends is frequently interrupted.

Sympathy forms friendship, complaisance nourishes it, and integrity of heart preserves it; but excess of familiarity often does so much injury to friendship, as even to dissolve it. Every man, who says, that familiarity is the ensign of friendship, is not acquainted with the delicacy of the latter; and he, who is too fond of our familiarity, seldom cares much about our friendship. Familiarity opens the door to love, but shuts it against friendship. He who wishes to make friendship lasting, should so manage that

delicate business, that excessive familiarity should not be suffered to appear; for that mother never fails to introduce her daughter contempt, who is the source of irreconcilable enmity.

INEQUALITY OF TEMPER.

A FRIEND of an irregular Temper is like good provisions badly cooked; for his happy moments, being frequently interrupted by caprice, prevent us from tranquilly enjoying the pleasures of his friendship.

A man of an unsettled temper never follows even his own will, and consequently we never can discover what are his resolutions, he every moment changing his opinion. He is incapable of great affairs, and disagreeable even in small concerns. It is with difficulty he finds friends, and it is impossible for him to keep them. An irregular temper is the mark of a weak judgment, since it shews to-day, by marks of indifference, the regret it feels of being yesterday deceived

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in its choice, and that coolness, which so closely follows caresses, is infinitely more mortifying to a generous mind, than the first demonstrations of his friendship gave it pleasure.

An irregular-tempered man is like a bastard plant, whom nature has not taken the pains to perfect. When we happen to be connected with a man of this character, the best way perhaps would be to consider him in the light of a comedian, who at one time represents a king, and at another time a beggar; sometimes a philosopher, and sometimes a harlequin; sometimes a lamb, and sometimes a bear. It is only mere pass-time we can hope to receive from a man of an unsettled temper, since no dependance can be placed on him as a friend.

RARITIES.

EVERY thing this world produces is imperfect, the possession of them diminishes their value, and even the hope of acquiring we know not what is often at-

tended with infinitely greater anxiety, than the possession of what we have so ardently pursued gives us pleasure. The value we put upon things merely on account of their difficulty to be obtained is absurd; for we should certainly fix the price on them only in proportion to their utility. It is evidently a proof of our weakness, to give the preference to any thing merely because it is the growth of a foreign country. Reason naturally dictates to us, that any thing really useful to us, and the product of our own country, must be more valuable in itself, with respect to us, than any useless commodity imported from the Indies.

Pearls are of little value in the East, gold at Peru, or odoriferous drugs in Arabia; but here they are esteemed at a high price, merely on account of their scarcity with us. However, it is our own imagination only that enhances their price; and, to speak the truth, the Europeans are more foolish so much to esteem gold, which is only a yellow earth,
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and pearls, which are but a kind of shell-fish, than were the Indians, who so dearly paid the Dutch for the first cat they carried among them, since that animal was of more service to them in killing their mice, than all the gold and pearls of the East.

It is true, that gold at this day will do many things, not to say every thing, with respect to vanity and avarice; but, as gold could not drive away mice, so in that country a cat was certainly of more value than gold.

For my own part, I must confess, that I prefer the magpie in his half-mourning dress, when he has learned to imitate the human voice, to the proud peacock, with all the brilliant plumage of his tail, since he utters only discordant and disagreeable sounds.

Nature has been so just in the division of her gifts, that she has bestowed on each country whatever is necessary to supply its wants, provided they know how to be contented with the real necessaries of

life, without being obliged to visit foreign countries. As all kinds of superfluities are useless, so things however scarce, which serve only to feed our vanity and encrease our luxury, appear to me of no value, even though they may be brought from the remotest regions of the earth.

A plain family joint of English beef is certainly preferable to a turtle, which is made to please the palate by the addition of wines and foreign spices, without the assistance of which it would be rejected with contempt. After all, every one has his predominant taste.

NAVIGATION.

OF all the elements, water is perhaps the least to be trusted, since a calm is often a forerunner of a furious tempest, and justly verifies the old proverb, that *danger lurks on the brink of security*. Cato used to say, he repented of three things: of having suffered a day to pass without doing some good; of having entrusted a secret to an improper person; and

and of venturing on the water when he might have gone by land.

Another Roman used to say, that a ship was the emblem of madness, because it was never a moment in one situation; that the mariner was a fool, because he changed his opinion with every wind; that the water was a fool, because it never was at rest; and that the wind was a fool, because it was never steady to one point; to which we may add, that it is the height of folly to join in such company.

There is, indeed, no profession more perilous than that of a seaman, since his life is every moment separated from death only by a single plank. He has often the four elements to struggle with at one time, and sometimes is burnt alive in the midst of water. His principal end is to arrive at land, and yet the sight of that element, in some situations, drives him to despair. Though he rests all his hopes on the winds, yet those very winds frequently prove his destruction. Lastly, he
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seeks riches, and instead of them sometimes meets with unhappiness, misery, and even death itself.

Notwithstanding all this, navigation is one of the finest and most useful sciences that man ever discovered; for, besides the riches it introduces into every country, it serves to draw the wonders of the Creator from the mass of ignorance, by the knowledge it has given us of so many different regions, nations, religions, manners, animals, fruits, and plants. So that, every thing considered, we have reason to thank Heaven for having given birth to men of so rude a taste, as contentedly to live on stockfish and biscuits, in order to furnish others, from the four quarters of the world, with the delicacies of the remotest regions, and every moment to run the risk of their lives, to procure to the luxurious the delicacies of the table.

GAMING.

GAMING.

IT is said that the Lydians were the first inventors of gaming, in order to amuse themselves when they could get no provisions to eat. If that be true, their loss of time was not badly employed; but as daily experience proves to us the contrary, and that we every day see people whom the madness of gaming exposes to famine and death, we cannot but treat with contempt the memory of those sluggards who first invented it. Indeed, when we reflect on the various misfortunes that gaming draws on itself, it appears to me, that it would be very difficult to ascertain its first inventor; unless it be the demon himself, who, by the means of gaming, encreased his empire of the robbers of time and of the purse.

I perfectly agree with those who will insist, that an innocent game may sometimes amuse and relieve the mind, for a little time, from the most painful pursuits

suits in the commerce of this world: it is against the use of it in excess that reason and conscience revolt. Mahomet very properly forbid his disciples all games of chance; nor was that Turk wrong, who laughed at two Christians who were *amusing* themselves by playing for money: "What a folly! (said he) for two men to take money out of their pockets, and put it to hazard to which it belongs!" At any rate, the character of a gamester is at all times despicable, since they are principally composed of thieves and sharpers.

CRUELTY.

A SOUL truly generous can never be cruel, since cruelty harbours only in the bosom of a mean tyrant. Ferocity is repugnant to human nature, and converts him in whom it is found to a monster, and a declared enemy of society. A cruel prince is the plague of nations, and sent by God as a scourge upon mankind; and, perhaps, comes to the same

same end as do those rods which the tender parent throws into the fire, after he has used them to correct his child.

All the world wishes ill to a tyrant, and even those who are not under his yoke pray for his ruin: God abhors him, and his own conscience will be one day his executioner. As his joy consisted in the affliction of others, his ruin will rejoice his people, when divine justice shall deliver them from the gripe of that Nero.

History is replete with accounts of the unfortunate end of tyrants, whom a violent and premature death has hastened to the grim regions of Pluto, where they will be treated with an indulgence similar to that they have granted to others, and where the sighs of those, whom they afflicted and tormented in this life, will fan the fire of their torments. Lastly, every cruel person, be his condition either exalted or humble, must expect punishment either in this or the other world,
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and often in both, since the same measure we make to others will be again measured to us.

AVARICE.

THERE is hardly a vice more opposite to good sense than this; for the avaricious man prostitutes his honour, his life, and even his soul, merely to hoard up treasures, from which he derives no other advantage than the pain of taking care of it, the uneasy fears of losing it, and the injustice he makes use of to encrease it. The miser thinks himself master of his riches, but does not perceive that he is the slave to them. He bears them so high a respect, that he presumes only to touch them; he loves nobody, and nobody loves him, nor does he even love himself. In proportion as he fills his chests, his poverty encreases; so that, like a second Tantalus, while in the arms of opulence he experiences all the horrors of poverty.

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The Avaricious Man.

It is without doubt the evident effects of the divine justice against this vice, that the avaricious man condemns himself not to make use of his riches, and is a prey to the devouring idea, that he must leave all his riches to his heirs, whose most ardent wish is to see him in his grave.

I remember to have read, that a certain bishop was so avaricious that he went by night to rob his own horses of their oats; and that this prelate, of so exemplary a life, was one night seized by his groom, who, under cover of the dark, worked hard with a good cudgel on the shoulders of his master, supposing him to be some needy thief.

Avarice is a vice, from which even the demon himself is exempt, though its professors contribute greatly to enlarge his empire. It must give great pleasure to the evil spirit, to see how man abandons his God for so vile a thing as gold, and disregard his salvation to become a slave to that yellow earth, which he must leave behind him.

DEATH.

DEATH having been introduced into the world by Sin, it is not all surprising, that there should be something frightful in its appearance, even the very idea of which makes men tremble. Its effect is an incontestable proof of the punishment of crimes.

Terrible as it may be, it frees us from all the miseries of this life, and opens to us the gates of eternity. The death of a good man is the completion of his felicity; but that of a wicked man is the commencement of his misery.

When we properly consider the matter, we find a striking proof of the divine bounty even in our dissolution. It is the end of all the evils that accompany this life, which, were they for ever to endure, would be far more insupportable than even death itself. When we reflect on the miseries of old age, and that, after having seen sixty revolving suns, we generally begin to be a load to others as well as to ourselves;

ourselves; what would that misery be, were we doomed to live eternally loaded with all these calamities, which our first parents drew on their unhappy posterity by their disobedience? Certainly it would be an insupportable punishment.

Since death is no more than a tribute we owe to nature, let us pay it without complaining, but always endeavour to be upon our guard. Let us study to have a conscience pure and clear from reproach, in order that we may not be surpris'd by death, and we shall then know by a happy experience, that there is nothing so terrible in death as is represented to us. It is by death that Martyrs have received the crown of glory, in changing this short life, full of adversity and pain, for an eternity of incomprehensible felicities.

EPITAPHS.

THE last vanities of men are their epitaphs, and are often a surer proof of the pride of the living, than of the virtues of the dead. It should seem from hence,

that falsity is so inseparably united to man, that it accompanies him even to his tomb, and triumphs over his ashes. The expence attending monumental erections is often only with a view to give credit to imposition; and the eulogiums which are engraved on marble in honour of the deceased, are too often only a portrait of what we would wish they had resembled, rather than a faithful picture of what they had been.

Epitaphs are a gasconade of words, to which a judicious reader seldom gives any credit. If the soul, after it has taken its flight, be happy, it wants no pompous epitaphs here; and, if it be not happy, no expences whatever on a monument will mend its condition. Heirs, however, who through gratitude or friendship, employ certain sums in ornamenting the tombs of their relations and friends, appear more excuseable than those, who, during their lives, expend vast sums in raising magnificent mausoleums as repositories of their dead carcases, and who have the effrontery
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to compose an eulogium on their lives, and thus make themselves liars long after they can no more speak.

THE DISTRIBUTIONS OF NATURE.

NATURE is so just in the distribution of her favours to men, that she, in some measure, rewards all her votaries. If she gives to one man riches and power, she adds to it a restless and unbounded ambition; if another be poor and unfortunate, she gives him patience and contentment. If the first with his riches had the indifference of the latter, he would certainly be too happy; and if the latter had the natural inquietude of the former added to his bad fortune, he would assuredly have just room to complain.

If we weigh then the riches of the first with the misfortunes of the second, and the inquietude of the one with the contentment of the other, we shall certainly find the balance even; for the indifference

of the second laughs at the inquietude of the first, and his patience is so great, that his disgraces have no effect on him. Should time or accident happen to change the fortune of both of them, what a load of misfortunes would not the first experience, if indigence should be associated with his natural inquietude? The only prudent step we can take, is to make ourselves easy and quiet in whatever situation Providence may have placed us.

HONOUR:

HONOUR resembles the eye, which cannot admit of the least impurity without receiving a material alteration. It is a precious stone, the least defect in which diminishes the price. It is a treasure, which, when once unfortunately lost, can never be recovered. As salvation is to the next life, so is honour to this; the first cannot be acquired but with great care, and the last cannot be preserved but with the most cautious delicacy. The
wise

wise consider it as a resource in every misfortune that may happen to them; whereas the fool pledges it every moment upon the most trifling purposes. As a body without a soul is a corpse, so is a man without honour, whom all the world shuns with aversion as impure.

Honour is so entirely united with itself, that it cannot suffer a diminution in any of its parts, without hazarding its whole existence. From hence it arises, that we never see what may be called a half-honest man; for, generally speaking, he who is so unfortunate as to receive a check on his honour, soon becomes a complete bankrupt. Honour and life put to the balance will prove equally ponderous; but as soon as we take honour out of the scale, life weighs no more than a feather.

PATIENCE.

THE fool considers patience as the mark of a weak heart, and generally represents

represents it as the resource of a coward ; but the wise consider it as a mark of true grandeur of soul. It supports itself by hope, and is a stranger to despair, which is the portion of mean souls. Patience is so great a resource against all kinds of misfortunes, that every evil loses three parts of its effects by the proper use we make of patience ; it combats them wherever it meets them, and generally triumphs at last. It honourably resists the greatest calamities in life, and softens the severity of our adversities in such a manner as hardly to suffer us to feel them. It is a virtue, which always carries its reward along with it ; for those who practise it, never fail to feel its happy effects.

The Emperor Marcus Aurelius, so remarkable for his temper and patience, often said, that Cæsar obtained the Empire by the sword, Augustus by descent, Caligula by his father's merits, Nero by tyranny, Titus by the conquest of Judea ; but as for himself, though of a low extraction,

traction, he had obtained it by patience. Such is the superior influence of this virtue.

However weighty may be our burthens, they cannot crush us totally, so long as patience lends us its support, and conducts us by its friendly hand. As every thing in nature has its contrariety, so patience is opposite to despair. The Christians consider it as a gift from heaven, and the ancient philosophers regarded it as the last effort of a firm and generous soul.

Patience is nearly allied to courage, which cannot shew itself to advantage without enemies; in the same manner, this virtue disappears the moment adversities abandon us. Patience is a generous friend, for it never comes near us during prosperity; but the moment we are likely to sink under misfortunes, it never fails to present itself to us, and to offer us its assistance. Lastly, it supports us to the end of our career, crowns all our labours, and conducts us into those paths, which lead to a happy eternity.

READ.

READING.

ALL the employments of mankind in this world are only amusements, except those to which we are indebted for our daily bread: all the rest are but pass-times. Of all the amusements, there is certainly no one more agreeable or instructive than that of reading.

Plautus, the Poet and Philosopher, in the early part of his life, was much given to the vanities of the world, and, owing to the great vivacity which nature had given him, was a very irregular in his conduct. He began his career of life in the capacity of a soldier, after which he tempted fortune on the hazardous ocean. He next learned the trade of a baker, then became a taylor, next a merchant, and continued his pursuits in a variety of other professions till he at last commenced a philosopher. Being one day asked, in which of his professions he had found the most satisfaction, he thus replied:—
“ There is no condition, of which we
do

do not wish for a change; no post of honour without danger, no riches without labour and inquietude, no prosperity so permanent as not to have an end, nor any pleasure so agreeable as not at last to tire us: so that, if I have ever experienced any peace and tranquillity, it is only since I have given myself to reading."

This philosopher was indeed very right in making those just observations; for, whatever other vanities of this world we may be engaged in, we only encrease our inquietude, our wants, our desires, and solicitations. After having obtained and experienced them all, a few moments of enjoyment are sufficient to disgust us with them. The principal reason of all this is, that we never properly esteem that which we possess, but sigh too much after the enjoyments of others.

An application to reading delivers us from all those agitations; for it learns us to know the vanity of all things, since the

dead,

dead, who tells no falſities, teach and perſuade us by their experience. The ſolidity of their converſation is infinitely preferable to the flighty vivacity of the living. If we wiſh to know what is neceſſary for our good, they will inſtruct us without hypocriſy; if we have an inclination to learn the ſciences, they will teach us them without fee; if we wiſh to learn the maxims of ſtates, they will explain them without oſtentation; if prudence urges us to learn the principles of economy, they will voluntarily teach us; and if we are deſirous to acquire theological knowledge, we may find it in thoſe maſters without pride or parade.

THEſE are the advantages we owe to reading, by the means of which we are introduced to the familiarity of the moſt illuſtrious ſages of antiquity. Beſides theſe, we derive other advantages from reading; and theſe conſiſt in turning our attention from the frequent and dangerous commerce with the living, and inſenſibly accuſtoming ourſelves to commune with
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The two Roads through Life.

the dead. From hence we shall learn, that though we may acquire immortality in the sacred page of history, our bodies after death will moulder into ashes, and that all our knowledge, power, and grandeur, will terminate with our mortal lives.

The Two Roads Men pursue in this Life.

THERE are only two roads to travel in this world, the one agreeable, and the other useful. The first is trodden by those men who seek nothing but pleasure, and give themselves up wholly to the false allurements of life. The second is frequented by the wise, who tread only on firm paths in their journey through life.

The paths of pleasure are agreeable to the view, being bordered on all sides by trees of singular beauty, yielding fruits enchanting to the sight; but when we wish to taste them, we find they are like the apples of Sodom, and full of nothing but cinders. On advancing
H further,

further, we observe fountains, which, instead of water, pour out the most exquisite wines. On each side of the path we behold beautiful meadows, covered with the choicest flowers, though their smell is intoxicating. We see charming fields bordered by little hills, on which we discover magnificent palaces, with fragrant groves of oranges and other choice fruits.

In these palaces they do nothing but laugh and sing. In some of them we see tables covered with the most delicious food; in others, beautiful women, who receive every passenger with open arms. Here concerts are formed of the most enrapturing music; there they join in the lively dance, attended by operas, plays, and various other entertainments. In some places we see magnificent equipages; in others, a kind of fair, where we see a thousand trifles brilliantly ornamented, but totally useless.

The traveller, his mind being fascinated by the sight of these trifles, keeps
still

still advancing, without recollecting, that perhaps three parts of his life have passed since he entered this path, when, all on a sudden, he begins to feel himself fatigued with the length of his journey: he then finds himself obliged to cross a frightful desert to gain a little straw hut, at the entrance of which he perceives an old man of a hideous aspect, meagre, and worn down to a skeleton; whose eyes are sunk into his head, his black hair, terminated with grey, hang in wild confusion over his shoulders, and forms, on the whole, a most frightful spectre.

He asks the name of that place, and wishes to know who the old man is. To which the surly old keeper replies,—“This is the country of Tears and Repentance, and my name is Misery.—I am placed here by the decrees of Pleaven, to receive and lodge those travellers who come here over the paths of Pleasure.”

The poor stranger, terrified at this answer, asks if there be no other place in

that neighbourhood where he can repose himself? "Ah! (replies Misery), at ten paces from hence lives my neighbour Despair; but I sincerely tell you, that of all those who have rather chosen to go to him, than to abide with me, not one has ever returned. It is, therefore, either with him or me, that you must finish the career of pleasures, in which you have been engaged."

As to the path of Utility, its entrance is more difficult. We begin it by climbing craggy mountains, in which we must employ all the labour of our youth, before we can hope to arrive at its most lofty summit. We must submit to encounter every danger, by ascending the precipices we meet with on the way, without meeting with any other companions than Labour and Pain, who encourage his pursuits by the advantages and charms of Utility, receiving, at the same time, some assistance from Hope, who persuades him, that the remainder of his journey will be short. His own desires keep
pace

pace with the sincerity of Hope, and thus fortified by the charms of those flattering promises, he regularly advances to the height of this frightful mountain, on which he sees, though at some distance, a palace of enchanting structure, and most enrapturing situation.

He first enquires after the name and master of this beautiful edifice, when he is told, that the first is called Convenience, and the second, Repose. He hastens his pace, and rejoices infinitely at this information, hoping there to refresh and repose himself after all his toils and fatigues.—The master of the palace then assigns him an apartment agreeable to his wishes, and Hope tells him, “Here end all your fatigues and labours; here you may repose in quiet for the remainder of your days.”

The poor traveller perceives an extraordinary joy glowing in his bosom, and soon begins to form projects in his mind of making himself master of the whole palace. He sets his head to work, begins

to be uneasy, and cannot be contented with the sweet apartment he possesses in this pleasing abode. Amidst these agitations of his mind, Death suddenly appears, who, with a terrible visage, makes a sign to him with his finger to follow him.— He endeavours to oppose his commands, complaining bitterly of the cruelty of being so soon obliged to quit his repose, which had cost him so much labour and pain to acquire; but Death, always inexorable, seizes him without pity, and hurls him into a pit of six feet deep, where, covered with earth, he becomes the prey of worms, and has no further recompence for his past labours, than a few words engraved on marble, which inform posterity, that such a man had lived according to the rules of prudence.—Vanity of vanities; all things are vanity!

I cannot, however, quit this subject without observing, that though the most prudent conduct, as well as the most slighty and futile, must at last come to an end, yet my youthful readers cannot but observe,

observe, from what has been here allegorically mentioned, that the path of Pleasure leads to Misery and Despair, and that the path of Utility is terminated by the enjoyment of Convenience and Repose. If we do not make a proper use of the latter, the fault rests only with ourselves.

PRESUMPTION.

THE high opinion a man has of himself is generally the effect of his little discernment, which has not sufficient extent to comprehend the merit of another; his vanity being employed only in contemplating himself, he has not leisure to observe what is brilliant in others. His self-love, which serves him as a mirror, every moment presents to him such unrivalled accomplishments in himself, that his imagination can find nothing in the rest of mankind, that can enter into comparison with his wonderful talents.

When Alexander the Great was on his death-bed, his courtiers besought him to name his successor; but that proud monarch,

monarch, evidently considering no person as worthy to succeed him, nominated neither his brother Arideus, nor his sons, nor the infant, of which his wife Roxana was then with child, but answered, that he left the empire to him who should be most worthy of it; well knowing, that the words, *the most worthy*, would prove an apple of contention among the great, and that self-vanity would not fail to persuade each of his captains, that he himself was superior to the rest.—Alexander was not deceived in his conjecture; for, after his death, that vast empire was torn in pieces, divided among the great, and was never afterwards reunited under one chief, as Alexander had wished it.

We may conclude with saying, that Presumption is the daughter of Pride, and her mother the object of universal hatred, even though she were accompanied with some merit. As vanity produces a contempt for others, so the
vain

vain man cannot obtain the esteem of others. The vanity of a fool constitutes a just claim to a madhouse.

The false Glare of a Crown.

NOTHING more perfectly shews the equality of mankind than Death: it makes a prey of the rich as well as poor, and the monarch and the private man are frequently carried off by the same kind of disorder. This sufficiently proves, that the greatest monarchs are composed of no better materials than the meanest of their subjects, and that their crown, with all its brilliancy, and their sceptre with all its power, will have no influence with the grim king of terrors, Death.

No sooner has the soul quitted its prison, than we conceive a horror and aversion to the body, to which, but a few moments before, we offered so much incense, and to which we paid a respect, approaching almost to adoration. Monarchs are born to labour and pain as well

well as the rest of men. If we closely examine the false brilliancy of their felicity, we shall easily perceive, that it is not proportioned to the cares and fatigues inseparable from a sceptre, without speaking of the continual risques and dangers, to which they are exposed, as well in times of peace as war. Even their power has bounds prescribed to it by a superior order, the voice of the people, whom they must not presume to oppose. Besides, pleasures become insipid by being too familiar to them; and the fear and homage, with which men approach them, is an insurmountable obstacle to every connection of friendship. Good God, if private individuals could but cure themselves of ambition and avarice, those mighty princes would soon be induced to envy the happiness of their subjects!

As to their riches, if they employ them as they ought, they would be sensible, that they belong to the public, and not to themselves; and, if they employ them
badly

badly, they will one day have a terrible account to settle with the great Judge. Their actions are censured and criticised by all the world, and there is not even the humblest beggar, who does not think he has a right to enquire into their conduct. Let us pray to God for the preservation of the good, and the conversion of the wicked, such being the duty of a Christian.

TALKATIVENESS.

IT has been observed, that he who talks much, talks a great deal of nonsense, and therefore merits not the name of a wise man, since he deprives every one in company of the use of their tongues. He often stuns his auditors with his vociferous harangues, and at the same time deprives himself of the power of thinking and properly digesting what he would say. If he gives not himself leisure to digest his thoughts, so neither does he pay any regard to the choice of his words, but utters every thing crude
and

and undigested. No wonder, if an harangue supported in this manner prove tedious and disgusting to all who hear it. He says every thing he believes, every thing he wishes, every thing he knows, and in order to furnish matter for the volubility of his tongue, he often says many things of which he is totally ignorant. He interlards his speech with so many useless observations, that the thread of his discourse is frequently lost; and he is not sensible of his error, till he at last finds himself left alone, one moving off after another.

LAWS.

LAWS were made by people of property and virtue, and afterwards accepted of by the people for the advantage of individuals. Prometheus was legislator of the Egyptians, Moses of the Jews, Solon of the Athenians, Lycurgus of the Lacedemonians, and Numa Pompilius of the Romans. Before those times men had no other laws than those
of

of nature, and the customs introduced by their ancestors.

The intention of the legislators was to weaken vice by the laws, and to give force and energy to justice. These intentions are no less laudable, than their effects are useful to the people, when the laws are executed with punctuality, and when neither the negligence of the sovereign, nor the corruption of the magistrate, does not weaken them by injustice.

The Greeks boasted of being a country of legislators, the Romans made it their glory, that the laws were no where so punctually observed as among them; and the boastings of the latter were perhaps better founded than those of the first; for, of what consequence are laws, if they are not observed? It is very true, that the Romans demanded of the Athenians the laws which Solon had formerly made, to extract from them what suited their purpose; but it is no less certain, that the Romans improved

on those laws by an exact and rigorous observation of them.

I remember to have read in an old book, written by an Italian, * a very singular matter relative to the laws of Athens, of which the Romans asked for a copy; and as I know of no other author who has spoken of it but him, I shall lay it before my readers as a curiosity.

He says, that the Roman ambassadors being arrived at Athens, and having explained the subject of their deputation, the grand council assembled to deliberate whether they should agree with the request. After having examined the proposition, the judges resolved to send to Rome a wise and sensible man, to know whether the Romans were by their wisdom worthy of receiving the laws, which Solon had given to the people of Greece;

* *Specchio delle Scienze, par M. L. Fioravanti.*

Greece; but, if the ambassador found them rude and ignorant, he was to bring them back, without communicating them to the Romans.

This resolution of the grand council of Athens could not be so concealed, but that the Romans got knowledge of it. The senate found themselves very much embarrassed, as at that time Rome was not provided with philosophers capable of arguing with one of the wise men of Greece. The matter therefore to be considered, was by what means they should get over this difficulty. The senate could think of no better method than to oppose a madman to the Greek philosopher; and with this view, that if the madman should happen by chance to prevail, the honour of Rome would be so much the more glorious, as a mad Roman would in that case confound a Grecian philosopher; and, if the latter should triumph, Athens could derive but little honour in boasting of having closed the mouth of a madman at Rome.

The Athenian ambassador being arrived at Rome, he was led immediately to the capitol, and introduced into an apartment richly furnished, where was seated, in an elbow chair, a madman dressed in the habit of a senator, whom they had expressly ordered not to speak a word. At the same time, the Grecian philosopher was told, that the senator was very learned, but that he was a man of few words.

The Athenian was then introduced, and, without speaking a word, lifted up one finger of his hand. The madman, supposing this was a threatening signal to pull out one of his eyes, and remembering that he was ordered not to speak, lifted up three of his fingers, wishing to signify thereby, that if the Grecian should put out one of his eyes, he would put out both his, and strangle him with the third finger. The philosopher, in lifting up one of his fingers, wished to be understood, that there was but one supreme Being, who directed every thing; and believed,
that





The Madman and Grecian Philosopher.

that the three fingers the madman had lifted up implied, that with God the past, present, and future, were the same thing, and from thence concluded that he, who in fact was only a madman, was a great philosopher.

The Grecian sage then held his hand opened to the innocent man, meaning thereby, that nothing is concealed from God; but the madman, supposing this to be a sign that he meant to give him a slap on the face, clinched his fist fast, and shook it at the philosopher, wishing him thereby to understand, that, if he executed his threats, he would meet with a resolute opposition. The Greek, being already prepossessed in favour of the madman, conceived the meaning in a very different light, and concluded in himself, that the Romans meant, by a clinched fist, that God comprises all the universe in his hand. Judging from thence of the profound wisdom of the Romans, he granted them without any further enquiry,

the laws of Solon, according to their request.

On the whole, laws are so necessary, and of so much consequence for the preservation of the people, that without them every thing would fall into a dreadful confusion.

FEASTS.

THERE is more ostentation and parade in great feasts than satisfaction. A great number of soups and ragouts, which should be eaten hot, as well as sauces, are almost cold before they reach the table; many unknown faces, and some of them often disagreeable, crowded so together as frequently not to give liberty to the arms to act; the inattention of servants, who, having too much to do, cannot serve every one, besides the whole hours, this pompous mode of eating occupies—certainly all these inconveniencies cannot be agreeable to a wise man, who wishes to be at ease.

Besides

Besides this, all the healths which are given, and which you must drink, though those persons may be as indifferent to you as the Great Mogul, serve only to drown the stomach, and to destroy all the powers of digestion. Add to all these, the great obligation you are under to the man, who furnishes you with all these elegant inconveniencies. Surely there can be nothing of this kind agreeable to people, who love peaceful and tranquil pleasures.

Experience tells us, that the true pleasures of the table consist in the good company of five or six friends, a few dishes well cooked, and served up hot. If any thing more be wanting, it can be only a little cheerful wine, and the liberty of drinking no more than we like.

A COUNTRY LIFE.

OF all the situations in which a man may find himself in this world, the country life is perhaps the sweetest and most agreeable. He who is born a gentleman, quietly enjoys the possessions of
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of his ancestors, and lives in the country, is generally void of ambition, and consequently is not tormented by the vain desires of changing his condition, nor deceived by the false hopes of titles and dignities.

He confines his pursuits to the improvement of his lands, and, when the year proves favourable, he collects the rewards of his cares, which is more agreeable to him than the greatest revenue arising from any public place he might enjoy, which every moment exposes him to envy, and threatens him with a dreadful fall, or at least with some fatal reverse of fortune.

He enjoys his little revenue in peace and tranquillity, and his employments are nothing more than an agreeable amusement. He truly possesses the pleasures of life; for every season of the year supplies him with business, profit, or pastime. He sees no countenance that displeases him, and he is free from the necessity of flattering or regaling the proud, who are often unworthy of even
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the most homely accommodation. He pays no court in the morning but to his fields, and his family supplies the place of assemblies at night. Hunting serves him for a diversion, and fishing for a profitable amusement. Age approaches him by pleasing and gentle steps, and his life closes in peace and tranquillity.

HEALTH.

THE generality of men are so blind to themselves, as to treat with the greatest indifference, and the most trifling management, two important matters, to which they ought to pay their whole attention, and those are their salvation and health. The value of the first comprehends a happy or miserable eternity, and the second a life free from pain and grief; for, without health, there can be no felicity.

The grandeurs, riches, and honours of this world, become tasteless and insipid to the man who is deprived of the rich treasures of health. Nothing can afford
diversion

diversion to a sick man, and nothing can console him who labours under excruciating pain. Every thing tastes disagreeable to a disordered palate, and the valetudinarian cannot relish even the choicest food.

When we consider the manner in which the generality of mankind live, we are led to conclude, that they take a great deal of pains to make themselves ill. They eat without being hungry, they drink without being dry, pass whole nights without sleeping, hover over the fire when they are not cold, and do every thing they can to deprive themselves of the inestimable blessings of health.

After having passed the prime of their days in this irregular manner, age rapidly advances, accompanied with its usual infirmities, which are encreased by the imprudent conduct of their youthful days. It is in this latter season of life, that pain and grief begin, too late, to make them sensible of their past errors.

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They then in vain lament the irregular conduct that has produced these evils, and we cannot help pitying their folly in having taken so little care of their health, which would, in some measure, have contributed to soften the calamities of old age. Though young people daily see proofs of this nature in persons advanced in age, yet, notwithstanding these living examples, the mind is so blinded by the passions, that they pay not the least regard to them. Oh! how imprudent is our youth! how grievous our old age!

OLD AGE.

EVERY one wishes to reach a good old age, but few persons wish to be thought old. The love of the vanities of this world, and the fears of death, are the cause of the first; and the imperfections which accompany age, and render men a load to themselves and others, are the reasons for the second.

IF

If we properly consider the subject, we shall readily conclude, that an honourable old age is the crown of a virtuous life, and that the white locks of an old man, free from reproach, are the laurels with which time has crowned him, and is an homage paid to his virtues. Every old man, who leads a life agreeable to his age, merits respect, and the number of his years ought to be considered as so many steps he has risen above the follies of youth.

It sometimes however happens, that vice, though it generally quits us with age, still lurks in the heart of the old man, and gains sufficient influence to rekindle his passions. We must not then be astonished, if such an old age, separated from virtue, becomes the object of universal contempt.

VAIN GLORY.

VAIN-GLORY is a branch of pride, and a sin so odious in the eyes of God, that Lucifer and his millions of angels

for having been guilty of it, were immediately punished, and precipitated into the bottomless pit. How many unhappy effects does vain-glory produce! It often prevents us from doing all the good we might, and frequently leads us to do that we ought to have shunned.

We read in the Roman History, that the Consul Manilius one day asked Cæsar, what conduct he thought the most proper to acquire true glory. "It is (replied he) to pardon injuries easily, and largely to recompence those who use us well." These were the sentiments of a Christian in the heart of a Pagan, which ought to make us ashamed of ourselves, since, notwithstanding we profess Christianity, we commit worse actions than a Pagan.

How many people do we not daily see, who are totally averse to forgiving an injury, equally through a motive of vain glory, as the fear of being considered as a poltroon? How many others, to make an ostentation of their bravery, have entirely stifled the virtue of charity

so much recommended by the evangelists? How many do we not constantly meet with, who, through a principle of vain-glory, have affected to follow all the vices of the age, though their inclinations were not naturally inclined that way? How many also boast of having committed infamous actions, in order to please those with whom they were conversing?

We hardly ever meet with those men, who make it their glory to relate the virtuous actions they have performed. Such is the extreme corruption of the age in which we live, and so incomprehensible is the folly of men, which carries them so far as to think, that they should fall short in the number of their crimes, if they did not make a glory of those they have already committed.

FIDELITY.

A FAITHFUL friend is the repository of our secrets, and is like a precious stone which has no spots, and which is not to be purchased but by returns

returns of the same nature.—Happy he who finds such a friend; for to him he can entrust his most secret thoughts, and in him find a consolation at all times.

Diodorus the Sicilian says, that among the Egyptians it was a criminal matter to discover a secret with which they were entrusted; and one of their priests, being convicted of this offence, was banished his country. Certainly nothing can be more just, than that a secret entrusted to a friend, under the sanction of good faith and secrecy, should be considered as a sacred thing, and that to divulge it, under any pretence whatever, is a profanation of the most sacred duties.

Plutarch remarks, that the Athenians, being at war with Philip, King of Macedonia, one day intercepted a letter, which he had written to Olympia his wife. They sent it back to him unopened, that they might not be obliged to read it in public, saying that their laws forbid them to betray a secret.

The infidelity of a friend is certainly repugnant to nature itself, and that to betray a secret entrusted to us is truly detestable. A man who entrusts his secrets to another is like him, who surrenders his arms, and declares himself a slave; but how great would be the infamy of him, to whom we have surrendered them, were he to turn those very arms against us, and assassinate us in that defenceless state! Thus fidelity is the greatest treasure a man can find, and the secret entrusted to him the highest mark of sincere friendship.

SINGULARITY.

A MAN of singularity is a very disagreeable character, since he pleases nobody, and is every moment drawing on himself enemies almost without his perceiving it. Singularity is the consequence of a concealed presumption, which seeks to make itself admired by sentiments and manners totally contrary to the notions of others, and
to

to appear brilliant by an extraordinary taste for things. The man who is of this stamp, discovers no wit in what other people say, nor sees any thing pleasing in what others delight. He endeavours to raise himself above human nature by opinions contrary to all the rest of the world, and thereby falls into universal hatred and contempt.

There seems to be an antipathy between the singular man and all the rest of the world; for every person of good sense and sound judgment cautiously shun him. He esteems nothing but what he possesses, or what comes from himself, and finds neither worth nor merit in what others possess, or in any thing they do. He is a true copy of Momus, for he has something to say against every one. Nature seems to have formed such a man for solitude, for he is of no value in the commerce of human nature. He, who cannot accommodate himself to the humour of others, will never be esteemed nor loved.

FALSE PRAISE.

THE habit of praising every thing we see, and every thing we hear, is a mark of a weak judgment, or the sign of a false heart. He who applauds every thing wishes to please all the world, not reflecting at the same time, that he who praises only with a view to make his court to others, suffers his judgment to become a dupe to his complaisance.

It is truly the character of a coxcomb to admire every thing he sees or hears; and there is but little satisfaction in being worshipped by any one, who erects altars to all sorts of idols. Such a man constantly exposes himself to be repaid with ingratitude, since no one pays any regard to such affected complaisance. By such a conduct, he leads every one to suppose, that he finds beauty in deformity, wit in nonsense, wisdom in ignorance, bravery in cowardice, modesty in impudence, prudence in avarice, generosity in prodigality, and virtue in vice. He himself
must

must be convinced, that he wants either judgment or probity.

PHILOSOPHY.

PHILOSOPHY is the mother of the sciences, and disposes men to accommodate themselves to every condition of human life; for it is by the assistance of Philosophy that we arrive at the knowledge of every thing. True Philosophy is known by the contempt it teaches for all terrestrial things, and by not submitting its spirit to the cares and anxieties, which accompany the vanities of this world.

The true Philosopher knows less of the malice of this world, than of the course of the stars; and finds more pleasure and advantage in not knowing evil, than in comprehending the ebbing and flowing of the sea. The Philosopher Anacharsis, one day, among other things, thus wrote to Cræsus: "Know, Cræsus, that the Athenian academy does not teach us to command, but to be commanded and to obey; not to say much, but rather

to learn to be silent; not to revenge, but rather to pardon; not to covet the possessions of others, but to give part of our own to the needy; not to seek after honours, but to cultivate virtue; and not to be eager in the pursuit of much, but to be contented with a little.

In this only consists true Philosophy; all the rest is but base coin and tinsel.

The first Philosopher, of whom we have any celebrated account, was Thales, who, on account of his virtues and great merit, was placed at the head of the seven wise men of Greece, though he was not by birth a Grecian, being originally of Miletus in Asia. It is said, that he was the first who acknowledged the immortality of the soul, who invented astronomy, discovered the cause of eclipses, &c. Since his time, there have appeared a number of Philosophers, who much more merit the epithet of Buffoons of Parnassus, than of being considered as its ornaments. So dangerous it is to affect great characters.

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Among the philosophers, who made the most splendid figure after Thales, were the five following.

Pythagoras was the chief of that sect, which, after his name, were called Pythagoreans, whose disciples were obliged to observe a profound silence of five years, before they could be admitted as a proficient in that sect. It has with propriety been doubted, whether any Frenchman could ever be one of this fraternity.

The second was Plato, surnamed the *divine*, the chief of the Academicians, so named from the place where he taught being called the Academy. He lived to the age of eighty-one years, which is, in some measure, attributed to the moderation his philosophy taught.

The third was Aristotle, the chief of the Peripatetics. He was a disciple of Plato, and taught as he walked.

The fourth was Zeno. He taught in a place called Stoa, and from thence the sect was called Stoics. Among all
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the Pagan Philosophers, his morals were the most pure, and approached the nearest to those of Christianity. He taught his pupils to be regardless of grief, to pay no attention to the sufferings of the body, to treat riches with contempt, and to bestow all their time in the pursuit of wisdom and virtue. St. Paul, before his conversion to Christianity, was of this sect.

The fifth was Epicurus, who was said to allow of every kind of enjoyment and voluptuousness; though there are others, who represent his doctrines in a different light. After all, the truest philosophy is properly to know ourselves, and to live in such a manner in this world as may secure us a happy eternity.

THINK BEFORE YOU ACT.

THE little reflection men make before they undertake any thing, is the natural consequence of their so often repenting of what they have done. A precipitate resolution is frequently the forerunner
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of an unfortunate finish. If a man, in order to make a public discourse, employs sometimes whole days in composing it, with how much more reason ought he to take a long time to consider, when he is to determine on a matter, on which his honour, repose, and fortune, may materially depend!

Demetrius, the son of the great Antigonus, one day replied to Patrocles his general, who expressed his impatience to give the enemy battle, "Remember, Patrocles, that it is of little use to reflect on a miscarriage, which an imprudent haste may occasion; we ought first maturely to consider the matter, and then conclude with judgment." Suetonius said, that Augustus was a long time in forming his friendships, but having once contracted them, he was firm and unshaken. Plutarch, in his life of Pertorius, pays him great compliments; saying, that he was very slow to determine, but afterwards very firm in his resolutions. Such a character is worthy
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of a great man; for whatever may be said of certain occasions, in which a sudden resolution may be best, and where the least delay would be dangerous, yet, if precipitation in design, and slowness in execution, sometimes produce happy events, it may be compared to a lottery, in which there are an hundred blanks to one prize. Every thing in nature advances slowly, and is long arriving at maturity.

VIRTUE.

VIRTUE is the daughter of Heaven; happy those who cultivate it from their infancy; they pass their youth in serenity, their manhood in tranquillity, and their old age without remorse. There is nothing in this world fit to be compared with it; all its wishes and desires tend to celestial enjoyments, which are not liable to change. The virtuous man looks back on his past conduct without regret, because his time has been well employed; and has no apprehensions

apprehensions for the future, because his fate cannot but be happy. His mind is the seat of cheerfulness, and his actions are the foundations of felicity; he is rich amidst poverty; and no one can deprive him of what he possesses; he is all perfection, for his life is spotless; and he has nothing to wish for, since he possesses every thing. Alexander was celebrated for his courage, Ptolemy for his learning, Trajan for his love of truth, Antonius for his piety, Constantius for his temperance, Scipio for his continence, and Theodosius for his humility. O glorious virtue, which, in some way or other rewards all its admirers, and without whom there can be no real happiness!

LIBERTY.

OF all the vanities of this world, liberty is the most precious, and nature has kindly favoured us with this treasure to soften the ills of life. All the world admire it, but few know how properly to preserve it. Avarice and ambition are

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its greatest enemies, and the most capable of engaging men to pay homage at the shrine of slavery.

That men should sacrifice their liberty to court the favour of the great is truly wonderful, yet not small is the number of those who worship the Idol of Fortune. To part with our liberty merely to obtain the favours or the smiles of the rich and powerful, is buying wretchedness and misery at a great price. Such a man resembles the moth, who flutters round the flame of a candle, to enjoy the light it emits, till it burns its wings, becomes crippled, and can fly no longer.

Happy the man who can eat when he pleases, sleep as long as he likes, and go wherever his inclination carries him. There is something so sweet in liberty, that we plainly see the love of it predominant in animals, some of whom die in confinement. But the worst species of slavery is that condition, which reduces a man to the abject state of being obliged to say and act, without regard to the dictates

dictates of truth, or conscience, what some rich tyrant shall please to direct him. Preferable to such a situation is the abode of plague, pestilence, and famine.

DEPENDANCE.

IT is generally said, "Happy is he who depends on no one but himself;" but where are we to find that person? Such is the condition of human beings, that there is no state independant, from the sceptre to the shepherd's crook. The greatness of the sovereign depends on the obedience of his subjects, and the good or bad condition of the subjects on the wisdom or weakness of the Prince. The buffoon of Philip II. King of Spain, one day said to that Prince, "What would you do, Philip, if your subjects should take it into their heads to say *no*, every time that you said *yes*?" A reflection replete with wisdom, and worthy of the wisest man.

Thus the great depend on the little, and the little on the great; the valet on
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his master, and the master on his valet; the avaricious man on his money, and the proud man on his folly; the luxurious man on vice, and the felicity of this world on the imagination; the national expences on the revenues, and the revenues on the labour of the subject; navigation on favourable winds, and war on fortune; true happiness on a good conscience, and this on a life without reproach.

Even the elements are not independent, since they cannot subsist without the mutual assistance of each other. The animals depend on the earth, from which they draw their subsistence, and the earth depends on good seasons, without which it can produce neither fruits nor vegetables; the rain depends on the clouds, and the clouds on the vapours of the earth, and all together depend on the Divine direction. God alone being absolutely independent, it is he who has created all things with a mutual dependance upon each

each

each other, in order to make us sensible of our imperfections, and that nothing is perfect, except the Creator of all things.

SPEECH.

EVERY man, who is not dumb, speaks; but every one who speaks has not the art of pleasing: to be capable of doing that, genius, judgment, and rhetoric, are necessary. To speak properly is certainly a great accomplishment, and there are few acquisitions that are to be compared to it; for though words are nothing but sounds that strike the ear, they have nevertheless so much force, that the life or death of a man is often determined by them.

We read in Josephus's History of the Jews, that after the death of Marc Anthony, (the competitor of Augustus) Herod, King of the Jews, and a great partisan of Anthony, took the resolution to present himself to Augustus; and, placing

his crown at his feet, he accompanied his submission with so eloquent an harangue, that Augustus found himself forced, not only to restore him his crown, but also to introduce him to a number of his most intimate friends.

Pyrrhus, king of Epire, was a generous and magnanimous prince, a good soldier, liberal, and admirably patient under a reverse of fortune, but more particularly famous for his sweetness of temper, being besides endowed with such persuasive and insinuating eloquence, as gave the highest pleasure and delight to all who heard him, upon whatever subject he spoke. It was for this reason that the Roman senate, having sent Ambassadors to him, forbade them to treat with him immediately, but to wait till the second or third interview, fearing that by his eloquence he might draw them over to his party.

Plato said, that by the words of a man, we learn to discover those internal faculties, which we cannot see. Titus Livius,

Livius, Diodorus, Pliny, Plato, Plutarch, and many other authors, always spoke in high commendation of the eloquence of the Greek and Latin princes, who raised themselves to the highest employment, rather by their genius and eloquence, than by victories and an illustrious birth.

Antoninus, surnamed the Pious, in giving his daughter Faustina to Marcus Aurelius, who had nothing to boast of but philosophy, he said, he would much rather have for a son-in-law a wise poor man, than a foolish prince. Lastly, speech places the real distinction between men, and discovers their capacity, excuses their defects, and raises their merit. Happy those who can speak well, or know how properly to be silent.

SILENCE.

SILENCE may be the effects of wisdom or stupidity. He must be a very disagreeable companion, who says nothing, because he knows nothing; he is, however,

ever, far preferable to the man, who speaks a great deal, and says nothing to the purpose. The silence of a wise man is a proof of solid speculation; and such a man, if he speak little, he generally carries conviction with him when he does speak. The philosopher Xenocrates, being one day at a feast, was asked, why he talked so little. He replied, he had often repented of speaking too much, but never of saying too little.

It is said of Demosthenes, who was a great orator, and a philosopher of an exemplary life, that, amidst all his good qualities, he was addicted to talking too much, which induced the Athenian assembly to assign him a pension, not with a view that he might teach philosophy, but that he might have occasion to talk less.

To be a disciple of Pythagoras, the first qualification necessary was to keep silence for five years, as we have before observed. The end of this philosophy was undoubtedly to make a man master
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of his tongue, which certainly is a very necessary knowledge. "Confine your tongue, (says the old proverb) or your tongue will confine you."

Hence silence may be considered as a mark of stupidity in some persons, and of good sense in others. It is certain, that in the affairs of the state cabinet, silence is essential; in those of love it is necessary; and, in particular affairs, silence is very often useful, since, by speaking too much, the most important secrets may escape us. In short, silence in a wise man is a venerable modesty, and, in a fool, is a favour done to society.

SELF-LOVE.

SELF-LOVE is the general defect of human nature, and the most dangerous enemy of reason. It is the groundwork of the greater part of our crimes, and the favourite of our natural inclinations. It is that which fans the flame of
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of pride, makes avarice insatiable, tickles the luxurious, warms the bilious, feeds the glutton, and lulls the idle to sleep.

It commands the helm of all human actions, and banishes every reflection that opposes the tyranny of its will. It is the most dangerous enemy we have, and is the more difficult to conquer, as it has the secret of persuading us, that it proposes nothing but what is for our own interest.

If we candidly examine all our actions, we shall soon be convinced, that self-love is our reigning principle. Do we pretend to love any particular person? It is ourselves we love in that person. Do we hate any one? Self-love is at the bottom of it. Self-love, however, is in some instances necessary, since, without some attention to it, we might become the dupes of the artful and designing; and though it is absolutely necessary we should keep self-love within due bounds, yet it would not be prudent entirely to destroy it.

TEARS.

TEARS.

TEARS are the musicians of Sorrow and Despair, they are the echo of the doleful lamentations of the afflicted, and a bitter pastime to those who are obliged to shed them. There appear to be five different sorts of tears: the first are of *sorrow*, the second those of *joy*, the third of *rage*, the fourth of *love*, and the fifth those of *penitence*.

As to the first sort of tears, they are just, and even becoming, when they are shed with moderation on the death of a parent or friend; but, when let fall on any other account, such as the loss of earthly possessions, or any other uneasiness caused by such-like motives, they are certainly very badly employed.

Those tears, which we sometimes see people let fall on the first meeting, after a long absence, of a dear and particular friend, are the sure signs of a tender
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and sincere affection; and may be regarded as sacrifices which sorrow makes to joy, and which may be considered as the overflowings of a noble and generous heart.

The third sort of tears are composed of venomous drops, which rage produces, and mark the excess of fury, which is disappointed of taking its revenge in the manner it wishes.

The fourth kind of tears are the most foolish and ridiculous of all, I mean those of lovers. But these are too ridiculous to dwell on.

The fifth kind of tears are those of penitence, which will one day shine in the crown of glory, with which God shall hereafter reward them. The tears of repentance lead to the paths of happiness.

IMPERFECTIONS OF HUMAN NATURE.

NO mortal is so perfect as to be totally free from vice, nor any person so vicious as not to possess some virtue.

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The ancient authors have accused Homer of vanity, Alexander of madness, Cæsar of ambition, Pompey of pride, Hannibal of perfidy, Vespasian of avarice, Trajan of violence, and Marc Anthony of luxury. Thus, among all the famous princes, not one is to be found, whose character does not afford a mixture of virtues and vices. It has been observed in all ages, that the greatest men have generally had the greatest vices. Nature seems to have placed a spot in some particular part of all her works: let us not therefore attempt to reform the weaknesses of others from our own feeble reasonings, but admire the good qualities of every one, and have pity on their defects, since we ourselves are in want of the same degree of charity.

The Impossibility of pleasing every one.

IT is impossible for any man to please all the world, since one loves what another hates, and what one esteems, another despises. Generally speaking,
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he who attempts to please every body, generally pleases no one; for, in order to be pleasing to every one, he must shew his approbation of conducts as different from each other, as light is from darkness; so that his deceitful complaisance being once known, he draws on himself contempt, instead of esteem.

A wise man cannot please a fool, and, as the world abounds with fools, the number we may please can be but small. If the wise man, with all the brilliancy of his virtue, cannot acquire universal approbation, how can the fool be expected to obtain it? It is extreme vanity in any man to imagine he can please all the world. Every man, who knows his own imperfections, will never flatter himself with being able to please many people.— This knowledge of himself will produce indifference, and that indifference will place him much more at his ease, and he will enjoy more profound tranquillity, than the man who aims at universal approbation, and who will at last find, that

that he has been pursuing but a shadow.

The ambition we have of pleasing all the world comes from the good opinion we have of ourselves, and this serves to flatter us with the hopes of success, till experience convinces us, that we are giving ourselves much trouble in the pursuit of what we shall never overtake.—Let us live honestly, and free from the reproach of our own consciences, without caring about the approbation of the greatest part of mankind, who generally judge of others by their own inclinations or aversions.

INTERFERENCE.

THE man, who unnecessarily interferes in the concerns of others, often finds himself embarked on a boisterous ocean. A certain philosopher used to say, that he would much rather be a judge in the cause between two of his enemies, than between two of his friends; for, of the first, he should at least make

one friend; whereas, of the last, he should probably lose one; that is, the person against whom he gave his opinion.

The best method is certainly to stand neuter in affairs, in which we have any personal interest. Besides, those who are fond of meddling with the affairs of others, are generally people of a restless and bad disposition, since they find pleasure in intermixing in broils and quarrels. It has been observed, that people of a quarrelsome and litigious character have generally no friends; for, being accustomed to blow the coals of contention, which Christian charity tells us we ought not to do, but, as far as lies in our power, endeavour to extinguish the flame, they draw on themselves the contempt and aversion of every honest person.

By endeavouring to separate two vagabonds who are fighting, we frequently expose ourselves to the danger of receiving some marks of their brutality.—The same thing happens to him, who
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interferes in matters with which he has no reason to meddle. I saw an instance of this nature at Amsterdam, in the person of a native of Brussels, who offered himself as a second to a German gentleman, of whom he knew nothing, and merely because he had heard that the gentleman had an affair of honour with another person, with whom he was equally unacquainted. Being arrived at the spot where the affair was to be settled, sword in hand, this busy and meddle-making man made use of so many injurious expressions to the second of the opposite party, as obliged him, being a man of honour and spirit, to draw his sword, when, on the first onset, he laid the aggressor dead on the spot, to the entire satisfaction of all present. Thus the principal actors in this scene were prevented from finishing their affair, and were satisfied with one fool having lost his life. Such was the consequence of his idle interference.

COMPANIES.

A MAN is generally said to be known by the company he keeps.—Ravens are generally seen among dead carcases, and bees among flowers. There is nothing of more consequence to a young man than to chuse such company as may do him credit, and from whom he may take the model of his conduct and manners.—The mind of man is so formed, that it copies what is before it, without thinking, whether it be good or bad. We must keep at a distance from every thing that can stain the morals, treat all the world with civility, but cautiously keep from the company of those who are capable of giving bad examples.

The practice of these precautions is very difficult for young people to attend to, whose strong and impetuous passions, having nothing in view but to satisfy themselves, eagerly embrace the company of those who humour their whims and caprice, Many instances are frequently produced of
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young people, who, while under the guidance of their parents or friends, have given the most promising hopes of a wise and prudent conduct; but no sooner were they become masters of themselves, and having had the misfortune to fall into the company of profligates, than, in imitation of them, they ran into all their vices, and at last perished miserably. Every one, who despises this advice in his youth, will not fail to be sensible of his error when it may perhaps be too late, and when it must infallibly be succeeded by despair, horror, and remorse. It is a melancholy state indeed, when we arrive at the borders of old age, to find no hope is left us but in sorrow and repentance.

COMPASSION.

THERE are two sorts of men who are incapable of compassion. The first are the great and rich, who, being ignorant of what want and oppression are, cannot be so sensible of misery as they ought. The second

second sort are those, who, being naturally hard-hearted, are insensible to the misfortunes of their neighbours. The first would be in some measure excusable, were they ignorant of the divine precepts, which the sacred writings hold forth to them concerning universal charity; but the second sort are totally inexcusable, since it is through cruelty and malice that they look with consummate indifference on the miseries of others.

The rich and powerful are obliged to acquire this virtue, because here on earth they hold the place of him, whose pity and compassion they will one day stand so much in need of themselves, and who will measure out to them his mercy and pity, in proportion as they have bestowed it on others. But that unfeeling set of men, who have a heart insensible of pity and compassion, would do well to read those dreadful judgments, which the scriptures denounce against them.

Though every age produces unfeeling and obdurate hearts, and compassion exists generally

generally more in words than actions, yet we meet with some noble and generous souls, who most sensibly feel for the misfortunes of others, and take the greatest pleasure in alleviating their sorrows, and assisting them in their necessities. After all, however, happy are those, who are not in want of compassion. It is an old proverb, it is better to be envied than pitied.

SINCERITY.

SINCERITY is the mother of Truth, and the ensign of an honest man; it is the pledge of our words, and the picture of our thoughts. There is no need of vouchers for the truth of what it says, and its protestations are indisputable. It encloses several virtues in itself, for it never deceives or flatters any one. Its promises are considered as matters already done, and its protestations are sacred records. An openness of heart is its device, and it has no other end in view but honour. It does not deceive by appearance,

appearance, for it is in itself plain and simple; it is a stranger to falsity, since it speaks nothing but truth; it every where makes itself known, and never wishes to be concealed; it fears no enemies, for virtue is its friend; it is held in esteem by every honest person, though privately despised by the base and treacherous; it is banished from courts, and is unknown among the rich and dignified; its birth is in the heart, and its abode on the lips. It seems as if it had abandoned the earth, since malignity has found the secret of making it pass for stupidity among the greater part of men. For my own part, I believe it has taken its flight to heaven, that it may no longer be witness of the triumphs of Falsity and Deceit.

PROMISES.

THE facility of making promises, and the difficulty of performing them, are almost similar. It is a folly to ruin ourselves by promises, and it is a meanness to enrich ourselves by avoiding the performance

performance. An old proverb says, "Promises are females, and the performance of them males; since we see more of the first than of the last."

It is generally observed, that those who are the most ready to promise are generally those who are the least in condition to fulfil their promises. It is a very great imprudence to make promises in order to gain friends for a little time, and afterwards to make them our enemies by thinking no more of what we said. It seems to me, that it is infinitely better to oblige without promising, than to bemean ourselves by promising without effect. The fool makes engagements with all the world without the least discrimination; but the wise man obliges only those who deserve it. The man, who readily offers his purse to another who he knows will not accept of it, will not, when asked, lend any man a half-penny. Indeed, I hold great promises in so little esteem, that the instant they are made me, I would
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very willingly give them up for the least reality.

RANK.

THE pride of rank or title is certainly one step beneath the other follies of this world. It seems to be the completion of human vanity and impertinence, to consider it as a necessary point, to take the first seat at a sumptuous entertainment, merely from the consideration of being possessed of a title. The elbow-chair or the stool will equally display merit; and he, who occupies the latter, may probably have more sense and discernment, than he who lolls at his ease in the first. The man, who is not seated at table, according to his rank, generally enjoys little comfort of his dinner. What folly! Is the soup better, when placed where his vanity wishes to have a seat, than at any other part of the table? Is it reasonable for a man to lose his appetite, because he is seated one chair lower than he thinks his dignity merits? should he

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wish to be served first at table, that would be pardonable, provided he was more hungry than others; but, if it be only from the consideration of his rank, that he has consequently more merit than the rest of the company, and that greater attention ought to be paid him on that account, it is the highest mark of impertinence, and renders him unworthy of the lowest seat. A coxcomb, prepossessed with this imagination, wishes the master of the house to present him with the first glass of wine, without considering who may be in the most want of it. This folly of rank is carried to such a height and degree of insolence, that it has even crept into the churches, where the dignified man cannot pray to his God but in the most conspicuous and elegant seat. Lastly, people, who are in love with their rank and title, are very tiresome animals, sworn enemies to the pleasure of others, and especially to the conviviality of the table, where the liberty and ease of the company ought

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not to be restrained by any personal distinctions.

THE SPIRIT OF CONTRADICTION.

THE man who knows the least, generally speaking, is he who takes the most pleasure in contradicting. His only resource being in the power of his lungs, he stuns his auditors with the loudness of his words, and makes himself equally odious to those whom he attacks, and those who are obliged to endure the tempest of his voice. What a foolish character is that of the contradictor! What pains does he not take to shew his ignorance, by talking of those things, of which he knows nothing! Is it not a supreme degree of effrontery, for a man to set himself up as a judge of a discourse, of which he perhaps does not know any thing. Though contradiction, properly timed, may sometimes furnish matter for conversation; yet, when it is accompanied with obstinacy, it will soon become disgusting. To tire this sort of disagreeable dispositions,

dispositions, the best is to give them their way in whatever they advance, when they will soon get tired, having no longer any thing to feed their nonsense. It has been said of a certain nobleman, that he is very angry on being contradicted, and yet looks upon that man as a fool, who has not something to say in opposition to whatever is advanced. This kind of character is very disgusting, especially when they are masters of subtle argument. It is therefore best, whenever we can, to avoid such company; and, when we cannot, we must follow the advice of the old proverb, which says, "Give hay to the ox, and grains to the swine."

CONVENIENCE.

THAT conveniency, which mortals seek with so much avidity in the course of this short life, appears to be a kind of sweet poison, which fills the human mind with vanity, and is ranked among the greatest felicities of this world.

Conveniency, by which is meant the possession of things agreeable to our wishes, is the false friend of the body, and, under the pretence of making us happy, loads us with many evils. It destroys industry and exercise so necessary to the body, as it furnishes us with all the dangerous delicacies of the table. Besides this, it lulls the soul into a state of lethargy, and too often makes us forget our God.

It is very difficult for the man, who is entirely at his ease, to sacrifice any pleasure to his health. The generality of men will not give themselves leisure to recollect, that they cannot serve two opposite masters at the same time, and that it is impossible to give way to all the vanities of this life, and at the same time think of our duty to God and ourselves.

The end of most of our desires is to procure an agreeable independence for our old age, that we may live at ease when we shall be nearly verging on the borders
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of the grave. Every one dreads the idea of wanting conveniences in that stage of life, without considering, that the greater part of mankind do not live to arrive at the age of fifty. A great part of what we call conveniences are little better than vices, for which we shall be called to an account hereafter. A convenience is, in some degree, properly called the gift of Heaven, provided we make a right use of it; for, improperly used, it becomes a curse. The Scripture tells us, that Lazarus, labouring under the most terrible infirmities of human nature during his life, on his quitting this world, was conveyed to the regions of eternal felicity; while the rich man, who here enjoyed all the luxuries of this life, was said to have little comfort in the world above. This surely merits a moment's reflection!

COMPLAISANCE.

COMPLAISANCE is the daughter of Civility, which easily insinuates man-
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kind into the esteem of each other, and often forces people naturally of a savage disposition to be kind and civil. Every one is fond of the company of the complaisant man, because his conversation is at all times agreeable.

He seems to sympathize with every one with whom he converses, and consequently is pleasing to every one. Complaisance proves a knowledge of human life, and is the certain proof of a polite education. It distinguishes a man, without exposing him to envy; for even the envious are pleased with his obliging manners. Upon the whole, it is a character advantageous to every one.

After all, however estimable complaisance may be, the excess of it is good for nothing, unless it be to draw contempt on the over-complaisant man, or to make him pass for a dupe. Hence it seems that complaisance should not be left to itself, but always accompanied with judgment and prudence, without which it loses its merit, and exposes us to the mockery of others.

OATHS.

EVERY sin has some pretended appearance of satisfaction or pleasure, except the vice of swearing. It is not only offensive to God, but lessens the veracity of what the swearer tells you, it being an old saying, that those who swear will falsify. A man of credit and veracity has no occasion to call in the assistance of oaths to make himself believed, since he knows, that if his character has not weight enough to make his assertions believed, it is not oaths that will contribute to give them weight.

The man who is much given to swearing, is generally guilty of many other vices; they are generally unfortunate in the world, and finish their lives miserably. It is a very wicked custom to be every moment calling God to witness what they frequently know, at the very moment they are speaking, to be totally false. We have been told of a man, who had the misfortune to be a great swearer, and who,
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being reprimanded by his confessor to no purpose, was at last enjoined, by way of penitence, to have a button pulled off his coat every time he swore; so that, at the end of twenty-four hours, he had not a coat left to wear. He now began to reflect, that, in a little time, he should be obliged to have his clothes new-buttoned every day; and this bringing him to reflection, he at last happily broke himself of the habit of swearing.

THE RIDICULE OF BAD FORTUNE.

IT seems as if mockery and ridicule were a tribute which the world pay to bad fortune, and that, to laugh at people ill-treated by that blind divinity, were a prerogative which those in easy circumstances had a right to indulge themselves in. But surely nothing can be more ungenerous, than for one man to make a mockery of another, merely because he may not have been so fortunate as himself. It is a great mark of pride and vanity,

vanity, and, in some measure, is a proof of the depravity of the heart. Those who act on this ungenerous principle would do well to recollect, that the gifts of fortune are fickle, and that some accident or other, in the commerce of human life, whatever may be our possessions at present, may strip us of them all, and place us in the very situation of those, with whom we have been so ungenerously free, as to turn them into ridicule for what they probably could not help, and which was owing to some unforeseen accident. Could we but be brought to think and act by others, in the same manner as we ourselves would wish to be done by, we should not mock the unfortunate man, but endeavour to console and assist him. To rejoice in the distresses of another is cruel to the last degree; for if we do not choose to relieve them, we have certainly no right to add to the load of their afflictions.

PRESERVATION OF HEALTH.

OUR principal employment in youth is to discover new pleasures, and in old age we are equally employed in the pursuit of what will ease our pains, and preserve the little health we have left. It is with the view of lessening these cares, that I am now going to make some few remarks, the observation of which may contribute to soften the infirmities of old age.

The first rule is, to shun those places where the air is thick and moist, and where violent winds are frequent; to keep the head, stomach, and feet always warm, and to guard as much as possible from the nocturnal air, which is very prejudicial to the health.

The second rule consists in eating only when you are hungry, and not drinking but when you are dry, nor committing any excess with either. To abstain from eating different sorts of provisions at one time, and always to rise from table with
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an appetite ; never to eat at night, at most but a light supper ; to fast every tenth day, in order to give nature a rest, and never to drink between meals, nor after midnight.

The third rule is, to go to bed in good hours, and rise early in the morning, for seven hours sleep is sufficient for the repose of a man ; a longer time is hurtful to his health. Never sleep after dinner ; but, if that cannot be prevented, let it be only in an elbow chair, and that only for half an hour at most. Never use exercise of body or mind immediately after a meal, it being then as hurtful as it is useful at other times ; and though exercise, according to Hippocrates, may be the surest means of preserving health, nevertheless we must not push it so far as to fatigue us too much.

The fourth rule is, to have nothing to do with physicians, except in desperate cases, but to apply to the most simple and easy medicines, whenever nature requires some assistance.

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The fifth is, to use pleasure with a moderation which will not tire in the enjoyment, and without suffering ourselves to be hurried away into excess; in a word, to enjoy pleasure, but not to suffer it to take possession of us.

The sixth and last rule is, not to suffer ourselves to be too much dejected on the miscarriages of this life; for there is a very close connection between the body and the mind, so close indeed, that the one cannot suffer without disturbing the economy of the other.

Were people to observe these rules, we should not see so many broken constitutions in the early part of life; but unfortunately such is the disposition of mankind, that they know not the value of health till after they have lost it, and do not think of consulting the disciples of Esculapius till after Bacchus and Venus have made irreparable breaches in their constitutions.

REPOSE.

REPOSE.

THE wise man knows the value of repose, but happy is he who actually enjoys it. It is the most reasonable object of our wishes, after having been discouraged in the pursuits of our youth, and disappointed in the enjoyment of the tumultuous pleasures of this life; for it is only in repose we can hope to rest in the evening of life. In order to obtain that pleasing situation, we must remove ourselves far from every thing that can disturb our tranquillity, and absolutely renounce, and never more to think of, what the world calls fortune, upon which we must turn our backs, before we can boast of happiness; for, all things properly considered, there can be neither grandeur, riches, nor honours, without inquietude. Hence the favours of fortune cannot be esteemed as promoting happiness; and he, who lives in repose in some peaceful retreat, better enjoys the sweets of life undisturbed,

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than those who imagine they find every felicity in the bustle of parade and grandeur.

Mainard, the French poet, has very prettily described the situation of life to be wished for. "Listen, my son, (says he) to what forms the composition of a happy life.—Neither care nor law-suit; a sufficiency of wealth, without the trouble of labouring to procure it; friends, of an even temper, to converse with; a sound body, always neatly dressed, without finery; no quarrels, and provisions plain and natural; a modest good-tempered woman to assist in domestic matters, and a little sleep, but that peaceful and tranquil, Be satisfied with such a lot, you having no room to complain of it; and you will then view the approach of death without fear or desire."

Herein really consists the true fortune of this world; but ambition and avarice conceal it from the eyes of the generality of mankind. Age, to which wisdom is generally

generally confined, easily discovers this truth ; for having, in youth, experienced the vanity of the passions, he cannot but despise them, and look forward to repose, as the only end of all his desires.

We read in history, that Plato, Marcius, Cato, Lucullus, Scipio, Pericles, Seneca, and Dioclesian, have supported this truth by their example, in preferring, in the latter end of their lives, the peaceful retreat of their gardens to the throne and the sceptre ; and that they found more satisfaction in cultivating, in perfect liberty, their plants and vegetables, than in seeing themselves crowned with laurels, or enjoying all the pomp of a day of triumph, amidst the acclamations of the Roman citizens.

EXAMPLE.

IT is a received maxim, "Live according to the laws, and not according to example." However, if we imitate good examples, we shall

never have occasion for laws to restrain us. Good examples effectually lead us into the paths of virtue, as bad examples conduct us into those of vice. The wicked man shelters himself in his crimes, under the idea, that he is neither the first nor the only one who has been guilty of errors.

Good example is like a flambeau, the light of which conducts us to the right road; but bad examples tend to countenance the wicked in their criminal pursuits. The examples of those who lived in former ages, teach us what will be the issue of our conduct; they encourage the wise to persevere in the career of virtue, and are no less proper to deter the vicious from false courses.

A man, whom reading has not instructed in the different circumstances of life, is not capable of forming any project to his advantage, nor of judging what may be the issue of his conduct; but examples are like good spectacles, through which we may distinguish at a distance

distance between good and evil. The general of an army, or a prime minister of state, must have studied the examples that have gone before them, and regulated their conduct thereby, if ever they wished to obtain credit in their different professions. The good examples reading furnishes are a powerful spur, which make them exert every faculty to attain virtue, and sometimes makes great men of those who are as yet not far advanced in life. Happy the man, to whom a good example serves as a rule of his conduct, and the bad one as a warning to avoid the danger.

TRANQUILLITY.

TRUE felicity consists in the tranquillity of the mind, and the health of the body. If it be easy to remove the disorders of the body by the power of medicine, it is no less easy to cure the distempers of the mind by the assistance of reason. The will of God, without which no accident whatever can happen

to us, ought always to be adored, and make us contented with our lot.

Reason tells us, that every agitation of the mind is useless, when the evil we suffer is without remedy. That uneasiness we feel, while the event of any thing material is hanging between hope and despair, appears more reasonable than that chagrin we feel from the weight of an actual calamity; since, in the first situation, the *perhaps* may as well turn on the bad side as on the good; whereas, in the second instance, the evil is determined, to which reason tells us we must accommodate ourselves, since impatience will not change the matter. It is incomparably better to submit with patience to the will of heaven, and to console ourselves with the hope, that as every thing is subject to change, misfortunes cannot last for ever. History furnishes us with a variety of examples of the revolutions of fortune, which sometimes raise people from the lowest pitch of misery to the most elevated situation in life,

life, and afterwards again plunged them into their former misery and obscurity.

WISDOM.

PHILIP of Macedon one day, being in company with several philosophers, asked them, what they considered as of the most consequence in this world. It is not at all surprising that they were of different opinions.

One said, that he gave the preference to water, because that element occupied a greater space than the earth. Another insisted, that it was the sun, because it gave light to the heavens, the air, and the earth. The next was of opinion, that it was the mountain Olympus, whose summit reached to the clouds, and, being so high, was seen at an immense distance. The fourth gave the preference to Homer, who was so much esteemed during his life, and so much celebrated after his death, that seven powerful nations entered into a bloody war, to *determine* which of them were actually in possession of his bones.

bones. The last speaker insisted, that there was nothing in this world of so much consideration as wisdom, since it despises the false glare of things of this life, thinks little of what the world in general admire, and what the vulgar consider as the greatest blessing.

Indeed, if we reflect on this matter properly, we shall be brought to agree, that he, who despises the false glare of grandeur, merits more glory than he who courts or possesses it; and that the man, whose virtues afford him a just self-approbation, is greater than he, to whom the rage of party may have erected a statue of bronze.

Titus Livius, when he speaks of Marcus Curius, says, that being one day employed in his house in washing cabbages before he put them into the pot, was waited upon by the ambassadors of the Samnites, who came to offer him a considerable sum of money, to support with his credit and suffrage the request they had to make to the senate. This noble
Roman

Roman answered them very coolly :
“ You must, gentlemen, offer this considerable sum to some other person, who disdains to wash his own cabbages, and who is above being contented with such ordinary fare. As for me, I desire no other riches, than of having an influence over those who are masters of so much treasure.”

Surely this is the character of a true hero, who knew how to derive as much glory from cleaning his cabbages in his kitchen, as from the laurels he had justly acquired by his great exploits and famous victories. He was certainly no less illustrious by his kitchen fire-side, than invincible to the enemies of Rome, at the head of armies he commanded.

Wisdom is an ornament to the humblest individual ; but shines with greater lustre when it is found among princes and great men, who know how to acquire it, by cultivating the acquaintance of persons distinguished for their merit and knowledge, to whom they cannot give too
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free an access to their persons. Every prince, who is not ambitious of cultivating wisdom, is an enemy to himself, and contemptible in the eyes of all those who have any discernment, even though he were as fortunate as Cæsar, as rich as Cræsus, as brave as Alexander, and as happy as Augustus. Indeed, he would be always unfortunate, since, without wisdom, all the felicities of this world depend upon chance, which are produced and destroyed according to the caprice of fortune, which equally sports with the master and the servant, the king and the subject, with the rich and the poor, and which seems to have an absolute power over all the events that concern the affairs of mortals, except those of the wise.

YOUTH.

THERE never was seen a more beautiful or more dangerous thing than youth. It is the rose of the spring of human life ; but it may easily be precipitated into the abyss of vices by inexperience

experience and its own vivacity. It is a sea continually agitated by tempests, and full of a thousand rocks, through which we must pass in the midst of numberless dangers, before we arrive at the age of discretion.

If happiness, as some people pretend, consists in the imagination of being so, it is certainly in these times that man is the most happy, however extreme his imprudence may be, his ignorance gross, his presumption ridiculous, his judgment weak, his reasoning false, his obstinacy invincible, his comprehension dull, his passions unruly, and his foresight extremely short.

The youth thinks he knows every thing, and wishes to put theory in the place of experience; he amuses and employs himself with trifles, and readily surrenders himself into the arms of folly; indolence is his pillow, and indulgence his bed of repose; the vices pay their court to him, and the vanities accompany them; the present moment occupies all his thoughts,
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and his cares do not extend to the future, which he considers as uncertain; he knows not what he wishes, for he has no fixed object in view; his resolutions are inconstant, and what he proposes has no solid foundation; sometimes he is distractedly fond of a thing, which the next moment he as heartily despises; for he is not accustomed to reflect on what he thinks or wishes, which to him would be a punishment. Lastly, notwithstanding what we have here observed, happy he who passes his youth in the study of wisdom, in the application of the lessons he has received, and in the practice of virtue, as he will thereby infallibly preserve, even in old age, many of the agreeable qualities of youth.

CREDIT.

HOWEVER rich a man may be, he will not fail, if he wants credit, at some time or other, to be as much embarrassed as he who has too much, who, not knowing how properly to manage,
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and take care of his credit, not only ruins himself, but involves in the same evil all those who have placed too much confidence in him. A wise man never abuses his credit, but an imprudent man soon loses it. Credit is the father of the borrower, who very often proves an unworthy son. Good faith is the mother of Credit, but she frequently brings forth children who go quite naked, who are treacherous and deceitful, and who have the cruelty to suffer their mother to be put to death when she attempts to correct them.

The prince, who loses his credit, shakes his kingdom to the very foundation. The gentleman, who fails in his credit, puts himself in the high road to ruin. The merchant, whose principal support is his credit, no sooner loses sight of it, than he becomes a bankrupt. The man, who incautiously gives credit, runs a great risk of losing his money; and he, who has a soul base enough to abuse that credit, by being generous at the expence of
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another, at last falls into the lowest degree of indigence, and frequently experiences the want of the common necessaries of life. Avarice is generally the motive of the lender, and imprudence and a bad conscience bring on the latter.

I well remember, being one day at Brussels, that a German gentleman, an acquaintance of mine, came to me, and desired me to accompany him to the house of a merchant, to whom he was well known. The merchant, who was very rich, had formerly advanced large sums of money to my friend. On our arrival at the merchant's house, we found him in bed, to which he was confined by a fit of the gout. He received us with great civility, and, after we had drank chocolate together, he listened with great attention to the proposal the count made to him, which was to advance him five hundred pistoles upon a letter of exchange on Germany. After maturely considering the proposal, he replied, " Sir, I have had the honour of several times

times serving you on your first journeys into this country, and it is true that you always punctually reimbursed me the sums with which I had accommodated you, and I am much obliged to you for so doing. But permit me, Sir, to tell you, that in those times I was not much at my ease, and I therefore easily ran risks, in order to encrease my little fortune. Thank heaven, I have always been so lucky as not to lose any thing: but, as I have now got a sufficiency, I wish to be at my ease, and preserve what I have got without running any chance of losing it. So that, at present, I advance no money without proper security, nor trust any longer to inconstant fortune, though I am, Sir, at the same time, fully persuaded of your honour and integrity."

Such was the conduct, which prudence herself seemed to have dictated to this old man, who, though he did not satisfy the demands of the count, supplied me with ample matter for reflection. To

sum up the whole in a word; every man, who has a sufficiency to live on comfortably in his own way, and according to his condition, but still runs risks to gain more, resembles the dog in *Æsop's Fables*, who quitted the reality for a shadow, and lost even that he before had. He who parts with his money too freely, and lends it to the great on their own credit, resembles a candle, which consumes itself in the service of others.

MOCKERY, &c.

TO make a mockery of the infirmities of others is a vile and odious thing; it is displeasing to God, is detested by every honest man, and is hated even by the impious themselves. This diabolical inclination for mockery is the mark of a soul full of envy, presumption, brutality, and every thing else the most unworthy in a man. It is generally observed, that he who takes delight in mockery, is generally destitute of every quality necessary to recommend a man in the commerce of this world.

Mockery





Justice.

Mockery and raillery are nearly allied, and are equally mischievous. The discourses of those who are fond of raillery are generally malicious, their civilities are affected, their confidence false, their protestations deceitful, and their friendship resembles a reed, which pierces the hand of him who takes hold of it for support. He is beloved by no one, but hated by all. Every one waits with impatience the moment of seeing his feet slip, that they may contribute something to precipitate him into the abyss he merits.

JUSTICE.

JUSTICE is the Queen of the Virtues, and includes a great variety of blessings it bestows on mortals. It is the scourge of crimes, and the terror of guilt; it destroys vice, holds folly in a bridle, protects innocence, rewards virtue, and preserves peace and tranquillity in the state.

The ancients, who have depicted the figure of Justice, represent it with a crown

on its head, as the emblem of majesty, and the grandeur and glory that attends it.— They put a sceptre in its hand, to mark its absolute power, which cannot be disputed without offending heaven, and ruining the state. They put a bandage round its eyes, to insinuate the impartiality and little regard it ought to have to the appearances of persons in the course of justice: friends, enemies, rich, poor, great and little, should be all upon a level, and receive judgment according to the merit of their cause. In the left hand it holds a pair of scales, which represent its inflexible justice, which neither interest, favour, nor any other influence whatever, can in the least degree make any alteration.

Justice is frequently represented as holding a sword, instead of a sceptre, in its right-hand, and this is called the sword of justice, which is to be used in the punishments of all degrees of delinquents, whether great or little, rich or poor, weak or powerful, without the least favour or distinction.

POVERTY and PRIDE.

THERE is no contrast in nature more ridiculous than that of a proud man, surrounded with poverty. Without hardly any shoes to his feet, he will take the lead in every procession; and, though his linen and clothes may be much the worse for wear, he will take his seat at the upper end of the table. He affects to love carelessness in his dress, because he has not wherewith to change them.— He cannot endure the sight of laced or embroidered clothes, his sublime genius soon discovering, that these are fit only to decorate servants, and the saddle-cloths of their horses. He hates all sorts of lace, is an enemy to all ornaments, and finds that a black stock gives to a man the appearance of a soldier. He wears no cloak, because it is too cumbersome, and light shoes and silk stockings are apt to give him cold. He never powders his wig, because that would make him look like a miller, and contribute to spoil his clothes.

clothes. He is seldom seen without a tooth-pick in his hand, for it is very disagreeable to him to have the flesh of a partridge or woodcock stick in his teeth. He despises the embarrassment of a great train, which, according to him, is more troublesome than proper to make a man respected; and, besides all those qualities, that are not personal, can form no real merit. He is no lover of either tea or coffee, for he says, that it is in reality nothing but water, and he is surprised at the false taste of those who make use of them. He keeps neither horse nor carriage, because he loves exercise, and considers it as the sovereign preserver of health. He never rides in a chaise, because that would be too effeminate. He never plays at any game, because he is always employed in great and important affairs, which demand all his time and attention. He never eats any supper, because that would interrupt his sleep. He carries no small change about him, because that would incumber his pocket; nor has he
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any snuff-box, because he wishes to discourage the practice of snuff-taking, considering it as a nasty habit; though every time he sees a box opened, he will condescend to thrust his fingers into it. He speaks little, because he does not love contradictions, and rarely approves of what others say, unless good manners and politeness sometimes obliges him to it. He never goes to operas or plays, because he does not love to be crowded, and besides, he cannot support the fumes of the candles. When he travels, he never goes post, but always in the stage-coach for the sake of agreeable company. In short, his inn is at the Sun, and he sleeps at the Moon.

While I am speaking of this oddity of nature, I recollect what I have heard spoken of a certain girl, who accused herself to her confessor of being very proud. The priest then asked her, what he supposed must be the case, if she were rich? "No, no, father, (replied the penitent) so far from it, that I have
nothing

nothing in this world but the clothes on my back." "Go, go, my good girl, (said the father) this madness of yours will soon leave you, and I shall inflict no penance on you."

TO KNOW OURSELVES.

THE little knowledge a man generally has of himself, we may venture to say, comes from the insatiable desire of knowing others. Being accustomed to wander from home, where he seldom finds himself, he has no time to stop to observe what passes within himself. Chilo, one of the seven wise men of Greece, bore for his motto, *Know thyself*. He taught others this short moral, which has a great extent of meaning, and is of the last consequence; for, if we know not ourselves, we know not in what degree we are good or bad: so that we cannot apply ourselves to cultivate the good, or to weaken and totally destroy the bad we may find in ourselves. Besides, the more we are employed in
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the study of ourselves and our own defects, the less room shall we have to complain of the disagreeable judgment the rest of the world pass on us; and, as we do not like to hear the reproaches of the latter, we should be more attentive to the first, the study of ourselves. We may be said to have acquired great knowledge, when we have learned to discover our own imperfections, and that it is a mark of wisdom to become sensible of our own folly, since that knowledge seriously engages us ardently to labour in the field of Reformation. Every man, whatever his sense and judgment may be, if he neglect the study of himself, he will frequently commit such gross errors, and will so derange his conduct, that those very talents of understanding he possesses, by being improperly used, will add to his disgrace. A celebrated author, speaking on this subject, makes the following remark: "We ought at no time better to know ourselves, than when we exert every

every art to make ourselves appear wise in the eyes of others ; because we are generally more fond of displaying the *little* we really know, than of learning the *great deal* we know not."

FINIS.







