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WISDOM, WIT, AND ALLEGORY.

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J. Addison

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WISDOM, WIT,

AND

ALLEGORY.

SELECTED

FROM "THE SPECTATOR"

NEW YORK:
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PREFACE.

THE collection of papers forming the present volume is selected from the celebrated *Spectator*, and, with two exceptions, are written entirely by Addison. Joseph Addison, who is justly considered as one of the great authors of England, was born at Milston, Wiltshire, on May 1, 1672; and, after receiving an elementary education at various public schools, he entered the University of Oxford at the age of fifteen. His original intention was to study for the Church, but circumstances compelled him to abandon it, and he afterwards devoted himself exclusively to literature and politics. After several years of study and travel, he received various important political appointments, in all of which he acquitted himself with ability and honour.

After engaging in several minor literary efforts, Addison, in conjunction with his friend Sir Richard Steele, projected, in 1711, the *Spectator*, a daily paper, and the first number was published on the 1st of March. The "great and noble" objects of this publication—the most popular and elegant miscellany in English literature—as originally set forth, was to correct the vices, ridicule the follies, dissipate the ignorance, cultivate the understanding, and refine the taste of the public; and how ably the authors attained these objects is now matter of history. This success was in a great measure due to Addison, whose essays on the circum-

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stances, morals, and follies of the day have now become classic models of style, characterised by a strength and delicacy which has never been excelled.

Many of the papers in the *Spectator* were merely of a temporary interest, treating of the fashions of the day, the vices, rudenesses, and absurdities of the town and country of the period, now obsolete; but a large number of the papers are of a permanent and sterling nature, and well worthy of preservation. From the latter class the present selection has been made, and it contains, to quote the words of a recent writer on Addison, "many admirably written essays on subjects of abiding interest and importance, on characters, virtues, vices, and manners, which will chequer society while the human race endures; and a judicious selection of which can never fail to present indescribable charms to the man of taste, piety, philanthropy, and refinement."

In 1713 Addison published *Cato, a Tragedy*, which, although never popular on the stage, still retains its place in English literature: and he also, at various periods of his life, published several treatises on educational and other subjects. In 1716 he contracted an injudicious marriage with the Dowager-Countess of Warwick; and in the following year was appointed Secretary of State, which office he resigned in 1718. At this time his health had been for some years in a precarious state; and, after a lingering but severe illness of several months' duration, he died at Holland House, Kensington, on the 17th of June 1719, in the 48th year of his age, leaving behind him, however, a name which will ever stand prominently forth in the annals of British literature.

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WISDOM, WIT, AND ALLEGORY.

PROPER EMPLOYMENT OF TIME.

"Thy lengthen'd hopes with prudence bound
Proportion'd to the flying hour:
While thus we talk in careless ease,
The envious moments wing their flight;
Instant the fleeting pleasure seize,
Nor trust to-morrow's doubtful light."

FRANCIS'S HORACE.

WE all of us complain of the shortness of time, saith Seneca, and yet have much more than we know what to do with. Our lives, says he, are spent either in doing nothing at all, or in doing nothing to the purpose, or in doing nothing that we ought to do. We are always complaining our days are few, and acting as though there would be no end of them. That noble philosopher has described our inconsistency with ourselves in this particular by all those various turns of expression and thought which are peculiar to his writings.

I often consider mankind as wholly inconsistent with itself in a point that bears some affinity to the former. Though we seem grieved at the shortness of life in general,

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we are wishing every period of it at an end. The minor longs to be at age, then to be a man of business, then to make up an estate, then to arrive at honours, then to retire. Thus, although the whole life is allowed by every one to be short, the several divisions of it appear long and tedious. We are lengthening our span in general, but would fain contract the parts of which it is composed. The usurer would be very well satisfied to have all the time annihilated that lies between the present moment and next quarter-day. The politician would be contented to lose three years of his life, could he place things in the posture which he fancies they will stand in after such a revolution of time. The lover would be glad to strike out of his existence all the moments that are to pass away before the happy meeting. Thus, as fast as our time runs, we should be very glad in most parts of our lives that it ran much faster than it does. Several hours of the day hang upon our hands; nay, we wish away whole years; and travel through time as through a country filled with many wild and empty wastes, which we would fain hurry over, that we may arrive at those several little settlements or imaginary points of rest which are dispersed up and down in it.

If we divide the life of most men into twenty parts, we shall find, that at least nineteen of them are mere gaps and chasms, which are neither filled with pleasure nor business. I do not, however, include in this calculation the life of those men who are in a perpetual hurry of affairs, but of those only who are not always engaged in scenes of action; and I hope I shall not do an unacceptable piece of service to these persons, if I point out to them certain methods for the filling up their empty spaces of life. The methods I shall propose to them are as follow :—

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The first is the exercise of virtue, in the most general acceptation of the word. The particular scheme which comprehends the social virtues may give employment to the most industrious temper, and find a man in business more than the most active station of life. To advise the ignorant, relieve the needy, comfort the afflicted, are duties that fall in our way almost every day of our lives. A man has frequent opportunities of mitigating the fierceness of a party; of doing justice to the character of a deserving man; of softening the envious, quieting the angry, and rectifying the prejudiced; which are all of them employments suited to a reasonable nature, and bring great satisfaction to the person who can busy himself in them with discretion.

There is another kind of virtue that may find employment for those retired hours in which we are altogether left to ourselves, and destitute of company and conversation; I mean that intercourse and communication which every reasonable creature ought to maintain with the great Author of his being. The man who lives under a habitual sense of the Divine presence keeps up a perpetual cheerfulness of temper, and enjoys every moment the satisfaction of thinking himself in company with his dearest and best of friends. The time never lies heavy upon him: it is impossible for him to be alone. His thoughts and passions are the most busied at such hours when those of other men are the most inactive. He no sooner steps out of the world but his heart burns with devotion, swells with hope, and triumphs in the consciousness of that Presence which everywhere surrounds him; or, on the contrary, pours out its fears, its sorrows, its apprehensions, to the great Supporter of its existence.

I have here only considered the necessity of a man's being

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virtuous, that he may have something to do; but if we consider further, that the exercise of virtue is not only an amusement for the time it lasts, but that its influence extends to those parts of our existence which lie beyond the grave, and that our whole eternity is to take its colour from those hours which we here employ in virtue or in vice, the argument redoubles upon us for putting in practice this method of passing away our time.

When a man has but a little stock to improve, and has opportunities of turning it all to good account, what shall we think of him if he suffers nineteen parts of it to lie dead, and perhaps employs even the twentieth to his ruin or disadvantage? But because the mind cannot be always in its fervours, nor strained up to a pitch of virtue, it is necessary to find out proper employments for it in its relaxations.

The next method, therefore, that I would propose to fill up our time should be useful and innocent diversions. I must confess I think it is below reasonable creatures to be altogether conversant in such diversions as are merely innocent, and have nothing else to recommend them but that there is no hurt in them. Whether any kind of gaming has even thus much to say for itself I shall not determine; but I think it is very wonderful to see persons of the best sense passing away a dozen hours together in shuffling and dividing a pack of cards, with no other conversation but what is made up of a few game phrases, and no other ideas but those of black or red spots ranged together in different figures. Would not a man laugh to hear any one of this species complaining that life is short?

The stage might be made a perpetual source of the most noble and useful entertainments, were it under proper regulations.

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But the mind never unbends itself so agreeably as in the conversation of a well-chosen friend. There is indeed no blessing of life that is any way comparable to the enjoyment of a discreet and virtuous friend. It eases and unloads the mind, clears and improves the understanding, engenders thoughts and knowledge, animates virtue and good resolutions, soothes and allays the passions, and finds employments for most of the vacant hours of life.

Next to such an intimacy with a particular person, one would endeavour after a more general conversation with such as are able to entertain and improve those with whom they converse, which are qualifications that seldom go asunder.

There are many other useful employments of life, which one would endeavour to multiply, that one might on all occasions have recourse to something, rather than suffer the mind to lie idle, or run adrift with any passion that chances to rise in it.

A man that has a taste for music, painting, or architecture, is like one that has another sense, when compared with such as have no relish for those arts. The florist, the planter, the gardener, the husbandman, when they are only as accomplishments to the man of fortune, are great reliefs to a country life, and many ways useful to those who are possessed of them. . . . . I remember an author, speaking of a certain mineral, tells us, that a man may consume his whole life in the study of it without arriving at the knowledge of all its qualities. The truth of it is, there is not a single science, or any branch of it, that might not furnish a man with business for life, though it were much longer than it is.

I shall not here engage on those beaten subjects of the usefulness of knowledge; nor of the pleasure and perfection it gives the mind; nor on the methods of attaining it;

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nor recommend any particular branch of it; all which have been the topics of many other writers; but shall indulge myself in a speculation that is more uncommon, and may therefore perhaps be more entertaining.

I have before shewn how the unemployed parts of life appear long and tedious, and shall here endeavour to shew how those parts of life which are exercised in study, reading, and the pursuits of knowledge, are long, but not tedious, and by that means discover a method of lengthening our lives, and at the same time of turning all the parts of them to our advantage.

Mr Locke observes, "That we get the idea of time or duration by reflecting on that train of ideas which succeed one another in our minds: that for this reason, when we sleep soundly without dreaming, we have no perception of time, or the length of it whilst we sleep; and that the moment wherein we leave off to think, till the moment we begin to think again, seems to have no distance." To which the author adds, "And so I doubt not but it would be to a waking man if it were possible for him to keep only one idea in his mind, without variation, and the succession of others: and we see that one who fixes his thoughts very intently on one thing, so as to take but little notice of the succession of ideas that pass in his mind whilst he is taken up with that earnest contemplation, lets slip out of his account a good part of that duration, and thinks that time shorter than it is."

We might carry this thought further; and consider a man as, on one side, shortening his time by thinking on nothing, or but a few things; so, on the other, as lengthening it, by employing his thoughts on many subjects, or by entertaining a quick and constant succession of ideas. Accordingly,

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Malebranche, in his "Inquiry after Truth," tells us "that it is possible some creatures may think half an hour as long as we do a thousand years; or look upon that space of duration which we call a minute, as an hour, a week, a month, or a whole age."

This notion of Malebranche's is capable of some little explanation from what I have quoted out of Mr Locke; for if our notion of time is produced by our reflecting on the succession of ideas in our mind, and this succession may be infinitely accelerated or retarded, it will follow, that different beings may have different notions of the same parts of duration, according as their ideas, which we suppose are equally distinct in each of them, follow one another in a greater or less degree of rapidity.

There is a famous passage in the Alcoran, which looks as if Mohammed had been possessed of the notion we are now speaking of. It is there said, that the angel Gabriel took Mohammed out of his bed one morning to give him a sight of all things in the seven heavens, in paradise, and in hell, which the prophet took a distinct view of; and, after having held ninety thousand conferences with God, was brought back again to his bed. All this, says the Alcoran, was transacted in so small a space of time, that Mohammed at his return found his bed still warm, and took up an earthen pitcher, which was thrown down at the very instant that the angel Gabriel carried him away, before the water was all spilt.*

There is a very pretty story in the Turkish tales, which relates to this passage of that famous impostor, and bears some affinity to the subject we are now upon. A sultan of

* The author's memory has here deceived him; no such passage is to be found in the Alcoran, though it possibly may in some of the histories of Mohammed's life.

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Egypt, who was an infidel, used to laugh at this circumstance in Mohammed's life, as what was altogether impossible and absurd; but conversing one day with a great doctor in the law, who had the gift of working miracles, the doctor told him he would quickly convince him of the truth of this passage in the history of Mohammed, if he would consent to do what he should desire of him. Upon this the sultan was directed to place himself by a huge tub of water, which he did accordingly; and as he stood by the tub amidst a circle of his great men, the holy man bid him plunge his head into the water, and draw it up again. The king accordingly thrust his head into the water, and at the same time found himself at the foot of a mountain on the sea-shore. The king immediately began to rage against his doctor for this piece of treachery and witchcraft; but at length, knowing it was in vain to be angry, he set himself to think on proper methods for getting a livelihood in this strange country. Accordingly he applied himself to some people whom he saw at work in a neighbouring wood; these people conducted him to a town that stood at a little distance from the wood, where, after some adventures, he married a woman of great beauty and fortune. He lived with this woman so long, that he had by her seven sons and seven daughters. He was afterwards reduced to great want, and forced to think of plying in the streets as a porter for his livelihood. One day as he was walking alone by the sea-side, being seized with many melancholy reflections upon his former and his present state of life, which had raised a fit of devotion in him, he threw off his clothes with a design to wash himself, according to the custom of the Mohammedans, before he said his prayers.

After his first plunge into the sea, he no sooner raised his

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head above the water but he found himself standing by the side of the tub, with the great men of his court about him, and the holy man at his side. He immediately upbraided his teacher for having sent him on such a course of adventures, and betrayed him into so long a state of misery and servitude; but was wonderfully surprised when he heard that the state he talked of was only a dream and delusion; that he had not stirred from the place where he then stood; and that he had only dipped his head into the water, and immediately taken it out again.

The Mohammedan doctor took this occasion of instructing the sultan, that nothing was impossible with God; and that He with whom a thousand years are but as one day can, if He pleases, make a single day, nay, a single moment, appear to any of His creatures as a thousand years.

I shall leave my reader to compare these Eastern fables with the notions of those two great philosophers whom I have quoted in this paper; and shall only, by way of application, desire him to consider how we may extend life beyond its natural dimensions by applying ourselves diligently to the pursuits of knowledge.

The hours of a wise man are lengthened by his ideas, as those of a fool are by his passions. The time of the one is long, because he does not know what to do with it; so is that of the other, because he distinguishes every moment of it with useful or amusing thoughts; or, in other words, because the one is always wishing it away, and the other always enjoying it.

How different is the view of past life in the man who is grown old in knowledge and wisdom, from that of him who is grown old in ignorance and folly! The latter is like the

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owner of a barren country, that fills his eye with the prospect of naked hills and plains, which produce nothing either profitable or ornamental; the other beholds a beautiful and spacious landscape divided into delightful gardens, green meadows, fruitful fields, and can scarce cast his eye on a single spot of his possessions that is not covered with some beautiful plant or flower.

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THE THEORY OF LAUGHTER.

"Laugh if you are wise."—MARTIAL.

MR HOBBES, in his Discourse of Human Nature, which, in my humble opinion, is much the best of all his works, after some very curious observations upon laughter, concludes thus:—"The passion of laughter is nothing else but sudden glory arising from some sudden conception of some eminency in our selves, by comparison with the infirmities of others, or with our own formerly: for men laugh at the follies of themselves past, when they come suddenly to remembrance, except they bring with them any present dishonour."

According to this author, therefore, when we hear a man laugh excessively, instead of saying he is very merry, we ought to tell him he is very proud. And indeed if we look into the bottom of this matter, we shall meet with many observations to confirm us in this opinion. Every one laughs at somebody that is in an inferior state of folly to himself. It was formerly the custom for every great house in England to keep a tame fool dressed in petticoats, that the heir of the family might have an opportunity of joking upon him, and diverting himself with his absurdities. For the same reason, idiots are still in request in most of the courts of Germany, where there is not a prince of any

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great magnificence who has not two or three dressed, distinguished, undisputed fools in his retinue, whom the rest of the courtiers are always breaking their jests upon.

The Dutch, who are more famous for their industry and application than for wit and humour, hang up in several of their streets what they call the sign of the Gaper, that is, the head of an idiot dressed in a cap and bells, and gaping in a most immoderate manner. This is a standing jest at Amsterdam.

Thus every one diverts himself with some person or other that is below him in point of understanding, and triumphs in the superiority of his genius whilst he has such objects of derision before his eyes. Mr Dennis has very well expressed this in a couple of humorous lines which are part of a translation of a satire in Monsieur Boileau :—

> "Thus one fool lolls his tongue out at another,
> And shakes his empty noddle at his brother."

Mr Hobbes's reflection gives us the reason why the insignificant people above mentioned are stirrers up of laughter among men of a gross taste; but as the more understanding part of mankind do not find their risibility affected by such ordinary objects, it may be worth the while to examine into the several provocatives of laughter in men of superior sense and knowledge.

In the first place, I must observe, that there is a set of merry drolls, whom the common people of all countries admire, and seem to love so well, "that they could eat them," according to the old proverb—I mean those circumforaneous wits whom every nation calls by the name of that dish of meat which it loves best: in Holland they are termed Pickled Herrings; in France, Jean Pottages; in

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Italy, Macaronies; and in Great Britain, Jack Puddings. These merry wags, from whatsoever food they receive their titles, that they may make their audiences laugh, always appear in a fool's coat, and commit such blunders and mistakes in every step they take, and every word they utter, as those who listen to them would be ashamed of.

But this little triumph of the understanding, under the disguise of laughter, is nowhere more visible than in that custom which prevails everywhere among us on the first day of the month of April, when everybody takes it into his head to make as many fools as he can. In proportion as there are more follies discovered, so there is more laughter on this day than on any other in the whole year. A neighbour of mine, who is a haberdasher by trade, and a very shallow conceited fellow, makes his boast that for these ten years successively he has not made less than a hundred April fools. My landlady had a falling out with him about a fortnight ago for sending every one of her children upon some sleeveless errand, as she terms it. Her eldest son went to buy a halfpenny-worth of inkle at a shoemaker's; the eldest daughter was despatched half a mile to see a monster; and, in short, the whole family of innocent children made April fools. Nay, my landlady herself did not escape him. This empty fellow has laughed upon these conceits ever since.

This art of wit is well enough when confined to one day in a twelvemonth; but there is an ingenious tribe of men sprung up of late years, who are for making April fools every day in the year. These gentlemen are commonly distinguished by the name of Biters; a race of men that are perpetually employed in laughing at those mistakes which are of their own production.

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Thus we see, in proportion as one man is more refined than another, he chooses his fool out of a lower or higher class of mankind; or, to speak in a more philosophical language, that secret elation or pride of heart which is generally called laughter, arises in him from his comparing himself with an object below him, whether it so happens that it be a natural or an artificial fool. It is, indeed, very possible that the persons we laugh at may in the main of their characters be much wiser men than ourselves; but if they would have us laugh at them, they must fall short of us in those respects which stir up this passion.

I am afraid I shall appear too abstracted in my speculations if I shew that, when a man of wit makes us laugh, it is by betraying some oddness or infirmity in his own character, or in the representation which he makes of others; and that when we laugh at a brute, or even at an inanimate thing, it is at some action or incident that bears a remote analogy to any blunder or absurdity in reasonable creatures.

But to come into common life; I shall pass by the consideration of those stage coxcombs that are able to shake a whole audience, and take notice of a particular sort of men who are such provokers of mirth in conversation, that it is impossible for a club or merry-meeting to subsist without them—I mean those honest gentlemen that are always exposed to the wit and raillery of their well-wishers and companions; that are pelted by men, women, and children, friends and foes, and, in a word, stand as butts in conversation, for every one to shoot at that pleases. I know several of these butts, who are men of wit and sense, though by some odd turn of humour, some unlucky cast in their person or behaviour, they have always the misfortune to make the company merry. The truth of it is, a man is not quali-

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fied for a butt who has not a good deal of wit and vivacity, even in the ridiculous side of his character. A stupid butt is only fit for the conversation of ordinary people: men of wit require one that will give them play, and bestir himself in the absurd part of his behaviour. A butt with these accomplishments frequently gets the laugh on his side, and turns the ridicule upon him that attacks him. Sir John Falstaff was a hero of this species, and gives a good description of himself in his capacity of a butt after the following manner: "Men of all sorts," says that merry knight, "take a pride to gird at me. The brain of man is not able to invent anything that tends to laughter more than I invent, or is invented on me. I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men."

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THE DANGER OF SATIRE.

" Fierce Volscians foam with rage, and gazing round,
Descried not him who gave the fatal wound ;
Nor knew to fix revenge." DRYDEN'S VIRGIL.

THERE is nothing that more betrays a base ungenerous spirit than the giving of secret stabs to a man's reputation ; lampoons and satires that are written with wit and spirit are like poisoned darts, which not only inflict a wound, but make it incurable. For this reason I am very much troubled when I see the talents of humour and ridicule in the possession of an ill-natured man. There cannot be a greater gratification to a barbarous and inhuman wit than to stir up sorrow in the heart of a private person, to raise uneasiness among near relations, and to expose whole families to derision, at the same time that he remains unseen and undiscovered. If, besides the accomplishments of being witty and ill-natured, a man is vicious into the bargain, he is one of the most mischievous creatures that can enter into a civil society. His satire will then chiefly fall upon those who ought to be the most exempt from it. Virtue, merit, and everything that is praiseworthy, will be made the subject of ridicule and buffoonery. It is impossible to enumerate the evils which arise from these arrows that fly in the dark ; and I know no other excuse that is or can be made for them, than that the wounds they give are only imaginary, and produce no-

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thing more than a secret shame or sorrow in the mind of the suffering person. It must, indeed, be confessed that a lampoon or a satire do not carry in them robbery or murder; but at the same time how many are there that would not rather lose a considerable sum of money, or even life itself, than be set up as a mark of infamy and derision? And in this case a man should consider, that an injury is not to be measured by the notions of him that gives, but of him that receives it.

Those who can put the best countenance upon the outrages of this nature which are offered them, are not without their secret anguish. I have often observed a passage in Socrates's behaviour at his death, in a light wherein none of the critics have considered it. That excellent man, entertaining his friends, a little before he drank the bowl of poison, with a discourse on the immortality of the soul, at his entering upon it says that he does not believe any, the most comic genius, can censure him for talking upon such a subject at such a time. This passage, I think, evidently glances upon Aristophanes, who wrote a comedy on purpose to ridicule the discourses of that divine philosopher. It has been observed by many writers, that Socrates was so little moved at this piece of buffoonery, that he was several times present at its being acted upon the stage, and never expressed the least resentment of it. But with submission, I think the remark I have here made shews us, that this unworthy treatment made an impression upon his mind though he had been too wise to discover it.

When Julius Cæsar was lampooned by Catullus, he invited him to supper, and treated him with such a generous civility, that he made the poet his friend ever after. Cardinal Mazarine gave the same kind of treatment to the learned

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Quillet, who had reflected upon his eminence in a famous Latin poem. The cardinal sent for him, and, after some kind expostulations upon what he had written, assured him of his esteem, and dismissed him with the promise of the next good abbey that should fall, which he accordingly conferred upon him in a few months after. This had so good an effect upon the author, that he dedicated the second edition of his book to the cardinal, after having expunged the passages which had given him offence.

Sextus Quintus was not of so generous and forgiving a temper. Upon his being made Pope, the very statue of Pasquin was one night dressed in a very dirty shirt, with an excuse written under it, that he was forced to wear foul linen, because his laundress was made a princess. This was a reflection upon the Pope's sister, who, before the promotion of her brother, was in those mean circumstances that Pasquin represented her. As this pasquinade made a great noise in Rome, the Pope offered a considerable sum of money to any person that should discover the author of it. The author, relying upon his Holiness's generosity, as also on some private overtures which he had received from him, made the discovery himself; upon which the Pope gave him the reward he had promised, but, at the same time, to disable the satirist for the future, ordered his tongue to be cut out, and both his hands to be chopped off. Aretine* is too trite an instance. Every one knows that all the kings of Europe were his tributaries. Nay, there is a letter of his extant, in which he makes his boast that he laid the Sophi of Persia under contribution.

Though, in the various examples which I have here drawn together, these several great men behaved themselves very

* Peter Aretine, infamous for his writings, died in 1556.

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differently toward the wits of the age who had reproached them; they all of them plainly shewed that they were very sensible of their reproaches, and consequently that they received them as very great injuries. For my own part, I would never trust a man that I thought was capable of giving these secret wounds; and cannot but think that he would hurt the person whose reputation he thus assaults, in his body or in his fortune, could he do it with the same security. There is, indeed, something very barbarous and inhuman in the ordinary scribblers of lampoons. An innocent young lady shall be exposed for an unhappy feature; a father of a family turned to ridicule for some domestic calamity; a wife made uneasy all her life for a misinterpreted word or action; nay, a good, a temperate, and a just man shall be put out of countenance by the representation of those qualities that should do him honour. So pernicious a thing is wit, when it is not tempered with virtue and humanity.

I have indeed heard of heedless, inconsiderate writers, that without any malice have sacrificed the reputation of their friends and acquaintance to a certain levity of temper, and a silly ambition of distinguishing themselves by a spirit of raillery and satire: as if it were not infinitely more honourable to be a good-natured man than a wit. Where there is this little petulant humour in an author, he is often very mischievous without designing to be so. For which reason, I always lay it down as a rule, that an indiscrete man is more hurtful than an ill-natured one; for as the latter will only attack his enemies, and those he wishes ill to, the other injures indifferently both friends and foes. I cannot forbear on this occasion transcribing a fable out of Sir Roger l'Estrange, which accidentally lies before me. "A company

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of waggish boys were watching frogs at the side of a pond, and still as any of them put up their heads, they would be pelting them down again with stones. 'Children,' says one of the frogs, 'you never consider, that though this may be play to you, it is death to us.'"

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LUXURY AND AVARICE: AN ALLEGORY.

"Our passions play the tyrants in our breasts."

PERSEUS.

THERE were two very powerful tyrants engaged in a perpetual war against each other; the name of the first was Luxury, and of the second Avarice. The aim of each of them was no less than universal monarchy over the hearts of mankind. Luxury had many generals under him, who did him great service, as Pleasure, Mirth, Pomp, and Fashion. Avarice was likewise very strong in his officers, being faithfully served by Hunger, Industry, Care, and Watchfulness: he had likewise a privy-councillor who was always at his elbow, and whispering something or other in his ear: the name of this privy-councillor was Poverty. As Avarice conducted himself by the counsels of Poverty, his antagonist was entirely guided by the dictates and advice of Plenty, who was his first counsellor and minister of state, that concerted all his measures for him, and never departed out of his sight. While these two great rivals were thus contending for empire, their conquests were very various. Luxury got possession of one heart, and Avarice of another. The father of a family would often range himself under the banners of Avarice, and the son under those of Luxury. The wife and husband would often declare themselves on the two different parties; nay, the same per-

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son would very often side with one in his youth, and revolt to the other in his old age. Indeed, the wise men of the world stood neuter; but, alas! their numbers were not considerable. At length, when these two potentates had wearied themselves with waging war upon one another, they agreed upon an interview, at which none of their counsellors were to be present. It is said that Luxury began the parley, and after having represented the endless state of war in which they were engaged, told his enemy, with a frankness of heart which is natural to him, that he believed they two should be very good friends were it not for the instigations of Poverty, that pernicious counsellor, who made an ill use of his ear, and filled him with groundless apprehensions and prejudices. To this Avarice replied, that he looked upon Plenty (the first minister of his antagonist) to be a much more destructive counsellor than Poverty, for that he was perpetually suggesting pleasures, banishing all the necessary cautions against want, and consequently undermining those principles on which the government of Avarice was founded. At last, in order to an accommodation, they agreed upon this preliminary, that each of them should immediately dismiss his privy-councillor. When things were thus far adjusted towards a peace, all other differences were soon accommodated, insomuch that for the future they resolved to live as good friends and confederates, and to share between them whatever conquests were made on either side. For this reason we now find Luxury and Avarice taking possession of the same heart, and dividing the same person between them. To which I shall only add, that since the discarding of the counsellors above-mentioned, Avarice supplies Luxury in the room of Plenty, as Luxury prompts Avarice in the place of Poverty.

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HUMOUR: FALSE AND TRUE.

"Nothing so foolish as the laugh of fools."—CATULLUS.

AMONG all kinds of writing, there is none in which authors are more apt to miscarry than in works of humour, as there is none in which they are more ambitious to excel. It is not in imagination that teems with monsters, a head that is filled with extravagant conceptions, which is capable of furnishing the world with diversions of this nature; and yet if we look into the productions of several writers, who set up for men of humour, what wild irregular fancies, what unnatural distortions of thought do we meet with? If they speak nonsense, they believe they are talking humour; and when they have drawn together a scheme of absurd, inconsistent ideas, they are not able to read it over to themselves without laughing. These poor gentlemen endeavour to gain themselves the reputation of wits and humorists, by such monstrous conceits as almost qualify them for Bedlam; not considering that humour should always lie under the check of reason, and that it requires the direction of the nicest judgment, by so much the more as it indulges itself in the most boundless freedoms. There is a kind of nature that is to be observed in this sort of compositions, as well as in all other; and a certain regularity of thought, which must discover the writer to be a man of sense, at the same time

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that he appears altogether given up to caprice. For my part, when I read the delirious mirth of an unskilful author, I cannot be so barbarous as to divert myself with it, but am rather apt to pity the man, than laugh at anything he writes.

A playwright, who had himself a great deal of the talent which I am treating of, represents a character, in one of his plays, as very much surprised to hear one say that breaking of windows was not humour ; and I question not but several English readers will be as much startled to hear me affirm that many of those raving incoherent pieces, which are often spread among us under odd chimerical titles, are rather the offsprings of a distempered brain than works of humour.

It is, indeed, much easier to describe what is not humour than what is ; and very difficult to define it otherwise than as Cowley has done wit, by negatives. Were I to give my own notions of it, I would deliver them after Plato's manner, in a kind of allegory, and, by supposing Humour to be a person, deduce to him all his qualifications, according to the following genealogy. Truth was the founder of the family, and the father of Good Sense. Good Sense was the father of Wit, who married a lady of collateral line called Mirth, by whom he had issue Humour. Humour, therefore, being the youngest of this illustrious family, and descended from parents of such different dispositions, is very various and unequal in his temper ; sometimes you see him putting on grave looks and a solemn habit, sometimes airy in his behaviour and fantastic in his dress ; insomuch that at different times he appears as serious as a judge, and as jocular as a merry-andrew. But as he has a great deal of the mother in his constitution, whatever mood he is in, he never fails to make his company laugh.

But since there is an impostor abroad, who takes upon him the name of this young gentleman, and would willingly

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pass for him in the world; to the end that well-meaning persons may not be imposed upon by cheats, I would desire my readers, when they meet with this pretender, to look into his parentage, and to examine him strictly whether or no he be remotely allied to Truth, and lineally descended from Good Sense; if not, they may conclude him a counterfeit. They may likewise distinguish him by a loud and excessive laughter, in which he seldom gets his company to join with him. For as True Humour generally looks serious, while everybody laughs about him; False Humour is always laughing, whilst everybody about him looks serious. I shall only add, if he has not in him a mixture of both parents—that is, if he would pass for the offspring of Wit without Mirth, or Mirth without Wit, you may conclude him to be altogether spurious and a cheat.

The impostor of whom I am speaking descends originally from Falsehood, who was the mother of Nonsense, who was brought to bed of a son called Frenzy, who married one of the daughters of Folly, commonly known by the name of Laughter, on whom he begot that monstrous infant of which I have here been speaking. I shall set down at length the genealogical table of False Humour, and, at the same time, place under it the genealogy of True Humour, that the reader may at one view behold their different pedigrees and relations:—

Falsehood.
Nonsense.
Frenzy——Laughter.
False Humour.

Truth.
Good Sense.
Wit——Mirth.
Humour.

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I might extend the allegory, by mentioning several of the children of False Humour, who are more in number than the sands of the sea, and might, in particular, enumerate the many sons and daughters which he has begot in this island. But as this would be a very invidious task, I shall only observe, in general, that False Humour differs from the True, as a monkey does from a man.

First of all, He is exceedingly given to little apish tricks and buffooneries.

Secondly, He so much delights in mimicry, that it is all one to him whether he exposes by it vice and folly, luxury and avarice; or, on the contrary, virtue and wisdom, pain and poverty.

Thirdly, He is wonderfully unlucky, insomuch that he will bite the hand that feeds him, and endeavour to ridicule both friends and foes indifferently. For having but small talents, he must be merry where he can, not where he should.

Fourthly, Being entirely void of reason, he pursues no point either of morality or instruction, but is ludicrous only for the sake of being so.

Fifthly, Being incapable of anything but mock representations, his ridicule is always personal, and aimed at the vicious man or the writer—not at the vice, or the writing.

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THE VISION OF MIRZA: AN ORIENTAL ALLEGORY.

" The cloud, which, intercepting the clear light,
Hangs o'er thy eyes, and blunts thy mortal sight,
I will remove ——— " VIRGIL.

ON the fifth day of the moon, which, according to the custom of my forefathers, I always keep holy, after having washed myself, and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills of Bagdad in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the tops of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life; and passing from one thought to another, "Surely," said I, "man is but a shadow, and life a dream." Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes towards the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, with a little musical instrument in his hand. As I looked upon him he applied it to his lips, and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought into a variety of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different from anything I had ever heard. They put me in mind of those heavenly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their first arrival in Paradise, to wear out the impressions of the last agonies, and qualify

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them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures.

I had been often told that the rock before me was the haunt of a genius; and that several had been entertained with music who had passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised my thoughts by those transporting airs which he played, to taste the pleasures of his conversation, as I looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the waving of his hand directed me to approach the place where he sat. I drew near with that reverence which is due to a superior nature; and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating strains I had heard, I fell down at his feet and wept. The genius smiled upon me with a look of compassion and affability that familiarised him to my imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with which I approached him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking me by the hand, "Mirza," said he, "I have heard thee in thy soliloquies; follow me."

He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me on the top of it—"Cast thy eyes eastward," said he, "and tell me what thou seest."—"I see," said I, "a huge valley, and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it."—"The valley that thou seest," said he, "is the Vale of Misery, and the tide of water that thou seest is part of the great tide of eternity."—"What is the reason," said I, "that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other?—What thou seest," said he, "is that portion of eternity which is called time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation. Examine now," said he, "this sea that is bounded with darkness at both

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ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it."—"I see a bridge," said I, "standing in the midst of the tide."—"The bridge thou seest," said he, "is human life; consider it attentively." Upon a more leisurely survey of it, I found that it consisted of threescore and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which, added to those that were entire, made up the number about a hundred. As I was counting the arches, the genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand arches: but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it. "But tell me further," said he, "what thou discoverest on it."—"I see multitudes of people passing over it," said I, "and a black cloud hanging on each end of it." As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge into the great tide that flowed underneath it: and, upon further examination, perceived there were innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon, but they fell through them into the tide, and immediately disappeared. These hidden pitfalls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud, but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together towards the end of the arches that were entire.

There were indeed some persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a walk.

I passed some time in the contemplation of this wonderful structure, and the great variety of objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep melancholy to see

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several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at everything that stood by them to save themselves. Some were looking up towards heaven in a thoughtful posture, and in the midst of a speculation stumbled and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles that glittered in their eyes and danced before them; but often when they thought themselves within the reach of them, their footing failed, and down they sank. In this confusion of objects, I observed some with scimitars in their hands, and others with urinals, who ran to and fro upon the bridge, thrusting several persons on trap doors which did not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped had they not been thus forced upon them.

The genius seeing me indulge myself on this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it. "Take thine eyes off the bridge," said he, "and tell me if thou yet seest any thing thou dost not comprehend." Upon looking up, "What mean," said I, "those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see vultures, harpies, ravens, cormorants, and among many other feathered creatures several little winged boys, that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches."—"These," said the genius, "are Envy, Avarice, Superstition, Despair, Love, with the like cares and passions that infest human life."

I here fetched a deep sigh. "Alas," said I, "man was made in vain! how is he given away to misery and mortality! tortured in life, and swallowed up in death!" The genius, being moved with compassion towards me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. "Look no more," said he, "on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting

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out for eternity; but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it." I directed my sight as I was ordered, and (whether or no the good genius strengthened it with any supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for the eye to penetrate) I saw the valley opening at the further end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it: but the other appeared to me a vast ocean planted with innumerable islands, that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the sides of fountains, or resting on beds of flowers; and could hear a confused harmony of singing-birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle, that I might fly away to those happy seats: but the genius told me there was no passage to them, except through the gates of death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. "The islands," said he, "that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching further than thine eye, or even thine imagination can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who, according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among

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these several islands; which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them; every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirza, habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? Is death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity reserved for him." I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. "At length," said I, "shew me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lie hid under those dark clouds which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant." The genius making me no answer, I turned about to address myself to him a second time, but I found that he had left me: I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating; but instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdad, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing upon the sides of it.

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NATURAL GENIUS.

"On him confer the poet's sacred name,
Whose lofty voice declares the heavenly flame."

HORACE.

THERE is no character more frequently given to a writer, than that of being a genius. I have heard many a little sonnetteer called a fine genius. There is not a heroic scribbler in the nation, that has not his admirers who think him a great genius; and as for your smatterers in tragedy, there is scarce a man among them who is not cried up by one or other for a prodigious genius.

My design in this paper is to consider what is properly a great genius, and to throw some thoughts together on so uncommon a subject.

Among great geniuses, those few draw the admiration of all the world upon them, and stand up as the prodigies of mankind, who by the mere strength of natural parts, and without any assistance of art or learning, have produced works that were the delight of their own times, and the wonder of posterity. There appears something nobly wild and extravagant in these great natural geniuses, that is infinitely more beautiful than all turn and polishing of what the French call a *bel esprit*, by which they would express a genius refined by conversation, reflection, and the reading of the most

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polite authors. The greatest genius which runs through the arts and sciences, takes a kind of tincture from them, and falls unavoidably into imitation.

Many of these great natural geniuses that were never disciplined and broken by rules of art, are to be found among the ancients, and in particular among those of the more eastern parts of the world. Homer has innumerable flights that Virgil was not able to reach, and in the Old Testament we find several passages more elevated and sublime than any in Homer. At the same time that we allow a greater and more daring genius to the ancients, we must own that the greatest of them very much failed in, or, if you will, that they were much above, the nicety and correctness of the moderns. In their similitudes and allusions, provided there was a likeness, they did not much trouble themselves about the decency of the comparison; thus Solomon resembles the nose of his beloved to the tower of Lebanon, which looketh towards Damascus; us the coming of a thief in the night, is a similitude of the same kind in the New Testament. It would be endless to make collections of this nature; Homer illustrates one of his heroes encompassed with the enemy, by an ass in a field of corn that has his sides belaboured by all the boys of the village without stirring a foot for it; and another of them tossing to and fro in his bed and burning with resentment, to a piece of flesh broiled on the coals. This particular failure in the ancients opens a large field of raillery to the little wits, who can laugh at an indecency, but not relish the sublime in these sorts of writing. A former Emperor of Persia, conformably to this eastern way of thinking, amidst a great many pompous titles, denominated himself "the sun of glory," and "the nutmeg of delight." In short, to cut off all cavilling against the ancients, and

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particularly those of the warmer climates, who had most heat and life in their imaginations, we are to consider that the rule of observing what the French call the *bienséance* in an allusion, has been found out of later years, and in the colder regions of the world; where we could make some amends for our want of force and spirit, by a scrupulous nicety and exactness in our compositions. Our countryman, Shakspeare, was a remarkable instance of this first kind of great geniuses.

I cannot quit this head without observing that Pindar was a great genius of the first-class, who was hurried on by a natural fire and impetuosity to vast conceptions of things and noble sallies of imagination. At the same time, can anything be more ridiculous than for men of a sober and moderate fancy to imitate this poet's way of writing, in those monstrous compositions which go among us under the name of Pindarics? When I see people copying works, which, as Horace has represented them, are singular in their kind, and inimitable; when I see men following irregularities by rule, and by the little tricks of art straining after the most unbounded flights of nature, I cannot but apply to them that passage in Terence:—

"You may as well pretend to be mad and in your senses at the same time, as to think of reducing these uncertain things to any certainty by reason."

In short, a modern Pindaric writer, compared with Pindar, is but the distortion, grimace, and outward figure, with nothing of that divine impulse which raises the mind above itself, and makes the sounds more than human.

There is another kind of great geniuses which I shall place in a second class, not as I think them inferior to the first, but only for distinction's sake, as they are of a different

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kind. The second class of great geniuses are those that have formed themselves by rules, and submitted the greatness of their natural talents to the corrections and restraints of art. Such among the Greeks were Plato and Aristotle; among the Romans, Virgil and Tully; among the English, Milton and Sir Francis Bacon.

The genius in both these classes of authors may be equally great, but shews itself after a different manner. In the first, it is like a rich soil in a happy climate, that produces a whole wilderness of noble plants rising in a thousand beautiful landscapes, without any certain order or regularity. In the other it is the same rich soil under the same happy climate, that has been laid out in walks and parterres, and cut into shape and beauty by the skill of the gardener.

The great danger in the latter kind of geniuses is, lest they cramp their own abilities too much by imitation, and form themselves altogether upon models, without giving the full play to their own natural parts. An imitation of the best authors is not to compare with a good original; and I believe we may observe that very few writers make an extraordinary figure in the world, who have not something in their way of thinking or expressing themselves that is peculiar to them, and entirely their own.

It is odd to consider what great geniuses are sometimes thrown away upon trifles.

"I once saw a shepherd," says a famous Italian author, "who used to divert himself in his solitudes with tossing up eggs and catching them again without breaking them: in which he had arrived to so great a degree of perfection, that he would keep up four at a time for several minutes together playing in the air, and falling into his hands by turns. I think," says the author, "I never saw a greater severity than

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in this man's face ; for, by his wonderful perseverance and application, he had contracted the seriousness and gravity of a privy-councillor ; and I could not but reflect with myself, that the same assiduity and attention, had they been rightly applied, might have made him a greater mathematician than Archimedes."

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ON INCONSISTENCY AND IRRESOLUTION.

"Keep one consistent plan from end to end."

HORACE.

NOTHING that is not a real crime makes a man appear so contemptible and little in the eyes of the world as inconstancy, especially when it regards religion or party. In either of these cases, though a man perhaps does but his duty in changing his side, he not only makes himself hated by those he left, but is seldom heartily esteemed by those he comes over to.

In these great articles of life, therefore, a man's conviction ought to be very strong, and, if possible, so well timed, that worldly advantages may seem to have no share in it, or mankind will be ill natured enough to think he does not change sides out of principle, but either out of levity of temper, or prospects of interest. Converts and renegadoes of all kinds should take particular care to let the world see they act upon honourable motives: or, whatever approbations they may receive from themselves, and applauses from those they converse with, they may be very well assured that they are the scorn of all good men, and the public marks of infamy and derision.

Irresolution on the schemes of life which offer themselves to our choice, and inconstancy in pursuing them, are the greatest and most universal causes of all our

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disquiet and unhappiness. When ambition pulls one away, interest another, inclination a third, and, perhaps, reason contrary to all, a man is likely to pass his time but ill who has so many different parties to please. When the mind hovers among such a variety of allurements, one had better settle on a way of life that is not the very best we might have chosen, than grow old without determining our choice, and go out of the world as the greatest part of mankind do, before we have resolved how to live in it. There is but one method of setting ourselves at rest in this particular, and that is by adhering steadfastly to one great end as the chief and ultimate aim of all our pursuits. If we are firmly resolved to live up to the dictates of reason, without any regard to wealth, reputation, or the like considerations, any more than as they fall in with our principal design, we may go through life with steadiness and pleasure; but if we act by several broken views, and will not only be virtuous, but wealthy, popular, and everything that has a value set upon it by the world, we shall live and die in misery and repentance.

One would take more than ordinary care to guard one's self against this particular imperfection, because it is that which our nature very strongly inclines us to; for if we examine ourselves thoroughly, we shall find that we are the most changeable beings in the universe. In respect of our understanding, we often embrace and reject the very same opinions; whereas beings above and beneath us have probably no opinions at all, or, at least, no wavering and uncertainties in those they have. Our superiors are guided by intuition, and our inferiors by instinct. In respect of our wills, we fall into crimes and recover out of them, are amiable or odious in the eyes of our great Judge, and pass

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our whole life in offending and asking pardon. On the contrary, the beings underneath us are not capable of sinning, nor those above us of repenting. The one is out of the possibilities of duty, and the other fixed in an eternal course of sin, or an eternal course of virtue.

There is scarce a state of life, or stage in it, which does not produce changes and revolutions in the mind of man. Our schemes of thought in infancy are lost in those of youth; these, too, take a different turn in manhood, until old age often leads us back into our former infancy. A new title or an unexpected success throws us out of ourselves, and in a manner destroys our identity. A cloudy day, or a little sunshine, have as great an influence on many constitutions, as the most real blessing or misfortunes. A dream varies our being, and changes our condition while it lasts; and every passion, not to mention health and sickness, and the greater alterations in body and mind, makes us appear almost different creatures. If a man is so distinguished among other beings by this infirmity, what can we think of such as make themselves remarkable for it even among their own species? It is a very trifling character to be one of the most variable beings of the most variable kind, especially if we consider that He who is the great standard of perfection has in Him no shadow of change, but "is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

As this mutability of temper and inconsistency with ourselves is the greatest weakness of human nature, so it makes the person who is remarkable for it in a very particular manner, more ridiculous than any other infirmity whatsoever, as it sets him in a greater variety of foolish lights, and distinguishes him from himself by an opposition of party-coloured characters. A humorous character in Dryden's

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Absalom and Achitophel is founded upon this unevenness of temper, and irregularity of conduct:—

"In the first rank of these did Zimri stand:
A man so various, that he seem'd to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome.
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
Was every thing by starts, and nothing long.
But in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon:
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
Blest madman who could every hour employ,
With something new to wish, or to enjoy!"

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VALUE OF GOOD NATURE.

"His manner of life was this: to bear with everybody's humours; to comply with the inclinations and pursuits of those he conversed with; to contradict nobody; never to assume a superiority over others. This is the ready way to gain applause without exciting envy."

TERENCE.

MAN is subject to innumerable pains and sorrows by the very condition of humanity, and yet, as if nature had not sown evils enough in life, we are continually adding grief to grief, and aggravating the common calamity by our cruel treatment of one another. Every man's natural weight of afflictions is still made more heavy by the envy, malice, treachery, or injustice of his neighbour. At the same time that the storm beats upon the whole species, we are falling foul upon one another.

Half the misery of human life might be extinguished, would men alleviate the general curse they lie under, by mutual offices of compassion, benevolence, and humanity. There is nothing, therefore, which we ought more to encourage in ourselves and others, than that disposition of mind which, in our language, goes under the title of good-nature, and which I shall choose for the subject of this day's speculation.

Good-nature is more agreeable in conversation than wit, and gives a certain air to the countenance, which is more amiable than beauty. It shews virtue in the fairest light,

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takes off in some measure from the deformity of vice, and makes even folly and impertinence supportable.

There is no society or conversation to be kept up in the world without good-nature, or something which must bear its appearance, and supply its place. For this reason mankind have been forced to invent a kind of artificial humanity, which is what we express by the word good-breeding. For if we examine thoroughly the idea of what we call so, we shall find it to be nothing else but an imitation and mimicry of good-nature, or, in other terms, affability, complaisance, and easiness of temper reduced into an art.

These exterior shows and appearances of humanity render a man wonderfully popular and beloved, when they are founded upon a real good-nature; but without it, are like hypocrisy in religion, or a bare form of holiness, which, when it is discovered, makes a man more detestable than professed impiety.

Good-nature is generally born with us; health, prosperity, and kind treatment from the world are great cherishers of it where they find it; but nothing is capable of forcing it up, where it does not grow of itself. It is one of the blessings of a happy constitution, which education may improve, but not produce.

Xenophon, in the life of his imaginary prince, whom he describes as a pattern for real ones, is always celebrating the philanthropy or good-nature of his hero, which he tells us he brought into the world with him, and gives many remarkable instances of it in his childhood, as well as in all the several parts of his life. Nay, on his death-bed, he describes him as being pleased, that while his soul returned to him who made it, his body should incorporate with the great mother of all things, and by that means become bene-

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ficial to all mankind. For which reason he gives his sons a positive order not to enshrine it in gold or silver, but to lay it in the earth as soon as the life was gone out of it.

An instance of such an overflowing of humanity, such an exuberant love to mankind, could not have entered into the imagination of a writer, who had not a soul filled with great ideas, and a general benevolence to mankind.

In a celebrated passage of Sallust, where Cæsar and Cato are placed in such beautiful, but opposite lights, Cæsar's character is chiefly made up of good-nature, as it shewed itself in all its forms towards his friends or his enemies, his servants or dependants, the guilty or the distressed. As for Cato's character, it is rather awful than amiable. Justice seems most agreeable to the nature of God, and mercy to that of man. A being who has nothing to pardon in himself, may reward every man according to his works; but he whose very best actions must be seen with grains of allowance, cannot be too mild, moderate, and forgiving. For this reason, among all the monstrous characters in human nature, there is none so odious, nor indeed so exquisitely ridiculous, as that of a rigid, severe temper in a worthless man.

This part of good-nature, however, which consists in the pardoning and overlooking of faults, is to be exercised only in doing ourselves justice, and that, too, in the ordinary commerce and occurrences of life: for in the public administrations of justice, mercy to one may be cruelty to others.

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ON THE IMPORTANCE OF FABLE.

"Sometimes fair truth in fiction we disguise;
Sometimes present her naked to men's eyes."

POPE'S HOM.

FABLES were the first pieces of wit that made their appearance in the world, and have been still highly valued not only in times of the greatest simplicity, but among the most polite ages of mankind. Jotham's fable of the trees* is the oldest that is extant, and as beautiful as any which have been made since that time. Nathan's fable of the poor man and his lamb† is likewise more ancient than any that is extant, besides the above mentioned, and had so good an effect, as to convey instruction to the ear of a king, without offending it, and to bring a man after God's own heart to a right sense of his guilt and his duty. We find Æsop in the most distant ages of Greece; and if we look into the very beginnings of the commonwealth of Rome, we see a mutiny among the common people appeased by a fable of the belly and the limbs, which was indeed very proper to gain the attention of an incensed rabble, at a time when perhaps they would have torn to pieces any man who had preached the same doctrine to them in an open and direct manner. As fables took their birth in the very infancy of learning, they never flourished more than when learning was at its greatest height.

* Judges ix. 8-15. † 2 Sam. xii. 1-4.

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To justify this assertion, I shall put my reader in mind of Horace, the greatest wit and critic in the Augustan age; and of Boileau, the most correct poet among the moderns; not to mention La Fontaine, who by this way of writing has come more into vogue than any other author of our times.

The fables I have here mentioned are raised altogether upon brutes and vegetables, with some of our own species mixed among them, when the moral hath so required. But, besides this kind of fable, there is another in which the actors are passions, virtues, vices, and other imaginary persons of the like nature. Some of the ancient critics will have it, that the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer are fables of this nature; and that the several names of gods and heroes are nothing else but the affections of the mind in a visible shape and character. Thus they tell us, that Achilles, in the first Iliad, represents anger, or the irascible part of human nature; that upon drawing his sword against his superior in a full assembly, Pallas is only another name for reason, which checks and advises him upon that occasion; and at her first appearance touches him upon the head, that part of the man being looked upon as the seat of reason. And thus of the rest of the poem. As for the Odyssey, I think it is plain that Horace considered it as one of these allegorical fables, by the moral which he has given us of several parts of it. The greatest Italian wits have applied themselves to the writing of this latter kind of fables. Spenser's Fairy-Queen is one continued series of them from the beginning to the end of that admirable work. If we look into the finest prose authors of antiquity, such as Cicero, Plato, Xenophon, and many others, we shall find that this was likewise their favourite kind of fable. I shall only further observe upon it, that the first of this sort that

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made any considerable figure in the world, was that of Hercules meeting with Pleasure and Virtue ; which was invented by Prodicus, who lived before Socrates, and in the first dawnings of philosophy. He used to travel through Greece by virtue of this fable, which procured him a kind reception in all the market towns, where he never failed telling it as soon as he had gathered an audience about him.

After this short preface, which I have made up of such materials as my memory does at present suggest to me, before I present my reader with a fable of this kind, which I design as the entertainment of the present paper, I must, in a few words, open the occasion of it.

In the account which Plato gives us of the conversation and behaviour of Socrates, the morning he was to die, he tells the following circumstance:—

When Socrates "his" fetters were knocked off, (as was usual to be done on the day that the condemned person was to be executed,) being seated in the midst of his disciples, and laying one of his legs over the other, in a very unconcerned posture, he began to rub it where it had been galled by the iron ; and whether it was to shew the indifference with which he entertained the thoughts of his approaching death, or (after his usual manner) to take every occasion of philosophising upon some useful subject, he observed the pleasure of that sensation which now arose in those very parts of his leg, that just before had been so much pained by the fetter. Upon this he reflected on the nature of pleasure and pain in general, and how constantly they succeed one another. To this he added, that if a man of a good genius for a fable were to represent the nature of pleasure and pain in that way of writing, he would probably join them together after such a manner, that it would be impos-

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sible for the one to come into any place without being followed by the other.

It is possible, that if Plato had thought it proper at such a time to describe Socrates launching out into a discourse which was not of a piece with the business of the day, he would have enlarged upon this hint, and have drawn it out into some beautiful allegory or fable. But since he has not done it, I shall attempt to write one myself in the spirit of that divine author.

"There were two families which, from the beginning of the world, were as opposite to each other as light and darkness. The one of them lived in heaven, and the other in hell. The youngest descendant of the first family was Pleasure, who was the daughter of Happiness, who was the child of Virtue, who was the offspring of the gods. These, as I said before, had their habitation in heaven. The youngest of the opposite family was Pain, who was the son of Misery, who was the child of Vice, who was the offspring of the Furies. The habitation of this race of beings was in hell.

"The middle station of nature between these two opposite extremes was the earth, which was inhabited by creatures of a middle kind, neither so virtuous as the one, nor so vicious as the other, but partaking of the good and bad qualities of these two opposite families. Jupiter, considering that the species, commonly called man, was too virtuous to be miserable, and too vicious to be happy; that he might make a distinction between the good and the bad, ordered the two youngest of the above-mentioned families, Pleasure, who was the daughter of Happiness, and Pain, who was the son of Misery, to meet one another upon this part of nature which lay in the half-way between them, having promised to settle it upon them both, provided they could agree

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upon the division of it, so as to share mankind between them.

"Pleasure and Pain were no sooner met in their new habitation, but they immediately agreed upon this point, that Pleasure should take possession of the virtuous, and Pain of the vicious part of that species which was given up to them. But upon examining to which of them any individual they met with belonged, they found each of them had a right to him: for that, contrary to what they had seen in their old places of residence, there was no person so vicious who had not some good in him, nor any person so virtuous who had not in him some evil. The truth of it is, they generally found upon search, that in the most vicious man Pleasure might lay claim to a hundredth part, and that in the most virtuous man Pain might come in for at least two-thirds. This they saw would occasion endless disputes between them, unless they could come to some accommodation. To this end there was a marriage proposed between them, and at length concluded. By this means it is that we find Pleasure and Pain are such constant yoke-fellows; and that they either make their visits together, or are never far asunder. If Pain comes into a heart, he is quickly followed by Pleasure; and if Pleasure enters, you may be sure Pain is not far off.

"But notwithstanding this marriage was very convenient for the two parties, it did not seem to answer the intention of Jupiter in sending them among mankind. To remedy, therefore, this inconvenience, it was stipulated between them by article, and confirmed by the consent of each family, that notwithstanding they here possessed the species indifferently, upon the death of every single person, if he was found to have in him a certain proportion of evil, he

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should be despatched into the infernal regions by a passport from Pain, there to dwell with Misery, Vice, and the Furies. Or, on the contrary, if he had in him a certain proportion of good, he should be despatched into heaven by a passport from Pleasure, there to dwell with Happiness, Virtue, and the gods."

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THE DANGER OF MISTAKEN ZEAL.

THERE is nothing in which men more deceive themselves than in what the world calls zeal. There are so many passions which hide themselves under it, and so many mischiefs arising from it, that some have gone so far as to say it would have been for the benefit of mankind if it had never been reckoned in the catalogue of virtues. It is certain, where it is once laudable and prudential, it is a hundred times criminal and erroneous: nor can it be otherwise, if we consider that it operates with equal violence in all religions, however opposite they may be to one another, and in all the subdivisions of each religion in particular.

We are told by some of the Jewish rabbins that the first murder was occasioned by a religious controversy; and if we had the whole history of zeal from the days of Cain to our own times, we should see it filled with so many scenes of slaughter and bloodshed, as would make a wise man very careful how he suffers himself to be actuated by such a principle when it only regards matters of opinion and speculation.

I would have every zealous man examine his heart thoroughly, and I believe he will often find that what he calls a zeal for his religion, is either pride, interest, or ill-nature. A man who differs from another in opinion, sets himself above him in his own judgment, and in several par-

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ticulars pretends to be the wiser person. This is a great provocation to the proud man, and gives a very keen edge to what he calls his zeal. And that this is the case very often, we may observe from the behaviour of some of the most zealous for orthodoxy, who have often great friendships and intimacies with vicious and immoral men, provided they do but agree with them in the same scheme of belief. The reason is, because the vicious believer gives the precedency to the virtuous man, and allows the good Christian to be the worthier person, at the same time that he cannot come up to his perfection. This we find exemplified in that trite passage which we see quoted in almost every system of ethics, though upon another occasion :—

> " I see the right, and I approve it too ;
> Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue."
>
> TAIT'S OVID.

On the contrary, it is certain if our zeal were true and genuine, we should be much more angry with a sinner than a heretic, since there are several cases which may excuse the latter before his great Judge, but none which can excuse the former.

Interest is likewise a great inflamer, and sets a man on persecution under the colour of zeal. For this reason we find none are so forward to promote the true worship by fire and sword as those who find their present account in it. But I shall extend the word interest to a larger meaning than what is generally given it, as it relates to our spiritual safety and welfare, as well as to our temporal. A man is glad to gain numbers on his side, as they serve to strengthen him in his private opinions. Every proselyte is like a new argument for the establishment of his faith. It makes him believe that his principles carry conviction with them, and

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are the more likely to be true, when he finds they are conformable to the reason of others, as well as to his own. And that this temper of mind deludes a man very often into an opinion of his zeal, may appear from the common behaviour of the atheist, who maintains and spreads his opinions with as much heat as those who believe they do it only out of a passion for God's glory.

Ill-nature is another dreadful imitator of zeal.—Many a good man may have a natural rancour and malice in his heart, which has been in some measure quelled and subdued by religion: but if it finds pretence of breaking out, which does not seem to him inconsistent with the duties of a Christian, it throws off all restraint, and rages in full fury. Zeal is, therefore, a great ease to a malicious man, by making him believe he does God service, whilst he is gratifying the bent of a perverse, revengeful temper. For this reason we find that most of the massacres and devastations which have been in the world, have taken their rise from a furious pretended zeal.

I love to see a man zealous in a good matter, and especially when his zeal shews itself for advancing morality, and promoting the happiness of mankind. But when I find the instruments he works with are racks and gibbets, galleys and dungeons: when he imprisons men's persons, confiscates their estates, ruins their families, and burns the body to save the soul, I cannot stick to pronounce of such a one, that (whatever he may think of his faith and religion) his faith is vain, and his religion unprofitable.

After having treated of these false zealots in religion, I cannot forbear mentioning a monstrous species of men, who one would not think had any existence in nature, were they not to be met with in ordinary conversation—I mean the

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zealots in atheism. One would fancy that these men, though they fall short in every other respect of those who make a profession of religion, would at least outshine them in this particular, and be exempt from that single fault which seems to grow out of the imprudent fervours of religion. But so it is, that infidelity is propagated with as much fierceness and contention, wrath and indignation, as if the safety of mankind depended upon it. There is something so ridiculous and perverse in this kind of zealots, that one does not know how to set them out in their proper colours. They are a sort of gamesters who are eternally upon the fret, though they play for nothing. They are perpetually teazing their friends to come over to them, though at the same time they allow that neither of them shall get anything by the bargain. In short, the zeal of spreading atheism is, if possible, more absurd than atheism itself.

Since I have mentioned this unaccountable zeal which appears in atheists and infidels, I must further observe that they are likewise in a most particular manner possessed with the spirit of bigotry. They are wedded to opinions full of contradiction and impossibility, and at the same time look upon the smallest difficulty in an article of faith as a sufficient reason for rejecting it. Notions that fall in with the common reason of mankind, that are conformable to the sense of all ages and all nations, not to mention their tendency for promoting the happiness of societies, or of particular persons, are exploded as errors and prejudices; and schemes erected in their stead that are altogether monstrous and irrational, and require the most extravagant credulity to embrace them. I would fain ask one of these bigoted infidels, supposing all the great points of atheism, as the casual or eternal formation of the world, the materiality of a think-

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ing substance, the mortality of the soul, the fortuitous organisation of the body, the motions and gravitation of matter, with the like particulars, were laid together and formed into a kind of creed, according to the opinions of the most celebrated atheists; I say, supposing such a creed as this were formed, and imposed upon any one people in the world, whether it would not require an infinitely greater measure of faith than any set of articles which they so violently oppose. Let me therefore advise this generation of wranglers, for their own and for the public good, to act at least so consistently with themselves, as not to burn with zeal for irreligion, and with bigotry for nonsense.

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TEMPERANCE, A NATURAL NECESSITY.

"Fools not to know that half exceeds the whole,
How blest the sparing meal and temperate bowl!"

THERE is a story in the Arabian Nights Tales of a king who had long languished under an ill habit of body, and had taken abundance of remedies to no purpose. At length, says the fable, a physician cured him by the following method: he took a hollow ball of wood, and filled it with several drugs; after which he closed it up so artificially that nothing appeared. He likewise took a mall, and after having hollowed the handle, and that part which strikes the ball, he enclosed in them several drugs after the same manner as in the ball itself. He then ordered the sultan, who was his patient, to exercise himself early in the morning with these rightly prepared instruments, till such time as he should sweat; when, as the story goes, the virtue of the medicaments perspiring through the wood had so good an influence on the sultan's constitution, that they cured him of an indisposition which all the compositions he had taken inwardly had not been able to remove. This Eastern allegory is finely contrived to shew us how beneficial bodily labour is to health, and that exercise is the most effectual physic. I have described in my hundred and fifteenth paper, from the general structure and mechanism of a human body, how absolutely necessary exercise is for its preservation. I shall in this place recom-

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mend another great preservative of health, which in many cases produces the same effects as exercise, and may, in some measure, supply its place, where opportunities of exercise are wanting. The preservative I am speaking of is temperance, which has those particular advantages above all other means of health, that it may be practised by all ranks and conditions, at any season, or in any place. It is a kind of regimen into which every man may put himself, without interruption to business, expense of money, or loss of time. If exercise throws off all superfluities, temperance prevents them; if exercise clears the vessels, temperance neither satiates nor overstrains them; if exercise raises proper ferments in the humours, and promotes the circulation of the blood, temperance gives nature her full play, and enables her to exert herself in all her force and vigour; if exercise dissipates a growing distemper, temperance starves it.

Physic for the most part is nothing else but the substitute of exercise or temperance. Medicines are indeed absolutely necessary in acute distempers, that cannot wait the slow operations of these two great instruments of health; but did men live in an habitual course of exercise and temperance, there could be but little occasion for them. Accordingly we find that those parts of the world are the most healthy, where they subsist by the chase; and that men lived longest when their lives were employed in hunting, and when they had little food besides what they caught. Blistering, cupping, bleeding, are seldom of use but to the idle and intemperate; as all those inward applications which are so much in practice among us, are for the most part nothing else but expedients to make luxury consistent with health. The apothecary is perpetually employed in countermining the cook and the vintner. It is said of Diogenes, that meeting

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a young man who was going to a feast, he took him up in the street and carried him to his own friends, as one who was running into imminent danger, had not he prevented him. What would that philosopher have said, had he been present at the gluttony of a modern meal? Would not he have thought the master of a family mad, and have begged his servants to tie down his hands, had he seen him devour a fowl, fish, and flesh; swallow oil and vinegar, wines and spices; throw down salads of twenty different herbs, sauces of a hundred ingredients, confections and fruits of numberless sweets and flavours? What unnatural motions and counter-ferments must such a medley of intemperance produce in the body! For my part, when I behold a fashionable table set out in all its magnificence, I fancy that I see gouts and dropsies, fevers and lethargies, with other innumerable distempers, lying in ambuscade among the dishes.

Nature delights in the most plain and simple diet. Every animal, but man, keeps to one dish. Herbs are the food of this species, fish of that, and flesh of a third. Man falls upon everything that comes in his way; not the smallest fruit or excrescence of the earth, scarce a berry or a mushroom, can escape him.

It is impossible to lay down any determinate rule for temperance, because what is luxury in one may be temperance in another; but there are few that have lived any time in the world, who are not judges of their own constitutions, so far as to know what kinds and what proportions of food do best agree with them. Were I to consider my readers as my patients, and to prescribe such a kind of temperance as is accommodated to all persons, and such as is particularly suitable to our climate and way of living, I would copy the following rules of a very eminent physician. "Make

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your whole repast out of one dish. If you indulge in a second, avoid drinking anything strong until you have finished your meal; at the same time abstain from all sauces, or at least such as are not the most plain and simple." A man could not be well guilty of gluttony, if he stuck to these few obvious and easy rules. In the first case there would be no variety of tastes to solicit his palate, and occasion excess; nor in the second, any artificial provocatives to relieve satiety, and create a false appetite. Were I to prescribe a rule for drinking, it should be formed upon a saying quoted by Sir William Temple: "The first glass for myself, the second for my friends, the third for good humour, and the fourth for mine enemies." But because it is impossible for one who lives in the world to diet himself always in so philosophical a manner, I think every man should have his days of abstinence according as his constitution will permit. These are great reliefs to nature, as they qualify her for struggling with hunger and thirst whenever any distemper or duty of life may put her upon such difficulties; and at the same time give her an opportunity of extricating herself from her oppressions, and recovering the several tones and springs of her distended vessels. Besides that, abstinence well-timed often kills a sickness in embryo, and destroys the first seeds of an indisposition. It was observed by several ancient authors, that Socrates, notwithstanding he lived in Athens during that great plague which has made so much noise through all ages, and has been celebrated at different times by such eminent hands; I say, notwithstanding that he lived in the times of this devouring pestilence, he never caught the least infection, which those writers unanimously ascribe to that uninterrupted temperance which he always observed.

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And here I cannot but mention an observation which I have often made, upon reading the lives of the philosophers, and comparing them with any series of kings or great men of the same number. If we consider these ancient sages, a great part of whose philosophy consisted in a temperate and abstemious course of life, one would think the life of a philosopher and the life of a man were of two different dates. For we find that the generality of these wise men were nearer a hundred than sixty years of age, at the time of their respective deaths. But the most remarkable instance of the efficacy of temperance towards the procuring of long life, is what we meet with in a little book published by Lewis Cornaro the Venetian; which I the rather mention, because it is of undoubted credit, as the late Venetian ambassador, who was of the same family, attested more than once in conversation, when he resided in England. Cornaro, who was the author of the little treatise I am mentioning, was of an infirm constitution, until about forty, when by obstinately persisting in an exact course of temperance, he recovered a perfect state of health; insomuch that at fourscore he published his book, which has been translated into English under the title of "Sure and Certain Methods of Attaining a Long and Healthy Life." He lived to give a third or fourth edition of it; and after having passed his hundredth year, died without pain or agony, and like one who falls asleep. The treatise I mention has been taken notice of by several eminent authors, and is written with such a spirit of cheerfulness, religion, and good sense, as are the natural concomitants of temperance and sobriety. The mixture of the old man in it is rather a recommendation than a discredit to it.

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THE INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION.

"Ingenuous arts, where they an entrance find,
Soften the manners, and subdue the mind."

OVID.

I CONSIDER a human soul without education like marble in the quarry, which shews none of its inherent beauties until the skill of the polisher fetches out the colours, makes the surface shine, and discovers every ornamental cloud, spot, and vein that runs through the body of it. Education, after the same manner, when it works upon a noble mind, draws out to view every latent virtue and perfection, which without such helps are never able to make their appearance.

If my reader will give me leave to change the allusion so soon upon him, I shall make use of the same instance to illustrate the force of education which Aristotle has brought to explain his doctrine of substantial forms, when he tells us that a statue lies hid in a block of marble; and that the art of the statuary only clears away the superfluous matter, and removes the rubbish. The figure is in stone, the sculptor only finds it. What sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to a human soul. The philosopher, the saint, or the hero, the wise, the good, or the great man, very often lie hid and concealed in a plebeian, which a proper education might have disinterred, and have brought to light. I am, therefore, much delighted with reading the

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accounts of savage nations, and with contemplating those virtues which are wild and uncultivated; to see courage exerting itself in fierceness, resolution in obstinacy, wisdom in cunning, patience in sullenness and despair.

Men's passions operate variously, and appear in different kinds of actions, according as they are more or less rectified and swayed by reason. When one hears of negroes who upon the death of their masters, or upon changing their service, hang themselves upon the next tree, as it frequently happens in our American plantations, who can forbear admiring their fidelity, though it expresses itself in so dreadful a manner? What might not that savage greatness of soul which appears in these poor wretches on many occasions be raised to, were it rightly cultivated? And what colour of excuse can there be for the contempt with which we treat this part of our species? that we should not put them upon the common foot of humanity; that we should only set an insignificant fine upon the man who murders them; nay, that we should, as much as in us lies, cut them off from the prospect of happiness in another world as well as in this, and deny them that which we look upon as the proper means for attaining it?

Since I am engaged on this subject, I cannot forbear mentioning a story which I have lately heard, and which is so well attested that I have no manner of reason to suspect the truth of it. I may call it a kind of wild tragedy that passed about twelve years ago at St Christopher's, one of our British Leeward islands. The negroes who were the persons concerned in it were all of them the slaves of a gentleman who is now in England.

This gentleman, among his negroes, had a young woman, who was looked upon as a most extraordinary beauty by

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those of her own complexion. He had at the same time two young fellows, who were likewise negroes and slaves, remarkable for the comeliness of their persons, and for the friendship which they bore to one another. It unfortunately happened that both of them fell in love with the female negro above mentioned, who would have been very glad to have taken either of them for her husband, provided they would agree between themselves which should be the man. But they were both so passionately in love with her that neither of them would think of giving her up to his rival; and at the same time were so true to one another, that neither of them would think of gaining her without his friend's consent. The torments of these two lovers were the discourse of the family to which they belonged, who could not forbear observing the strange complication of passions which perplexed the hearts of the poor negroes, that often dropped expressions of the uneasiness they underwent, and how impossible it was for either of them ever to be happy.

After a long struggle between love and friendship, truth and jealousy, they one day took a walk together into a wood, carrying their mistress along with them; where, after abundance of lamentations, they stabbed her to the heart, of which she immediately died. A slave who was at his work not far from the place where this astonishing piece of cruelty was committed, hearing the shrieks of the dying person, ran to see what was the occasion of them. He there discovered the woman lying dead upon the ground, with the two negroes on each side of her, kissing the dead corpse, weeping over it, and beating their breasts in the utmost agonies of grief and despair. He immediately ran to the English family with the news of what he had seen; who, upon coming to the place, saw the woman dead, and

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the two negroes expiring by her with wounds they had given themselves.

We see in this amazing instance of barbarity what strange disorders are bred in the minds of those men whose passions are not regulated by virtue, and disciplined by reason. Though the action which I have recited is in itself full of guilt and horror, it proceeded from a temper of mind which might have produced very noble fruits had it been informed and guided by a suitable education.

It is, therefore, an unspeakable blessing to be born in those parts of the world where wisdom and knowledge flourish; though it must be confessed there are, even in these parts, several poor, uninstructed persons who are but little above the inhabitants of those nations of which I have been here speaking; as those who have had the advantage of a more liberal education rise above one another by several different degrees of perfection. For, to return to our statue in the block of marble, we see it sometimes only begun to be chipped; sometimes rough-hewn, and but just sketched into a human figure; sometimes we see the man appearing distinctly in all his limbs and features; sometimes we find the figure wrought up to a great elegancy, but seldom meet with any to which the hand of a Phidias or Praxiteles could not give several nice touches and finishings.

Discourses of morality and reflections upon human nature are the best means we can make use of to improve our minds, and gain a true knowledge of ourselves, and, consequently, to recover our souls out of the vice, ignorance, and prejudice which naturally cleave to them. I have all along professed myself in this paper a promoter of these great ends; and I flatter myself that I do from day to day contribute something to the polishing of men's minds: at least,

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my design is laudable, whatever the execution may be. I must confess I am not a little encouraged in it by many letters which I receive from unknown hands, in approbation of my endeavours; and must take this opportunity of returning my thanks to those who write them, and excusing myself for not inserting several of them in my papers, which I am sensible would be a very great ornament to them. Should I publish the praises which are so well penned, they would do honour to the persons who write them; but my publishing of them would, I fear, be a sufficient instance to the world that I did not deserve them.

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ON GRATITUDE TO GOD.

"No weak, no common wing shall bear
My rising body through the air."

CREECH'S HORACE.

THERE is not a more pleasing exercise of the mind than gratitude. It is accompanied with such an inward satisfaction that the duty is sufficiently rewarded by the performance. It is not like the practice of many other virtues, difficult and painful, but attended with so much pleasure, that were there no positive command which enjoined it, nor any recompence laid up for it hereafter, a generous mind would indulge in it, for the natural gratification that accompanies it.

If gratitude is due from man to man, how much more from man to his Maker? The Supreme Being does not only confer upon us those bounties, which proceed more immediately from His hand, but even those benefits which are conveyed to us by others. Every blessing we enjoy, by what means soever it may be derived upon us, is the gift of Him who is the great Author of good, and Father of mercies.

If gratitude, when exerted towards one another, naturally produces a very pleasing sensation in the mind of a grateful man, it exalts the soul into rapture when it is employed on this great object of gratitude—on this beneficent Being who

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has given us everything we already possess, and from whom we expect everything we yet hope for.

Most of the works of the pagan poets were either direct hymns to their deities, or tended indirectly to the celebration of their respective attributes and perfections. Those who are acquainted with the works of the Greek and Latin poets which are still extant will, upon reflection, find this observation so true, that I shall not enlarge upon it. One would wonder that more of our Christian poets have not turned their thoughts this way, especially if we consider that our idea of the Supreme Being is not only infinitely more great and noble than what could possibly enter into the heart of a heathen, but filled with everything that can raise the imagination, and give an opportunity for the sublimest thoughts and conceptions.

Plutarch tells us of a heathen who was singing a hymn to Diana, in which he celebrated her for her delight in human sacrifices, and other instances of cruelty and revenge; upon which a poet who was present at this piece of devotion, and seems to have had a truer idea of the Divine nature, told the votary, by way of reproof, that, in recompence for his hymn, he heartily wished he might have a daughter with the same temper with the goddess he celebrated. It was, indeed, impossible to write the praises of one of those false deities, according to the pagan creed, without a mixture of impertinence and absurdity.

The Jews, who, before the time of Christianity, were the only people who had any knowledge of the true God, have set the Christian world an example how they ought to employ this divine talent of which I am speaking. As that nation produced men of great genius, without considering them as inspired writers, they have transmitted to us many

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hymns and divine odes, which excel those that are delivered down to us by the ancient Greeks and Romans, in the poetry, as much as in the subject to which it was consecrated. This, I think, might easily be shewn if there were occasion for it.

When all thy mercies, O my God!
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I 'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise.

Oh, how shall words, with equal warmth,
The gratitude declare
That glows within my ravish'd heart!
But Thou canst read it there.

Thy Providence my life sustain'd,
And all my wants redrest,
When in the silent womb I lay,
And hung upon the breast.

To all my weak complaints and cries
Thy mercy lent an ear,
Ere yet my feeble thoughts had learnt
To form themselves in prayer.

Unnumber'd comforts to my soul
Thy tender care bestow'd,
Before my infant heart conceived
From whom these comforts flow'd.

When in the slipp'ry paths of youth
With heedless steps I ran;
Thine arm, unseen, convey'd me safe,
And led me up to man.

Through hidden dangers, toils, and deaths,
It gently clear'd my way;
And through the pleasing snares of vice,
More to be fear'd than they.

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When worn with sickness, oft has Thou
With health renew'd my face;
And, when in sins and sorrows sunk,
Revived my soul with grace.

Thy bounteous hand with worldly bliss
Has made my cup run o'er;
And, in a kind and faithful friend,
Hath doubled all my store.

Ten thousand thousand precious gifts
My daily thanks employ;
Nor is the least a cheerful heart,
That tastes these gifts with joy.

Through every period of my life
Thy goodness I'll pursue;
And after death, in distant worlds,
The glorious theme renew.

When nature fails, and day and night
Divide Thy works no more,
My ever-grateful heart, O Lord,
Thy mercy shall adore.

Through all eternity to Thee
A joyful song I'll raise;
For, oh! eternity's too short
To utter all Thy praise.

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THE PARADISE OF FOOLS: AN ALLEGORY.

OUR defects and follies are too often unknown to us; nay, they are so far from being known to us, that they pass for demonstrations of our worth. This makes us easy in the midst of them, fond to shew them, fond to improve them, and to be esteemed for them. Then it is that a thousand unaccountable conceits, gay inventions, and extravagant actions must afford us pleasure, and display us to others in the colours which we ourselves take a fancy to glory in. Indeed, there is something so amusing for the time in the state of vanity and ill-grounded satisfaction, that even the wiser world has chosen an exalted word to describe its enchantments, and called it "The Paradise of Fools."

Perhaps the latter part of this reflection may seem a false thought to some, and bear another turn than what I have given; but it is at present none of my business to look after it, who am going to confess that I have been lately amongst them in a vision.

Methought I was transported to a hill, green, flowery, and of an easy ascent. Upon the broad top of it resided squint-eyed Error, and Popular Opinion with many heads; two that dwelt in sorcery, and were famous for bewitching people with the love of themselves. To these repaired a multitude from every side, by two different paths which lead towards each of them. Some who had the most assuming air went directly

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of themselves to Error, without expecting a conductor; others of a softer nature went first to Popular Opinion, from whence, as she influenced and engaged them with their own praises, she delivered them over to his government.

When we had ascended to an open part of the summit where Opinion abode, we found her entertaining several who had arrived before us. Her voice was pleasing: she breathed odours as she spoke. She seemed to have a tongue for every one; every one thought he heard of something that was valuable in himself, and expected a paradise which she promised as the reward of his merit. Thus were we drawn to follow her, till she should bring us where it was to be bestowed; and it was observable, that all the way we went, the company was either praising themselves for their qualifications, or one another for those qualifications which they took to be conspicuous in their own characters, or disprais-ing others for wanting theirs or vying in the degrees of them.

At last we approached a bower, at the entrance of which Error was seated. The trees were thick woven, and the place where he sat artfully contrived to darken him a little. He was disguised in a whitish robe, which he had put on, that he might appear to us with a nearer resemblance to Truth; and as she has a light whereby she manifests the beauties of nature to the eyes of her adorers, so he had provided himself with a magical wand, that he might do something in imitation of it, and please with delusions. This he lifted solemnly, and, muttering to himself, bid the glories which he kept under enchantment to appear before us. Immediately we cast our eyes on that part of the sky to which he pointed, and observed a thin blue prospect, which cleared as mountains in a summer morning

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when the mist goes off, and the palace of Vanity appeared to sight.

The foundation seemed hardly a foundation, but a set of curling clouds, which it stood upon by magical contrivance. The way by which we ascended was painted like a rainbow: and as we went, the breeze that played about us bewitched the senses. The walks were gilded all for show; the lowest set of pillars were of the slight fine Corinthian order, and the top of the building being rounded, bore so far the resemblance of a bubble.

At the gate the travellers neither met with a porter, nor waited till one should appear; every one thought his merits a sufficient passport, and pressed forward. In the hall we met with several phantoms, that roved among us, and ranged the company according to their sentiments. There was decreasing Honour, that had nothing to show, but an old coat, of his ancestor's achievements. There was Ostentation, that made himself his own constant subject, and Gallantry strutting upon his tiptoes. At the upper end of the hall stood a throne, whose canopy glittered with all the riches that gaiety could contrive to lavish on it; and between the gilded arms sat Vanity, decked in the peacock's feathers, and acknowledged for another Venus by her votaries. The boy who stood beside her for a Cupid, and who made the world to bow before her, was called Self-Conceit. His eyes had every now and then a cast inwards, to the neglect of all objects about him; and the arms which he made use of for conquest were borrowed from those against whom he had a design. The arrow which he shot at the soldier was fledged from his own plume of feathers; the dart he directed against the man of wit was winged from the quills he writ with; and that which he sent against those who presumed upon their

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riches, was headed with gold out of their treasuries. He made nets for statesmen from their own contrivances: he took fire from the eyes of ladies, with which he melted their hearts; and lightning from the tongues of the eloquent, to inflame them with their own glories. At the foot of the throne sat three false Graces: Flattery with a shell of paint, Affectation with a mirror to practise at, and Fashion ever changing the posture of her clothes. These applied themselves to secure the conquests which Self-Conceit had gotten, and had each of them their particular polities. Flattery gave new colours and complexions to all things; Affectation new airs and appearances, which, as she said, were not vulgar; and Fashion both concealed some home defects, and added some foreign external beauties.

As I was reflecting upon what I saw, I heard a voice in the crowd bemoaning the condition of mankind, which is thus managed by the breath of Opinion, deluded by Error, fired by Self-Conceit, and given up to be trained in all the courses of Vanity, till Scorn or Poverty come upon us. These expressions were no sooner handed about, but I immediately saw a general disorder, till at last there was a parting in one place, and a grave old man, decent and resolute, was led forward to be punished for the words he had uttered. He appeared inclined to have spoken in his own defence, but I could not observe that any one was willing to hear him. Vanity cast a scornful smile at him; Self-Conceit was angry; Flattery, who knew him for Plain-Dealing, put on a vizard, and turned away; Affectation tossed her fan, made mouths, and called him Envy or Slander; and Fashion would have it, that at least he must be Ill-Manners. Thus slighted and despised by all, he was driven out for abusing people of merit and figure; and I

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heard it firmly resolved, that he should be used no better wherever they met with him hereafter.

I had already seen the meaning of most part of that warning which he had given, and was considering how the latter words should be fulfilled, when a mighty noise was heard without, and the door was blackened by a numerous train of harpies crowding in upon us. Folly and Broken-Credit were seen in the house before they entered. Trouble, Shame, Infamy, Scorn, and Poverty brought up the rear. Vanity, with her Cupid and Graces, disappeared; her subjects ran into holes and corners; but many of them were found and carried off (as I was told by one who stood near me) either to prisons or cellars, solitude or little company, the mean arts or the viler crafts of life. "But these," added he, with a disdainful air, "are such who would fondly live here, when their merits neither matched the lustre of the place, nor their riches its expenses. We have seen such scenes as these before now; the glory you saw will all return when the hurry is over." I thanked him for his information; and, believing him so incorrigible as that he would stay till it was his turn to be taken, I made off to the door, and overtook some few who, though they would not hearken to Plain-Dealing, were now terrified to good purpose by the example of others. But when they had touched the threshold, it was a strange shock to them to find that the delusion of Error was gone, and they plainly discerned the building to hang a little up in the air without any real foundation. At first we saw nothing but a desperate leap remained for us, and I a thousand times blamed my unmeaning curiosity that had brought me into so much danger. But as they began to sink lower in their own minds, methought the place sunk along with us, till they were arrived at the due point of

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esteem which they ought to have for themselves: then the part of the building in which they stood touched the earth, and we departing out, it retired from our eyes. Now, whether they who stayed in the palace were sensible of this descent, I cannot tell; it was then my opinion that they were not. However it be, my dream broke up at it, and has given me occasion all my life to reflect upon the fatal consequences of following the suggestions of Vanity.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF METHOD.

"Method gives light."—HORACE.

AMONG my daily papers, which I bestow on the public, there are some which are written with regularity and method, and others that run out into the wildness of those compositions which go by the name of essays. As for the first, I have the whole scheme of the discourse in my mind before I set pen to paper. In the other kind of writing, it is sufficient that I have several thoughts on a subject, without troubling myself to range them in such order that they may seem to grow out of one another, and be disposed under the proper heads. Seneca and Montaigne are patterns for writing in this last kind, as Tully and Aristotle excel in the other. When I read an author of genius who writes without method, I fancy myself in a wood that abounds with a great many noble objects, rising among one another in the greatest confusion and disorder. When I read a methodical discourse I am in a regular plantation, and can place myself in its several centres, so as to take a view of all the lines and walks that are struck from them. You may ramble in the one a whole day together, and every moment discover something or other that is new to you; but when you have done, you will have but a confused, imperfect notion of the place; in the other your eye commands the

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whole prospect, and gives you such an idea of it as is not easily worn out of the memory.

Irregularity and want of method are only supportable in men of great learning or genius, who are often too full to be exact, and therefore choose to throw down their pearls in heaps before the reader rather than be at the pains of stringing them.

Method is of advantage to a work, both in respect to the writer and the reader. In regard to the first, it is a great help to his invention. When a man has planned his discourse, he finds a great many thoughts rising out of every head, that do not offer themselves upon the general survey of a subject. His thoughts are at the same time more intelligible, and better discover their drift and meaning, when they are placed in their proper lights, and follow one another in a regular series, than when they are thrown together without order and connexion. There is always an obscurity in confusion; and the same sentence that would have enlightened the reader in one part of a discourse perplexes him in another. For the same reason, likewise, every thought in a methodical discourse shews itself in its greatest beauty, as the several figures in a piece of painting receive new grace from their disposition in the picture. The advantages of a reader from a methodical discourse are correspondent with those of the writer. He comprehends everything easily, takes it in with pleasure, and retains it long.

Method is not less requisite in ordinary conversation than in writing, provided a man would talk to make himself understood. I, who hear a thousand debates every day, am very sensible of this want of method in the thoughts of my honest countrymen. There is not one dispute in ten where, after the three first sentences, the question is not

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entirely lost. Our disputants put me in mind of the scuttle-fish, that when he is unable to extricate himself, blackens all the water about him until he becomes invisible. The man who does not know how to methodise his thoughts has always, to borrow a phrase from the "Dispensary," "a barren superfluity of words;" the fruit is lost amidst the exuberance of leaves.

Tom Puzzle is one of the most eminent immethodical disputants of any that has fallen under my observation. Tom has read enough to make him very impertinent: his knowledge is sufficient to raise doubts, but not to clear them. It is a pity that he has so much learning, or that he has not a great deal more. With these qualifications, Tom sets up for a politician, and finds a great many things to blame in the constitution of his country. He has got about half a dozen commonplace topics, into which he never fails to turn the conversation, whatever was the occasion of it. This makes Mr Puzzle the admiration of all those who have less sense than himself, and the contempt of all those who have more. There is none in town whom Tom dreads so much as my friend Will Dry. Will, who is acquainted with Tom's logic, when he finds him running off the question, cuts him short with a "What then? We allow all this to be true; but what is it to our present purpose?" I have known Tom eloquent half an hour together, and triumphing, as he thought, in the superiority of the argument, when he has been nonplussed on a sudden by Mr Dry's desiring him to tell the company what it was that he endeavoured to prove. In short, Dry is a man of a clear, methodical head, but few words, and gains the same advantages over Puzzle that a small body of regular troops would gain over a numberless undisciplined militia.

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PATIENCE: AN ALLEGORY.

"'Tis hard: but when we needs must bear,
Enduring patience makes the burden light."

CREECH'S HORACE.

HOW are we tortured with the absence of what we covet to possess, when it appears to be lost to us! What excursions does the soul make in imagination after it! and how does it turn into itself again, more foolishly fond and dejected at the disappointment! Our grief, instead of having recourse to reason, which might restrain it, searches to find a further nourishment. It calls upon memory to relate the several passages and circumstances of satisfaction which we formerly enjoyed; the pleasures we purchased by those riches that are taken from us; or the power and splendour of our departed honours, or the voice, the words, the looks, the temper, and affections, of our friends that are deceased. It needs must happen from hence that the passion should often swell to such a size as to burst the heart which contains it, if time did not make these circumstances less strong and lively, so that reason should become a more equal match for the passion, or if another desire which becomes more present did not overpower them with a livelier representation. These are thoughts which I had when I fell into a kind of vision upon this subject, and may therefore stand for a proper introduction to a relation of it.

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I found myself upon a naked shore, with company whose afflicted countenances witnessed their conditions. Before us flowed a water, deep, silent, and called the River of Tears, which, issuing from two fountains on an upper ground, encompassed an island that lay before us. The boat which plied in it was old and shattered, having been sometimes overset by the impatience and haste of single passengers to arrive at the other side. This immediately was brought to us by Misfortune who steers it, and we were all preparing to take our places, when there appeared a woman of a mild and composed behaviour, who began to deter us from it, by representing the dangers which would attend our voyage. Hereupon some who knew her for Patience, and some of those, too, who until then cried the loudest, were persuaded by her, and returned back. The rest of us went in, and she (whosc good-nature would not suffer her to forsake persons in trouble) desired leave to accompany us, that she might at least administer some small comfort or advice while we sailed. We were no sooner embarked but the boat was pushed off, the sheet was spread; and being filled with sighs, which are the winds of that country, we made a passage to the further bank through several difficulties, of which the most of us seemed utterly regardless.

When we landed, we perceived the island to be strangely overcast with fogs, which no brightness could pierce, so that a kind of gloomy horror sat always brooding over it. This had something in it very shocking to easy tempers, insomuch that some others, whom Patience had by this time gained over, left us here, and privily conveyed themselves round the verge of the island, to find a ford by which she told them they might escape.

For my part, I still went along with those who were for

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piercing into the centre of the place; and joining ourselves to others whom we found upon the same journey, we marched solemnly as at a funeral, through bordering hedges of rosemary, and through a grove of yew trees, which love to overshadow tombs and flourish in churchyards. Here we heard on every side the wailings and complaints of several of the inhabitants, who had cast themselves disconsolately at the feet of trees; and as we chanced to approach any of these, we might perceive them wringing their hands, beating their breasts, tearing their hair, or after some other manner visibly agitated with vexation. Our sorrows were heightened by the influence of what we heard and saw, and one of our number was wrought up to such a pitch of wildness, as to talk of hanging himself upon a bough which shot temptingly across the path we travelled in; but he was restrained from it by the kind endeavours of our above-mentioned companion.

We had now gotten into the most dusky, silent part of the island, and by the redoubled sounds of sighs, which made a doleful whistling in the branches, the thickness of the air, which occasioned faintish respiration, and the violent throbbings of heart, which more and more affected us, we found that we approached the Grotto of Grief. It was a wide, hollow, and melancholy cave, sunk deep in a dale, and watered by rivulets that had a colour between red and black. These crept slow and half congealed amongst its windings, and mixed their heavy murmurs with the echo of groans that rolled through all the passages. In the most retired parts of it sat the doleful being herself; the path to her was strewed with goads, stings, and thorns; and her throne on which she sat was broken into a rock, with ragged pieces pointing upwards for her to lean upon. A

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heavy mist hung above her: her head oppressed with it reclined upon her arm. Thus did she reign over her disconsolate subjects, full of herself to stupidity, in eternal pensiveness, and the profoundest silence. On one side of her stood Dejection, just dropping into a swoon, and Paleness wasting to a skeleton; on the other side were Care, inwardly tormented with imaginations, and Anguish suffering outward troubles to suck the blood from her heart in the shape of vultures. The whole vault had a genuine dismalness in it, which a few scattered lamps, whose bluish flames arose and sunk in their urns, discovered to our eyes with increase. Some of us fell down, overcome and spent with what they suffered in the way, and were given over to those tormentors that stood on either hand of the presence; others, galled and mortified with pain, recovered the entrance, where Patience, whom we had left behind, was still waiting to receive us.

With her (whose company was now become more grateful to us by the want we had found of her) we winded round the grotto, and ascended at the back of it, out of the mournful dale in whose bottom it lay. On this eminence we halted by her advice, to pant for breath; and lifting our eyes, which until then were fixed downwards, felt a sullen sort of satisfaction, in observing through the shades what numbers had entered the island. This satisfaction, which appears to have ill-nature in it, was excusable, because it happened at a time when we were too much taken up with our own concern, to have respect to that of others; and therefore we did not consider them as suffering, but ourselves as not suffering in the most forlorn estate. It had also the groundwork of humanity and compassion in it, though the mind was too dark and too deeply engaged to

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perceive it; but as we proceeded onwards, it began to discover itself, and, from observing that others were unhappy, we came to question one another, when it was that we met, and what were the sad occasions that brought us together. Then we heard our stories, we compared them, we mutually gave and received pity, and so by degrees became tolerable company.

A considerable part of the troublesome road was thus deceived; at length the openings among the trees grew larger, the air seemed thinner, it lay with less oppression upon us, and we could now and then discern tracks in it of a lighter grayness, like the breakings of day, short in duration, much enlivening, and called in that country gleams of amusement. Within a short while, these gleams began to appear more frequent, and then brighter and of a longer continuance: the sighs that hitherto filled the air with so much dolefulness, altered to the sound of common breezes, and in general the horrors of the island were abated.

When we had arrived at last at the ford by which we were to pass out, we met with those fashionable mourners who had been ferried over along with us, and who being unwilling to go as far as we, had coasted by the shore to find the place where they waited our coming; that by shewing themselves to the world only at the time when we did, they might seem also to have been among the troubles of the grotto. Here the waters that rolled on the other side so deep and silent, were much dried up, and it was an easier matter for us to wade over.

The river being crossed, we were received upon the further bank by our friends and acquaintance, whom Comfort had brought out to congratulate our appearance in the world again. Some of these blamed us for staying so long

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away from them, others advised us against all temptations of going back again; every one was cautious not to renew our trouble, by asking any particulars of the journey; and all concluded that, in a case of so much melancholy and affliction, we could not have made choice of a fitter companion than Patience. Here Patience, appearing serene at her praises, delivered us over to Comfort. Comfort smiled at his receiving the charge; immediately the sky purpled on that side to which he turned, and double day at once broke in upon me.

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