FRONTISPIECE.

Philemon and his Ass. P. 24

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.

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 Phœnix, 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 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.

When

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 ſurpriſe 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.

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 em-

ployments

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 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 diburber 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 lyar 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 lyar 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 in

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 truely 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.

Cœlius 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 farewel 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 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 ſhonld 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

and

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

ſerves 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

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 wife; 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 happineſs

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.

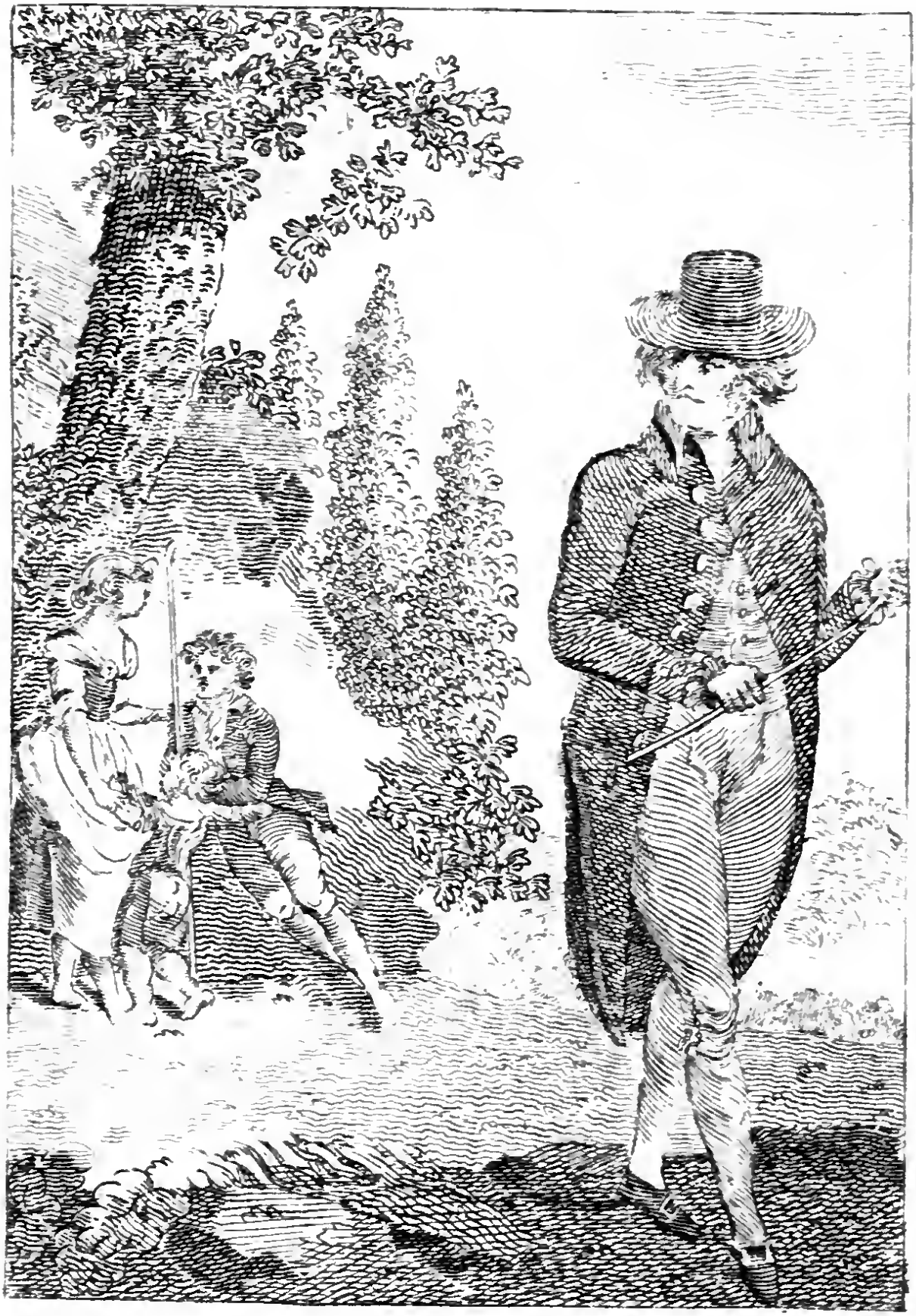
ENVY.

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 in

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 ſurpriſing, 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 looks

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 careſſes, 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,

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 comman ſhew the ſtrongeſt attachment.

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

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 aukward 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

of

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 ſurpriſed 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 in

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 aukward 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

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 ſhew

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 irreconcileable 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 in

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, and

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

ſeeks

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, and

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.

It

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 thoſe 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 ſurpriſed 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

to

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.

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 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

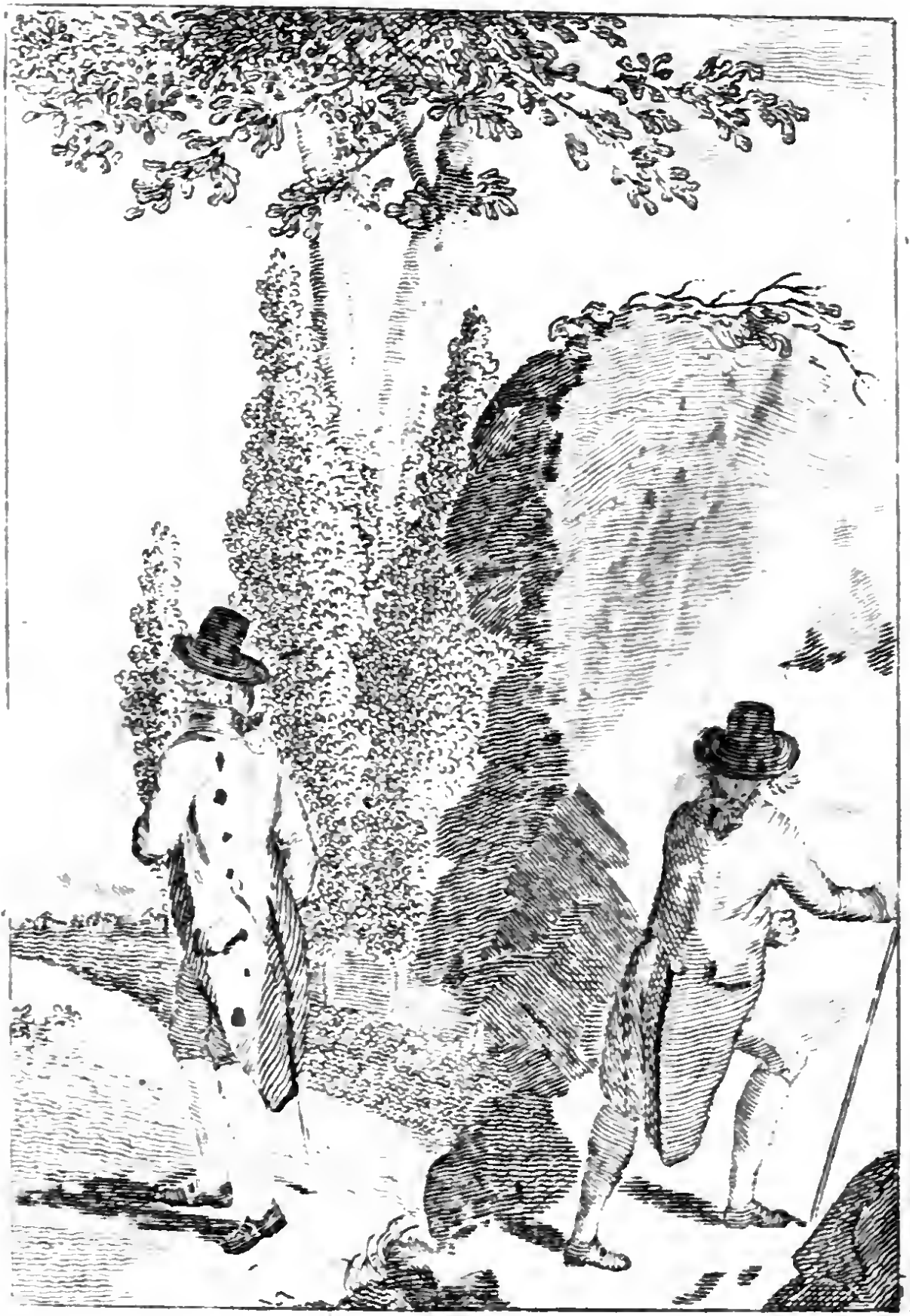
do not wiſh for a change; no poſt of honour without danger, no riches without labour and inquietude, no proſperity ſo permanent as not to have an end, nor any pleaſure ſo agreeable as not at laſt to tire us: ſo that, if I have ever experienced any peace and tranquillity, it is only ſince I have given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



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

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 Heaven, 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;

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

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 threatning 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

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 the

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.

They

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 Macedon, 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 Crœſus: "Know, Crœſus, that the Athenian academy does not teach us to command, but to be commanded and to obey; not to ſay much, but rather

to

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 Miletes 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.

Among

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 the

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 of

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

of

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

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 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

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 ſubſiſtance, 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 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 of

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

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

and

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.

The

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,

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 ſhapow.

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 interferes

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 parry, 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 young

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 that 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 very

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

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

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, 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 of

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-

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.

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, being

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 an

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,

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 ſpectaeles, 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 Crœſus, 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,

and

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, and

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

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 nó 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

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 any

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 the

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.